



Seedy character

When the snow gets too deep and the food scarce, a furry thief always know where to go. His feathered friends may cry foul, but this fellow's hollow stomach is reason enough to rob the bird feeder. (Staff photo) by Gary Caskey)

Brock's barbs highlight convention

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI
It was the South versus the South. William Brock, Republican national chairman and a former U.S. senator from Tennessee, got a boisterous ovation from 1,000 Oakland County Republicans as he ripped Georgian Jimmy Carter's performance as president.

Brock spoke Thursday to one of the largest Republican functions in the state—the annual Lincoln Day dinner at Southfield's Raleigh House.

"JIMMY CARTER was swept into

office on a tidal wave of promises. Now the debris is all around us."

"He promised," Brock said of Carter, "to deregulate the price of natural gas; not to raise taxes; to more effectively lead Congress; to keep U.S. Attorneys out of politics; and to bring a new competency to the White House." According to Brock, the Carter Administration is a shambles.

The crowd, which had only moments earlier given a thunderous standing

Chairman Wallace Gabler (R-Royal Oak) of the county board of commissioners seems to be cast in the role of peacemaker.

In a surprise address last week, Gabler called for a truce between the board of commissioners and the county road commission.

"One of the most important ways we can improve services to the citizens of Oakland County is to improve the county road system," Gabler said. "I believe the best approach to this goal is to forge a rebirth of teamwork between this board and the Oakland County Road Commission."

"Such teamwork rather than grandstand criticism, is needed."

The board of commissioners had previously dedicated itself to abolishing the autonomous road commission.

THE COUNTY board appoints all three members of the road commission; they serve three-year terms.

The road commission gets money directly from the state and operates with great independence.

Reform proposals center on placing the road commission's administrative functions under the executive, and giving the elected board of commission-

ers policy-making functions.

In practice, general county government has been at odds with the road commission. So Gabler's remarks were all the more startling when he said:

"In my opinion, the road commission has taken long strides in earning our teamwork."

Those conciliatory remarks were backed by suggestions to bring about debate between the two agencies.

HE INVITED the road commission to address the board of commissioners on a regular basis and asked that the road commission and the board's planning and building committee work together.

Gabler also asked for a "proposal of joint undertakings" by the road commission and the board.

"I believe it would be valuable...to have representatives of both groups attend each other's meetings regularly and meet together more consistently than has been the practice in the past," he said.

OTHER MEMBERS of the board of commissioners appeared surprised at the tone of the speech. They were even more surprised after hearing it was Gabler's address.

The board chairman routinely read the message, without disclosing that it was his speech, during the usual "communications" period of the regular board meeting.

Many commissioners, including Vice-Chairman Lillian Moffitt (R-Birmingham) and Robert McConell (R-Farmington Hills)—two of the board's most knowledgeable members in the field of roads and transportation—thought it was a letter from John Gnaul, the road commission's chair-

'It is time we stressed that improvement of our road system is the goal we seek; that the road commission is the agency established to accomplish that goal and that it is here to stay.'

—Chairman Wallace Gabler

tion between the two boards. "Our problem is that the only time we talk to the road commission is when we have a problem or when they need money."

"A public hearing is just not an adequate vehicle for our input," Mrs. Moffitt said.

EVEN THOUGH most of Gabler's remark were conciliatory in nature, he chided his own board for some of its past actions.

"When, in 1976, the road commissioners asked us to help by placing a road millage before the people, we responded by calling for an advisory vote on abolishing the road commission," he said.

"Calling for abolishment may have saved our political sores, but it did nothing to provide our constituents with a better road system."

"It is time," he continued, "we stressed that improvement of our road system is the goal we seek; that the road commission is the agency established to accomplish that goal and that it is here to stay for quite awhile."



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Cross-country skiing on marked trails is available at Stony Creek Metropark near Rochester.

Trails are 1 1/4 to 1 3/4 miles long and are designed for the beginner, intermediate and proficient skier.

Bing Eberhart, assistant park superintendent, said those who prefer to make their own trails may ski throughout the park except at the nature center area.

Equipment rental is available at the ski center at Eastwood Beach. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

A complete set of equipment (skis, boots

and poles) rents for \$4.50 per half day. Equipment breakage insurance is available for \$2, and \$1 is repaid when equipment is returned in good condition. In addition to the rental fee, a security deposit of \$15 or a driver's license is required if insurance is purchased. If insurance is not purchased, a driver's license, plus \$15 is required.

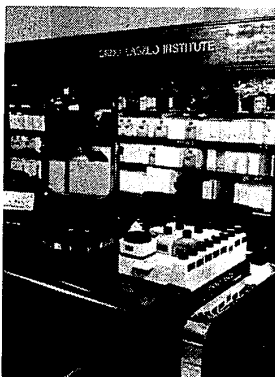
Special weekday group rates are available. Contact the ski center for details.

One hour lessons are given at the center on Saturday and Sunday at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Lessons are \$3 per person.

Call 781-3000 or 781-4342 for snow conditions.

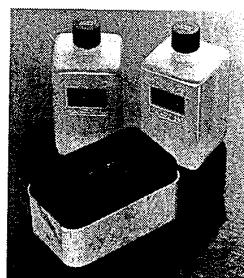
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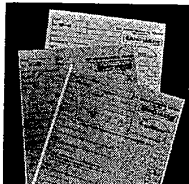
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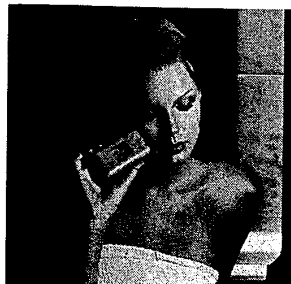
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