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'Shining examples': two who really care

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

There should be a better word than "retarded" for persons born with the condition.

The word only emphasizes limitations. Accomplishments made by men and women who are mentally retarded as well as persons who helped them achieve were recognized on April 3 at an awards banquet sponsored by the Association for Retarded Citizens of Oakland County.

Two Farmington men — John Mintline, 42, a resident of a group home for the retarded in the city and Peter Mantyla, 18, a senior at Farmington High who does volunteer work with the retarded — received awards.

"Both young men (were) honored for their personal examples and contributions to the lives of persons with mental retardation," said Catherine Trainor, community relations coordinator for the Oakland County ARC. "One has retardation, the other does not. But both are shining examples of advocacy for self and others."

Mintline was the recipient of the 1981 Hugh Graham Inspiration Award, named after a late educator who worked to help the retarded realize their full potential.

After Mintline was nominated for the award, members of ARC-Oakland contacted the manager of Kmart's Farmington Hills store to see what kind of employee Mintline has been in the five and a half years he has worked at the department store.

STORE MANAGER Chuck Hajduk said at first he couldn't understand why an association for the retarded was asking about Mintline. They told Hajduk that Mintline had been nominated for an award on the basis of achievements made despite his mental handicap.

"I wasn't aware he was retarded, and I've been at this store a while,"



Peter Mantyla

Hajduk said. "The guy is unbelievable. He is so super dependable."

The Kmart manager told the ARC that if he had 50 employees as conscientious and pleasant as Mintline, "I'd have the best-run Kmart in the USA."

"Yeah, that's the way I feel," Hajduk said. "He has a physical handicap so he's a little bit slow but when it does a job, he does it through. He's done right."

The physical handicap Hajduk refers to is a result of Mintline's cerebral palsy.

It's not surprising to hear Hajduk say he wasn't aware Mintline was retarded. In an interview, the man talked intelligently, without hesitation, about his life, the award, his organ playing and what it's like to be retarded.

"NO, IT doesn't embarrass me," Mintline said when asked if he resented being called retarded. "As far as words go, the word 'handicapped' would probably sound better."

He says he was honored to win the award and explained that he won it "for being upgraded in all different categories."

Mintline's new goals are to get a driver's license, buy a car and share an apartment with another high-functioning retarded person. Right now, he says rules governing the group homes for the retarded are too restrictive and treat adult residents like babies.

"I'm against the state rule, the one where we all have to leave the house when nobody's around," Mintline said. "Say I was living at home and my mother leaves for the store or something like that. Sure, I can go with her, but if she's going to be back in 15-20 minutes, why can't I stay (home)?"

He says it's inconsistent to allow him to leave the home to work at Kmart, where he earns \$5.20 an hour, and then demand constant supervision of him when he returns to the group home. For that reason, he would like to advance to an apartment building where the supervisor is a trained therapist living down the hall but the retarded residents are afforded more freedom.

Mintline lives most of his life with his parents. His mother, Mrs. Dorota Mintline, resides in West Bloomfield. Mintline explains that a car will allow him to visit her more often, and he won't have to rely on Dial-a-Ride to get him to and from work.

ONE OF the fringe benefits of visiting his mother, Mintline says, is that he gets to play her Aurora Classic electric organ. Mintline owns an organ of his own, but likes his mother's fancy one better.

"I can do little arpeggios with my left hand and there's a few more difficult things you can add to the accompaniment," he says.

Without much encouragement, Mintline sat down at the organ to treat listeners to a self-taught rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" last Tuesday in honor of the Tigers opener. He hit the "Hawaiian Guller" switch and launched into a twangy rendition of "Tiny Bubbles." A few more switches are manipulated and Mintline dem-

onstrated that the organ can sound full, like a church pipe organ.

THE OTHER local award recipient, Peter Mantyla, won the "Youth Volunteer Award" for his work as a teacher's aid in special education classes at Farmington High School.

