

News briefs

Murderer's appeal denied

Barring a rare state Supreme Court reversal, Arthur Ream will spend the rest of his life in prison for killing 13-year-old Cindy Zarzycki, who was abducted outside an Eastpointe ice cream shop almost exactly 24 years ago.

The state Court of Appeals announced Friday that it had rejected Ream's appeal of his 2008 conviction by a Macomb County jury on one count of first-degree, premeditated murder, which carries a term of life in prison without a chance for parole.

Cindy's disappearance April 20, 1986, after going to meet Ream at the Dairy Queen on Nine Mile Road near her home, went unsolved for more than two decades. Eastpointe detectives Derek McLaughlin and Kelly Shock revived the investigation along with the cold case unit of the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office.

Ream, 60, who had two prior rape convictions, was convicted mainly on circumstantial evidence and statements. He later led police to her corpse in Macomb Township.

Fundraiser aids homeless

The Macomb County Warming Center will host its Spring for the Homeless fundraiser from 6-10 p.m. Thursday at DeCarlo's Banquet Center, 6015 E. 10 Mile Road, Warren. Tickets are \$30 per person. There will be an extended buffet dinner and a cash bar. Live entertainment will be provided by Mr. B's Salute to the Superstars and there will be raffles and door prizes. For tickets or more information, visit www.warming-center.org.

'Friends' offer free concert

The Friends of the Shelby Township Library will present Swingin' Chopin, a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Polish composer Fredrick Chopin, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday.

The free concert will be performed by Richard Kowalewski and members of the Detroit Polonia. The Evola Music Center, 12745 23 Mile Road, Shelby Township, will host the event. For information, call the Shelby Township Library at (586) 739-7414.

School hosts fun night

Roseville Community Schools are inviting community residents to a family fun night to be held from 6:30-9 p.m. next Friday at Roseville High School.

The event is geared toward elementary school-aged children. The school administration is inviting the public to enjoy hot dogs, popcorn, snow cones, carnival games and prizes, open swimming and a petting zoo.

Vehicles burglarized

A person living in the 14000 block of Taconite in Sterling Heights told police someone broke into both vehicles what were parked in her driveway on Thursday.

The thieves stole a GPS unit from one unlocked vehicle and a purse which was in the back seat of the other vehicle.

Deaths

- William M. Bilkovic, 72
- Delores Cottrell, 87, of Warren
- Bryan A. Hawkins, 32, of Warren
- Caroline Skues Hawkins, 78
- Catherine Laethem, 87
- Adam Lehl, 91, of Macomb Township
- Phyllis M. Linsdeau, 88, of St. Clair Shores
- Edward Reinhardt, 79
- Katie Sakowsky, 82
- Stephan Sikorski, 79, of Shelby Township
- Arnold H. Stenzel, 85, of Clinton Township
- Patricia M. Yates, 79, of Shelby Township

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Brad Woessner and Taylor Landicho work on a solar-powered car at Dakota High School in Macomb Township. Students in the engineering research program at the school are holding a fundraiser Monday at Travis restaurant on Gratiot near 21 Mile Road.

High school students plan fundraiser to help pay for electric vehicles

Dakota High School engineering students designed, constructed off-road vehicle

By Mitch Hotts
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

Students in Dakota High School's engineering research program hope to raise some green on Monday in their quest to go green when it comes to fueling automobiles of the future.

The students are working on designing and building two electric-powered lightweight vehicles that eventually will have solar panels to provide renewable power without hooking up to a power grid.

"We're teaching real world applications here," said Scott Mitchell, the design technology teacher overseeing the project. "We're not just opening textbooks and drawing pretty pic-

tures. The kids are using CAD (computer-aided design) to plan everything out and then they actually build the vehicles into something sustainable and green."

The students are working on two projects: An off-road vehicle and a low-rider street version using airbag technology. One of the cars will be presented at the Design and Manufacturing Alliance Spring 2010 Conference on Tuesday at Macomb Community College's Warren campus.

"We've taken a golf cart and pretty much built everything from scratch after putting our drawings into CAD and coming up with the design," said Zack Messing, 17, a senior at Dakota High School in Macomb Township.

"We're pushing our limits to learn what we can and cannot do. Some of what we're doing with software and computers is just mind blowing," he said.

The vehicles are made of extruded aluminum which has never been used to produce a

motorized vehicle.

Another student, Michael Lentini, noted electric vehicles are in the marketplace already. He said it's the job of future engineers to enhance the viability of alternative energy cars.

"With fuel prices getting pushed up and the demand for lower emissions, we need to really dig into alternatives," Lentini said. "In a way, what we're doing is like playing with Lincoln logs — we're taking something that already exists and giving it a new use."

The electric car project is an ongoing aspect of Mitchell's engineering research and development class. Mitchell has put in \$3,000 of his own money with other funding coming from Chippewa Valley Schools and sponsors.

