

"FIRE DEPT. MINIMUM MANNING - TO BE OR NOT TO BE"

January 11-24, 2008

The Pontiac News

A NEWS SOURCE WITH A LOCAL FLAVOR

A BI-WEEKLY PUBLICATION VOL.1 ISSUE 6



The Pontiac News would like to acknowledge the many contributions made to the City of Pontiac by the late Charles Mitchell. We offer our condolences to his wife Ann and daughter Shelia Mitchell! He will be missed by all of us!

City of Pontiac at the Crossroads – Part 5

To the Citizens of the City of Pontiac:

On Tuesday January 15, 2008 you will have the opportunity to help move Pontiac in the right direction by going to the polls and voting your conscious.

This Election is not about the Police Department against the Fire Department, it is about what is best for the City of Pontiac!

Police Department Versus Fire Department



Not



Show your elected officials and the rest of the world that you care about the City of Pontiac!
Make sure that you understand the ballot issues and get out and vote!

Remember to Get Out and Vote on Tuesday January 15, 2008!

Contents

Ruth Johnson – Election Update2	From the County Seat – Mattie Hatchett6	Voices in The Community
What's Happening in Pontiac	What's Happening in Lansing	Dianthia Spann13
Primary Election & 5 Ballot Issues3	State Rep. Tim Melton Year in Review6	Joe Cool13
Joe Knollenberg - Woodward Ave. Award.....3	Educational Matters: Six Habits of	Ask Elaine13
Minimum Manning	Fiscally Responsible School Districts7	Ken Corr13
Mayor Clarence Phillips Perspective4	Pontiac Firefighter's Union.....8	NOMC14
Did You Know.....4	Joblink Career Center of Pontiac9	Sports - 5 on 5 Basketball Tournament.....15
What's Happening in Pontiac	What's Going on Around Us	Community Service Award Winner
Minimum Manning	Eric Dyson & Bill Cosby.....10-11	Bishop Murphy.....15
A Pontiac Firefighter's Perspective5	Senior Matters - Grandparents Getting	Community Calendar15
What's Happening in Oakland County	Organized for Childcare12	Job Opportunities.....15
Oakland County Fire & Ice Festival6	Health Watch: Selvy Hall - Sickle Cell.....12	Community Events16

Oakland County Ministerial Fellowship

Bishop William H. Murphy, Jr., President

Presents



Martin Luther King Day Celebration

Sunday, January 20, 2008

at 4:00 pm

At

**Antioch Missionary Baptist Church
318 Auburn Avenue
Pontiac, MI**

Guest Speaker:

**Dr. Jim Holly,
Pastor**

**Little Rock Baptist Church
Detroit, MI**

If you have questions, please call Sis. Elaine Miller on (248) 343-1478 or Pastor Roger Jackson.

Election Update

By Ruth Johnson
Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds

On Jan. 15, you'll have an opportunity to have your vote count, your voice be heard in Michigan's presidential primary election.



Ruth Johnson

The timing was unfortunate for a number of reasons, but thanks to a lot of scrambling, determination and hard work by your local clerks and our elections team, polling places will be open and waiting.

A few things to keep in mind as you head to your local precinct:

- Bring your wallet. Remember that you'll have to show current photo identification under Michigan's new Voter ID law. Acceptable forms are a driver's license, passport, a state or federal ID card, military ID, a student ID or tribal identification card. If you forget your photo ID, you will still be allowed to vote if you sign an affidavit.

- Know that you will have to declare a political party preference – Republican or Democrat. I don't like it either, but lawmakers decided that this election would be a closed primary. You'll indicate your choice on your Application to Vote form. (There are a few communities with non-partisan, local ballot proposals, too.)

- There is an option on both the Republican and Democrat ballots that will allow you to simply vote "uncommitted" – which leaves decision on specific candidates up to your national convention delegates.

- Write-in votes will not be valid because no one registered with the state as a write-in candidate as required. Your vote for Mickey Mouse, your mom, your dog or your Uncle Bob will simply be disregarded. Don't waste your vote.

- Only four of the Democrat candidates will be listed on your ballot and two of them, Chris Dodd and Joe Biden, have already dropped out of the race. Some well-known candidates will not appear because of a dispute with the Democratic Party over the timing of the Michigan's presidential primary election.

- If you're not sure where you are registered to vote, visit our web site at www.oakgov.com/clerkrod and click on elections. Click on "Where Am I Registered?" for assistance.

- Be kind to your local clerk and your poll workers. They were probably up before sunrise, at work by 6 a.m. and will put in a good 12 or 13 hours at the polls – more out of patriotism than for the pay scale. Chances are they don't like declaring their party preference any more than you do and they're wondering why they're not in Florida like their neighbors.

- On election night, we'll have nearly up-to-the-minute Oakland County results on our web site. Visit often to see how the presidential hopefuls are doing in your backyard.

- There's plenty not to like about this election, but it is part of our system of democracy and an opportunity for your voice to be heard. Vote.

(Ruth Johnson, a former state legislator, is the Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds.)

About The Pontiac News

The Pontiac News is dedicated to providing balanced news about The City of Pontiac and surrounding communities!

The Pontiac News was founded and established in February 2007 and will be published bi-weekly beginning in August 2007. As a major community and the county seat of Oakland County we believe that The City of Pontiac should have a newspaper that is dedicated to providing information and news about this great and historical city.

The Pontiac News is a community minded newspaper that will not only serve readers but also businesses and local organizations and will strive to be the paper of record for local municipal units including The City of Pontiac, and the Pontiac School District.

This bi-weekly newspaper, The Pontiac News, has been established to cover areas in our retail zone including Pontiac, Auburn Hills, Waterford, Bloomfield and other nearby communities (and other school districts).

The Pontiac News will be distributed to over 25,000 homes in The City of Pontiac and nearby communities and over 1,000 area businesses, organizations and agencies. We will eventually create a computer database for all addresses in the zip codes contained in the basic Pontiac News circulation area. A computer program will be designed to generate labels for all households and businesses in those zip codes in order to reach a total of more than 30,000 homes and businesses in our retail area by mail or by door to door delivery service.

In addition to better serving the business community with expanded circulation to cover the retail zone, The Pontiac News will have a great product for readers. We will often feature full 4 color pictures on the front page and occasionally elsewhere in the paper. We will also have the Associated Press wire for news features, local writers to augment our local news, and feature coverage. The Pontiac News web site will be launched in the near future to expand and supplement our news coverage and advertising reach.

We will continue to find better ways to serve our customers.

The Pontiac News Mission Statement



Publisher R. Frank Russell

To serve The City of Pontiac and nearby communities as the leading information source that empowers our community, while never compromising the principles of truth and fairness in reporting.

We measure our effectiveness based on the following core values:

- Provide leadership that contributes to the betterment of our community.
- Reflect our community in everything we do.
- Build credibility by accepting nothing less than the highest standard of excellence.
- Exercise our "watchdog" role by seeking solutions for and protecting those living within our community.
- Help our customers grow and prosper by providing useful information.

Several decades ago, Pontiac residents could pick up a newspaper and expect solid reporting from a locally owned newspaper business with a focus on this community.

However as Michigan participated in social and political change in the United States, its media outlets moved in the opposite direction, falling victim to the corporate expansion and consolidation that was taking shape at the state, regional and national levels. Out-of-state conglomerates

have bought many of the best dailies. In an attempt to keep pace with these fierce new competitors, the former Pontiac Press, changed its name to the Oakland Press, expanded its market area in order to serve the entire Oakland County community. As a consequence of this change, Pontiac experienced a void in its need for a news source with a local flavor. The birth of The Pontiac News eliminates that void and fills that need.

The Pontiac News will specifically focus on this city. Through our bi-weekly newspaper and web site, we will provide an independent perspective with a commitment to credible investigations. It will also include provocative and informative stories that others either miss or choose to ignore.

Too often, today's media spins their news coverage in a political rather than a human light. Stories and subjects are tagged as "left" or "right," ignoring the subtleties and nuances that define The City of Pontiac.

The Pontiac News will reinvigorate the credo that journalism speaks for the individual, checks abuses of power, and stands vigilant in the protection of democracy and free speech. By hosting regular editorial meetings throughout the city, and presenting news in a community context, we will give Pontiac citizens a unifying forum from which to view and address today's issues. Knowing that Pontiac residents value news and perspectives from beyond their borders, the Pontiac News will also provide timely and provocative stories from around the county, state, country, and the world, through an independent network of writers and subscriptions to various news wire services.

Our pledge to you -- readers, advertisers, and subscribers -- is to provide socially responsible news and opinions on a human scale. With news stories from throughout the city, we will be the voice of the community, a place where Pontiac citizens can share ideas and forge solutions. Those outside Pontiac can look to The Pontiac News as a

showcase for "the Pontiac way," which personifies the unique ability to solve problems and define community issues related to political, educational, religious and social matters.

Our business model is unique in its approach because Pontiac is a unique city. A bi-weekly newspaper, combined with our web site will provide you with breaking stories as they become available to us, no matter where they come from including Pontiac, Oakland County, the State of Michigan in the U.S. or around the globe.

Thank you for reading the TPN and taking us into your homes, schools and businesses. Please pray with us that we will do good work when reporting the news concerning the City of Pontiac and never hesitate to let us know what you think!

The Pontiac News

PUBLISHER & CONTENT EDITOR

R. Frank Russell

NEWS EDITOR:

Elaine Smith-Wright

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

State Representative Tim Melton

County Commissioner Mattie Hatchett, Selvy Hall, Mary Pietila, John Smith, Joseph P. Cool, Kenneth E. Corr, Dianthia Spann, Elaine Smith-Wright

PHOTOGRAPHER:

TBD

ADVERTISING MANAGER:

TBD

CIRCULATION MANAGER:

Christopher Riley

OFFICE MANAGER:

Mary C. Russell

DESIGNER & PRINTER

Michigan Web Press

CONTACT INFO:

TELEPHONE: (248) 758-1411

FAX: (248) 451-1653

PO Box 431412, Suite #1

Pontiac, MI 48343

ThePontiacNews@SBCGlobal.net

— What's Happening In Pontiac —

The Michigan Primary election will be held on Tuesday, January 15, 2008. In addition to the Presidential primary ballot, there are 5 ballot proposals for Pontiac residents to consider. **Sample ballots** for the January Primary are available on the City Clerk's webpage. In addition to a listing of candidates, it includes the wording for the 5 ballot proposals listed below. Also visit the Clerk's page for other voting information such as: Voting Locations, Photo ID Requirements, Absentee Ballot Application, and Instructions for using the voting machines

CHARTER AMENDMENT
PROPOSAL 08-1 - REALLOCATION OF FIREMEN TAX
 An amendment to Section 5.205 of Article V, Chapter 2, of the City Charter
 This Amendment proposes an amendment to Section 5.205 of the City Charter to reallocate the 2 mills (\$2.00 per \$1000 of taxable value) of ad valorem property taxes currently allocated for "salaries, benefits and expenses of firemen assigned to duty" under minimum manning requirements of Section 4.504 of the Charter to "all City Fire Department related purposes authorized by law." It is estimated that if levied 2 mills would raise approximately \$2,893,134.72 when first levied in 2008.
 Shall the proposed amendment be adopted? YES - NO

CHARTER AMENDMENT
PROPOSAL 08-3 - TEMPORARY TAX INCREASE FOR YOUTH RECREATION
 An amendment to Section 5.205 of Article V, Chapter 2, of the City Charter
 This amendment proposes a temporary increase in the maximum charter millage authority by .5 mills (\$0.50 per \$1,000 of taxable value) of ad valorem property taxes, to be levied for a period of ten (10) years, applied retroactively for the year 2007, and 2008 through 2016, inclusive, for the purpose of providing recreational activities to persons 17 years of age and younger. It is estimated that if levied .5 mills would raise approximately \$723,283.68 when first levied in 2008.
 Shall the proposed amendment be adopted? YES - NO

