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**CANTON**  
**OBSERVER**

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**CONNECTION**  
Saluting service

Canton's Salute to Service program will be held on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, from 6-8:30 p.m., with the program starting at 7 p.m.

The focus this year will be on Korean War veterans. The Canton Cable Studio will be recording interviews with Korean veterans. Veterans who are interested in volunteering to be interviewed may contact Cable TV studio manager Dave Harris at (734) 394-5241.

Those who participate will be invited to the Salute to Service program and be honored during the program. They will receive a DVD of their interview.

The interviews will be compiled into a presentation for the Salute to Service program.

**Job training**

A group of Team Canton volunteers is launching a series of eight CREW (Canton Re-Employment Workshop) sessions to assist those individuals seeking re-employment due to a layoff, or simply exploring the possibility of making a job change.

The job training and networking support is led by volunteers with expertise in career development, human resources and the job search process.

The first session is 7-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 15, in the lower level of the Canton Administration Building. The remainder of the workshops will be held every following Wednesday.

Participation is free, however if you plan on attending, please e-mail TeamCantonCrew@comcast.net at least a week in advance.

**Election forums**

The League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County will provide an opportunity for voters to hear from candidates for elected offices in the local area prior to the Nov. 2 general election.

The league will sponsor a candidates' forum for the 11th District seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, featuring incumbent Thaddeus McCotter of Livonia and Democratic challenger Natalie Mosher of Canton.

That forum takes place 8-9 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 9, at the Livonia City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Drive in Livonia.

The LWV also hosts a candidates' forum for candidates in the 20th (Plymouth-Northville) and 21st (Canton) state House districts and the 7th (Plymouth-Canton-Northville and Downriver) state Senate district on Monday, Oct. 4.

The Senate forum takes place from 7-8 p.m., with Republican Patrick Colbeck and Democrat Kathleen Law invited; the race also includes independents John Stewart and Michael Kheibari. There is no incumbent in that race.

The House forum takes place 8-9 p.m. Republican Kurt Heise and Democrat Joan Wadsworth face off in the race for that seat, being vacated by Democrat Marc Corrivieu, who decided not to seek re-election.

The forums take place at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill, on Cherry Hill near Denton, in Canton.

**Canton fills largest industrial void**

BY DARRELL CLEM  
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Canton's largest industrial vacancy, a 1.1-million-square-foot building that once housed a Kmart distribution center, will be the new home for longtime Romulus-based W.F. Whelan Co., a global third-party logistics firm that stores and distributes goods exported and imported by air and sea.

W.F. Whelan, also licensed as a foreign trade zone where companies can avoid duties and taxes until products are shipped, plans a gradual move that Dennis Webb, chief business develop-

ment officer, said should be completed by February.

"We're very excited," he said. "This is an evolution for us."

Amid plans to invest as much as \$4 million in the Canton building, W.F. Whelan confirmed it will consolidate operations from two separate Romulus facilities into the former Kmart warehouse southwest of Joy and Haggerty.

"We're kind of like a big family," Webb said. "This gets us all back under one roof."

W.F. Whelan has 50 full-time employees and a similar number of contract employees. Moreover, Webb predicted the still-growing, 36-year-old company will likely

add five to 15 workers a year after it settles into its new international warehouse, distribution center and headquarters.

"We are very excited they are coming to Canton," township Economic Development Manager Debra Bilbrey-Honsowetz said.

Canton Municipal Services Director Tim Faas said the former Kmart distribution center has been vacant for several years, though it was most recently used by Absopure Water Co.

"This is the largest industrial vacancy in Canton and one of the largest in western Wayne

Please see **INDUSTRIAL, A3**



BILL BRESLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The old Kmart distribution center, Canton's largest industrial vacancy, will be the new home for longtime Romulus-based W.F. Whelan Co.



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Hindu Temple of Canton marks a significant development for the metro Detroit Hindu population.

**Temple opens with CELEBRATION**

BY DARRELL CLEM  
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER



Hindu Priest Shiv Kumar Bhatt washes statues of Hindu deities.

Esteemed spiritual leaders from as far away as India joined thousands of metro Detroiters in song, prayer and upbeat ceremonies that ended Sunday as the new Hindu Temple of Canton formally opened amid a three-day celebration of what many lauded as one of the nation's premier Hindu places of worship.

Temple chairman Manoj Sachdeva estimated that 8,000 to 10,000 people passed through the doors over the weekend. A huge crowd packed a vast prayer hall Sunday for what he hailed as "a history-making event" inside the \$8.3-million, 37,517-square-foot building on Cherry Hill east of Canton Center.

Outside, Hindus watched as priests and temple officials gathered atop the temple's roof and blessed the building by sprinkling holy water, some of it brought from India's revered Ganges River, onto two domes — one graced by the Hindu symbol of peace. "This is very, very exciting," said Jesal Shah, a temple trustee. "This makes me feel so satisfied and proud."

Colorful balloons and flower petals adorned the entrance area as Hindus and other visitors marveled at a new temple that

Please see **TEMPLE, A5**

**District eyes plan to hike fund-raising**

BY BRAD KADRICH  
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

A fund development hired to help the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools come up with a plan to raise money outside the general fund budget thinks there is money out there to be had.

The district's administrators and Board of Education, he said, just need to find the right way to tap into it. And the key, the consultant said, may very well lie with the board's ability to work with the exiting Plymouth-Canton Educational Excellence Foundation.