Monday's fundraiser will be held all day at the Travis restaurant on Gratiot near 21 Mile Road in Chesterfield Township. The eatery will donate 10 percent of the day's receipts to the program to help pay for extra parts for the cars.

Teacher puts surgery on hold for kids

Talk about dedication to students.

Dakota High School engineering research instructor Scott Mitchell cancelled surgery to alleviate nagging back pain last week to help out his students. The students are finishing work on a custom-made electric vehicle that will be presented Tuesday to the Design and Manufacturing Alliance Spring 2010 conference at Macomb Community College in Warren.

Mitchell rescheduled his operation for Monday, which means he won't be able to attend the conference. But he wanted to be in the classroom last week to make sure everything is in place for his students.

"That's what I do, I'm here for the kids," said Mitchell, who kicked in a few thousand dollars out of his own pocket for parts for the vehicle.



Retiring but learning

When it comes to learning, Dan Hagen's motto is "better late than never."

Hagen, 52, who is retiring as chief of the Eastpointe Fire Department after 30 years of service, will receive his bachelor of applied science in public safety studies degree next month from Siena Heights University in Adrian.

Hagen, a 1976 East Detroit High School graduate, earned an associate degree in fire science from Macomb Community College but had to give up his undergraduate studies at Wayne State University in 1989 due to other commitments.

"I took a 20-year hiatus," joked Hagen. "But it was a personal goal to complete my degree. It was a phenomenal feeling to finish it."

Waiting for an apology for GM and Chrysler

Several weeks ago I received a call from a right-wing reader of the The Macomb Daily who was nearly giddy about the news: a Toyota Prius that had sped out of control on a California highway had passed all its subsequent test drives.



Chad Selweski

"I knew that this was all a fraud," he said, referring to Toyota's infamous sticky gas pedals. Since the auto "bailouts" were rendered in Washington, this reader has become one of countless conservatives who seem to be rooting for General Motors and Chrysler to fail. They are so blatantly anti-union and anti-Obama that they assume any hard times befalling Toyota or any other foreign firm is an attempt to rig the system in favor of "Government Motors."

These critics insist that Obama's Auto Task Force amounts to "gangster government," the loan program was a deception to engineer a federal "takeover" of the auto companies, and that government regulators are "bullying" Toyota.

I have to say: Whose side are you on? It's easy these days to cite Toyota's numerous problems and questionable tactics, but the larger point is that all those claims heard on Capitol Hill and cable TV news in 2008-09 that American automakers build inferior cars that consumers won't buy now seem pretty silly. Politicians who argued that GM and Chrysler are not competitive and deserve to die owe us — all of us in Michigan — an apology.

Let's not forget those, like Sens. Richard Shelby and Bob Corker, who were eager to cast us aside and destroy our economy.

Republicans from states hosting foreign auto plants asserted that U.S. automakers were essentially incompetent and that granting federal loans to survive the recession and credit crunch was "flushing money down the toilet."

Despite obvious misinformation about labor costs and worker productivity at U.S. auto plants — and in the face of years of domestic downsizing and restructuring — one lawmaker declared that federal assistance would be like "putting a tourniquet on a dead guy."

And the sniping wasn't only relegated to the right. Left-wing environmentalists smugly declared that the U.S. car companies had received their comeuppance, that any firm that thrives on building SUVs or worse — a Hummer — deserves to go the way of the dinosaurs. Just 18 months later, the tables have turned.

GM is on a roll, paying back its \$8.1 billion in government loans five years early and moving toward a return to profitability. Those gains, sparked by several award-winning vehicles that meet or beat Toyota and Honda for quality and fuel efficiency, will soon allow the U.S. government to get back the rest of its equity in the corporation.

Chrysler, which is busy stitching together a new global company along with Fiat, needs more time to pay back its obligations. But it has posted a \$143 million operating profit in the first quarter of 2010 and has several new models in the pipeline.

The bottom line: Millions of good jobs have been saved, along with two of America's premier manufacturing firms, and in the end it won't cost the taxpayers a dime.

Further proof of the changing times is a new national poll finds that a majority of people with a distinct opinion on the matter now say that American automakers build better vehicles than our Asian competitors.

While one senator questions whether GM's actions last week were really a payback, it's undeniable that this rescue package, prompted by the Wall Street meltdown, has produced a far better result than the ideologues could have imagined.

Even as GM and Chrysler were heading into bankruptcy court last June — at the lowest point in the history of the two auto giants — their sales figures would have surprised the anti-American-autos crowd on the right wing. At that time, June 2009 auto sales showed that GM was still No. 1 and Chrysler, which was essentially viewed as a company on life support, had higher sales than Nissan or Volkswagen or Mazda.

So much for the idea that Detroit builds cars that nobody wants.

Never forget the essential message of the Confederate congressional Republicans to Michigan, and especially places like Macomb County: Drop dead.

Let them know, every chance you get, that we're still alive and kickin'.

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