

HISTORY

FROM PAGE A1

illustrations and two fold-out maps.

The Bible was bound in Pennsylvania and presented to the St. John's Lodge in 1770 and wound up being used to administer the oath of office to Washington after it was discovered there was no Bible in Federal Hall.

"We like to say it's the third most important document in America," said Vaughan, his British accent quite noticeable. "There's the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and this Bible. With this, the presidency was created."

The Bible was displayed on a red velvet cushion with velvet blocks to support it when it is open to Chapter 49-50 of the Book of Genesis, which is where Washington placed his left hand.

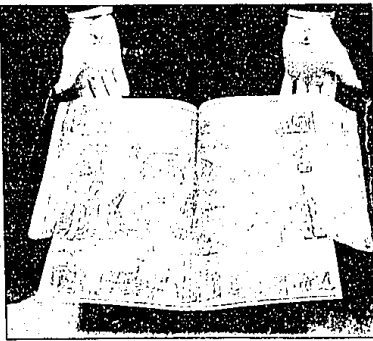
Thin sheets of silk have been placed over that page and the opposite page, which he bent over and kissed following the ceremony, to preserve them.

The Masons know which page Washington used because New York State Chancellor Robert Livingston folded over the lower right corner, a fold that is still visible today.

The Bible remains the property of the lodge, but is kept at Federal Hall, where the Federal Park Service keeps a close eye on it.

It leaves the hall for lodge ceremonies, trips like the one to this area late last week and for those presidents who chose to follow in Washington's footsteps.

"When George H. Bush was going to take the oath of obligation, it was brought out for Barbara Bush," said Vaughan. "She said that if she had to hold it for five minutes, she wanted to know how much it weighed."



A page of the bible folds out to reveal a detailed drawing of Solomon's Temple.

President George W. Bush planned to take his oath on the same Bible, but was forced to use a family Bible because of rain. The Washington Bible never comes out in bad weather.

After a brief history lesson, youngsters had their chance to ask questions.

The Masons assured them that it was "absolutely true, beyond a shadow of a doubt" that the first President never told a lie, that George Washington did know Paul Revere - "He was one of his confidants" - and that he was unanimously elected the first president.

Once the questions were over, the students were able to file past and view the Bible up close although no one was allowed to touch the book.

The Mason wear white cotton gloves when they handle it, since the only hand that can actually touch the book is that of the president during the swearing-in ceremony.

"We love to bring it around because it is living history," said Vaughan, who had the

distinction a few years ago of being the first British worshipful master of St. John's Lodge since the Revolution. The lodge was founded in 1757 by English militia who brought the Masons to the colonies from England.

When the visit was over, the Bible was placed back in its well-worn leather travel case, made in 1840 by Crouch and Fitzgerald. It's newest addition is a handle that was recently put on it by the White House.

Vaughan said that it's impossible to set a price for the book and is impossible to insure it, even by Lloyd's of London, so unless it's locked up like at the police station, it's with the Masons, when traveling and under the watchful eye of the park service at Federal Hall.

"It doesn't leave our sight. If we don't put it in a vault of lock it up in a police station, it's with us," Vaughan said. "George went to lunch with us today."

smason@oe.com or call (734) 953-2102

Students get a look at county government

Students from around Oakland County got the chance to experience the inner workings of county government during the county's youth in government day on Thursday.

About 70 students from Farmington, Farmington Hills, Oxford, Oak Park, and Pontiac participated in the day-long event at the county campus in Pontiac. In addition to touring several county facilities, the students got to sit in on an Oakland County Board of Commissioners' finance committee meeting and had a panel discussion with several commissioners.

Commission Vice Chairman David L. Moffitt (R-Farmington Hills), who proposed the idea of event back in 1996, said it is important for government officials to reach out to the county's youth.

"I think it's important that the students get exposure to government and government processes, and learn how we in government make the decisions that affect their lives. If



Oakland County Commissioner Mike Rogers (R-Farmington Hills) talks to a group of students, including North Farmington senior Marle Raymond, during Oakland County's youth in government day on Thursday.

you have this kind of opportunity when you're young, you're

more apt to be involved in government as an adult," he said.

Chocolate lovers will love Gala

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

The eighth annual Farmington Area Festival of the Arts will kick off Saturday, April 26 with the Starry Night Gala, which offers a special attraction for chocolate lovers.

Planners are calling it "chocolate decadence," a four-tier fountain of flowing Bavarian chocolate accompanied by a pile of strawberries, pineapple, bananas and other fresh fruit as well as dipping goodies, such as cherry biscotti, gracing the presentation. The chocolate fountain, seen

recently on local television, is being donated by The Vineyard restaurant on Northwestern Highway.

