

The TELEGRAPH

A newsletter dedicated to the hard-working employees of Oakland County Government

Volume III, Issue XV

November 1995

Gage inducted into Women's Hall of Fame

One of Oakland County's most distinguished and respected jurists has been accorded an honor only a few others have received. **Chief Oakland County Circuit Judge Hilda Gage** was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame on Oct. 28, in Lansing, joining the ranks of 110 other women who have been singled out over the years.

Judge Gage was selected for her contributions to law, government, health and human services and law education, as well as being an inspiration to others afflicted with multiple sclerosis.

"Women inducted into the hall of fame are selected because of their historical contributions to Michigan, their achievements and those who serve as role models for children," said Liz Giese, educational director, Michigan Women's Historical Center.



Photo by Ryan Photo, Inc.

Past inductees into the Women's Hall of Fame include: Former First Lady Betty Ford; Rosa Parks, the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement and Helen Milliken, the wife of former Michigan Governor William Milliken.

"I'm honored to be in their company," said Judge Gage.

During her long legal and judicial career, Judge Gage has won numerous awards including: The 1991 Robert P. Hudson Award for her outstanding and unique service to the State Bar of Michigan; the 1991 Frances R. Avandenka Award for her significant and numerous contributions outside the legal profession; the 1993 National Center for State Courts Distinguished Service Award and the 1994 John N. O'Brien Memorial Award for Distinguished Community Activities.

Furry friends find loving homes at Animal Control openhouse



cats and seven kittens were adopted and taken home.

"The employees worked very hard to plan this event," said **Sandy Gay**, Animal Control Division manager. "They should all be very proud of the outcome from this very special day."

In addition to being afforded the opportunity of adopting a pet, visitors were taken on a tour of the facility, provided



More than 400 people visited the Animal Control Care Center on Oct. 21 for the first "Adopt a Stray Day and Open House."

During the five-hour event, a total of 17 adult dogs, eight puppies, two adult

information on pet care and treated to light refreshments.

"Adopt a Stray Day and Open House" was so successful another one was held on Saturday, Dec. 9. — just in time for the holidays.

PATTERSON / *Person to Person*

Since this is the last newsletter of the year, it seems like a good opportunity to review 1995 and look ahead to 1996.

We accomplished quite a bit this past year. For one thing, we offered employees a choice between two different retirement plans — the old “Defined Benefit Retirement Plan” and the new “Defined Contribution Plan.” I wrote an earlier column on the differences between the two plans so I won’t take up space here rehashing all that. But I do want to stress the fact that the window of opportunity to switch from the old plan to the new one is quickly closing shut. You only have until Dec. 31 to make the switch. After the close of business on that day, it’s too late. Whether the new plan or the old one is best for you depends on your individual circumstances. The important thing to remember is that the day of decision is at hand if you want to transfer to the Defined Contribution Plan.

There are a number of other things that occurred in 1995 which we can take a great deal of pride in. Oakland County opened its new “One-Stop-Shop” for business development. A short time later the Pontiac Export Assistance Center rolled out the welcome mat for firms looking to increase their visibility in worldwide markets.

Nineteen ninety-five also turned out to be a year of national recognition for

six of my Executive Departments. Economic Development, Community and Minority Affairs, Information Technology, Animal Control and Community Development all received Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties.

Speaking of honors, Dave Ross, director of Facilities Management; Paul Funk, director of Information Technology and Oakland County Treasurer C. Hugh Dohany, were all listed in “Governing Magazine”, a national publication, as among the top 50 county officials in the country in their respective fields.

During the past year, Oakland County government also took a giant step toward saving the taxpayers about \$9 million over the next 30 years. As a result of our “Deferred Retirement Buy-Out Option,” 40 percent of the eligible employees elected to gain access to their retirement dollars in a lump sum payment now, instead of waiting until they reached 60 years of age. The bottom line is a net savings of \$750,000 annually over the next three decades.

As 1996 approaches, I look forward to another year of prosperity and growth for Oakland County. Nineteen ninety-six will also mark the start of my fourth year as County Executive. The successes we have enjoyed over the past three years are attributable



L. Brooks Patterson
Oakland County Executive

in large measure to the hard work and dedication of the men and women who toil on the front lines of county government everyday. With your continued commitment, we will be able to prepare Oakland County for the challenges of the next century.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend to each of you my sincere thanks and appreciation for doing such an outstanding job on behalf of the citizens of Oakland County. From my family to yours, best wishes for a happy, safe and healthy holiday season.

Drain Commission inspector saves a life

Sept. 22, started out to be a routine day in the life of **Charlie Van Bibber**, construction inspector for the Oakland County Drain Commission. But shortly after 5 p.m., the calm of what had been a normal day was shattered.

Van Bibber was writing his daily report at a construction site on Farmington Road just north of Maple in West Bloomfield Township when he noticed a cloud of dust rising from a bore pit. He saw a machine operator

jump down off his rig and signal for help as he ran toward the hole.

“My first thought was, ‘my God what’s happened’,” Van Bibber recalled.

When he arrived at the pit, he knew instantly what had happened. One of the banks had caved in, trapping the crew of four men 14 feet below. One of the workers was killed instantly, another was buried up to his shoulder blades, a third was completely buried and a fourth man was uninjured.

