

'Great Strides' to benefit Cystic Fibrosis

By LEE SNIDER
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They'll be making "Great Strides" in West Bloomfield next Sunday, May 6, as dozens of people are expected to walk the track at Drake Sports Park to raise money for cystic fibrosis research.

The West Bloomfield event, officially dubbed the Great Strides Walk, is part of a series of similar fund-raisers happening throughout the state this spring.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation-Metro Detroit Chapter is coordinating the activity.

Check-in begins at 10 a.m. and the walk itself follows at 11. The park is located off Drake between Maple and 14 Mile.

Participants are asked to obtain pledges then complete as much of the 10K walk as they want. Event organizers advise walkers to set a goal of at least \$150. All proceeds go to cystic fibrosis research and education.

For Alyssa Kay of Farmington Hills, Sunday's event is more than just another charity fundraiser. Her brother, Matt Colman, is a cystic fibrosis patient.

"He's a fighter," Kay said.



Fighter Matt Colman is an inspiration to his sister Alyssa Kay of Farmington Hills.

"He's very sensitive and bright. He's just a very good person."

Colman graduated from West Bloomfield High School in 1994 and majored in film studies at U.M. He currently lives in Los Angeles and works as a production assistant for the Judge Judy and Judge Joe Brown, tele-

vision shows.

"He loves to work. He's living his dream," Kay added.

Though none of the pledge money will be earmarked for a specific person or cause, Kay said she will be walking under the TEAM MATT banner. Kay said her brother is healthy and fit, though he tends to tire easily and enters the hospital periodically for two-week rehabilitation sessions.

"This community has been a great support to help Matt beat this aggressive disease," Kay said.

Colman's name is on a list for a double lung transplant in California. Kay said the normal waiting period for such an operation is one to two years.

Those who want to become involved in TEAM MATT can call Kay at (248) 361-4070. Anyone wishing to donate to either the Great Strides Walk or to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation can send a check payable to CFF to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, 2285 Livermore, Suite 410, Troy, MI 48063.

For more information, call LFF Director of Special Events Debi Avera at (248) 269-9769.

Learn more about Cystic Fibrosis

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease affecting both children and adults.

The disease comes from a defective gene, which causes the body to produce abnormally thick mucus. The mucus accumulations can impair digestion and lead to chronic and fatal lung infections.

There is currently no cure for CF, but medical science is making advances with gene therapy and other treatments.

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is based in Bethesda, Md. Its Web site is www.cff.org.

Program gives cell phones to abused women

Wireless industry analysts estimate that there are currently as many as 24 million inactive wireless phones in people's homes and businesses.

Sponsored by Motorola, "Donate a Phone" is part of CALL to PROTECT, a national program that provides domestic violence victims with phones that are pre-programmed for 911 and one additional non-emergency number so that they can access help at the touch of a button.

"Abused women are able to use these donated phones to call for help with the push of a button, which can often make the difference between continued abuse and peace-of-mind security," said Rita Smith, NCADV executive director.

Locally, phones can be donated by mailing the phone, battery and charger, if available, to CALL to PROTECT, care of Motorola, 1680 E. Ellsworth Road, Ann Arbor 48108.

For more information, visit the Wireless Foundation's Web site at www.wirelessfoundation.org.

BUSINESS NEWS

No fee service

Paramount Bank announces it will offer all deposit services free of charge to its business customers with a minimum monthly balance of \$3,000.

The no-fee services include monthly banking fees, per check fees, per deposit slip fees, wire-in fees, domestic wire-out fees, check ordering fees, cashier's check fees, teller transaction fees, courier service fees and more.

"A business can spend thousands of dollars a year in banking fees," said Jeffrey Sugg, President of Paramount Bank. "This is especially painful for smaller businesses."

Paramount will also offer all its deposit services free of charge to consumers who maintain a minimum monthly account balance of \$150.

At a \$500 monthly balance, Paramount Bank will pay interest on consumer checking accounts at one of the highest rates in the Detroit area. The no-fee services include monthly banking fees, check ordering fees, cashier's check fees, teller transaction fees and more.

With bank fees increasing at a rate higher than the rate of inflation and Michigan noted as one of the most expensive states for banking fees, Paramount Bank will be the only bank in Michigan and just one of very

few banks in the country to offer no fee services.

