

MAPLE VALLEY news

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Vol. 130-No. 35 August 27, 2002

New signs greeting students this week



The new sign for Fuller Street Elementary sits in the parking lot of the bus garage awaiting installation.

by Sandra Ponsetto
Staff Writer

When students returned to school yesterday (Monday,

Aug. 26) they were greeted by new signs in front of all Maple Valley schools. There are also new signs

marking the bus garage and the administration office and, at the corner of Reed and Main streets in Nash-



This sign in front of the administration building is one of seven new signs marking Maple Valley Schools in Nashville and Vermontville.

ville, there is a directional sign for the junior-senior high school.

The seven bright blue and white signs were made for Maple Valley Schools by Central Signs of Lansing at a cost of \$64,472. 46. Two other companies bid on the project, but their quotes came in at upwards of \$75,000 and didn't have as good a message system for the junior-senior high school

as the one from Central, according to Maple Valley Schools Superintendent Clark Volz.

An insurance settlement from wind damage to school property in the fall of 2001 was used to help defray the costs of the message centers for the new signs. Maple Valley School officials had been looking to replace the pre-existing signs for about two years.

The junior-senior high school sign features a lighted liquid crystal display (LCD) message center. The sign in front of Kellogg Center has a removable letter message center and the signs at Fuller Street, Maplewood schools have lighted removable letter message centers.

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Developer rejects Nashville's sewer easement proposal

by Sandra Ponsetto
Staff Writer

The Nashville Village Council voted unanimously Thursday to approve a proposed agreement with local businessman Jeff Beebe for a sewer easement on his property at 230 S. Main in Nashville.

The council also authorized Village President Frank Dunham to sign and execute the agreement.

However, after the vote at last Thursday's regular meeting, Beebe issued a statement that he would no longer accept the agreement.

The settlement had been drafted by the village's lawyers, Law, Weathers & Richardson, P.C., after a special meeting of the council Aug. 13, when the council and Beebe discussed terms of a potential agreement that would limit liability for both parties regarding sewer easement on the property. Beebe requested that the agreement be in place by Monday, Aug. 19, when Beebe was to meet with investors in the proposed Dollar General Store that he was building on the site.

The council previously had obtained a temporary re-

straining order preventing Beebe from continuing construction on the addition he was building on the property when it was discovered that there was a sewer easement beneath the building.

Beebe on Aug. 13 stated that the restraining order, which was in place from July 22 to Aug. 5, had cost him upwards of \$63,000.

The terms of the agreement for the council to drop the suit and claims for damages against Beebe were:

1. Beebe would grant an agreeable easement for the village for the purpose of relocating the existing sewer main. In exchange, the village would surrender its current easement after the main is relocated.

2. Beebe would agree to drop any claims for damages against the village, its employees or officials.

3. Beebe would accept he responsibility for cleanup costs due to line leakage occurring under his building in the future.

4. The village would pay Beebe \$15,000 cash to be paid upon the successful execution of an alternative easement for the purpose of relocating the sewer main.

Additional terms requested by Beebe and agreed to by council were:

1. A timetable for replacement of the existing sewer line within 15 years.

2. The agreement would be in place by Monday, Aug. 19.

3. The new easement was to be directly north of the new addition and between the addition and his property line.

4. The easement size would be worked out in the future.

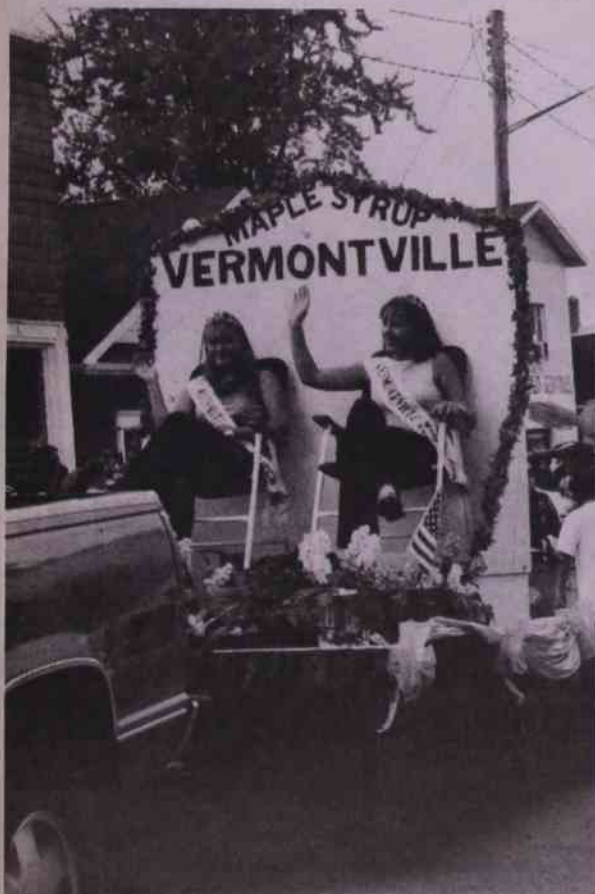
5. The new easement would be attached to the property.

Beebe, in explaining his

rejection of the agreement, said Thursday night, "Since last Friday I had one of my investors drop out. Since then I have also had a chance to talk to Dollar General. I went all the way up the chain... and they will not commit (to a Dollar General in Nashville)," said Beebe. "So at this point in time I have to back out of giving Nashville any kind of guarantee of limit of liability."

"We would need a legal remedy before I would be able to secure any more in-

See sewer easement, pg. 4



Vermontville Syrup Queen makes parade appearance

Samantha Mater, Vermontville's 2002 Syrup Festival Queen, and alternate Jessica Cowell wave to the crowd during the Sunfield Farmers Picnic Parade, which was held Saturday, Aug. 17.

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- Nashville man to be sentenced on drug house conviction
- Maple Valley Fall Sports Preview in this issue

New signs, continued from page 1



The Kellogg Center has a new sign with message board.

