

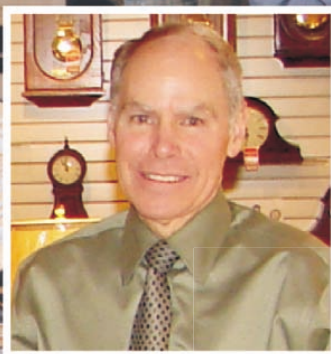
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THE WAYNE Dispatch

JANUARY 2011

Unimaginable

Devastation, heartbreak and hope among rubble



Neighbors and firefighters free business owner from explosion

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IN MEMORY OF JAMES ZELL AND LESLIE MACHNIAK

Generosity makes season bright

This really was the season for giving. Donations of food, clothing and money were generous; people realizing the great need this year.

St John's Lutheran Church once again packed 110 boxes of pajamas, underclothes, socks and personal care items and delivered them to the Veterans Hospital in Ann Arbor.

Lois Press had me call Kendra Schaffer. Kendra told me they also packed 140 boxes and bags for the homeless shelter in Ann Arbor. In addition they gathered gently used wearables for the Clothes Closet at the VA Hospital. The 7th and 8th graders along with their parents did the packing and then delivered the boxes to the 5th floor of the VA hospital. Each veteran was thanked "for the freedom that we have."

The church also sent 'care packages' with candy and personal items to 31 soldiers in Afghanistan. Mrs. Schaffer sends a big "Thank You," to the Rotary—they donated \$125.00 for shipping.

She would also like to thank Huron Valley Lutheran, St Paul's in Livonia, Northside Hardware, the Marathon Station at Glenwood, G&R Floor covering, Harold Allen, CPA, Tim Horton's, Dunkin' Donuts, Meijer's, and K Mart for their generous support.

Footprints of Wayne

Dee Ryan



The Rev. Andrew Gruenhagen, of St. Michael Lutheran Church, tells me of their "Angel Tree" prison fellowship. They support families facing hardship because of a family member who is in prison. St Michael's also acts as a sponsor for a number of families who have real need. The Sunday School children do their part by donating scarves and mittens.

Sandy Ofiera is the secretary at the First United Methodist Church. She tells of their Mitten Tree outside the Sacristy of the Church. In addition to mittens, the tree is loaded with hats, gloves, and pajamas. Those items go to the Methodist Children's Village, and Head Start of Wayne-Westland—First Step. The church also collects 'Toys for Tots' for the Salvation Army.

Among their charitable projects, they prepare and serve meals for the Full Gospel Temple in Westland.

These meals are served at the Temple each Wednesday, from January to March. The Methodist Church also collects and donates clothing for the warming center at the Full Gospel Temple.

Judy Wells at St. Mary's Outreach Center says, "she begs." Tell me if you think she's successful. Churches from as faraway as Plymouth and Livonia have given the Center thousands of pounds of food. Divine Child School in Dearborn entered a national contest and donated over 5,000 lbs. of food. Other schools in the area who gave hundreds of pounds of food are; Wayne Memorial; John Glenn; Wm. Ford Voc Ed. and Adams.

Dave Wells, Judy's husband, picked up 400 toys at St Mary's Hospital in Livonia.

St. Mary's Cub Scout Troop 247 collected many pounds of food as did the school's Girl Scout Troop 2166.

Ms. Wells wants special thanks to go out to American Jetway; Ford Local 182 retirees; Ford Local 900; Annapolis Hospital; City of Wayne; Knights of Columbus, and The Christmas Cup of Tea for donations of food and money. She also sends thanks to Grace Moravian Church in

Westland for all the produce they gave the Outreach Center during the summer.

These are the approximate results of the Goodfellows evenings: "Jake's Again"--\$5,000. "Avenue Bar and Grille"--\$3,000, "The Village Bar"--\$5,000. "US 12" along with the Chamber of Commerce--\$10,000. Also the Christmas Tea at the Community Center, with the Wayne Business and Professional Women, brought in \$1,200. In addition Ford Motor Co. and the UAW gave \$7,000. Thanks to Cathy Lutkenhoff at the Wayne Fire Dept. for the information, and for everyone who gave so generously to the Goodfellows.

Linda Beasley, secretary at the First Congregational Church, says they packed 100 food baskets for Christmas, which were delivered through the Wayne Westland schools.

Miriam Shurlow adds that they delivered 98 baskets for Thanksgiving. The Boy Scouts at the church have a "Can Do" and their collection of foodstuffs go into the make-up of the baskets. Members of the congregation also donate money and food.

Dee@TheWaynedDispatch.com

On the Cover- The devastation at William C. Franks Furniture moments after the explosion that leveled the building and strew debris into Wayne Road. With downed power lines, the smell of gas and a large debris field, the scene was very dangerous when firefighters arrived and worked to get Paul Franks, owner of Franks Furniture, free from the pieces of the building that trapped him. Jennifer, Chris and Dave Gietzen, and Brian Sylvester from Henry's Auto Service were first to arrive on the scene. They worked to clear debris off of Paul Franks until firefighters arrived. Sadly, the explosion took the life of Franks Furniture employees Leslie Machniak and Jim Zell.



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Businesses along Wayne Road from Glenwood south sustained damage in the explosion. Wayne Road was closed to traffic until Friday morning. Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch

Community saddened and supportive of Franks Furniture disaster

By Jenny Johnson

It was the boom that changed everything. It shook not only the core of the city and destroyed a building but it took two innocent lives and severely injured two others. It was just after 9 a.m. on Dec. 29 when an explosion destroyed William C. Franks Furniture store on Wayne Road. Fire officials and Consumers Energy are contributing the explosion to a natural gas leak in the area. Consumers Energy had received two phone calls earlier in the morning about a smell of gas in the area of Chestnut Street. Crews were in the area trying to trace the source when the explosion occurred.

Owner Paul Franks was pulled from the rubble alive and sent to the University of Michigan Trauma Burn Unit. He was initially in critical condition but has been upgraded to fair condition. Two Franks Furniture employees, Jim Zell, 64, and Leslie Machniak, 54, both of Westland died in the building collapse. Wayne resident Matt Newport, 32, was driving on Wayne Road in front of the store at the time of the explosion. He suffered facial injuries and was transported to Oakwood Hospital where he underwent surgery. He is now home recuperating.



