

## CHAT ROOM



MARY RODRIQUE

## Rolling on the river not for faint of heart

I am a wimp, and I am not ashamed to admit it.

Bungee jumping, heart stopping amusement park rides, thrill seeking hobbies — those are for other people. Apparently my husband still hasn't gotten the message.

We planned our recent trip to Nova Scotia — down to the last detail. A few days before our departure for Halifax, he casually mentioned we had a reservation for white water rafting. Not me, no siree, I said.

### To raft or not

I finally agreed after major coaxing, promising my husband that if I fell out of the raft, I would take him down with me.

By the time we pulled into the lodge on the banks of the Shubenacadie River, my palms were sweating and my heart was racing.

Inside the lodge, one wall featured photos of bright orange rafts engulfed in huge waves and ocean spray. Along another wall hung rows of life jackets and yellow slickers. There were release forms every rafter had to sign absolving the company of liability. How comforting.

I asked the grandmotherly clerk who took our money to level with me — how dangerous was this? "Oh, it's not so bad," she said with a smile. Or

Please See CHAT ROOM, B2

## Y2K

### Lion or a lamb? You decide

■ Preparing for disaster or tired of the hype? Here's what some local folks are doing (or not) to get ready for the new millennium.



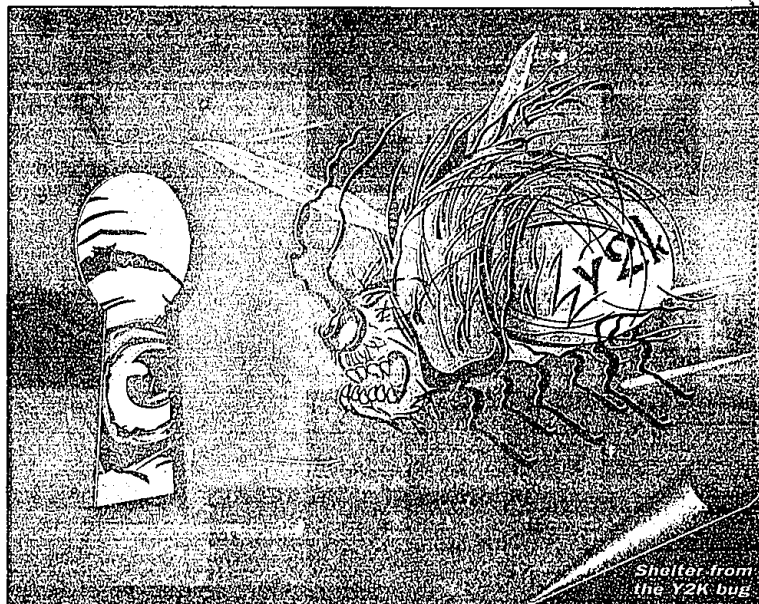
By KATHIE O'DONOHUE  
SPECIAL WRITER

Rabbi Loren Jacobs of West Bloomfield wasn't familiar with Y2K until the summer of 1997 when a member of his synagogue brought him a report. "I read it and I was fascinated. The more I investigated, the more concerned I became," he says.

Since that time, Jacobs has become somewhat of a Y2K expert, poring over information, sending out newsletters, arranging seminars, and speaking at area churches.

With the coming of the Year 2000 (Y2K), Jacobs believes we will experience "severe economic repercussions and economic problems with utilities in various parts of the country. Some (utilities) are okay, some are problematic (in terms of compliance). It looks like Detroit Edison is doing well, but there is still concern about the water company. It is still not compliant. I believe it is prudent at this point to stock up on water."

Economically, Jacobs believes Y2K is compounded by huge debt, both national and international, corporate and private. This coupled with an over-inflated stock market will have "tremendous implications. We'll see more volatility



Shelter from the Y2K bug

ILLUSTRATION BY TARIK CHAVES

late in the third quarter and in the fourth quarter, Jacobs says.

In terms of the predictions about the coming year and the possibility of problems due largely to computers erroneously reading date code as the year 1900, responses from people are as varied as the scale of possibilities. Reaction to Y2K forecasts ranges from people who are completely ignoring it to those who are amassing everything from food to fuel to hard cash, a few even preparing shelters.

### Poll shows apathy

A recent poll conducted by Reuters

for the CBS news show "Sunday Morning" showed 56 percent of the respondents are not making or planning to make Y2K preparations, though nearly a fifth of U.S. households may stock up on food and water.

The potential problems associated with Y2K inspired West Bloomfield resident Rick Heligman to open the Y2K Warehouse on Crestview Court in Farmington Hills, off Grand River between Halsted and Haggerty.

"The thing that makes the warehouse attractive is that we have stock," Heligman says. "We sell what you can't buy locally, items that are important in

terms of storage and preparedness."

Open only on Thursdays and by appointment, the Y2K Warehouse has been operating for five months and sells a combination of items. Heligman explains that while he doesn't stock canned goods that can be bought relatively inexpensively at Sam's Club or Costco, his store sells such staples as soy, navy or pinto beans. "Any one of these can sustain you. They are palatable and edible. We also sell wheat in the form of the wheat berry, which you can eat as is or grind into flour."

Please See Y2K, B3

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