

# The TELEGRAPH

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

Volume IV, Issue XVII

April 1996

## STATE OF COUNTY: Leadership through technology

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson was interrupted nearly two dozen times by applause as he delivered his annual State of the County Address to a packed house at the Board of Commissioners Auditorium on Feb. 6. Nearly 300 people were in attendance for the speech and another half million or so listened to it broadcast live on radio station WWJ.

Mr. Patterson spent the first few minutes of his 30 minute speech detailing the accomplishments of his administration over the past 12 months. He mentioned the opening of the new "One-Stop-Shop" for business development, the establishment of an Export Assistance Center to help businesses expand into foreign markets, the arrival of full-time customs service at the Oakland County International Airport, and the progress being made in developing a Geographic Information System and an Enhanced Access System.

When the Patterson administration



Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson delivers his second annual State of the County Address to a crowd of nearly 300 people in the Board of Commissioners Auditorium.

took office in January 1993, there were fewer than 200 personal computers in

use across Oakland County's 4000 person workforce. Mr. Patterson reported that there are now more than 2000 PC's and user imaging work stations in the hands of employees, bringing to more than 5000 the number of devices in use on Oakland County's Information Technology network.

Mr. Patterson also indicated that millions of dollars worth of cost savings to the taxpayers of Oakland County were realized in 1995. The Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, which more than 1200 of the eligible 2900 employees switched over to, will save the county approximately \$3.4 million this year and a total of more than \$24 million by the end of the decade.

The Deferred Retirement Buy-out Program which was completed last year will spare the county the obligation of contributing some \$796,000 annually to the health care fund over the next 30 years — a total savings of \$23 million.

Mr. Patterson also spent a consider-

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## Sheriff's deputy honored for heroic rescue of dog

It's often been said, "dog is man's best friend," but on one particularly cold day in the middle of an Oakland County lake just the opposite proved to be true. If Brandy, a 70-pound Irish Setter, could talk, she might say that, "man is dog's best friend."

On March 8, **Paul Bidinger**, a sergeant with the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, was relaxing at his Commerce Township home with his wife and two-year-old daughter when he received a panicky phone call from one of his neighbors.

"I own a golden retriever and a neighbor called to ask if it was my dog he saw out on the lake," Bidinger said.

"Fortunately, my dog was sitting right by my side. But when I looked outside I could see the dog and hear her crying and barking."

At that point, Bidinger and a neighbor tried to push a paddle boat out onto the ice to rescue the dog. But it proved to be too heavy to slide on the ice, so Bidinger tried something else. He got a half inflated inner tube from the garage and went out after the dog.

"I gave my wallet to my wife because I was sure I was going for a swim," chuckled Bidinger.

As it turned out Bidinger did get soaking wet, but more importantly he was



Sgt. Paul Bidinger went far beyond the call of duty to save the life of a dog.

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## PATTERSON / *Person to Person*

Individually and collectively, the men and women of Oakland County government have touched the lives of literally thousands of people over the years through their unparalleled generosity.

In 1995, the 4100 employees of Oakland County government gave \$82,479 to the United Way; \$36,074 to the March of Dimes and \$19,141 to the Casual Day Fund. The grand total: \$137,694.

The employees of Oakland County government always seem to be there when someone needs help. A few years ago, the employees of the Clerk/Registrar of Deeds Office came to the aid of a Drain office worker who needed a bone marrow transplant. They got the ball rolling with a Bowl-A-Thon, but before long other county departments got into the act to help raise \$50,000 for their fellow county employee whose life depended on a bone marrow transplant.

Every year, a number of county departments including Probation, the Sheriff's Department, Community Corrections, Equalization, Auditing, and Parks & Recreation sponsor a Torch Run for Special Olympics. Last year, the event raised \$7000 to help fund training programs for participants in the Special Olympics.

About ten years ago, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department Benefit for the Handicapped was established. Each year, some 54 local boat owners take more than 500 handicapped youngsters out on the lakes for a couple of hours of

fishing fun. Afterwards, a disc jockey plays music and the kids are treated to a picnic.

Last year, 144 golfers participated in the Fifth Annual Deputies for Kids Golf Outing to benefit the Rainbow Connection. The Rainbow Connection is a charity I formed in the early 1980s following the deaths of my best friend and two of his children in a plane crash. Thanks to the efforts of Sgts. Dale Romeo and Joseph Lambourn, the golf outing at Paint Creek Country Club raised \$18,000 last year.

The employees and residents of Children's Village also did their part to help the less fortunate. Over the last three years, they have raised \$2000 annually for the American Heart Association. The kids of Children's Village also work with handicapped youngsters and residents at the Medical Care Facility.

As a group, the employees of Oakland County Circuit Court have also taken an active role in supporting a variety of charities. For instance, they have contributed to the Haven, the Womens Survival Center, Lighthouse, Children's Village, the Multiple Sclerosis Walk, and the Pontiac Rescue Mission. In addition, Circuit Court employees also donated toys, books, and supplies to the new Friend of the Court building.

The Personnel Department collects presents at Christmas time and donates them to the Pontiac Rescue Mission. For the past three years, the staff at Infor-



**L. Brooks Patterson**  
Oakland County Executive

mation Technology has collected money and clothing for needy families during the holidays.

So as you can see, our generous employees consistently go out of their way to help people in need. Limited space prevents me from citing any more examples of charitable good deeds.

Suffice it to say that we have many warm hearted, compassionate people working for the citizens of Oakland County who have done more than their fair share to make this a better world in which to live.

Let us know if your division or an individual employee has done something special for someone else. We'd like to tell people about it in upcoming editions of the Telegraph.

## Management and Budget earns prestigious national award

The Oakland County Department of Management and Budget's Fiscal Services Division has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada.

"This is an extremely difficult award to earn," said **Robert J. Daddow**, director of Management and Budget.