CHARTER AMENDMENT PROPOSAL 08-5 -
FIRE DEPARTMENT MINIMUM MANNING REQUIREMENTS
 An amendment to Section 4.504 of Article IV, Chapter 5 of the City Charter
 This amendment proposes to eliminate the language of Section 4.504 of the Charter that requires the Fire Chief to assign firemen to actual duty for emergency medical services and fire suppression purposes at a minimum staffing level equal to "...a total number on each shift for all duties which is not less than one fireman for every 2,000 residents of the City," but permitting the Fire Chief to continue assigning firepersons for emergency medical services and fire suppression purposes without a minimum staffing requirement.
 Shall the proposed amendment be adopted? YES - NO

CHARTER AMENDMENT PROPOSAL 08-4
TEMPORARY TAX INCREASE FOR POLICE
 An amendment to Section 5.205 of Article V, Chapter 2, of the City Charter
 This amendment proposes a temporary increase in the maximum charter millage authority by 1.0 mill (\$1.00 per \$1,000 of taxable value) of ad valorem property taxes, to be levied for a period of ten (10) years, applied retroactively for the year 2007, and 2008 through 2016, inclusive, for City police personnel. It is estimated that if levied 1 mill would raise approximately \$1,446,567.36 when first levied in 2008.
 Shall the proposed amendment be adopted? YES - NO

CHARTER AMENDMENT
PROPOSAL 08-2 - DEADLINE FOR
SUBMISSION OF BUDGET
 An amendment to Section 5.102 of Article V, Chapter 1 of the City Charter
 This amendment proposes that the deadline for the Mayor to submit the City's proposed annual budget and annual appropriation ordinance be changed from one month prior to the end of each fiscal year to two months prior to the end of each fiscal year, effective this fiscal year ending June 30, 2008.
 Shall the proposed amendment be adopted?
 YES - NO

Knollenberg Announces \$845,000 for Woodward Avenue

Congressman Joe Knollenberg, the senior Republican member on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, announced today that federal grants in the amount of \$845,000 have been awarded for the improvement and promotion of Woodward Avenue.
 Knollenberg said, "As we have celebrated Woodward Avenue's 200th Anniversary all year, I am pleased this grant funding can be announced now. Woodward is a state treas-



Knollenberg

ure and the birthplace to the auto manufacturing complex. This funding will go a long way in promoting the national significance of Woodward."
 Earlier this year Knollenberg led a bipartisan effort of Michigan House members to secure the grant funding. The funding will be used specifically for improvements along Woodward, including historical buildings such as the Ford Highland Park Assembly Plant, and promoting its importance in the production of the automobile.
 "Woodward is Detroit's Main Street and its designation as Michigan's only federal 'National Scenic Byway' is a fitting tribute. One of Michigan's most important heritage

assets and probably one of the nation's top five historical sites – the Ford Highland Park Assembly Plant – is located on Woodward. This plant was the birthplace of industrial mass production and the assembly line, the \$5 a day wage, the 40 hour work week, and thousands of Ford Model Ts," Knollenberg continued.
 Woodward Avenue stretches 27 miles from the Detroit River north through the Woodward Loop in Pontiac. It includes the communities of Berkley, Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills, Detroit, Ferndale, Highland Park, Huntington Woods, Pleasant Ridge, Pontiac, and Royal Oak.

Law Offices of
CYRIL C. HALL, P.C.
Attorney And Counselor At Law



Dr. Harry L. Riggs Building
149 Franklin Blvd
Pontiac, Michigan 48341
(Phone) 248-333-7880
(Fax) 248-333-7924
Email: CYRILHALLLAW@SBCGLOBAL.NET

In the event that you or your loved ones, friends and/or acquaintances find themselves in need of legal service, do not hesitate to contact me. For informational purposes, you should be aware that we provide the following, but not limited to legal services.

- 1. All Personal Injury matters:**
 - a. Automobile/Motorcycle accidents:**
 - b. Slip and Fall accidents on private property/businesses and other locations**
 - c. Dog Bite: and**
 - d. Police Brutality and Abuse/Excessive Force**
- 2. Medical Malpractice/Nursing Home Negligence**
- 3. Contract Matters/Real Estate/Business Transactions:**
 - a. Automobile and Home Insurance**
- 4. Probate Matters: Wills – Trust – Estate Planning: and Guardianship and Conservatorship.**
- 5. Workmen's Compensation and Social Security Claims.**
- 6. All Criminal matters Felony/Misdemeanors and Traffic.**

— What's Happening In Pontiac —

PONTIAC FIRE DEPARTMENT MINIMUM MANNING

Mayor Phillips Perspective - Vote Yes to eliminate Minimum Manning!

By Mayor Clarence Phillips



Mayor Phillips

For those who may have forgotten, the Phillips Administration, upon coming into office in 2005, inherited a 31 million dollar general fund budget deficit that literally threatened to bring the city of Pontiac to its knees. In order to bring expenditures in line with revenues and meet the requirements of a state mandated deficit elimination plan, a variety of long overdue layoffs, departmental reorganizations and restructuring had to be immediately instituted. In a negative economic climate, unprecedented in the history of Pontiac, we have literally had to learn to do more with less just to keep our head above water. Every city department in the general fund, except the Fire Department, has experienced at least two series of cuts and layoffs because we simply do not have the revenue to support the various operations.

A Mayor, in order to control city finances, must possess the ability to set priorities and regulate all of its city departments. However, my administration is handcuffed by the minimum manning provision in the City Charter that protects the Fire department from any cuts or layoffs at all. The Fire

Department is funded out of the general fund but because of this charter provision, the administrations' ability to make fair, across the board cuts in all departments is prevented. It needs to be said that deep cuts have greatly impaired the ability of all departments to do the job for our city. The workload has increased significantly. Most acutely affected has been our police department who suffered the heaviest layoffs of any department.

In all fairness, our Fire department performs a great service for this community. However, the other valued city departments that have experienced significant layoffs are just as important, most acutely, the men and women of our police department who also help to keep our community safe and secure. Without a change in our outdated and costly service delivery system, I foresee changes that I don't believe the citizens will want for our community. We need relief from this very restrictive condition that minimum manning has put the city under. We all must bite the bullet. We have to explore new and more efficient ways of conducting city business.

Some have suggested that any attempt to right size our fire department would result in poor fire suppression and emergency medical services. I believe that nothing could be further from the truth. As literally every community around the State of Michigan as well as communities that surround Pontiac have realized, there are more progressive and

cost effective ways of implementing fire suppression service and Emergency Medical Service. It is the contention of this administration that we can reduce cost, right size our fire department and still have an effective and efficient emergency medical service.

Minimum Manning is a provision that has outlived its usefulness. Since it was first instituted in 1982, the population of Pontiac has decreased by almost 20,000. Very few communities in the entire state use this approach anymore. Those communities that do are experiencing financial difficulties because of it's restrictive nature or have chosen, like the city of Royal Oak, to voluntarily not implement it at all. It is calculated that over 3 to 5 million dollars would be saved by right-sizing our fire department. Barring any more severe downturns in the economy, we believe that a significant number of much needed police officers can be returned to duty. Also, we are quite confident that we can develop cost efficient and effective systems that would provide a safe, secure fire suppression system and emergency medical system that would serve the needs of the men, women and children of Pontiac.

Almost 80 percent of Pontiac's firefighters live outside the city of Pontiac. The service delivery systems that we are developing and would use in Pontiac would be comparable to the various types of fire systems that are currently in place in the various cities that they and their families reside. It stands

to reason that if these economical, more cost efficient arrangements are good enough for our firefighting professionals and their families that reside outside of the city then why can it not be good enough for the families that they serve who live in the city of Pontiac?

On JANUARY 15, 2008, when you go to the polls or cast your absentee ballot, please say yes 4 times for Pontiac. For a better day and a better Pontiac, cast a "Yes" vote to end minimum manning. Say, "Yes", to maintaining the two mills necessary to provide continuous EMS services for our citizens. Say "Yes" to use already approved and much needed dollars for our police department for the next ten years, and say a resounding "Yes" for the children for our ability to use already collected dollars that would be used exclusively to keep our youth centers open and operational for the next 10 years. None of these four measures will increase your taxes, but it will go a long way to bringing Pontiac back and allowing us to stand on our own feet.

The bottom line in the whole discussion about minimum manning is that we have to support a department that the city can neither financially maintain or regulate. If minimum manning is allowed to stand, everyone in the city should know that an additional 45 police officers or 55 city workers must be immediately laid off to balance our budget.

Mary C. Russell Catering Services

Specializing in Healthy Soul Food

Beef • Chicken • Turkey • Fish
Baked • Broiled • Barbequed • Steamed • Fried
Great Side Dishes & Salads

Try Mary's Famous

Grilled Barbequed Salmon
Fish Balls • Fresh Fruit Salad



Delicious Desserts

Carrot Cake • Peach Cobbler
Carrot & Squash Pies

(Taste as good as Granny's Sweet Potato Pie)

For a price Quote call

248-451-1665

or E-mail celestemcr5@aol.com

— Did You Know —

Dr. Philip Emeagwali: Inventor of the World's Fastest Computer



Dr. Phillip Emeagwali

Dr. Philip Emeagwali, who has been called the "Bill Gates of Africa," was born in Nigeria in 1957. Like many African schoolchildren, he dropped out of school at age 14 because his father could not continue paying Emeagwali's school fees. However, his father continued teaching him at home, and everyday Emeagwali performed mental exercises such as solving 100 math problems in one hour. His father taught him until Philip "knew more than he did."

Growing up in a country torn by civil war, Emeagwali lived in a building crumpled by rocket shells. He believed his intellect was a way out of the line of fire. So he studied hard and eventually received a scholarship to Oregon State University when he was 17 where he obtained a BS in mathematics. He also earned three other degrees — a Ph.D. in Scientific computing

from the University of Michigan and two Masters degrees from George Washington University.

The noted black inventor received acclaim based, at least in part, on his study of nature, specifically bees. Emeagwali saw an inherent efficiency in the way bees construct and work with honeycomb and determined computers that emulate this process could be the most efficient and powerful. In 1989, emulating the bees' honeycomb construction, Emeagwali used 65,000 processors to invent the world's fastest computer, which performs computations at 3.1 billion calculations per second.

Dr. Philip Emeagwali's resume is loaded with many other such feats, including ways of making oil fields more productive — which has resulted in the United States saving hundreds of millions of dollars each year. As one of the most famous African-American inventors of the 20th century, Dr. Emeagwali also has won the Gordon Bell Prize — the Nobel Prize for computation. His computers are currently being used to forecast the weather and to predict the likelihood and effects of future global warming.

EP.A.D. STUDIO

Printing & Design • Rasheed Shabazz - Owner

100 N. Saginaw Suite E
Downtown Pontiac, MI 48342

248-877-3044
rasheed@epadstudio.com

Everything for your design and printing needs!

Logos - Flyers - Custom T-Shirts - Brochures

— What's Happening In Pontiac —

PONTIAC FIRE DEPARTMENT MINIMUM MANNING

A Pontiac Firefighter's Perspective - Vote No to Keep Minimum Manning

By: **Damon Harney**

2nd vice president of the Pontiac Firefighters Union and a four-year Firefighter-Paramedic.

