



Sending a message

U.S. Sen Carl Levin (left) was presented with more than 200 letters by Observer & Eccentric columnist Steve Barnaby at Saturday's Livonia town hall meeting. The letters were from readers who supported a boycott of oil companies because of the high price of gasoline. (Staff photo)

Road weight limits imposed

Spring weight restrictions intended to avoid excessive road break-up during groundfrost thaws have been imposed on Oakland County roads. Truckers should contact the Oakland County Road Commission at 858-4835

for specifics. Permissible loading is generally reduced 25 to 35 percent, according to John L. Grubba, managing director. Signs dealing with specific load limits will be posted.

Sewage rates
Suburbs win look at the books

MIKE SCANLON

The annual lawsuit over proposed sewage treatment rate hikes reconvened last week in Federal District Court in Detroit.

Following a two-hour closed chambers session with Judge John Feikens, attorneys agreed to allow the plaintiffs, mostly suburban customers, to examine the numbers used by the Detroit Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board in reaching the latest rate hike proposal.

Oakland County Drain Commissioner George Kuhn, who initiated the latest suit, said the agreement represented a win for his side.

"Free and open disclosure — it's a great victory," Kuhn said.

JOINING Kuhn in the action were agencies of both Wayne and Macomb counties, the Detroit Chamber of Commerce, a group of laundries, and a food industry group that includes Stroh Brewery. The brewery is but one of the water system's largest customers.

The water board proposed, and the Detroit City Council approved, rate hikes ranging from 24-39 percent for suburban users.

Thursday's session resulted in the decision to set an April 2 deadline by which any other interested party must formally file to intervene in the action against the proposed hikes.

April 2 was also the deadline agreed on by which the water board must provide the rate-setting information.

"It's my personal opinion that there are some things they will want to see that are policy matters, not rate setting matters," Beckham said.

"We think we have put together an adequate rate that is both fair and legal to all the customers involved," added Beckham.

The increases, due to take effect July 1, would provide about \$2 million a month in added revenue, Beckham said.

Charles Hampton, an attorney representing Kuhn, said he doesn't think Judge Feikens will allow the water board to refuse to provide requested information.

"The judge has indicated that his doors are open to us anytime," Hampton said. "He's made it clear he wants clear and open discovery."

THE PLAINTIFFS say the water board has so far provided inadequate information on how the latest hike was decided on.

"This sketchy budget information that you get in building up the revenue requirements is just crazy," said Robert Fredericks, deputy drain commissioner for Oakland County.

"Detroit still does not have a (computer) system where you can compare their estimates with ongoing, month-to-month costs. It's an obsolete system that doesn't give the water board the information it needs," he said.

The lack of links between the computers that estimated costs and the computers that keep track of the costs make the task of acquiring accurate data difficult, Fredericks said.

Fredericks said the county so far has received six handwritten sheets and a five-page Memo in response to its queries on how the rate hike proposal was put together.

THE PROPOSED rate hikes, the latest in a series, are outgrowths of a decade-long dispute between the water board and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials. In 1977, the water board entered into a consent agreement in which it promised to meet a

series of deadlines in improving sewage treatment and thus controlling pollution. The water board says rate hikes are needed to provide enough revenue to build the expensive facilities needed to treat sewage.

The plaintiffs claim the rate hikes are more than enough, and most have been involved in a series of rate-related lawsuits against the water board in recent years.



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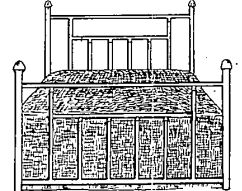
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Turn to NORTHLAND

for the First Annual
TWILIGHT FUN RUN
Sunday, March 22, 1981
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

You're invited to participate in the first annual "Northland Twilight Fun Run" at Southfield's Northland Center. You'll run a total of 5 km (3.1 miles) under the 172-store shopping center and through the Center's parking lots, finishing at McDonald's and the free drink stations. You won't want to miss this one — see you there!

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- ☆☆☆ Race is open to everyone 12 to 60 and above who can make the distance
- ☆☆☆ T-shirts to the first 1,500 who register
- ☆☆☆ Embroidered commemorative patches to the first 1,500 who register
- ☆☆☆ Certificates to all who participate
- ☆☆☆ Free drinks supplied by McDonald's and Hughes & Hatcher

PRIZES:

- Gift certificates, good at any Northland store, will be awarded to the first male and female finishers and the next 15 finishers:
- FIRST PLACE MALE & FEMALE: \$100 gift certificate, plus a pair of training shoes
- SECOND PLACE: \$50 gift certificate
- THIRD PLACE: \$40 gift certificate
- FOURTH PLACE: \$30 gift certificate
- FIFTH PLACE: \$20 gift certificate
- SIXTH THROUGH TWENTIETH PLACE: \$10 gift certificate

REGISTRATION:

Additional entry forms may be picked up at the Northland information booth (Hudson's east court) and at several stores, including Hudson's, J.C. Penney, McDonald's and Hughes & Hatcher. Photocopies may also be made of this form. Entry forms must be mailed no later than WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1981 to guarantee entry. Form must be accompanied by a check or money order, payable to NORTHLAND CENTER MERCHANT ASSOCIATION, for \$3.00 per entrant. Late registration and packet pickup will be held race day from noon to 4 p.m. in the Northland auditorium, Concourse B (use parking lot E and stairwell near Macauley's). Fee for late registration, March 22, is \$4.00 per entrant.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Call 569-6273 or 569-6290

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM
FIRST ANNUAL NORTHLAND TWILIGHT FUN RUN

FILL OUT ALL SPACES AND RETURN TO: Twilight Fun Run, Northland Center Merchant Association, BC-2 Northland Center, Southfield, MI 48075. PLEASE REGISTER AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE to guarantee a patch and T-shirt. Enclose check or money order payable to Northland Center Merchant Association.

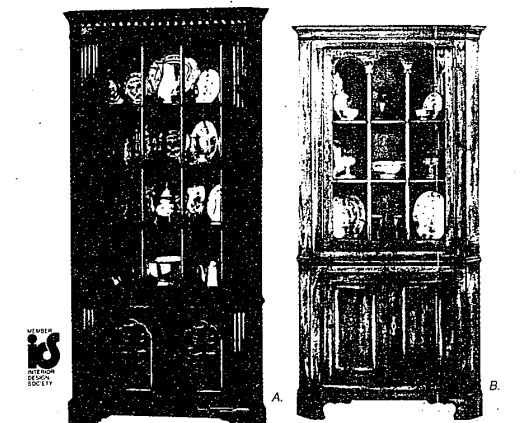
NAME: _____ AGE: (as of 3-22-81) _____
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T-SHIRT SIZE (circle one): Adult S M L XL
FEE ENCLOSED: Number of registrations at \$3.00 per runner _____
Number of late registrations at \$4.00 per runner _____

WAIVER: In consideration of my entry being accepted, I waive and release all rights and claims I may have against the sponsors, Northland Center Merchant Association, The Center Companies, The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States, et al. for injuries or damages occasioned by my participation in the Northland Twilight Fun Run. I intend to release all sponsors named and unnamed.

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