"Only 11 percent of the more than 3,000 counties nationwide have been accorded this honor and just 11 of Michigan's 83 counties have received the certificate of achievement. My congratulations to **Jeff Pardee** and his fine staff from the Fiscal Services Division for doing such an outstanding job."

The award, which was established in 1945, is designed to recognize and

encourage excellence in financial reporting by state and local governments. The GFOA instituted the certificate program as an incentive for all governmental units to prepare and publish easily readable and understandable comprehensive annual financial reports covering all funds and financial transactions during the year.



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# CHA-CHING... ESP turns ideas into dollars

**F**our Oakland County employees have fattened their wallets with \$50 each as interim winners in the Employee Suggestion Program.

**Karen Hopkins**, Health Division, received a check for suggesting that departments receive a list of items scheduled to be auctioned off so they have an opportunity to get them first

before they go on the auction block. **Greg Givens**, Fiscal Services Division, received his mini-windfall for suggesting that the county create an in-house video production studio which would allow individual departments to produce their own videos at a lower cost than contracting with an outside production company.

**Sandra Zipser**, Probate Court, is \$50 richer for suggesting that the county Library expand its services by hosting a lecture series featuring authors and various speakers who could discuss topics of interest to employees and the general public.

**Karen Dedenbach and Pam Agelink**, Clerk/Register of Deeds Office, teamed up for an idea that could save the county an estimated \$1000 to \$5000 annually. Their suggestion is to eliminate non-critical items from division first aid boxes.



Some ESP interim winners — past and present. From left to right; Kal Engelberg, Karen Dedenbach, Pam Agelink, Greg Givens, James Fitzpatrick, Carol Morin and Barb Perl.

## Leukemia takes marathoner to Alaska

**L**isa Rosa, Clerk/Register of Deeds Office, goes about her daily duties in a quiet and unassuming manner. But raging beneath the surface of this eight-year Oakland County government employee is a fire that burns to help her fellow man.

Rosa will be doing just that on June 22, when she sets out on a 26.2-mile walk in Anchorage, Alaska to help raise funds for the Leukemia Society of America.

"I've walked in marathons for other causes before, but this time I'm walking in honor of a friend of my family's," said Rosa. "His name is Chris Gardner and he underwent a bone marrow transplant several months ago. He's doing well and is currently in remission."

Rosa and her teammates who will participate in the mayor's Midnight Sun Marathon have committed to raising \$3,500 each. So far, Rosa has collected about \$900 by asking for donations from companies she deals with, attor-

neys and co-workers. If she doesn't come up with at least half of the money by April 22, she'll have to pick up the tab for the remainder.

"I've been walking three to five miles, four days per week in the evening," said Rosa explaining her training regimen for the grueling walk. "But as of April 1, we will be assigned a coach who will setup a training program for us. Hopefully, by the end of April I'll be able to walk ten miles and 20 miles by the end of May."

The terrain over which the course has been laid out won't do the walkers any favors. Eight miles of the 26.2 mile course are hilly, rocky, dirt trails — the remainder is cement or concrete. Although the final ten miles is down hill, the last quarter mile spurt is straight up hill.

"That's a little scary," said Rosa who admits this marathon will be a real physical challenge for her, because she has never really considered herself a walker.

## Did you know?

- **One-third** of all U.S. auto production takes place within 70 mile of Oakland County.
- **Local high school students** will be on the county campus, May 23, to participate in Student Government Day.
- **Over 16 percent** of all people employed in Michigan work in Oakland County.
- **The county boasts 11** institutions of higher learning with a total enrollment exceeding 53,000 students.

# Five twister tips from Emergency Management

By Leanne Robinson and Gail Novak, Emergency Management

Last year was an unusually quiet season for tornadoes in Michigan. Only 12 twisters struck the state and all 12 were classified as weak. Weak tornadoes are still very dangerous since they produce violent rotating winds between 72 and 112 mph. Let's not forget the Father's Day tornado on June 21, 1987 in the City of Novi! This *weak* tornado ripped through one of the most vulnerable areas, a mobile home park, leveling 37 homes and severely damaging another 300. Oakland County mobilized a disaster team and declared a State of Emergency, making residents eligible for federal disaster assistance programs. It is important that we do not become complacent when we hear a thunderstorm approach.

Here are five interesting safety tips and tornado facts:

**TORNADOES DEVELOP** from severe thunderstorms. They almost always occur at the **end of the storm**, giving you time to think and prepare before the tornado develops. When you hear the rumble of the storm and notice the darkening sky, start thinking about what you might need to do **before** the warning is issued.

**ONE OF THE MOST COMMON** questions we get is, "Why can't we hear

the tornado sirens inside our building?" To answer this question we explain there are two separate warning systems: An indoor and an outdoor system.

■ **The outdoor warning system** is comprised of tornado sirens. Most deaths during a tornado occur to individuals caught outside without protection. They are either struck by debris, or they become flying objects. The sirens are meant to tell those outside to take cover. The sirens were never designed to warn people inside of buildings. The Oakland County siren system was developed with federal funds after the West Bloomfield tornado in 1976. It is the largest warning system in the state with 158 sirens.

■ **The indoor warning system** consists of radio or television. During a thunderstorm, individuals should turn on a radio or TV to receive warning information. Oakland County also established a rapid indoor warning system called the Tone Alert Receiver Radio (the yellow weather radio). This radio gives quick and detailed information on storms and inclement weather.

■ **IF YOU ARE AT HOME** when a tornado strikes, take cover immediately on the lowest level of the building in an interior room or hallway. Always look for interior spaces, keep away from outside walls. Don't open windows, it **does**

**not** equalize the pressure in the building and will do nothing to reduce damage. Get away from glass!

π **THUNDERSTORM WATCH, TORNADO WATCH**, thunderstorm warning, tornado warning — do you know the difference? Watches mean, look out, a thunderstorm may develop sometime today. Watches are issued hours in advance of a storm. All of the above can produce a tornado; however, when a tornado watch is issued, it means that the developing storm is extremely dangerous (unstable) and has a greater likelihood of producing a tornado. Warnings mean, **IT'S HERE NOW!!** Take cover and be cautious.

