

**Briefs**

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

**EVENTS**

**Rummage sale Saturday at church**

**NILES** — The annual rummage sale is set from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at St. John's United Church of Christ, 601 Sycamore St., Niles. All proceeds from the sale will go to Relay for Life.

**Class offered for working parents**

**BERRIEN SPRINGS** — The Berrien Regional Education Service Agency is offering a class geared toward working parents of young children.

The meeting, called Parents as Teachers, will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Bridgman Public Library, 4460 Lake St., Bridgman.

The class will provide working mothers and fathers with an opportunity to network, discuss parenting issues and concerns, and to share child-rearing tips under the guidance of a parent educator, according to a news release.

The meeting is free and open to the public.

**Tyler at restaurant on Saturday**

**LANSING** — State Rep. Sharon Tyler, R-Niles, will be at the Prime Table Restaurant, 1915 S. 11th St., to meet with constituents from 9 to 10 a.m. Saturday. Appointments aren't necessary.

Residents who'd like to talk to Tyler but are unable to attend can reach her at (888) 373-0078 or at SharonTyler@house.mi.gov.

**GOVERNMENT**

**Singer James to be honored at Capitol**

**LANSING** — "Hanky Panky" in Lansing? It'll be that way next week when former Niles resident Tommy James is honored on the floor of the Michigan Senate.

State Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks, said James, a New York resident who with his band The Shondells produced such songs as "Hanky Panky," "Crimson & Clover" and "Mony Mony," will receive a special presentation for his contributions to music at 10 a.m. Tuesday.

Born Tommy Jackson, James recently published his autobiography, "Me, the Mob and the Music." Already, the book has spawned plans for a Broadway show and major motion picture.

**Granholm signs school pension bill**

**LANSING** — Gov. Jennifer Granholm has signed school pension reform legislation she says will save more than \$3 billion for districts over the next decade.

The legislation provides a slightly enhanced pension for up to 56,000 public school employees who choose to retire between July 1 and Sept. 1.

Also, beginning July 1, all Michigan Public School Employees' Retirement System workers will contribute 3 percent of their salary to be deposited into a health care trust. That's in addition to what they already contribute to the pension system.

The legislative package includes Senate Bill 1227 and HB 4073.

The bills signed Wednesday take immediate effect.

**'It's Possible' to offer leg up**

■ New agency to provide job assistance, counseling to former inmates.

By **TOM MOOR**  
Tribune Staff Writer

**NILES** — When Bill Anderson was a sophomore in college, he found himself in a game of "mouse get cheese."

The game consisted of Anderson going into a Cincinnati supermarket, unwrapping and eating a package of cheese and

running out of the store as fast as he could.

Moments later, Anderson, now 51, was found by police hiding behind a nearby garbage can.

The incident was a one-time fraternity prank he was pressured to do with other pledges by members of a University of Cincinnati fraternity.

**Serious matter**

The consequences were no laughing matter, though. Anderson was charged with armed robbery because, according to Ohio law at the time,

an officer had to use force to make the apprehension. He was given a \$500 bond, sentenced to 30 days at a work-release center, and he eventually transferred to another university.

Anderson went on to receive both bachelor's and master's degrees and embarked on a successful career in social services in New York City, but the incident in Cincinnati still lives with him today.

On several occasions — the most recent in 2006

See **POSSIBLE/B2**



Tribune Photo/TOM MOOR  
**Bill Anderson, of Niles, is opening an agency called It's Possible Inc., geared toward helping people who have recently been released from prison.**



Tribune Photos/GENE KAISER  
**Brett Fairchild, a local ironworker apprentice, welds a side of one of the 96 swine pens the South Bend Ironworkers Local 292 are constructing for the Berrien County Youth Fair set for Aug. 16-21.**

**Bugsy the pig will be safe**

■ Ironworkers, Berrien County Youth Fair team up for pigs.

