

## OAKLAND DIGEST

**Oakland Digest** provides a summary of headline stories from around the county during the week leading up to Jan. 16.

**BIRMINGHAM**  
MLK breakfast: The Birmingham-Bloomfield Task Force on Race Relations and Ethnic Diversity is sponsoring its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast and Workshops from 8 to 11:30 a.m. Jan. 19 at the Community House in Birmingham. For information, call (248) 844-5892.

**CLARKSTON**  
Lighthouse may see changes: The new branch manager of Lighthouse Clarkston said she hopes the organization will expand its services in north Oakland County. However, growth will probably prompt Lighthouse to move from its historic Presbyterian church home and into a larger facility. The building currently serves about 300 families each month.

**FARMINGTON**

**No leads in robbery:** The Farmington Public Safety Department has no solid leads in a Jan. 6 robbery of The Farmington Tobacco Shop, located in the Uptown Shopping Center near Grand River and Orchard Lake. According to police reports, three men entered the store at about 6:45 p.m. One of the suspects pulled out a gun and then struck the store's owner with his hand. The suspects, who took an undetermined amount of cash and 700 cartons of cigarettes, drove away in a black pick-up and headed westbound on Grand River. Anyone with information should contact Detective Christine Schatz at (248) 474-4700.

**ORION TOWNSHIP**  
Senior center getting evaluation: Orion Township Board formed a committee Jan. 5 to study the Orion Senior Center. The board also renewed a contract with the Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency, which runs the senior center, for

six months, rather than for a year. The committee was formed to review the needs of area seniors and the center.

**OXFORD VILLAGE**  
Water needs phosphate: Results from random lead and copper tests that were ordered by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) revealed that one of the sampled home or business locations in the village tested positive for unacceptable levels of copper. Even though only one location indicated an unacceptable copper level, the village will have to begin adding phosphates to its water treatment system. The DEQ had ordered Oxford Village and other municipalities that operate their own water systems to randomly sample the water from a set number of homes and businesses.

**NOVI**  
Bridge to be replaced: A 1920s bridge built over railroad tracks at Grand River Avenue

west of Novi Road will be torn down and rebuilt by the Oakland County Road Commission in the fall of 1998. The bridge is considered to be in a state of deterioration. The project is expected to cost \$2 million.

**ROCHESTER HILLS**  
Building continues: Rochester Hills City Council Jan. 7 gave preliminary building approval for two new subdivisions on the city's north side. Residents voiced concerns about the building projects, which would add more than 60 new houses, ranging in price from \$300,000 to \$500,000, to the area.

**SOUTHFIELD**  
Movie kick-off: A movie adaptation of Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables" will kick off the South-

field classic Cinema Series in 1998. The film, which is dubbed in English, will be presented at 7 p.m. Jan. 16 at the Southfield Centre for the Arts. Tickets are \$3. For information, call (248) 424-9022.

**TROY**  
Robbery brings action: A Jan. 9 hold-up at the National Bank of Detroit on Long Lake in Troy resulted in Troy police trailing and capturing a suspect. But a massive traffic jam occurred at 14 Mile Road and I-76 after the suspect's vehicle hit another car. He was apprehended as he fled on foot. The bank robber was dressed in women's clothing and carried a plastic gun during the robbery. The

bank was robbed of an undetermined amount of cash.

**WEST BLOOMFIELD**  
Hospitals abandon growth: Henry Ford Health System and the Detroit Medical Center (DMC) last week ended a 15-year battle with the state to build additional patient facilities. Both dropped Michigan Supreme Court appeals involving denied certificate-of-need applications they had filed with the state. Henry Ford had hoped to build an inpatient hospital in West Bloomfield. The DMC sought an 150-bed expansion of their Huron Valley Sinai Hospital in Commerce Township.

— Compiled by staff reporter Nicole Stafford

## Hearing to air business tax impact

State Capitol capsules:

### SBT hearing

Southfield will be the site of a public hearing on Michigan's single business tax when the House Tax Policy Committee meets from 9 a.m. to noon on Monday, Jan. 16.

Rep. Nancy Quarles, D-Southfield and vice chair of the panel, has set it up in the Southfield City Council auditorium, 26000 Evergreen. The local chamber of commerce is working with the panel.

The committee will study SBT's effects on small business. Other panel members from the area include chair Kirk Proff, D-Ypsilanti, John Freeman, D-Madison Heights, David Gubow, D-Huntington Woods, Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, Barbara Dobb, R-Union Lake, Tom Middleton, R-Orionville, and Deborah Why-

mith, R-Canton.

Experts from both government and business have been invited

to testify, Quarles said.

SBT produces about \$2 billion in revenue per year. It replaced the corporate income tax and a long list of other taxes which it was passed nearly 30 years ago.

### Laws signed

Gov. John Engler has signed into law:

■ Senate Bill 664, expanding the investment options of local units of government. The sponsor, Sen. Bill Bullard, R-Milford, said it will "allow local units to diversify their investment options, thus creating an opportunity to receive a greater return on investments." Each local unit must adopt an investment policy, including guidelines for safety.

■ Seven bills refining the high school proficiency tests (HSPT). The tests will be given in the last month of 11th grade and the time reduced to eight hours. Nonpublic students and home-taught students may take the tests.

■ An amendment to the Michigan Telecommunications Act that will increase the discount to low-income customers of 20 percent of their basic local exchange rate of \$8.25, whichever is greater. It also increases the discount for senior low-income customers to 25 percent of the basic rate or \$8.25, whichever is greater. Sponsor is Sen. Mat Dunnakiss, R-Lake Orion. The law has immediate effect.

In addition, the governor announced \$2.8 million in HIV prevention services grants to 40 agencies, including:

■ \$15,000 for the AIDS Partnership Michigan of Ferndale, for counseling and testing.

■ \$55,000 to the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, Dearborn, for testing and outreach.

■ \$60,000 to the Pontiac Urban League for counseling, testing and group education of African Americans.

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