∫ **IF YOU LIVE IN A MOBILE HOME** and a tornado warning is issued, leave immediately. Lie in a ditch, ravine, flat on the ground, or take shelter in a predetermined location. Persons in mobile homes should consider evacuating to a friend or relatives home during the approaching thunderstorm. Do not wait until the tornado warning is issued!

Stay tuned for the next "WEATHER TIPS". Upcoming topics will include: commode, bathtub shelters, and other safe locations, a review of the new Hollywood production "Twister," with "Mary Viviano at the Movies," and other unique weather trivia.

## Employee's son earns recognition at science fair

The 11-year-old son of a counselor at Children's Village finished seventh among 18 finalists in the 40th Annual Flint Area Science Fair at the General Motors Institute. **Charles McArthur's** son, Ross, who is a fifth grade student at North Road Elementary School in Fenton, earned his seventh place finish for an experiment to determine if colors influence a person's ability to taste flavors.

McArthur said his son made candies out of a variety of distinct flavors such as cinnamon, spearmint, and lemon. One hundred percent of those in a control group who were blindfolded could correctly identify the flavors of the candy. But the success rate fell to 50 percent when the group was asked to identify the candies only by sight.

"We are very proud of him" said McArthur. "It was really quite an occasion."

## Totals Ticker for 1996

 **Casual Day Contributions**  
\$6,635

**Employee Suggestion Program**   
62 Suggestions

 **Direct Deposit**  
54%

## The Brown Bag Lecture Series presents:

May

### 16 "Contemporary Michigan Sculptors"

Hugh Timlin, a noted sculptor, will take us on a journey through the history of contemporary sculpting and let us view the works of various Michigan artists.

June

### 20 "Detroit's Magnificent Movie Palaces"

Katherine Clarkson, acting director of Preservation Wayne, will illustrate with slides the history of Detroit's historic theater district and reflect on its recent challenges and achievements.

Lectures are presented in the Oakland County 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

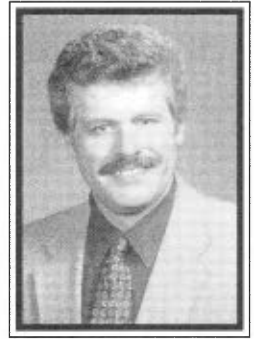
The weather-worn notches on my tree of life tell me I'm approaching 50, but my heart feels like 17. The reason for my renewed youthful vigor, is Mary Alice Roemer, the woman who became my wife on Feb. 23. It wasn't my first trip down the aisle, but it will be my last.

I've always believed that out there somewhere is a soul mate for everyone. I was lucky to find mine and not a moment to soon, because the clock is running. You might say, I saved the best for last.

Mary Alice, or M.A. as she also likes to be called, is a woman of immeasurable generosity, warmth, dignity, good humor and patience (she married me didn't she?). She has been extremely successful over the years in her chosen line of work which involves selling software computer packages to health organizations all across the country.

The first time I laid eyes on her something magical happened. My best friend was getting married to M.A.'s niece. When I walked into the church on the day of the rehearsal, Mary Alice was sitting in a back pew. She smiled up at me when I entered and said, "Hi." It was a moment suspended in time which I would not soon forget. Who was this very attractive woman? We talked at the rehearsal dinner and danced at the reception, but that was the last time I would see her for more than three years.

Then around Christmas time 1994, the friend of mine who married M.A.'s niece, mentioned that my name had come up at Thanksgiving dinner. Mary Alice wanted to know how I was. Suddenly the vision of that day when



**Bob Dustman**  
Media and  
Communications  
Officer

I saw her sitting in a church pew flashed through my brain.

I asked my friend if he thought Mary Alice might meet me for a drink after work some night. Nothing serious, just two people getting together to chat. He said that might be possible. After numerous requests and a little bit of prodding, my friend finally gave me her phone number.

As they say, the rest is history. She accepted my invitation to meet after work and soon a budding romance burst into full bloom.

I did not set out to meet anyone new or fall in love. It just happened. Fate stepped in and took control. I'm glad it did, because I can't imagine my life without Mary Alice Dustman in it.

### Children's Village announces the **7th Annual Four-Person Spring Scramble**

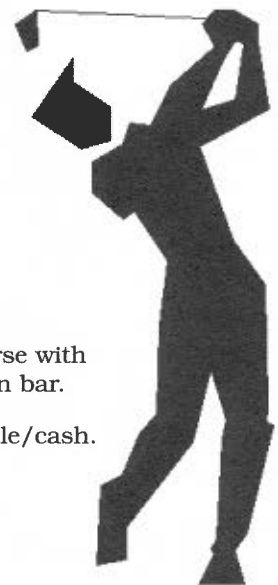
hosted by the Children's Village Foundation

**Friday, May 17, 1996**  
**Heather Highlands Golf Club, Holly**

\$110 — includes 18 holes on championship course with cart, continental breakfast, lunch, dinner & open bar.

- **Hole in one contests** — win a new automobile/cash.
- **Sports memorabilia auction** during dinner.

For additional information,  
contact **Greg Alessi** at (810) 858-1135



# HOW TO BUILD A WINNING PORTFOLIO — Part 2

by **Douglas J. Williams**, Deputy County Executive

**C**onstructing an investment portfolio is like putting up a building, but now you are the architect, engineer and contractor, all rolled into one. You must know the purpose of the structure, budget limitations, timeliness and the financial equivalent of the building codes and restrictions.

A winning portfolio requires meticulous attention to a myriad of subjects: goals, income flows, tax ramifications, investment options and time horizons, to name just a few. Most experts agree that whether you are a portfolio manager running a five-billion dollar fund or an investor with a \$25,000 portfolio, you must create and adhere to systematic strategies to succeed.

There is more to investing than picking a mutual fund. You need a master plan and a program to stick with. These final five points in our nine point blueprint will help you to build a solid foundation for your investments.

