C'ville again says no to Durant lawsuit

"Twice now, the Clarenceville
School District has turned down
the chance to join Durant II,
ilwauit that has already brought
a small victory for the 130 school
flistricts which filed it against
life state in May 1998.
Even though it didn't join the
lawsuit's forerunner, Durant I,
Clarenceville still got an unexpected windfull – 31 million –
from the state's settlement of

from the state's settlement of that suit in 1998.

Because the legal costs of what could be a lengthy Durant II lawsuit are "not cast in stone" and could jump every year for an unknown number of years, the Clarenceville Board of Education Thursday once again declined to sign onto the so-called Durant II

lawsuit.

Durant I took 17 years to wind its way through the court system before the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in 1997 that the state violated the Headlee

Amendment to the Michigen
Constitution in its funding of
state-mandated programs.

In losing, the state was forced
to pay \$211 million to the 84
school districts which had filed
suit, including Livonia Public
Schools, and another \$404 million to school districts which had
not filed suit including.

It's a tiny victory, but a welman and the school districts which had
to filed suit including. not filed Clarenceville. filed suit, including

Clarenceville.

In refusing to sign on to Durant II - Thursday, Clarenceville trustees said they feared a coatly, lengthy and open-ended battle lay shead, a legal battle that would take away money that should be spent in Clarenceville's classrooms.

spent in Clarencounte a conrooms.

"The cost is \$1,100 a year now;
we don't have a clue what it will
cost next year; and this could go
on for years," said beard president John Kanyo.
"There are too many questions,
and wo're not ready to spend dollars when we don't have
answers," said trustee Bryan
Bentley. "Once you're in, you're

are going up an average rate of 9 percent yearly. This takes money from the general fund. If the state mandates things, they should pay for it."

Tattan brought the question of whether to join Durant II from Superintendent John Schultz of Rochester, who is coordinating the lawauit for the 130 districts who have signed on so far.

"They would like all 500 Michigan school districts to participate." Tattan said.

The more districts join, the more the legal costs get spread around, he said.

In response to Durant II, the state has argued that there is nothing in the Headlee Amendment that guarantees a funding foundation for state-mandated programs. the state admitted it isn't paying its legal share of school lunch costs.

It's a tiny victory, but a welcome one, said Livonia Public Schoole' Superintendent Kon Watson. Livonia is one of the 130 school districts which have banded together in Durant II. In Durant II, the school districts claim the state still underfunds state-mandated special education and school lunch programs.

"The state has admitted it's not funding the lunch subsidy right," Watson said. 'It's an insignificant amount of money, but the same argument goes gother to true for special education? It's a small victory, but a large victory in principle."

"Principle' is the word used by Clarenceville Superintendent Tom Tattan Thursday in bringing the 'to-join-or-not-to-join-question before the beard." 'Some districts are doing it for by 'principle of the thing,' Tat-

programs.
School districts statewide struggle to keep up with the over-rising costs to educate spe-cial education students.

Tattan estimates Clarenceville

Natura estimates Chronovines will have an estimated \$300,000 shortfall this year in its special education programs.

The Durant suit was named after Warren school board president Donald Durant, who filed the first lawsuit in 1980. The 84 school districts which joined in

the lawsuit, including Livonia, wanted the state to pay the same percentage of special education costs it paid in 1978, when voters passed the Headlee Amendment to the Constitution.

Even after the state lost the lawsuit, and paid out about \$850 million to Michigan school districts, school districts still-claimed some programs were underfunded, and filed Durant In May 1996.

Clareaceville got one-half of its Durant money - \$525,000 - last year in a lump sum, and will get the rest in \$52,500 yearly installments over the next 10 years.

The district has spent some of the lump sum payment on supplemental K-6 reading materials, 60 iften and windows-compatible computers and a new telephone system.

als, 80 iMac and windows-compatible computers and a new telephone system. Livonia took a two-pronged approach to its \$30.2 million Durant I settlement. It gave local taxpayers a .6-mill tax cut on their 1996 tax bill, and set the remaining \$8 million aside to spend in the years ahead to update technology. That money currently earns interest for the district.

Speed

from page A1

residents about the problem. A SMART trailer, which gives speed readings to motorists, was also placed there.

General studies show people who speed also live in the area.

"The ones speeding are the ones most comfortable with the roadway," said Tom Biasell, Hills Public Services director.

Police stepped up enforcement on Mayfair, but it had little

A follow-up speed study a year later indicated the average speed actually increased to 31 mph from 30.6 mph between 7-9 a.m.

After traffic engineers nixed a three-way stop as a possible speed bumps. Some 40 of 48 homeowners, or 83 percent,

One street over, residents vere even more firm about using the last-gasp speed deterrent.

Of 41 homeowners along Ravenscroft in Briar Hill sub, 37 signed a petition asking for speed bumps. The 90-percent approval well exceeded the

approval well exceeded the required 75 percent.

A petition for a proposed speed bump on Northwick hadn't been turned in yet.

In the case of Ravenscroft, though, education and enforce-ment appeared to work.

In 1996, average speeds on Northwick at 7-9 a.m. were 31.4 mph. That dropped to 28.5 mph, according to follow-up study in

The clamor for speed bumps

Charles Frank, Briar Hill Association president, was not in favor of speed bumps but, like his neighbors, sees them as the only alternative to curb leadfoot motorists.