Van Bibber jumped into the pit and uncovered the face of the worker who was buried so he could breathe. Van Bibber then crawled out of the hole and called 9-1-1.

One of the workers suffered a broken pelvis and was taken to University of Michigan Hospital for treatment. The person Van Bibber rescued has made a full recovery. Work at the construction site resumed the following Monday and is still in progress.

County employees line up to collect ESP cash...

Eight more Oakland County employees are glad they entered the Employees Suggestion Program, after winning \$50 each for their ideas for improving county government. The interim ESP winners are:

■ **Dennis Smith**, Support Services, whose suggestion to send existing staff to dictaphone repair training, instead of contracting out repair work, will save the county approximately \$15,900 annually.

■ **Mary Griffiths**, Community Mental Health Department, has suggested establishing a central policies and procedures directory on the computer to enable employees to obtain the most current information available.

■ **Helen Andrews**, Personnel Department, came up with the idea to have the signature printed out on Personnel's First of the Year forms, instead of stamping them by hand. It's estimated her suggestion will save about 80 hours of staff time each year.

■ **David Hendrick** and **Michael Taylor**, Sheriff's Department, collaborated on a suggestion to use computer generated detainer cards in the County Jail, which will save about 715 hours of staff time annually.

■ **Donna Bevington**, Probate Court, has suggested requiring attorneys who ask for information from Probate Estates to enclose stamped, self-addressed envelopes. Her idea will save about \$4,000 per year.

■ **Dave Slade**, Health Division, came up with the idea of establishing an outside food court at the courthouse during the summer months which would be open to county employees and the general public.

■ **Valerie Taylor**, Equalization, has suggested using major drug store chains to develop low-volume film projects for the Equalization Division, which would save several hundred dollars annually in developing costs.

■ **Dennis Bristow**, Register of Deeds Division, suggested regularly updating the visual file at the Register of Deeds office, thereby improving service to the public and saving staff time.

The suggestions submitted by Hendrick, Taylor, Andrews and Griffiths have already been implemented and are therefore in the running for one of the major prizes which will be awarded at the County Executive's Annual Christmas Party on Dec. 8.

Parks & Rec offers Christmas Tree recycling program

The holiday season is just around the corner and once again this year Oakland County Parks will be in business to help you dispose of your used Christmas tree in an environmentally sound way.

Parks officials urge you to take the "green approach" by dropping off your tree at one of nine convenient locations. Trees will be accepted from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. seven days a week Dec. 26 through Jan. 14 at **Addison Oaks** near Oxford; **Glen Oaks** in Farmington Hills; **Groveland Oaks** near Holly; **Red Oaks** in Madison Heights;

Springfield Oaks in Davisburg; **Waterford Oaks** in Waterford and **White Lake Oaks** in White Lake.

In addition, holiday trees can be dropped off from Dec. 26 through Jan. 28 at **Independence Oaks** near Clarkston and **Orion Oaks** in Orion Township between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., seven days a week.

There's no charge for the service, but you are asked to remove all decorations, metal, string, plastic, etc. from the trees before dropping them off. For more information, call (810) 858-0906.

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Did you know?

■ **Purchase requisitions** can be sent directly from vendors to departments by contacting the Purchasing Department.

■ **County maps** and directories are in the process of being updated.

■ **ESP awards** will be given out at the County Executive's Annual Christmas Party on Dec. 8.

1995 Awards:

- One-week trip for two to Hawaii or \$4,000 cash
- One-week trip for two to Cancun or \$2,000 cash
- Weekend trip for two to Toronto or \$750 cash
- Six cash awards of \$500
- Four cash awards of \$250

Lifeguards win statewide competition

Two Oakland County Parks & Recreation lifeguards took first place honors in August at a statewide lifeguard competition held at Red Oaks Water Park. **Chris Ettinger**, Independence Oaks and **Saylor Frase**, Groveland Oaks, captured the top prize among the 33 two-man teams which competed in the Michigan Recreation and Park Association's competition.

The lifeguards physical stamina and strength were tested with a series of grueling challenges which included pulling victims from the water, diving to rescue 150 pound dummies, two-person and passive CPR tests, a tug-of-war and an Iron Man competition.

"The Iron Man portion was the hardest of all," said Frase. "We had to ride down a slide, run around to the front of the pool, drag a dummy 50 feet and then run another 100 yards."

Ettinger and Frase won individual contests in backboarding a victim, the tug-of-war and the Iron Man competition. Additionally, they captured first place overall in the men's division.

The Waterford Oaks Water Park Team of **Pete Cary** and **Dave Karakuc** put in a very respectable performance by winning second place in the men's division.

MCF News Notes

Liz Kellogg, coordinator of resident activities at the Medical Care Facility, reports that the Annual Rummage and Bake Sale was a huge success. The two-day event, held on Sept. 7 and 8, raised \$2,256.86. Proceeds will be used to fund various activities for MCF residents including field trips, parties, crafts, entertainment, transportation, music therapy and picnics.

Liz also says the Medical Care Facility Activities Department has just installed a computer system that will enable the residents to communicate with students at various schools in Waterford. "We think this new program will be very beneficial for all concerned," said Kellogg.

Tabulations & Totals for 1995



Casual Day Contributions
\$17,410.90

Employee Suggestion Program
201 Suggestions



Direct Deposit
53%

Probate Court worker honored for volunteer work



Pictured left to right are Oakland County Special Olympics Volunteer of the Year Corene Munro, Probate Court Administrator Robert Bingham and Supervisor Ron Auten.

