

■ Gilbert Avenue cheers razing of drug hangout 3B

■ Women get the fax on bachelor 3B

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# Metro

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**Pete Waldmeir**

## Bill Cahalan still courts judge's post

Sometimes fate plays strange tricks on us. Take Bill Cahalan, for example. This was to be the first day of his new career as one of two new judges on the Michigan Court of Appeals. The \$90,000-a-year seats were decided in yesterday's general election. It's a job that would have carried the 62-year-old former Wayne County prosecutor into comfortable retirement and he figured, with a name like Cahalan, he had a good shot at it.

AS IT STANDS, however, Cahalan's lucky some engraver isn't chiseling that name into a headstone. And if there's a judgeship anywhere on the horizon, it'll have to be an appointment from Gov. Jim Blanchard.

"I'm still waiting for a call," Cahalan says with a wry smile. "But I guess the governor has more important things on his mind."

Not that Bill Cahalan's luck is all bad. Far from it.

"Things were so grim for a while last spring that my wife, Mary, was actually working on a list of pallbearers," Cahalan recalled the other evening over dinner. "I had no idea what was going on, of course. I spent weeks totally out of touch with everything around me. No senses, no memory."

"But somehow I made it back," Cahalan said, smiling. "The Irish are just lucky that way, I guess."

Cahalan is Michigan's racing commissioner. It's the latest stop on a journey to a new life which began in August 1983, when he resigned after 16 years as chief Wayne County prosecutor to seek fame and fortune in private law practice.

WITHIN WEEKS he accepted a position with prominent Detroit condemnation lawyer Alan Ackerman, the guy who handled the much-ballyhooed \$42 million Chrysler-Jefferson plant land and used machinery deal. Cahalan wasn't on hand for that one, but he did assist Ackerman in the \$12 million Mt. Elliott park deal.

Ackerman and Cahalan have nothing but praise for each other. But their alliance didn't work out. Cahalan had been hoping for a gubernatorial judgeship appointment from Blanchard, and when that fell through he accepted the post of racing commissioner in the summer of 1985.

By now he had moved in a short period of time from western Wayne County to Birmingham to Grosse Pointe Farms. He and new wife, Mary, also had become parents of an infant son, John.

The racing commission office is located in Plymouth, which isn't exactly next door to Grosse Pointe Farms.

THE APPEALS COURT beckoned last January. Cahalan was just getting geared up to run in February when he began having stomach pains. He thought it was an ulcer. It turned out to be cancer.

"Before the first operation they told me I had a 50-50 chance to survive," Cahalan said. "I didn't like the odds, but I had no choice." There were post-operative complications. Surgery followed surgery. Six operations in all.

Throughout the early part of his illness Bill's cousin, Wayne County Circuit Judge William Leo Cahalan, tried to keep his appeals court hopes alive by issuing progress reports that sounded like Bill was suffering from little more than gastritis.

"We hoped for a miracle all along," Bill Cahalan said. "We didn't want anyone to know how bad things were."

How bad are they now? "I have no complaints at all," Cahalan said. "I'm here and that's what counts. Of course, I'd still like that judgeship, but ..."

Well, it would be a shorter drive to work.

### For the record

**Corrections and clarifications:**  
 Christopher Kertesz, reader representative, 222-2212.

■ Because of a computer error at the American College of Radiology, the name of Heritage Hospital in Taylor was omitted from a list of institutions that have mammography units accredited by the college. The list appeared on Page 6A Tuesday.

Knollwood Clinic, Lapeer, did not use general purpose X-ray machines to test for breast cancer in women in 1987. An aide at the clinic erred in answering a state questionnaire in January 1987, and the name of the clinic appeared on Page 12A Sunday on a list provided by the state Department of Public Health.

## Vannelli Detroit closes doors

### Financial problems plague downtown restaurant

By Sandra Silven and Greg Lopez  
 News Staff Writers

Touted as the cornerstone of a downtown dining revival, Vannelli Detroit restaurant on Woodward closed Tuesday after failing in last-ditch efforts to pay back rent.