Leslie Machniak, a secretary, and Jim Zell, a salesman, were at work at Franks Furniture and died in the explosion. The USAR team and members of the Wayne Fire Department recovered their bodies later that evening. Photos by Ron Baker

Helping Hands

Windows were blown out in neighboring businesses and homes as far as a couple blocks away. Chris and Jennifer Gietzen were in their office at Henry's Auto Service just a few doors down when they heard the explosion.

"We thought a car fell off the hoist out back," Jennifer said. Chris ran to the garage to see if his employees were ok. When they realized the



sound came from outside, they opened their back door and saw a cloud of smoke. Chris and Jennifer, along with Chris' brother, Dave, and Brian Sylvester ran to the scene.

They could tell by the cars in the parking lot who was in the building. Jim Zell was a customer at Henry's "To see the cars in the parking lot and say I know those cars and who they belong to," was tough Chris said.

"We just stood there for a minute

and then Jennifer heard someone making noises," Chris said. It was Paul Franks, trapped in the rubble. Chris said the debris pile was about 10 feet high and they could just see Franks' head peeking out from it. He was about 10 feet from the back door.

They had to pass downed power lines to get to him. About 10-15 feet away from Franks was the fire. "We just started digging," Chris said. They moved cinder blocks out of the way and tried to pull him out.

"His shirt was blown off him and the fire was near his leg," Dave said. "It was a miracle to find him where he was."

"The fire was encroaching on him," Chris said.

Sylvester said they moved part of the back door out of the way and on the other side they found a fire extinguisher.

"He was conscious and trying to get himself out. We were pulling and his legs were pinned. Once the fire fighters came they used equipment to get him out," Chris said.

Deputy Fire Chief Shawn Bell said, "This was a multi-jurisdictional incident. Every resource was on the

See **Franks**, page 4

Franks, Continued from page 3

scene. It was a very meticulous and methodical search. They used search dogs, sound equipment and removed debris with machine and by hand.

Residents relocated

Residents and businesses were evacuated from Glenwood to Sims between Elizabeth and Second Street as a precaution when officials thought there might be a second gas leak. By later in the evening all residents but those on Glenwood and Chestnut were able to return to their home.

"The events of what happened there affected hundreds of people," said City Manager John Zech.

Carol Baker lives on Elm Street. She said, "It was the loudest noise I've ever heard. It sounded so close I thought something in my backyard blew up. All of my neighbors came out at the same time and we heard ambulances right away. We were evacuated around 1 p.m. due to the second gas leak. We didn't get to go back home until around 7 p.m."

Debra Dodd of Consumers Energy said there was a leak on the second gas main behind Franks and that was shut off at 2:48 p.m. The first gas leak was located on Chestnut and that was shut off at 11:15 a.m.

"We don't know at this time" what caused the explosion said Dodd.

The Wayne Community Center was used as a warming center for

displaced residents. They were served food, drinks and given games, puzzles and television to help pass the time.

Colleen Kidder lives on Elm Street and was evacuated from her home. She took shelter at the Wayne Community Center.

"I heard it and opened the door and didn't hear any sirens at first. I felt it in my whole body. I could smell gas. Later people went door to door and said they were evacuating this area," she said.

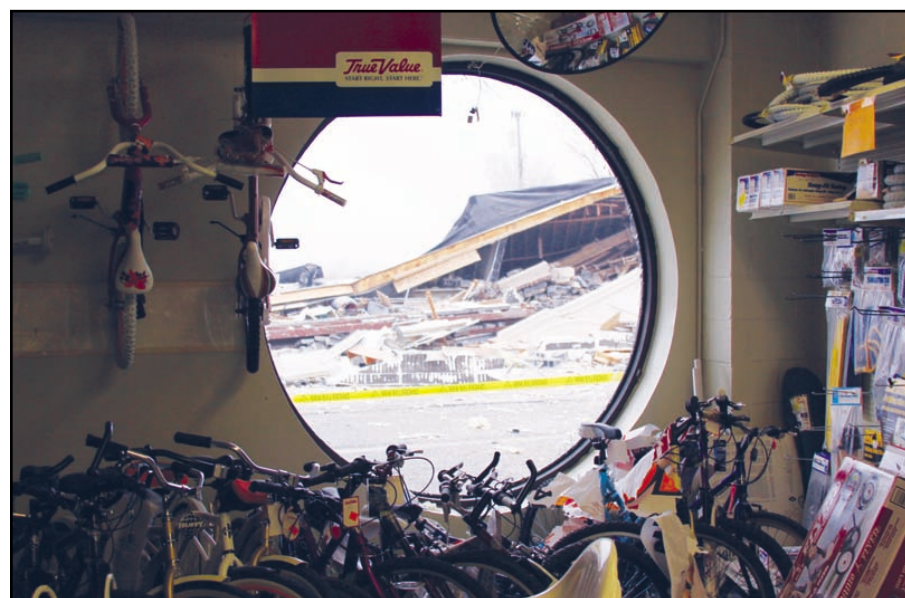
Howard Muiers lives on Elm Street east of Wayne Road. He and his girlfriend, Martha Schmidt, brought their four dogs to seek shelter. "I thought the world came to an end. I thought a car blew up. It shook the house," he said. He has lived in his home for 56 years and knows Paul Franks. He has bought furniture from Franks.

Wayne resident Chris Sanders said, "I am proud of the City of Wayne today. Management handled it well and the residents had resiliency."

Mary Gwizdak lives on Evans Street and said "It's devastating." She brought pizza to the community center to help feed the displaced residents. "We know Mr. Franks. I bought furniture there. They are a good family and have great furniture," she said.

A state of emergency was called at 7:50 p.m. on Dec. 29. This will allow the City to seek funds from the state

See **Franks**, page 5



The view from inside Northside Hardware of the destruction caused by the explosion at Franks Furniture. It damaged many homes and businesses in the immediate area.

Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch



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Franks, Continued from page 4

to help pay for the rescue and clean-up operation.

