

# Neighbor to north seeks more cable bidders

By Mary Lou Callaway  
Special writer

Bidding has been reopened for the cable television franchise in West Bloomfield. The deadline has been reset for 3 p.m. Thursday, March 31.

But reopening the bidding has raised questions of ethics.

West Bloomfield's Township Board voted, 5-2, last Tuesday to seek other cable bids. That move brought objections from the only cable bidder to make the original Feb. 15 deadline, Bloomfield Communications, two township trustees and a resident.

Township Supervisor John Doherty said some people requested an extension on the original deadline.

"I had two, three calls from people wanting an extension," Doherty said. "I

explained I had no authority to grant an extension. The one bid seems sound, but our counsel advised we have the right to reopen the deadline."

Trustee Weldon Yeager, who headed the nearly two-year-long cable study, and Trustee Dennis Vaitas voted against the move.

"This board's primary obligation is to the public to get the best price in a fair manner," Yeager said. "But the one (cable company) making the effort to get a bid in on time ought to get recognition."

Doherty said he had given bid copies to Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake and Keego Harbor city officials. They have agreed to be a part of the West Bloomfield consortium.

LOWELL JAMES, president of

Bloomfield Communications of Bloomfield Hills, which incorporated just five days before submitting its bid, said reopening the bidding could hurt West Bloomfield's cable services.

"It seems strange others would want to get into the bidding at the last minute," James said. "We abided by the rules. If you reopen, you'll probably receive less service."

David Orr, Bloomfield Communications operations manager and principal stockholder, said his company already has surveyed the township.

"We have had engineers mapping this difficult geography," Orr said. "Unless God himself did it, it couldn't be more accurate. We walked all the township."

Bloomfield Communications and Michigan Bell have an agreement for

the telephone company to supply services, said Orr.

"It's all Michigan employees. The money stays in the state. This has to be a good damn thing."

The topography, lakes and sparse density of the township and cities were cited as reasons other cable firms did not seek West Bloomfield's franchise.

"WE DIDN'T BID because the criteria (specified in proposal requests) favored larger companies," said Greater Media Cablevision spokesman Mac McCormick, adding that his company may reconsider bidding.

The low density of homes and extensive underground wiring also figured in their earlier decision not to bid, he said.

Com-Star Cablevision President

Charlie McCubbins said his firm had asked for a deadline extension because it had not had enough time to prepare after a change in their investors.

One resident, Cheri Nelson, also objected to reopening the bids.

"I see this as a moral issue," Nelson said. "It puts them (Bloomfield Communications) in a vulnerable position, giving others a better opportunity than they have a right to expect. They met the deadline."

POINTING TO THE hefty bid book from Bloomfield Communications, Doherty said, "They must have spent thousands of dollars on this."

## School hosts open house

Orchard Lake St. Mary's Preparatory will host an open house for prospective students beginning with Mass at 11 a.m. Sunday afternoon, March 13.

A coffee social will follow in the Dombrowski Fieldhouse. Presentations will begin at 12:30 p.m., followed by tours of the campus grounds and facilities.

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**It's Tax Time**  
by Charles H. Williams, C.P.A.

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If your income is fairly straightforward and deductible expenses minimal, you might satisfactorily use a short-form return and do it yourself or with the help of a tax preparer. But with more income, and more deductions, as the return becomes more complicated, you're going to want a tax professional.

Why? Because it's worth the difference to put your tax return in the hands of someone with the knowledge to find every likely loophole, and the experience to know which are acceptable. And as you reach the higher brackets, you'll get the advice you need on sheltering some income from taxes.

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A certified public accountant can handle most complex returns and are familiar with shelters and investing. His or her tax know-how can save you more than the fee. How do you choose a professional? Recommendations from satisfied clients are one way, as are referrals from lawyers. Once a relationship is entered, the client will find his accountant helpful in making financial decisions all year round.

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\*Source: Scarborough Report, Detroit 1982