Tickets are \$35 per person and \$60 a couple. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Costick Activities Center, located on 11 Mile between Middlebelt and Inkster.

The gala will also feature a delicious dinner catered by Gourmet Express, live music, dancing, and a silent auction, including such items as a lunch with Detroit Free Press editor Heath Merriwether, original artwork, and a pool party

package. Business and individuals wishing to donate items are welcome to call (248) 473-1856.

Gala attendees will be the first to preview and purchase a selection of more than 100 paintings, framed and unframed, by the Farmington Artist Club members.

Tickets may be purchased by calling (248) 473-1857. The Festival of Arts will be held at the Costick April 27-May 5 and is sponsored by the Farmington Community Arts Council and the city of Farmington Hills Cultural Arts Division.

Find your favorite recipes each Sunday in Taste

It's Not Just 340 Cold Storage
It's By The Best Fur Care Available!
In-Store Party Bird Special **FREE Note Bag**
With Purchase of Cleaning Service
Storage: from \$23.50 to \$33.50
SALE!
\$5 Off 2nd Garment
\$10 Off Each Garment Over 2!
SAVE!!
\$3 On Storage With Cleaning
Ditrich
Since 1923
Detroit: (313) 873-8100
373 Third Ave.
Moonfield Mills: (248) 642-1000
39315 Woodward Ave.
www.ditrichfur.com

THE ORIGINAL HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIALISTS
One Call Gets the Things You Want Done... DONE.
Handyman CONNECTION
What do you need to get done today?
CARPENTRY DRYWALL
ELECTRICAL PAINTING
PAVING CEILING TILE
KITCHEN & BATH RENOVELS HOME REPAIRS
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL **248-848-9400**
handymanconnection.com

Special Gifts For Easter
Save Now On Michigan's Finest Selection!
3947 W 12 Mile, Berkley, 248-543-3115
Mon-Sat: 10a-5:30pm Fri: 10a-5pm

GUARDIAN EMERGENCY AUTOMATIC STANDBY GENERATORS
POWER OUTAGE?
Don't be left in the dark wondering when the power will be turned back on. Protect your home and family without lifting a finger. The Guardian Home Standby Generator supplies emergency electrical power... AUTOMATICALLY even when you're not there.
• COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC
• 24 HOUR BLACKOUT PROTECTION
• WORKS WHEN YOU'RE AWAY
Since 1988
EZ ELECTRIC
(734) 284-2100

THINKING ABOUT CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONING? **LENOX**
FREE ESTIMATES (734) 524-1930
Our 20th Year!
UNITED TEMPERATURE 8919 MIDDLEBELT, LIVONIA

Look what you can get for just \$299.
DESIGNER SOFABED \$299.99
NO Interest, NO Payments, NO Down Payment. **UNTIL NOVEMBER 2004**
2 LEATHER CHAIRS \$299.99 Black
SIMMONS FIRM QUEEN SET \$299.99
JENNIFER
CONVERTIBLES & LEATHER
GRAND OPENING TAYLOR 23205 Eureka Rd (586) 776-3186
Rochester (586) 415-0700 Utica (586) 726-0170 Ann Arbor (734) 869-2700
Birmingham (248) 644-8200 Dearborn (313) 271-3410 Novi 27793 Novi Rd (248) 347-3553
*Subject to credit approval. If not paid in full by November 2004, finance charges will be assessed from date of delivery at current annual interest rate of 29.99%. Financing available 301-427, on purchases of \$200 or more with delivery. Payment of tax & delivery charges required at time of purchase. Not good on prior sales. Sorry, not all products available in all showrooms.

Certified IT Training at Schoolcraft College
Schoolcraft College Continuing Education Services now offers certified IT training programs to fit your needs.
• A+ Computer Technician
• Microsoft MCSE Electives
• Network+
NOW available
Classes starting soon. Current MCSA's, looking to upgrade their certification, are encouraged to inquire about the MCSE electives.
Call toll free for details: **1-866-248-6265**
In partnership with IT Pro, Pearson, & Microsoft Certified Technical Education Center.
Schoolcraft College

Spring cleaning made easy!
Time to take a change. Make this year to get organized. Call on the company more people have known and trusted for 25 years.
We'll come to your home and work with you to create the perfect storage solutions for your closet, kitchen pantry, linen closet, entry hall, beds, center-garage, kids' rooms, entertainment center and home office.
www.caloclosets.com
Call: 1-800-878-9999 or VISIT US at:
3260 Old Farm Lane Somerset
Walled Lake, MI Collection
(248) 624-1234 North
CALIFORNIA CLOSETS
life, stuff, storage