Jim Zell was removed from the wreckage around 7 p.m. He was found in the front reception office area. Leslie Machniak was removed around 10:45 p.m. She was found near the front of the building. The family of Machniak released a statement through their attorney Stuart Sklar.

"The family of Leslie Machniak wishes to extend their gratitude to the fire fighters and rescue workers who worked so hard to save Leslie. Although the outcome was not what we hoped for, the comfort we received from so many people has been overwhelming and for that we are grateful."

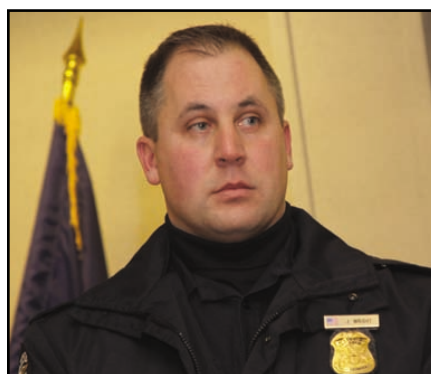
Support from many

Franks Furniture has been a mainstay in the community for more than 40 years.

"It is one of the jewels of our community. Mr. Paul Franks is not only a businessman in the community but very involved in the city. He serves on the DDA and is a very community oriented person. The whole community is saddened by this," said Mayor Al Haidous.

"Mr. Franks has been in the community a very long time. Most everyone in town at one time has bought something from him," Zech said. "He is a first class fellow and we hope U of M can help him."

Charles Colburn knew Franks from high school. "He has always been a good, steady guy. He always took great care of his business and has always been honest like his dad. Franks Furniture sold quality furniture. I still have a piece, a tea cart, that I bought from Franks 26 years



Firefighter/paramedic Rob Caccia takes in the scene as rescue workers search for survivors. Wayne Police Chief Jason Wright assures the public that his officers will stay on site until all homes and businesses are secure. Deputy Fire Chief Shawn Bell updates personnel from all of the different agencies of the progress of the operation. Photos by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch



ago," he said.

Haidous said, "Our hearts go out to all of the families."

Where to go from here

The day after the building and engineering department inspected the businesses along Wayne Road and Glenwood to see if they were safe to re-open. Those who got the all clear were able to resume business operations. The businesses on the same block as Franks Furniture have been red tagged and structural engineers will have to determine the stability of the buildings, said Acting City Manager Robert English.

Fire Chief Mel Moore said the EPA has completed their testing and their results showed no trace of asbestos in the air or debris. They have been given the green light from EPA to clean the site as soon as the investigation is complete.

Moore thanked the fire department and all other city departments who worked cooperatively. "We clicked like clockwork," he said. "The scene was very dangerous when we first arrived."

The City of Wayne, Consumers Energy and the Michigan Public Service Commission are all conducting an investigation. A piece of the natural gas piping has been sent to federal investigators.

"The scene is secure. We ask everyone to please stay out of the area so we can do our proper investigation," Moore said.

How you can help

The Wayne Chamber of Commerce has set up the William C. Franks Disaster Fund to benefit the victims and their families. Donations can be sent to: Wayne Westland Fed-

See **Franks**, page 6

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Firefighters held out hope until the end that they would be able to rescue all three employees alive. To see more photos go to our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/the-waynedispatch](https://www.facebook.com/the-waynedispatch). Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch

Franks, Continued from page 5

eral Credit Union, 500 S. Wayne Road, Westland, MI 48186.

US-12 is hosting a fundraiser from 7-10 p.m. on Jan. 13. Tickets are \$20. The staff from Henry's and members of the Wayne Fire Department will be there to be "recognized for their heroism and bravery and for having the courage to act," said Scott Gocaj.

The Avenue Sports Grille will host a benefit buffet dinner and raffle from 5-9 p.m. on Jan. 17 at 3632 Elizabeth. All you can eat for \$10. There will also be raffles for liquor baskets donated from Mitch's Party Store and many other prizes.

The City of Wayne Dance & Theatre programs will present "A Starry Night Variety Show- Wayne artists helping light the path of darkness" at

7 p.m. on Jan. 28 at the Wayne Community Center. Tickets are \$18 and include pizza, pop and salad. They will go on sale Jan. 13 at the Wayne Community Center. Proceeds will go to the disaster fund. Cash bar for beer and wine.

Students at Taft Galloway Elementary School are starting a Penny Drive. They will donate the proceeds to the disaster fund. In Feb. they will be selling hearts at their "Someone Special" dance. Proceeds from this will go toward a bench in Goudy Park to be given "with love from the students at Taft in memory of those killed in the explosion," said Stephanie Miller, principal.

To send get well cards to Paul Franks, please mail them to Trauma Center, University of Michigan Medical Center, 1500 E. Medical Center Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.



Police need your help

Police are looking for two suspects who broke into the car of a Dearborn firefighter who was on the scene helping at the Franks Furniture explosion. They stole his wallet and were able to access his bank account using his ATM card at two locations on Wayne Road in Westland. If you recognize either of these photos, please call the Westland Police at 734- 722-9600.

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Roosevelt students support soldiers

By Jenny Johnson

"Dear Soldier, Thank you for saving our world," the letter began. Students at Roosevelt-McGrath Elementary School spent November and December collecting items and writing letters to soldiers stationed overseas. The school has participated in Operation Gratitude for the past five years. Last year they collected over 1,000 snacks, stationary, stuffed animals and personal hygiene items to send to the soldiers.

Kathy Steiner, teacher, started the program at Roosevelt after she heard about how Operation Gratitude started as a grassroots program in California and grew nationwide. She knew the students and families at Roosevelt could make a difference to soldiers stationed far away from home mainly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Students brought dozens stuffed animals, bags of leftover Halloween candy and made hundreds of hand-made cards. Holly McClellan, a fourth grader at Roosevelt-McGrath,



Helping pack supplies for soldier care packages are Roosevelt-McGrath fourth graders Chelse White, Anthony Burd, Kathy Steiner, Holly McClellan and Michael Dunbar. Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch

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said she brought in paper, pens and deodorant for the soldier care packages.

Michael Dunbar, another fourth grader, wrote a letter to the soldiers. "I asked 'what is it like on your base,'" he said.