On January 15, 2008, a major ballot issue will be decided on, the elimination or continuation of minimum manning. While there are four other worthy issues to be voted on, my intentions in this editorial will be to address minimum manning only, to briefly discuss some of its benefits, refute opposing viewpoints, and provide clarity to the community as a whole. On the surface, minimum manning has been portrayed by Mayor Clarence Phillips and his supporters as a financial monster gobbling up all the cities monies. This could not be further from the truth and with ample time and format(s), I believe myself and other fire department representatives will show its benefits, provide revenue framework, and offer other solutions to aid the city in the deficit elimination.

The Mayor has stated on more than one occasion that minimum manning is the cause for the cities financial struggle, and has suggested that we look towards other communities (i.e. Royal Oak) as it pertains to this matter. He sites Royal Oaks position on staffing as being fiscally responsible, noting that they do not enforce manning to help save money. What the Mayor has cleverly left out is that Royal Oak, like many of the other surrounding communities, have their Fire Departments budgets supplemented by millages, just as we do. These millages ease the burden on the general fund, and are paid through taxes. The difference between our manning and that of Royal Oak is this: our manning is supported by city charter language, which means the Mayor must enforce it, Royal Oak's manning is contract language only, allowing the mayor to enforce it if and when he pleases. Plainly put, in Pontiac, the Mayor must provide the citizens manpower that they pay for, in Royal Oak, you still pay for it, but the administration will decide when or whether to provide it. Minimum Manning in the City of Pontiac is a charter and contract issue (as well as a provision approved by the citizens), not a tool left to administrators to use at their discretion to correct financial malfeasance while supposedly balancing the budget.

The Mayor also promises to provide the citizens adequate Emergency Medical Services. The services currently provided are better than adequate, they are excellent. He's proposing to provide this menial service at the current tax rate, which apparently short changes the residents. Let's discuss this adequate service that the Mayor proposes:

1. Outsourcing The EMS, this will provide less ambulance coverage for the city, and varying levels of training (possibly basic EMT's, possibly paramedics, depending on availability). 2. These unit's will be staffed with 2 people, responding from outlying areas as far as White Lake and as close as Bloomfield. Let's look at the care needed on an emergency scene; for example a cardiac arrest. The EMT's would attempt to provide these services with 2 people: gather patient information; observe, evaluate, and treat the patient, establish IV's, administer chest compressions, establish airway stabilization and respirations for the patient, administer drug therapy as needed, attach a cardiac monitor and evaluate, transport the patient to the hospital, notify the hospital, and continue to evaluate enroute. And remember, one of these

two individuals has to drive the rig to the hospital!

CPR calls occur frequently in Pontiac, weekly if not more often. They are currently handled by six trained responders, 2 of which are trained in Advance Life support techniques and treatments, and four others trained at the level(s) of first responder or Emergency Medical Technician, which allows the care provided to be increasingly efficient with a more favorable outcome. The Mayor say's that's too much. Adequate is enough. How much is too much when your life, or the life of a loved one hangs in the balance? Which response do you want?

The shortage of manpower is obvious, and another fact conveniently left out is that transport generates revenue through billing of insurance companies for the transporting agency. Historically, this money has gone to the private company. We felt that this was a disservice to the citizens and the city. After all, we had to wait for the private to respond from outlying areas, hindering patient care, and they received all the proceeds. That's why in 2003 we proposed transporting our own patients. It was approved by this council in the 2007-2008 fiscal year budget. At no cost increase to the residents, our transport improved overall patient care and captured the money for our city. This revenue is directly deposited into the City of Pontiac's general fund, and can be used for a variety of applications: the return of laid off police officers, investment into support staff (finance and community development among others) and any other purpose the administration deems necessary. Our transport currently generates over \$100,000 a month, and we are on pace to top \$1.2 million per year. All deposited into the general fund. The Mayor wants flexibility? He wants control? We provided the city with control of over \$1million a year and the flexibility to use it as they see fit, all while providing better service to the residents and visitors of this city. Eliminating minimum manning will erase all of this, and for what, adequate services?

This is just the impact on the EMS aspect of this decision. What about house fires (almost 500/yr.), auto accidents, hazardous material spills, terrorism and WMD, all emergencies that your fire department respond to when needed (for the sake of space I will not list all incidents that we respond to). Furthermore, what happens when these emergencies occur simultaneously, as they often do? Who's affected when a home is burning on one side of town, someone has a heart attack on another, and a mother and baby are trapped in an auto accident, all at the same time? The citizens are! Currently your fire department is staffed, trained, and capable of handling these situations, as we do daily. Eliminating minimum manning will change that. It will greatly diminish our ability to serve you, and for what, and adequate plan?

So let's review. Better service for the residents. Increase revenue for the city. Control in spending of new revenue deposited into the city's infrastructure. Flexibility to bring back police officers and other city personnel, who will help put us on track to be a healthy and vibrant community, among other benefits. All gone if you eliminate minimum manning. Adequate isn't good enough, and this isn't even adequate.

It's my hope that these small bits of information provided to you will provoke some



Left to right: Rick Luxon, President Firefighter Union Local 376, Damon Harney, VP Local Firefighter Union 376 Firefighter-Paramedic, and Paul Holmes, Firefighter-Paramedic

questions. I don't want to tell you how to think, I only ask that you think. Think of what eliminating minimum manning will do. We ask that you vote no on proposal 08-5, and keep your EMS system and the services you are accustomed to. The administration can find another way to fix our financial problems, because as you now know, we have pro-

vided them with some tools.

For questions and/or replies: The Fire Department phone center will be accepting calls at (248) 929-1231.

Damon Harney is 2nd vice president of the Pontiac Firefighters union and a four year Firefighter-Paramedic.



Where You Belong™

The Grace Agency LLC

262 S Telegraph Road

Pontiac MI 48341

Tel 248-706-0200

Fax 248-706-0202

E Mail thegraceagency@sbcglobal.net

We specialize in Home, Auto, Life and Commercial Insurance

Please call us today for a free no obligation review on your insurance,

If you can save money today, why wait?

**LOW, LOW DOWNPAYMENT
MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTION, TICKETS,
ALL ARE WELCOME.**

**Se Habla Espanol.
From your friends at Farmers Insurance.**

Patricia Ouellette

—What's Happening In Oakland County—

OAKLAND COUNTY FIRE & ICE FESTIVAL

Family Fun In Downtown Rochester



Patterson

Oakland County is co-sponsoring an annual event with the City of Rochester, the Rochester DDA and Oakland County Parks. On Friday & Saturday, January 25 and 26, the "Fire & Ice Fest" will take place in downtown Rochester. The City of Rochester and the Rochester

DDA have held a winter festival for years. With the support from Oakland County and Oakland County Parks, this popular event will be enhanced with added attractions.

Friday – January 25, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Fire & Ice Fest will commence with Opening Ceremonies by local and county officials. Activities include fireworks, entertainment, ice sculptures, and horse drawn trolley rides. Downtown businesses will be open for a shopping spectacular and restaurant crawl.

Saturday - January 26, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Plenty of family fun events are scheduled for Saturday in the municipal park, including: snow shoeing & cross country skiing lessons & demos, snowman/angel making, and nature hikes along the Paint Creek Trail. There will be plenty of opportunities to keep warm, the Lions Club and the South Eastern Michigan Indians, Inc. are sponsoring warming stations. A geo-caching scavenger hunt, ice sculptures, trolley rides, ice skating, snow sculpting, and shopping will be also available in downtown Rochester. The Fire & Ice Fest will end with a spectacular fireworks exhibition and entertainment.

Be sure to mark your calendar for this fun-filled family event and visit www.oak.gov to learn about the activities and time schedule. For more information about the Fire & Ice Fest, please contact Julie Skene, event coordinator for Oakland County Economic Development & Community Affairs at 248-858-5437.

Information copied from Oakland County website © 2002-2007 Oakland County, Michigan

—What's Happening In Lansing—

Dear Friend,

As 2007 draws to a close, I want to give you an overview of some of this year's activities in Lansing and in our community. I've had the opportunity to meet many of you as I've visited homes in our neighborhoods, held coffee hours and town halls, and corresponded with you. If you haven't had time to come to one of my coffee hours or town hall meetings, I hope you will find the time to do so in 2008. Nothing is more important than the feedback I get from the people I serve.



Melton

Some of the core issues I've worked on this year include school equity, developing state-wide promise zones, protecting homeowners from the foreclosure epidemic gripping Michigan residents, and other consumer protections initiatives, like eliminating redlining practices from big insurance companies and cracking down on identity theft.

Moving Michigan forward is my highest priority, and I will continue to fight to make our state a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I hope you find this document interesting and informative. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. Your ideas and input can only help me do the best job possible of representing our community. It continues to be my honor and privilege to serve as your State Representative.

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season,

State Representative Tim Melton

Consumer Protection Will Make Insurance More Affordable

I joined my House Democratic colleagues and unveiled consumer protection legislation to combat excessive insurance rates; eliminate credit scoring, the unfair practice of basing a person's auto insurance rate on their credit rating; and open the Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association (MCCA) to

public scrutiny.

Under current Michigan law, citizens have no recourse against abusive insurance companies that charge excessive rates under the state insurance code. Michigan's average auto insurance rate remains one of the highest in the Midwest. Though the insurance industry receives several tax breaks, insurance rates continue to climb dramatically. Since 1999, auto insurance rates increased between 45 and 90 percent.

Credit scoring to determine insurance rates is unfair to Michigan consumers. Auto insurance rates should be determined by your driving record, not where you live or your past credit history. This legislation will protect people who have responsible driving habits.

I will continue fighting to end unfair insurance practices. Please contact my office to learn more information on auto insurance programs that could help you save money.

New Program Helping Families Avoid Foreclosure Will Boost Economy

Stepping in where the federal government has failed to act, the House Democrats announced an aggressive plan to fight the epidemic of foreclosures by establishing programs to allow homeowners saddled with risky adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs), and those who have missed mortgage payments, to refinance and secure a fixed-rate loan. The plan, which will allow more Michigan residents to avoid losing their homes, is part of the Democrats' comprehensive approach to help jumpstart the state's economy.

The plan allows at-risk low- and moderate-income borrowers (homeowners facing a spike in housing expenses due to their adjustable-rate mortgage, or residents who have already missed payments due to financial constraints) to secure a fixed-rated loan through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). The agency provides loans financed through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds and notes to private investors.

The MSHDA program allows borrowers who meet income and credit score requirements to avoid dramatic increases in their

—From the County Seat—

The next regular Board of Commissioners Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17, 2008, at 9:30 a.m., in the Board of Commissioners' Auditorium.

TETHER PROGRAM ARTICLE

Dear Friends,

Jail overcrowding has been an ongoing issue in Oakland County for some-time. In the last two years, Oakland County has had eight jail overcrowding emergencies, releasing about 2,275 prisoners serving 45-47 percent of their sentences. We have looked at various options to address this problem. With the creation of the Oakland County Jail Population Task Force, recommendations such as the developing jail management policies and the Board authorized formation of the Oakland County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council in 2005 have helped in developing solutions to the overcrowding issue.

The Oakland County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, of which I am a member, in conjunction with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, the sheriff, prosecutors, chief judges of circuit court and district judges, have sought to reduce sentences. We looked at alternative measures when faced with 95% capacity rates in the county jail for at least seven straight days.

By looking at alternatives within our



Mattie McKinney Hatchett, Oakland County Commissioner

own county jail system, we decided to expand the current Oakland County Tether program. Through expansion of this program, eligible low-income, non-violent offenders' tethering fees may be waived. At the discretion of the program's participating judges, eligible inmates meeting specific criteria and guidelines may be selected to participate in the tether-pilot program.

While serving the duration of their sentences, under house arrest, outside of jail, eligible non-violent prisoners would wear the device monitored by law enforcement agencies.

By expanding the tether program, we will free up more of the 1,828 jail beds and space in the county jail facility. This effort would help us avoid the economically unfeasible option of building a new jail or expanding our current jail.