"The sign in front of the junior-senior high school used to be parallel to the highway and had a removable letter message center," said Volz. "We wanted to upgrade to an electronic message center to make changes quickly, like announcing the cancellation of

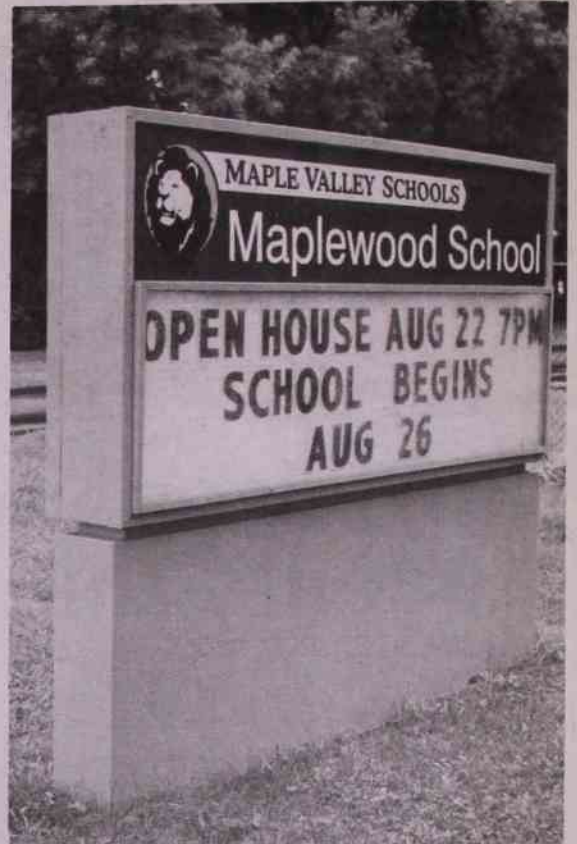
a game or something like that."

Volz said that signs in front of the schools could be used to promote community as well as school events.

"We could help promote the Nashville Car Show or the Vermontville Syrup Festival," he said.



A directional sign for the junior-senior high school has been placed at the corner of Main and Reed Streets in downtown Nashville.



The signs in front of each Maple Valley School has some sort of message board that can be used to promote school or community events. This one is front of Maplewood Elementary School in Vermontville promoted last week's open house.

"The sign in front of the junior-senior high used to be parallel to the highway and had a removable letter message center. We wanted to upgrade to an electronic message center to make changes quickly, like announcing the cancellation of a game or something like that."

- Superintendent Clark Volz

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There is a new sign on the Maple Valley bus garage.

Workers use a crane to install the new sign in front of Maple Valley School.



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Blood drive exceeds goal by 24 pints

Judy Hook, the Nashville chairperson for the Barry County blood drive, reports that the blood drive held at Castleton Township Hall Thursday, Aug. 8, exceeded its goal.

"It was our best blood drive ever. Our goal was 45 units of blood and we re-

ceived 69," said Hook. "We had 83 people show up to donate; that's pretty good for a town this size."

The reasons for not accepting blood from all potential donors that show up include high or low blood pressure, high or low iron or cold and flu symptoms, ac-

cording to Hook.

Hook said that once a year the Red Cross likes to offer a special treat to donors. This year it was root beer floats. The ice cream and soda was donated by the First Congregational Church in Vermontville.

The blood drive also re-

ceived a donation of God Scout cookies from Troop #6025, led by Marilyn Frish, Julie Klover and Becky Warner of Nashville.

Hook said that some area churches take turns providing refreshments for the blood drive, three in Vermontville and six in Nash-

ville. "We also had a group of 14 volunteers who served the refreshments, unloaded the truck in the morning and reloaded it at night," said Hook.

The goal for the next blood drive has been set at 50 units, which Hook said

can mean up to 75 bags of blood.

"Our donors in the Nashville area are very loyal," said Hook. "They show up no matter what."

The next blood drive is scheduled for 1 to 4:45 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, at the Castleton Township Hall.

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Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

R.S.V. Proverbs 16:24

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301 Fuller St., Nashville
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 P.M. Worship 8 p.m.
 Wednesday Evening 7 p.m.
 PASTOR ALAN WETTLER

CHESTER GOSPEL CHURCH

3744 St. Vermontville Hwy
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
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 Evening Worship 8 p.m.
 Wednesday Family 8 p.m.
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 PASTOR MARC S. LIVINGSTON
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 Fellowship Time After Worship
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 Sunday 8:30
 Morning 10:30 a.m.
 Evening 8 p.m.
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 Church Service 9:30 a.m.
 Sunday School 10 a.m.
 Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m.
 Adult Class 10:50 a.m.
 PASTOR JEFF BOWMAN

NORTH KALAMO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Worship Service 9:30 a.m.
 PASTOR MARK THOMPSON

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8883 Cloverleaf Road
 (1/2 mile East of 46-46 1/2 mi. south of Nashville)
 Sunday School 10 a.m.
 A.M. Service 10:30 a.m.
 P.M. Service 8 p.m.
 PASTOR GEORGE GAY

NASHVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

289 Philips St., Nashville
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
 A.M. Service 11 a.m.
 P.M. Service 7 p.m.
 Wed. Service 7 p.m.
 PASTOR LESTER DICKROCK
 PASTOR DEANO LAMPHIER
 PASTOR GARY ROYCE

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Located on the corner of State and Washington streets
 Worship Service 9:45 a.m.
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 N. Holly, 852-0585
 Church Phone: 852-2543

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 A mile west of Nashville (on 46-75 & Barryville Rd.)
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 Morning Service 11 a.m.
 Sunday Evening Service 8 p.m.
 Wed. Evening Service 7 p.m.
 480ANA 7-8:30 p.m. Wed.
 PASTOR DANIEL E. SMYTH

VERMONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

108 N. Main, Vermontville
 Sunday School 10 a.m.
 Church Service 11 a.m.
 PASTOR JEFF BOWMAN

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Roman Catholic, Latin Mass
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 Sunday Mass 8 a.m.
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Sewer easement, continued from page 1

vectors, or any more financing that would satisfy Dollar General," he added. "I respectfully decline your offer until I get Dollar General back in line. At this point it's not a probability. At this point in time they are not committed to Nashville."