An Oakland County Probate Court employee has been selected as the Oakland County Special Olympics' 1995 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year. A plaque was presented to **Corene Munro**, child welfare worker-probation officer assigned to the Royal Oak Office, during a special ceremony at the Probate Court's general staff meeting on Sept. 8. Corene serves as the volunteer representative on the Special Olympics' management team, overseeing the needs of the many volunteers who comprise the backbone of this Special Olympics effort.

Over the past decade, Corene has unselfishly devoted her time and energy to serving as a volunteer at the numerous Special Olympics competitions, fund-raisers and special events.

"Corene's pleasant personality and her understanding nature have greatly contributed to making the Oakland County Special Olympics a very successful program," said her boss, **Robert Bingham** who is the Probate Court Administrator. "The Special Olympics considers Corene an extremely valuable asset."

Special Olympics is an intergenerational program of sports, training and competition for children and adults with mental retardation. Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation in 1968, the Special Olympics program is designed to develop the physical, mental and social well-being of every participant.

The Brown Bag Lecture Series presents:

December

14 "Women Artists of the DIA"

Susan Ruwart will examine and consider artwork created by women in different time periods and cultures, and discuss women's historic lack of recognition in the artistic community.

January

18 "Movie Music — the Sounds of the Cinema"

"The movies were never silent," says Oakland University Professor Brian Murphy. He traces the evolution of cinematic music beginning with early silent pictures and shares entertaining anecdotes about Hollywood.

Lectures are presented in the Information Technology Auditorium from noon to 1 p.m. every third Thursday of the month.

The Brown Bag Lecture series is a partnership project of the Oakland County Cultural Council and Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson.

The View from Here

All of us have certain things which annoy us more than others. Maybe you can identify with some of my "pet peeves".

At the top of the list is traffic congestion, especially that created by slow drivers or large trucks. When I get behind the wheel of my car, I want to get where I'm going as quickly as possible. There always seems to be someone lurking in the shadows whose main mission in life is to prevent that from happening. I can't tell you how many times I've been zipping along down the road, thrilled to be ahead of schedule for once, only to have a moving van, cement hauler or 18-wheel semi, pull out in front of me and travel at ten to 15 miles per hour for the next 20 miles. Naturally, there's no opportunity to pass. Patience has never been my strong suit, so you can understand that waiting in line, whether it's sitting in a car or standing, is sheer agony for me. I always seem to hit the grocery store or the Secretary of State's Office at the worst possible moment. In many cases, people who are there to supposedly help you are rarely in much of a hurry to see that you get on your way as quickly as possible. They've got to be there for eight hours anyway, so what's it to them if you spend a couple of hours waiting in line.

Have you ever been in the bathroom when the phone rings? You leap out of the shower, make a mad dash toward the bedroom, only to hear the sound of someone hanging up as you lift the receiver off the hook. In the meantime, there you stand, out of breath and dripping wet.

Then there is the ever popular gum-snapping teenage girl who operates the cash register at the corner store. Invariably, I get her when she's talking on the phone, probably

to her boyfriend. She doesn't even bother looking at me as she's ringing up my purchase. Maybe I'm being picky, but when someone waits on me I'd like to have their undivided attention for the few seconds I'm there. It doesn't seem like too much to ask.

Improper use of the English language is another thing that infuriates me. Not that I'm so perfect that I never mess up. But some people seem to make a career out of butchering the King's English. "Isn't that a lovely *pitcher*?" No, but it is a lovely *picture*. "I *seen* this guy running toward me." I doubt it, although you *may have seen* him running toward you or perhaps you even *saw* him running toward you. Then there is my favorite — the old double negative. "He *don't know nothing*." Perhaps, but he sure knows more than you. Proper use of the English language reflects favorably on who we are and what we know.

Finally, car repairs. I'd almost rather leave my car where it dies than have it towed into a garage for repairs. I know virtually nothing about cars or what keeps them running. Judging by a few of the garages I've dealt with over the years, neither do the mechanics who work on the vehicles. I dread looking at the repair bill, because it usually resembles the national debt. I don't care what's wrong with the car — the bill is always \$150 - \$200 or more. I'm sure most auto repair shops are reputable, but sometimes you do wonder.

Thanks for letting me vent. I do feel better. Happy holidays.



Bob Dustman
Media and
Communications
Officer

"BATTEN DOWN"

A couple of county employees go head-to-head with

Editor Dustman's tropical vacation includes uninvited guest

F it was a trip I had been looking forward to for quite some time. My first excursion south of the border — destination the Yucatan Peninsula, specifically Cancun, Mexico. The anticipation of a week lying in the hot Mexican sun and walking along the white sands of the Caribbean was beginning to build as I headed to the airport to catch my flight to Cancun, by way of Tampa.

As the plane touched down at the airport in Cancun, I noticed it was overcast and a little on the breezy side. After the 20-minute ride from the airport, I quickly checked into my room at the Hyatt Regency, traded in my jeans for swimming trunks and headed down to the pool.

With book in hand, I settled into one of the chairs by the pool, looking forward to an afternoon of reading and relaxing. But Mother Nature had other plans. The winds started to blow and the skies opened up, dropping buckets of water on everyone and everything in sight. A passing shower I thought — wrong again. I didn't realize it at the time, but this was the opening salvo from Hurricane Roxanne.

