Detroit Free Press
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HOLY ROLLERS: Pastor Tim Wessel's church Brighton Nazarene has taken an unconventional approach to connecting with area youths: offering an indoor skate park, video arcade and paintball course, which makes it one of several Livingston County churches that reach out by rolling out recreational opportunities. United Brethren in Christ of Handy Township, for example, built a disc golf course.

– LIVINGSTON COUNTY DAILY PRESS & ARGUS

Oakland deputies facing cuts

Layoffs possible as cash-strapped county communities can no longer afford patrols

By JOHN WISELY
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office could be forced to lay off deputies for the first time since 1983 because cash-strapped local communities that pay for patrols can no longer afford to foot the bill.

Independence, Oakland, Highland and Commerce townships, which contract with the Sheriff's Office for police services, informed Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard in recent days that they would not hire as many deputies in the new year because of budget cuts.

Independence plans to cut five of its 31 deputies; Oakland will cut two of its 15; Highland will cut two of its 20, and Commerce plans to cut two of its 29.

Bouchard met with 13 low-seniority deputies last week to advise them of the situation and explain the reality of shrinking budgets. The exact number of layoffs is still unclear because other deputies could retire or leave before the end of the year, Bouchard said.

Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard met with 13 low-seniority deputies last week to advise them of the situation.

"I met with them all because I wanted to give them and their families as much notice as I could," Bouchard said. "We're going to be trying to get them into part-time positions."

Under the county's contract with the deputies union, those road patrol deputies have the right to bump corrections officers at the county jail with lower seniority. Deputies take about a $5,000 pay cut when they move into jail work.

The lowest seniority corrections officers are the ones facing layoffs, but it's the local communities that will receive less service, Bouchard said.

"Any time you have less people to respond, service is going to be impacted," Bouchard said.

The cuts are part of an overall downsizing of the Sheriff's Office to help reduce its budget by $13.3 million.

"By October of 2011, we're slated to eliminate 127 positions," Undersheriff Michael McCabe said. "So far, we've done 70 of them through attrition."

Another 33 deputies will be eliminated by Oct. 1, 2010, when the sheriff closes the Frank Greenan Detention Facility, a satellite jail that houses about 185 prisoners.

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Free Press chief named 2009 Editor of the Year

Detroit Free Press Editor and Publisher Paul Anger has been named winner of the 2009 Benjamin C. Bradlee Editor of the Year Award by the National Press Foundation.

Anger is to be honored at the NPF's annual fund-raising dinner Feb. 16 in Washington, D.C.

Judges cited Anger's contributions to the innovative publishing model in Detroit and noted that it was being developed at the same time the Free Press was pursuing its Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation of former Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick — "a great watchdog function of demanding accountability from government," according to judges.

Under Paul Anger's leadership, the Free Press won a Pulitzer Prize and multiple Emmys.

"This is a tremendous honor and reflects Paul's strong leadership in delivering both excellent journalism for our communities and an innovative business model that works," said Craig Dubow, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Gannett, which owns the Free Press. "We could not be more proud of Paul and the entire team in Detroit."

In addition to the newspaper's ninth Pulitzer Prize in April, the Free Press and **freep.com** won a fourth national Emmy award in September for documentary videos on Detroit's Christ Child House, a home for orphaned boys.

"I couldn't be more grateful," Anger said. "It reflects the kind of work we do together in the Free Press newsroom — which is a resilient, talented group that weathers any storm and focuses on journalism that makes a difference."

The Free Press remained the sixth largest Sunday newspaper in the country and moved up in rankings of the largest daily papers after the launch of a new publishing model that includes newspapers for sale every day, home delivery on Thursday, Friday and Sunday, and emphasis on e-Editions — electronic replicas of the print newspaper — available to subscribers.

Others to be honored at the NPF dinner include the CBS News show "60 Minutes" for excellence in broadcast, veteran editor-author Bill Kovach for distinguished contributions to journalism, and the Associated Press' Julie Hirschfeld Davis and CNN's Brianna Keilar for their coverage of Congress.