In other business the council:

- Accepted a bid of \$189,649.90 from Hunter Prell Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning, Processed Piping and Underground Utilities of Battle Creek to make sewer improvements on State, Sherman, Middle and Phillips Streets in con-

junction with the water main work being done on those streets. Hunter Press is the same company currently handling the water main project.

The village had also received a second bid for \$213,566.90 from Hoffman Brothers contractors. The village's engineers had projected the cost of the project at approximately \$224,000 and recommended accepting the bid from Hunter Prell.

The improvements would include replacing manholes as well as replacing sewer mains and laterals. Council Member Steve Wheeler

noted that there are several laterals in that area that serve more than one home and these have proved to be a problem in the past.

More specifically, said Department of Public Works Interim Director Darrell Clements, new eight-inch sewer mains will be installed 280 feet from Main Street to State Street and 234 feet from State Street to Queen Street.

Clements referred to the new mains as extensions though the residents along the extension routes are already hooked on to the sewer system via older later-

als which he said are "cobbled together."

"They're either tied on with someone else or hooked in directly," he said. "Some areas are cobbled and that needs to be addressed."

The new, eight-inch mains will increase the gravity flow because the lines they replace are two inches smaller in diameter. Clements said the upgrades will also reduce problems with clogs and backups.

On Middle Street between Maple and Washington, the contractors will install two underground structures for better cleaning of the mains. The structures will include two manholes.

Another manhole will be installed between Sherman and Washington "just about in the middle of Phillips Street," said Clements.

On Queen Street, the project calls for a 260-foot sewer line extension from the end of the existing line south "so more people can tie into it." And, on State Street between Gregg and Reed, another 260-foot extension is planned to the south which will allow customers to hook to their own, new laterals rather than tapping into multi-user laterals.

"We'll go right up to the residences with the lines," Clements explained.

Wheeler said that there would be no cost to residents to replace an existing lateral. A new hookup, however, would be subject to the usual fees, while existing sewer customers will not be charged a connection fee.

Clements said the sewer project should begin as soon as the current water main project is complete in September.

"We're hoping to have it done before the snow flies," said Clements. "Once the water project is done in late September, then they'll jump into the sewer and we'll put the roads back together."

• Approved the purchase

of 60 new water meters for \$95 each to replace old meters or faulty meters as the contractors hook them up to the new water lines being installed.

• Heard a complaint from Wade Carpenter about drainage from Reed Street onto North Queen Street. Carpenter said that due to the rise of the road and the location of the drains, the water run-off from Reed Street ends up in the yards of homes located on North Queen.

Dunham said that he would refer the matter to the Department of Public Works (DPW) to see if a remedy could be found.

Carpenter and another neighbor from North Queen Street also expressed their concern over people speeding down Reed Street now that it is open to traffic again. They said they would like to see the speed limit of 25 miles per hour enforced.

Council members responded that they thought the village police department was doing a fine job

patrolling the street to enforce the speed limit.

• Heard a complaint from Ron Ohler, who stated that the lowering of the alley behind his home and the construction of the MainStreet Bank parking lot have caused increased drainage problems. He was concerned that the paving of the alley would further add to the problem. Additionally, he stated that the work on the alley had undermined the foundation of his garage.

Dunham said that the matter would be referred to the DPW.

• Heard a report from Councilman Ed Sheldon regarding playground equipment for potential installation in Putnam Park. Sheldon asked council members to look over the information he provided from Game Time, a playground equipment manufacturer in Fort Pain, Ala., and contact him with any questions and suggestions they may have regarding what they would like to see at the park.

Position Opening
MAPLE VALLEY SCHOOLS
Instructional/Personal Care Aide-Jr/Sr High School

Hours: 6.5 - 7 hours per day Monday through Friday

Qualifications:

- High school graduate
- Must pass the instructional aide skill test
- Ability to work well with young adolescents who are disadvantaged or who have special needs
- Must be flexible and self-directed in a variety of situations
- Must demonstrate patience and compassion and be able to work under the supervision of a classroom teacher

Duties may include: Assisting with students' health and personal needs, lifting, toileting, taking direction from classroom teacher; assisting in the supervision, instruction and discipline of students in all school-related settings.

Application should be made to Administration Office, Maple Valley Schools, 11090 Nashville Highway, Vermontville, MI 49096 by Friday, September 6, 2002.

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Classes begin in late August and/or mid-September. Visit us online (www.kellogg.edu) or in person to obtain full schedules, tuition and fees, registration particulars and orientation dates for new students.

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Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

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3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

From Our Readers

Change paper's name?

To the editor:
Hellooooo... we here in Vermontville happen to be from Eaton County. Where were the election results from Eaton County in the last edition of the Maple Valley News? Did I over look that article? Did I miss someone's phone call to find out the results of my township?

Vermontville Township was host for Eaton County's chapter of Michigan Township Association a while back. We invited meteorologist Andy Provenzano to speak at the meeting. Many notable state and county VIPs also were in attendance at the meeting. Did anyone from the Maple Valley News cover the event as requested? The answer is "No."

Did anyone cover our appointment of the new Planning Commission for Vermontville Township? The answer is "No."

Often times when I post legal notices in the Maple Valley News for the township I do not even get a paper delivered. So, how much of the rest of the township also does not get a copy?

Hmmmm... maybe a name change for the paper would be in order.

Marcia Grant,
Vermontville Township
Clerk

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State to hold hearings on special education

Since new administrative rules on special education took effect June 6, several documents implementing the rules have been revised, documents of which are available for comment through Monday, Sept. 30.

