

# Scrabble from page A1

from difficult letter combinations.

"And sometimes you just have to throw up a prayer." Jerome Boyd, a Detroit resident, sat across from Wedell in a booth at Big Boy Restaurant on 16 Mile Road and Orchard Lake in West Bloomfield on a recent Thursday night. As he placed letters on the board, Boyd explained that the highest scoring word at a tournament he attended the weekend before was "breadier."

"But I found out it's not a word," he added with a grin. The only time a dictionary is consulted during a game is if a word is challenged by the opposing player. If the word is in the dictionary, the challenger loses a turn and if it isn't, the word maker loses a turn. Bogus words are used in the hopes that the other player will be afraid to challenge.

In a booth behind Wedell and Boyd, Kevin Lucas of Ferndale said he's drawn to the game for the comradeship.

"People get to meet all kinds of people," he said. "And you're trying to beat the tar out of them."

Lecianna Dutton, director of the club that meets at the Livonia Sheldon Center on Tuesdays, said Scrabble players just like to get together

ter words. They can even use the sheets while they're playing. They're also given two free challenges without losing turns.

"I like to play, because I like the game," Dutton said. "Other people play because they want to become a Scrabble superstar where you can win quite a bit of money. For me it's entertainment."

Tobi Bell from Wyandotte said she's drawn to the Scrabble clubs because she likes the people it attracts.

"It's amazing when you start playing, you realize that they're just like you," she said. "After the people, I like the way it keeps your mind going."

In fact, she said, in the average course of a day she finds herself breaking words apart and thinking how they can be rearranged into new words.

Scrabble players come to meetings with all different levels of expertise, ages and occupations, Ravichandran said.

"There's a real cross section of people," she said. "You can get started in your 80s and play. It's for people who like competition and people who like words."

People who like crossword puzzles generally like Scrabble, Wedell

said. "The hardest thing is to find places to play."

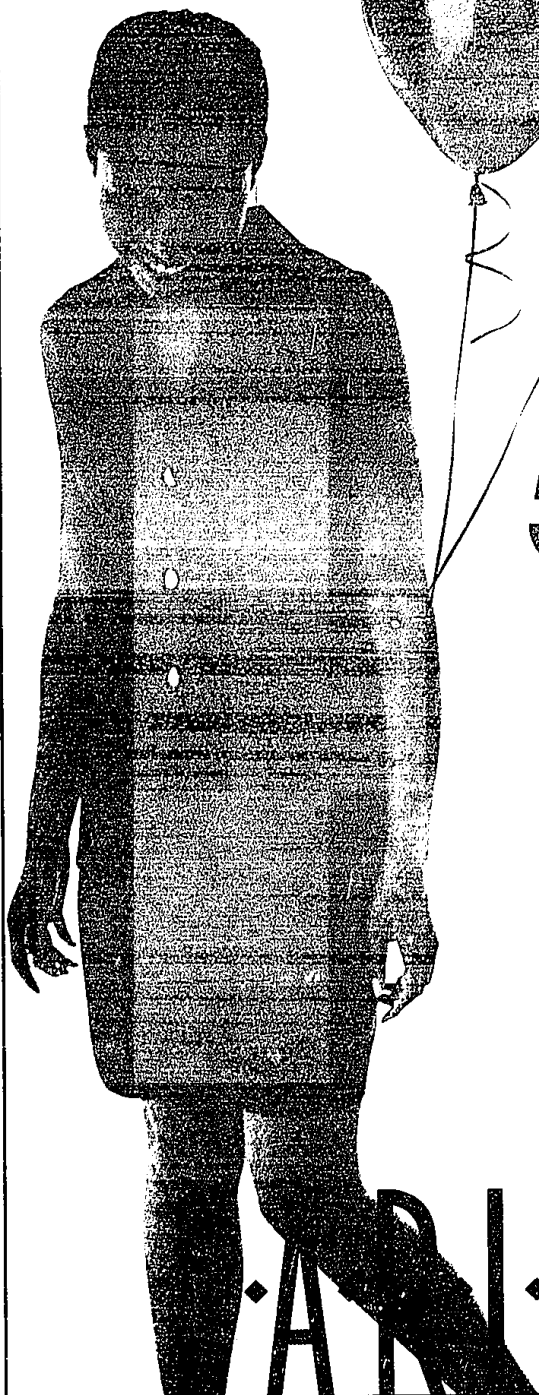
Wedell played Scrabble as a child, but not a lot. And now it's become a time consuming hobby. When he isn't working or playing Scrabble, Wedell constructs the boards used during games. He takes the standard game boards and mounts them on turntables making it easy for the players to sit across from one another and spin it back and forth.

On Tuesday's Scrabble players around the metropolitan Detroit area meet at Livonia Sheldon Center, 10800 Farmington, 248-476-6647; or Hunter Community Center, 509 Fisher Court, in Clawson, 248-589-0334. On Thursdays players meet at Big Boy on 16 Mile Road and Orchard Lake on the southeast corner. The first games start at 7 p.m. and the second games at 8 p.m. Players can join anytime on the hour.

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