It rained off and on for the rest of the day and the wind became more intense. As I retired for the evening, I thought to myself that tomorrow would be a better day — wrong again.

My first clue that something was amiss occurred at 2 a.m. when I awoke to the sound of a ferocious wind and waves battering the sea wall outside. In addition, my curtain was blowing straight out through the sliding glass door which I had left open.

The next morning came word that Hurricane Roxanne was heading toward us and the hotel would have to be

evacuated. All of the guests were told to report to the hotel lobby at 10:30 a.m. We boarded buses and were taken to a hotel inland. Other shoreline hotels in Cancun had the same idea, so there was no room for us when we arrived. We were taken to another hotel — again there was "no room at the inn." Our third stop was a gymnasium, where I spent about four hours with 3,000 of my closest friends.

After being handed a sheet (no blankets or pillow thank you), I managed to find one of the last vacant places on the hard gym floor, a space about the size of a postage stamp. By this time the storm was gathering momentum, even though the hurricane wasn't suppose to hit for another three or four hours. The wind shook the entire building and the roof sounded as if it was ready to pop off.

For several minutes I wondered if this was it. Was I about to meet my maker? Fortunately, the winds subsided a little and some of us were moved to another location — a Mexican army barracks further inland. As our bus passed through the gate, I could see Mexican soldiers, guns slung over their shoulders, scurrying about helping some of the other evacuees who had just arrived.

My temporary home away from home turned out to be a room with 40 bunk beds and metal lockers in it. Although not luxurious, this was a vast improvement over the gymnasium and its wall-to-wall people. It was here I met an elderly man from Connecticut who regaled some of the children with magic tricks and the rest of us with interesting stories from his past. Two young couples, who were in nearby bunks, were celebrating honeymoons

they would not soon forget.

Supper this night in the mess hall was a pimento loaf sandwich, black bean soup and Mexican coffee, which was quite delicious. The hurricane which had been expected to arrive at 6 p.m. was now forecast to hit by 8 p.m. That was viewed as good news by some of the local folks because that meant some of the storm's ferocity would have spent itself before reaching us.

Around 10 p.m. it was lights out as we all hunkered down for what we thought would be a long night in the barracks. But around midnight the lights went back on and we were told the all clear was sounded and we could return to our hotels. So, it was back on the bus for the 30-minute ride back to the Hyatt, but it was a trip I was thrilled to make.

As it turned out Hurricane Roxanne only slightly brushed by Cancun, saving most of her savage fury for Cozumel. Although there was some flooding on the streets and a few trees were uprooted, the electricity stayed on.

Once back in the comfort of my hotel room, I put the bed and the rest of the furniture back where it belonged (the hotel staff had moved everything against the wall as a precaution) and then poured myself a couple of stiff drinks before turning off the light and officially ending one of the most extraordinary days of my life.

"THE HATCHES"

hurricanes — and live to tell about it

Judge Kuhn meets Hurricane Luis

Oakland County Circuit Judge Richard Kuhn and his wife, Sally, spent part of their 40th wedding anniversary riding 40-foot waves in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, some 700 miles from the nearest land. Their companion was Hurricane Luis, who tossed the

Queen Elizabeth II, the ship the Kuhns were on, from side-to-side and up and down for a period of 14 to 16 hours.

"It was very rough, with winds in excess of 130 miles per hour and waves averaging 40 feet and some as high as 90 feet," said Judge Kuhn. "I can't say we were ever in any real danger, but some people on the ship

accommodate 2,000 passengers.

In order to keep the rocking of the ship to a minimum, the captain cut the speed from 33 knots to five knots, which also had the effect of putting the trip back to New York 12 hours behind schedule.

"No one was allowed on deck and you had to hold onto something to keep from falling down," said Judge Kuhn. "You could see water pouring over the bow of ship all the time. It's an experience I'll never forget."

Despite the visit from Hurricane Luis, Judge Kuhn said it was a fantastic cruise; it was everything he had expected.

"We went from two extremes," noted Judge Kuhn. "We left New York on board the Supersonic Concorde, traveling at 1,384 miles per hour and came back on the Queen Elizabeth II going only 32 knots (36 miles per hour)."

Judge Kuhn also pointed out that when they docked in New York, the ship required some repairs because the strength of the waves had apparently knocked some of the welds loose.

spent the night with their clothes and life jackets on."

Fortunately for the Kuhns and the other 1,000 or so people on board, the Queen Elizabeth II is one of the largest ships in existence, standing nine stories high and able to

All sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a Sphere.

Excerpt from "Fable, The Mountain and the Squirrel"
a poem by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Annual Fun Run benefits Michigan Special Olympics

The rainy, windy, cold weather that greeted the 50 or so runners and walkers who participated in Oakland County's fifth Annual Torch Run for Special Olympics on Sept. 22 failed to dampen spirits.