Documents which were revised include, Intermediate School District plan criteria, monitoring standards, the Individual Education Plan manual and forms, mediation procedures, complaint procedures and the inclusive education position statement among others.

Parents can look at these revised documents at the

Michigan Department of Education offices in Lansing, at each intermediate school district and via the Internet at michigan.gov.mde. To select documents Internet users should go to the list of "What's New."

The website allows individuals to comment on each document via the web site.

All comments will be reviewed by the office of special education. Written comments will be accepted by the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Service through 5 p.m. on

Monday, Sept. 30. Comments can be submitted through the above website, facsimile at 517-373-7504 or via surface mail to David Brock, supervisor, Policy, Planning and Compliance Program, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, Michigan Department of Education, P.O. Box 3008, Lansing, Michigan 48909.

Parents from school districts throughout Barry County can also bring their comments to public hearings held by the Michigan Department of Education. The closest hearings will be held

on Monday, Sept. 23, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. and Tuesday, Sept. 24, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in rooms Grand

A and B, at the Kent Educational Services Center in Grand Rapids.

The Kent Educational

Services Center is at 2930 Knapp Avenue NE. The telephone number is 616-365-2299.

Nashville man to be sentenced on drug house conviction

by Shelly Sulser
Staff Writer

A 19-year-old Nashville man is set to be sentenced Thursday on a conviction of dealing marijuana out of his Fuller Street home last spring.

Kenneth Lamoin Mitchell pleaded guilty to one felony count of delivery and manufacture of marijuana after he was arrested by the Southwest Enforcement Team (SWET), which executed a search warrant on the home April 11.

The charge carries a maximum possible penalty of four years in prison and/or a \$20,000 fine. Unless sentenced to more than

one year in prison, the court shall impose license sanctions, according to Michigan law.

Mitchell was also accused of operating a drug house, a two year misdemeanor, and one count of attempting to maintain a drug house.

Undercover officers found three-quarters of a pound of marijuana, paraphernalia and scales in a safe inside the home during the raid, according to a SWET spokesman.

According to court records, the two drug house charges are to be dismissed in exchange for his guilty plea and the Barry County Prosecutor's Office has agreed to Mitchell receiving Holmes Youthful Trainee Act Status, which would keep the felony conviction off his record if he is successful on probation.

Also scheduled to be sentenced Thursday is Brian Jeffrey Hunt of Maple Grove Road, Nashville, on a conviction of stealing a 1994 Buick belonging to his parents, who live in Baltimore Township.

Hunt also has been charged with third offense drunk driving for operating the stolen car on M-37 April 2, a felony charge that could land him in prison for one to five years or probation with

30 days to one year in jail, at least 48 hours to be served consecutively. Further, he has been charged as a fourth habitual offender which means he could be sentenced to life in prison if the primary offense has a penalty of five years or more; 15 years or less if the primary offense has a penalty under five years.

Hunt told Judge James Fisher that his parents were in Florida when he drove their car and then became involved in a single car crash while driving drunk.

He was previously convicted of entry without breaking in Ionia County in 1976, delivery and manufacture of marijuana in 1988 and possession of less than 50 grams of cocaine in 2000.

Both men are set to be sentenced at 8:15 a.m. in Barry County Circuit Court in Hastings.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

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'12 Angry Jurors' cast rehearsing

The Revue will perform "12 Angry Jurors" by Reginald Rose Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 5-8, at the Vermontville Opera House located at 211 S. Main St. in Vermontville.

Performances Thursday through Saturday will be at 7 p.m. Sunday's matinee performance will be at 3 p.m.

"Bill (Reynolds, the director) always tries to have something new and different in each show, and this is no exception," said Pat Hansen, a spokesperson for The Re-

vue. "Don't miss this totally unique experience at the Vermontville Opera House. The cast is great — you'll be on the edge of your seat."

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The cast of "12 Angry Jurors" rehearses for their upcoming performance.



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Auditions slated for 'Will Rogers Follies'

The Bellevue Community Theater will hold auditions for the Will Rogers Follies at 7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 25, and Monday, Aug. 26, at the Bellevue High School Auditorium.

Pat Hansen, a spokesperson for the theater group, said that Bill Reynolds, the director, music director and choreographer has planned some new things.

"He says that you will love the songs," said Hansen. "Come and have a great time."

Besides the main characters, the Bellevue Community Theater needs "a bunch" of dancing girls,

cowboys and cowgirls. There are also a few parts for children (35-40 people total).

At the audition, actors will read from show scripts and then Reynolds will practice a couple of songs with the prospective actors and actresses so they may sing them for their auditions.

The stage door of the auditorium is located at the back of the school. Use the driveway on the west side of the high school.

Show dates are Oct. 25-27 and Nov. 1-3. Rehearsals are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and some Saturdays. Everything will be held at Bellevue High School.

The Bellevue Community Theater is looking for a scrim and a machine that projects power point shows on the big screen. If anyone has one or both of these items to loan or rent, call Bill Reynolds at (616) 367-4455 or e-mail therevue1@yahoo.com.

Obituaries

Euin Clayton Cantrell

NASHVILLE - Euin Clayton Cantrell (Red), age 92, died at his home in Nashville, MI on Aug. 21, 2002 at 9:30 a.m.

He was living with his son, Harlon Cantrell, until Harlon's death, and was lovingly cared for by his daughter-in-law, Marjorie.

Married Willie Bernice Ramsey in Falling Springs, TN in 1927.

He worked for the Post Products Division of General Foods for 37 years, retiring from there having worked in the cook room.

His gardens were beautiful. As small children we were fishermen. He belonged to the coon club and had a great love for coon hunting and enjoyed many good friends.

He is survived by children, Genola Wisner of Allen Park, MI; Marion Izola Smith (Doug) of Battle Creek, MI; Phyllis Lorraine Phares (Vic) of Nashville, MI; and Clayton Cantrell Jr. (Inez) of Ft. White, FL.