Paramount Bank also offers free courier service to its business customers maintaining a minimum balance of \$3,000 per month. Paramount Bank will handle all the banking needs of business customers and their employees at their business location.

Paramount Bank founded in 1998, currently has full-service locations in Farmington Hills and Birmingham.

Workshops

Dale Carnegie Training presents "Two Spring Workshops, for Salespeople and Managers," on Tuesday, May 8, at the MSU Management Center, 811 Square Lake Road, Troy.

The "Five-by-Five Sales Workshop" from 8:00 a.m. to noon, will help salespeople to build relationships that build sales. The "Managers Spring Tune-Up" from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., will help managers learn the ingredients for successful management.

Dale Carnegie Training has over 85 years' experience training people in communication skills, human relations, stress management, attitude control and adapting to change. For more information, or to register, call Dennis Deveja at (248) 879-1422.

Spring Ballet workshop offered

A Spring Ballet Workshop featuring ballet master and choreographer Jacob Lascu will be presented by Oakland Community College at the Orchard Ridge Campus' Smith Theatre on Saturday, May 12.

The program gives intermediate and advanced level dancers the opportunity to participate in workshops with Lascu. Members of the general public who wish to observe are also welcome.

The intermediate level workshop runs from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., the advanced workshop from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost to enroll in either workshop is \$10. General admission for observers is \$5.

Lascu has studied with noted

Romanian and Russian ballet masters: Ionel Marcu, Mercedes Pavelici, Anton Romanofski, Oleg Danofski and Maru Vasile.

Well known in the Metropolitan Detroit area for his work on the *Nutcracker Suite* with the Detroit Symphony, Mr. Lascu was lead dancer, ballet master and choreographer of the Romanian national Ensemble "Ciocila" and the Rapsodia Romina.

Those wishing to attend the Spring Ballet Workshop should make their reservations in advance by calling (248) 522-3667, or (248) 522-3494.

The Orchard Ridge Campus is located at 27055 Orchard Lake Road, just south of I-696 in Farmington Hills.

Good, bad news for county business

By PAT MURPHY
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Oakland's business climate has some bad news and good news, according to economists from the University of Michigan who presented the 16th-annual Economic Outlook Luncheon Friday in Troy.

First the bad news: Oakland county is experiencing a "slow-down."

That's according to George A. Fulton and Donald R. Grimes of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations at University of Michigan, who said the downturn has been "too mild and too short to be a recession."

Now the good news: That slow-down is expected to end in the second quarter of 2001, and it will be followed by "modest growth" in the second half of the year and throughout 2002. That's when local unemployment and inflation are each expected to be 2.5 percent or lower.

The economists, who claim to have been 99 percent accurate in their predictions over most of the last decade, were confident and optimistic through 2010.

During that decade, they predicted, Oakland County's population and labor force to expand by about 6 percent annually.

Beyond 2010, however, there is considerable uncertainty, they added. "A shortage of qualified workers will be a major problem," and the labor force will shrink and get older.

The U.S. economy has slowed since the booming 1990s because of three interrelated factors, said Fulton: Rising interest rates, increasing energy costs and the "equity crisis" on the stock market. But the economy is strengthening fundamentally, he said, and it will rebound because of interest rate reductions and expectations of a tax cut — which would boost business and consumer confidence.

Confidence is crucial, Fulton said. "Without it, it's speculation of a more serious slowdown could become a self-fulfilling prophecy."

In other years, their forecast would be considered extremely good, said the economists — particularly during the "mild recession" of 1991, when the county's unemployment rate (7.1 percent)

was higher than the nation's (6.8 percent). But the outlook for the next decade is somewhat modest when compared with the unprecedented prosperity and growth of the 1990s.

During that decade, Oakland registered some impressive statistics, such as:

■ Oakland led Michigan in job creation, with the county generating one in four private sector jobs.

■ Oakland ranked third, nationally, in total private sector employment growth between 1990 and 1998.

■ Oakland had consistently high per capita income. In 1998 (the latest year for which data was available) the per capita income here was \$42,378. Second in the state was the Ann Arbor area at \$41,616.

With the county's pool of educated and qualified workers dwindling, the economists said Oakland would do well to adapt a strategy of training and upgrading the substantial pool of less educated workers — including those who are not even seeking employment because of poor skills.

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Students at ATA have access to experienced instructors, high tech facilities and all university resources, including the library, computer and science labs, the field house and dining facilities.

Tuition is free, but space is limited.

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