Rich Howard of The McCormick Group said eight months worth of dialogue with the district's fund development committee determined this: There's a campaign out there that people will identify with and get behind; the district has to find it.

"The school districts that have collaborative relationships with their (EEF) are really the most successful," Howard told the board. "In order to have a successful fund-development strategy, there has to be accountability. We recommend you give that responsibility to a committee."

Under recommendations made by the fund-development committee in dialogue

with The McCormick Group, the district would put a development coordinator in place to work with the EEF, which would then collect information from a trio of committees:

- Annual fund-raising, which would handle annual giving campaigns, planned and corporate giving;
- Special events, such as employee drives, events fund-raisers and special programs, and
- An Alumni Committee, which would be charged with finding giving opportunities, special programs such as reunions and awareness building.

The board and the EEF would work together to find that one idea the community could rally behind.

"The board would work with the EEF in identifying a particular campaign, a concept that would resonate with the community," Howard said.

Howard pointed out some 100 groups, primarily sports boosters and other clubs, are already doing between \$800,000 and \$1.2 million in fund-raising in the district (the largest of those being the marching band boosters). The district itself is using fund-raisers such as door-to-door, special events,

Please see **DISTRICT, A3**

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BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The long-silent loading docks at the old Kmart distribution center near Joy and Haggerty could be busy again soon.

**INDUSTRIAL**  
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County," Faas said, calling W.F. Whelan's move "awesome" for a township that has strived to lure companies to combat an economic downturn.

W.F. Whelan Co. began in 1974 in the Detroit Metro Airport international terminal as a small customs brokerage company for the automotive industry and its parts suppliers. The company later moved to a larger facility in Romulus, adjacent to the airport.

Webb said the firm now finds itself in need of an even

larger facility where it can continue to grow.

W.F. Whelan supplies some 36 automotive assembly plants each day, and Webb said the company also handles hundreds of products ranging from electronics to wine to feathers for pillows.

"We have even shipped human remains for people who moved here from other countries and wanted to go back to the old country to be buried," Webb said.

As a U.S. Customs broker, the company also clears freight for businesses.

Webb's brother-in-law Bill Whelan, company president, founded the business in 1974, and Webb's late wife,

MaryAnne, served as vice president and helped the company grow.

Webb cited the Canton location as ideal because it allows the company to expand while remaining close to Detroit Metro Airport, Willow Run Airport and the I-275 corridor.

Webb conceded that many companies have struggled amid an economic recession. Yet, he said W.F. Whelan does business amounting to more than \$50 million a year.

"We've really weathered the storm," he said. "We love the Canton area, and we're really looking forward to being part of the community."

dclm@hometownlife.com | (313) 222-2238

**DISTRICT**  
FROM PAGE A1

and government and corporate grants, to do the bulk of their fund-raising.

"This wasn't a surprising number to me, given the size of your district," Howard said. "You have an awful lot of things going on."

Opportunities exist, Howard pointed out, in planned giving, corporate giving, naming opportunities and among the alumni to raise money.

"We are coming up, thanks to the baby boomers, on the biggest transfer of wealth in our nation's history," Howard said. "There are opportunities

for fund development there."

Howard's research showed districts similar to Plymouth-Canton throughout the Midwest generally raise between \$50,000 and \$100,000 a year, primarily through individual giving, which Howard said brings in "the big dollars."

"Philanthropy is trending down, really for the first time in our nation's history, for a number of different reasons," he said. "The good news is, people are still willing to support what's important to them."

That's where the EEF and the other committees would come in handy.

"The collaboration between the EEF and the board is a

positive thing," said Carole Cody, the EEF's executive director. "We can accomplish so much more together. We're here working for the same things as the board."

Whatever the final fund-development committee structure looks like, board members said it's up to them to make sure the district comes up with something the public wants.

"Some of these are exciting things," school board President Steven Sneiderman said. "We need something the community can get around. We haven't communicated well to figure out what would resonate. It's important to have a structure that will help us do that."

bkadrich@hometownlife.com | (313) 222-8899

**Canton man held after domestic dispute**

BY DARRELL CLEM  
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

A knife-wielding Canton man who barricaded himself in an attic after allegedly threatening to slit his mother's throat was taken into custody after township police forced their way into his hiding place, police Sgt. Mark Gajeski said.

The 22-year-old suspect was arrested for domestic violence around 8:30 p.m. Friday on Newburyport Drive, near Warren and Sheldon, ending an ordeal that Gajeski said began more than five hours earlier.

Township police initially went to the mother's house

about 3 p.m. Friday after receiving a report that she had come home, found her front door open and her car missing, Gajeski said.

A short time later, the suspect contacted his sister and told her that he had gone to his mother's house and taken a cell phone and her car, which he had crashed in Detroit.

Police began an investigation only to receive another call about 8:30 p.m. that the son had returned home and had become violent after the mother told him that she was calling authorities, Gajeski said.

"He had a knife, and he

threatened to slit her throat," the sergeant said, adding that while the son didn't use the weapon on his mother, "he assaulted her and shoved her around a few times."

The suspect then barricaded himself with the knife in the attic, according to police. Gajeski said officers surrounded the house, forced their way into the attic and took the suspect into custody.

"He surrendered," Gajeski said.

The suspect is now facing a charge of domestic violence, the sergeant said.

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