His sister, Winnie Lucas of Holland, MI and another sister, Laurie Dixon in Livingston, TN, and brother, Coy Cantrell of Livingston, TN survive him. He had 13 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren and seven great-great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Willie Bernice Cantrell; sisters, Birdie Kilroy and Minnie Deck; brothers, Herman Cantrell and Spurgeon Cantrell; and sons, Harlon and C.J. Cantrell.

Services were held at the Richard A. Henry Funeral Home on Saturday, Aug. 24, 2002. Interment was at Floral Lawn Cemetery. Rev. Gary Cantrell, pastor of Gull Lake Bible Church, officiated.

You may send memorial gifts to Gull Lake Bible Church or to the charity of your choice.

Arrangements were made by Richard A. Henry Funeral Home.

Caroline M. Furlong

NASHVILLE - Caroline Margarette Furlong, age 73, of Woodland departed this life to be with her Lord and Savior on Aug. 22, 2002 at Blodgett Hospital in Grand Rapids.

Caroline was born Aug. 29, 1928, in Argo, Ala., the daughter of Carl and Myrtle (Fisher).

She graduated from Nashville High School in 1947, and was married to Richard Furlong on Aug. 24, 1947 in Quimby, MI.

She loved her children and was an excellent homemaker. She loved to sew, make quilts, and other crafts. She also enjoyed wintering at the family's home in Florida where she frequently visited the area flea markets.

Caroline was a long time member of the First Baptist Church of Sebewa in Lake Odessa.

She was an excellent mate to her husband Richard and loved her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Caroline is survived by her husband of 55 years, Richard; sons, Richard II (Mary) Furlong of Woodland and Frank Furlong of Nashville; daughter-in-law, Shirley Furlong of Oklahoma City,

Okla.; brother-in-law, Glenn Ainslie of Battle Creek; sister, Mary Lou Hoosier of Madison, Tenn; uncle and aunts, Cecil and Lila Gray of Lake Odessa and Don and Vanda Dennis of Battle Creek; brother and sister-in-law, Neil and Mable Wilson of Woodland and Russell and Irene Furlong of Nashville. She also raised two grandchildren, Christina Garbacz of Lincoln Park and Shelly Bender of Saracta, Fla; 10 grandchildren; 10 step grandchildren; 23 great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; son, Johnney; brother, Carl Sanborn Jr.; sister, Pearl Ainslie; daughter-in-law, Edith Furlong; father and mother-in-law, Walter and Mable Furlong; sister-in-law, Judith Furlong; and brother-in-law, Danny Furlong.

Funeral services were held 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 24 at Maple Valley Chapel of Nashville. Rev. Duane McNeil officiated. Burial at Woodland Memorial Park.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Barry Community Foundation.

Arrangements were made by Maple Valley Chapel of Nashville.

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Bernece Marshall to celebrate 86 years



appreciated in her honor. Send cards to Bernece at 25349 W. St. Olaf Ave., Ingleside, IL, 60041-8655.

Bernece Marshall of Nashville, recently celebrated her 86th birthday at her son's home in Illinois during an extended visit. She was born on Aug. 23, 1916.

She is the mother of three children, Arloa, Marvin and Dean.

Bernece continues to be in good health, but is no longer travelling to Arizona for the winters.

She was born in Barry County and retired from Thomapple Manor after 20 years of service.

She misses all of her family and friends.

A card shower would be

Barry County Extension Calendar of Events

Aug. 29	Poultry Developmental Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., Extension Office.	Sept. 12	4-H Shooting Sports Committee Leader's Meeting, 7 p.m., Extension Office.
Sept. 4	Livestock Development Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Expo Center.	Sept. 14	4-H Judged Trail Ride.
Sept. 8	Open Speed Horse Show, 10 a.m., Expo Center.	Sept. 23	Rabbit Developmental Committee Meeting.
Sept. 9	Horse Developmental Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.	Sept. 30	Goat Developmental Committee meeting, 7 p.m., Extension Office.

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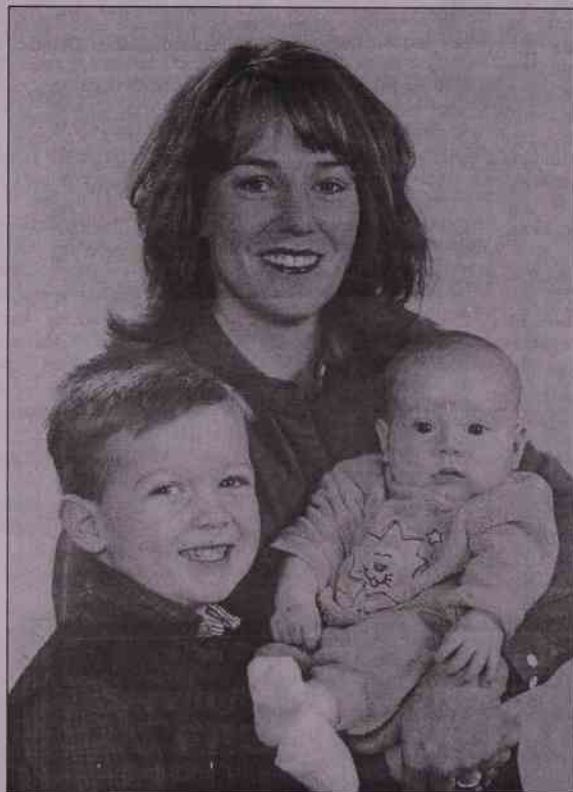
Hunter safety classes slated

Hunter safety classes will be offered Monday, Sept. 9, through Thursday, Sept. 12. The classes will run from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Castleton Township Hall at 915 Reed St. in Nashville.

Students must attend all sessions to receive their certificate. The cost is \$5 to cover materials.

Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. Call Gary White at (517) 852-9189 to register or for more information.

