



Writer's conference registration opens

ROCHESTER — The annual Rochester Writer's Conference is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 2.

The conference is held at Oakland University. Workshops will be offered on several topics, including creating believable characters, building an online presence, writing applications for smart phones, as well as both basic and advanced instruction in various forms of writing.

The event will also feature panels of publishers and magazine editors.

To register for the conference or for more information, visit www.rochesterwriters.com

— Annie Stodola, Local Editor

US judge sets 1st conference in Kilpatrick case

DETROIT — Lawyers defending former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick are going to federal court for the first pretrial hearing since charges were filed in June.

Kilpatrick is accused of turning the Civic Fund charity into a personal slush fund for cash, travel, yoga, summer camp and anti-bugging equipment when he was in office. He has pleaded not guilty.

Kilpatrick is in prison in a separate Michigan criminal case after a Wayne County judge said the ex-mayor violated probation by failing to turn over assets toward \$1 million restitution to Detroit.

— Associated Press Report

Tienken Road project revised, set for 2012

ROCHESTER — After receiving a large amount of negative feedback from the community, the Road Commission for Oakland County has agreed to modify the original plans to widen Tienken between Livernois and Sheldon Roads.

The plan originally proposed to make Tienken a five-lane road. The modified plan will instead include a center turn lane, occasional right-turn lanes and a two-lane traffic circle.

The road commission will begin the Tienken Road project in 2012.

— Annie Stodola, Local Editor

Bernero requests debates with Snyder

DETROIT — Democratic gubernatorial candidate Virg Bernero says talks with Republican Rick Snyder have failed to produce agreement on where, when and how they'll debate.

In response to the impasse, Bernero says he's written to all Michigan TV stations urging them to invite him and Snyder to debate. He says he still believes there's time to plan and hold three debates before the Nov. 2 election.

— Associated Press Report

Café Muse adopts farm fresh attitude

By **ANNIE STODOLA**
Local Editor

Although the idea of organic and health conscious restaurants is not necessarily a new trend, some local restaurants are taking the farm fresh attitude a step further.

Café Muse in Royal Oak, as well as several other local eateries, have begun to utilize locally grown produce in their menus.

David Smith, owner of Café Muse, said that while organic has always been a priority for the restaurant, purchasing ingredients locally has also been important.

"We've always wanted the freshest ingredients possible," Smith said. "It made sense to reach out to local farmers."

About three months ago, Café Muse became involved with the Royal Oak community farm. The community farm is a project of Royal Oak Forward, a community-oriented nonprofit organization.

David Baldwin, executive director of Royal Oak Forward, said the farm started this year as an attempt to benefit several different segments of the community.

"It really helps restaurants market themselves as supporting the community by buying local ingredients," Baldwin said. "It's beneficial to the farm and the restaurant, as well as to



Photo Courtesy of David Smith

Greg Reyner, owner of Cafe Muse, picks fresh produce at the Royal Oak community farm.

residents who can go to a restaurant and get locally grown produce."

After a volunteer for the farm brought the farm's vegetables to Cafe Muse, a partnership was formed.

Thus far, the Royal Oak Community Farm, located off 11 Mile Road, has received positive responses from those who visit the garden, who purchase produce from the garden at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market, and from patrons of Café Muse.

"People are glad to see something positive happening on this land instead of it just sitting here," Baldwin said. "It enhances the community, which was a founding principle of the farm."

In addition to using produce from the community farm, Smith and Café Muse executive chef Greg Reyner have been working with other farms.

"It's important to use local farms as much as possible because it has a big impact, both economically and environmentally," Smith said. "It both strengthens the local economy by putting money back into the local farms and it's also for businesses that want to reduce their carbon footprint. When you don't have to transport vegetables, you reduce that process."



Photo Courtesy of David Smith

Locally grown tomatoes at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market.

This past year, the restaurant began working with a farm in Clinton Township that sets aside a plot for Café Muse and grows whatever they request. Additionally, they have been developing a partnership with a new Highland Park farm.

"It's nice to be able to work with the farmers to decide what you want to grow and coordinate the harvesting," Smith said.

The Michigan Micro Farms organization has started selling produce to local restaurants as well, including Café Muse and The Hills in Grosse Pointe.

Mike Berschback of Michigan Micro Farms, located in Chesterfield Township, said that his organization is largely trying to get people back to a more personalized approach to growing food.

"Local food is out there and this is how it used to be; small farmers are growing their own crops and selling them," Berschback said. "In the last 40 years, it's been large corporations growing the food, which isn't how it should be or how it was meant to be."

Smith agrees that it's important for people to not only support local restaurants, but to purchase locally grown food themselves. Reyner purchases ingredients from the Royal Oak Farmers Market each week for the restaurant's menu.

"It's important to use as many local products as possible," Smith said. "People don't necessarily think about that. You buy eggs from a local farm and you keep that money in the community."



Photo Courtesy of David Smith

Various vegetables at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market.