

26-star flag on display

Re-creation usable by civic groups

They were rare — rarer than America's original 13-star flags. They're the 26-star flags the U.S. used after admitting Michigan into the Union in 1837. That 26-star flag was the national standard from 1837-45.

And Oakland County has one.

"Ours will stand in the second floor lobby of the courthouse next to the 1857 restored map of Oakland County," said Virginia DeBenham Rodgers, the county's director of cultural affairs. The courthouse is at 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac.

"It'll be available for display at local functions," she added.

MICHIGAN BELL Telephone Co. paid for restoration of an original 26-star flag after the frayed, yellowed specimen was discovered in Florida. The work was done by the Michigan State University Museum. The original will be displayed in the State Capitol Rotunda in Lansing.

Bell also funded the making of 300 replicas, including one for each of the 83 county seats and one for each of the 20 members of the congressional delegation. Bell's Jim Helmrich, local corporate affairs manager, presented Oakland's flag last week to Patrick Nowak, deputy county executive.

Helmrich said the flags all have been flown over the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and the State Capitol.

THE 26 STARS are arranged in the shape of a large five-pointed star. Five small stars are in each point of the larger star, with one small star in the center.

As the 26th state, Michigan doubled the original 13 states.

The state celebrates its sesquicentennial (150th anniversary of statehood) in the same year the U.S. celebrates the 200th anniversary of the writing of the Constitution.



HCMA chief

James Clarkson, Oakland County member of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority board, has been elected its chairman for 1987-88. Clarkson is chairman, president and CEO of First Federal Savings Bank & Trust Co., headquartered in Pontiac, and is active in many civic groups. He has been on the HCMA board for 17 years. HCMA operates 14 metropolitan parks in the five-county region. Clarkson replaces John C. Hertel, former Wayne County commissioner.

Senate boosts education aid

AP — After rejecting an amendment to curb a program aimed at limiting high school dropouts, the Michigan Senate has approved three education budget bills for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Senate last week also passed a bill that would require lottery winners of \$5,000 or more to pay any debts owed to the state from their jackpots.

The education bills now go back to the House for consideration of Senate changes. The bills are scheduled to be sent to Joint House-Senate conference committees to work out final language.

But Sen. Dan DeGrow, R-Port Huron and chairman of the Senate appropriations subcommittee on school aid, said that would be a "big mistake."

"We lost an awful lot of kids in this state" to dropping out of school, he said. "We can't afford as a state to lose all these kids every year."

Cropsey's amendments failed to gather even half of the 20 votes needed to adopt them.

THE SCHOOL aid bill, passed 35-0, calls for \$606.9 million in general fund money — the state's main checking account — and \$2.38 billion in total spending for Michigan's kindergarten through 12th grade schools.

That is \$35.5 million over the level enacted for this fiscal year and \$29.5 million over Gov. James J. Blanchard's recommendation.

The community college bill, passed 34-2, totals \$198.8 million in state spending, up \$11.4 million from current levels and \$2 million from Blanchard's recommendation.

The Department of Education budget bill, passed 31-6, would provide \$45 million in general fund money and \$56.1 million in total spending, once federal funds are added. The general fund portion is up \$7.7 million from current spending and \$7.5 million from Blanchard's proposal.

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