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Maple Valley fall sports previews

Gridders might reload instead of rebuild in '02



Strapping on the pads this fall for the Lions' this fall are (front from left) Jeff Taylor, Josh Grasman, Jonathan Denton, Bryan Dunlap, Cam Smith, Britt Leonard, Eric Smith, Jim Hirneiss, Ben Smith, (row 2) Dustin Brown, Cole Hansbarger, Josh Beard-slee, Brandon Schantz, Zach Vorce, Bill Hawblitz, Nick Ewing, Andrew Thomason, Josh Cook, (row 3) Ben Swan, Jacob Lawless, Nate Racine, Eric Turner, Eric Davis, Derek Ripley, Nicklaus Newton, Ty Van Acstine, Corey Caudill, (back) coach Chris Ricketts, coach Don Roscoe, Micah Keasler, Matt Root, Ryan Grinder, and head coach Guenther Mittelstaedt. (missing: coach Kevin Stewart)

by Jon Gambee
Giving his best George Allen impression, Maple Valley football coach Guenther Mittelstaedt bemoans his team's chances in the upcoming season.

He lists his liabilities as team speed, experience and the loss of eight starters on offense and defense, including three-fourths of his backfield.

But before you start passing the hat for the beleaguered coach, remember that this is a man who has won 141 games in 18 seasons, won or shared the conference championship 10 times, made the state play-offs nine times and was runner-up in the state Class CC finals in 1997. His Lions have averaged just over seven victories a season during his tenure and last year went 8-3 overall and 5-1 in the conference, tying for the title again.

And they do it the old fashioned way. They beat you up. They don't run and shoot, they run and run... and run... and run.

After four quarters of Maple Valley football, the play-

ers on Mittelstaedt's team just want to go home to a hot bath. Their opponents just want to go home. Maple Valley doesn't just wear you down, they wear you out. It's like going 10 rounds with Mike Tyson without the biting.

Six returning lettermen form the nucleus of Mittelstaedt's "rebuilding" project. Seniors Jonathon Denton (230 pounds), Josh Grasman (220 pounds) and Cam Smith (200 pounds) will open holes for all-league returning running back Eric Smith, while Josh Cook (298) and Ben Smith (220) will bolster the defense.

Mittelstaedt can add 290-pound Eric Davis and 220-pound Ben Swan to the offensive line, giving him an average of 230 pounds across the front if he wishes and Ben Smith will team with Josh Cook to solidify the defense.

Others being counted on by Mittelstaedt include running backs Bryan Dunlap and Jimmy Hirneiss, quarterback Britt Leonard and end Jeff Taylor. The defense should benefit from the play-

of linebacker Zach Vorce and defensive back Brandon Schantz.

But most players on the Maple Valley team play both ways throughout the season, and many play more than one position, so the veteran coach can gear his team around bulk or speed, as his game plan materializes.

One thing is constant with Maple Valley football. No matter how big or how small, how fast or how slow, all the Lions show up to play hard. It is this intensity, this passion for the game that has been the tradition in Lion country and what makes this one of the top high school programs in the entire state.

Mittelstaedt can point to all that he has to do to prepare for another successful season, but in a town where football is king, the prediction here is that the Lions will remain king of the jungle.

Maple Valley will open its season Friday, Aug. 30., at home against Pewamo Westphalia.



Meet the 2002 Maple Valley girls' basketball squad (back from left) Akiyo Ueshima, Jessie Grant, Stefanie Joostberns, Briann Treloar, Megan Garvey, Meagan Putnam, assistant coach Landon Wilkes, (front) Chayla Robles, Kortney Ewing, Jennifer Grant, Kyndra Root, and Tessa Robles. (missing: Ashley Gordeneer and head coach Craig Kitching)

Lady Lion cagers optimistic about prospects this season

by Jon Gambee

If you think all the excitement around Maple Valley High School this fall will be on the football field, check out the girls' basketball team as soon as possible. They have a new coach, a new attitude and a new spirit.

"I'm really excited about this season," said new coach Craig Kitching. "We have a good combination of experience and youth and the chemistry is there for us to put it all together."

Returning starters include Jessie Grant, an honorable mention all-conference player last season. Grant averaged 8.3 points a game, 3.7 assists and 3 steals from her guard position.

Fellow senior Briann Treloar will start at one of the forward positions. She averaged 12 points per game and seven rebounds on last year's team.

Juniors Megan Garvey (11.3 ppg) and Stefanie Joostberns (13.5 ppg) also return, bringing leadership and experience to the mix.

"Stefanie is recovering from a knee injury right now," Kitching said, "but she is as much a part of this team as I am. We look at her injury as part of the adversity that sometimes hit, but we are looking at it in a positive light."

"I know, common sense tells you that when you take 13.5 points a game, 5.1 rebounds and 3.5 steals from your team you lose a lot, but we don't look at it like that. We look at it as an opportunity for us to get stronger as a team and to give others an opportunity to step up."

Those others include senior center Ashley Gordeneer, sophomore center Meagan Putnam, sophomore forwards Kortney Ewing and Kyndra Root and senior forward Jennifer Grant. Tessa and Chayla Robles will strengthen the guard position and senior exchange student Akiyo Ueshima will fill in at forward.

Last year's team finished 14-6, but laid the foundation for this squad.

"We've been together

since June," Kitching said. "We attended the Michigan State University team camp and went 8-1 against bigger, stronger schools. After every game they play an automatic overtime and we also went 8-1 in overtime chances. We played in the competitive division and took the overtime championship."

The work ethic and the team chemistry is there," the coach said. "I am real excited."

"We have built a hard schedule, against a lot of bigger, more established schools, all geared to helping us prepare for the state tournament."

That tough schedule will begin today (Tuesday, Aug. 27) when Maple Valley hosts Portland St. Patrick. Portland has won two state championships (Class D) in the last four years, and last year's team finished 23-3. They also return four starters.

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Soccer squad sports new coach, program in Aug. 29 opener

A young team, a young program and a young coach all combine to make things interesting for Maple Valley's varsity soccer program this fall.

"We're looking to play to our strengths and to develop key fundamentals throughout the year," said coach Josh Meersma.

