

## CHAT ROOM



Brian Golden

## Historian seeks input on local trolley

**A**s the interurban trolley comes to a halt at Farmington junction, passengers and cargo unload. Some transfer north to picnic at Orchard Lake, while others with packages are destined for Northville and beyond. That's the way it was until 1928. By then, the interurban line was no longer needed. The tracks were removed. Automobiles, municipally owned busses, jitneys, steam trains and streetcars had taken over urban transportation in Southeast Michigan.

The usefulness of the Detroit United Railroad's Orchard Lake division had waned. It was difficult to justify the continuation of this type of transportation outside of the city limits of Detroit. Gone forever, but not forgotten. Those days are now a memory to a select few in the area. I'm trying to recapture the enchanting days of interurban travel on the Orchard Lake division's picturesque routes. I've amassed a large collection of information, unearthing photographs, newspaper articles, books, city maps, research papers and the like, for three purposes. First is to present a lecture series to local communities and their historical societies. There is a growing interest in

Please see CHAT ROOM, B2

## St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center Garden party a sweet success story

■ The 11th annual Garden Party benefit drew over 1,000 partygoers to the grounds of the St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center on Sunday afternoon.

Sunny skies and cool temperatures were the backdrop for the 11th annual St. Vincent & Sarah Fisher Center Garden Party on Sunday, the biggest fund-raiser of the year for the Farmington Hills center, which serves abused children and families in crisis.

Hundreds of partygoers lined up at 1 p.m. on the center grounds at 12 Mile and Inkster roads, waiting for admission to three tents, which featured appetizers, main courses and desserts respectively from dozens of the best restaurants in Michigan.

Patrons and benefactors were treated to an earlier tour of the newest residential cottage. Currently 59 children ages 4 to 17 live at the center. Another nine girls and their babies are registered in the Transitions program. Children who call the center home were gone for the afternoon on outings with volunteers.

Approximately 1,100 tickets were issued at \$125 apiece. With auction proceeds, at least \$206,000 was raised, according to center personnel.

Wine samples and a wine auction hosted by party founder Ed Jonna, owner of The Merchant of Vino stores, and honorary chairmen Dick Purtan of 104.3-FM Radio and Huel Perkins of WJBK-TV 2 were other highlights of the afternoon. Ford Motor Co., the party's major sponsor, showcased some old Ford cars including a 1964 Mustang convertible.

Music was provided by Alexander Zongji and Friends and the Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band.

Warren and Katie Flagg of Wolverine Lake worked as volunteer hosts, con-



**Auction extravaganza:** (Above) Michele McCue thrusts her bidding paddle high into the air. Right, Rosalie Vicari of Andiamo Ristorante shows off the Princess Di Beanie Baby she successfully bid on for \$500 for her daughter, Carmella, on Sunday afternoon.

tinuing a family tradition.

"It's a great party for a very worthwhile cause," said Warren Flagg, indicating that his wife got him involved a few years ago.

"Today we passed out programs and collected tickets," said Katie Flagg, taking a break at one of the tables set up near the music stage area. "I think it's worthwhile for the restaurants that participate, too. I've seen a number of people walking around with menus in their hands. It gives them good exposure."

Tim Winterfield, chef of Le Metro in

Southfield, had a production line of his three children: Patricia, 11, Tommy, 8, and Maria, 10, assembling the apricot shortcakes he served to party guests with blueberries, strawberries and whipped cream.

"I've been involved here for nine years," Winterfield said. "Of all the events I get asked to do, and that's about 50 a year, this is the best."

Lori Novelty, owner of the Great Harvest Bread Co. of Northville, had her usual perch for the fifth year in a row in the dessert tent where her crew served slices of bread baked with no



fats, oils or preservatives.

"We brought 75 loaves and we're down to 10," she said. "It's an awesome party."

Bob Wakeman of Rave Associates, an Ann Arbor wine and beer distributor, was pouring wine samples with the help of volunteer Gordon Michael.

"This is a nice setting for this type of event. I like the circulation," Wakeman said. "It exposes people to a lot of restaurants and gives them an opportunity to try new products."

Please see GARDEN PARTY, B2

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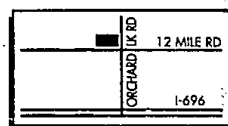
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