

From the vine

Wild grapes plentiful, tasty now

While walking along fence rows and riverbanks at local parks in the area and throughout the state, I am reminded of the Vikings name for North America — Vinland. When the Vikings landed in the New England area they were so impressed with the profusion of grape vines, that they named the country Vinland.

There is still an abundance of wild grape vines in our area. Michigan sports four species according to one authority, and throughout the United States there are from 14-30 different species. Leaves and fruit of all species look very similar and all produce an edible fruit.

One species, the northern Fox grape was used to cultivate the Concord, Catawba and Isabella varieties. Fruit taken from wild plants does not make good wine, but it does make excellent jams and jellies.

Wild grapes of all species grow in a variety of places, so there is no problem in finding a supply to collect. But be sure to collect them when they are ripe. For some additional flavor you may want to add a few strips of fruit.

The only problem you may have in collecting, is finding ripe fruit before the animals do. Approximately 57 species of birds and 12 species of mammals enjoy eating the ripe fruit to fatten up for fall and winter. Even dried fruit discovered in winter is eaten.

SWEET SUGARS as well as the many seeds produced by the plant are nutritious. As homeowners with grape vines in their yard well know,

County parents like MET

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higher than last year, he said. Last year, those loan payments averaged about \$100 a month, according to MET figures.

PARENTS OF a newborn paid \$6,755 last year to guarantee four years' tuition for that child, or \$1,689 for each year.

For this year's enrollment period, the preliminary price for a newborn is \$7,654 for four years of tuition, or \$1,914 a year.

The price is higher for older children — up to \$3,638 a year for children 16 through 18. Last year, the top figure was \$3,145.

Prices are lower for community colleges.

Bowman, chairman of the MET board, said final prices will be set after the enrollment period when the trust has a chance to examine the ages of the children enrolled and what colleges they plan to attend.

For example, if this year's group is older with more who want to attend the more expensive schools — Michigan State and the University of Michigan — than last year's crop, then the rate might have to be increased, Bowman said. It wouldn't be a dramatic rise, he said.

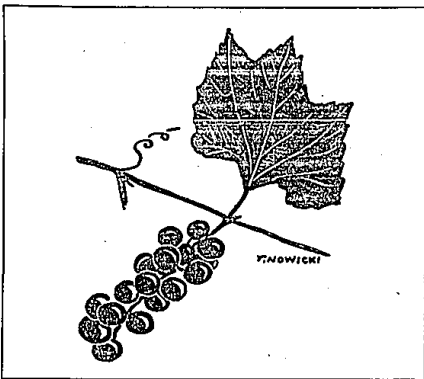
THE MAIN REASON for this year's average 15-percent increase is to make up for part of tuition increases of nearly 10 percent last year and increases averaging 9 percent for the upcoming school year, he said.

Bowman said state budget director Shelby Solomon was working with the state's university presidents on a way to tie state appropriations to tuition increases in an effort to moderate them.



nature

Timothy Nowicki



It's a grape lover's time of year these days in Michigan.

some of those seeds pass through the digestive system of birds and animals, and are deposited on sidewalks, clean cars, or aluminum siding. Grapevine is found commonly in fence rows because it is a place where birds and animals frequently rest and deposit seeds.

Birds not only enjoy the ripe fruit of grapes, but brown thrashers and catbirds use strips of bark from the vine to build their nests. Their dense tangle of stems provide good cover

and shelter for a variety of animals born in summer and in winter.

Instead of going to the grocery store to buy some grape jelly go out and collect some wild fruits and make your own. Always be sure of your identification and be considerate of private property.

Tim Nowicki is a naturalist at Independence-Oaks in Oakland County. He lives in Livonia.

Roll Call Report

Here's how Observer & Eccentric area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the week ending Aug. 5.

HOUSE:
ABORTION — By a vote of 206 for and 219 against, the House refused to further restrict abortion in the District of Columbia. The defeated amendment sought to renew a ban on the District using its own revenue as well as federal payment to provide abortions for the poor. It also sought to toughen the ban so that the District's own money could no longer be spent on abortions deemed necessary because the mother's life is at stake.

The vote occurred during debate on the D.C. appropriations bill (HR 3026) for fiscal 1990 later sent to the Senate. It liberalizes the federal abortion law as it is applied to D.C. But the federal city remains severely restricted in using money it gets from the U.S. Treasury for abortions.

Supporter Christopher Smith, R-N.J., said the House should seize "the opportunity to at least deny government largess to these merchants of death" who perform abortions in Washington.

Opponent Richard Durbin, D-Ill., called the amendment "a sad commentary on the depths we can reach in Congress in perpetuating a plantation relationship with the residents of the District of Columbia."

Members voting yes wanted to further restrict public funding of abortions in D.C.
Michigan members voting yes were Dennis Hertel; D-Harper Woods and William Broomfield, R-Lake Orion.

Members voting no were William Ford, D-Taylor, Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth and Sander Levin, D-Southfield.

SAVINGS AND LOAN RESCUE — By a vote of 170 for and 250 against, the House rejected a GOP attempt to put the initial \$50 billion cost of the savings and loan rescue off the federal budget. The vote kept the thrift bailout bill (HR 1278) from being sent back to a House-Senate conference committee where the off-budget language was to have been added.

Later, however, the bill was returned to conference, following the Senate's refusal (below) to waive the Gramm-Rudman deficit-reduction law to permit counting the \$50 billion on the federal budget.

At issue was how to treat about \$50 billion in immediate borrowing needed to close or merge hundreds of insolvent thrifts and meet insurance obligations to depositors. The compromise later sent to President Bush put \$20 billion of the new debt on this year's budget and left the remaining \$30 billion off-budget, to be raised by bonds floated by a government-chartered corporation.

Members voting yes supported off-budget financing of the initial \$50 billion cost of the savings-and-loan bailout.

Michigan members Pursell and Broomfield voted yes, Hertel, Ford and Levin voted no.

SENATE:
BALLOUT PLAN — By a vote of 54 for and 46 against, the Senate failed to reach the three-fifths majority needed to waive the Budget Act so initial borrowing costs of the savings and loan bailout would not violate Gramm-Rudman deficit ceilings.

This sent the bill (HR 1278) back to conference with the House, where negotiators produced another compromise for counting the \$50 billion that must be borrowed initially to close problem thrifts and reimburse lost deposits; \$20 billion would be put on the fiscal 1989 budget and \$30 billion would be borrowed off-budget by a new entity created by the bill. The bill was sent to President Bush.

Senators voting yes wanted to put the first \$50 billion in borrowing for the S&L bailout on the federal budget.

Michigan Democratic Senators Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted yes.

FEDERAL PAY PLAN — By a vote of 69 for and 31 against, the Senate reaffirmed a plan to allow the departments of Defense and Energy to pay certain scientists and engineers up to \$134,250 annually, and to also lift the Civil Service pay cap for certain other top federal workers. Many civil servants thus could earn more than members of Congress and federal judges, a disparity not allowed by present law.

The plan was included in the fiscal 1990 defense authorization bill (S 1532) later sent to conference with the House.

Sponsor Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said his proposal, "picks out some of the most severe problems and tries to deal with them."

Opponent John Glenn, D-Ohio, warned the plan "may well wreck the Civil Service."

Senators voting yes supported the new pay plan.

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