## Define Your Strategy

In the mutual fund arena, investors commonly employ one of four strategies: 1) fund timing, 2) market timing, 3) dollar cost averaging or 4) buy and hold. Most investors start with dollar cost averaging strategy (making equal dollar investments) and then move to a buy and hold strategy. This makes the most sense because it is proven that market timing in most markets is too difficult to do. Fund timing, systematically shifting your assets from one fund to another, removing the poor performers and replacing them with better funds is a time-tested winning strategy. Just be sure to give each fund an ample amount of time to do its thing. The important consideration, however, is not which of the four strategies is the best, but you should decide on which one is best for you. Alternatively, if more than one strategy appeals to you, earmark a defined portion of your capital and future income flows toward that strategy, and then stick with it. A common mistake of the mutual funds investor, experts say, is failing to stick with a plan. Long term winners are invariably those investors that define an approach and adhere to it consistently over many years.

## Diversity

Mutual funds, by definition, are diversified. Building a winning portfolio goes

beyond choosing good funds. Some investors buy funds sporadically on the basis of performance, without realizing that they may be holding five aggressive growth funds and nothing else. Various styles of mutual funds perform well at different times, providing balance to an investment portfolio. Asset allocation is the best way to give yourself the chance for the best return over a long period of time. Some financial experts give allocation advice on the basis of an investor's age. Do not pigeonhole yourself on the basis of age alone. Again, goals, risk tolerance and time horizons all must be taken into account. Some people prefer to use an asset allocation fund as their methodology for choosing their asset allocation. Others are "do-it-yourselfers." As a "do-it-yourselfer" you must pick the allocation you will be most comfortable with between stock funds, bond funds and money market funds. Once you have completed that process, then you must select which investments within the equity and the bond portion that you are going to use. As an example, within your equity or stock funds, you have an option of using a small cap fund, a mid cap fund, conservative value fund, growth funds, income funds or any one of the other style of funds that are available.

## Education

If financial experts agree on anything, it is this: do your homework. Fortunately we live in the information age. Educational material on funds is everywhere: newsstands, the library, newsletters, schools and the Internet. Go to the library, dig up information on the different funds and really look at what they are all about. Look at more than just the return — look at the risk they are assuming — look at the management tenure and really evaluate all these things. Learn to read the prospectus on any fund in which you have an interest and note if the fund invests in options, derivatives or other risky investments. Virtually all fund families have toll-free number and service reps stand by ready to answer your questions. If you have a question, call them. The more you learn the more sophisticated and successful you will be relative to reaching your long term investment goals.

## Put Your Plan Into Action

It is very easy to purchase a mutual fund. There are many ways to do so. You can hire a registered investment advisor, brokers, financial planners, or fund specialists. They can charge for their services in any number of ways: hourly fees, ranging from \$50 to \$150 per hour; commissions charged by putting you into load funds or a flat percentage annual fee on your assets. Of course if you already know your tastes and your budget, you can do business with no load fund families directly and avoid fees and commissions. A middle course is to use a discount broker such as Charles Schwab, Fidelity Funds Net, Jack White, etc. All of these can answer your questions but generally will not dispense advice. These discounters offer many funds at no service charge. For others you pay a commission.

For those employees who are using the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, or the 401(a) which is our Defined Contribution Plan, you have the advantage of being able to buy directly through the County any of the mutual funds that we offer with no commissions or load charges. You can call directly to the companies, Fidelity or ICMA and receive information on those companies and the funds that we offer. Some people have used financial planners in helping them with their investments within the County products, but it is not necessary. Developing a plan or strategy and developing your investment knowledge will give you a clear idea of additional contributions you may have to make to meet your retirement needs down the road.

## Maintenance

Now that you have built your portfolio, you must maintain it. The pros say you should review your master plan and your progress every six to twelve months. At this time it would also be wise to reconfigure your investments in order to maintain your allocation allotments. The individual investments in your portfolio grow at varying rates, causing your portfolio to change shape over time, hence, the need for balancing at regular intervals. Maintaining your fund portfolio is as important as your original asset allocation. You must maintain your fund portfolio to preserve the value of your investment.

*Editor's note: This article is the second in a two part series. Look for the first installment in the February 1996 issue of the Telegraph.*



# Lanier Worldwide presents Purchasing with award

A group of high level officials from Lanier Worldwide Incorporated stopped by the Executive Office Building on a chilly February morning to present the Purchasing Division with an award of appreciation. The award symbolizes a successful 15 year business relationship between the copier company and Oakland County government.

"Our relationship with the county has gone through a number of stages," said John Hamilton, director of National Accounts for Lanier. "Initially, we were one of many suppliers and then we graduated to a position of being a preferred supplier. I believe we are about half way to that third level in which an alliance is formed."

Joseph Hylla, manager of the Purchasing Division, said Lanier has provided Oakland County with about 150



John Hamilton (left), director of National Accounts for Lanier, presents special award of appreciation to Joe Hylla, manager of the Purchasing Division.

brand new copying machines. In addition, Lanier has stationed two full-time service representatives at the county who can respond to service needs and also provide employees with supplies and training when needed.

"Over the past few years, the new program implemented by Lanier has saved the county about \$125,000," said Hylla. "We always felt the relationship with Lanier was a success and we are deeply appreciative of what they have done for us."

Lanier is owned by the Harris Corporation which is based in Melbourne, Fla. and is responsible for the electronic systems on the NASA Space Shuttles.

In presenting the award to Hylla, Lanier's Hamilton said, "we value your relationship with us...you mean the world to us and we appreciate all your business."

## Above and beyond the call of duty

The next time you hear someone castigate government employees for being lazy or inefficient, just drop the names of Oakland County's tenacious trio. **Larry Mitchell, Ron Crank and Tom Smith** give new meaning to the phrase, "above and beyond the call of duty."