Though he is new to the coaching ranks, Meersma brings a winning tradition and a winning attitude to the position. A member of the Hope College program when it was nationally ranked, Meersma believes strict fundamentals and good conditioning are the keys to building a successful program.

"It's going to be fun," he said, "but it will also be work."

The process of developing a winning tradition takes time and effort, according to Meersma, but it also takes commitment.

"Right now we are just finding out about ourselves and working very hard to set a standard for the future."

Meersma projects his lineup to be young and he accepts that as a foundation for the future.

"I want to work with the young players to help build a program," he said. To do that, he says, he will have to involve the community.

"It will be a long process," he said, "but I think the commitment is there."

Seniors Andrew Cook and Rich Wilson are back from last year's team, which finished .500 and they will join

returning juniors Dan Sealy and Jordan Volz to form the nucleus of the team. The other returning letterman is sophomore Akok Malek.

Newcomers include senior Mike Meade and freshman Steve Perry.

"We have speed and we have youth," Meersma said. "That is what we will build on. What we need to do now is to get into the best conditioning possible and to find some depth to bolster our ranks."

The Lions opened their season Monday, Aug. 26, at Saranac. They will travel to Lakewood Thursday, Aug. 29, before their home opener Sept. 3 against Lansing Christian.



The Maple Valley boys' soccer team is ready to get the season started (front from left) Andrew Cook, Stephen Perry, Chris Abbott, Matthew Scramlin, (middle) Daniel Sealy, Richard Wilson, Michael Mead, Aaron Staines, Mark Rodriguez, (back) coach Josh Meersma, Jordan Volz, Akok Malek, Deng Chol, Bol Bol, and Kyle Lesage

Lion golfers' season already in full swing



The Lions' jayvee and varsity golf teams get together (front from left) Tyler Greenfield, Adam Gonser, Joe James, (middle) Andrew Belen, Daniel Culhane, David Benedict, Rusty Harris, (back) Garrett Van Engen, Michael Sleeper, Todd Cupp, Nathan Carney, Nick Burpee, and coach John Hughes.

School hasn't started yet, but the Maple Valley golf team is well into its 2002 schedule, with three matches already under its belt.

Coach John Hughes' Lions finished seventh at the Middleville Invitational Aug. 14, followed that up the next day with a fifth place finish in the Barry

County Invitational, took a second at the Eaton Rapids junior varsity tournament and was fourth in the Leslie Blackhawk Invitational August 20.

The team is led again this season by all-conference golfer Nick Burpee, a senior who has medaled in every tournament so far. He shot

an 82 at Yankee Springs in the opener, followed that up with a 78 at Mullenhurst in the Barry County Invitational and came back with another 82 at Leslie. Pushing Burpee is senior Collin McLean who shot an 83 at Yankee Springs, a 79 at

See M.V. golf, page 10



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Maple Valley harriers hope to run by numbers

Low numbers mean victory in a cross country meet, but for Maple Valley this season, low numbers refer to the number of participants in the program.

And that is the biggest obstacle facing Coach Gary Hamilton as he begins his 16th season at the helm.

When fall practice began, Hamilton had only three

runners on the boys' team and only seven girls. He has since picked up two additional boys to give him the minimum qualifying number so he can at least field a complete squad.

"Jordan Bursley and Zeke Wieland came out this last week and they will help us, no question," Hamilton said. They join Dustin Jones,

Andrew Kenyon and Jason Wymer to fill out the squad.

Jones is coming off an all-conference season in which he finished 12th in the SMAA Conference finale and the sophomore harrier is bigger and stronger this season.

"He looks good and I think he is going to have another outstanding year,"



The Maple Valley boys' and girls' cross country teams are ready to run (front from left) Dhanielle Tobias, Summer Hill, captain Michelle Silsbee, captain Kari Emerick, Muriel Wieland, Jessica McMillen, Rachel White (back) coach Cindy Allwardt, Dustin Jones, Jason Wymer, captain Andrew Kenyon, Jordan Bursley, Zeke Wieland, and coach Gary Hamilton.

Hamilton said. "The kids are working very hard and we are hoping to improve as a team."

Last year the boys finished fifth in the league race.

On the girls' side, Hamilton has three returning all-conference runners, sophomore Jessica McMillen, jun-

ior Muriel Wieland and senior Melissa Nisse. All three are back from a team that finished third in the conference last season and the addition of Michelle Silsbee, a senior who has battled injuries over the past two years, should help improve the team's chances.

Other runners expected to contribute include senior Kari Emerick, junior Summer Hill and freshman Dhanielle Tobias.

"Dhanielle is running real well," Hamilton said, "and she is going to make an impact for us this year as well."

MV golf, from page 9

Mullenhurst and an 83 at Leslie.

"We have looked good early and I think we have the talent to challenge for the league title," Hughes said. "This is my best team in my three years of coaching (here)."

Hughes is in his second tenure as the team's golf coach and he says he is looking forward to this season.

"We have some talent and the kids are working hard," he said. "It is hard to predict anything in golf because you can have a bad day at any time, but I think we have enough talent to carry us in most matches."

Joining Burpee and McLean are senior Nathan Carney, sophomore Todd Cupp and freshman Garrett VanEngen.

"We also added junior Matt Dunn and we put him in the junior varsity tournament (two varsity players were eligible per team) and he was the meet medalist, shooting an 80," Hughes said.

"I think we have made vast improvement over last season," he said. "And we have eight freshmen out, so that gives us something to build on."

Maple Valley has looked particularly strong against league competition, tying Leslie and beating Olivet handily.

"Of course, that is only one day and Olivet did not score well that day. Nothing is guaranteed, but I think it did a lot for our confidence."

"I was really happy with our performance at Mullenhurst (in the Barry County Invitational)," Hughes said. "We were only six strokes out of third place and only eight behind Wayland. We were playing against all Division II schools and I think it says something about our kids that they played so well against such good competition."