Mantyla was noted that two other volunteer students, Kevin Nichols and Chris McAskin, have worked just as hard.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

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"Working with the retarded made me realize how lucky I am," Mantyla

said. "Our teacher, (Mrs. Susan Kissinger), she does so much. We only do a little bit of volunteer work in third hour and sometimes on Saturdays. You can compare that to the work she does and the parents' work."

"It seems like I don't do doddly compared to them."

One of the reasons Mantyla received the award, Ms. Trainor of the ARC said, is that he was successful in getting retarded students to interact with mainstream students.

He did this by inviting special education students to eat lunch at his table in the lunchroom.

"People used to tease me and stuff," Mantyla said, "asking me why I sat there at the 'retard table.' I said 'Because they're my friends, I like them.'"

Mantyla works after school at Romano's Pizzeria, where his boss, Sam Mannino, calls him a "gem of a person."

Praise for Reagan supercedes boost for tax proposal

By Kathleen Moran
staff writer

If he was campaigning for passage of his tax relief proposal, it was barely noticeable Thursday when Gov. William Milliken addressed a gathering of 610 Oakland County business people.

Milliken, whose bi-partisan tax proposal will face voters in an election May 19, touched on the subject only briefly at the conclusion of his speech to members of 15 chambers of commerce at the Troy Hilton Inn.

Instead, his low-key talk praised the way President Ronald Reagan and the nation handled the assassination attempt and addressed Milliken's optimism for Michigan's economy.

"That was the most sterile speech I ever heard," said Robert Tisch, whose unexpected appearance at the luncheon set a few people on edge. Two persons in Tisch's entourage had been seen in the hotel lobby carrying two cartons of eggs.

When they went into the banquet room, only one carton was confiscated, leading organizers of the luncheon to

fear Milliken's speech would end up with an egg toss.

Milliken is apparently relying on private meetings with leaders and organizations in the state to garner support for the tax proposal. Besides just touching briefly on the proposal, Milliken didn't take questions from the audience.

THAT APPROACH apparently won't discourage Tisch.

"I'll follow him all over," said Tisch, calling the tax proposal a disaster.

"I'll do everything I can to communi-

cate with the people of Michigan."

Under the proposal, property taxes for operations would be cut in half, up to a maximum saving of \$1,400. Future operational property taxes would be limited to a six percent increase — on the average.

Taxes for debt retirement are not changing.

The sales tax will increase from four to 5½ percent, under the proposal. Revenue from the sales tax increase will be used to reimburse local governments for the money they lose as a re-

sult of the 50-percent property tax reduction.

"It's a hell of a tax increase," Tisch argued. "It will be bad for Michigan — it will be a disaster for business in Michigan. It adds another 37½ percent payment for anything you buy, add another 37½ percent to the purchase of a car and see what that does."

(According to backers of the plan, the sales tax would increase by 37½ percent, but the price of an item would only increase by less than 1½ percent. On an \$8,000 car, the current tax is \$320. With the 5½ percent sales tax rate, the tax would be \$440. The new cost of the car would be \$8,440, a 1.44 percent increase in the total price.)

Milliken told his audience that the tax relief proposal is a direct response to the clamor for property tax relief.

"The people of this state have told us for a long time they believe property taxes have escalated at a rate which is extremely difficult for many families to pay," he said. "They've told us they want a responsible approach to reform property tax reduction."

ALTHOUGH THE three tax reform proposals on the November election ballot had been rejected statewide, Milliken said the message still came through that residents want an "effective formula" for tax reform.

"I think that has been done," he said, noting that the May 19 election proposal was arrived at through a bi-partisan effort between the state legislature and governor's office.

Milliken said he isn't totally satisfied with the proposal, but believes it is the best compromise possible.

"Given the factors, given all the problems, given the concerns of the people of this state, I do honestly believe it is a good proposal and it ought to be adopted by the voters."

Asked later about charges that the proposal was simply a tax shift, Milliken said, "this proposal is not a tax shift. It is a proposal which clearly calls for executive cuts of \$250 million."

