

The Monroe Evening News

Dedicated today as was the Michigan Sentinel in 1825 to fairness and independence in presentation of the news.

An employee-owned newspaper

20 W. First St., P.O. Box 1176, Monroe, MI 48161, tel. (734) 242-1100

LONNIE PEPPLER-MOYER, president and publisher
DEBORAH SAUL, editor and vice president

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

— The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

OUR VIEW

► To the point

A program that asks the community to read the same book at the same time also is seeking public participation.

Don't be shy: Share your story

Human beings find power and healing and connection in sharing stories of personal experience.

It doesn't have to be earth-shattering. It just has to be real.

It might have been a life-changing event or a moment of clarity or a decision that led to regrets.

It might be funny, sad, shocking, revealing or affirming.

The One Book One Community of Monroe County committee invites everyone to join in a month-long series of programs, movies, story-sharing and book discussion. The kick-off program at the Monroe County Community College is March 18, but there are a few things we all can do before that.

First is to read this year's community read: "One Amazing Thing" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. In the book, a random group of strangers is trapped in a basement office after an earthquake. In an attempt to stay calm and to pass the time, one person suggests they each tell "one amazing thing" about his or her life.

Besides reading about those stories, the One Book committee is asking local men, women and young people to do a little personal reflection and then share the details. Some already have started coming in:

(One story received so far: "By the time we reached Portland, my mother had pushed the floorboards through on her side of the cab, braking for my father all the way out.")

The One Book, One Community program will share those stories, working with The Monroe Evening News and Monroe Public Access Cable Television to collect and distribute them.

Anyone may write a 200- to 500-word essay, or record a story in a one-

to three-minute video. Written works will be published in The Evening News and on www.monroenews.com; the videos may be shown at program events and on Channel 21 (Comcast) and 95 (Charter).

(One story received so far: "At his funeral by the sea, the people felt his presence. During the Hawaiian chants, the canoeists raising their paddles in salute, the blowing of the conch shell, and the placing of the lei petals on the gentle waves while the green sea turtles watched, a great love encircled us.")

One opportunity to record a video is from 6 to 8 tonight at the MPACT studios, 20 W. Fifth St. (at S. Monroe and W. Fifth Sts. in downtown Monroe). Just drop in during those times or call 243-5707 to make another appointment.

Send written pieces to Share Your Story, Monroe Evening News, P.O. Box 1176, Monroe, MI 48161 or e-mail them to saul@monroenews.com. You also may go to www.monroenews.com and submit it online. It should be received by March 1.

It's also possible to choose to tell your story through a physical object. Visit the Monroe County Historical Museum from 1 to 4 p.m. April 5 to drop it off and see all of the items on display the following week.

(One story received so far: "It was the summer I turned 15 — that awkward age when everything your parents say is suspect. How had I let them talk me into a summer-long car trip, financed by working as a migrant laborer?")

The events for this program are free and should touch our hearts and make us think. The committee, partners, sponsors and supporters of One Book One Community encourage Monroe County readers join in and share a special time.



► LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Another silica mine isn't needed

I just returned from an (un) informational meeting concerning the (proposed) new silica mine, that U.S. Silica wants to dig off of N. Telegraph Rd., bordering Dauncy and Carleton-Rockwood Rds. U.S. Silica was there, of course, along with some "real estate" minions touting the fact that this new mine will not depreciate any one's home values.

U.S. Silica stated they wanted to be a "good neighbor" to the residents of this area ... even though no one wants this mine! There were plenty of residents in attendance, all with the same questions.

The "plant manager" of U.S. Silica could not, or would not, answer any of my burning questions, i.e. would YOU live near this mine? Why aren't you telling people that

Letters are welcome

Letters on matters of public interest are welcome. Full name, address and telephone number are required. Letters are limited to 400 words and may be edited. The e-mail address is letters@monroenews.com. Fax: 242-0937.

silica is a carcinogen? Why do you want this mine in a residential neighborhood? And it all comes down to the bottom line: money!

U.S. Silica may as well say: The heck with people and their neighborhoods, who cares if it's carcinogenic. Silica is like asbestos. Once it gets into your lungs, that is where it stays.

