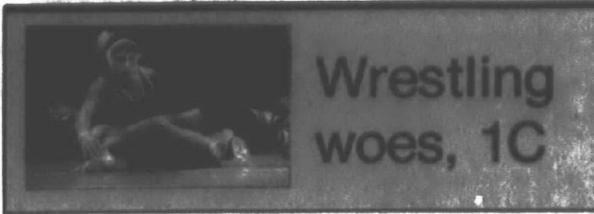


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Plymouth Observer

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plymouth pipeline

Volunteers sought

Growth Works, Inc., a youth assistance agency, is looking for volunteers from Canton to help with its program. Volunteers are needed to act as mentors for troubled youths. For more information, call Susan Davis, 455-4090, Monday through Thursday.

Luminary sale

The Plymouth Symphony League and the Trailwood Garden Club are selling luminaries, Christmas decorations that consist of a candle in a bag. For more information, call Mary O'Connell, 459-1999.

Luminary sand

The city of Plymouth has sand available for luminaries. It's available at the public works department. For more information, call 453-7737.

Warfare will not stop this wedding

By Diane Gale
staff writer

A Dec. 30 marriage between a native Plymouth resident and his Canton fiancée was just shy of becoming another casualty of the Panama war.

But late last week Sharon and Caldwell Fleming learned that their son, Stephen, an Army PFC stationed in Fort Bragg, N.C., would be home for Christmas, after all.

AN ADDED touch was that he could go ahead with his plans to marry Michelle Matevia of Canton later in the week.

The families began to worry when Michelle learned Wednesday morn-

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Ed Mikrut and daughter Jeanna, 5, take advantage of good sledding at Plymouth Township Park.

Snowy days are fun

You don't have to go looking in other folks' windows to know ol' Santa sure 'nuff left a couple-two-three pairs of skates and sleds under some Christmas trees yesterday.

And while the weatherman said temperatures could warm a bit by today and Wednesday — up from the near-zero readings last week — there should be plenty of snow and skating for folks who aren't afraid of a little wintertime fun.

So there's no reason for kids to get too bored this week while they're out of school.

Outdoor skating and sledding are plentiful in Hines Park in Plymouth Township, and open skating is available at Plymouth's Cultural Center.

Open skating hours today are 8:30-10:50 a.m., 11:50 a.m. to 12:50 p.m., 1-2:40 p.m. and 3:50-5:50 p.m.

On Wednesday, hours for public skating are 8:30-9:30 a.m., 11 a.m. to 12:50 p.m., and 1-3:20 p.m.

Public skating on Thursday is 8:30-11:40 a.m., 11:50 a.m. to 12:50 p.m., 1-2:50 p.m. and 4-5:20 p.m.

Charge for open skating is \$1.75 for adults and \$1 for children. Skate rental is \$1.

For more information on public skating, call the city recreation department at 455-6620.

In Canton young and old will be skating on the pond behind the Canton Township administration building on Canton Center south of Proctor.

Ice skaters will be making the rounds at Flodin Park on Saltz Road between Lilley and Sheldon, too.

Neighborhood parks around the township also will make ice rinks. Call association presidents for more information.



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Larry Reamer and Al Roden face off in Plymouth Township Park.

Firm brings 800 jobs, inspiration

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

The site design of one light industrial facility planned for Plymouth Township will, it is hoped, set a standard for others, government officials say.

Besides setting an example for other developers on how to build aesthetically, the Johnson Controls firm will relocate nearly 800 employees to the site.

The company's car interior research and engineering facility scheduled to be built this summer is "an important pacesetter," said township planner James Anulwitz.

That's because the firm plans to keep an existing wood lot on its property north of M-14 and west of Beck, add evergreens, create a patio for employees and keep other natural landscape features, Anulwitz said.

"Aesthetic values are always a

major consideration, said Ray Jusak, Johnson's director of environment and facilities.

"Our scheduled completion date is August of 1990; we hope to get in there earlier," Jusak said.