The NPF is a nonprofit that sponsors conferences and training across the country and abroad in its mission to help journalists "better understand and explain the impact of public policy on readers and viewers."

ON PROSPEROUS TRACKS

Once crumbling train stations gleam in 2 cities

Is a similar renaissance possible for Detroit eyesore?

REGINA H. BOONE/Detroit Free Press

IDLE IN DETROIT: Michigan Central Station sits behind barbed fence Nov. 10.

By NAOMI R. PATTON
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

They were boarded up eyesores in the 1970s and 1980s with crumbling roofs, broken windows and beyond dingy interiors strewn with debris. They signaled the stark end of the era of robust passenger train travel.

For years, train stations in Nashville Tenn., and Kansas City, Mo., sat. Their designations as historic landmarks meant little to those who wanted to see them demolished.

But decades and hundreds of millions of dollars later, the gleaming Nashville Union Station and Union Station Kansas City are anything but dingy.

A luxury Wyndham hotel — rededicated in 2007 after an $11-million renovation — now occupies space at the Nashville station. The building still has its 100-year-old original stained glass, though trains haven't run there since 1979.

In 2002 Union Station Kansas City welcomed the return of Amtrak trains for the first time since they moved to smaller quarters in 1985.

The trains' return was the culmination of the station's revival, having reopened three years earlier after a two-year, $250-million restoration. It now features museums, retail stores and restaurants.

By contrast, the historic Michigan Central Station in Detroit has sat idle since 1988. Ideas have come and gone for potential reuse.

Is it possible for the station to have a similar renaissance?

Two things Nashville and Kansas City had going in their favor are money and committed local supporters — public and private — pushing to save the structures.

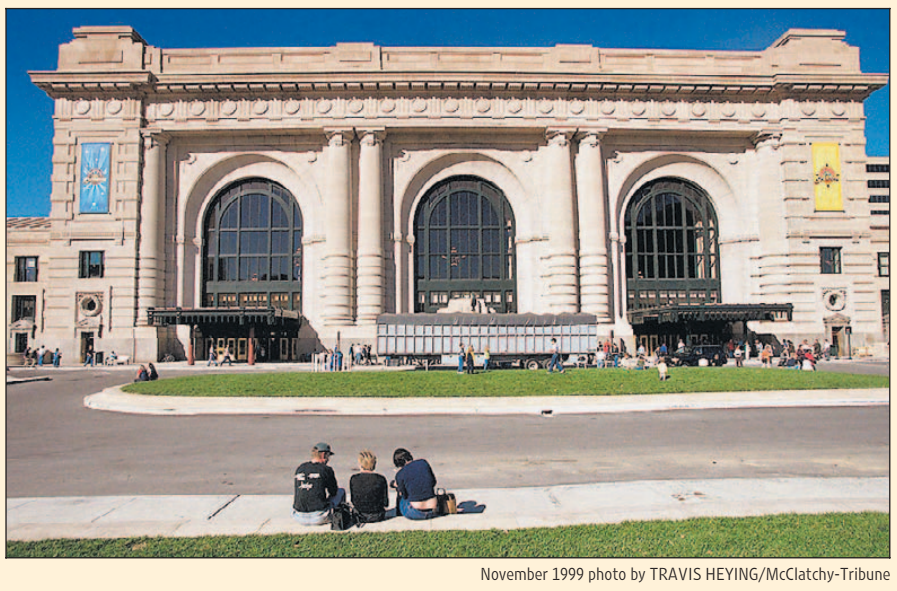
Detroit's preservationists and the station's detractors were roused last spring when the Detroit City Council voted to demolish the station once and for all. But, since the council's April vote, there has been no discernable progress one way or the other, though the city has declared the station a dangerous building.

A statement from Detroit Mayor Dave Bing's office called the station "a symbol of neglect for the city," adding, "If a feasible plan to redevelop the structure is not presented, all other options including demolition will be considered."

HOW TWO CITIES REVIVED THEIR HISTORIC TRAIN STATIONS. 10A, 11A

October 2007 photo by SHELLEY MAYS/The Tennessean

RENEWED IN NASHVILLE: A hotel — rededicated in 2007 after an $11-million renovation — occupies space at the Nashville Union Station. It has its original stained glass.