In October 2007, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution that allocated \$150,000 for a 6-month test pilot Tether Program. We anticipate beginning the program early in 2008.

On average 30 non-violent inmates, who meet the program's criteria, would be eligible to participate in Oakland County's Tether Pilot Program, monthly. This would make 180 beds available during the six-month test pilot period, approximately.

Commissioner Mattie McKinney Hatchett represents the 10th District on the Oakland County Board of Commissioners which encompasses the city of Pontiac. The Board of Commissioners is the governing body for Oakland County approving county policies and budgets.

housing expenses by securing a fixed-rated loan. It would allow homeowners who have missed payments on their adjustable rate mortgages, and who are unable to work out an agreement with their lender to avoid a foreclosure, to apply for a fixed-rated loan.

Michigan's economy is struggling, and too many of our middle class families are at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure and seeing their version of the American Dream disappear.

Cracking Down On Identity Theft

Two legislative packages passed the Michigan House of Representatives earlier this year and are waiting action in the state Senate. The first plan allows consumers to put a security freeze on their credit reports. Credit-reporting agencies would not be able to release a credit rating – for example, to a retailer seeking approval for a major purchase – without authorization. Only the consumer could authorize the release of credit information by providing a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

The second plan aims to protect residents' Social Security numbers – the most valuable information for identity thieves.

Social Security numbers and other personal information are often available for public viewing on Register of Deeds documents. The legislation would require Registers of Deeds to remove all Social Security numbers from deeds and other documents.

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in Michigan and across the nation, and it's important for our residents to know how to protect themselves. It can take years for victims of identity theft to repair their credit. The best way to protect yourself is to be careful and take precautions to safeguard your personal and financial information.

According to the Identity Theft Resource Center, 10 million people are harmed by

identity theft each year. That means about 19 individuals become identity theft victims every minute.

Hire Michigan First

The "Hire Michigan First" plan rewards companies that invest in the future of our state and hire Michigan workers. This job creation plan gives priority for economic development projects to companies that employ 100 percent Michigan workers.

Michigan tax dollars should not fund grants or tax incentives for businesses that hire people from other states and countries when our residents have the training and expertise. Michigan families have been hit hard by outsourcing and downsizing, and every scarce state dollar should be used to create jobs for our workers.

Lead Toys

In the face of a series of nationwide product recalls to keep dangerous toys off of store shelves, House Democrats took decisive action to protect Michigan's children by passing a plan that would virtually eliminate the amount of lead that can be applied to children's toys sold in Michigan to 0.06 percent. Currently, there are no state laws that regulate the amount of lead in children's products. The plan also establishes civil fines for those who violate these limits. The plan also bans the amount of lead in children's jewelry and lunch boxes.

In order to ensure educational too Rep. Melton's Equity Plan Puts More Money in Classrooms for K-12 Students

Earlier this year I introduced the Michigan Promise Zone Act, a plan aimed at providing higher education access for anyone who wants to go to college. The Michigan Promise Zone Act would allow local communities funding mechanisms that

See Melton on page 10

— Educational Matters —

The Six Habits Of Fiscally Responsible School Districts

The Six Habits of Fiscally Responsible School Districts is an article that was written by Dr. Kirk A. Johnson and Elizabeth Moser of The Mackinaw Center for Public Policy, a nonprofit research and educational institute headquartered in Midland, Michigan. This article continues from the fifth issue of TPN. This week's article continues with Habit 5 - Participate in the Schools-of-Choice Program.



Moser



Johnson

Habit 5: Participate in the Schools-of-Choice Program

The fifth habit that characterizes fiscally responsible school districts is participation in the schools-of-choice program. In 1996, the state of Michigan made it easier for parents to choose their child's school from among those in their own and neighboring public

school districts. Previously, parents wanting to send their children to schools other than their assigned district school were required to pay tuition to the school district of the desired school unless they obtained permission for the transfer from their assigned school district.

For participating districts, the law now allows students to transfer between public schools in the same local district, to public schools in the same intermediate school district, or to public schools in contiguous intermediate districts without paying tuition, provided the desired district has space.

The number of students exercising public school choice is increasing; however, the number of schools involved in the schools-of-choice program is limited because districts control whether or not they participate, and to what extent.

According to the Michigan Department of Education, a total of 463 out of 554 districts participated in Michigan's state schools-of-choice plan last year. Of those that participated, 169 districts adopted their own plans, offering very limited forms of choice. Ninety-one districts do not permit choice at all. Overall, the number of students participating statewide in the choice program has grown from 5,611 in the 1996-97 school year to 33,506 in 2001-02, less than 2 percent of Michigan's 1.7 million K-12 public

school children.

Participation in the schools-of-choice program is fiscally responsible for two reasons. First, competition creates incentives, which in turn gives rise to reform. The Dearborn City School District is a case in point. "We welcome competition. The reforms we've enacted would not have happened, at least not as fast, without competition," says Jeremy Hughes, the district's superintendent.

During the 1990s, as choice increased through the growth of charter schools and public school choice, Dearborn began preparing to retain and attract students. New, specialized programs were developed, with parents' wants and needs becoming the primary focus. Second, participation in the schools-of-choice program is fiscally responsible because it financially rewards successful school districts. Concurrent with Dearborn's aggressive efforts to recruit students, enrollment at Dearborn public schools increased from 13,857 in 1994-95 to 17,075 in 2000-01 even as competition from neighboring school districts and charter schools has increased. Each out-of-district student brings with them \$6,700 in state per-pupil funding.

In other words, even with such limited choice, parents are beginning to see the potential these programs have to improve

schools. Dearborn parents say the district must show improvement and offer better educational services to lure students to the district. Districts that do not participate in the program or respond to consumer demand face the possibility of losing students, and funding, to other districts.

"People are going to have to see the improvements in the curriculum," Rose Starks, a parent of three children in the Detroit school system, told the Detroit News. "If you can satisfy the parents and the children here now, you can then attract new ones. If you don't meet the needs of a basic and challenging curriculum, clean and safe buildings, you will not retain the students you have," she said.

Public school choice options are a reality across Michigan - whether it be through interdistrict choice or charter schools. Fiscally responsible districts face this reality and the consumer demand it enjoins with confidence by participating in choice programs, offering options to their consumers and seeking to improve services. The environment of choice provides an incentive for change and the impetus for schools to improve, reduce excessive costs and direct more money into services for students.

The next issue of TPN will continue with - Habit 6: Reform Collective Bargaining Copyright © 2002 Mackinaw Center for

THE PARENT SUCCESS KIT
How to Make Your Child a Success in School, Friendship & Athletics

THIS HANDBOOK WILL HELP PARENTS TO IMMEDIATELY:

- Help Your Child to Develop a Sense of Responsibility.
- Help Your Child To Read Better and Get Better Grades and Test Scores In School.
- Help Your Child With His/Her Homework.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS AMAZING HANDBOOK:

- Contains Tear Out Work Sheets & Charts To Help You Help Your Child.
- Sixty Ways to Help Your Child Learn.
- Ten Steps to Improved Reading.
- What The Research Says About Parental Support.
- Getting Along With Others.

TYPICAL READER COMMENT:

• After reading and applying the material in this handbook my ability to help my child has increased 100%.

IRON CLAD GUARANTEE:

• If you're not completely satisfied with this handbook after you have it for 10 days, return it for a full refund.

IT WORKS!

• Hundreds of parents have already used this handbook and are now helping their children succeed in school, friendships and in sports.

THIS HANDBOOK WILL HELP THE STUDENT TO IMMEDIATELY:

- Get Better Grades In School
- Get Better Test Scores

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS AMAZING HANDBOOK:

- How To Prepare For Class
- What To Do After Class
- What To Do During Classes
- Test Taking Strategies
- Contains Tear Out Worksheets and Charts To Help You Get Better Grades

TYPICAL READER COMMENT:

• After reading and applying the material in this handbook my grades went from a (D-) to a (B+).

IRON CLAD GUARANTEE:

• If you are not completely satisfied with this handbook after you have it for 10 days you may return it for a full refund.

IT WORKS!

• Hundreds of students have already used this handbook and are now getting better grades in School.

THE STUDENT SUCCESS KIT
How to get Better Grades in School

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

- This handbook is a must for the concerned parent who wants to help their child succeed in school.

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

- This handbook is a must for the serious student who wants to get better grades in school.

Clip Coupon and mail to: The Youth Development Institute P.O. BOX 431016 - PONTIAC, MICHIGAN 48343 email: YDIyouthDevelop@aol.com

Please send Me _____ Copies of **THE PARENT SUCCESS KIT** AT \$14.95 each plus \$2.00 Postage and Handling. It is my understanding that if I am not completely satisfied with the book after 10 days of receipt, I can return the book undamaged for a full refund.

Money Order Enclosed Check Enclosed (Make Payable to Youth Development Institute)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

THE PARENT SUCCESS KIT
How to Make Your Child a Success in School, Friendship & Athletics

THIS HANDBOOK WILL HELP PARENTS TO IMMEDIATELY:

- Help Your Child to Develop a Sense of Responsibility.
- Help Your Child To Read Better and Get Better Grades and Test Scores In School.
- Help Your Child With His/Her Homework.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS AMAZING HANDBOOK:

- Contains Tear Out Work Sheets & Charts To Help You Help Your Child.
- Sixty Ways to Help Your Child Learn.
- Ten Steps to Improved Reading.
- What The Research Says About Parental Support.
- Getting Along With Others.

TYPICAL READER COMMENT:

• After reading and applying the material in this handbook my ability to help my child has increased 100%.

IRON CLAD GUARANTEE:

• If you're not completely satisfied with this handbook after you have it for 10 days, return it for a full refund.

IT WORKS!

• Hundreds of parents have already used this handbook and are now helping their children succeed in school, friendships and in sports.

THIS HANDBOOK WILL HELP THE STUDENT TO IMMEDIATELY:

- Get Better Grades In School
- Get Better Test Scores

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS AMAZING HANDBOOK:

- How To Prepare For Class
- What To Do After Class
- What To Do During Classes
- Test Taking Strategies
- Contains Tear Out Worksheets and Charts To Help You Get Better Grades

TYPICAL READER COMMENT:

• After reading and applying the material in this handbook my grades went from a (D-) to a (B+).

IRON CLAD GUARANTEE:

• If you are not completely satisfied with this handbook after you have it for 10 days you may return it for a full refund.

IT WORKS!

• Hundreds of students have already used this handbook and are now getting better grades in School.

THE STUDENT SUCCESS KIT
How to get Better Grades in School

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

- This handbook is a must for the concerned parent who wants to help their child succeed in school.

REVIEWER COMMENTS:

- This handbook is a must for the serious student who wants to get better grades in school.

Clip Coupon and mail to: The Youth Development Institute P.O. BOX 431016 - PONTIAC, MICHIGAN 48343 email: YDIyouthDevelop@aol.com

Please send Me _____ Copies of **THE STUDENT SUCCESS KIT** AT \$14.95 each plus \$2.00 Postage and Handling. It is my understanding that if I am not completely satisfied with the book after 10 days of receipt, I can return the book undamaged for a full refund.

Money Order Enclosed Check Enclosed (Make Payable to Youth Development Institute)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

FIREFIGHTERS STAND UP FOR US. WE SHOULD STAND UP FOR THEM.



SAY NO TO LOWER PROPERTY VALUES!

SAY NO TO LESS PUBLIC SAFETY!

SAY NO TO PROPOSAL 08-5!

Pontiac's Fire Department is one of the busiest in the nation,* responding to 9,177 emergencies in 2006 alone. That's more than 25 emergencies a day! Yet some politicians want to slash the number of firefighters by nearly 40% and put our families at risk.