JOHNSON CONTROLS will consolidate its car interior design operations in Plymouth Township. Those operations have been performed separately in Ann Arbor, Saline, Livonia and Madison Heights.

Approximately 400 employees in administration, computer services and purchasing will work out of a central technical unit building, Jusak said.

"The intent of the building is to coordinate our research and engineering staff into one unit," he said.

A central technological unit will house approximately 320 employees in sales and engineers who design in-

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City to have one less Ken

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

They're breaking up that gang of Kens down at city hall.

Come Jan. 3, Ken Vogras, superintendent of public works, will still be there. And so will Ken West, city engineer.

But Ken Way, treasurer-assessor, is retiring after 38 years working for the city of Plymouth.

"People sometimes say, 'You've got to be named Ken to work over there,'" said Way, laughing.

Way, 63, started working for the city in January, 1951. "I was looking for a steady job.

"I passed a test and hired on as a patrolman," he recalled. He worked

the midnight shift with two more experienced officers.

Way, who spent his early years in Livonia, moved to a house on Holbrook where he and his wife Beatrice raised their two children, Olivia and Bill.

In October 1951, he took a clerical position with the city. He became city clerk in 1955, then treasurer-assessor in 1959 — a position he will serve in through Jan. 2.

He's also served twice as acting city manager, in 1973 and 1979.

Way calls assessing property "an art more than a science."

"Some question the evaluation, that's why we have the Board of Re-

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BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Plymouth's Treasurer-Assessor Ken Way, who has worked for the city for 38 years, is retiring Jan. 2.

Girl's diary spreads inspiration for Christmas

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Jamie Schroeder, 9, wrote a diary note about the meaning of Christmas five days before her unexpected death last December.

The unedited entry went like this:
Dec. 1, 1988

Hu I'm so excited! Why? because Christmas is coming up. Why do we celebrate (celebrate) Christmas? Because Jesus is born. Who's Jesus? Ya mean you don't know Jesus? Well he's our (our) Lord and Savior. He died for our sins. So we don't have to worry about going to Hell. If you pray and ask God to forgive everything you did wrong, and believe in Him, Jesus, you will go to

'The message of Christmas is so simple and it helped so much last year. The reassurance of her faith helps us through this.'

— Ellen Schroeder

heaven. But I'm a little nervous too. Why? because I'm in the Christmas service (service). Well I've got to go! Bye! And remember, Jesus loves you! Jamie.

JAMIE NEVER made it to the Christmas Eve service at St. Peter's Lutheran church in Plymouth.

The fourth grade Canton resident collapsed Dec. 6, 1988 during a basketball practice at St. Peter's Lutheran

Church where she attended classes. She died a short while later in the arms of principal Jerry Meier, a close family friend.

While going through Jamie's school desk the morning of her funeral, Meier found the diary and based his eulogy on her heartfelt words.

"The message of Christmas is so simple and it helped so much last

year," her mother Ellen said. "The reassurance of her faith helps us through this."

The Schroeders — Gary, Ellen; Anne, 14; Nathan, 12 and Teri, 6 — used Jamie's journal entry in a Christmas card last year. And now they want to memorialize Jamie's words so they can serve as inspiration for others. Ellen hopes to help start a church grief ministry.

"We have plans to help people with it so they know you don't have to dwell in grief," Ellen said.

DOCTORS AREN'T sure what caused Jamie's death, her mother Ellen said. However, an autopsy indicated she had a seizure and a weakened heart muscle. Jamie had her first seizure in second grade, fol-

lowed by a second one last September.

The family suffered one tragedy after another. Ellen's father, uncle and a close family friend died that fall.

Since the child's death was so close to Christmas, the family didn't have time to accept her death and they were able to take part in traditional activities.

"This year I think we feel the loss a little more," Ellen said. "We'll still do what we have always done. It's a lonely time of year because we notice the void. But yet we have the promise of salvation that fills the void."

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