November 1999 photo by TRAVIS HEYING/McClatchy-Tribune

REVIVAL IN KANSAS CITY: Union Station Kansas City, which was refurbished as part of a $250-million project, houses a planetarium, restaurants, an Amtrak station and more.

Michigan Central Station

Designed by: Warren & Wetmore and Reed & Stem firms, who also designed New York City's Grand Central Terminal
Built: 1913 at a cost of $15 million
Opened: Dec. 26, 1913
Closed: 1988
Features: 500,000 square feet
Wow factor: View from I-75 near Vernor Highway exit

Nashville Union Station

Designed by: Richard Montford
Built: 1900
Closed: 1975
Reopened: 1986; second renovation in 2007
Features: Wyndham hotel, restaurants, shops
Wow factor: Statue of Mercury, a messenger of the gods, is affixed to top of clock tower

Union Station Kansas City

Designed by: Jarvis Hunt
Built: 1914
Closed: 1988
Reopened: 1999
Features: Several restaurants, science center, planetarium, 95-foot ceiling in Grand Hall, three 3,500-pound chandeliers and a 6-foot wide clock hanging in the central arch
Wow factor: 200-pound roof tiles

Winter calls for a pinch less salt

Road crews will try different products

By MATT HELMS
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

With winter road maintenance budgets stretched thin and prices jumping 30% or more for rock salt, the road commissions of Macomb and Oakland counties are stepping up efforts to stretch their supplies and save a few bucks.

One method both counties are using this winter is pre-wet rock salt. Wet salt adheres to roadways better than dry salt and begins melting snow and slush faster. Plus, 400 pounds of wet salt is about as effective as 500 pounds of dry salt.

To accomplish the savings, the Road Commission of Macomb County said it bought three additional Epokes, devices that attach to trucks and let drivers apply salt in three forms: brine, pre-wet or dry.

Brine — salty water — is applied ahead of snowfall to slow accumulation.

The commission paid $82,000 apiece for the Epokes and now has eight, said spokesman Jim Tittsworth. The devices can reduce salt use up to 30%. Reducing salt use even 10% a year can save about $275,000.

"Over time, they pay for themselves," Tittsworth said of the Epokes.

And that's a good thing, because Tittsworth said the Macomb road commission paid 35% to 66% more this year than last year on two contracts for 63,000 tons of salt. The prices for this season jumped to $44.95 per ton for one contract and $55.06 a ton for another. Salt was $33.19 a ton last winter.

Officials at the Road Commission for Oakland County said their price for rock salt increased, too. It rose to $42.98 per ton from $33.19 last winter. The commission has contracts for up to 100,000 tons.

Besides using pre-wet salt, the Oakland road commission said it also will adjust salt trucks so they spread about 400 pounds per mile of two lanes of pavement instead of up to 800 pounds.

"The old philosophy was the more salt you put down, the safer the road," spokesman Craig Bryson said. "But beyond a certain point, the additional salt is just wasted."

Bryson said just how much money the new salting policy saves will depend on how snowy the winter is.

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How 2 cities revived old train stations

Kansas City and Nashville could be models for Detroit

By NAOMI R. PATTON
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

When Manuel (Matty) Moroun bought the Michigan Central Station outright in 1995, there was a glint of anticipation that the dilapidated shell sitting on 3½ acres in Detroit's historic Corktown neighborhood, could be revitalized.

A casino and a hotel/office complex were among the initial development ideas offered up.

But nothing happened.

Former Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick shocked many in 2004 when he suggested moving the Detroit Police Department headquarters to the storied and decaying station. A year later, the deal, dismissed by many as foolhardy, hadn't materialized.

When the Detroit City Council voted in April to demolish the hulking structure — designated a dangerous building by the city — preservationists came out in favor of saving it.

As some ask whether the station can be saved, others are quick to say: Tear it down and bill Moroun for the cost.

Redeveloping the station ravaged by scavengers could take years and cost more than $200 million, a blinding figure for a city with a $300-million deficit.

