

Teleprinter for deaf

The Michigan Department of Social Services (DSS) now has a teleprinter, or TTY machine, in the agency's central office in Lansing. The TTY will allow the department to communicate with deaf or hearing-impaired persons who have similar equipment.

The TTY operates with a standard telephone receiver and enables the users to communicate with printed language, typing outgoing messages on a keyboard similar to a typewriter's and receiving information on a continuous paper roll two inches wide.

The DSS machine will be in the Office of Legislator and Citizen Inquiries, a trouble-shooting and client information unit. The telephone number for reaching the TTY at Social Services between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays is (517) 373-3908.

"For the first time, those with TTYs will be able to communicate directly and independently with the Department of Social Services via telephone," said Patrick Vaughan, MDSS coordinator for the Federal Section 504 (handicapped rights) regulations. "The word 'independent' is important because in the past, deaf people

— although they may have had a TTY — were forced to rely on others in order to communicate with DSS because the department did not have the machine," Vaughan explained. The agency's TTY will be used to relay messages from TTY users to the appropriate local DSS office or other Social Services units within the state department. It will also enable DSS to send messages from one of its sub-units back to a deaf person with a TTY.

"Additional TTY units may be installed elsewhere after the department completes a review of all of its programs with the assistance of Michigan handicapped," Vaughan said. "The review will be completed next spring."

The federal Section 504 rules require DSS to offer all of its facilities, services and employment opportunities equitably, without regard to physical or mental handicaps, to those who are eligible, Vaughan added.

"More importantly, the department has always believed that its services should be available to all Michigan residents who need them," he said.

Red Cross launches new fund drive

Calling its financial situation precarious and grim, the American Red Cross announced it is taking the unusual step of launching a \$15 million nationwide fund drive to bolster depleted reserves needed for disaster relief.

The Michigan Division, American Red Cross, has been assigned a quota for the fund drive of almost \$707,000. According to Duane E. Johnson, Michigan Division manager and Southeastern Michigan Chapter Executive Director, the local goal for Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties is more than \$392,000.

The United Foundation and United Way have been approached with requests for allocations to meet the local goal. The United Foundation and United Way have always met Red Cross special disaster fund needs during the last two decades, according to Johnson.

The nation's largest volunteer relief organization has already exhausted the

amount budgeted for disasters this fiscal year, which runs from July 1, 1979 to June 30, 1980.

"The national organization has spent or committed to spend more than \$23 million for disaster relief and preparedness thus far," said Johnson. "This means we are operating on disas-

ter reserve funds, which have already been reduced to a little over \$2 million.

"Basing its estimates on past experience, the Red Cross can expect additional relief expenditures in the neighborhood of \$16.5 million through next June 30.

"Obviously, the Red Cross must de-

pend upon the public's continued generosity to enable us to respond to major disasters during the remainder of the fiscal year," Johnson said.

The major cause of the financial crisis was heavy relief expenditures to help hurricane and flood victims last summer in this country, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Bell asks GOP to pay for phones

Michigan Bell Telephone Co.'s proposed equipment charges for the 1980 Republican national convention in Detroit will be the subject of a public hearing next week by the Michigan Department of Commerce/Public Service Commission.

The hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 13 in the offices of the commission, 6545 Mercantile Way,

Lansing. A prehearing conference to define issues, determine the number of witnesses, and set up hearing procedures was held last week.

Bell is asking commission approval to charge \$280 for each telephone line it connects for the convention, which will get underway July 14, 1980.

According to the company's application, providing equipment and services

to the Republican National Committee, state delegates, candidates, communications media, and others at the convention will result in "significant and extraordinary" costs to Bell because of the short life of the facilities and services.

Those costs should be recovered from users of the equipment and not the general ratepayer, Bell said.

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Goodwill sale begins Dec. 12

The annual pre-Christmas sale of merchandise will be held by the League for the Handicapped-Goodwill Industries on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Dec. 12, 13 and 14 at the Goodwill Building, 6422 Brush at East Grand Boulevard in Detroit. Sale hours are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. all three days.

A variety of items will be featured at the sale. The articles, contributed to League-Goodwill by area retailers and business firms, include assorted tables, desks, hall trees, radios, record play-

ers, office desks and chairs and other miscellaneous items. There will be a few items left over from the recent Junior Group Antiques Show.

One unusual item will be an electronic organ recently contributed to League-Goodwill by a Detroit area church. The church recently acquired a new organ and decided to contribute the old one to a non-profit organization. Sales clerks for the sale will be members of the Junior Group of League-Goodwill.

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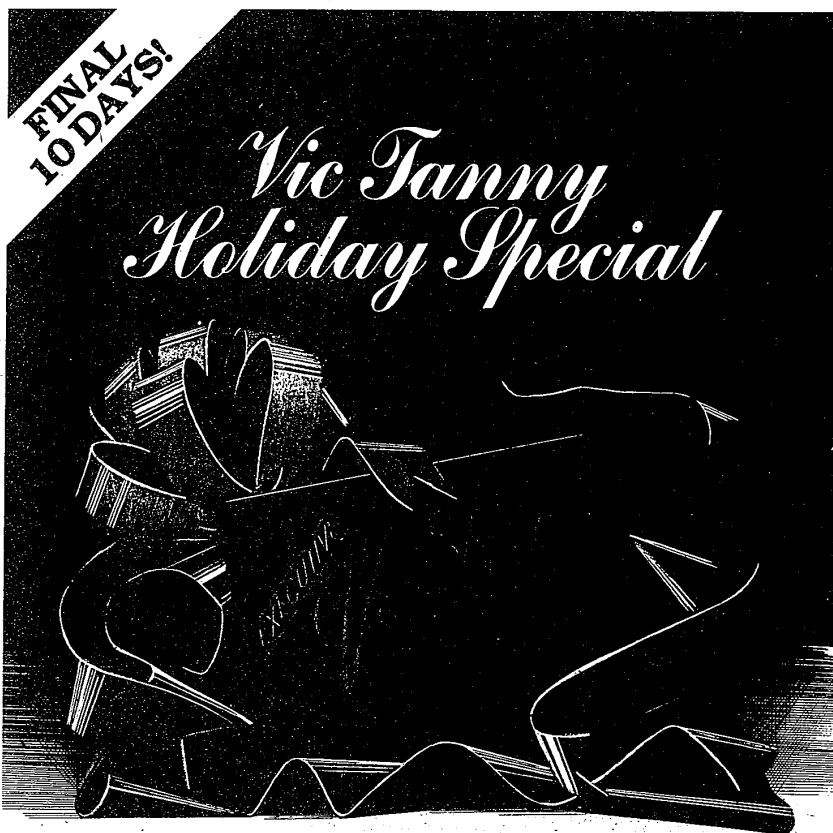
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