Proposal 08-5 will eliminate Pontiac's Minimum Manning requirement and send our local heroes to the unemployment line. Who will be left to protect our families, our neighbors and our property?

Only YOU can stop politicians from slashing our Fire Department by voting **NO** on Pontiac Proposal 08-5 on Tuesday, January 15th.

* Firehouse magazine, Aug. 2007

DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE...

VOTE NO ON PONTIAC PROPOSAL 08-5

ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 15th.

Paid for by Citizens Supporting Public Safety, 1101 Oak Valley Dr., Pontiac, MI 48341

A NEWS SOURCE WITH A LOCAL FLAVOR



**Looking for a Job?
Looking for Employees?
Contact us at 248.276.1777**

A Michigan Works! One-Stop Center

Employers and jobseekers alike are invited to take advantage of the following FREE services:



Employment Services/Job Seekers

- Labor Market Information
- Resume Writing Software
- Employment Preparation Workshops
- Access to the Michigan Talent Bank Website
- Career Training

Business Services/Employers

- Advertising of job openings on Michigan Talent Bank
- Pre-screening and Assessment
- Recruitment of Qualified Applicants
- Interview Space
- On-site Job Fairs

JobLink Service Center

1847 North Perry, Pontiac, MI 48340

TTY 800.649.3777 or 711

Operated by Oakland Schools. Funded by Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth through Oakland County Workforce Development Board 1.800.285.WORKS Auxiliary Aides and Services Available upon request



-What's Going on Around Us

Responding to a controversial debate about race in America *Is Bill Cosby Right About Black Youth?*

In 'Is Bill Cosby Right?' professor Michael Eric Dyson debates the comedian's criticism of low-income blacks made at 2004 NAACP awards. Read an excerpt

Comedian Bill Cosby sparked a heated debate about low-income blacks in America after a speech he gave at the NAACP awards dinner. His words criticizing poor blacks for their spending habits, speech patterns and parenting were the topic of countless newspaper editorials and conversations on TV and radio talk shows. Professor Michael Eric Dyson recently published a written response to Cosby's remarks. He was invited on the "Today" show to discuss his new book, "Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?" Read an excerpt.

Introduction: An Afristocrat in Winter
"Do you view Bill Cosby as a race traitor?" journalist Paula Zahn bluntly asked me on her nighttime television show.

Zahn was referring to the broadside the entertainer had launched against irresponsible black parents who are poor and their delinquent children. Cosby's rebuke came in a May 2004 speech on the fiftieth anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*. Not content with a one-off tirade, Cosby since then has bitterly and visibly crusaded against the declining morality and bad behavior of poor blacks. Six months into his battle, Zahn snagged the comic legend turned cultural warrior for his first in-depth interview. Cosby clarified his comments and reinforced his position. No, he wasn't wrong to air the black community's dirty laundry. Yes, he would ratchet up the noise and pace of his racial offensive. And he surely didn't give a damn about what white folk thought about his campaign or what nefarious uses they might make of his public diatribe. One could see it on Cosby's face: This is war, the stakes are high and being polite or politically correct simply won't do.

Since I was one of the few blacks to publicly disagree with Cosby, I ended up in numerous media outlets arguing in snippets, sound bites, or ripostes to contrary points of view. In the *New York Times* a few days after his remarks, I offered that Cosby's comments

"betray classist, elitist viewpoints rooted in generational warfare," that he was "ill-informed on the critical and complex issues that shape people's lives," and that his words only "reinforce suspicions about black humanity."

Still, I don't consider Cosby a traitor, and I said so to Zahn. In fact, I defended his right to speak his mind in full public view. After all, I'd been similarly stung by claims of racial disloyalty when I wrote my controversial book on Martin Luther King, Jr. I also said that while Cosby is right to emphasize personal behavior (a lesson, by the way, that many wealthy people should bone up on), we must never lose sight of the big social forces that make it difficult for poor parents to do their best jobs and for poor children to prosper. Before going on Zahn's show, I'd already decided to write a book in response to Cosby's relentless assault. But my appearances in the media, and the frustrating fragmentation of voice that one risks in such venues, pushed me to gain a bigger say in the issues Cosby has desperately if clumsily grabbed hold of. This book is my attempt to unpack those issues with the clarity and complexity they demand.

Of course, the ink and applause Cosby has won rest largely on a faulty assumption: that he is the first black figure to stare down the "pathology" that plagues poor blacks. But to believe that ignores how figures from black intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, in varying contexts, with differing results, have spoken controversially about the black poor. Equally intriguing is the leap of faith one must make in granting Cosby revered status as a racial spokesman and critic. He has famously demurred in his duties as a racial representative. He has flatly refused over the years to deal with blackness and color in his comedy. Cosby was defensive, even defiant, in his views, as prickly a racial avoicer as one might imagine for a man who traded so brilliantly on dimensions of black culture in his comedy. While Cosby took full advantage of the civil rights struggle, he resolutely denied it a seat at his artistic table. Thus it's hard to swallow Cosby's flailing away at youth for

neglecting their history, and overlooking the gains paid for by the blood of their ancestors, when he reneged on its service when it beckoned at his door. It is ironic that Cosby has finally answered the call to racial leadership forty years after it might have made a constructive difference. But it is downright tragic that he should use his perch to lob rhetorical bombs at the poor.

For those who overlook the uneven history of black engagement with the race's social dislocations and moral struggles — and who conveniently ignore Cosby's Johnny-come-lately standing as a racial critic — Cosby is an ethical pioneer, a racial hero. In this view, Cosby is brave to admit that "lower economic people" are "not parenting" and are failing the civil rights movement by "not holding up their end in this deal." Single mothers are no longer "embarrassed because they're pregnant without a husband." A single father is no longer "considered an embarrassment if he tries to run away from being the father" of his child. And what do we make of their criminal children? Cosby's "courage" does not fail. "In our own neighborhood, we have men in prison ... I'm talking about these people who cry when their son is standing there in an orange suit. Where were you when he was two? Where were you when he was twelve? Where were you when he was eighteen, and how come you don't know he had a pistol?" Before he is finished, Cosby beats up on the black poor for their horrible education, their style of dress, the names they give their children, their backward speech and their consumptive habits. As a cruel coda, Cosby even suggests to the black poor that "God is tired of you."

It is not remarkable that such sentiments exist. Similar comments can be heard in countless black spaces: barbershops and beauty shops; pulpits and pavement platforms; street corners and suite hallways; and civil rights conventions and political conferences. These cultural settings give such ideas an interpretive context that they often lack when they bleed beyond ghetto walls and comfortable black meeting places and homes into the wider world. Cosby bypassed, or, more accurately, short-circuited, the policing mechanism the black elite — the Afristocracy — habitually use to keep such

thoughts from public view. (This is done not so much to spare the poor but to save the black elite from further embarrassment. And no matter how you judge Cosby's comments, you can't help but believe that a great deal of his consternation with the poor stems from his desire to remove the shame he feels in their presence and about their activity in the world.)

Usually the sort of bile that Cosby spilled is more expertly contained, or at least poured on its targets in ways that escape white notice. Cosby's remarks betray seething class warfare in black America that has finally boiled over to the general public. It is that general public, especially white social critics and other prophets of black ethical erosion, that has been eager for Cosby's dispatches from the tortured front of black class war. Cosby's comments let many of these whites off the hook. If what Cosby says is true, then critics who have said the same, but who courted charges of racism, are vindicated. There's nothing like a formerly poor black multimillionaire bashing poor blacks to lend credence to the ancient assaults they've endured from the dominant culture.

Cosby's overemphasis on personal responsibility, not structural features, wrongly locates the source of poor black suffering — and by implication its remedy — in the lives of the poor. When you think the problems are personal, you think the solutions are the same. If only the poor were willing to work harder, act better, get educated, stay out of jail and parent more effectively, their problems would go away. It's hard to argue against any of these things in the abstract; in principle such suggestions sound just fine. But one could do all of these things and still be in bad shape at home, work or school. For instance, Cosby completely ignores shifts in the economy that give value to some work while other work, in the words of William Julius Wilson, "disappears." In our high-tech, high-skilled economy where low-skilled work is being scaled back, phased out, exported, or severely under-compensated, all the right behavior in the world won't create better jobs with more pay. And without such support, all the goals that Cosby expresses

See Cosby on page 11

Melton from page 6

would increase college education opportunities for graduates of Michigan's K-12 school system by providing free college tuition to in-state schools.

Investing in areas of education will benefit Michigan businesses and families and make our state a leader in the 21st Century. Too many of our students lack the resources to afford college. We need to give our children the best K-12 education possible and then provide them the opportunity of a world-class college education.

By providing our students a top-notch education system, we will attract the businesses and people who will make Michigan second to none.

Modeled after the privately initiated Kalamazoo Promise, which guarantees graduates of Kalamazoo Public Schools free college tuition at any university or community college in Michigan, the Michigan Promise Zone Act would authorize the creation of promise zones throughout the state in areas that have a combination of low rates of educational attainment and high rates of poverty and unemployment.

During the first two years of the program, the promise zones have to raise funds through private donations.

Michigan promise zones can be created in cities, townships, counties, local school districts or intermediate school districts that have a high level of poverty. Participating communities would need to show a significant local financial commitment to qualify for the designation of the promise zone.

Since the creation of the Kalamazoo Promise, educators and community leaders have cited multiple positive impacts throughout Kalamazoo, including increased graduation rates and college enrollment, and higher property values and a major positive economic impact. The success of our state depends on the future of our students. The Michigan Promise Zone Act is an opportunity to turn our state's economy around and lead the world in education.

Tim Melton - Democrat
State Representative
29th House District, Pontiac & Auburn Hills
888-MELTON-4
timmelton@house.mi.gov

THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE AWAITS YOU... ARE YOU READY?

"I have returned to the area of my birth to make a difference"
Joseph P. Cool, President

Cool & Associates, Inc.
"Where Quality is Never an Accident"

PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Born at St. Joe's Hospital
PCH - 64 OU - 68 UNC - 78
Successfully worked in 54 countries
Cultural organization memberships
Veteran - US Army - Germany, Korea
International Registries of Professionals
Basic knowledge of 5 languages + English

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

International Business Development
Multi-Tasking
Problem Solving
International Marketing
Customer Service
Training & Development

NEED A GUEST SPEAKER?
Tell me your Audience and Theme
I'll bring the Global Marketplace



Tel/Fax: (248) 683 1130, Email: jcool@cool-associates.com Website: www.cool-associates.com

—What's Going on Around Us

Is Bill Cosby Right About Black Youth?

Cosby from page 10

for the black poor are not likely to become reality. If the rigidly segregated educational system continues to miserably fail poor blacks by failing to prepare their children for the world of work, then admonitions to “stay in school” may ring hollow.

In this light, the imprisonment of black people takes on political consequence. Cosby may be right that most black folk in jail are not “political prisoners,” but it doesn’t mean that their imprisonment has not been politicized. Given the vicious way blacks have been targeted for incarceration, Cosby’s comments about poor blacks who end up in jail are dangerously naïve and empirically wrong. Cosby’s critique of criminal behavior among poor blacks neglects the massive body of work that catalogs the unjust imprisonment of young blacks. This is not to suggest an apologia for black thugs; instead, it suggests that a disproportionate number of black (men) are incarcerated for nonviolent drug offenses. Moreover, Cosby seems to offer justification for the police killing a young black for a trivial offense (the theft of a Coca-Cola or pound cake), neglecting the heinous injustices of the police against blacks across the land. Further, Cosby neglects to mention that crime occurs in all classes and races, though it is not equally judged and prosecuted.