But Kansas City, Mo., and Nashville, Tenn., took unique approaches to renovating and financing the preservation of their old train stations that could serve as potential models for Detroit.

'People wanted it saved'

In a history similar to that of Michigan Central, the 850,000-square-foot Union Station Kansas City opened in 1914, closed in the 1980s and sat neglected until 1996. That's when a state initiative was passed to partially fund the station's renovation.

In the 1970s, the Kansas City Railway Terminal sold the station to a private company to develop the property. When the company failed to develop the station, the city sued. The parties settled out of court.

The city didn't want to own it, but "they had some very specific things they wanted to see done," said Denise Morrison, Kansas City Museum director of collections. "Civic leaders all looked and turned to us."

Union Station Kansas City reopened in 1999, and now houses an interactive science center called Science City, a planetarium, retail shopping, restaurants, permanent and traveling museum exhibits and an Amtrak train station. It also connects via a walkway to the Crown Center, a hotel and retail center developed by Hallmark, the greeting card company whose headquarters is across the street from the station.

The Kansas City Museum merged its board with the station board to form Union Station Kansas City Inc. in 2001.

The station is now owned by Union Station Kansas City Inc., a nonprofit, and funded by general admission to Science City, theater tickets, grants, commercial space leases, facility rental and corporate and private donations.

Sarah Biles, the station's director of community relations, said half of the $250-million price tag for the Kansas City renovation was paid for with a ⅛th-cent bistate cultural sales tax — paid by two neighboring counties in Kansas and three counties in Missouri. The rest of the funding came from federal transit and Environmental Protection Agency brownfield grants and private donations, including corporate sponsors.

"People really have an affinity for this building ... and people wanted it saved," Biles said.

Now Kansas City, Mo., officials are banking on getting another infusion of money; this time by way of federal stimulus funds. In October, Jackson County Executive Mike Sanders announced a plan to request stimulus money to fund a regional rail system, connecting Union Station to the Kansas City International Airport.

Necessary partnerships

Nashville got its Union Station up and operating by taking advantage of a little-used federal provision.

February 1964 photo by JIMMY ELLIS/The (Nashville) Tennessean

October 2007 photo by SHELLEY MAYS/The (Nashville) Tennessean

At left, dwarfed in the rotunda of the Nashville Union Station are a few people in the once-bustling terminal. A $12-million restoration project from 2006 to 2008 converted the area to a Wyndham hotel property, right.

Ann Roberts, former director of the Nashville Historic Commission, is Nashville's expert on all things Union Station.

Now retired, Roberts said the Nashville station, which first opened in 1900, was in various stages of decay in the early 1970s and condemned by the city by 1975.

By the late 1970s, a nearby building was converted to a federal office building, paving the way for the station — designated a federal historic property — to be given to the City of Nashville for free.

City officials received the deed to the station in 1985 and came up with a plan to lease the station to developers who would convert it to a hotel, Roberts said.

Leaseholders function as private owners and the city doesn't have to put money into it, Roberts said.

"It's a creative solution that we took," she said. Echoing Biles, Roberts added, "It takes public and private partnerships to get anything done like this."

Phil Goldfarb, president and chief executive officer of Turnberry Hospitality Management, is the latest leaseholder at Nashville Union Station. It took $12 million and two years, from 2006-08, to painstakingly restore the station, converting it to a Wyndham property.

The urgency for projects like this, Goldfarb said, "starts at the grassroots level."

There was such a ground swell following the council's vote to demolish the depot. Facebook groups calling to "Save Detroit's Michigan Central Station" sprang up.

John Mohyi, a 21-year-old Wayne State University student, contacted Dan Stamper, president of the Detroit International Bridge Co., which owns the station, to get access to the station to clean it up over the summer.

Until the Detroit City Council vote, Mohyi, who lives in West Bloomfield, said he didn't know the depot existed. He developed a Web site, **savemichigancentral.com**, hoping to "breath new life into the station and resurrect a landmark in the city of Detroit.

"I thought, 'Wow, you cannot destroy something as beautiful as this,'" said Mohyi, who envisions Michigan Central as a hub for high-speed rail and mixed-used development.

