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Mom recalls boy's death

By LIZ SHEPARD
 Times Herald

Ashley Marie Snowden testified Tuesday her former boyfriend, John William Gonzales, continuously abused her and her children before and after killing one of his sons.

Snowden said the abuse occurred several times a week, and involved "hitting, kicking, choking, spanking (and) yelling."

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IN YOUR VOICE ONLINE EXTRA

Discuss the felony murder trial of John William Gonzales

She also said he would hold their oldest son's head under water as a form of discipline.

Snowden was the prosecution's final witness called in Gonzales' jury trial. Gonzales faces up to life in prison if convicted

of felony murder in the 2005 Port Huron death of 18-month-old Braylon Bishop Gonzales.

The trial, which started last week, is expected to resume Thursday before St. Clair County Circuit Judge Peter Deegan. The judge said he was not available to hear testimony today.

Snowden, who already was sentenced to 5½ to 15 years in prison for Braylon's death, told

See TRIAL, 2A ►



Ashley Marie Snowden

DANIELLE'S JOURNEY



Danielle Fahrner

A week after having her second heart transplant, Danielle Fahrner was listed in good condition Tuesday at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor.

The 17-year-old Port Huron girl underwent a heart transplant Aug. 19 to replace a heart

she received when she was 5 weeks old.

Danielle is a senior at Crosswell-Lexington High School.

Donations to help the family can be made to Danielle's account at Bank of America.

Cards may be sent to: Mott Community Relations, 1500 E. Medical Center Drive, Ann Arbor, 48109-5253. In the bottom left corner of the envelope, please write "Patient: Danielle Fahrner."

— Angela Mullins

Freshmen face their fears



Times Herald photos by MARK R. RUMMEL

SHOUT OUT: Port Huron High School sophomore Ciara Francisco leads a group of incoming freshmen, teachers and mentors yelling "Go Big Reds" in the school gym Tuesday as they wrap up a freshman orientation session called Uniting Identities.

Students get help with transition to high school's scary hallways

By LIZ SHEPARD
 Times Herald

Throughout St. Clair County, school districts are trying to prepare students for the leap to high school.

From entering a new social culture to making academic decisions that have a large impact on their futures, administrators said some students have a hard time making the transition.

"I don't know if a word other than traumatic could be (used)," St. Clair High School Principal Ron Miller said.

Freshman orientation, which many districts are emphasizing, is designed to make that experience a little more tolerable.

For nearly a decade, Miller said the student council has led freshmen orientation.

The goal, as with orientations at other schools, is to introduce young students to new surroundings and teach them how to succeed. Along the way, some of their fears can be eased.

"The reality is we want every single ninth-grader to be successful, so we want to demystify the transition to high school," Miller said. "If you can get a student through ninth and tenth grade ... the likelihood of that student graduating skyrockets."

Marysville High School freshmen have their orientation tonight.

Principal William Farnsworth said along with orientation the district has Freshmen Connection, a program in which freshmen meet with building leaders a few

See SCHOOL, 10A ►



A NERD?

Jeff Warren, sophomore, holds up a "Nerd" sign to emphasize how he is dressed Tuesday during an exercise judging people by appearance. Upperclassmen and teachers led Port Huron High School's freshman orientation.

Marina value put on record

By STEPHEN TAIT
 Times Herald

An appraisal of Port Huron's Water Street Marina shows its value is a half million dollars — as long as it isn't used as a marina.

The appraisal, conducted by Robert W. Bogner and Associates in St. Joseph, said the marina is most valuable as a "speculative use" property "related to waterfront development."

John Ogden, the city's finance director, said the appraisal shows business at the marina would need to increase by at least three-fold to make it worth \$500,000.



John Ogden

Ogden said the River Street and Water Street marinas are a drain on city coffers.

"Both of those, the revenues have been insignificant to pay the operating costs," he said.

The city has signed an agreement to have Desmond Marine operate the River Street Marina. City officials are considering selling the Water Street Marina.

The City Council voted Monday to receive and file the appraisal, a 37-page document outlining local market conditions, the usable slips at the marina, the marina's history and many other items.

In May, the council voted to put a question on the Nov. 4 ballot to authorize selling the marina for a "minimum of \$300,000 or one half the appraised value, whichever

See MARINA, 4A ►

BALLOT ISSUES, 4A

A LOOK AT ISSUES HEADED TO VOTERS

RECOUNT WOES: Loretta Johnson, chairwoman of the St. Clair County Board of Canvassers, puts her head in her hands in frustration Tuesday after discovering several precincts mislabeled seals and could not be recounted for the Clay Township clerkship.



By MARK R. RUMMEL,
 Times Herald

Recount verifies clerk vote

By STEPHEN TAIT
 Times Herald

The first time around, Lisa White won the Republican primary in the race for Clay Township clerk by one vote.

Now, after a Tuesday recount, White has extended her margin of victory to two votes. She beat Mike Pellerito, the clerk for 16 years, 657 to 655.

"I'm glad the votes stood

and that I'll be clerk," she said.

There is no Democratic challenger on the Nov. 4 ballot, but that doesn't mean she'll be unopposed. Just minutes after the St. Clair County Board of Canvassers certified the recount, Pellerito hinted he may organize a write-in campaign.

"Things are not over until they're over," he said, adding later, "never say die."

Tuesday's recount wasn't without some controversy.

The Board of Canvassers was unable to recount ballots from three of the township's five precincts because the number on the ballot seals did not match

the numbers recorded in the poll book. The numbers are supposed to match up to ensure there was no ballot tampering.

Officials said poll workers likely wrote down the wrong number, since there are two different seals protecting ballots.

County Clerk Marilyn Dunn said it was a disappointment, but the rules

See CLAY, 2A ►



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- Grace Elizabeth LaFrance, infant
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- Virginia M. (Wahl) Moch, 80
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- Mabel R. Roth, 92
- Gerald E. Skuta, 73

- Dolores M. Smith, 75
- Franz Smith, 80
- Elizabeth J. Sopha, 88
- Frank L. Stockwell Sr., 72
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COMING THURSDAY

The excitement is building for Thursday night's prep football season openers