All three energetic young men work by day for the Oakland County Register of Deeds Office. Smith is an engineer and professional surveyor, Crank is an engineering aide and Mitchell is a property and validation supervisor. By night (after 5 p.m.), they assume new identities and become members of what is called the Remonumentation Team. As such, they check all the property markers in Oakland County, an effort which serves as the foundation for Oakland County's Geographic Information System (G.I.S.).

It's not enough for this high-tech trio to put in a mere mortal 40-hour work week. They stretch their work days to 13 hours and a not uncommon Saturday shift. To them it's no big deal, but others have a different opinion.

"These are great guys," says **Karen Dedenbach**, administrative assistant to

Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds **Lynn Allen**. "They go above and beyond the call of duty."

Remonumentation is all part of Oakland County's aggressive effort to convert its paper base maps into the technologically superior digital format. Once completed and in full operation, GIS will be able to provide citizens and government leaders with an almost unlimited amount of information. Such things as average home selling prices and annual incomes in a particular geographic area, location of utility lines, sewers, roads, boundary lines and the list goes on.

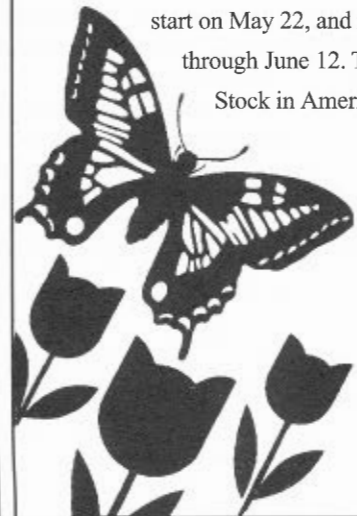
You'd think these guys were personally responsible for the county treasury, because when the Remonumentation Project got started in 1994 they suggested doing some of the surveying work themselves instead of the county contracting it out. That way, they reasoned, the county could put some of the grant dollars away for a rainy day.

In baseball there was the great double-play combination of Tinkers to Evers to Chance. In Oakland County, we have a great double-duty combination of Mitchell, Crank and Smith.

## Spring! Time for a New Look

The campaign period is coming soon for U.S. Savings Bonds. It's time to think about purchasing them if you don't have any or adding to one if

you do. The campaign will start on May 22, and run through June 12. Take Stock in America!



Take  
Stock  
in America **U.S. SAVINGS  
BONDS**

# Parks & Recreation employee steps into the winner's circle

**A**n Oakland County Parks & Recreation Department employee has walked off with a top statewide award. In February, **Daniel J. Stencil**, chief of Park operations, received the 1995 Michigan Recreation and Park Association Program Leadership Award at the MRPA's winter conference.

Stencil, a resident of Independence Township, has been instrumental in developing or expanding many park programs since he started with the department in 1977. For example, from a pile of dirt, Stencil directed the construction of a world class bicycle

moto-cross track which in 1994 paved the way for Oakland County to host the BMX version of the Olympics, a truly international event that attracted 1500 riders from 32 countries and an estimated 6000 spectators.

Stencil has also presided over the establishment of many other programs such as: senior citizen theme events, a sports camp attended annually by more than 600 young people, three hot air balloon festivals, and a Christmas tree recycling program which has collected nearly 20,000 trees since 1990.

Stencil, whose sphere of responsi-

bility includes the operation of the "Fridge", (Michigan's only refrigerated toboggan run), supervises general operations for seven parks encompassing more than 4500 acres and employing 21 full-time and 122 seasonal employees.

When not at work, Stencil occupies his free time with a variety of interests which include golfing, skiing, landscaping, and volunteering. Another of his passions is marathon running. This April he visited Boston with his family to run in the marathon. He placed in the top third with a time of 3 hours, 39 minutes.

## STATE / cont. from page 1

able amount of time praising the efforts of county employees whom he called "the backbone of county government." He mentioned their contributions to the Jean Jars on Casual Days, which last year amounted to \$18,000. The money was distributed to eight charities during the holiday season. He noted also that the ideas submitted by employees to the Employee Suggestion Program in 1995 pushed the total cost savings past the \$2 million mark for the three years the program has been in existence.

"Nineteen hundred and ninety-five was a busy year for the talented men and women who work for the Engineering and Maintenance Division of Facilities Management, said Mr. Patterson. "Those familiar with our campus will see many significant improvements."

He then recited a laundry list of projects undertaken or completed by Facilities Management in 1995. These included: renovation of the main floor

of the Executive Office Building to house the "One-Stop-Shop," installation of new signage around the complex which will make it easier for visitors to reach their proper destinations, construction of a large circular driveway outside the north entrance to the Courthouse which will provide Courthouse Security with the room needed to accommodate check point equipment and provide easier access into the Courthouse for the general public and the renovation of the old 52-1 District Court Building in Walled Lake which will be transformed into the West Oakland Service Center.

Two County employees were singled out for special praise by the County Executive. Mr. Patterson recognized the considerable accomplishments of **John Almstadt**, manager of the Employment and Training Division and **Shirla Kugler**, administrator of the Medical Care Facility.

Mr. Patterson said that despite working with a reduced staff, Almstadt's di-

vision was awarded \$15 million to train economically disadvantaged individuals. In addition, the division has met or exceeded all seven performance standards for employment and training programs under the Job Training Partnership Act, found unsubsidized jobs for 80 percent of the economically disadvantaged adults and dislocated workers who were enrolled in JTPA training programs and created seven full service career centers.

Ms. Kugler won kudos from Mr. Patterson for cutting the county subsidy for the Medical Care Facility from \$2 million per year down to zero.

"These are just two of the many outstanding individuals who are representative of the kind of employees we have working at all levels of county government," said Mr. Patterson. "I thank each and everyone of them personally for the job they are doing on behalf of the citizens of Oakland County."

## RESCUE / cont. from page 1

able to save the dog's life.

"I didn't know if the dog was going to bite me or not, but luckily she didn't resist when I grabbed her paws and pulled her to safety," Bidinger recounted. "I guess she was just thankful at that point that someone had come to help."

