



**BREAKFAST BENEFIT:** NBC News correspondent Anne Thompson is to be the keynote speaker at the 17th Annual Women’s Power Breakfast to benefit Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan. The program is set for 8 a.m. April 14 at the Somerset Collection, 2800 W. Big Beaver Road, Troy. Gleaners hopes to raise funds for 1 million meals. Tickets are \$100 to \$1,000. For tickets, call Omari Taylor, 866-GLEANER, ext. 272 or visit [www.gcfb.org](http://www.gcfb.org).

Detroit Free Press

METRO

313-222-6600 localnews@freepress.com



# Salvation Army HQ is back on track

Ground-breaking could be this spring

By MELANIE D. SCOTT  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Salvation Army Eastern Michigan Division officials said they plan to break ground as early as spring on the organization’s new Pontiac headquarters. The project was stalled for a year because of a land dispute. Pontiac and Salvation Army officials finalized the sale of the Wallace E. Holland Center on Jan. 29, about a year after the Pontiac City Council approved the transaction. The former community center has been vacant for five years.

The project was stalled after organization officials learned that a portion of the parking lot was owned by a private business, not the city.

After months of negotiations with the owner, Salvation Army officials decided to redesign the plans for the building to avoid using the private property. City officials did not return calls seeking comment.

“It became very clear that we were not going to reach an agreement, so we had to go ahead with our plans,” said Capt. Heath Sells, commanding officer of the Salvation Army Pontiac Corps.

## THE GROUP PLANS TO OFFER SOCIAL SERVICES, EDUCATION AND REC PROGRAMS.

The organization paid about \$645,000 for the center and plans to spend \$2 million for renovations. The organization is to offer social services, educational programs and recreation to low-income residents in the city and nearby Oakland County communities.

The 24,834-square-foot building, at 469 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., is to be expanded by at least 10,000 square feet, officials said.

The Salvation Army’s current 37,000-square-foot Pontiac headquarters at 34 Oakland Ave. is a two-story building that lacks interior and exterior ramps for those with disabilities. The building would cost millions more to renovate than the Holland Center, officials said.

Many residents did not know the project was at a standstill until the sale of the Silverdome, which sold in November for \$583,000 — about \$62,000 less than the Holland Center. When residents demanded to know why the Silverdome sold for less, officials disclosed the land dispute.

“I’m glad the Salvation Army was still interested in the building and didn’t give up, because we need them in the city,” said LaShon Jones, 22, of Pontiac. “It’s just one more thing that could have slipped through the cracks.”

CONTACT MELANIE D. SCOTT: 586-826-7267 OR MDSCOTT@FREEPRESS.COM

# Store water, save costs?

Rochester Hills considers 2 reservoirs

By GINA DAMRON  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Rochester Hills is considering constructing water storage reservoirs and better enforcing its lawn-watering ordinance to improve its water rates.

The two, 3-million gallon reservoirs, if approved, would cost about \$17.5 million — including \$6 million in interest — and would be funded by bonds that would be repaid through the water and sewer costs paid by residents.

City officials say the above-ground tanks would pump water from Detroit during nonpeak hours and then out to residents during peak times — primarily in the summer, when usage is up because people are watering their lawns.

The storage tanks could re-

duce water purchase rates from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department by 38%, according to the city.

If approved, the city would join communities like Birmingham and Pittsfield Township, which use water storage facilities.

Rochester Hills City Council President Greg Hooper said Thursday that the council likely will wait to make a decision until after the city renegotiates rates with Detroit this summer.

Based on new rates proposed by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department, Rochester Hills’ rate could increase by 11.5% for 2010-11. Detroit officials have said water consumption is down 20% over the past two years and 60% since 2002.

Several residents at the



council meeting Feb. 8 expressed concerns about the cost and locations of the proposed aboveground reservoirs — one in Eugene S. Nowicki Park, east of Adams and south of Tienken, and the other on the east side of John R, between Bloomer and Avon.

“This isn’t monopoly mon-

ey,” resident Martha Black said to the council, urging that the city be more prudent with spending.

For decades Birmingham has used two, 500,000-gallon water towers managed by the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority.

In 2004, Pittsfield Township constructed a 5-million gallon tank to accommodate the growing community. Mike Luptowski, utilities director for Pittsfield Township, said the tank — which joined an existing 750,000-gallon water tower — has kept rates stable for residents.

Rochester Hills officials said they also may consider better enforcement of the city’s ordinance requiring automatic lawn-watering systems to be used only between midnight and 5 a.m.

STAFF WRITER STEVE NEAVLING CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT.



Photos by MANDI WRIGHT/Detroit Free Press

Zachary Davis, 10, of St. Clair Shores receives a teddy bear and a card from the Bishop Foley football team before his big wish is revealed.

