### COUNTY/REGIONAL NEWS

## Religious freedom for prisoners a Senate issue

A Senate committee is pondering whether to include prison inmates in a proposed "Religious Freedom Restora-tion Act" being pushed by churches and

conyects recedent research and the being pushed by churches and dwill libertarians.

"We'll take this up in November, in the post-election session," said Sen, william Van Regenmerter, R-Jenison, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, during a Sept. 15 hearing.

"The safety and security of prisons has to come first," said Sen. Mike Rogers, R-Brighton, who doesn't want to include prisoners in the House-passed bill. 'I haven't seen it (donial of immates, and the senate of th

- "The American Civil Liberties Union flors a long-standing commitment to reli-gious liberty, both inside and outside prison," countered ACLU lobbyist Wendy Wagenholm of Birmingham in a

would like to pick and choose win gois religious rights. It's a majoritarian body."
They cited two cases where prison inmates need protection of their religious rights:

A group of immates from a lesser security prison attended a service in a higher security prison and was stripscarched four times - once leaving their facility, a second time on arrival at the host facility, a third time when leaving the host facility and a fourth time on roturning to their home facility. The Jewish spokespersons said strip-searches had a chilling effect on the practice of their faith.

Dan Cohen, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League in Southfield, produced a lotter from Wardan Henry Grayson at the Parnall Facility in Jackson saying the department "does not accommodate prisoners with a Sukka, nor accommodate their participation in a Jowish Sukkot Fassival."

Sen. Chris Dingell, D-Trenton, was

Sen. Chris Dingell, D-Trenton, was

tional Values, and two Muslim groups, among others.

"It is rore when the ACLU, Michigan Family Forum and the Christian Legal Society join in coalition," said ACLU's Wagonheim. "But this is one issue on which we all agree."

J. Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington, D.C., said the story started with a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1990.

The U.S. Constitution's first amendment provides for ne establishment church and free exercise of religion. Courts long had held that "government must have a compelling state interest before it interfered with religious practice, said Walker, an attorney as well as a Baptist minister. "That was to keep

Jowish groups saw the need to protect rights of Jowish immates. Rabbl Marla-Feldman, representing the Jowish Community Council, said, "The Legislature would like to pick and choses who gets religious rights."

They cited two cases where prison immates need protection of their rolligious rights:

Agroup of immates from a lesser security prison attended a service in a higher security prison attended a service in a higher security prison and was string fast. (Catholic Conference, Citizons for Tack) and the configurational values, and two Muslim groups, among others.

They created from the Department of Corrections is they take their time and say, watt till next earth helidays ever. I want to see something fast."

Watt till next year, the holiday's ever. I want to see something fast."

Fushing the bill is an unlikely group whose members more often are at one another's throats: ACLU, ADL, the Christian Legal Society of Troy, Michigan Catholic Conference, Citizons for Tack and Configurational Conference, Citizons for Tack and Configuration of church buildings was regulated, Walker said.

The is rear when the ACLU, Michigan chart facility, a third time when leaving the host facility, a third time when leaving the host facility and a fourth time on returning to their home facility. The

Honce the effort in Michigan and other states for a state RFRA, pronounced "riff-ra."

nounced "riff-ra."
Profit said Michigan courts have given greater weight to cities rights of historic preservation than to the constitutional right of free exercise of religion. Ho cited the fight his own First Presbyterian Church of Ypsilanti had had with the city was clearly rour.

the city and circuit court.

Under a 1978 historic district ordinance, he told the Senate panel, the city found 12 building violations and gave

the church 21 days to make \$140,000 in repairs - to a building that had cost less than \$62,000 to buy nine years earlier. Church members voted to demolish it, but the Historic District Commission denied the church a demolition permit. It also denied the church a moving permit. Washtenaw Circuit Judgo Donald Shelton ruled in favor of the city's effort to make repairs and bill the church. On Feb. 3, the state Court of Appeals affirmed Shelton's decision in favor of the city's make repairs and bill the church. On Feb. 3, the state Court of Appeals affirmed Shelton's decision in favor of the city.

"My church caved in," said Profit. This is symptomatic."

Profit's bill, which the House passed 99-0 on July 3, says in Sec. 3 that the state and local units "shall not impeas a substantial burden on a person's exercise of religion unless it' proves that "(a). The burden is necessary to advance a compelling governmental interest.—"

Sec. 4, the disputed one, applies to prison immates.

Refer to House Bill 4376 when writing to your state senator, State Copitol, PO Box 30036, Lansing 48903.

## Grand jury included in budget

A vote of confidence for the prosecutor and a slight cut in property taxes are components of the 1999 Oakland County budget expected to be approved Thursday at the regular meeting of the county board of commissioners.

The budget includes \$50,000 requested by prosecutor David Gorcyca to extend the Oakland County Citizens Grand Jury for

The budget also cuts county property taxes by about 16 cents per \$1,000 of cash value — or per \$1,000 of cash value — or about \$16 for the owner of a bouse valued at \$200,000 and house valued at \$20 assessed at \$100,000.

Both are part of the proposed \$573,223,287 budget for 1999 that is scheduled to be approved Thursday, the last board meet-ing of the 1998 fiscal year.