And, members of Preservation Wayne, the Greater Detroit Historic Preservation Coalition and the Detroit Historic District Commission showed their support for restoring the station by taking a group photo there this summer. They were inspired by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "This Place Matters" initiative.

April 2009 photo by DIANE WEISS/Detroit Free Press

Redeveloping the Michigan Central Station, which has been ravaged by scavengers, could take years and could cost more than $200 million.

'Clearly, it's a landmark'

A group of volunteers, enlisted in part through the Facebook groups that included adults, teens and preteens, spent most of July cleaning up

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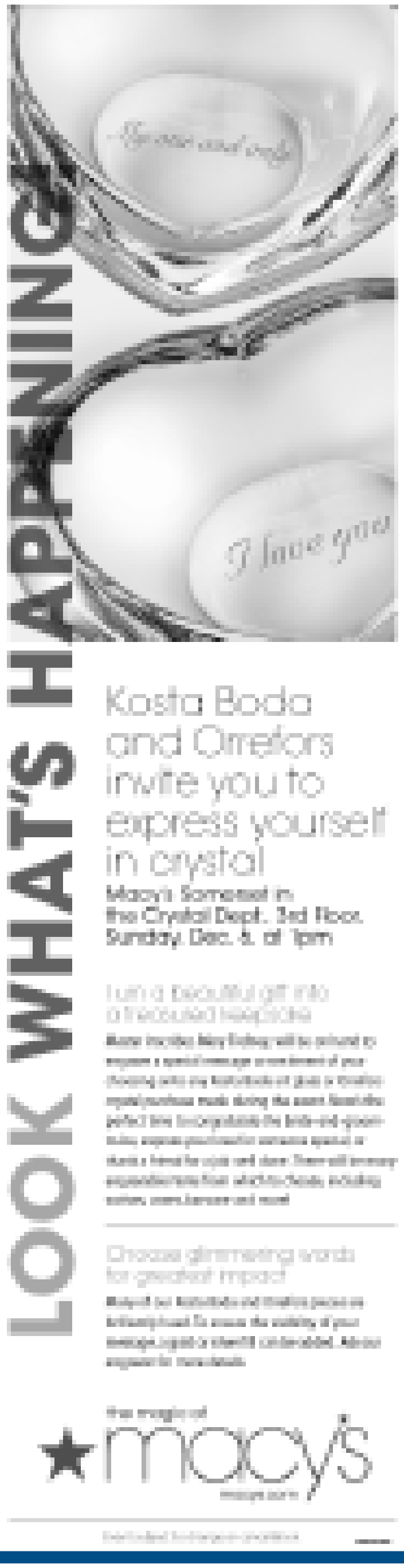