Cosby also slights the economic, social, political and other structural barriers that poor black parents are up against: welfare reform, dwindling resources, export of jobs and ongoing racial stigma. And then there are the problems of the working poor: folk who rise up early every day and often work more than forty hours a week, and yet barely, if ever, make it above the poverty level. We must acknowledge the plight of both poor black (single) mothers and poor black fathers, and the lack of social support they confront. Hence, it is incredibly difficult to spend as much time with children as poor black parents might like, especially since they will be demonized if they fail to provide for their children’s basic needs. But doing so deflects critical attention and time from child-rearing duties — duties that are difficult enough for two-parent, two-income, intact middle-class families. The characteristics Cosby cites are typical of all families that confront poverty the world over. They are not indigenous to the black poor; they are symptomatic of the predicament of poor people in general. And Cosby’s mean-spirited characterizations of the black poor as licentious, sexually promiscuous, materialistic and wantonly irresponsible can be made of all classes in the nation. (Paris Hilton, after all, is a huge star for just these reasons.) Moreover, Cosby’s own problems — particularly the affair he had that led to the very public charge that he may have fathered a child — suggest that not only poor people do desperate things. In fact, as we reflect on his family troubles over the years, we get a glimpse of the unavoidable pain and contradictions that plague all families, rich and poor.

Cosby’s views on education have in some respects changed for the worse. His earlier take on the prospects of schooling for the poor was more humane and balanced. In his 1976 dissertation, Cosby argued against “institutional racism” and maintained that school systems failed the poorest and most vulnerable black students. It is necessary as well to acknowledge the resegregation of American education (when in truth it was

hardly desegregated to begin with). The failure of *Brown v. Board* to instigate sufficient change in the nation’s schools suggests that the greatest burden — and responsibility — should be on crumbling educational infrastructures. In suburban neighborhoods, there are \$60-million schools with state-of-the-art technology, while inner city schools fight desperately for funding for their students. And anti-intellectualism, despite Cosby’s claims, is hardly a black phenomenon; it is endemic to the culture. Cosby also spies the critical deficiency of the black poor in their linguistic habits, displaying his ignorance about “black English” and “Ebonics.” But the intent of Ebonics, according to its advocates, is to help poor black youth speak “standard” English while retaining an appreciation for their dialects and “native tongues.” All of this suggests that structural barriers, much more than personal desire, shape the educational experiences of poor blacks. In fact, *Fat Albert* and the *Cosby Kids*, Cosby’s lauded ’70s television cartoon series, won greater acceptance for a new cast of black identities and vernacular language styles. Cosby has made money and gained further influence from using forms of Black English he now violently detests.

Cosby’s comments betray the ugly generational divide in black America. His disregard for the hip-hop generation is not unique, but it is still disheartening. Cosby’s poisonous view of young folk who speak a language he can barely parse simmers with hostility and resentment. And yet, some of the engaged critique he seeks to make of black folk — of their materialism, their consumptive desires, their personal choices, their moral aspirations, their social conscience — is broadcast with much more imagination and insight in certain quarters of hip-hop culture. (Think of Kanye West’s track, “All Falls Down,” which displays a self-critical approach to the link between consumption and the effort to ward off racial degradation.) Cosby detests youth for their hip-hop dress, body piercing and the pseudo-African-sounding names they have. Yet, body piercing and baggy clothes express identity among black youth, and not just beginning with hip-hop culture. Moreover, young black entrepreneurs like Sean “P. Diddy” Combs and Russell Simmons have made millions from their clothing lines. There are generational tensions over self-definition; arguments over clothes and body markings reflect class, age and intracultural conflicts as well. I think that, contrary to Cosby’s argument, it does have something to do with the African roots of black identity, and perhaps with Cosby’s ignorance of and discomfort with those roots. And Cosby’s ornery, ill-informed diatribe against black naming is a snapshot of his assault on poor black identity. Names like Shaniqua and Taliqua are meaningful cultural expressions of self-determination and allow relatively powerless blacks to fashion their identities outside the glare of white society. And it didn’t just start in this generation. Cosby’s inability to discern the difference between Taliqua and Muhammad, an ancient Muslim name, is as remarkable as it is depressing — and bigoted in its rebuff to venerable forms of black identity and culture.

Cosby’s comments don’t exist in a cultural or political vacuum. His views have traction in conservative (and some liberal) circles because they bolster the belief that less money, political action and societal intervention

— and more hard work and personal responsibility — are the key to black success. While Cosby can surely afford to ignore what white folk think, the majority of black folk can’t reasonably dismiss whites in influential places. Cosby has said that he’s not worried about how the white right wing might use his speech, but it certainly fits nicely with their twisted views of the black poor. The poor folk Cosby has hit the hardest are most vulnerable to the decisions of the powerful groups of which he has demanded the least: public policy makers, the business and social elite, and political activists. Poor black folk cannot gain asylum from the potentially negative effects of Cosby’s words on public policy makers and politicians who decide to put into play measures that support Cosby’s narrow beliefs.

Cosby also contends that black folk can’t blame white folk for our plight. His discounting of structural forces and his exclusive focus on personal responsibility, and black self-help, ignore the persistence of the institutional racism Cosby lamented in his dissertation. To be sure, even when black folk argued for social justice, we never neglected the simultaneous pursuit of personal responsibility and self-help, since that’s often the only help we had. In the end, Cosby’s views may make white and black liberal fence-sitters unfairly critical of the black poor. Cosby may even convince them that personal behavior will help the poor more than social programs, thus letting white and black elites off the hook. There is a strong counterpoint to Cosby’s evasive, and dismissive, racial politics in his own home. I think it is important to recall the famous letter Cosby’s wife, Camille, penned in 1998 in *USA Today* — written in the aftermath of the tragic murder of their son by a Russian immigrant, excoriating America for teaching her son’s murderer the bigotry that fueled his lethal act. Unlike Cosby’s comments, Camille’s essay drew the ire and rebuke of pundits and the political establishment. Camille Cosby was told that America provided the opportunity for her husband to become a rich artist. By contrast, Bill Cosby’s remarks were embraced by the same establishment, as Cosby was praised for his self-help strategy of pulling himself up from poverty to plenty. Thus, these critics want it both ways. I think when it comes to the issues at hand, contrasting Camille’s letter and Cosby’s remarks proves that she is the Cosby with genuine insight into race relations.

It is clear that Cosby has touched a raw nerve of class and generation in black America. What he said — and our response to it — goes far beyond a single speech before a group of blacks who were celebrating the achievements of the past. This story is so powerful and controversial, and continues to resonate in our society, because it goes to the heart of the struggle for the identity of a culture. It also embodies the different visions put forth by older and younger members of the race. In a sense, Cosby is Moses, Elijah and King Lear rolled into one. Like Moses, he has laid down the law, but he is realizing, as we all must at some point, that he may not get the chance to see the Promised Land in his own day. The sweet reward of hard work slips through the hands as easily as water in a rushing stream. But finally, as it says in the book of Hebrews, “these all died in faith not having received the promises.” We must all face the reality at some point that the fulfill-

ment of our hopes and dreams is ever in the distance, flung to a horizon that recedes as we march forward, and can only be brought closer in the collective push ahead, and often not through one’s own energy but through the efforts of some Joshua — the younger helper of Moses, the one God appointed to lead the people after Moses’ great journey came to a close. It’s hard to hand over the reins and embrace the transition, but it must be done. This doesn’t mean that old prophets and sages are of no use; it means they must learn to coexist with an upcoming phalanx of rebels with new spirits and vision. Even if they wear dreads and baggy pants or speak in ways foreign to the elders.

Like Elijah, Cosby has thrown in the towel and embraced his frustration; like Elijah, he has said, “It is enough!” Elijah felt that he was the only one left to do God’s work and that everyone else had sold out to godless hedonism and corrupt morality. But God told Elijah to rest up, since he was exhausted — Cosby, too, has said, “I’m a tired man” — and, after replenishing himself, to recognize God not in the thunder but in the still small voice, in the serenity of inner circumstances that nourish hope. And then God pointed out to Elijah that there were literally thousands more who had a righteous cause and who were not in Elijah’s camp. Cosby must accept that others have the truth, too, and that they are working in their own way to make things better — for the race, the culture, the community and our struggle.

And finally, like King Lear, Cosby is at war with his children, feeling their fatal betrayal of his fatherly leadership, saying, as did Lear, that “I am more sinned against than sinning.” That, to be sure, is the claim of every generation, of every visionary who feels that the people he has loved and brought along have somehow fatally departed from the path of wisdom and morality when they go their own way. There are undoubtedly lethal circumstances afoot in black America, and we do indeed need the voices of the elders to ring out and the wisdom of the fathers and mothers to resonate loudly. But transition and transformation bring inevitable struggles between generations, or at least between their leading lights, and sometimes the wrestling is bloody and unraveling. We must resist the temptation to take refuge in hurt feelings and raging resentment as we grapple with how our children live, or choose to leave us, or even how we handle our recognition of their betrayals and disaffections. Loyalty to particular figures may not be as important, in the end, as loyalty to the cause of enlarging the hopes of the individual and racial family.

The conversation that Cosby has started endures because the people who must engage him, and the issues he has raised, are likewise enduring. Thus, what Cosby said reflects on the griefs and hopes and losses and pains of an entire generation of noble men and women who nonetheless, like the rest of us, are human and at times frail and misled. We must learn from each other, listen to each other, correct each other and struggle with each other if the destiny of our people is to be secure. And we must fight for the best that is within our reach, even if that means disagreeing with icons and resisting the myopia of mighty men. What Cosby started is left to us to finish.

Excerpted from the book "Is Bill Cosby Right?" by Michael Eric Dyson; Copyright (c) 2005.

—Senior Citizens Matters—

Grandparents - Getting Organized for Childcare

A plumber wouldn't show up for work without a wrench in his toolkit. And a carpenter couldn't do her job without a good hammer. Professionals need tools. And so do grandparents who provide childcare for grandchildren. It doesn't matter how often or for how long you look after grandkids. You'll do your best if you bring along some basic gear.

Some grandparents bring books or a craft project to entertain grandchildren during an evening of babysitting. Others pack favorite recipes if they're staying for a week or more. A grandparent who provides daily childcare may rely on a comfortable pair of shoes to chase after toddlers. These tools are nice to have. But they aren't the most important items in a grandparent's toolkit.

Information—and lots of it—is what grandparent childcare providers need most. Having this information makes grandparents feel more confident. It helps grandchildren feel more secure. And it lets parents relax!

Ruth Meyer Brown is a grandmother who babysits her grandchildren for weeks at a time. During the course of these babysitting adventures, Brown has learned many lessons about the best approaches to childcare—including ways to encourage good behavior, plan child-friendly meals, have fun, and stay organized. She writes about all of these lessons in her book, "A Grandmother's Guide to Babysitting."

Brown says that being organized is the key to being a good babysitter. And having the right information is the key to being organized. Here's some of the information to include in your own toolkit, says Brown:

Contact Information

There's a good chance you'll need to talk to your adult children while you are watch-

ing their kids. Have parents' contact information handy so you don't have to search for it. Write down office, cell and pager numbers. If parents are traveling, get the phone number of the hotel or home where they're staying.

Your contact list should also include names, addresses and phone numbers for:

- The children's doctor and dentist.
- The local hospital and pharmacy.
- The poison control center.
- The fire and police departments.
- The veterinarian, if the children have a pet.
- The children's schools and after school programs.
- Neighbors who can lend a helping hand.
- Coaches, scout leaders, and others who work with your grandchildren.
- The plumber, electrician, and furnace repair person, just in case something breaks.

Be sure to get directions to the places where you'll have to drive.

Emergency! Emergency!

One of the most important pieces of paper in your toolkit will be a "Letter of Permission." This letter should say that you are responsible for your grandchildren for a specified period of time. It should also give you permission to seek medical and dental care for them, and to deal with all school-related issues. A parent should sign and date the letter. Keep this letter handy in case a doctor or teacher wants to see it.