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Lions girls' cross country finish 7th in invitational

The Maple Valley girls' cross country team placed seventh among 11 teams Thursday in the Burg Invitational at Laingsburg High School.

The Lions scored 155 team points, five away from

sixth place. deWitt won the competition with 81 points and Perry and Laingsburg tied for second with 85.

Kari Emerick was 18th across the line to lead Maple valley, but she figured 17th in the scoring. Her time was

22:56. Sophomore Jessica McMillon was 21st in 23:20, freshman Dhanielle Tobias was 35th in 24:19, Muriel Wieland was 40th in 24:33 and Michelle Silsbee finished in 42nd at 24:41. Close behind in 44th was Summer Hill at 24:47.

The boys' team did not place because it fielded only two of the five minimum runners. Senior Andrew Kenyon took 47th with a time of 19:42 and sophomore Dustin Jones was 62nd in 20:35.

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2 FAMILY GARAGE SALE: August 29-30-31, Thursday, Friday & Saturday, 8am-5pm daily. 187 Maple St., Vermontville. Laser disc player, hunting & fishing supplies, canoe & motor (belonged to Robert Olds), clothing, furniture & many other articles.

2 FREE GARAGE SALE signs with your ad that runs in any of our papers. Get them at J-Ad Graphics, 1351 N. M-43 Hwy., Hastings. At the front counter.

AUGUST 30TH-SEPTEMBER 1ST: 9549 Thornapple Lake Rd., Nashville. Lots of kids and adult clothes, toys, videos, CD's and lots more.

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1.3 million to travel during Labor Day

An estimated 1.3 million Michigani- ans have Labor Day holiday travel plans, according to a recent survey

by AAA Michigan. Ninety percent will travel by car, truck or van — the highest percentage traveling by pas-

senger vehicle since 1998. Only six percent will travel by air. Preliminary reports from tourism bureaus across the state suggest business is good, with spending up in many sectors.

Sixty-five percent of those with travel plans will remain in Michigan (down from 69 percent in 2001), and the average trip length will be four to five days — a trend that has continued since the state-mandated Friday "holiday" was enacted in 1999.

"The weak economy and post 9-11 terrorist threats have kept many travelers

closer to home," said Linda Woolwine, vice president of Travel for the Auto Club Group. "We've seen a dramatic increase in the number of people staying in a hotel, motel or resort, which means occupancy rates and overall spending may be higher this year. These factors should help Michigan meet our prediction of 3-percent growth for 2002."

This year's Labor Day travel period caps a summer of relatively stable, moderate gas price — \$1.435 as of Aug. 12 (about a penny lower than last year). More

than three-quarters (88 percent) of travelers said that a change in gas prices would have no impact on their travel plans for the weekend.

Len Trankina, executive director of the Mackinac Island Chamber of Commerce, said the summer tourism season has been "strong and solid," with some weaker numbers early in the season due to colder weather.

According to Linda Jones of the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council, Michigan wineries report that "business is up over last year," with more families in attendance at the tasting rooms.

Traffic reports from the Mackinac Bridge Authority show an increase in bridge traffic during May, June and July — up 3.2, 2.1 and 1.4 percent respectively from the previous year. The United States-Canada Bridge and Tunnel Operator's Association reports a year-to-date decrease (through July) of 12 percent of the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit; nearly 7 percent of the Blue Water Bridge of Port Huron and a decrease of 21 percent for the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel.

According to an Auto Club survey of 500 Michigan residents, weather will have little influence on Labor Day travel plans. Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the respondents said they would not consider canceling a trip due to rain or cool temperatures. Major findings from AAA Michigan's 2002 Labor Day survey show:

- Eighty-two percent of the trips will be more than 100 miles from home (up from 68 percent last year);
- Two-thirds of travelers (65 percent) will stay in Michigan, compared to 69 percent in 2001;
- Approximately 90 percent of all trips will be by car, truck or van, up from 78 percent in 2001;
- Travelers' accommodations are distributed as follows: staying in a hotel, motel or resort (33 percent); in a second home or with relatives (14 percent); rental cottages (12 percent); in tents (10 percent); in a trailer or RV (8 percent); with friends (4 percent), on a boat or in a condominium (2 percent).

Based on requests received for AAA TourBook® guides, Trip Tik® routings and maps, the top five summer destinations in Michigan are: 1) Mackinaw City, 2) Traverse City, 3) Ludington, 4) Sault Ste. Marie, and

5) Grand Rapids, (based on 2002 AAA TripTik® requests).

The official 78-hour Labor Day holiday period begins at 6 p.m. Friday, Aug. 30 and runs to 11:59 p.m. Monday, Sept. 3.

During last year's Labor Day holiday period, 20 people died in 17 fatal crashes on roads across the state. That was down from the 2000 holiday, when 27 people died in 20 fatal crashes. Nine of last year's fatal crashes were alcohol-related, and safety restraints were used by only 23 percent of the victims. Three of last year's fatal crashes involved pedestrians and five involved motorcycles.

To reduce these numbers this Labor Day holiday, all drivers are urged to use safety belts, avoid alcohol, stay alert at the wheel and observe all traffic laws. Law enforcement agencies across the state will enforce Michigan's mandatory safety belt law during the holiday, issuing tickets to those who fail to buckle up. "Click It or Ticket" Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) information is available at AAA branches statewide.

Beginning Aug. 30 and continuing through September, AAA Michigan and McDonald's restaurants of Michigan will sponsor a "Be Awake, Be Aware" traffic safety campaign. McDonald's will offer a free small cup of coffee to travelers who present a coupon available in the September issue of *Michigan Living* magazine. Safety and travel tips from AAA will be available on the tray liners at participating McDonald's restaurants.

For detour information, call 1-800-411-4823 or visit: www.aaamich.com on the Web. For more Michigan travel information, travelers may call the state tourism office at 1-888-78-GREAT or visit Travel Michigan's Web site at: www.michigan.org

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