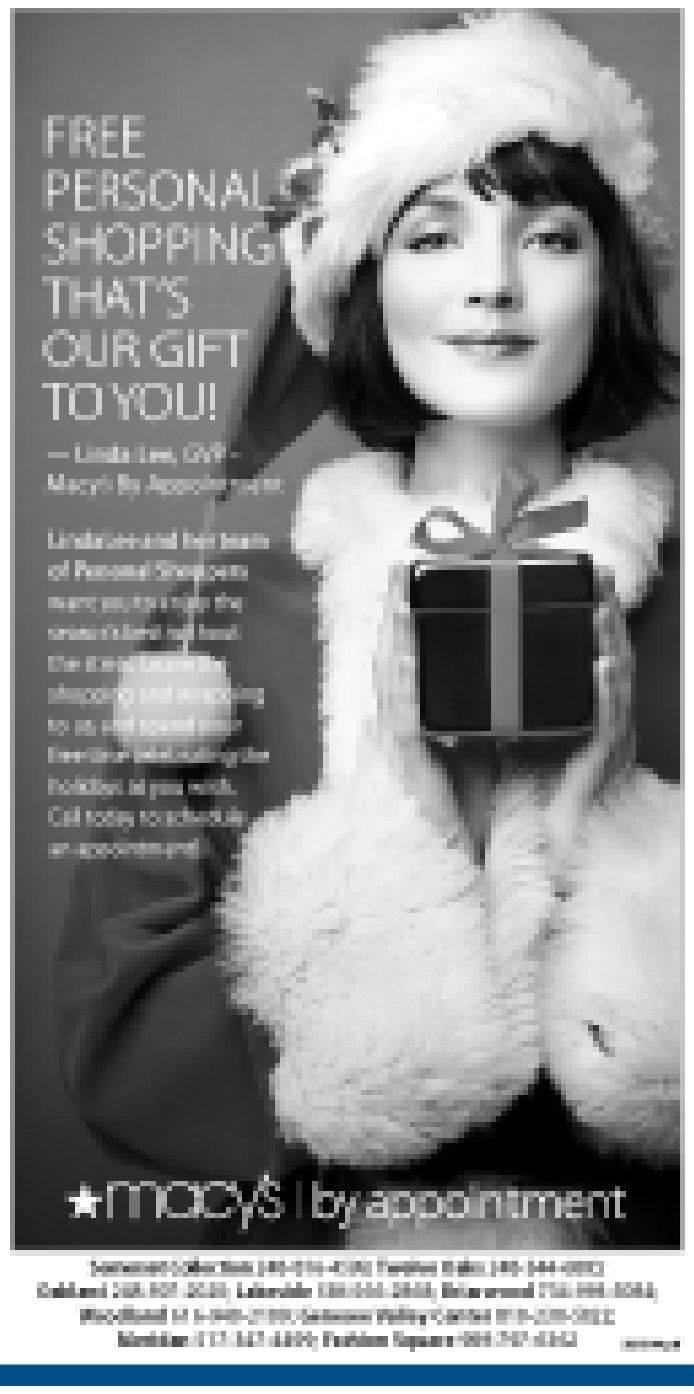

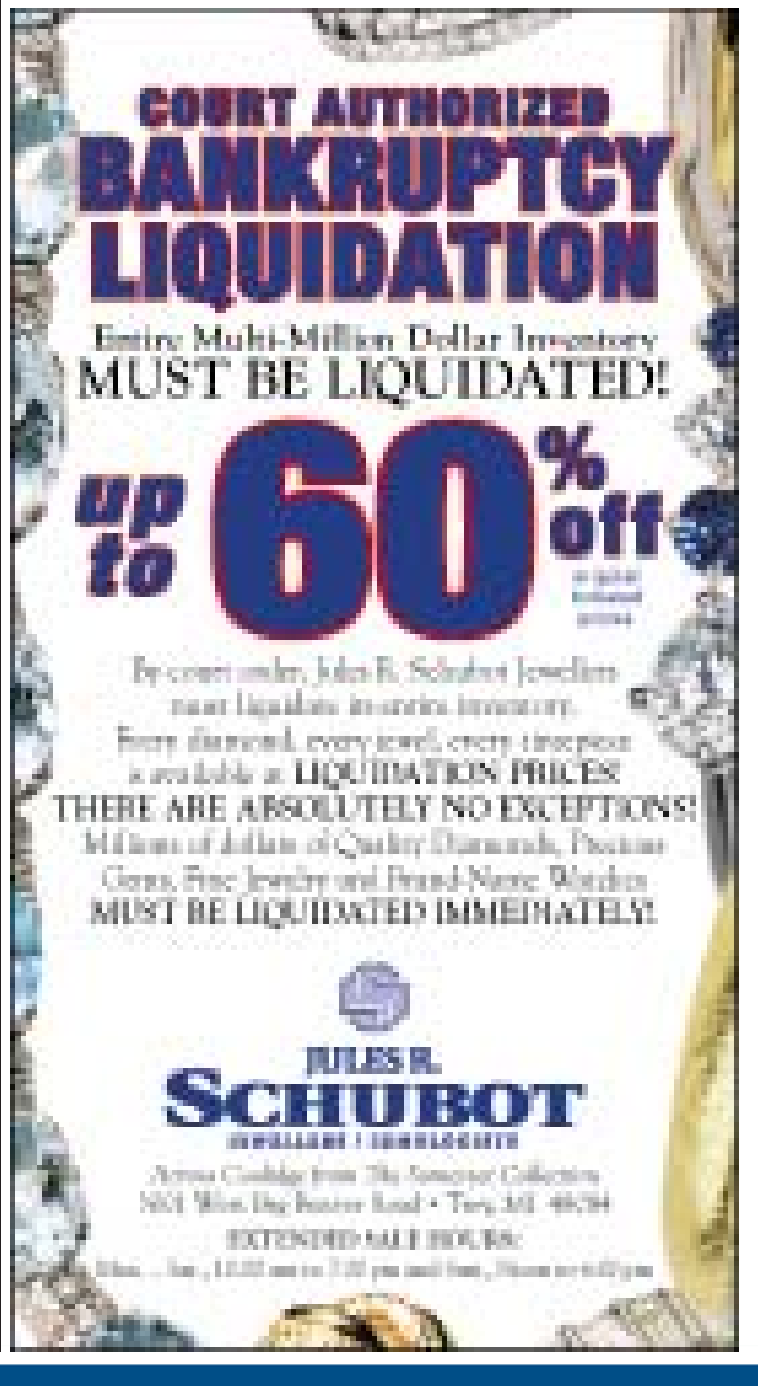

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the depot with the blessing of the Detroit International Bridge Co.

The effort was halted when Michigan Department of Environmental Quality officials were tipped to the presence of asbestos, declaring it unsafe for non-certified asbestos-removal professionals.

Still, the cleaner depot appears to be no closer to development.

Kathleen Wendler, president of the Southwest Detroit Business Association, said redeveloping Michigan Central is critical to the development of southwest Detroit. She would like to see commercial, office and residential development in the station.

"Clearly, it's a landmark," she said, calling it "a huge real estate development challenge."

Stamper, president of the Detroit International Bridge Co., ruled out a hotel project, but said there might be an opportunity to accommodate the city's burgeoning film industry in a portion of the station. He also was interested in any federal or public sector uses, including Mohyi's idea to bring rail service back to the station.

Stamper said a renovation project for Michigan Central would require two or three private or public sector anchor tenants to entice further development.

He was circumspect about the prospects for tenants considering the faltering economy, but added, "I don't see financing as a problem with renovations.

"We're more excited today about renovating it now than ever," Stamper said.

Nancy Finegood, Michigan Historic Preservation Network executive director, said, "Right now would be the perfect time to do it. Private ownership is not a wrinkle at all."

There are federal and state rehabilitation tax credits for private development projects up to 20% and 5%, respectively. Finegood said an additional so-called enhanced state rehabilitation tax credit would also be available, ranging from 10% to 15% to redevelop the station.