While the 1999 budget is

A&L Personnel

Abletemps/Operation

\$1,765,676 over this year's, is doesn't represent a significant increase or shift in policies, said Robert J. Daddow, the county's dimanagement and b Robert J. Daddow, the county's director of management and budget. "The budget is 725 pages and includes more than 6,000 line items," Daddow said Friday. "It's very difficult to make comparisons. But basically it's a no change budget."

The property tax rate for 1999 will be 4.19 mills per \$1,000 assessed valuation, Daddow said, down from 4.3505 in 1998. "That's the lowest in the state," he said.

The county board has held hearings on the proposed budget for about two months. Some final adjustments were made last week in committee meetings.

One such adjustment was made after the prosecutor told members of the board's Finance Committee that the current grand jury, scheduled to expire

at the end of this month, is involved in several cases requir-ing additional deliberation.

"It makes more sonse to extend the existing grand jury rather than convening a new one," said Goreyca. "The grand jury is one of the most effective tools in law enforcement."

The chair of the finance committee said the unanimous voice in favor of extending the grand jury was a vote of confidence for the prosecutor's office. "We like what the grand jury is doing," said Sue Ann Douglas, R-Rochester.

Since convening in April, the grand jury has issued 14 indictments, including one against a suspect in a 28-year-old murder case, said assistant prosecutor John Pietrofesa who coordinates the investigation. "We also indicted nine people in a major drug conspiracy," he said.

#### **ROAD WATCH**

Road improvements could cause delays on the following Oakland County Roads this week. Roads are open unless noted, alternative routes are advised in all instances.

E DEQUINDRE ROAD
From: Big Beaver to Wattles
Community: Trey
Details: Road Commission of
Oakland County is widening
this section from two to five
lanes. Should be completed by
Oct. 31.

FLEMINGS LAK
ROAD
From: Clarkston Road to
Waters Road
Community: Independence

Township
Details: RCOC is paying this
gravel road. Project should be
completed by Oct. 31.

BLONG LAKE ROAD
From: Falmouth to Grandy,
cast and west of Rochester
Road

Community: Troy
Dotalls: City of Troy is
reconstructing and resurfacing
the road. Completion date
unknown.

GRAND RIVER
AVENUE
From: Throughout Lyon
Township Community: Lyon Township
Details: Lyon township is
installing a water main along
the read

the road.

MAIRPORT ROAD

From: Hatchery Road to Williams Lake Road

Community: Waterford

Township
Details: RCOC is resurfacing
road. Completion date is Sept.

23.

KLINGENSMITH ROAD
From: Intersection of Klingensmith and Ward
Community: Bloomfield

wnship Details: RCOC resurfacing

intersection
FRANKLIN ROAD
From: Square Lake Road to

ontine city limits Community: Bloomfield ownship

Township
Details: RCOC is reconstructing and resurfacing road.
Completion by end of Novem-

ORCHARD LAKE ROAD From: Commerce Road to Old Telegraph Road Communities: Orchard

Communities: Orchard
Lake Village, Keege Harber,
Sylvan Lake, West Bloomfield
Township, Pontiac
Dotails: RCOC is reconstructing and resurfacing road.
Completion date is Nov. 15.

SCOTTLAKE ROAD
From: Dixie Highway to
Elizabeth Lake Road
Community: Waterford
Township

Township
Dotails: RCOC is reconstructing and resurfacing road completion date is Nov. 30.

14 MILE ROAD

From: Stevenson to Bellevuo Community: Troy
Details: RCOC is reconstructing and resurfacing road.
completion date is Nov. 30.

# Observer & Eccentric Hove Town



### Laurel Manor

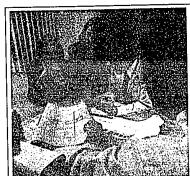
39000 Schoolcraft, Livonia Wednesday, September 23, 1998 11:00 a.m. - 7 p.m. Admission-Free

Thinking about changing jobs or beginning a career in a new field? Here is a great opportunity to leave your resume with more than 60 companies and agencies who are looking for talent. Now is the time to update your resume, make 50-60 copies and visit our Job Fair.

It's absolutely free, and

representatives from the firms listed here are ready to talk with you about your future employment plans.

Mark your calendar and we'll see you on the 23rd!



Meijer-Brighton Morgan Stanley Dean Witter

NBD Bank New Horizons Computer Learning Center Old Kent Bank Olde Discount Olive Garden Panther Crankshafts Parisian Par-Tecl

Pepsi-Col Performance Personi Plasti-Pak Packagir PowerFlow Engineering Preferred Temporary Service Providence Hospital Medic

Prudential Preferred Financ Rock Homes Constructi

> Senior Commun Sentech Servi Skyway Precisi Snelling-Bingham Farn Snelling-Liven Sovereign Sale

ecial Tree Rehabilitation Staffing Service Temperform Corp is Inns Management, Inc

Unique Restaurants allassis Communications Village Green Company wood Senior Community Wyndham Nov

Dart Development
Day Personnel
Dorling Kindersley
Family Learning
Doubletree Hotel EDS Employment Connection Entech Personne Family & First investors Ford Motor Company Glacier Hills Harper Associates Holiday Inn-Livonia Wost.

Home Depot

Jawood Managemer

Kroger Co. L&W Englineering McDonalds