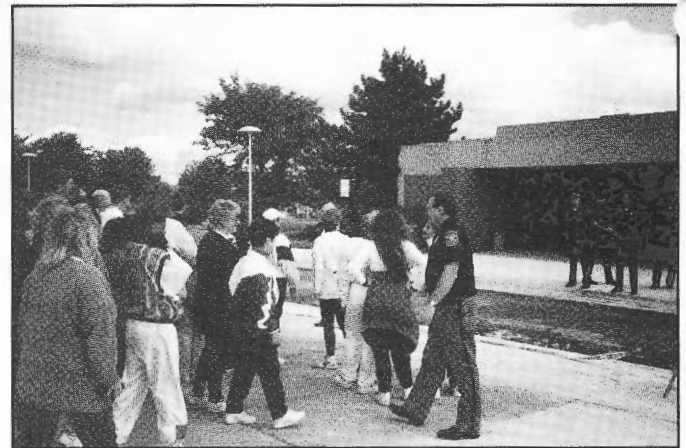
The participants showed up at the starting line behind the North Office Building decked out in their finest running gear. They set out on a course which took them by the main courthouse building where **Judge Deborah Tyner** thanked the runners for their dedication to the Special Olympics. From there it was on to the Sheriff's Department where **Sheriff John Nichols** was presented with a plaque in recognition of his support for Special Olympics.

At the finish line the runners and walkers were cheered by 40 Special Olympians who had been invited to attend the Fun Run.

Entertainment was provided by Doug Jacobs and the Red Garter Band who often donate their time and talent to a variety of charitable events, including the Annual Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon for Muscular Dystrophy.

The hungry were fed a hardy meal of hamburgers and hot dogs.

Bob Dustman, representing Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and representatives from the **Legal News** and **Parks & Recreation** were presented with awards by **Probation Manager Dan Smith**.



Some of the 50 or so enthusiastic Oakland County employees who participated in the Sept. 22 Torch Run for the Michigan Special Olympics.

It's estimated that this year's Torch Run raised more than \$5,000 for the Michigan Special Olympics.

Probate Court helps parents make the right C.H.O.I.C.E.

by **Jim Windell**, Probate Court

Raising a teenager today can be one of the most difficult things for anyone to do. How do you tell a teenager "No"? What should you do when your adolescent doesn't listen? What's the best way to control a teenager?

Those are the kinds of questions that are dealt with every week in the Probate Court's C.H.O.I.C.E. program. Developed in 1990 as part of the Intensive Probation Program, C.H.O.I.C.E. stands for Court Help on Increasing Control Effectiveness.

Although the eight-week parenting series won a national award in 1993,

Karen Wiater, the facilitator of C.H.O.I.C.E. says that her program operates without much fanfare. We have a good program," Wiater says, "but I would like to see more people, especially within the Probate Court, be more aware of what we're doing."

"They don't want anyone to tell them how to raise their kids or tell them what they're doing wrong," Wiater says. "However, once they start they often say they wish they could have taken this class when their kids were younger."

Most of the parents enjoy the support, according to Wiater, and it helps them to

know they are not alone in having a difficult time managing a teenager.

Parents of probationers are referred to C.H.O.I.C.E. by a judge, referee, or a court caseworker. According to Wiater, the program is one of the most important that the court offers. "Juvenile courts around the country are realizing the tremendous impact parent training programs can have on whole families," she says. "This kind of program empowers parents and sets the scene for a more positive and loving environment that teens will want to stay in."

Diligent volunteers made United Way 1995 possible

by **Gail Novak**, Emergency Management manager

This year, 60 volunteers served as United Way captains from each of their departments and divisions. I wish to say **THANK YOU** for all of your hard work. During the preliminary tally, we have exceeded the employee contribution of cash donations and pledges from last year by five percent.

This year we held a captain's drawing for those individuals who turned in their pledges by the due date. The winners were: **Darlinda Irons**, Southeast Clinic CMH — Complimen-

tary night for two at any Courtyard by Marriott (Richard W. Kalinin administrative assistant); **Sandy Kowell**, MSU Extension — Sunday Brunch for two at the Kingsley Hotel & Suites (Jay Haratsis, general manager); **Pat Barger**, Facilities Management — t-shirt; **Debbie Hool**, Reimbursement, Child Support — sweatshirt; **Gary Gould**, Accounting — tote bag

The following received coffee mugs: **Mona Kempf**, Reimbursement; **Jill Paululian**, 52-2 District Court; **Carol Artman**, 52-4 District Court

Viv at the Movies

by **Mary Viviano**, Friend of the Court

"Babe"

My mother tortured me for a solid week without relief to go see this silly movie about a talking pig. She called me every single day. I stayed strong. She chased me around the house quoting lines from "Babe". Whoa — quoting lines from a movie about a talking pig?!!? I cracked — more from my need to save my mother's sanity than from my desire to see this film. Well, by the time the end credits rolled, my mother proved to be saner than I, because I enjoyed every single moment of this movie.

Babe is taken to the Hoggett farm after Farmer Hoggett correctly guesses the piglets weight in a contest. He is the new kid in the barnyard and is very lonely until he is adopted by Fly, the female sheepherder. In his many adventures he meets Ferdinand, the goose aspiring to be a rooster; Ma, the sheep who teaches him that sheep are not dumb; Rex, the barnyard boss and the very, very evil house cat.

As the story progresses Farmer Hoggett begins to sense that Babe is a very special pig. Despite all the obstacles and prejudices, Babe is determined to be a great sheepherder.

All of the animals and their trainers deserve great credit for their achievements, but the true stars of this film are the writers. The dialogue is wonderfully witty and at times my mother and I were laughing so hard that we missed large sections of the film.

