

OCC hosts forum to honor, study U.S. Constitution

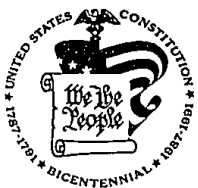
A seminar on constitutional origins and two U.S. Constitution displays will precede "The Trial of Elizabeth Ross," a dramatization that's first in a local series of constitutional forums.

District Judge Michael Hadd of Farmington will portray Judge Samuel Lunt in heading a cast of local residents who will present the dramatization Sunday afternoon, Jan. 24, at the Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus, Farmington Hills.

Preceding the dramatization, three members of the OCC Department of History will conduct a brief seminar on constitutional origins.

Marilynn Kokoszka will delineate written constitutions, such as the Hunan and the Greek. Daniel Plesko will speak on 18th Century European philosophy as it relates to the Constitution. Curtis Anderson will speak on the founding fathers and slavery.

Two special exhibits will be on display, thanks to a Farmington Hills Historical Commission grant.



"The Blessings of Liberty," an exhibit from Washington, D.C., presents photos and documents about the Constitution and the Northwest Ordinance.

The other exhibit is an oversized replica of the Constitution, complete with signatures. At the side will be a pen. "You, too, may sign the Constitution," said Jean M. Fox, who chairs the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution Farmington Area Committee.

BASED ON the "Right to Bear Arms and Go to Jail," the Constitutional series celebrates the second amendment of the U.S. Constitution. "We, The People," written by the American Bar Association, provides a chance to discuss leading constitutional questions of 1988.

As enacted at OCC, the drama focuses on an elderly woman on trial for illegal possession of a firearm. Among the cast members are signers of the Constitution, resurrected as material witnesses by the prosecution and the defense.

At the end of the dramatization, the audience will vote to decide whether Elizabeth Ross is or is not guilty, according to constitutional principles.

Refreshments will be served. There is a nominal admission charge.

To be represented on the local bicentennial committee, call 473-9501.

Hullm, 79, kept ancestors' land

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and Aaron Wilson.

The Wilsons were ex-slaves who fled to Michigan twice from their Freedom, Va., owner before and during the Civil War. After their first bid for freedom in the 1850s, the Wilsons were tracked and recaptured under the Fugitive Slave Act. Fleeing a second time in 1863, they went to Canada before coming to Farmington Township, where the "people had been so friendly."

HULLM REBUILT his Freedom Acres house from the original 1870 farmhouse.

"There was no resentment, not at all," Hullm said in a 1982 interview when asked if his family suffered repercussions from being the only local black family. "They helped the slaves out here."

One neighbor belonged to the Ku Klux Klan and wanted the family to move. But a township official ordered the Klansman to leave them alone, Hullm said.

Briggs remembers Hullm telling about the time "when, as a little boy, he and his great-grandmother, Ellen, would walk on 11 Mile to visit Mrs. Esch, who was living in the house that formerly was the Phibrick Tavern."

"He didn't know at the time that the tavern apparently was one of the places his great-grandmother had gone through on the Underground Railroad to freedom."

Hullm remembered when Freedom

Acres was ripe for planting strawberries and trapping milk.

ALTHOUGH NOT a historical commission member, Hullm enjoyed local history. He had an old key that DUR conductors once used to open street-car power stations. He also had one of the last bottles of wine made by the old LaSalle Winery of Farmington.

In 1928, Hullm graduated from Farmington High, where he played football and ran track. "He was a popular kid," Briggs said. "The only time when he ran into racial problems was when we played other teams that didn't like him because he was black."

She also said he couldn't visit Washington, D.C., as a member of his senior class "because of the Jim Crow rules at the time."

While still in high school, Hullm started to repair radios. Later, he branched out to refrigeration units and TV sets. For many years, he made house calls.

Electricity fascinated him. As a boy, he went to the nearby DUR station to watch power transformed along the lines to make the street cars run.

An Army veteran from World War II, Hullm was part of an all-black signal corps sent to India. He also was a Disabled American Veterans member.

Survivors include two daughters, Adrian Hullm-Stanford and Tracey W. Hullm; one son, Dwight C. Hullm; and two grandchildren. His



Freedom Acres received a Farmington Hills historic site marker earlier this year.

wife, Helen, died in 1978.

Services were held Monday at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington. Family member Leslie Cole officiated. Burial was

in United Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Plymouth.

The family asks that memorials be made to Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders, Ann Arbor.

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Parents oppose boundary plan

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Meanwhile, the Concerned Parents Coalition is busy this week circulating petitions opposing the transfer of any elementary children.

Their petitions urge the board to reject "student-shuffling proposals, and to seek a more constructive solution to our problems."

Parents said they will present their petitions to the board during the study session.

Representatives from Wood Creek, Beechview, William Grace and Gill elementary as well as parent groups have already met to discuss boundary change alternatives, and

many plan to attend Tuesday's meeting.

School officials stress that no decision will be made at the study session. The board is expected to hear information Tuesday, add it's own ideas and discuss the matter over the next two months.

Trustees must make a decision by late March, when employees are told if they will be employed in the fall, according to contractual obligations with unions.

"The final decision is they (the board) could accept it or reject it," said Lewis. "They don't say yes or no to a recommendation — they

also bring their own ideas."

Lewis said he is aware of the parent meetings and discussions occurring around the district, and invites everyone to bring their ideas Tuesday. Not only boundaries, but magnet, or specialized schools, and other alternatives can also be discussed, he said.

"This board will sit there the whole night if they have to" to hear the residents' concerns, he added.

PIASECKI'S PARENT group represents three subdivisions near Wood Creek Elementary. The parents have hired a lawyer to aid them in their

mission. Several hundred parents from his area are involved, and parents from other elementaries are showing support, he said.

The core group of the coalition involves parents from subdivisions south of 12 Mile and north of I-696, who currently have children at Wood Creek.

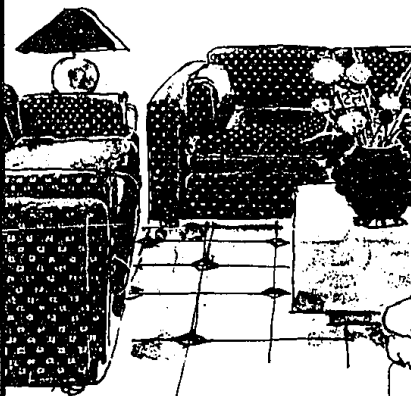
Churchill Commons residents, whose children currently attend Beechview Elementary, received a communication this week from another parent group, urging them to attend a parent meeting this week, and the school board study session next week.

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