"Every year I keep hoping I don't have to do this but as long as the war continues, I will do it," she said. "It used to be on the front page of the newspapers but now it's not. We don't want the soldiers to be forgotten."

"These packages are lifelines from home," she said.

In the past students have been thrilled to receive thank you letters from soldiers who have received their packages.

"Last year a girl in my class had an uncle who came from the airport in his military uniform to tell the kids thanks, Steiner said. He had been the recipient of one of the care packages from Roosevelt.

What is the lesson students are learning from this project? "Treat others how you want to be treated," Dunbar said.

"It teaches the core democratic value of common good," Steiner said. "To look beyond themselves and get

involved in their community."

Because of the tough economy some charities struggled the past few years. While the need for support has increased, donations have decreased.

"The last two years have been hard on this community and I see the need every day in this school,

Steiner said. But she is proud of the outpouring of support for this program.

"Even in times of despair, people can help others," she said.

Operation Gratitude provides civilians anywhere in America a way to express their respect and appreciation to the men and women of the U.S. Military in an active, hands-on manner. Operation Gratitude care packages contain food, hygiene products, entertainment items and personal letters of appreciation, all wrapped with good wishes of love and support. For more information on the program, please visit www.operationgratitude.com.

"It used to be on the front page of the newspapers but now it's not. We don't want the soldiers to be forgotten."

Call of Duty

By Jenny Johnson

While most of us run from danger, it's the job of police and fire fighters to run toward it. They are trained to help in emergencies. But the explosion that collapsed William C. Franks Furniture store on Dec. 29 was like nothing most of them had seen before.

In addition to Wayne police and firefighters, there were over 200 firefighters and police officers from 30 different municipalities who responded to the disaster.

Police Chief Jason Wright said, "We are very fortunate to have several fire fighters and police officers come to our aid and help us. Immediately the phone started ringing off the hook with offers of help." This allowed the scene to be secured quickly.

Trained volunteers also wasted no time rushing to the scene. The CERT Team is a crew of volunteer residents who have been trained to help out during special events and emergencies. They responded to the scene and help block streets and direct traffic for hours until the scene was secure. The Wayne Police Department has two reserve officers who spent the night patrolling the area.

Recently the staff at the Wayne Fire Department has been cut by a third. But when the department had to battle one of the biggest disasters in the City, they had help from familiar faces. Laid off Wayne firefighters rushed to the station when they heard the news.

"It says a lot about human nature when firefighters we laid off showed up to work on the scene," said Acting City Manager Robert English.



Captain Ken Chapman

Kevin Brookshire, Wael Gharbie, Cullen McKee and Jeremy Schneider are firefighter/paramedics who worked for the Wayne Fire Department for more than two years before being laid off several months ago. When Brookshire saw the disaster unfolding on television he called the others and they responded to the fire station to see what they could do to help.

"I thought we would just hand out coffee or something," Gharbie said. But they got supplies like fresh gloves radios and batteries, ran errands, helped scan ids and kept track of the personnel at the scene. They also went door to door to help evacuate the residents. They came back the next day to help clean up and move equipment.

Was it hard to not be on the front line?

"I just wanted to get in there and help," said McKee.

All four agree they also wanted to offer support to their former co workers and help the community. While they all hope they will be called back to work, Schneider said, "It's not about my job and his job it's about the safety of the guys working and the safety of the community."

Brookshire said when you get into this profession it's because you feel a call to service.

Schneider said, "Someone has to be the one to go in there to save the life."

Rescue Operation

Captain Ken Chapman and Firefighter Carl Peters had just gotten off duty but were still at the fire station at 9 a.m. on Dec. 29 when they heard a loud noise. Before the 911 calls came in they knew something had happened. It shook the station.

"We knew something was wrong but at first we thought it was at the fire station," said Captain Ken Chapman. That was until they stepped outside and saw smoke and debris in Wayne Road. Right away they knew it was a "massive incident."

Lt. Bill Thomas immediately told Peters and Chapman they were back on duty.

"We responded unusually with six guys and thank God. It took all six of



Laid off firefighters: Cullen McKee, Jeremy Brookshire, Jason Schneider and Wael Gharbie rushed to the scene and volunteered to help their former colleagues and the members of the community. Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch

us to man the scene," Chapman said.

When they pulled up on the scene they saw a group of people on the debris. Chapman and Thomas went to their location.

"They were within 10 feet of downed wires and flames," Chapman said. The smell of natural gas was in the air and the firefighters were worried about a second explosion. There were void areas in the debris and they were concerned about gas building up in them.

The other firefighters Troy Marlewitz, Kevin Kimmel and Captain Kenny Joe Hines worked the fire truck and to keep the flames away from the rescue operation. Within minutes Westland and Garden City fire departments had help on the scene.

"They helped us get the tools we needed to get Mr. Franks out. He was surprisingly alert for the injuries he had," Chapman said. "To be a viable patient with a collapse of that magnitude was by the Grace of God. I can't explain it."

It took about 35-45 minutes to free Franks. They had to burrow

down head first under the debris to be able to free Franks' leg. There was about four feet of debris on top of him.

The entire time he was trapped he was telling rescuers that Jim Zell and Leslie Machniak were also in the building and where he thought they were located.

As soon as Franks was rescued the focus was on rescuing the other two employees. "We were on a rescue mission," Chapman said.

He said the USAR team- Urban Search and Rescue went above and beyond. They had 10 person teams at the front and the back of the building searching for Zell and Machniak. "Brick by brick they were taking the building apart," he said.

When Zell and Machniak were located by the USAR they notified the on duty crew of the Wayne Fire Department. Chapman said, "Our Wayne firefighters brought them out. Out of respect for their family and Franks who have been in this town almost 50 years. These are our people and we wanted to give them dignity and respect."

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Businesses in shock over Franks tragedy

By Jenny Johnson

The residents of Wayne are a tight knit community and so are the business owners. While many of them are suffering damages to their own stores as a result of the explosion at William C. Franks Furniture on Dec. 29, they are all shocked and saddened by the loss of Jim Zell and Leslie Machniak and the injuries to Paul Franks.

