

# Rochester Eccentric

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## THE PAPER TODAY

**A fee there will be:** Visitors to Rochester's Art & Apples Festival will be charged a \$3 fee for the first time in the event's 32-year history. But most Rochester property owners will be able to enter the two-day cultural event at no charge. They'll be issued a coupon in their city newsletter making them exempt from the fee. The city and Paint Creek Center for the Arts will benefit from the fee. **A3**

## OPINION

**About that bond:** The Rochester Eccentric says yea or nay on the upcoming \$112.5 million school bond issue. **A10**

**Write on!** With the bond issue coming up, the letter traffic is heavy. **A10-11**

## SPORTS

**Second best:** Rochester's Richard Kuzma and Avondale's Kirt Rushlow grappled their way to runner-up finishes in last weekend's state finals in Battle Creek. Adam Adkins of Troy was the lone area champ. **C5**

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## Sister on suspect: 'I still love her'

BY JAY M. GROMSHAN  
STAFF WRITER

Two sisters sat facing each other in the courtroom: One a widow, the other charged with murder.

Lydia Nowos and her sister, Monica, were both dressed in black.

In a bizarre killing that's gaining national media attention, Monica Nowos, 27, will stand trial for murder in the Feb. 12 shotgun slaying of her sister's husband, Michael Hockenberry in Rochester Hills.

Assistant prosecutor Cheryl Matthews asked Lydia Nowos how she felt about her sister after the

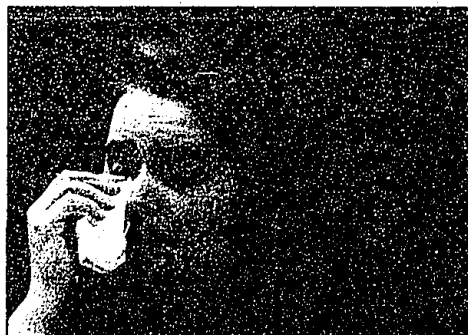
shooting.

"I forgive her and I love her," she answered in a tear-filled voice. "But I wish Mike wasn't dead."

Lydia Nowos, 29, testified about the shooting for nearly three hours during a preliminary exam Tuesday before 62-3 District Court Judge Julie Nicholson.

Violence and abuse marked her 2-year marriage to Hockenberry, according to testimony. The couple lived in Highland Township with their daughter, Holly, before separating in November.

See MURDER, A3



Emotion showing: Murder suspect Monica Nowos dabs at her eyes during her exam in district court.

## Bats turn Rochester home into Dracula's castle



STAFF PHOTO BY JOHN STOKELAND

**Winged invader:** A bat, earns and a wing showing, peeks out from Lance DeVoe's secure-gloved hand.

## Bats have house for hangout

BY JAY M. GROMSHAN  
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to killing bats, Donna Kearis prefers a tennis racket over a wooden stake.

The Rochester woman keeps a

fishing net in her bedroom to catch the creepy critters, while the tennis racket stays in the kitchen. Her war with bats started four years ago when she moved into her house on Castell Street.

"Come around here in the summer and it looks like Dracula's

castle," said Kearis. "You can actually see them hanging during the day."

Episcopus Puscus, commonly known as the big brown bat, will soon start coming out of hiberna-

See GOING BATTY, A7

## Tootsie stays! Horse owner, Hills agree

BY SHARON DARGAY  
STAFF WRITER

Tootsie the horse is smiling these days.

"She's walking around the backyard and her teeth are showing," explained owner Helen O'Neill-Pottery.

Tootsie has reason to celebrate.

Her beleaguered owner and the city of

Rochester Hills

■ **'Now I have the support of the community.'**

Helen O'Neill-Pottery  
—Tootsie's owner

Tootsie to stay home if O'Neill-Pottery builds a paddock-style fence.

If the decision sounds familiar, it's because the Rochester Hills Zoning Board of Appeals told O'Neill-Pottery two years ago build the fence or get rid of the horse.

But O'Neill-Pottery says there's a difference.

"I didn't have support from anyone then. Now I have the support of the community," she said.

Gerald Robbins, a community activist and Rochester Hills planning commissioner, plans to help O'Neill-Pottery raise money to buy fence materials and enlist a volunteer crew to install it.

They tentatively scheduled a fundraiser-open house on May 17.

The new agreement between O'Neill-Pottery and the city specifies the fence must be complete by June 1.

"We've been holding off (on fundraising) until they had an agreement," Robbins explained. "Now that they have it, it doesn't

See TOOTSIE, A2

## Deadline for absentees is 8 p.m. Tuesday

BY SHARON DARGAY  
STAFF WRITER

It doesn't matter if you vote on the spot or absentee, the deadline to cast ballots in Rochester Community Schools' bond election is 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 18.

That's when the polls close and when absentee ballots are due in the school election clerk's office in the School Administration Building, University and Wilcox, Rochester.

Elections Clerk Becky MacIntyre said a misunderstanding between her office and another district department resulted in a confusing announcement about balloting deadlines last week.

■ **Elections Clerk Becky MacIntyre said the procedure was a little confusing this year because the district generally holds Monday, not Tuesday, elections.**

Absentee voters can obtain ballots from MacIntyre's office through 2 p.m., Saturday.

Voters can return the ballots that same day. Or they can submit them to MacIntyre's office on Monday or Tuesday. The deadline on Tuesday is at 8 p.m., the same time the polls close.

MacIntyre said the procedure was a little confusing this year because the district generally holds Monday, not Tuesday, elections.

For example, the district normally doesn't deal with a category of absentee voters the state calls "late" absentee.

The state says absentee voters who miss the Saturday deadline to obtain ballots, can vote in the clerk's office the day before the election as "late" absentee.

See ABSENTEES, A2

## Calling all car buffs

A car club — GMC Corvette Set, Inc. — will host its annual indoor swap meet and car sale 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, March 16, at Bill Fox Chevrolet, 725 S. Rochester Road, Rochester Hills.

The event is open to all makes and models, including hot rods. A \$100 gift certificate will be given away as a door prize. Admission is \$1. Call the club's hot line (866-0539) for more information.

## 'From Paradise to Parkways'

Loretta Merkell of The Detroit Institute of Arts will present a slide show on "From Paradise to Parkways" during a meeting of the Meadow Brook Hall Garden Club at 10 a.m. Friday, March 21, at Meadow Brook Hall on the

## HEART OF THE HILLS

campus of Oakland University.

The event is open to the public. A \$3 non-member donation will be asked.

## Any would-be board members?

Attention, anyone thinking of running for the Rochester Board of Education:

The Rochester Community Schools will host an informational meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 20, at the Administration Center, 601 W. University, for those thinking of running for the board.

Information on filing for candidacy and time

commitments will be discussed.

Candidates must be registered voters and residents of the Rochester Community Schools district. Nominating petitions can be obtained at the March 28 meeting or anytime before that at the Administrative Center.

The signatures of at least 21 registered voters are required to complete a nominating petition, but candidates are advised to obtain more than the minimum number.

For more information, call the Rochester Community Schools' Communications Department at 651-6210.

Items for Heart of the Hills Highlights may be mailed to the Rochester Eccentric, 2414 S. Rochester Road, Rochester Hills 48307, dropped off at the newspaper office, or faxed to 651-9080. The Internet e-mail address is: [rochred@ocnline.com](mailto:rochred@ocnline.com).