Bidinger's rescue of Brandy was captured on a home video recorder and later aired on at least one Detroit television station.

Bidinger's heroism did not go unnoticed or unrewarded. On April 5, he was honored by Attorneys for Animals and the Animal Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan.

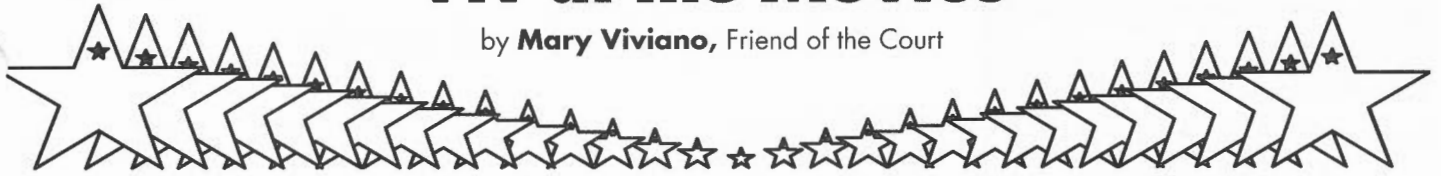
"Sgt. Bidinger risked his own life to save that of a dog — an extraordinary act of heroism to be sure," said Beatrice Friedlander, president of Attorneys for Animals, as she presented a certificate of commendation to Bidinger during a ceremony in the second floor conference room in the west wing of the Oakland County Courthouse. "It is acts of heroism and devotion to duty such as Sgt. Bidinger's that restore our faith in people in general and police officers in particular."

Sgt. Bidinger works in the Fugitive Apprehension Section of the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office.



# Viv at the Movies

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



## “Dead Man Walking”

Why Tim Robbins was nominated for Best Director and his film was ignored in the Best Picture category is beyond me. “Dead Man Walking” was one of the finest films made in 1995.

At issue is capital punishment. I’ll admit that I was a little wary of this film because Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon have always been very vocal about their politics and I was convinced that there would be a bias slant to this movie. Fortunately, I was completely wrong and the reason this

film is so powerful and moving is because every aspect of capital punishment is presented.

The story focuses on Matthew Poncelet, brilliantly portrayed by Sean Penn, who is the next convict to be executed and Sister Helen Prejean, played by Susan Sarandon who should finally win a well deserved Oscar (She did win!). Sister Helen becomes his spiritual advisor during the last four days of his life. This movie is primarily dialogue driven between these two characters with special emphasis given to the gripping emotional rather than physical aspects of their relationship. The writing is superb and Tim Robbins’s direction is flawless. His use of flashbacks to detail the brutality of the murders is perfectly mixed with the pain and anger

that the victims’ families experience. This is balanced with the fear and guilt that Poncelet feels for the crimes he has committed and the sheer terror and sadness he and Sister Prejean feel as another life is about to be taken.

This is the type of movie that you think about for weeks after leaving the theater. The last thirty minutes of the film force each viewer to examine his or her own beliefs and attitudes regarding capital punishment. The film ends perfectly as the possibility of hope and understanding is carefully and quietly revealed.

“Dead Man Walking” is outstanding and the only injustice is the failure of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to nominate it for Best Picture. Do not miss this film!

## Department of Information Technology does it all

The Department of Information Technology’s (DoIT) customer base is large, diverse, and geographically dispersed. Support is provided to over 82 county divisions, 61 local government units (assessors, treasurers, law enforcement), and 50 private sector customers. While customer functional needs in some cases may be related or similar, each customer has unique and specific goals, objectives, and operating needs. Some customers are located on the primary county campus, while others operate in various locations throughout the county. Given over 4000 county employees and another 1000 users across the local government and private sectors, that is a ratio of approximately 509 customers to one DoIT employee.

DoIT is also diverse technically. Support is provided for two IBM Mainframe computers, an IBM AS/400 Mini-computer, 950 mainframe terminals, 35 Local Area Network (LAN)

servers, over 2000 personal computers and image workstations, over 500 Mobile Data Terminals in police cars; not to mention the hundreds of printers, modems, peripherals and software packages surrounding these devices. These systems run over 150 major applications consisting of more than 8000 programs. These systems provide the processing for all the major applications such as payroll, accounting, and purchasing, as well as some important documents you may have come in contact with (tax statements, assessment notices, Fido’s dog license renewals, voter registration listings, and W-2’s). In addition, there are 85 law enforcement, fire and other agencies in the county, including the County Sheriff, who use the Courts and Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) on a 24-hour basis. In 1995, the Information Technology Training Center attendance was 2276 across 12 different software courses.

A high tech, high-speed infrastructure (not unlike the neural network in our bodies), supports the communications between these devices and systems. It consists of a fiber optic backbone (similar to I-75) which is surrounded by hundreds of hubs, routers, and wired closets (similar to the entrance and exit ramps). The electronic activity pulsing through this network is mind boggling. In 1995 alone, there were 28.8 million information packets communicated through the LAN (equivalent to approximately seven million pages of text), 11.2 billion inputs or outputs to mainframe disk drives (that’s billion folks), 1.7 billion inputs or outputs to mainframe tape drives, and 140.2 million mainframe transactions.

Needless to say, the employees of DoIT are never at a loss for “work”. Unlike the Maytag repair man, the challenges and demand are plenty!

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Animal Care Center  
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**Saturday, May 4 and  
Sunday, May 5**

Begins 9 a.m., Saturday and  
continues for **36 HOURS**  
until 9 p.m., Sunday

at the Oakland County  
Animal Care Center  
1700 Brown Road, Auburn Hills

**Call (810) 391-4100**

## New Fiscal Division will improve efficiency and cut costs

**T**he finishing touches are being put on a plan to consolidate the Accounting and Budget Divisions into the new Fiscal Services Division. The merger, which was approved by the Board of Commissioners on Feb. 15, has already resulted in some streamlining with the elimination of three positions at a savings to the taxpayers of \$140,000.