Also, U.S. Silica already is starting

a mine on Ready Rd. They are already moving the dirt away for that mine. So here in this little corner of Berlin and Ash townships, there will be three mines going full throttle. One mine for stone by I-75 and two silica mines (not even counting the stone mine in Newport.)

Where the wind blows, so goes the silica — into your lungs, your house, your kids! Enough! Residents should call their township officials and tell them NO on mining. Remember we may get a new Fermi 3.

We don't want or need any more mining operations shaking the ground and polluting our air! (These new mines only bring in 25 new jobs.)

**Linda Kaye
South Rockwood**

Weight limits are there for good reason

This is in regard to Leon Salenbien's Community Currents column Wednesday about heavy-haul trucks. I would like for him to try something on his front lawn. First have a six-yard single-axle dump truck travel across his yard loaded; then try a 12-yard dual-axle in a separate spot. I can guarantee the difference in the result.

Next, he should try a tandem trailer dump truck. I think he would better see what those trucks do to our roads if it was his yard.

Having one person on an elevator or a porch is fine, but crowd them and see what happens.

There are weight limits on a lot of things and they are there for good reason. Just because the weight is spread out some doesn't mean the harm is not there.

As far as it being cheaper, yes, maybe, but when fixing the roads costs too much and is hampering his truck driving, I think it's worth it to put the limits at least where Ohio has them and keep our roads safe.

**Don Ford
Monroe**

If government spent money right, it wouldn't have to raise taxes

First of all I would like to applaud the article written by Leon Salenbien. It was certainly the truth.

I would like to take it one step further and comment on the budget proposed by Gov. Rick Snyder. The raising of fuel tax and registration will further cripple the people of this state who operate with diesel fuel. Large companies can pass the cost off to the consumers, but small business owners and farmers can't do that and as a consequence will be forced out of business.

In our household, we cut spending when we are over budget. What part of that concept do the legislators not understand? Instead of cutting spending they are attempting to further squeeze the productive people of Michigan for more money.

Yes, we pay a heavy road use tax of \$550 for each and every semi on the road. What is that money used for? It seems it might be used for roads in other states, but not in Michigan.

Unless the people in Lansing and Washington start making cuts, there will be continued tax increases to the hard-working, tax-paying, salt-of-the-earth people. Could the reason that this state and country is in the financial shape that we are in be a result of uninformed voters and politicians who are mismanaging our money?

**Suellen Pittman
Monroe**

Governor again wants to tax little guy

Well, the governor is at it again! Dumping higher taxes on the little guy. Now he wants us to swallow a 60 percent increase on registration fees while big trucks sneak by with a 25 percent increase.

Problem here is who is responsible for the road damage? Over the decades, cars have become lighter and our big trucks are allowed to have a 164,000-pound weight limit twice the weight of our neighboring states.

So, why does the governor expect me to pay for what others have destroyed?

**Paul Wohlfarth
Ottawa Lake**

Eliminating no-fault insurance a no-win for Michigan

Michigan's no-fault auto insurance is a private sector insurance system that provides the best health benefits in the country at average costs for personal injury protection and liability.

This means that individuals who are injured in a car accident receive full injury benefits as long as their injury lasts, which is sometimes a lifetime.

And, in addition to the big road project Gov. Snyder introduced in his State of the State address, it is said that eliminating auto no-fault is also top on his list.

The governor cited three main reasons for justifying his road proj-

ect proposal: to protect Michigan drivers, create Michigan jobs, and save Michigan money by preventing higher costs in the future.

However, eliminating the auto no-fault system would do just the opposite; unfortunate injuries and accidents will continue to occur no matter how safely our roads are paved, and drivers who were injured would not be guaranteed medical care.

If the no-fault system were eliminated, thousands of Michigan jobs would be lost in various fields, particularly those in medical and rehabilitative fields.

Finally, eliminating the current

no-fault system would cause a shift in costs from the private to public sector, meaning individuals and families who could not afford health-care costs or could no longer hold employment secondary to their injuries would need to turn to Medicare and Medicaid for support, a la Michigan taxpayers.

For \$175 a year, Michigan drivers are guaranteed medical care that is reasonable and necessary under the current no-fault system. Eliminating that system would be a no-win for Michigan.

**Katie MacDonald
Dundee**