# ZACH GETS WHEELS

Wish for a golf cart is fulfilled for boy with muscular dystrophy

By NAOMI R. PATTON  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Zachary Davis, a rather gregarious and spirited fellow with a spiky haircut, wanted no part of a trip to Hawaii or to Universal Studios.

His wish was to have a golf cart to drive around in — like the ones he saw driven in the pit at the motocross races of his big brother Dominic and his father, Tim.

But he was too young at age 8. He had to wait until he was 10, the legal age to drive a golf cart in a private area. He turned 10 in November, then waited three more long months.

On Valentine’s Day, he got his wish, courtesy of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Michigan, in front of his family, friends, teachers and the whole Bishop Foley football team at the Catholic high school in Madison Heights.

Zachary has Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a genetic, degenerative disease that rapidly weakens muscles. His muscles continue to weaken and he is cognitively impaired.

The disease’s symptoms often include impaired motor skills, cognitive impairment and muscle weakness. Children with the disease can live into their mid-20s.

Wearing funky black



Taking his new golf cart for a spin, Zachary Davis gets some help from his brother Dominic, 14, and dad Tim Davis, 33, in back.

Free Press

See a photo gallery

glasses, Zachary squealed with delight as his proudly smiling brother and another teammate carried him on their shoulders to the cafeteria for the official presentation.

Steve Vecellio, who delivered the golf cart, had one more surprise for Zachary before the big reveal — a

Monster Energy motocross jersey and helmet. And Zachary knew there was only one thing left: “Keys,” he said.

The golf cart was donated by Vecellio, Keith’s Michigan Auto & Golf Cart Sales of Warren and the Dan Hiller Memorial Golf Outing.

“Zach is king,” Zachary yelled as he was carried to his golf cart in the parking lot.

“Guys, hop in,” Zachary said to Dominic, 14, and his father. “Watch out,” he yelled next, giving the crowd of

about 100 people the chance to clear a path.

Zachary — no stranger to the road — has won first place in his age division in four-wheel motocross races. Pictures of him with a trophy and on his four-wheeler were posted in the Foley cafeteria.

“Yeeaaaahhh,” he yelled at the wheel of the golf cart as he sped to the opposite end of the parking lot with his brother and father aboard.

“He just means so much to me. I can’t say no to him,” Tim Davis, 33, said, smiling through tears, marveling at the freedom the cart gives his son, whose muscles are too weak for him to ride a bike. “He just melts me.”

After sending Dominic to get his jacket, and donning his helmet, Zachary, a fifth-grader at Keith Bovenschen School in Warren, took a few of the Foley players for a spin.

“He’s pretty much our No. 1 fan,” Mike Rossman, one of the players, said. “I love seeing the smile on his face.”

His parents hope stem cell therapy can prolong Zachary’s life.

“It was amazing to actually see it come to life,” Tori Russo-Davis, 30, said of her son’s wish. The family lives in St. Clair Shores. “We’re just so blessed for him ... to see what an amazing kid he is.”

CONTACT NAOMI R. PATTON: 313-223-3327 OR NPATTON@FREEPRESS.COM

## Wayne

DETROIT

## Clothes, books, food collected at Winter Blast

Not only did 75,000 people celebrate the season at the Motown Winter Blast this weekend, they donated more than 500,000 pounds of clothes, books and food for needy people in Detroit, organizers said.

The Grosse Pointe Rotary Club organized Rotarians from throughout the region to collect items that are to be distributed through Matrix Human Services in Detroit.

The event ended Sunday.

Motown Winter Blast producer Jon Witz said about the same number of people attended the event as last year, judging by crowd estimates and the sale of food and carnival ride tickets.

## Saginaw

SAGINAW

## Biden to visit, discuss jobs at Delta College

Vice President Joe Biden is to discuss how Recovery Act investments are improving communities and creating jobs in Michigan at 11:45 a.m. Tuesday at Delta College, 1961 Delta Road, University Center.

U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., also is to speak.

## Region

## Across metro Detroit, Hindus mark Shivratri

Hindus across metro Detroit gathered in temples this weekend to mark Shivratri, one of their holiest times of the year.

At the Bharatiya Temple in Troy, about 500 people gathered Sunday for special prayers and services.

Similar services were held at temples during the past three days in Canton, Detroit and Pontiac.

Shivratri means Shiva’s night.

## What’s closed, what’s open on Presidents’ Day

Today will be observed as Presidents’ Day. U.S. government offices, financial markets and most banks will be closed.

There will be no mail delivery. State offices will be closed. In Oakland and Macomb counties, the clerks’ offices and courts will be closed.

In Wayne County, the clerk’s office will be open.

Most City of Detroit offices will be closed because of a furlough.

Buses and the People Mover will run on regular schedules. Local government offices might be open; contact the city, village or township clerk.

— COMPILED FROM REPORTS BY TAMMY STABLES BATTAGLIA, NIRAJ WARIKOO AND NAOMI R. PATTON