Attempts to keep the restaurant open ran out of "time and money," said owner Dante Vannelli, who also operates Vannelli's Gus' Steak House in Lake Orion.

"We made the decision to close about 1:30 a.m. yesterday (Monday)," he said. "It didn't look like there would be a white knight down the road to save us even if we did put up enough money."

"WE JUST didn't serve enough dinners.

We couldn't increase our lunches any more; they were great. But we could not be a lunch-only restaurant."

It was the second big downtown restaurant this month to be reported in financial difficulty. Last week Lanie Pincus, the owner of the London Chop House, one of Detroit's best-known restaurants, was sued by Michigan National Bank for allegedly defaulting on a \$150,000 loan.

Assets in the Chop House have been pledged as a security for the loan.

Vannelli Detroit, in the renovated Metropolitan Building, had been open for about 18 months.

LAST SUMMER, a Wayne County Circuit Court lawsuit alleged that Dante

Vannelli was behind \$97,500 in rent. At the time, he conceded he did owe some rent, but not that much.

The lawsuit was filed by the Metropolitan Building Limited Partnership and Acquisti Unlimited Inc., owners of the renovated building Vannelli Detroit was located in, on Woodward between Fort and Congress. The owners could not be reached for comment on the closing.

Employees and customers were shocked at finding the restaurant closed. A cook, Mandy Galvin, arrived at 7 a.m. and was told of the closing by another employee. There was no warning, she said. The restaurant had 50 workers.

Ken Harris, an investment adviser with Harris Group Ltd. in the Penobscot Building

and a frequent customer, also was surprised. "I think it's sad," he said. "They had very good Italian food. The restaurant filled a void in downtown lunch options. I ate there once a week."

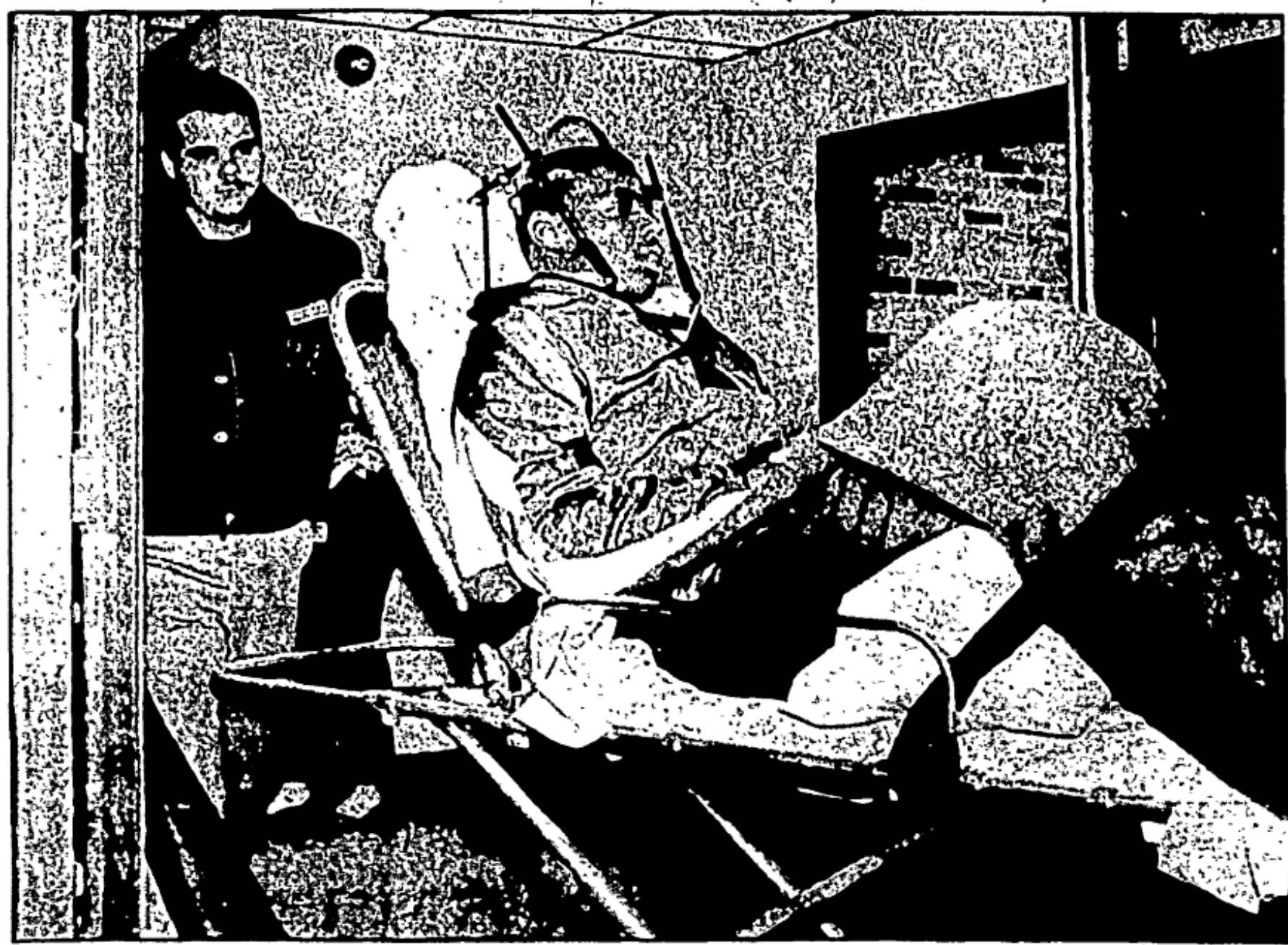
JEROME BARNEY, an attorney for Wayne County, said he hopes the closing doesn't signal that there is not enough business for a good restaurant in downtown Detroit.