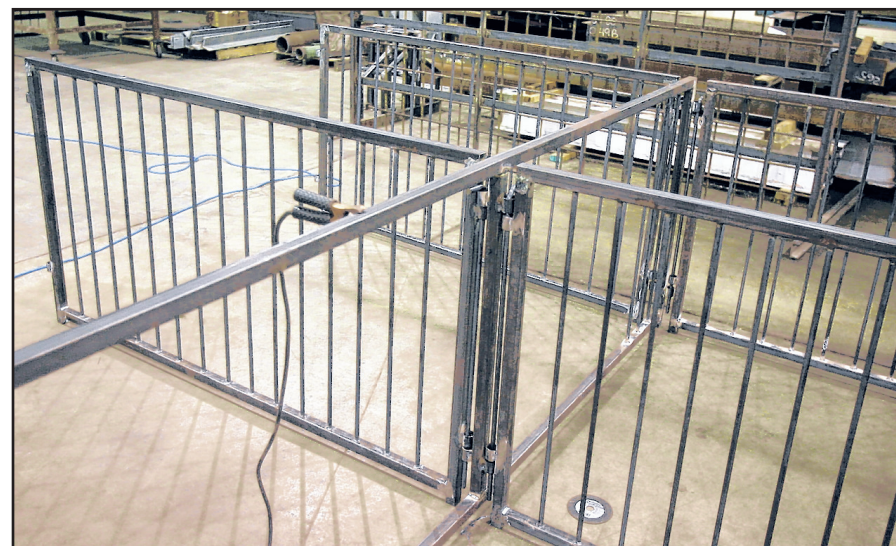
By **DOUGLAS FARMER**  
Tribune Staff Writer

Thanks to the generosity of local ironworkers, 8-year-old Jacob Lohraff does not need to worry about his pig, Bugsy, escaping while on display at the Berrien County Youth Fair in August.

And Jacob's mother, Carey, won't need to mend Jacob's jeans after he tears them on Bugsy's pen as he has in the past.

Instead, the South Bend Ironworkers Local 292 is putting the finishing touches on 96 new steel swine pens, at no cost to the fair.

The BCYF Swine Com-



**South Bend Ironworkers Local 292 is constructing 96 new steel swine pens for the Berrien County Youth Fair.**

mittee has been working on replacing the old pig pens, dating back 25 years, for five years now, but finding the money for the project has always been an is-

sue. The project picked up urgency when limited capacity in the Swine Barn at the fair resulted in some pigs being displayed in temporary pens in the

Sheep and Goat Barn, and some of those pigs escaping from their pens.

"A pig would occasionally get out, but it wouldn't get too far," committee

member Dale Robson said. "This is a project we've been working on for a long time. We've been fundraising, and already have probably a third of the barn done with pens similar to these."

In fundraising, the fair received grants from the Hanson Family Foundation and the Upton Foundation, as well as donations and discounted supplies from Miller Welding Supply in Grand Rapids, Niles Chemical and Paint and ATT Witt Galvanizing, among others. The most vital contributions, manpower and time, came from the Ironworkers Local 292.

"In a time when it's been tough to get funding, every little bit has been huge," BCYF Swine Project Chairwoman Gaye Blind said.

See **PIG/B2**

**Marina sought at former strip club area**

By **NORMA LERNER**  
Tribune Correspondent

**EDWARDSBURG** — A potential new owner for the site and surrounding beach area of the former Escape Reality Strip Club is seeking to build a marina on what is now called Pleasant Lake Resort in Edwardsburg.

The building where the club was housed has been converted into a bar and dance hall.

Now it's possible there could be more piers and boats on Pleasant Lake.

A proposal to do so was announced at the Edwardsburg Village Council this week.

Purchasing the bar is Frank Massa of Evergreen Land Holdings LLC, who is buying it from current owner Raymond Ornatowski.

Massa is proposing a marina to include 46 docks next to Lindbergh

Park, a public park at the lake's east side.

During the council meeting, village attorney William LaBre presented an ordinance with deed restrictions about the sale of the resort which he called "tight" pertaining to the establishment not becoming a strip bar as it had been.

Authorities shut down the strip bar last year when eight employees were arrested on various

charges of prostitution, lewd and lascivious conduct, possession of drugs and one count of failing to inform a partner of an HIV status.

The council approved the restrictions placed on the site.