You will also want to have:

- Copies of your adult child's insurance cards.
- A list of prescription drugs the kids are taking, who gets what and when.
- A list of allergies that the children have.
- The location of the first aid kit.

• Medical information for children who have chronic illnesses like asthma or ear infections. How should you treat these illnesses if they occur?

Your Grandchildren's Routines

Routines make little ones feel safe and secure. They also make the day go more smoothly. That's why it's important to learn as much as you can about how your grandchildren get through each day. For example:

- When do the children wake up? Go to school? Go to bed?
- What are the morning and evening rituals?
- What do the children eat—and what shouldn't they have?
- What after-school activities do the children attend? Do you have to drive them?
- When does homework get done?

There's a lot to learn and remember. Write down as much of the daily routine as you can. Review it with parents before they leave. Ask questions!

The Animal Kingdom

Chances are your grandchildren have a pet. If you're lucky, that pet is a well-behaved cat. But it could be an energetic dog or an exotic reptile. Who's in charge of this pet? If it's you, find out exactly what you're supposed to do. Don't want to babysit Spot or Whiskers? Speak up before you arrive. Ask parents either to assign pet care to a grandchild, or to call the kennel.

Soccer Grandma?

Your grandchildren may have busier schedules than you expected. Ask for a master calendar of all the things they have to do while you're on duty. Do you need to drive the children to sporting events, practices, scout meetings or doctor's appointments? Better get directions.

Enforcing the Rules

Don't want to be the "heavy" when you're watching your grandchildren? Let their parents make the rules. But be sure to get lots of information about those rules before parents leave home. For example:

- How much television can grandchildren watch? What shows are approved?
- When can a child use the phone and Internet?
- Are school-age children allowed to go to a friend's home after school?
- Can the kids ride their bikes to the local park?
- Are teens allowed to drive? What's the curfew?

You'll think of more questions. Write down the answers!

What about the House?

Are you providing childcare at your grandchild's house? Be sure that you know something about that house. Find out where the keys are—the ones that open the front door, cars and storage areas. Know the location of the thermostat, fuse boxes and main water connection. Learn about the alarm system. Locate flashlights, candles and matches in case the lights go out.

Have fun!

You take on lots of responsibility when you provide childcare for grandchildren. It can be overwhelming. Don't worry, says Brown. As long as you're prepared—and you bring your tools along—your time with your grandchildren will be fun and productive!

Contact - AARP Grandparent Information Center (888) 687-2277 -Article copied from AARP website www.aarp.org/grandparents

—Health Watch—

Sickle Cell Anemia

This is the second part of a two-part series. The first ran in a previous issue.



Selvy Hall

Did you know there are different types of sickle cell disease?

• People who inherit two sickle cell genes, one from each parent, have a type of sickle cell disease called SS. This is commonly called "sickle cell anemia" and is usually the most severe

form of the disease.

• People who inherit one sickle cell gene from one normal gene have the sickle cell trait. People with sickle cell trait usually do not have any of the symptoms of the disease. However, it is possible for a person with sickle cell trait to have complications of the disease under extreme conditions, such as:

- High altitude
- Increased pressure (scuba diving)
- Low Oxygen
- Dehydration

In addition, a person with sickle cell trait can pass the disease onto their children.

Sickle Cell Anemia

Sickle Cell Anemia is a genetic blood disorder that most commonly affects people whose ancestors come from Africa, Spanish-

speaking regions in the western Hemisphere South and Central America, Saudi Arabia, India, and Mediterranean countries.

It has been proven that sickle cell anemia is inherited from both parents.

In some individuals the red blood cells can change from a round to a sickle shape.

Sickle Cell Anemia causes severe pain from time to time. The pain attacks may necessitate several hospitalizations per year.

Other health problems that a person with Sickle Cell Anemia can have include leg ulcers, decreased exercise tolerance, pneumonia, gallstones and strokes.

Young children with Sickle Cell Anemia are susceptible to "sudden" death from infections.

Women with sickle cell disease can have a healthy pregnancy but need to be extra careful to avoid problems during pregnancy.

Current Michigan law requires that all newborns be tested for the Sickle Cell Disease.

Did you know there is a cure for sickle cell disease?

Bone marrow/stem cell transplant can cure sickle cell disease. For the transplant to work, the bone marrow must be a close match. Usually, the best donor is a brother or sister.

Listed are few things an individual can do to avoid complications:

- They should have regular medical exams, vision, tests for silent strokes, etc.

- Prevent infections (take necessary antibiotics, penicillin which is prescribed)
- Learn healthy eating habits
- Avoid long exposure to heat
- Look for clinical studies
- Get support, find a patient support group, camps for children with sickle cell, etc
- Treatment consists of painkillers for pain, transfusions for anemia and antibiotics for infections

People with sickle cell disease can live full lives and enjoy most of the activities that other people do.

MOST IMPORTANTLY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE ARE THE BEST ADVOCATE FOR OURSELVES IN ALL AREAS OF OUR LIVES.

FOR FURTHER INFO CALL THE PONTIAC SICKLE CELL OFFICE AT 248-858-7222.

DIVINE BREEZE

Specializing in Residential, Commercial and Industrial Cleaning Services




SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.
Using Technology in Cleaning Services
Honest, reliable, diligent service
Competitive pricing
Finest sanitary cleaning services

Kofi Annorh, Proprietor

Call Today - Quick Clean

Tel: (248) 636-8448 • FAX: (248) 683-1130
2760 Cherokee Hills #32 Waterford, MI 48328
Email: divinebreeze@cool-associates.com

-Voices in the Community-

ENCOURAGER'S CORNER: The Gift of Life®



Dianthia Spann

filled objectives are to get, get, and get more without much thought given as to what we will give in return if we give anything at all. What a difference you and I can make in the lives of others in so many ways by simply giving. I am talking about the gift of life, a genuine love for people to the point of giving of oneself. Literally to save another's life.

The reward of a lifetime I believe is in knowing you have given the ultimate contribution, which will cause another, your brother or sister to live. And guess what I know, neither color nor race matters, religion matters not, education, financial status or who you may or may not know doesn't measure at all on this scale when it comes to the gift of life. What a distinction can be clearly defined from our acts of love. There is nothing which love cannot accomplish. In essence we are the gift.

It's not until someone near and dear to your heart becomes ill that you really begin to think about what you can do to help and make a difference, not only to that particular person but to someone, anyone that stands in need of an organ transplant, bone marrow or even blood for a transfusion. Someone needs your gift. During this wonderful season of love and giving be proactive and find out what you can do to donate blood, register to be an organ donor, be tested for the national registry for bone marrow. The American

Red Cross website has a logo that really caught my attention it says, "Together we prepare". How powerful is that, the operative word being we, O what we can do jointly, united in the spirit of love one gift at a time.

Tomorrow will be better because you, I, we, will operate in the spirit of love with a willingness to give to touch another. We can do this together. **LOVE IS THE GIFT.... GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE**

We all love receiving gifts and I must say there is something quite exciting about knowing that someone thought enough about you to take time from their busy schedule to select something just for you. I've discovered that it doesn't have to be big, pricy or even grand nor does it have to be a special occasion or event to get the maximum response. Isn't it the simplest things that make the greatest impact? A true gift does not come with demands or stipulations. It doesn't come with attachments or unnecessary conditions. Sharing yourself, your feelings and your affections is what a gift is all about. You give because you want to give and not because you have this expectation of what you will get in return. True giving is not a trading session, or let's make a deal, (I give in exchange for), but true giving offers from a heart of love, unconditionally rendered and only wants to cause to be. To be what you ask, well your gift provides occasion to the recipient to celebrate for that moment being whatever they can imagine.

I am talking about the gift of life and love, since you can only give the gift of life when you are operating as a gift of love.

Sounds like a lot doesn't it? Considering it, it is general speaking our natural propensity and tendency to be a self-ish people with self-center ambitions, goals and motives. Our aspirations with dream

A Voice in the Community

By Ken E. Corr



Ken E. Corr

"Don't Drive Drunk"

**Drunk driving by law
is considered a crime.
You could take someone's life --
You might even do time.**

**Some bars serve free popcorn
I don't know what they think.
But it makes me real thirsty
Why not have one more drink?**

**Stevie Wonder wrote lyrics
That are clear as can be.
Don't drive drunk is his message
Even Stevie can see!**

**We've got MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers)
We've got SADD (Students Against Drunk Drivers)
Yes, they share the same view,
You should never drive drunk
Hope you feel that way too!**

**Should you choose to drive drunk
Say you make that mistake,
It might very well be
The last one you make.**



The World According to Joe Cool



Joe Cool

Hi Pontiac - Joe Cool here and honored to write this article. To all who have contacted me regarding my previous articles many thanks. In this article, let's talk about the spirit of December Holidays throughout the world. There are many different types of Festivals celebrated during the month of December. I want to relate to you two events in which I made presentations at different locations and audiences.

The first is the presentation entitled "Christmas Around the World" which I gave at the Children's Christmas Party at the Mexican Mutual Society (sometimes known as La Loma) located in Auburn Hills. Children and Parents gathered around the screen and we spoke about how Christmas is celebrated in several different countries.

Through visual slides, I described the origin and meaning of Poinsettias, Christmas Trees, Candy Canes, Holly and Mistletoe. Through words and photos, I described the Christmas celebrations in several countries including Mexico, England, Germany and Australia. Did you know - Australia is in the southern hemisphere and in December it is summertime. Many Australians celebrate Christmas "at the beach" with family and friends where they also exchange gifts. We couldn't do that here in Michigan that's for sure. As a group, we said "Merry Christmas" in 8 different languages. That was fun for all and from the comments I received from both children and adults all had a great time and learned a lot. "It was a pleasure to see the faces on the kids as Mr. Cool presented an

educational and cultural seminar about the various activities that surround Christmas", said Kristina Hawkins, President of the organization.

The second is the presentation entitled "December Festivals Around the World" which I gave at the residential community of Village Green Of Waterford. Once again, through words and photos, I described the unique Festivals that are celebrated in several countries. The Festivals I described included Hanukkah, The Feast of St. Nicholas, Bodhi Day Observance, Eid al-Adha, Christmas and Kwanzaa - this order was selected due to the order of observance in the month of December 2007. For each Festival, I described local activities of the children including visiting of family and friends and the exchange of gifts. "It was very knowledgeable to connect with the cultures through education provided by the presentation. I was very thrilled!" said MaryBeth Bowers, Executive Manager of Village Green of Waterford.

WOW! What a great time had by all!! We all learned something about December Festivals and how other cultures celebrate in their own unique way. There is no right way or wrong way to celebrate Festivals throughout the year - only different ways. Having worked in virtually every culture on this planet we call Earth, I have found that to be successful, one has to be flexible and adaptable. Would you like a presentation to your children or adult group describing various celebrations and Festivals throughout the year? The world is full of Festivals and I have personally experienced many. Send your requests to Joe Cool at ThePontiacNews@sbcglobal.net and I will answer in future columns.

Ask Elaine.com

By Elaine Smith-Wright



Mrs. Smith-Wright started out as a Mass Communications major at Oakland University and now holds a B.A. degree in Nursing Home Administration and the Certificate of Gerontology and Sociology of the Aging from Wiley College along with a MBA Degree from East Texas Baptist University in Management. She also holds a Certificate in Filmmaking, Screenwriting and Directing from the Motion Picture Institute of Michigan.