"Maybe their prices were just a little too high for this market," he said. "You've got to price meals for people who are secretaries and not just the big shooters."

Vannelli Detroit tried to lure night customers with everything from cut-rate drinks to buffets, opera singers and jazz. It even provided a free shuttle to ferry customers to Joe Louis Arena for hockey games.

Please see Close/8B

## Rogers goes home



JAMES L. VARON/The Detroit News

Detroit Lions' defensive end Reggie Rogers, wearing a "halo" neck brace, is put in an ambulance for the trip home after being released from Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital Tuesday night. Rogers, 24, has been charged with three counts of manslaughter in the deaths of three teenagers in an Oct. 20 auto crash in Pontiac. He fractured his neck and suffered a severed thumb in the accident. He will be arraigned in the case within 72 hours, police say.

## Officer pleads guilty to armed robbery

### Kidnapping charges dismissed in deal

By Mike Martindale  
 News Staff Writer

A Detroit police officer who allegedly used his uniform and a scout car in a robbery spree pleaded guilty Tuesday to two counts of armed robbery and one count of using a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Brian Crite, 21, a patrolman for two years and assigned to the 11th (Davison) Precinct, entered the plea before Recorder's Court Judge Prentice Edwards. The plea was part of a sentencing agreement with the Wayne County Prosecutor's office that calls for several similar charges to be dismissed. Under the agreement, two other armed

robbery charges and two kidnapping charges will be dismissed.

Following the plea, Crite was returned to the Wayne County Jail, where he is being held on \$175,000 bond.

CRITE'S SENTENCING is set for Nov. 21. As part of the agreement, which still must be reviewed by Edwards, Crite would serve between 12 and 40 years in a state prison, according to George Ward, the county's chief assistant prosecutor.

If convicted on the more serious kidnapping or armed robbery charges, Crite could receive a maximum sentence of life in prison. Conviction of using a firearm in the commission of a crime carries a mandatory two-year sentence.