LaBre said the resolution with the deed restrictions was verified by the village president, the police chief and himself.

"It's progress. I am not happy but satisfied. You

have a proposed deed giving land contract between Ornatowski and the buyer. The ordinance authorizes us to accept delivery of the deed with restrictions. That's it," LaBre said.

It, however, does not allow village police to enforce deed restrictions.

There will be a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. June 17 at the Ontwa Township Hall on whether the marina proposal should be approved.

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# Council seeking ban on K2

■ Product that produces high like pot is now legal.

By ERIN BLASKO  
Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND — Members of the South Bend Common Council have launched a campaign to ban the sale of K2 or Spice, a synthetic herb-based

product sold legally across the counter and over the Internet.

According to a news release, a meeting of the Health and Public Safety Committee has been called for Monday afternoon to discuss the issue.

The product, which reportedly produces a high similar to marijuana, already has been banned in several states, and officials in Elkhart have asked retailers to stop stocking the product.

In South Bend, at least one retailer currently carries K2, Common Council President Derek Dieter said, and residents have expressed concern about its possible spread.

"There are some states that have banned it, and that's what we're looking to do," Dieter said.

Whether the Common Council has the authority to ban K2 is another matter, since the active ingredient in the product, a chem-

ical compound similar in effect to THC, is technically legal in Indiana.

Dieter said Common Council members plan to discuss the matter with the city attorney and also with local police.

On Tuesday, a Tribune reporter visited the South Bend store where the product is reportedly sold. The store owner was not available for comment, and the product did not appear to be on display.

However, a woman who answered the phone at the store later in the day confirmed the store carried "Mr. Smiley," another name for K2. She said it cost \$10.

Monday's meeting will take place on the fourth floor of County-City Building. A time has not yet been set.

Staff writer Erin Blasko: eblasko@sbtinfo.com (574) 235-6187

# Goshen upgrades warning system

By ED ERNSTES  
WSBT-TV Reporter

GOSHEN — The City Council has signed off on using \$225,000 from a rainy day fund to upgrade the city's tornado warning system.

The current system has been in place for 15 years.

"The siren heads themselves are OK, but the electronics leading up to it are all shot, so that has to be rebuilt," Mayor Allan Kauffman said. "Plus, the city has grown a lot in the last 15 years, so our reach isn't all the way to the edge of the city."

He says dead spots exist in the city where sirens are not heard.

"Every time we test the tornado warning system, there is one or two that aren't functioning right and we have to go out and repair them," Kauffman said. "So it's just time to update it."

The city plans to upgrade and enhance the 10 existing sirens in the city and add seven more in the surrounding areas.

The move meets the approval of several Goshen residents.

"Of course, we never know when something is coming too far in advance and so anytime you can get advance warning, it's going to help you prepare for whatever may be coming your way," said Denny Miller, of Goshen.

FROM PAGE B1

## Possible

— Anderson has had to jump through hoops while explaining to potential employers about the incident when it shows up on his criminal record.

It hasn't cost him a job to date, but: "To this day it really bugs me," said Anderson, a 1978 Niles High School graduate. "I don't think it's there anymore, but it's been amazing the avenues I've had to take."

### A criminal record

If having a record from decades earlier can make life that tough on an educated person, how hard would it be for someone who just exited prison after 10 years with nothing to their name, Anderson wondered.

"What about people that don't have an education," he said. "What do people without the means do?"

It's why in 2004 — the second to last time he had to explain himself — he envisioned one day coming back to Niles and starting an organization called It's Possible Inc., geared toward helping formerly incarcerated people and at-risk youth build stable lives and reintegrate into their communities and society.

Anderson moved back

from New York to Niles earlier this year and is starting the organization at 1105 N. Front St.

### Working on a vision

Anderson said he hopes to have the nonprofit operational in July and will offer, among other programs, employment readiness training, job placement and substance abuse/anger management for recently released prisoners. He is only weeks away from having his substance abuse licensing squared away.

There are very few agencies out there that help prisoners after they are released, a reason so many wind up right back in prison, Anderson said. The state-run Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative program primarily deals with inmates in prison and only takes the most high-risk prisoners once they are released, he said.