Wayne Sew and Vac shares a wall with Franks Furniture. All its windows and doors were shattered and clocks were blown off the wall. Owner Richard Immerfall said, "Everything is wrecked inside but it's a building. You can replace a building but not lives." He has been in business for 39 years and said he knows everyone at Franks.

Jack Shaw is a trustee at North-west Alano Club on the corner of Wayne Road and Glenwood and next to Franks. He normally would be at the club at that time, cleaning. "It was my wife's birthday so I was late, he said. "By the grace of God I wasn't in there."



Mayor Al Haidous spent the morning after the disaster visiting neighboring businesses. Here he checks on Northside Hardware owner Bob Kaplan. Photo by John P. Rhaesa of The Wayne Dispatch

Across the street at Northside Hardware, "We had glass everywhere. All of my windows except for one blew out," said Bob Kaplan, owner Northside Hardware. But they were able to re-open by 10 a.m. on Thursday. "We're in good shape now," he said.

Dave Romero at Karma Coffee was alone in the coffee shop when "I felt it big time," he said. His cooler

moved. His business did not sustain any damage.

"I looked out the front window and thought I saw icicles falling but then I realized it was the glass from the building across the street," he said.

When he ran out his back door he saw the guys from Henry's running to the scene. "I really commend them. Dave, Chris and Brian saw Paul's truck and they knew there were probably casualties," he said.

The staff at Henry's Auto Service raced to the scene when they saw what happened. It was Jennifer Geitzen who first heard Franks' calls for help.

"He was about 10 feet in buried under a pile of debris. You could just see his head," her husband, Chris Geitzen said. They worked to free him until the fire department arrived on scene.

I was impressed with how quick the police and fire department got here and shut down Wayne Road," said Romero. On Monday the Wayne Fire Department delivered lunch to the brave staff at Henry's Auto Service.

"They delivered it in the fire truck," said Jennifer Geitzen.

At Professional Insurance the front windows are boarded because they shattered in the explosion. But the building did not have any structural damage. Regina Higgs was one of two employees sitting about 15 feet from the windows when they shattered.

"It sounded like something was on our roof. We grabbed our things and got out," Higgs said. They could-

n't believe it when they got outside and saw the smoke filled sky and the spot where Franks Furniture used to be.

The Dairy Queen just across Chestnut from the explosion is still without gas. Consumers Energy still has the power turned off at the Dairy Queen because they were connected to the same line as Franks Furniture. It will be another week or two before they are connected to another line and their gas is back on. In the meantime John Petrou said his electricity is back on and he is using space heaters to try and keep his pipes from freezing. It's 37 degrees in his building. One of his doors won't open so he thinks the ground has shifted.

Petrou said he has known the staff at Franks for years. They are frequent Dairy Queen customers in the summer.

"They are the most wonderful people you have ever known. Paul is a good family man and businessman," he said.

Of Jim Zell and Leslie Machniak Petrou said, "They were both good people, hard working people."

Anna Petrou serves on the Downtown Development Authority with Paul Franks. "They are a really good family. A very respected family. I am proud to be two doors down from them. We pray that he gets well," she said.

Wayne Liquor and Lotto sustained broken windows and neon sign and their compressor stopped working.

Ed Rowe, electrical inspector for the City of Wayne, said the businesses attached to Franks were allowed 15 minutes to enter their business on Thursday and get their personal things. The Building and Engineering Dept. was inspecting all building along Wayne Road and Glenwood before owners could get back in or open for business. Most businesses were able to open back up by Thursday. The businesses on the same block as Franks Furniture have all been red tagged and are not allowed to be occupied until further notice.

Editor's note: For updated information on the businesses still closed, please visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/thewaynedispatch.

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Ice Dogs give back

By Erica Perdue

In between shooting pucks and blocking shots the Michigan Ice Dogs adopted two Wayne families for the holidays in December.

The team first adopted a local family and purchased gifts that the mother and two children asked for.

The Michigan Ice Dogs are a Junior B hockey team in the Great Lakes Junior Hockey League. The team has been around for over 25 years under different names and chose to become the Michigan Ice Dogs several years ago to include the whole state.

The Ice Dogs' home arena is at the Wayne Community Center. The players are typically ages 15-20.

The team collected gifts and brought them to their holiday party. The week after the Ice Dogs gathered to collect the gifts, Lori Miller went to the elementary school that the children attend to give the family their early Christmas gifts. Miller handles the finances for the Michigan Ice Dogs.

"It was wonderful to meet the family. We filled the back of her van. It worked out so well too because her son's birthday was a few days after, so she had birthday and Christmas gifts to give him," said Miller.

Included in the gifts was Michigan Ice Dogs gear for the kids to wear. The team also invited them to be guests to a game.

While waiting for the mother of

"It's great for our players to give back to the community where they play and practice several times a week. It's a good experience for them to give back to the community surrounding our arena."

Lindsay Reed

the first adopted family to arrive, Miller was talking to staff at the elementary school. She heard about a family with four children – one a newborn – that had just lost one of the parents.

Miller said that she started to cry when she heard about the incident.

"I had a bag of toys for girls and other girls' stuff in my car that I was going to take to a shelter to donate since the family we adopted only had boys.

I brought it in for the second family and asked the school to have them contact me so we could adopt them for Christmas," she said.

Miller said that she immediately called the team owner to ask if they could collect items for this family as well, and he agreed that they should.



Members of the Ice Dogs hockey team collected Christmas gifts and adopted a needy family in Wayne.

"It's great for our players to give back to the community where they play and practice several times a week. It's a good experience for them to give back to the community surrounding our arena," said Lindsay Reed, the team's fundraiser coordinator.

Team captain, Brandon Kaput, said, "I collected gifts from kids at my school. I just asked around and they were really supportive. It was awesome."

Player's family members also contributed.

"My family got a whole cart full of toys from Toys R Us. We were all glad to do it," said team goalie, Matthew Schnoes.

Miller said that the team has supported many charities before but this was the first time they chose to adopt families.

"We're glad we did it this way," Miller said smiling.

Reed agreed that the whole team was happy to know that families so close to the ice rink were benefiting.

"It makes it feel like even more of a home here," said Reed.