"I feel that speeders should pay through fines for additional enforcement." Frank said.

also underscored his view to council that speed deterrents are a last hope on his street.

"I also beg that you pass it for us," Clevey said.



BY RICHARD PEARL STAFF WRITER

COURTYARD MANOR We offer Assisted Living through a carefully structured and comprehensive program. Personalized care and social activities designed to stimulate body and mind. By focusing our efforts in small groups in our residential settling, we are able to accomdate Active/Alert Memory Impaired, Frail/Recovering, and Alzheimers residents. We welcome Respite.

- Nurse On Site
 On Site Physician
 Visits Available
 Visits Available

Please call today to set up a time for an Informative lour and visit with our friendly staff.

Visit any of our convenient locations:

COURTYARD MANOR Sterling Heights 13400 Nineteen Mile Road 1-800-807-8337

COURTYARD MANOR

Φ

OURTYARD MANOR COURTYARD MANOR COURTYARD MANOR
Auburn Hills
6031 N. Squirter Road 29750 Farmington Hills
1-800-756-9199 1-800-998-0787 1-800-736-2323

and under accompanies of free. Group-tour fees for adults, which had been a \$1 donation minimum per person, will rise to \$2 while students will be charged \$1. The gazebo, a popular place for weddings, and mansion grounds will have a \$150 fee for up to two hours of usage. The old fee was \$100, The \$300 fee for anything over two hours will become a half-day rate, while \$450 will be charged for a full day.

They'll still be a bargain, but admission and gazebo fees at the popular Governor Warner Mansion in Parmington will increase by 50 to 100 percent come July 1.

The Parmington City Council, taking its cue from recommendations by the Farmington Historical Commission, voted Monday to increase adult admission from \$1 to \$2 and youth admissions (ages 13-19 years) from 50 cents to \$1. Children 12 and under accompanied by an adult are admitted free.

for a full day:
"A lot of people seem to feel we ought to kick up

M 'As many as 3,000 people a year use the area (as a setting) for plc-

> Dick Carvell Warner Mansion committee cl

the price a bit," said Dick Carvell, Warner Man-sion Development Committee chairman. "Every-body else is up, too."
He said the new fee structure formalizes student rates. "A lot of them (schools) had been doing it (making donations) on a voluntary basis." About a thousand school children visit the museum a year, he said.

u. vell said the museum has "a dozen or so wed-

Carvel saud to museum has a dozen or so weadings lined up this year.

"As many as 3,000 people a year use the area (as a setting) for pictures," he said.
The problem is, he said, "Sometimes we have as many as three bridal parties taking pictures at the

same time.
"Sometimes they don't even call us" ahead of

time to make reservations.

To make reservations or get additional information, call (248) 473-7275.



HOMELINE: 734-953-2020

Open houses and new

developments in your area.

Free real estate seminar information.

➤ Current mortgage rates.

✓ CLASSIFIED AFTER HOURS: 734-591-0900 Place classified ads at your convenience

CIRCULATION AFTER HOURS

O&E ON-LINE: 248-644-1100

You can access On-Line with Just about any communicat software—PC or Macintosh. On-Line users can:

· Send and receive unlimited email. s all features of the Internet-Teinet, Gopher, WWW

Read electronic editions of the the Observer & Eccentric Chat with users across town or across the country.

ou need help signing on to our service, just call the.

O & E On-Line Hotline: 734-953-2266

PHOTO REPRINTS: 734-591-0500

Chair reprints of pictures that have been taken by our staff photographers: Provide the publication date, page number, and description
 of the picture, which must have been published within the

\$20 for the first print, \$7.50 for each additional print paid in advance (check or credit card).

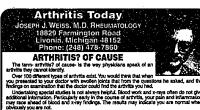
The Farminaton Observer











vousity you are not.

Furthermon, blood studies can be misleading - you can have abnormalities such as a siber-elementable factor of Lupus test only referse. Pile labe may represent past pourse to an agent or dury not responsible for your present plot condition.

Though your doctor may not be able to say what you restrict is, often he can be sure of at your printing is not left may be able to assure you that you do not have referred managed the condition.

us, you, apus serves, or oscoutrities.

sing out these conditions is imported as the medicine for them can be as toxic as it is
ut, and you are sparsed the complications such regimens bring.

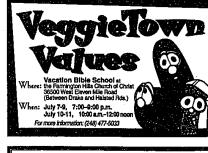
nearly, in tracting inflatiments on of unknown cause, the physician can turn to medication
its for joint inflammation of whatever reason.



un the 90s by Herbert M. Gardner, D.D.S. JOINT CONCERN

It is already income that older people need to report the control of their pays particular attention to the health of their gorns at a mean of preservity their level. There was not been already to the health of their gorns at a mean of preservity their level. There has been some new evidence that gorn disease may gorns checked by a derial proteins and Maybe published in the level of their point and their pays and the provided of the provided of the plantal derivation and proteins and Maybe published in the point and derivation and provided of the provided of their point and their published in the provided of their point and their

LIVONIA VILLAGE DENTAL 19171 MERRIMAN - LIVONIA (248) 478-2110 womm ususty experience berooted before of their purit due to temp





313-563-6530