"The combination of the two divisions works out well," said **Robert J. Daddow**, director of Management and Budget. "Accounting is busy from late November through March closing the books and Budget is busy from May to November gearing up for preparation of the budget. With the consolidation plan, they'll be busy all year long."

**Tom Ott**, formerly chief of Financial Accounting, has been named manager of the new division with **Tim Soave**, **Laurie Van Pelt** and **Nancy Fournier** serving as his chiefs. The new division, which has county wide budgeting, ac-

counting and financial reporting responsibilities, is one of three divisions including Purchasing and Reimbursement, reporting through the newly created deputy director, **Jeff Pardee**, to the director of Management and Budget, **Robert Daddow**.

To coincide with the merger, a new financial system is being implemented to replace the 23-year-old system which Daddow calls labor intensive and replete with duplication. Daddow says the old system offers little documentation and is prone to break down on a periodic basis.

The county will switch over to the new system in September 1997, and at the same time institute a new fiscal year which will end on Sept. 30, instead of on Dec. 31.

"The changes we are making will make county government more streamlined, more efficient, and more accountable," said Daddow.

## Childrens' artwork brightens walls of Friend of the Court

by **Ara Kachadourian**, Media & Communications

**O**n March 15, the Friend of the Court hosted a reception for a group of students and teachers from Longfellow Elementary School. Students were recognized for their various artworks which were put on display and which gave the Friend of the Court building a brighter and more colorful look. The students seemed to enjoy seeing their paintings and works of art showcased.

The students' artwork, part of an ongoing program called "Children Helping Children Through Artwork," has made a difference in transforming the Friend of the Court building into a gallery of artwork that brings a smile.

Friend of the Court Office Supervisor **Charlyne Johnson** remarked, "This has brightened the office and it also has made a difference." Johnson recalled a particular instance when the display of artwork made a positive impact on a child's visit to the court. Stories like this make the Friend of



Smiling faces from the Longfellow School and some of their artwork.

the Court a warm and more friendly place to be.

The Friend of the Court has made such a difference that **Judge Barry Howard** stopped by to show his appreciation and thank the students of Longfellow Elementary. Interstate Supervisor **Cheryl Crowl** commented, "Children can have something to relate to when they come and see this artwork." The students were happy to see the impact of the artwork. This is the third time students from Longfellow have had their artwork displayed.

### ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

#### NEW EMPLOYEES

**Dale Boadway**, Sewer Maintenance Unit, was hired on Jan. 29, as a maintenance laborer.

**Derek Brown**, Custodial Services, was hired Feb. 10, as a general helper.

**Wendy Coulter**, Clerk's Office, was hired on Sept. 18, as general clerical.

**Tiffany Day**, Clerk's Office-Vital Statistics, was hired last May 22, as general clerical.

**Jennifer DeLisle**, Register of Deeds, was hired on Jan. 8, as general clerical.

**Daryl Dunham**, Information Technology, was hired March 5, as a student

**Brian King**, Maintenance, was hired Dec. 4, as a general maintenance mechanic.

**Patricia Locher**, Register of Deeds, was hired on Oct. 3, as general clerical.

**Jane Martinez**, Clerks's Office-Legal Records Unit, was hired on Feb. 3.

**Trish McCurry**, Clerk's Office-Elections, was hired on Jan. 22, as general clerical.

**Mary Pardee**, Personnel, was hired Feb. 5, as secretary to Judy Eaton, manager Human Resources.

**Suzanne Patterson**, Clerk's Office-Legal Records, was hired last June 19, as general clerical.

**Dana Stodgel**, Maintenance, was hired Feb. 10, as a general maintenance mechanic.

## FOND FAREWELLS

**Nick Gjonaj**, Custodial Services, is moving to Texas after 26 years of service with the county.

**Donald Keyes**, Maintenance, resigned on Jan 12.

**Janet Stickley**, Clerk' Office, director of Elections, retired on Dec. 22, after 29 years of service to be a Grandma and travel in her motor-home. Her contagious laugh will be missed.

## CHANGING PLACES/CHANGING FACES

### PROMOTIONS

**Mark Conner**, Maintenance, was promoted to chief-FM&O on Dec. 9.

**Allen Cooley**, Drain Commissioner-Sewer Maintenance, was promoted to maintenance mechanic II on Jan. 6.

**Jeff Elliott**, Custodial Services, was promoted to custodial worker III on Feb. 10.

**Bob Fair**, Maintenance, was promoted to skilled maintenance mechanic II, retroactive last May 27.

**Loretta Hall**, Custodial Services, was promoted to custodial work supervisor I on Jan. 20.

**Ellen Halsey**, Clerk's Office-Elections was promoted to office supervisor on Dec. 23.

**Mary Jo Hammon**, Clerk's Office-Elections, became the new director of Elections.

**Mark Hopkins**, Eight Mile Water Department, was promoted to maintenance mechanic I on Feb. 17.

**Bob Larkin**, Facilities Management Technical Support, was promoted to supervisor, Facilities Planning on Dec. 9.

**Chuck Lester**, Maintenance, was promoted to chief-FM&O on Dec. 9.

**Bob Matthaedi**, Custodial Services, was promoted to custodial work supervisor III on Dec. 9.

**John Stange**, Drain Commissioner-SOCSDS Division, was promoted to pump maintenance supervisor I on Jan. 6.

**Madelyn Thomas**, Drain Commissioner, was promoted to typist II on Feb. 3.

### TRANSFERS

**Sylvia Garcia**, Clerk's Office-Legal Records Unit, transferred to full time last Aug. 21, from the Jury Commission where she was a student.

**Dean Schultz**, rejoined Risk Management & Safety as safety coordinator on March 11, after working for Environmental Health.

**Kristina Stevens**, Drain Commissioner Operations & Maintenance, transferred from the Prosecuting Attorney's Office on Jan. 29.