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ABSTRACT

WAYNE CITY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 2011-01

January 4, 2011

Regular Meeting of the City Council held Tuesday, January 4, 2011 at 8:00 p.m. at Wayne City Hall, 3355 S. Wayne Rd. Members Present: Haidous, McEachern, Damitio, Dobrowolski, Rowe, Mulholland, Henley. Members absent: none. APPROVED: minutes of Regular Meeting of December 21, 2010; resolution of the observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day; resolution with Wayne County for work in the right-of-way; animal control services with the Michigan Humane Society; appointment of Edward McMurray to Housing Commission until March of 2015. Received and filed Communications and Reports. Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Publish: January 7, 2011

Matthew K. Miller
City Clerk

CITY OF WAYNE NOTICE OF RENEWAL PERIOD FOR 2011 DOG & CAT LICENSES ALL CATS MUST NOW BE LICENSED IN THE CITY OF WAYNE

The 2011 dog & cat tags are available for sale in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall. All dogs & cats four months of age or older must be licensed (certificate of rabies vaccination required) and wear a collar with current tag attached. Tags obtained by February 28, 2011, will be at a lesser fee.

Fees during annual licensing period ending February 28, 2011

| | |
|--|----------|
| Regular license | \$10.00* |
| License for spayed or neutered animals | \$5.00* |

Fees from March 1 thru December 30, 2011

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Regular/spayed or neutered animals | \$20.00 |
| Replacement license (all year) | \$1.00 |

*Dogs & cats under four months of age or owned for less than 10 days qualify for these rates at any time of the year.

Matthew K. Miller
City Clerk

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LETTERS

An Open Letter to the Residents and Businesspersons of Wayne:

I would like to thank you for your support during my 31 years of public service in Wayne. Being the City Manager for the past 18 years has been the best job I have ever had.

Wayne is a fine community with a long and rich history. Eventhough we are going through an extremely difficult economic period, I have great confidence in the City Council, the City Employees and the people of Wayne to persevere through this situation. If we continue to listen to each others ideas and work as a team, we will secure Wayne's future.

I wish you good health and happiness in 2011 and beyond.

Sincerely,
John J. Zech
City Manager

Salvation Army helps in Wayne's time of need

Dear Editor,

On behalf of The Salvation Army, I wish to convey my thanks to the many local companies, churches and organizations that came alongside The Salvation Army as we served together at the site of the store explosion in Wayne last week.

Through-out the day, our emergency services canteens received donations of food and drink to be shared with the first responders and families displaced by the explosion.

The Adult Rehabilitation Center of The Salvation Army responded quickly and provided hot soup to the many, many first responders from cities throughout the metropolitan area as well as family members of the victims and those evacuated from their homes.

The response to this tragedy speaks volumes to the sense of community that exists throughout the City of Wayne. We join with so many in extending our sympathies to the families of James Zell and Leslie Machniak and prayers to Paul Franks as he continues to recover.

The Salvation Army Emergency Disasters Services is at the ready to assist with disasters, large and small. We consider it a privilege to come along first responders and other organizations in time of need to provide food, hydration and emotional and spiritual support.

George Aren, Director
Emergency Disaster Services
The Salvation Army

Wayne-Westland Community Schools Board terms

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools Board of Education announces the following Board terms: Two (2) four (4) year terms commencing July 1, 2011 and expiring June 30, 2015.

The election of the members of the Wayne-Westland Board of Education will be conducted in a regular

school election on Tuesday, May 3, 2011. The filing deadline for the vacant School Board positions is Tuesday, February 8, 2011, at 4:00 p.m.

Filing for the School Board position can be done through the office of the City Clerk of Westland or the City Clerk of Wayne. The offices of the Wayne and Westland City Clerks are located at the Wayne and Westland City Halls at the addresses listed below:

Westland City Clerk
City Hall • 36601 Ford Rd
Westland, MI 48185
734-467-3185
Hours: Monday-Friday
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Business of the Year

The Wayne Dispatch was named 2010 Business of the Year by the Wayne Chamber of Commerce. We are very honored by this award and thank everyone who voted for us. We will continue to try to be a positive influence on the community.

ITC Community Sponsorship

ITC Holdings Corp is the owner of the high voltage electric lines that run along Venoy between Norfolk Southern Railroad and Glenwood, along Norfolk Southern Railroad between Merriman and the Ford Plant, and along Glenwood Heights and the west end of Ford's Stamping Plant. They do line clearances along those lines.

They have a pilot program called Community Initiative Sponsorship and at a City Council meeting, Jamie Kryseynski of ITC presented Mayor Pro Tem Donna McEachern with a \$5,000 check. The funds will be used for plantings in neighborhood parks and stump grinding.

"It's going to be put to good use in the City of Wayne," McEachern said.

"We are happy to be part of the community," Kryseynski said.

AARP Tax

Assistance Program

The Senior Services Office will begin taking reservations for this year's tax program on Jan. 5. The program will be held at the Wayne Activity and Banquet Center, corner of Sims and Wayne Road. Dates of preparation will be each Wednesday from February through April 13. Assistance is done by appointments only. All tax returns are e-filed. Please call 734-721-7400.

Dusk to Dawn Lights

The City of Wayne will begin participating in DTE Energy's Dusk To Dawn program. This program will provide new photo cells on 16 street light circuits throughout the city at a cost of \$2,323. The net savings for the rest of this fiscal year will be \$5,615.50 and the estimated annual savings after will be \$15,877. The lights will turn on at sunset and turn off at midnight and then turn on be-



The Wayne Dispatch was awarded the 2010 Business of the Year by the Wayne Chamber of Commerce. In the photo are L-R: Jill Rymsha, Executive Director Wayne Chamber, Natalie and John Rhaesa, Publishers Wayne Dispatch, Jenny Johnson, Editor Wayne Dispatch and Christine Easley, Executive Assistant, Wayne Chamber.

fore 6 a.m. and off again at sunrise. There are 452 lights that will be part of this program.

Some of the lights that will be affected are located along Venoy, Wayne Road, Michigan Avenue, Elizabeth, Park Street, Annapolis and the Metro Mall area. Lights on one side of the street will participate in the program while the lights on the other side will remain on all night.