I know, I know — it sounds LAME — but trust me. This movie is a delight. It is charming and enchanting and has a terrific message. Babe teaches us that every creature is worthy and has a purpose and that you should always be yourself and never let anyone or anything stand in the way of your dreams.

This movie was the surprise hit of the season. I have tried to convince everyone I know to see this film. I have not been very persuasive to date but please, do yourself a favor, visit the Hoggett farm one afternoon and let yourself be entertained by this incredible barnyard — oh — and bring your mother — she'll love it too!!!!

The results are in

Speaking of loving movies — here are the final tallies of the "Flick Picks". Like most things in life everyone has his or her own likes and dislikes. That has proved to be the case in the "Flick Picks" contest. There was no clear consensus as to the favorite drama, musical or

comedy, so I have included all the sections in hopes that you will have an opportunity to rent and enjoy each movie.

FAVORITE DRAMA: The Big Chill, Casablanca, Chariots of Fire, Dangerous Liaisons, Dr. Zhivago, Fried Green Tomatoes, Forrest Gump, The Godfather, The Good Earth, Gone With the Wind, High Noon, The Inn of the Sixth Happiness, Steel Magnolias, Unmarried Woman and The Way We Were.

FAVORITE MUSICAL: Grease, The King and I, Meet Me in St. Louis, My Fair Lady, Music Man, Oklahoma, Show Boat, Singing in the Rain, The Sound of Music and West Side Story.

FAVORITE COMEDY: Baby Boom, Blazing Saddles, Bringing Up Baby, Four Seasons, The Jerk, Groundhog Day, I Was a Mail Order Bride, Nine to Five, The Princess Bride, The Producers, Roxanne, Strictly Ballroom and What About Bob.

Now, I know that this is very anticlimactic, so here is a new contest suggested by **Roy Lake** in Central Accounting. Name the all-time worst movie ever made. Call me at 858-4025 with your picks or send them to me at the Friend of the Court. I look forward to opinions and thank you for your enthusiastic participation. Have a blast!!!!

Retirees Association announces Autumn activities

Fall ushered in two activities which were hosted by the Oakland County Retirees Association, the General Membership Luncheon and an educational seminar. The luncheon was held at the American Polish Cultural Center in Troy on Sept. 27. Approximately 80 members and guests enjoyed a wonderful sit-down meal, followed by entertainment. **Walt Smith** performed several feats of magic, and was assisted by **Rich Hammerstein** and **Don Tews**.

The OCRA quartet performed "Turn the Radio On", "Precious Memories" and "To all the Girls I've Loved Before". Quartet members **Earl Koonce**, **Chuck Lewis**, **Tom Jackson** and **Jim Leuders** made it clear that the last song was not intended to incriminate them. **Ardyce Koonce** was the accompanist for the group. **Margaret Cytacki** closed the program by leading the group in "God Bless America".

The educational seminar was held Oct. 11 at Waterford Oaks Activity

Center and is an important part of the association's purpose and goals as defined in the bylaws. It also relates to the non-profit status of the organization. From survey forms returned by members, two topics of interest were financial planning and discount travel for seniors. The speakers provided excellent information on the topics and it was appreciated by those in attendance. It is always hoped that more members will take advantage of these programs.

"TRICK OR TREAT"



The Medical Care Facility was a spooky place to be Oct. 27. The Longfellow School in Pontiac brought a bus load of little goblins, ghosts, angels and assorted other characters to visit the residents and trick or treat through the halls. According to **Pearlean Lewis**, activities assistant director, this is the third year youngsters have visited the facility and as usual, it was a big hit.



ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

NEW EMPLOYEES

- Charles Corbett**, Information Technology, was hired on Oct. 16, as a student engineer.
- Sabrina Corke**, Friend of the Court, was hired on Sept. 5, as a production typist.
- Teresa Dorkins**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.
- Peggy Edwards**, Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division/Safety, was hired on Sept. 16, as a general helper.
- Lisa Giles**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.
- Linda Hondo**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.
- Scott Hummel**, Information Technology, was hired on Oct. 10, as an application analyst programmer.
- Leo Lease**, Drain Commissioner, was hired on Sept. 25, as a staff assistant.

- Janice Lindsay**, Friend of the Court, was hired on July 31, as a production typist.
- Nicole Mills**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division/Sewer Maintenance Unit, was hired on July 31, as a student.
- Portia McIntosh**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.
- Karven Midgett**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division/8-Mile Water Department, hired on Sept. 25, as a maintenance laborer.
- Hershell Powell**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.
- Dora Pryor**, Treasurer's Office, was hired on June 27, as a student.
- Susan Rogers**, Information Technology, was hired on Oct. 30, as an application analyst programmer.
- Kelly Ryan**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Oct. 16, as a student.
- Crystal Schultz**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Oct. 16, as a student.
- Terry Stefanovich**, Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division/Custodial Unit, was hired on Aug. 28, as a custodial worker II.
- Sherry Thomas**, Health Division, was hired on Oct. 30 as a public health educator.
- Julie Vickers**, Treasurer's Office, was hired as a full-time employee in May after five years as a student.
- Delene Vincent**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 19, as a nursing assistant.
- Betty Westman**, Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division/Custodial, was hired on Sept. 5, as a custodial worker I.
- Laura Wright**, Medical Care Facility, was hired on Sept. 5, as a nursing assistant.

