

OCC plans registration

Registration for the Oakland Community College summer semester will be 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. July 1.

An alphabetical scheduling arrangement will be used. Those unable to register July 1 may do so from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. July 2. Classes begin July 6.

For further information, call the college office of community relations at 647-6200, ext. 232.

Registration will be at the Auburn Hills campus, 2900 Featherstone, Auburn Heights (852-1000); the Highland Lakes campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake (383-7191); the Orchard Ridge campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills (476-9400); the Royal Oak campus, 625 S. Washington, Royal Oak (552-6900); and the Southfield campus, 22322 Rutland Drive, Southfield (552-8900).

Viet vets meet June 27

The Detroit chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America will meet from 1-5 p.m. on Saturday in the lower level of the Southfield Parks and Recreation building, 4600 Evergreen in the Southfield Civic Center.

Scheduled for discussions are updates on the Inside Six in west Los Angeles, aftereffects of exposure to Agent Orange and recent information on post-traumatic stress syndrome studies.

On-TV

Troy firm fights for sanctity of airwaves

By Mike Scanlon
staff writer

This might be a story about a plucky Canadian entrepreneur taking on big business.

It might also be a story about a foreign parasite sucking dry American corporate juices.

There is a difference of opinion. The one sure fact is that a lot of lawyers have been busy lately in a legal slugfest pitting Troy-based ON Television against Video Gallery, a Windsor retailer.

ON TELEVISION is the subscription broadcast company which charges a base fee of \$22.50 a month to about 65,000 Detroit-area customers in exchange for commercial-free programming. It provides home decoders to unscramble its signal.

Video Gallery sells the same sort of home decoder out of a hole-in-the-wall storefront on Windsor's Wyandotte street. The receivers are about the size of a cigar box. When hooked to a television set, the boxes enable viewers to unscramble ON-TV signals. The Windsor store sells the sets for \$169 U.S., or \$199 Canadian.

Some free-traders would label Buddy Baker, co-owner of the Video Gallery, an entrepreneur. Patrick Kerich is not among them.

"HE'S A PARASITE. He's not a businessman. He's a thief," said Kerich. I've got a couple of pirates who've positioned themselves a 9-iron shot away across the river rippling me off.

"I think it's ridiculous for a two-bit operator to be able to do something like that," says the Kansas-born Kerich, president of National Subscription Television-Detroit, the corporate entity which owns ON-TV.

"I think Pat Kerich from ON-TV is a fast-buck operator," replies Baker. Baker said Kerich charges the Detroit area \$22.50 for a monthly service virtually identical to what sells in other cities for \$14.95.

"He's full of —" replies Kerich. "In fact the \$22.50 is very similar to what's charged in Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco."

Kerich's attorneys last week got an injunction from U.S. Judge Robert DeMascio prohibiting the importation of decoder boxes, parts and plans into the U.S. The order even prohibits tuning in Channel 22 with one of the boxes.

In turn, Baker's lawyer got an injunction from a Windsor magistrate prohibiting Kerich from sending agents to Windsor to write down license plate numbers of Americans emerging from the store with the boxes.

But Kerich's legal arsenal has a big edge over Baker's — about a \$10 million edge.

Monday, June 8, 1981

(Wb.T.S.F.R.) 2A

ON MAY 28, in what turned out to be only the first shot in this legal firefight, Kerich filed a civil suit seeking \$10 million from Baker's corporation.

Baker doesn't like the DeMascio ruling, especially the language prohibiting him from tuning in Channel 20. A set in the store is tuned to the station constantly.

"Nobody can tell us what channel to turn our TV on, whether it's another Canadian and certainly not Chartwell Communications," a corporate partner in National Subscription Television-Detroit.

But Baker says the civil suit means he can't appeal the DeMascio ruling.

"If we make representation over there, we have answered to their jurisdiction," Baker said, and he'll then risk losing the \$10 million suit.

EITHER WAY, Baker thinks he's found a hole in DeMascio's ruling.

"You can buy a decoder here and declare it legally. All you can't do is declare a Video Gallery decoder. All our decoders aren't marked anymore."

U.S. Customs has a slightly different opinion.

According to U.S. Customs Chief Inspector Mike Mack, DeMascio's order applies only to decoders sold by Video Gallery. But, Mack said, Video Gallery decoders are not exempt from the ruling just because they don't say "Video Gallery."

Mack was asked how he can tell where unmarked decoders were purchased.

"I wish you hadn't asked that. If the person's honest, they're going to tell us. If they're not honest, they're going to beat us."

Kerich, who said "there's not that many" other Ontario retailers of decoder boxes, said Friday he didn't realize unmarked Video Gallery boxes are possibly being imported.

"I'll talk with our attorney on that. We're going to be over rascal' with him in Canadian courts anyway," Kerich said.

"WE DON'T get involved in the customs regulations because we don't know how they're going to fluctuate," Baker says. "All we know is we can legally sell (decoders) here, and we're open for business, and we will turn no American away from our door."

Baker declines comment on his source of decoder boxes. He also declines comment on what country they're being built in.

"I think it's buying them over here, and we have that under investigation right now," says Kerich.

Kerich also plans to appeal the Windsor magistrate's injunction in a Toronto court, although he says no such appeal has yet been filed.

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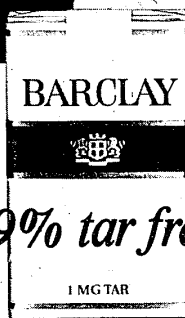
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