Puppy named poster dog

Wayne has a famous puppy. Drizzle, an 11 month old Siberian Husky was chosen as the poster dog for the Michigan Winter Dog Classic Dog Show which will be held Jan. 20-23 at the Rock Financial Showplace in Novi.

Drizzle is a Cadet Scout with the Dog Scouts of America. Dog Scouts are like Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts. They even wear a uniform and earn badges. He will camp this winter with his family, Matt and Melissa Perez. He will learn to pull a sled. He is also trying to earn his Canine Good Citizen title.

Drizzle will be at the show all four days and will be happy to meet you. The Michigan Winter Dog Classic will host more than 6,000 dogs, including several breeds getting ready for the country's premier Westminster Kennel Club Dog show in February 2011. Dogs will be judged on standards set by the American Kennel Club. There will be Police K-

9 demonstrations, Rock-n-Roll K-9's performance team shows, educational demonstrations and much more.

Civitan donation provides books for library

Wayne Civitan President Rachel Lessard presented Wayne Public Library Director Paulette Medvecky with a \$1000 check. The donation will be used to buy books for the children's area of the library. "The support comes at a wonderful time," Medvecky said because the library's book budget has been cut.

In other library news, the Wayne Public Library was recently awarded a \$12,000 grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

To qualify for the grant the library had to match funds up to \$1500.

These funds will come from the materials and supply budget. This grant will provide for computer hardware and software upgrades at the library including the purchase of laptop computers to be used in the library.

Hours change

The hours at the Wayne Community Center have changed. The Recreation and Exercise Club and Indoor track hours are now: Monday- Friday 5:30 a.m.- 9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. The Parks and Recreation administrative business hours are 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. Monday- Thursday.

Zebras are Michigan - Wide Drill Champions

Wayne Memorial JROTC continued a perfect season, defeating 26 schools at Cass Technical High School in Detroit. The Zebras were previously champions in Grand Rapids, River Rouge, and Anchor Bay. Wayne will now compete at the Seventh Brigade Drill Championship in Kentucky this spring.

Keslie Honeycutt won a first place finish, and Cory Sheldon's Armed Platoon placed second. Devin Person guided eight first-year cadets through the in-ranks inspection and placed third. Color Guard led by Jackie Odien added to total points and enabled the team to narrowly defeat Renaissance High School. Cadet Battalion Commander Keslie Honeycutt stated, "It was a team effort and everyone did their part in this victory."



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It is the policy of the Wayne-Westland Community Schools Board of Education to prohibit any acts of unlawful discrimination in all matters dealing with students, employees or applicants for employment. The Wayne-Westland Schools reaffirms its policy of equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, age, height, weight, marital status or disability which is unrelated to an individual's qualifications for employment or promotion, or which is unrelated to an individual's ability to utilize and benefit from the School District's services, activities, benefits, privileges or programs. Inquiries concerning the application of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and Title II legislation should be directed to the Executive Director of Student and Legal Affairs, Wayne-Westland Community Schools, 36745 Marquette, Westland, MI 48185 (734-419-2083).

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A brand new Ford Focus rolls off the line at the newly renovated Michigan Assembly Plant. The plant will build several models of the Focus in the coming year including a hybrid and battery power model.

Michigan Assembly Plant begins production of Focus

By **Jenny Johnson**

The newly renovated Michigan Assembly Plant has begun production of the all-new global Ford Focus. The workers from the Wayne Assembly Plant are now working two shifts at the new plant. The vehicles will go on sale in early 2011. The plant is the first in the world to build gas powered, battery electric, hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles. Production of the global Ford Focus is underway. Sales will begin next year. The electric Focus will go into production in late 2011 and the hybrid and plug-in hybrid will follow in 2012. The retooled Michigan Assembly Plant has a flex line which gives the capability to build multiple models.

"We've modernized just about every square foot of this facility to establish a new standard for a high-tech, green, flexible and efficient auto factory," said Jim Tetreault, Ford Vice President of North America Manufacturing. "The transformation of Michigan Assembly Plant stands as a symbol for the transformation of Ford."

Ford invested \$550 million to change the former Michigan Truck Plant, which used to produce the Expedition and Lincoln Navigator until 2008, to a flexible car plant that can

manufacture four different compact cars on the same assembly line.

The 1.2 million square foot plant is Ford's most flexible, high-volume and modern manufacturing facility and the only plant in the world to build four different vehicles on the same assembly line.

Tetreault said, "At Michigan Assembly, we will achieve a level of flexibility we don't have in any other plant around the world, which will allow us to meet shifting consumer preferences in real time."

With the implementation of a flexible assembly line, the Michigan Assembly Plant will be able to build multiple vehicle models on the same production line without a large downtime to retool.

Change has happened on the outside of the plant too. Ford has installed a 500-kilowatt solar panel that will generate renewal energy to help with the production of the Focus. It can store two million watt-hours of energy.

This is enough to power 100 average Michigan homes for a year. There will also be 10 electric vehicle charging stations on the property. These will be used to recharge the electric vehicles that transport parts between the facilities.

THE WAYNE Dispatch
A JoNa Media LLC Publication

P.O. Box 156 • Wayne, MI 48184
734-641-6550
ads@thewaynedispatch.com

John P. Rhaesa
Publisher
john@thewaynedispatch.com

Natalie Rhaesa
General Manager
natalie@thewaynedispatch.com

Jenny Johnson
Editor
jenny@thewaynedispatch.com



The Wayne Dispatch is a monthly publication direct mailed to the entire City of Wayne.

Family remembers loving mother and daughter

By Erica Perdue

Chelsea Marie Gilbert, mother of Trevor Dee Gilbert, only child of Ron and Sharon Gilbert and friend of many, passed away in her sleep on December 2 at 19 years of age.

Chelsea's father found her peacefully gone on a Thursday morning when he went in her room to wake her. The family believes she may have passed from heart complications, but the toxicology report is not back yet.

Chelsea graduated from Wayne Memorial High School in 2009 where she ran track and cross-country and participated in drama.

I had the pleasure of knowing Chelsea from the track and cross-country teams. She was the youngest on the team, deeming us to jokingly call her "freshman" even after her first year of running.