"There's worse buildings out there I've seen," she said.

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Save depot's grand hall, designers say

STEPHEN MEYERS/Hayles and Howe

Before and after photos show the ceiling of Union Station Kansas City's grand hall. Developers recommend restoring Michigan Central Station's grand hall.

By NAOMI R. PATTON
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

When the design team of Hayles and Howe began its yearlong effort in 1997 to restore the ornamental ceiling and molding at Union Station Kansas City, more than half of the ceiling had already fallen from the rafters.

Staff members at the firm, based in Bristol, England, and Baltimore, were undaunted, having worked on restorations of Grand Central Station in New York City and Windsor Castle, one of the British monarch's official residences. The firm specializes in restoring ornamental ceilings.

Coincidentally, the same firms, Warren & Wetmore and Reed & Stem, designed both the Michigan Central Station and Grand Central Station.

Graham Banks, Hayles and Howe's chief project director, and Jean Van Meter, the firm's director of marketing, said bringing Michigan Central back to life will require major work and money.

Both are familiar with the building. They recommend tearing down the 605,000-square foot depot's 16-story office tower and restoring the station's grand hall.

Banks called Michigan Central "a little more beat up" than Kansas City, where they had to tear out and remold the ceiling.

Part of Michigan Central's renovation would require restoring its scagliola columns, the Hayles and Howe's specialty.

"That's a made-by-hand process ... a separate and large budget," said Van Meter.