Crite, who was off-duty at the time of the alleged robberies and has since been suspended, was picked out of a police lineup

by three people who reported being robbed between 11:25 p.m. Aug. 15 and 2:40 a.m. Aug. 16.

TEN PEOPLE have told police they were robbed of \$1,150 in cash and \$3,000 in jewelry by two uniformed men. Several said they were driving cars when stopped and ordered to lean against the marked scout car as the two "officers" went through their pockets.

The scout car was traced to the 11th Precinct through information supplied by the victims, including a police officer's daughter who recalled the identification numbers on the vehicle.

Crite and another officer were detained briefly in August following the robberies but were released when none of the victims could identify them. Crite and Moss later were arrested after an investigation by the police Internal Affairs Section.

### NEWS FOCUS

## PREPAID COLLEGE TUITION

### Loan application flood starts earlier than anticipated

By James Tobin  
 News Staff Writer

Thousands of people who signed up for a state prepaid college tuition program are now showering savings banks with loan applications, trying to beat the Nov. 30 deadline for completed contracts.

"We're overwhelmed," said state Treasurer Robert Bowman, whose department administers the new program, called the Michigan Education Trust. "As I've said all along, we are a nation of procrastinators. We didn't expect the avalanche to start until the last week. But it appears to be starting early."

Under the program, state residents can escape the cost of future tuition increases by paying their children's fees now, years before they enter college. The program, the first of its kind in the country, covers public and private colleges both in and out of state.

THEY CAN pay the whole amount in a lump sum — from \$6,756 for a newborn baby to

Please see Loans/4B

### The 'trust' rush

Savings and loan institutions throughout the state are urging customers to apply soon to beat the Michigan Education Trust's November 30 deadline. Here are interest rates at 13 Metro Detroit institutions and their deadlines for loan applications:

Institution	Fixed rate	Variable rate	Deadline
Guaranty Federal Savings	10.5-12.25%	9.75%	Nov. 30
Heritage Federal Savings	11.5	—	Nov. 27
First Federal of Michigan	12.25	—	Nov. 21
Bloomfield Savings and Loan	11.25-12.5	9.75	Nov. 25
Standard Federal Bank	12.25	9.75	Nov. 10
Dearborn Federal Savings	10-10.25	—	Nov. 16
Empire of America	12.25	10.41	Nov. 25
Home Federal Savings	10.5-11.5	—	Nov. 30
United Savings	11.25	9.75	Nov. 23
First Federal Savings	11.75	10.0	Nov. 23
Citizens Federal Savings	10.5	—	Nov. 15
Colonial	—	2.75	—
Central Savings	12.0	over 1-b-1	Nov. 30
Mutual Savings and Loan	9.0	—	Nov. 19

## Pinned down

### Hair-pulling women bowlers nab purse-snatching suspect

By Gene Schabath  
 News Staff Writer

A purse-snatching suspect who may have tried to strike it rich at a Waterford Township bowling alley instead was bowled over by three women keglers.

Ronald R. Martin, 28, of Waterford, sore from a hair-pulling and the beating he received from the women, was arraigned Tuesday on a larceny charge before 32nd District Court Magistrate John McGrath.

Conviction on the charge carries a maximum prison term of 10 years. Martin could not immediately post a \$5,000 bond and was ordered held in the Oakland County Jail pending his preliminary examination.

Karen McAllister, one of the keggers in the arrest, said the incident began Monday at 6:50 p.m. when Martin allegedly grabbed her sister's purse and "traded a beetle for the door" at the 21st Century bowling lanes on North Oakland Boulevard.

MCALLISTER SAID her sister, Julie Johnson, went to the rest room and "he swooped down and grabbed the purse. I chased him and grabbed him in a headlock from behind in the foyer, and grabbed him by his hair. He was swearing and punching and got away, but dropped the purse."

Please see Bowlers/4B