FOND FAREWELLS

- Myrledeen Conner**, Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division, Custodial Unit, resigned on Aug. 18 and moved from the area.
- C. Todd Crimmins**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division, resigned from the Walled Lake Sewage Treatment Plant as a sewage treatment plant operator II to accept a position with Chrysler Corporation in Warren on Sept. 24. He started with the county on Sept. 24, 1990.
- Linda Guzzo**, Medical Care Facility, resigned on June 2, after 15 years of service.
- Caroline Parker**, Medical Care Facility, retired on July 14, after eight years of service.
- Fred G. Poinsett, Jr.**, Management & Budget, retired on Oct. 16 as the manager of the Accounting Division.
- Goldie Powell**, Medical Care Facility, retired on April 5, after 15 years of service.
- Kristina Siwek**, Medical Care Facility, retired on June 1, after nine years of service.
- Connie Zamora**, Medical Care Facility, resigned on Sept. 14, after five years of service and moved to Nevada with her family.

CHANGING PLACES/CHANGING FACES

PROMOTIONS

- Leslie Chrysler**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division, was promoted to engineering aide II in Operations & Maintenance on Sept. 16.
- Ronald Feneley**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division, was promoted to water maintenance supervisor in the 8-Mile Water Department on Oct. 14.
- Joyce Harbison**, Personnel Human Resource Department, was promoted to technical assistant on Oct. 1.

Rena Joseph, Budget Division, was promoted to budget records coordinator in June.

Candace Otte-Ingram, Medical Care Facility, was promoted to director of nursing on August 5.

Nicole Perris, Equalization, was promoted to an appraiser trainee on Oct. 23.

TRANSFERS

Dorothy Balma, Treasurer's Office, transferred from the Sheriff's Department, on July 8, as a clerk III.

Jeri Hopp, Medical Care Facility, transferred from Community Mental Health on May 27, as a unit secretary.

Dan Lane, Media and Communications, completed his internship from Oakland University and took an emergency salary position with Development & Planning.

Jerry McNair, Treasurer's Office, transferred from Animal Control on Aug. 19, as a personal property tax collector.

Terrie Miller, Medical Care Facility, transferred from the Health Department on July 31 as a medical records clerk.

Elizabeth Millner, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance Division, transferred from technical assistant (PTNE) in Development & Planning to engineering aid I (FT) in Operations & Maintenance on Sept. 16.

Patricia Nevison, Equalization, transferred from Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division/Safety Unit on Sept. 15.

Nicole Perris, Equalization, transferred from Drain Commissioner Pump Maintenance Unit on Oct. 23.

Gaia Piir, Information Technology, transferred from the Treasurer's Office on Oct. 2 as a project support specialist.

Yvonne Tipton, Management & Budget Proprietary Accounting Division, transferred on Aug. 21 from Equalization.

Nancy Wilk, Treasurer's Office, transferred from Equalization on Sept. 2, as an account clerk II.

CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHS

Dan Dopierala, Information Technology, and his wife, Lisa, are the proud parents of their first child, Donald Christian, born Sept. 11.

James J. Halushka, Prosecutor's Office, chief of Warrants Division, and his wife, Mary Beth, announce the birth of their daughter, Kellie Elizabeth, on Aug. 25.

Robert Runyon, Radio Communications, and his wife, Laura, welcomed their daughter, Ashlee Nicole, born on Oct. 23, weighing 6 lbs., 7 oz., and measuring 19 inches long.

Jerry Silagyi, Drain Commissioner Office, and his wife, Nena, are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Tina Marie, on Sept. 24.

Joanie Toole, Animal Control, and her husband, John, welcomed the birth of their daughter, Melissa Elizabeth, born on Sept. 14.

Cindy Weil, Development & Planning, and her husband, Jim Potwardowski, are the proud parents of their first child, John Robert, born on Oct. 20, weighing 7 lbs., 1 oz., and measuring 20 inches long.

MARRIAGES

Tom Cook, Facilities Maintenance & Operations Division/Maintenance Unit, married Jamie on Aug. 19.

onice Dowe, Management & Budget Water & Sewer Accounting, married Tony Adams on Sept. 30.

Julie Vickers, Treasurer's Office, married Todd Maynard on Aug. 12.

Yvonne Zalinski, Management & Budget Proprietary Accounting, married Ken Tipton on Aug. 21.

KUDOS

★ **Kathleen Altman** and the Health Division were honored by PREVCO for their billboard campaign related to substance abuse prevention.

★ **Chithra Chakrapani** and **Marina Lupyan**, Information Technology, became U.S. Citizens on Oct. 2.

★ **Penny Cremer**, Management & Budget Proprietary Accounting, received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Aug. 7, from Walsh College.

★ **The Facilities Maintenance & Operations staff** for their help in relocating the Court Administrator's Office.

★ **Nancy Fitzpatrick**, Management & Budget Proprietary Accounting, received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Sept. 30, from Cleary College.

★ **Lisa Grice**, Purchasing Division, received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Sept. 30, from Cleary College.

★ **Joyce Harberson**, Personnel Division, received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Sept. 30, from Cleary College.

★ **Rena Joseph**, Budget Division, received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Sept. 30, from Cleary College.

★ **Carol Morin**, Management & Budget Proprietary Accounting, also received her bachelor's degree in business administration on Sept. 30, from Cleary College.

