

Rouge 'friends' gird for big cleanup

Monday April 7, 1988 O&E

(OJSA)

By Teri Banas
staff writer

Facing a two-month deadline, the newly formed "Friends of the Rouge River" last week vowed to put the drive toward a June 7 cleanup program into overdrive.

"You are the ones that are going to play a critical role here," said James Murray, member of the state Water Resources Commission. The Rouge group met Thursday night in Livonia.

Washtenaw County's drain commissioner, Murray was one of the 11 directors elected to represent the diverse group of residents from Wayne, Oakland and Washtenaw counties.

A SELF-STYLED citizens advocacy group, Friends of the Rouge in coming weeks will plan a joint cleanup work day and celebration

event for June 7.

In addition, recreational activities will be hosted that afternoon by area parks and recreation departments.

Volunteer efforts will include removing logjams and debris, picking up litter, painting and repairing rest stations, docks and bridges, according to a staff report from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, a participating agency.

The SEMCOG report also advised that cleanup sites for volunteers be carefully selected taking into consideration locations near combined sewer overflow points, where raw

sewage is routed.

RESPONDING to concerns about health risks from polluted waters, Murray told the group of about 35 Thursday that the Wayne County Health Department has granted a health advisory report. He said the

department assured organizers that "the river is not that dangerous if you don't breathe it in or swallow it."

"It was encouraging to us," Murray added. "The risks are very minor. As long as you follow prudent health practices, there should be no risk at all."

That means people with an open wound or cut should avoid water contact because of the potential for bacterial infections.

Overall, added a SEMCOG source, short-term contact with Rouge water should not be hazardous.

OTHERS ELECTED to the board of directors included:

R. Eric Reickel, head of the Wayne County Parks and Recreation Department; Ted Textor, WJBK-TV weatherman, whose station is co-sponsoring the event; Jack Smiley of University of Michigan-Dearborn. Carla Worsham, Westland resident

employed by the Army Corps of Engineers; Steve Marshall, Southfield Parks and Recreation director; Kay Cushman, Dearborn League of Women Voters; Milt Handorf, Oakland County Public Works director.

Grant Hyatt, Dearborn physician; Don Kirchbaum, Detroit Parks and Recreation director; and Judy Nelson, a Dearborn Heights former schoolteacher.

ORGANIZERS intend to raise money for the cleanup effort. They expected to announce tomorrow the inclusion of a major corporate sponsor.

Murray confirmed last week that the sponsorship has enabled the group to pay for the full-time services of the director of the Rouge River Watershed Council, Bruce Monson, who previously worked 20 hours a week. Other "consulting" services will be made available with the grant money.

Divorce counseling sessions set

The Oakland County Circuit Court is sponsoring a series of family counseling workshops on Mondays 7-9 p.m. April 7-May 5.

The sessions, offered at no charge, take place at the First United Methodist Church, 1589 Maple Road, Birmingham.

Dates and topics are:
• April 7 - "Legal Aspects of

Divorce," presented by attorney Ron Bookholder; remarks by Circuit Judge Robert Anderson.

• April 14 - "Surviving the Break-up" with clinical social worker Russ Rude; Circuit Judge Francis X. O'Brien available for questions.

• April 21 - "Financial Planning Around Divorce" with attorney Hanley Gurwin; Circuit court

administrator Joan Young to answer questions.

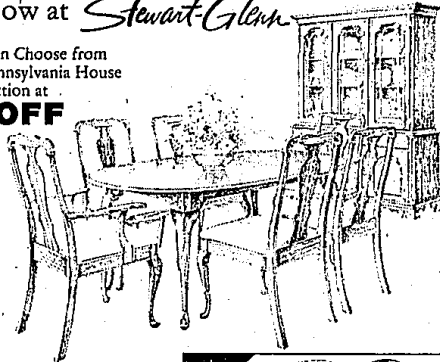
• April 28 - Psychologist James Kers on "Children and Divorce - Parents are Forever;" Circuit Judge Gene Schnetz to answer questions.

• May 5 - "What the Friend of the Court Can Do for You," by court personnel.
For information, call 858-0344.

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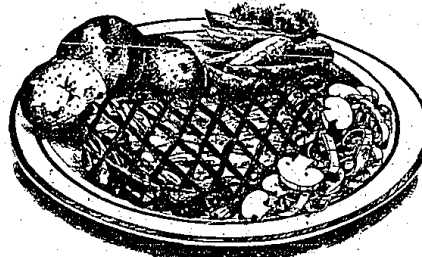
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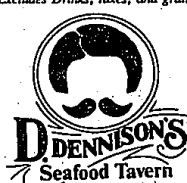
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