Krystal Nichols knew Chelsea from sports in high school and continued the friendship after they both graduated. She said, "She was like my little sister. I always kept her under my wing. She was always happy and caring to anyone. Her parents are like my parents. They are great people."

Chelsea's father, Ron, was like a team dad. Her parents were very supportive of her and everyone around her. They brought food, water and smiles to all of our meets and competitions. Ron kept times for our team and cheered us on endlessly. The whole family was a great part of WMHS.

I think anyone who knew Chelsea would agree with me when I say she was gullible and always laughing at something.

She was in her second year at Schoolcraft College studying nursing.



Chelsea Gilbert and her son Trevor enjoyed a visit to the Wayne Fire Department shortly before her death on Dec. 2.

Both of her parents grew up in the Wayne area and attended Wayne Westland schools.

As her parents played with Trevor, a smiling boy who is not yet 1-year-old, they told me stories about Chelsea as a kid.

After one story her father said, "It seems like it was just yesterday ..."

"We're lucky to have Trevor though."

Trevor will be 1-year-old on January 21st. He smiles at the word "Mom" and loves his grandma and grandpa. In the four hours I spent with the family today he didn't stop smiling for one minute.

Ron and Sharon are in the process of adopting Trevor.

A trust fund has been set up for Trevor's education through the Wayne Westland Credit Union.

JR's Bar and Grille will be having a fundraiser on February 12 starting at 4 p.m. to help the family with funeral and adoption expenses.

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Hit and run

Wayne police are investigating a hit-and-run accident that killed Chris Lentz just before 3 a.m. on Jan. 1 on Merriman, north of Van Born. The make and model of the vehicle is unknown because it fled the scene. Anybody with information is asked to call the Wayne Police at 734-721-1414.



Do you remember Y2K?

As we finish out the series of covering the City of Wayne's 50 year history decade by decade we conclude with the 2000's. I consider this my era here in the City as I began working in 2000 as the City Planner. Initially, I thought this would be an easy article to write. I wouldn't have to do that much research but as I started to put my thoughts together I thought, I cannot remember back that far!! It has been wonderful step back in time to look through all of the scrapbooks at the Museum. Now let's take a look at the new century 2000-2010.

Of course, everyone remembers the scare of complete shutdown predicted, but the new century came off without hitch in Wayne and elsewhere around the world. The Police Department was prepared, they had extra staff on hand and from all reports, it was a slow night. Around town at the beginning of the century, we were beginning to build momentum to rebuild our town. The streetscape projects were complete in downtown, the trees were starting to grow and in 2001 the Northside Business District got a complete make over with new sidewalks, green streetlights, brick pavers and flowers. The City also planted more than 500 trees along Michigan Avenue and Wayne Road. The trees are beautiful now and many are doing quite well. During this planting a new disease resistant elm tree 'Ulmus Americana Valley Forge' was planted on Michigan Avenue. They have performed well. There is a row of about five of them right by Westlawn Cemetery, check them out!

There was a lot of optimism for this century. There were three residential projects built in the downtown; Newberry Square, Fountain Place and Brownstones of Forest. Plus, Monroe Commons was finished, Forest Park, Chestnut Court Apartments and Alexis Manor were additional housing units in town. We were also successful at building many new infill houses through out the City. The City was actually poised to grow in population but by 2004, the housing market began to fail and in most cases today still failing. This was and still is a big disappointment as we have suffered the effects from this downturn. I hope that we can

Rearview Mirror

Matt Miller



make it through. I always say, you have got to have a place to live, so live in Wayne. Plus, I love my house and neighborhood.

It was not politics as usual, for the first time the City voted for the mayor by populist vote.

Mayor Haidous was the first elected mayor in November 2001. Prior to that, our mayor was elected by their peers on the City Council.

In 2000 Shafer Park was created with a grant from Ford Motor Company, the newest park in the City had platform climbers, trees and benches. It serves the Louis Savage

Subdivision and is a much needed play space for the children in the area. The Fun Squad ended by 2005, it served the parks through out the City. This was the best program, activity leaders went to the park and neighborhood children would come and play. What great way to spend summer day. This went by the way side of walking to school and actually playing outside. Nintendo rules now!!

This century brought progress for the City with a lot of new rebuilt infrastructure. The new Fire Station was built and as a result of building a building on the existing spot, the DPW got a new building. It was first built as a temporary Fire Station. The new Police Station was built to replace the 1950's version. The new station includes state of the art jail cells, a firing range and conference room. The Recreation Center got a complete make over, we passed a

road millage to repair the streets and more than nine phases of the water and sewer project were completed. Last but not least was the installation of fire sprinkler system at the Historical Museum. This will protect our most treasured items in case the unthinkable happens.

During this decade the tragedy of the attacks of September 11, 2001 were remembered with a respectful ceremony in Goudy Park on the first anniversary and at Veteran's Plaza on the second anniversary. Many people in the community attended these events to remember this solemn occasion. Another major incident was the August 2005 explosion of the EQ facility in Romulus.

The explosion warranted the evacuation of almost half of the town and was quite an event.

To end out the decade I want to leave with some positive things to remember that even though we are facing some difficult times, a lot of good has been done to improve our quality of life.

We celebrated the painting of the Wayne History Mural in 2007 & 2008. The mural is the largest art installation in the entire town. Not only does the mural look great, it teaches everyone about our important history. The clock park was built in 2005. The seed money for the purchase of the clock came to the City as a gift from a deceased resident, Mildred Lyman. Whenever you go by and look at the beautiful clock, say thank you to Mrs. Lyman. The City hosted the Farmers Market beginning in 2008, it brought fresh, quality food to town and also is quite the meeting place on a Wednesday afternoon.

Again, hope you have enjoyed the decade by decade look at our City of Wayne history. This was all made possible by the dedication of the people in the Finance Department who through the years have worked many hours creating the scrapbooks, cutting out articles relating to the City and our history. I really encourage you to stop at the Historical Museum and look through the yearbooks, it is lot of fun. The museum is open each Friday and Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. You can also contact me at matt@thewaynedispatch.com with any questions or comments.



The clock in downtown at Wayne Road and Michigan Avenue was one of the new developments in the City in the 2000s.

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