

# LANSGING COMMUNITY NEWS



Serving the Town and Village of Lansing, Cayuga Heights, King Ferry & Genoa  
 "Not quite paradise, but a nice place to live."  
 Wednesday, April 30, 1997 ♦♦♦ Vol. II No. 18

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## Mediation In Neutral; Go-Kart Track Construction Begins

MONDAY APR 28 - Though advocates and opponents of the planned Go-Kart Track had agreed to a Tuesday evening non-binding mediation session at the Community Dispute Resolution Center (CDRC) in Ithaca, weekend ground-breaking and the arrival of gravel to prepare the track site for eventual black-topping produced some neighborhood fallout.

Last midweek, prospects for an amiable settlement had brightened when project developer Glenn Fenner invited neighbors to hear one of the karts at the Buck and Conlon Road site.

Neighbors Tom Robinson and Susan Miller were among those who came to listen. Robinson, of Conlon Road, modified his stance saying, "I initially signed the petition; I was premature. Mediation is the best step."

"I appreciate your effort to invite us over," said Miller, of Buck Road, to Fenner, "but I don't want the constant drone of six lawnmower engines."

About 15 opponents and 5 proponents later attended the April 23 Town Board meeting. Town Attorney Richard John told Go-Kart opponents that the town couldn't comply with their request to require an environmental quality review of the project. Without noise or zoning ordinances or any structural construction, the town has no authority to regulate or deny the Fenners' right to construct a track, he said.

"In the unzoned part of town my hands



Photo: STAFF

**HEAVY TURNOUT** - Opponents of a proposed Go Kart Track at Buck and Conlon Roads in So. Lansing returned to the Town Board last Wednesday to renew their call for an environmental review of the project. Several proponents who remained in Council chambers later expressed their support for the project. Site preparation began over the weekend.

are tied," said Code Enforcement Officer George Totman. Where there's no ordinance, there's no jurisdiction."

Ed Tumavicus, of Conlon Road, asked the town to seek an advisory opinion from the Department of Environmental Conservation on gasoline storage. "The town can't take sides in potential litigation outside of our jurisdiction," said John. "We represent all Lansing residents and cannot be perceived as trying to shut down a potential business."

"Certainly the town is concerned," added John, responding to opponents' frustrations, "but the town is constrained to live by the rules we make."

The Town Board did agree to Susan Miller's request for a list of Town owned land that she might review in a search for an alternative site. Though the Board expressed skepticism that such a site could be found, it appeared to agree in principle with the idea of leasing appropriate land if such land is identified and doesn't impose burdens on neighbors.

John concluded by urging both sides to seek mediation to try to find a solution "before spending money on litigation."

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## \$2-3.9 Million Proj Savings Lost: Albany Wickes Law Exemption Denial Costly To Lansing

By Matthew Shulman

Quiet murmurs of disappointment marked School Superintendent Andrea Price's April 17 report to the Board of Education that the NYS Legislature will not act on Lansing's request for an exemption to the Wickes Law for our 1997-1998 capital construction and renovation project despite the likelihood that a similar request from the Ithaca City School District will be granted.

The historic intent of the Wickes Law was to protect taxpayers from collusive contracts. Requiring multiple contracts made it more difficult for municipalities to enter into fraudulent contracts with a single contractor. Over time, the Wickes Law was also seen by some as a device to protect local contractors and union workers so the economic benefits of public construction projects remained in the home community.

The NYS Wickes Law requires that publicly funded building projects be let to in at least 4 separate contract components, commonly known as the "four primes." These are general construction, plumbing, electrical and mechanical. Where the scope of work involves other elements, additional contracts may be required. Exemptions to the Wickes Law can only be granted by act of the State Legislature.

The advantages of the Wickes Law are that it promotes fair bidding and quality work, explained Ithaca-Cortland Building

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Lansing School District Election

### Meet The Candidates Night

Thursday, May 1 at 7:30pm in the High School Cafeteria

## Talent & Goods Auction To Fund Lansing Youth Missions

By Connie Conlon

All roads lead to Lansing on Sunday, May 4 when the Lansing United Methodist Church sponsors its 1997 Talents & Goods Auction at 6pm at the church. This event is designed to involve the community in an evening of fun and fellowship that will provide support to Lansing youth and adults who volunteer for mission work at home and abroad. Area businesses and individuals have donated unique items and services which will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Youth will operate a food concession and child care will be available.

In the past, the community has provided top notch support for the event and the purpose behind it. Confidence runs high that this year will be no exception.

Although the Talents and Goods Auction is important, the purpose behind it is even more so. About 30 years ago, lifelong Lansingite Josephine Ernstein began a mission in Haiti which has grown and been adopted by new genera-



Photo: LUMC

**SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS** - Thanks to Lansingites, life's a little better in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala.

tions who continue her work. Auntie "Jo", as she's affectionately known to many, wore a path between Lansing and Haiti that's marked by many Haitians who've benefited from her concern.

Jo's mission was to educate children in the impoverished market town of Verettes. Thanks to Lansingites' aid, many hundreds of Haitian children have received a chance to get basic education, a hot school lunch and the opportunity to learn trades to support themselves and their families in an economically disastrous situation. And when the "Boat People" fled the Haitian dictatorship before the arrival of Pres. Aristide, Lansing welcomed Berthony Milord and helped him begin a new life in America.

Today, the LUMC's Haiti Committee is headed by Kate Payne and continues the mission, sponsoring hot meals on school days and annual in-service training for the school's teachers and administrators as well as paying for children's tuition and ancillary living expenses.

Payne refers to the Haitians as "our forever friends" and says, "We learn from them humility, patience, Christian faith and love and we try to translate these qualities into action."

The purpose of the auction is also found in the energy and commitment of the Lansing youth who learn mission work firsthand. One such student is Ana Withiam - a member of the LUMC's third generation to carry on the tradition of mission work.

### Mission To Guatemala

Lansing High junior Ana Withiam was one of 17 youth and six adults from the joint All Saints Roman Catholic Church - LUMC mission team that traveled to the towns of San Lucas Toliman, Chontala and Chichicastenango in Guatemala during Spring Break '96.

"We helped the Mayans by carrying rocks and sand to work sites and digging out a hill for a house," said Withiam. "However, they taught us much more than we helped them." Withiam and her mission-mates learned about Mayan cul-

ture, the government's oppression and how people suffered during the recently concluded civil war.

It was amazing to see how people have persevered through their hardships, recounted Withiam. Though they're not physically wealthy, they are spiritually and mentally rich. "The Guatemalans are a warm, giving people who taught us the importance of spirituality and fellowship," she said. "It was a life-changing experience and donations to the upcoming Talent Auction will help more people go on enriching mission trips like ours," Ana concluded.

So, put on your travelling shoes and make Lansing's United Methodist Church your destination on Sunday, May 4 at 6:00pm for the Talent and Goods Auction.

Once you arrive, check out the unique and interesting array of goods and services, get your bidder number card and get ready for fun. Help yourself by being a high bidder and help put a mission volunteer on the road to a potential life-changing experience!

See you there.



Photo: LUMC

**SOUND MINDS IN SOUND BODIES** - Children having mid-day lunch at school in Verettes.

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