



He's superman

Four-year-old Ben McKnight of Farmington Hills easily hoists over his head a 50-inch fiberglass transmission support for passenger cars. It weighs only eight pounds as compared to the 20-pound steel component it is designed to replace. It was exhibited recently at the SAE Exposition at Cobo Hall.

WSU benefit premieres

Robert Stormont, son of Marjorie Stormont of Farmington, is appearing in Edward Bond's "The Sea," a scholarship benefit for Wayne State University at the Hilberry Studio Theatre March 1.

It runs Saturday, March 3, and the following week Wednesday through Saturday, closing March 10. Curtain time is 8:30 p.m.

Bond is one of England's most controversial playwrights. English critic Ronald Bryden, writing in the New York Times, called Bond "the playwright generally regarded abroad as the finest now writing in Britain."

Only recently have his works been attracting wide attention in America. His latest, "The Woman," will have its North American premiere at the Stratford Festival in Canada this summer.

"The Sea" is a comedy set in Edwardian England. A mad draper mistakes two men whose boat has capsized during a storm as invaders from outer space. From that incident all sorts of complications arise.

For ticket information, call the Hilberry box office at 577-2972. Tickets can be purchased at J.L. Hudson's.

Stormont is appearing as Evans. He was first seen at WSU as one of the tragedians in "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead." He is an undergraduate theatre major.

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Tornado weather comes with spring

By MARY LOU CALLAWAY

March, the beginning of spring, also ushers in the tornado season.

Three years ago March 20, a teenage girl was killed in her car at the Orchard Lake-Maple roads intersection in West Bloomfield.

Nearly 50 persons were injured and more than \$4 million in property damage was reported when a twister touched down in that vicinity. It had also hit various other spots in Oakland County.

West Bloomfield is better prepared than it was three years ago. The township is now part of a county-wide tornado siren system. That system has been tested monthly for the past year, says West Bloomfield Sgt. Daniel Pinos.

In a poll last year on people's awareness of the sirens, 61 per cent knew what they were, according to Michael Nieman, Oakland County public information director.

"But there was low awareness of what to do," he added.

The test blast of the siren lasts one minute. The real warning is three minutes long.

"Take cover. Turn on the radio or TV. We emphasize the siren doesn't sound for an all clear," Nieman explains.

West Bloomfield residents and victims still remember that an "all clear" had been broadcast for the area just minutes before the 1976 tornado hit the township's main intersection, devastating homes and the central business district.

"TORNADOS ARE JUST not that scientifically predictable. Normally, they come from the southwest, but not always. We've had them every month of the year, usually in 70 to 75 degree, high humidity weather. April through July are the most dangerous months," says Nieman.

Michigan is the third highest in the country for tornado deaths. Since 1950, there have been 410 tornadoes in the state, killing 227 people.

Winds can reach 100 to 300 miles per hour. They remain along the ground for less than 10 minutes.

If a tornado approaches, Nieman says, your immediate action could

mean the difference between life and death.

Civil Defense authorities advise these precautions:

• Watch the sky for the sudden appearance of violent wind, rain, hail or funnel-shaped clouds.

• Tornado watch means tornadoes are expected to develop.

• Tornado warning means a tornado has been spotted.

• Watches and warnings are broadcast by radio and television stations. Do not call the weather bureau or police. Keep your radio on.

• If a warning is broadcast, take shelter in the basement. A corner away from the direction in which the storm is coming is suggested. Stay away from windows.

• Have a flashlight, pick and shovel and a battery ready. Power could be cut off.

• If you are outdoors, go to the nearest underground building. Do not go to your parked car. If you are in your car, get out and lie as low as possible in the nearest ditch or ravine away from a vehicle or anything else.

• The best place is a small basement room below ground. In homes without basements, take cover in the center of the house in a small room such as a bathroom, closet or under sturdy furniture.

• Keep some windows open but stay away from them. Don't stop to open windows.

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