

# He holds the title: No. 1 Bottle Pick-Up

By Loraine McClellan  
staff writer

**T**HE RED FLAGS flying from the bicycles loaded in the breaking point with returnable bottles and cans is an every day familiar sight in the area roughly from Nine Mile to 12 Mile between Orchard Lake Road and Middlebelt.

It's the territory Clearance Cox has mapped out for himself to clear the roads and ditches of tossed-away bottles and cans and to solicit the returnables from businesses along the way.

The personnel at Architectural Designers on 10 Mile within that territory have dubbed his business the city's "Number 1 Bottle Pick-Up."

The staff at Farmers Insurance call him "Mr. Clean" because they know the Grand River-Orchard Lake Road area is always going to be cleaned of the hazard the throw-aways can cause to motorists.

Cox, 28, started his bottle pickup business when he was 14 years old, with two wagons, while his family was living in Detroit. He kept at it throughout his school years at Farmington Training Center where he scored high in the Special Olympics and, since graduation two years ago, has been working at it full time.

Full time to Cox is "about from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.," he said. "Quitting time generally depends on when the traffic gets very heavy."

Break time comes at any of his regular stops when he's invited to get relief from the heat or maybe a drink.

COX DOES not easily recall names, but he can certainly tell you where big family parties took place over Memorial Day weekend in his territory, or where the garage is that he cleared of 82 returnable cans.

"That took two trips," he said.

The trips back to empty his bike are made to Cambridge Drugs in Farmington Plaza, or 7-Eleven or Andy's Market in the Nine Mile-Middlebelt area, "depending on what kind of bottles and cans they are," Cox said.

He has never advertised his business. His regular stops are businesses who have invited him to stop in periodically, or neighbors (in the Nine Mile-Middlebelt area) who have told neighbors Cox was available "to sometimes pick up cases and cases of beer bottles like after a birthday party," Cox said.

A regular stop is in City Park, "especially after a ball game. I can always get a full load there," he said.

He carries a wallet full of dog-eared business cards he's been given to help him remember addresses that are on his regular route for pickups, and he's proud to tell of the profits he's made.

Cox goes a long way toward supporting himself with his business and recently started a bank account to buy himself a moped — "one that goes about 10 miles an hour, which will be just about right," he said.

"WE'VE KNOWN him for about six years," said Chuck Kantola of Farmers Insurance. "He gets here about noon two-three times a week,

and he's always sweating from all that pumping he does."

Kantola's co-worker David Johnson said, "He doesn't drink, doesn't smoke. He's organized and very safety conscious. He generally wears an orange vest when he's biking but that gets pretty warm on these hot days. And he's devised his own straps and leather carports for his basket so his cargo doesn't get broken."

"He's such a worker we want to see him get his moped. Anyone who has any bottles or cans they want picked up can call us at 474-4343; and we'll make sure he gets the message."

Cox's favorite pastime is playing the harmonica and fishing with his grandfather in Florida when he vacations there in the winter.

He said his biggest thrills came in winning trophies, medals and ribbons from competition in the Special Olympics while he was in school. He competed in soft ball throw, Frisbee, horseshoes, the 100- and 200-meter runs, and "was best in the 100 meter," he said.

A new activity he's enjoying is his recent membership into the Long-Horns CB Club of Southeastern Michigan.

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## Ms. Wheelchair pageant set

Ms. Wheelchair Michigan Inc. seeks contestants for the title of Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 1988-89.

The pageant is a competition to select the most accomplished and articulate spokeswoman for the physically handicapped in Michigan. Her duties include making people aware of the abilities and dignity of disabled persons to help eliminate bar-

riers and prejudices that prevent people with disabilities from assuming a place in society.

The pageant is set for July 28-30 in the Fairlane Holiday Inn. For details call or write Ms. Wheelchair Michigan, c/o Center for Independent Living, 4 East Alexandrine, Suite 104, Detroit, 48201; 745-9726.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Clearance Cox stops at Farmers Insurance two or three times a week to pick up empty bottles and chat with Dave Johnson about his day's work.

## Shoppers can help special children

Cash For Kids 1988 will be the fourth cooperative effort for the Greater Detroit Food Industry and Variety Club of Detroit.

Its purpose is to raise significant charity dollars for Michigan's spe-

cial children. The program will run through July 6.

A portion of the price from Cash For Kids grocery items will be donated to the Variety Club Cardiology Center as Children's Hospital of Michigan, the Variety Club Myoelec-

tric Center affiliated with Oakwood Hospital in Dearborn, and other Michigan children's charities. All money raised here stays here to help handicapped and underprivileged children. Variety Club of Detroit has been helping needy children for more than 50 years.

Supporting retailers include Farmer Jack Supermarkets, Kroger Food Stores, The Great A & P Tea Company, Great Scott! Supermarkets, Affiliated Foodland, Aher A. Wolf Independent, and Metro Grocery Affiliates.

Cash For Kids items to shop for are all Pepsi-Cola products; Vernors,

A & W, Slice, and 12-pack cans of soft drinks; Domino Sugar; R.T. French's Cream Salad Mustard; Airwick Carpet Fresh and Airwick Breeze; Oscar Mayer Thick and Regular Sliced Bacon; Lever Bros. Surf Powder and Surf Liquid Detergents; H.J. Heinz Strained Baby Juice and Junior Baby Food; Kraft Cheese Chunks and Cheese Shreds; Pillsbury's Jeno's Crisp and Tasty Pizza; Jeno's Pizza Rolls; Totino's Pan Pizza; Northern Bath Tissue; Ragu Spaghetti Sauces; Welch's Orchard Juices; Sanwa Ramen Pride and Sanwa Noodles and Soup; Mott's 6-pack Apple and Fruit drinks.

## Evangelist will speak

Michael Timms, a frequent participant in the Billy Graham Association, will speak at the 9:30-11 a.m. services Sunday, June 19, in First Church of the Nazarine, 21260 Hag-

gerty.

He will give the address that he gave at the President's Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C.

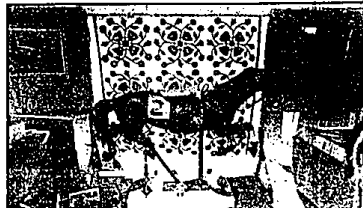
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