The state cutbacks will be required because the sales tax increase and from reduced property tax credits is expected to fall \$250 million short of the estimated \$1.1 billion the state will be required to reimburse local governments.

"We have already cut back some billion dollars. Many programs are being hurt," Milliken said the state cutbacks to make up the \$250 million will be made across the board.

Tisch said even if the tax proposal is adopted May 19, he won't abandon his campaign for passage of his more-dramatic tax relief proposal.

"I won't alter our plans at all," said the drain commissioner from Shiawassee County. "We're going to do the same thing whether this passes or not."

Calling the May 19 plan "chicken," Tisch said he is working on plans to have his revised tax plan put on the November ballot.

Auto dealer caught in middle of battle over bucks for cops

By Mary Rodriguez
staff writer

Farmington Hills auto dealer Bob Saks has gotten tangled to the tune of \$200,000 in a Wayne County legal mish-mash.

Saks is trying to reclaim 28 Oldsmobiles he leased more than two years ago to the Wayne County Sheriff's Department.

The cars, worth \$200,000, were due back following the lease expiration date March 31.

But Wayne County Sheriff William Lucas refuses to return the fleet, which is used for unmarked surveillance, until a state Supreme Court ruling is

made regarding the future of the county patrol division.

The Wayne County Board of Commissioners voted last November to eliminate road-patrol contracts with Romulus, Brownstown Township and Plymouth Township effective on Feb. 1 to balance its budget.

Delaying that order, Lucas has kept the 251-person division intact and hopes to be supported by the state high court when it hears his case on June 1.

MEANWHILE, SAKS wants his cars back.

"He (Lucas) asked me to be a good citizen," Saks said. "I'd like to cooperate but those cars cost me a monthly

payment to the bank of \$6,123. I couldn't afford to cooperate."

"I feel bad but I need the cars back. They're depreciating right now."

The county made payments while the cars were under lease but isn't paying for them anymore. A sheriff's spokesman said there is no money to compensate Saks.

Saks has turned the case over to Southfield attorney Nate Peterman.

Peterman said the sheriff's department has ignored an April 6 letter from the Wayne County Board of Auditors

stating that the cars must be returned.

He plans to file a lawsuit in Wayne County Circuit Court this week to get the vehicles back.

"We need these cars on the street," said Richard M. Novak, senior inspector for the sheriff's department.

"Bob Saks has been great to us. We appreciate everything he's done, but we need the tools to do the job."

"The sheriff's department has the responsibility to protect the people. We got to do what we got to do."

Two-year sentence for nine counts of possessing a firearm in both incidents.

HE RECEIVED a six- to 10-year sentence for one count of assault with intent to commit second-degree criminal sexual conduct and one count of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder. The sexual con-

duct charge stemmed from the first incident, the assault charge from the second.

Also, Hallberg was given 10-15 years for one count of second-degree criminal sexual conduct in the first incident and 10 to 30 years for three counts of armed robbery in both incidents.

In addition, he received 10-30 years

for one count of kidnapping and three counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, all stemming from the second incident.

Hallberg, who has been held in Oakland County Jail since his arrest, retired from Detroit Public Schools after receiving a disability pension. He is married and has two children.

They were arraigned before Farmington District Judge Michael Hand on Thursday afternoon, and all four pleaded innocent.

Bond was set at \$10,000 for Papoy and Brock, \$2,500 for Goodman and \$2,000 for Zink.

Zink was charged with receiving and concealing stolen goods. The other three were charged with breaking and entering.

A preliminary examination is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, at 2 p.m. in district court for all four suspects.

Police were aided in their probe by P.J.'s Donuts, located in the Grand Market Square.

Waling was walking his wife out to the parking lot at 11:45 p.m. when the couple heard a burglar alarm sound.

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Spruce Up for Spring!



Spring into home improvement, inside and out! See today's special Home & Garden section.