**Melaine Stodgel**, Safety, transferred from EMS on Nov. 25, as a BSA-bonus.

## CELEBRATIONS

### BIRTHS

**Maggie Barnard**, Information Technology, and Scott Wade are the proud parents of their new son, Dallas McGovern, born Jan. 27.

**Ronnie Cao**, Information Technology, and husband, Chen, are the proud parents of their new daughter, Heather, born Nov. 10.

**Tracy Hackman**, Risk Management & Safety, and **Ken Hackman**, Information Technology, are the new proud parents of their daughter Ashley Marie. She was born on March 11, weighed seven pounds, eight and a half ounces and was 21 inches long.

### MARRIAGES

**Joe Tabor**, Department of Information Technology, married Jennifer Harper on Jan. 20.

## KUDOS

**Lisa Corpus**, Information Technology, graduated in December from Oakland University with a bachelor's of art degree in psychology.

**Jan Warren**, Clerk's Office, became a U.S. citizen on Feb. 8. Jan immigrated from Scotland in 1965 and has always felt patriotic to America. Now she says she can express it by casting a ballot at the voting booth. The department celebrated by giving her a party on Feb. 13.

## THE SWAP SHOP

**FOR SALE:** Queen-size waterbed with large four-drawer pedestal. Dark pine with mirrored, lighted headboard. Excellent condition. Asking \$350. Contact Kim Riccardi at (810) 424-7193 or evenings at (313) 255-5624.

## CORRECTION

In the February edition of the Telegraph on page ten in the Employee of the Month Section, it was stated that Betty Francis is a Personnel Department office leader. Francis works as a technical assistant and she is not married.

## 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 **Ara Kachadourian**, Media & Communications

**Diana Calvin**, Veterans' Affairs supervisor, is one of the latest recipients of the Employee of the Month Award. "I was honored and surprised to be recognized by so many at the award ceremony. This award makes me feel appreciated," remarked Calvin. Carl Pardon, manager of Veterans' Services said, "Diana is a fair individual who also is loyal and trustworthy."



Calvin began her career at Oakland County in 1971 as a typist and in 1972 was promoted to Veterans' Service representative. In 1980, she was promoted to Veterans' counselor III and four years later was elevated to her present position as Veterans' Counselor supervisor. Calvin is responsible for assisting veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and monitoring their cases. She works with people daily answering their questions and counseling them.

"Diana has been a driving force for Veterans Services' working closely with the staff," said Pardon. Calvin played a vital role in the implementation of computers in the Veterans Services' Division. A graduate of Oakland University, Calvin received her degree in business management and was magna cum laude.

When not at work, Diana enjoys spending time with her ten-year-old daughter Shawn.

**Joan Goddard**, Parks and Recreation receptionist, is one of the most recent recipients of the Employee of the Month Award. Goddard responded to her selection by saying, "it was a wonderfully pleasant surprise and I am honored." As a receptionist, Goddard is known for helping create a pleasant atmosphere in the Parks and Recreation department.



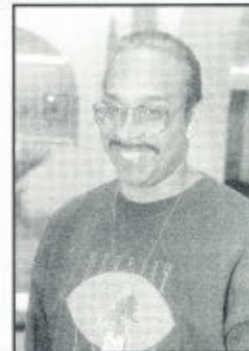
Since joining the department 12 years ago, Goddard has been responsible for helping to organize and promote activities sponsored by Parks and Recreation. "I take special interest in making sure that those who encounter Parks and Recreation have a good and memorable experience," Goddard says.

Goddard's desire to help people does not only exist at work, she is also an active member of the community. As a volunteer, Goddard is involved in various charitable organizations such as the Pontiac Rescue Mission, Women's Crisis Center, and her church.

In her spare time, Joan likes to spend time walking, playing tennis and golf. However, Goddard enjoys nothing more than spending time with her family, especially her husband and their four children and three grandchildren.

During this next year, Goddard will celebrate her 31st anniversary by visiting Vancouver.

**Youth Specialist-II Bill Anderson**, was, "surprised and honored" to learn he had received the Employee of the Month award. Anderson's background as a U.S. Navy officer and his concern for young people have made him an exemplary role model.



As a youth specialist, Anderson is responsible for maintaining order and providing an example to troubled youths at Children's Village. Since 1980, Anderson has worked with troubled youths at Children's Village, hoping to provide the guidance that will make a difference in their lives. One day as he was about to go off duty, Anderson noticed a youngster experiencing some emotional and behavior problems. He took the boy out for a talk. Later, Anderson returned to Children's Village with a more relaxed and calm young man. When Anderson went home that night, he called to check on the boy.

Anderson is an active member in the community and dedicates his time to working with children. He is a member of the Male Responsibility program and Mentor Youth Teenagers.

During Anderson's spare time he enjoys photography, audio-visual endeavors, and is a dedicated Detroit Lions fan. Anderson is married to Jacqueline and they have a son Derrick.

**Leanne Robinson**, Emergency Management coordinator, is a recipient of the Employee of the Month Award. Robinson's reaction upon winning the award was, "I feel very honored and wish I could share it with everyone I have worked with."



In 1986, Robinson joined the county. Robinson's experience includes working as a paramedic and teaching CPR. She is one of a few state certified emergency management coordinators in Michigan.

Robinson received her training at the Federal Emergency Management Institute in Berryville, Va. She is an instructor for the Michigan State Police. Last year Robinson participated in planning, simulating, and training a week-long disaster exercise with Gov. John Engler's staff and department heads in the State Emergency Operations Center.

During the past two years, Robinson has conducted annual disaster exercises. Robinson was responsible in 1994 for preparing a successful operation at the World Cup Games in the Pontiac Silverdome. She conducted a terrorist exercise at the Oakland County EOC after the Oklahoma bombing and the release of deadly gas in Japan. EMS Unit Manager, Gail Novak commented, "Leanne has done an outstanding job in disaster training for the OCEM. program."

Robinson's hobbies include training and showing her two dogs and spending time with her daughter and husband Alan.