Dear Elaine:

I am 45 and have three daughters. Being a Baby Boomer, I have always dressed similar to my girls; being hip and modern but not ridiculous. Their friends always want to know why I dress so young. It's the way I've always dressed. No one can say that I'm an old fuddy-duddy. I make sure that there are no mini skirts or tube tops involved (because with three daughters I can't wear that ANYWAY!) I like the way I dress, they like the way I dress but my own mother thinks I need to pick something out of HER closet and wear it. When my husband and I go out, he thinks I still look hot and I still manage to get looks from other men but when I'm around my mother, I feel like I need to go and get a blanket and throw it over me. How can I prove to her that what I wear is okay without hurting her feelings or compromising my own style?

Signed:

It's My Wardrobe and I'll Wear It If I Want To

Dear My Wardrobe:

WOW! Trying to please all of the people all of the time or some of the people all of the time or all of the people some of the time or some of the people some of the time or.....See where I'm going with this? It's just impossible to be everything to everybody all of the time girlfriend. All I can say is be true to yourself. People who have known you all of your life know that this is just the way you are. Usually by 45 you have done just about all of the changing that you are going to do unless you haven't hit that mid-life crisis period yet. When that happens, they just might get to see that mini skirt and tube top combination after all!

Good Luck!

We're Here for *Life*



North
Oakland
Medical
Centers

Dear Community Members:

Since 1910, when North Oakland Medical Centers became Oakland County's first hospital, we have always prided ourselves in our ability to deliver high-quality health care and health-related services.

We are aggressively working towards retooling our service offerings and arranging for a long and successful future. Our vision has always been that North Oakland Medical Centers will provide superior health care in a welldefined set of services for the citizens of Pontiac and northern Oakland County.



JOHN GRAHAM

Our hospital has many outstanding programs of which we are proud including:

- Our family medicine programs;
- Our teen health centers based right in Pontiac High Schools;
- Our ambulatory care center in Waterford and radiology services in Clarkston;
- Our development of a 40-bed Long Term Acute Care Unit in partnership with Select Specialties;
- Our inpatient services in medicine, surgery, psychiatry and rehabilitation.

As you may know, we have also entered into an affiliation with St. Joseph Mercy Oakland to further improve the delivery of health care to the greater Pontiac community. It is a major part of our strategic plan to ensure the future viability of North Oakland Medical Centers. We believe it will be more beneficial to our community to collaborate rather than compete.

As you can see by the plans that are underway, we are building a path to a successful future. North Oakland Medical Centers is here to serve the community for generations to come.

Respectfully,

John Graham
Chief Executive Officer
North Oakland Medical Centers

North Oakland 
MEDICAL CENTERS

We are NOMC, We're Here for Life.

Call or visit us...

MAIN CAMPUS

(248) 857-7200

PHYSICIAN REFERRAL LINE

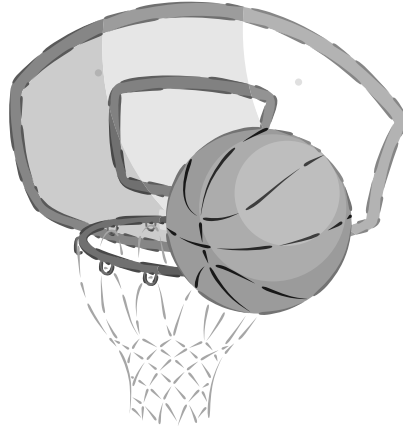
(877) 999-6662

WEB SITE

www.nomc.org

—Sports—

**Get Your Team Ready for the
Annual Welcome Back to School
5 on 5
Basketball
Tournament**



PRESENTED BY:

The Lady Panthers & Sky's The Limit Community Foundation

DATE: Saturday, January 26,

2008 from 8am until 8pm

LOCATION: @ Pontiac Central High School's Fieldhouse and Auxiliary Gym

Girls and Boys ages 9 through 15 – Teams by various age Division

COST: \$195 per team with referee fee included

For more information or to register contact:

Reggie Green – 248-495-4511 or Chris Riley 248-636-5054

This is a three game guarantee tournament. The top two teams in each division will compete for a team trophy and medals!

Community Service Award Winner

Bishop William H. Murphy, Jr. Senior Pastor of New Mount Moriah International Church was honored on Friday December 7th by Prudential for his service to the community. The event was held at the Somerset Inn in Troy, Michigan located on 2601 W. Big Beaver Rd.

Bishop Murphy currently serves as the Pastor of New Mount Moriah church which was founded in Pontiac, Michigan over 18 years ago. The ministry has grown to include locations in Detroit, Michigan and Mount Clemens, Michigan. He also serves as the President of the Oakland County Ministerial Fellowship, an organization made up of clergy members of all faiths.

Currently, he serves as the Bishop of the State of Michigan for the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship. He has oversight of

over 50 churches throughout the State of Michigan.

Bishop Murphy is most known for being a man of prayer; he currently serves additionally as the International Bishop of Intercessory Prayer for the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship.

Bishop Murphy has served the community for years through community outreaches, including feeding and clothing the poor. He has also worked with the Pontiac School District in both High Schools and within the middle and elementary schools. He has sponsored mentoring programs and promoted safe learning environments for our children. Most recently he worked with the City of Pontiac Police Department Clean Parks initiative. He is also a member of the Governor's Faith Based Steering Committee.



Bishop Murphy with wife and family

—Community Calendar—

OAKLAND COUNTY EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY COUNCIL

William Beaumont Hospitals & Oakland County Human Resources Department

PRESENTS: Monthly Diversity Educational Forum Series

TOPIC: "Towards an Understanding of Diversity, Equal Employment Opportunity and Inclusion and their impact in the Workplace – Focus on Best Practices"

FEATURING: Carey Ford, Ph.D. Department Chair - Social Sciences - Baker College

Thursday January 17, 2008 • 1 pm – 3 pm

Oakland County Executive Office Building 41 West Auditorium and Conference Facility
2100 Pontiac Lake Road - Waterford, MI 48328

To learn more about any of these monthly presentations or to sign up for sessions, please contact OCEDC PR/Marketing Chairperson Frank Russell at 248-858-5204, fax 248-975-9742 or email @ russellf@oakgov.com or Andrew Petressco at 248-338-1705 or email apetressco_302@hotmail.com

PLEASE RSVP BY TUESDAY JANUARY 15TH

— Employment Opportunities —



Human Resources Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency, 196 Cesar E. Chavez Ave., P.O. Box 430598, Pontiac, MI 48343-0598
Email: EMPLOYMENT@olhsa.org
(248) 209-2615 FAX Website: www.olhsa.org

The Pontiac News is in need of contributing writers and other staff - See list below!
Send your resume to
ThePontiacNews@sbcglobal.net

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

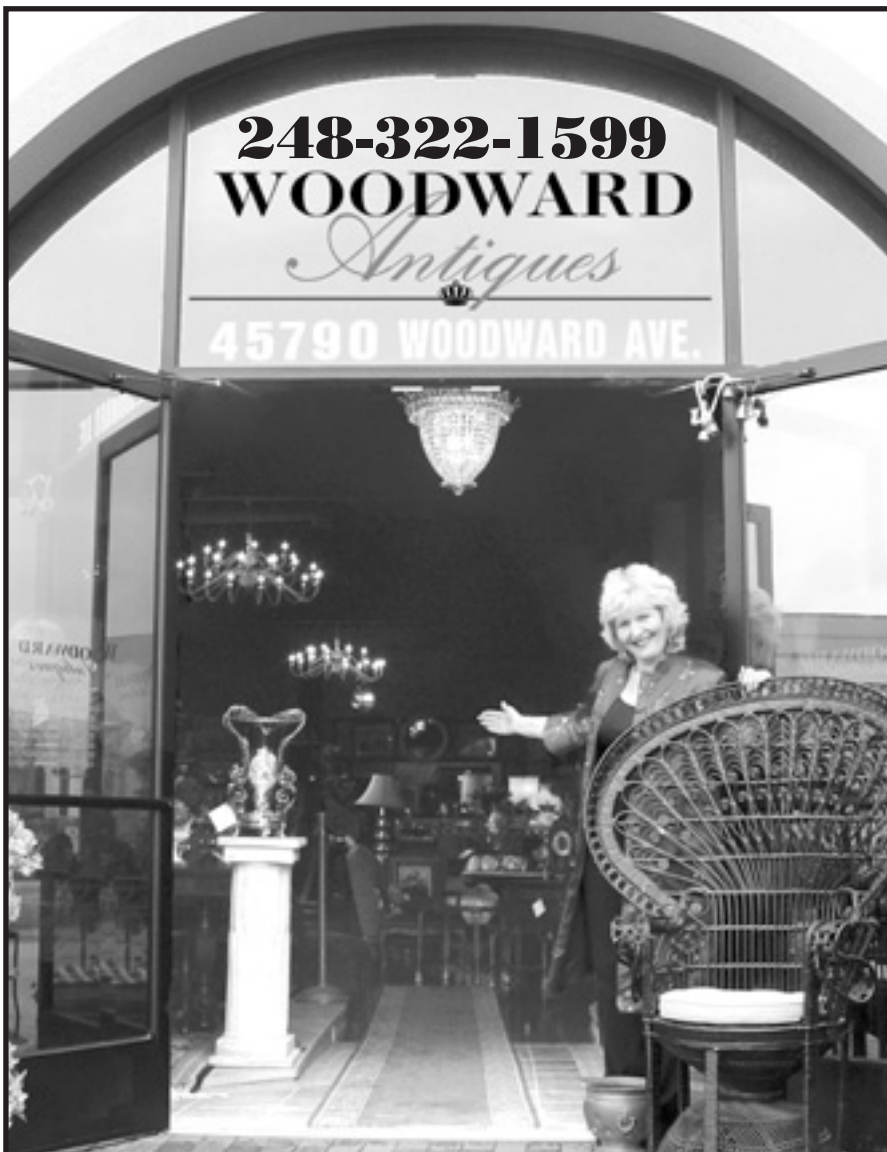
The Pontiac News is looking for highly self-motivated, enthusiastic, strong customer skills individuals to build our outside sales team. This position will report to the Advertising Manager. This is an Entry-level sales position with onsite training - NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY BUT PREFERRED.

DIRECTOR OF SALES

The Pontiac News, a community newspaper based in the City of Pontiac Michigan, is seeking a highly motivated, results driven Sales Director. This position is accountable for assisting with the direction, coordination and control of advertising for TPN and the management of sales and support staff to ensure the attainment of advertising sales goals.

ADVERTISING MANAGER

The Pontiac News seeks, an advertising manager. The person who fills this position will be responsible for growing classified revenue through outbound sales (cold calling), handling incoming advertiser calls, and executing sales strategies. The candidate selected must be able to work independently, be well organized and work efficiently in a deadline environment. The ideal candidate will have a proven track record in sales either in an outside media sales capacity or inside sales business development environment.



248-322-1599
WOODWARD
Antiques
45790 WOODWARD AVE.

Community Events

The Pontiac News Holiday Celebration



Chuck Johnson & Portia Fields Anderson @ TPN Celebration



Interim Supt Calvin Cupidore, Judge Cynthia Walker, Mrs. Cupidore & Ken Corr



Lucy Payne, Leon Jukowski & Hubert Price Jr



State representative Tim Melton - Host Mary Russell & Dianthia Spann @ TPN Reception



Kashif Russell - Naazir Russell - Kofi Annorh - Rahim & Mary Russell @ TPN Reception



Ellen Ferguson - Bishop Kenneth Ray Anthony and Betty Settles @ TPN Reception

Dr Jeff Martin & Attorney Albert Hatchett Holiday Event @ The Crofoot



Dr Jeff Martin, his mother Mrs. Holland along sisters & nieces @ Crofoot



Shirley Mason and Host Irma Hayes @ Crofoot



Mrs. Albert Hatchett, Mrs. Esmo Woods and Friend at Crofoot



Attorney Albert Hatchett & Esmo Woods @ Crofoot