

MET hot here

County parents buy 1 of 4 contracts

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Suburbanites are buying Michigan Education Trust contracts in disproportionate numbers, the state Treasury Department says.

Oakland County residents bought 10,224 pre-paid college tuition contracts — fully 25 percent of the 40,409 the state sold last year, said Robert Kolt, Treasury's public information officer.

Oakland has an estimated 1.1 million people, about 11 percent of the state's 9.4 million.

Neighboring Livingston County residents bought 706 contracts last year, or 1.7 percent of the state's total. Livingston has an estimated 110,000 residents, or 1.1 percent of the state's total.

Thus, Oakland parents and grandparents are buying more than double the MET contracts one would expect

Oakland parents and grandparents are buying more than double the MET contracts one would expect based on population alone.

based on population alone, and Livingston residents 50 percent more.

WAYNE COUNTY residents bought 7,756 contracts, 19 percent of the total. Wayne has 2.3 million population, or 23 percent of the state's total.

Kolt said no breakdown was available between communities within a county.

The theory of MET is that if parents invest a small sum now, the trust fund will earn compound interest — and provide tax advantages — to cover a child's state university tu-

tion for four years when he or she reaches 18.

A 20-minute video explaining the MET program is being copied and produced in Livonia, Kolt said. Premier Video is making 5,000 copies at cost, and Video Trend is distributing them free, to 1,200 video stores statewide. The stores are expected to make copies available to the public free or for a small handling charge.

The videos also will be distributed to 350 public libraries.

"It's a marketing tool explaining the ABC's of the MET," Kolt said.

STATE TREASURER Robert Bowman will bring his traveling MET show to southeastern Michigan starting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 6, in Royal Oak's Kimball High School, 1500 Lexington.

It will be the only public forum on MET in this area. Others are scheduled for Marquette, Traverse City, Haslet and Grand Rapids.

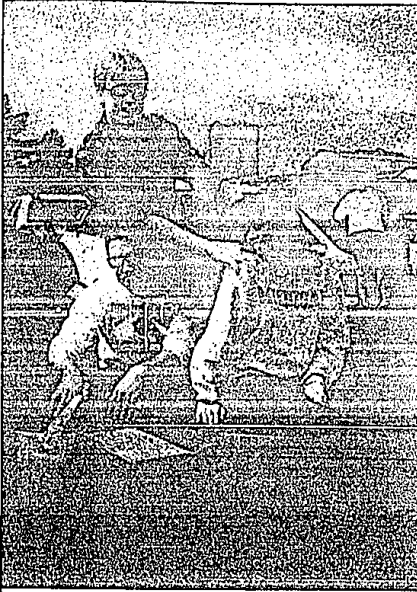
Open enrollment dates for MET this year are Oct. 2-6.

Tuition increases at the state's 15 universities have pushed this year's prices for Michigan's prepaid tuition guarantee program up 13 percent over last year.

But Bowman said loan rates at savings and loan associations are down half a percentage point or more.

Thus, parents who borrow to enroll their children in MET this year will have payments just \$1 to \$2

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(No photo)

Starting with U-M's Sept. 16 home opener against Notre Dame, partying will have to be done outside the stadium.

Local U-M fans react to cooler ban

By C. L. Rugenstein
staff writer

No beer, no coolers, no backpacks. No kidding.

University of Michigan football fan reactions ranged from pleased to peeved at the new policy barring fans from bringing into the stadium any container that could transport alcoholic beverages. The policy also bans umbrellas and stadium seat backs.

"We're a little peeved," said John Foster, a Michigan fan from Farmington Hills. "We don't do any heavy drinking or that, but from the sound of it, they're not going to let you bring in anything but your wallet."

On the other hand, Mike Lebeis, a 1977 Michigan grad, thinks it's a good idea.

"If people want to party they can do it in the parking lot before the game, or after, but not during the game," said Lebeis, also from Farmington Hills.

Lebeis recalled an incident in which two attractive female out-of-town fans, sitting in the seats ahead of him "got kind of wasted" during a game.

"The friend I was with ended up being a chair for one of them," Lebeis said.

HE ALSO AGREES with the policy that would bar coolers and other carriers of liquid refreshment — bags, bottles, flasks, thermoses — into the stands.

"The seats are so narrow there's just not enough room for bodies," much less coolers, he said.

The policy isn't exactly new, according to Carol Ledbetter, administrative associate for Michigan's assistant athletic director Jack Weidenbach.

"There's always been a policy never to allow alcoholic beverages," Ledbetter said. "We're just going to start enforcing it this year."

The reason is to stop alcohol abuse at games, which has been gradually increasing over the years, Ledbetter said.

Michigan State University has been enforcing their alcohol ban all along, according to a spokesman at the Sports Information office.

"The official policy is 'no alcohol, movie cameras, or seat backs,'" which take up a lot of room, the spokesman said. "We do permit containers like thermoses, but no large coolers." All containers are checked on entry to the stadium.

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"We've enforced it in the past by escorting people out of the stadium," said Ken Hoffman, the MSU sports information director. "Prevention is a better way."

AL RENFREW, the ticket manager at U-M's stadium, will go a step further to let into the stadium fans who get "overzealous" as a result of drinking will be escorted out.

But, said Renfrew, "If (season ticket holders) make a stink about it we'll take their tickets away and not permit them to buy more next year."

"A lot of people think it's just the college kids, but it's not," the MSU spokesman said. "I've seen a lot of 40- and 50-year-olds bring flasks in."

"What we're trying to do is make the games as pleasant as possible," especially for families, said Renfrew. "Most people would like to see the game."

That includes Robert Peterson of Bloomfield Hills, also a Michigan graduate, who's had season tickets in the same section for 15 years.

"People who go out to five or six games go out to enjoy the afternoon," Peterson said. It's the ones who only go out to one game a year who make it an occasion to get overzealous, he added.

U-M student Brian Brinkworth, 20, of Orchard Lake, agrees with the ban on bottles and cans or anything that could be thrown — except beachballs.

"People are going to drink before or during the game regardless of a ban on bringing things in," Brinkworth, a junior, said. "I just don't want to get hit in the head with an empty fifth of Jack Daniels."

LAST YEAR however, Brinkworth said, inventive students found a new object to toss around the stands, causing a policy change in another direction.

Rolls of toilet paper were making the rounds of the stadium aerially, according to Brinkworth. And even though officials changed over to the 2-foot diameter rolls, "Some-one brought one of those in," Brinkworth said.

Beach balls and nerf balls are the only things that should be flying in the stands according to Brinkworth.

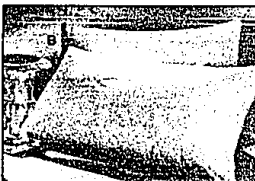
"If we don't have beachballs, I don't know what we'll do. If Michigan is losing to Notre Dame, it helps to have the beachball to play with," he said. "They make the game fun."

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