★ **Gary Pawlowski**, Information Technology, has completed the requirements for certification as a state certified level II assessor.

★ **Joy Schumacher**, Health Division AIDS coordinator, was presented with the Michigan Jewish AIDS Coalition (MJAC) Tools of the Trade Award at its annual meeting in October. The award acknowledged Joy's help in developing the MJAC's curriculum "Choose Life So You May Live".

★ **Rachel Shymkiw**, Information Technology, has earned an Educational Grant toward her Executive MBA and Leadership Degree through exceptional academic performance.

★ **Lynn Sonkiss**, Management & Budget Sheriff Accounting, also received her bachelor's degree in accounting on Sept. 7, from Walsh College.

★ **Anita Tewilliager**, Information Technology, has completed the requirements for certification as a state certified level I assessor.

THE SWAP SHOP

NEEDED: Towels, blankets, rugs, newspapers and sheets needed for Oakland County Animal Control Division.

WANTED: The Friend of the Court needs children's books for their waiting rooms. If you have any children's books (in good condition) that your children have outgrown or no longer use and would be willing to donate, please contact **Mitzi Schwab** (84924) at the Friend of the Court.

FOR SALE: 1985 Pontiac 6000: 145,000 miles; automatic; regular maintenance and oil changes; new radiator; silver grey; new AM/FM cassette radio; will need brake work; **old but dependable.** Asking \$900 or best offer. Call 545-5373.

COUNTY INFORMATION HOTLINE! (810)858-1022

The **Information Hotline** gives you your choice of news:

Press **1** for **Employee Information**

Press **2** for **late breaking Oakland County news**

Press **3** for **Arts & Cultural information**

Press **4** for **Community & Minority Affairs news**

Employee of the Month

by **Dan Lane**, Media & Communications

After receiving the Employee of the Month Award, Accounting Division's Payroll Supervisor **Johanna Vilella** replied, "I am excited and feel a little embarrassed in receiving this award."

Vilella has worked at Oakland County since 1970, all 25 years of which have been in the Accounting Division. "Johanna is very conscientious and takes great pride in every project she undertakes," said Fred Poinsett, retired manager of the Accounting Division. "While we all tend to take for granted the receipt of a paycheck, Johanna is the one who successfully overcomes daily hurdles and works through confusing mazes to accomplish this objective," added Poinsett.

Probate Judge Barry M. Grant, commenting on Vilella's recent assistance with some payroll and benefit issues said, "Johanna's research, analysis, and concern is something I appreciate and consider as a positive reflection on her, and the division. Such actions on her part, which I know are standard, often go unappreciated or taken for granted by others."

"Johanna was selected as Employee of the Month for her continually outstanding contributions in providing a high quality paycheck and associated benefits," concluded Poinsett.



"Surprised and honored," was Radio Communication Clerk III **Patty Kudla's** reaction to her selection as Employee of the Month. When asked about her recent award, Kudla said, "It is special to have my efforts noticed."

Kudla joined Oakland County in 1992 as a part-time employee and in January of 1994 went to full-time status. She takes care of all office paper work, as well as monitoring the pagers used within the division.

"Patty works well as a team player, always showing consideration to the other staff members," said Dennis Smith, manager for the Division of Support Services. "Patty has received this reward because time and time again she has demonstrated her abilities in the office."

When not at work, her spare time activities include bowling and an occasional foray to the casino. Kudla and her husband also keep busy with their sons' activities. Their oldest attends college and the youngest is in middle school.

Kudla says she feels greatly appreciated as a result of winning this award.



"I was very shocked and felt greatly honored," remarked **Pat Cosner**, customer service technician in the Data Center Operations, after receiving the Employee of the Month Award. "This award is very special to me because it shows how the people I work with feel about me," said Cosner.

Cosner began her career at Oakland County in January 1976, working the night shift as a data entry operator. Twenty years later, she is the friendly, helpful voice at the Information Technology Center computer help desk who responds patiently to your desperate calls. Cosner handles over one thousand calls a month, which come from all parts of the nation.

"Pat certainly is a key employee," said Debbie Pettit, manager of Data Center Operations. "She is a genuine pleasure to work with as she is a dedicated and delightful employee."

Cosner and her husband, Ron, a former San Diego Charger football player, enjoy fishing and vacationing twice a year in Florida.



Personal Property Appraiser, **Joy Hornkohl**, has come up through the ranks of the Equalization Department to become a top-quality auditor and she is also one of the newest recipients to receive the Employee of the Month Award.

Hornkohl began her career with Oakland County in 1988 and has developed many computer applications for use in the Personal Property Division. She has developed a program that can be used to prepare State Tax Commission petitions which adds omitted property to assessment rolls, thus eliminating typing and paperwork. Hornkohl was instrumental in preparing a graphic example of the impact on taxpayers and local government that would result from a legislative proposal to exempt personal property taxation.

"In short, Hornkohl has been an excellent employee over many years for Oakland County, said Bob Vandermark, manager of the Equalization Division. She also stepped in and organized the 1995 audit program in the absence of the field supervisor in her section. "It is for these reasons and many more that Joy has been chosen as employee of the month within our division," added Vandermark.

Hornkohl has a pleasant and interesting personal life outside of work. She plays volleyball, softball and is an outstanding photographer of animals and wildlife.