At It's Possible, everyone is accepted.

### Helping already

Anderson said he has taken a few walk-ins already since moving into the building in February. That included a veteran who had spent the past 30 years behind bars, is blind in one eye and didn't know where to go for help.

Giving such people the services they need is a path toward cutting down on re-

cidivism and "makes people who have criminal records feel good about themselves, so they can contribute in society," Anderson said.

Anderson has been working with the Berrien County courts in hopes of helping some of the inmates once they are released. He said he believes counseling should be mandated once inmates are released.

Anderson has paid for everything himself thus far as he awaits to hear back about grant applications. He already has teamed up with the county's Fresh Start Prevention Program, geared to prepare inmates for successful re-entry with a focus on substance abuse recovery. Once those in the program are released, they may be recommended for It's Possible.

Anderson's program will have a therapist, educational vocational coordinator and a director of outpatient services.

Anderson, meanwhile, also said he is hoping to meet with area businesses about having a program set up for them to hire people who have successfully completed It's Possible.

FROM PAGE B1

## Pig: Group builds pens

"This donation has been phenomenal. The ironworkers were a huge help."

The ironworkers have spent hundreds of hours cutting, welding and assembling the pens, which will house 192 pigs for the fair. Ironworker apprentices have done the work on the pens, helping them hone their craft.

"This is very important (for the apprentices)," Ironworkers Local 292 instructor Joe Novacek said. "This is good training, definitely something worthwhile."

Finding the time between their classes and

required community service has been difficult for the 48 apprentices, Novacek said, but anytime they had free time, they worked on some of the 6,500 cuts and welds involved in the project. His faith in the quality of work leads to an endorsement that excites Jacob.

"I'm very confident there won't be any pigs escaping from these," Novacek said, as he expects to see them in use when he visits the Aug. 16-21 fair with his 2-year-old son.

Another benefit of the pens is the added capacity they will provide for the fair, which surely Jacob appreciates.

"I'm excited because (the pens will) be new and better than the other ones," the exhibitor said. "We'll have more pigs."

And Buggy will be secured.

Staff writer Douglas Farmer: dfarmer@sbtinfo.com

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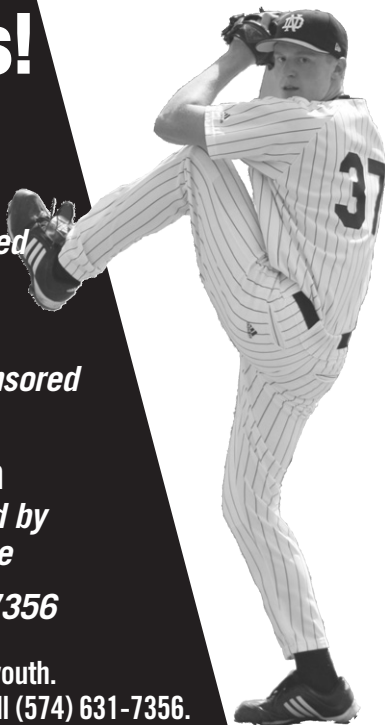
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Fibromyalgia

The Real Story

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• Date & Time:  
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10:00am - Noon

• Lunch will be provided to all who RSVP by May 21st



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## Moor Travels With Bill

Hosted by popular columnist Bill Moor Reserve early, don't be disappointed.

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Travel across the pond to merry old England. See London in-depth and also the countryside including Salisbury, Bath and Stonehenge. You'll also visit Cardiff in Wales before traveling to Scotland for three nights.

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August 18-21

Join Bill to see the Chicago Cubs, the Peoria Chiefs, the Iowa Cubs and the Field of Dreams, plus much more.

Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta

October 5-12

Edgerton's has arranged for you to take a balloon flight during this wonderful fiesta in New Mexico. You'll have exclusive admission to the Gondola Club during the events. Plus tours at the Turquoise Museum, walking tour of Sante Fe, driving tour of Route 66 and a visit to the Taos Pueblo, a World Heritage Site.

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by Popular Demand

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