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Former East-pointe councilman in Macomb County Circuit Court this morning on two felony charges, including insurance fraud.

**Refuge expansion**

A crescent-shaped piece of land around Carlson High School in Gibraltar soon will be a more-protected spot for wildlife. On Thursday, Wixom-based Waste Management of Michigan is to donate a 358-acre parcel near the school for the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. John Hartig, refuge manager, right, calls the undeveloped area "a really neat piece of wetlands."

— ERIC D. LAWRENCE



**Detroit Free Press**

**METRO**

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# Southfield schools to lay off 150

## Deficit, declining enrollment blamed

By GINA DAMRON  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Southfield Public Schools plans to lay off 150 employees — including teachers, counselors and administrators — to address budget deficits that are expected to grow next school year if no action is taken, an official said Tuesday.

Ken Siver, deputy superintendent of the district, said the plans, which also include moving several people from full-

time to part-time positions, will be announced at a news conference today.

He said those being let go will be notified this week, but the layoffs won't take effect until June.

The Board of Education is expected to decide whether to approve the layoffs at its meeting next Tuesday.

The cuts represent about 15% of the district's 1,000 to 1,100 employees, which in-

cludes more than 600 teachers. Union employees, working without a contract since August, protested Tuesday outside the board office.

The jobs at risk are those of some art, gym and music teachers; counselors, social workers, special education instructors, classroom aides, secretaries, assistant principals, and curriculum staff, Siver said. He said no programs are to be cut.

"These kinds of cuts will have a devastating effect on our ability to offer quality, comprehensive educational programs," said Patricia Haynie, executive director of the Southfield Education Association. "They're gutting the educational program."

But Siver said the cuts are necessary because student enrollment has declined. The number of students dropped from 10,280 during 2002-03 to 8,854 this school year.

Next school year, the district is looking at an enroll-

ment of 8,476, Siver said.

Because of the declining enrollment, the district had a \$6-million deficit this year. Next school year, the shortfall could be \$14 million if the board doesn't approve the layoffs, Siver said.

In addition, he said, the district has exhausted its fund equity, which was \$25 million in 2003.

"We are continuously in the hole," Siver said.

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## Wayne

DETROIT

## Appeals court to consider Cobo deal

Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr. and the City Council filed briefs Tuesday with the Michigan Court of Appeals on the fate of a regional authority to run Cobo Center.

The two sides reiterated their arguments from past court appearances. Cockrel's attorneys, who are appealing Wayne County Circuit Judge Isidore Torres' ruling favoring the council, argue Torres' opinion failed to properly interpret the powers retained by Cockrel under the city charter.

But the brief filed by the council reiterated its view that the plain language of the law carved out no power for a mayoral veto of the council rejecting the authority.

The appeals court has indicated it will not conduct oral arguments on the case and will likely rule based on the briefs submitted.

## Lawsuit seeks to save old train station

A Detroit man filed a lawsuit against Detroit City Council and the city, requesting an injunction against the demolition of the Michigan Central Station in southwest Detroit.

The City Council passed a resolution April 7 for the emergency demolition of the property on West Vernor.

In the lawsuit, filed Monday in Wayne County Circuit Court by Stanley Christmas and the Eclipse Foundation, Christmas said the council's resolution violates Title 16 Section 461 of the U.S. Code "that it is a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States."

Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr. wants to use at least \$3.6 million in federal economic stimulus funds to demolish the structure. He said he would require station owner Manuel (Matty) Moroun to reimburse the city for demolition costs.

### Quick hits

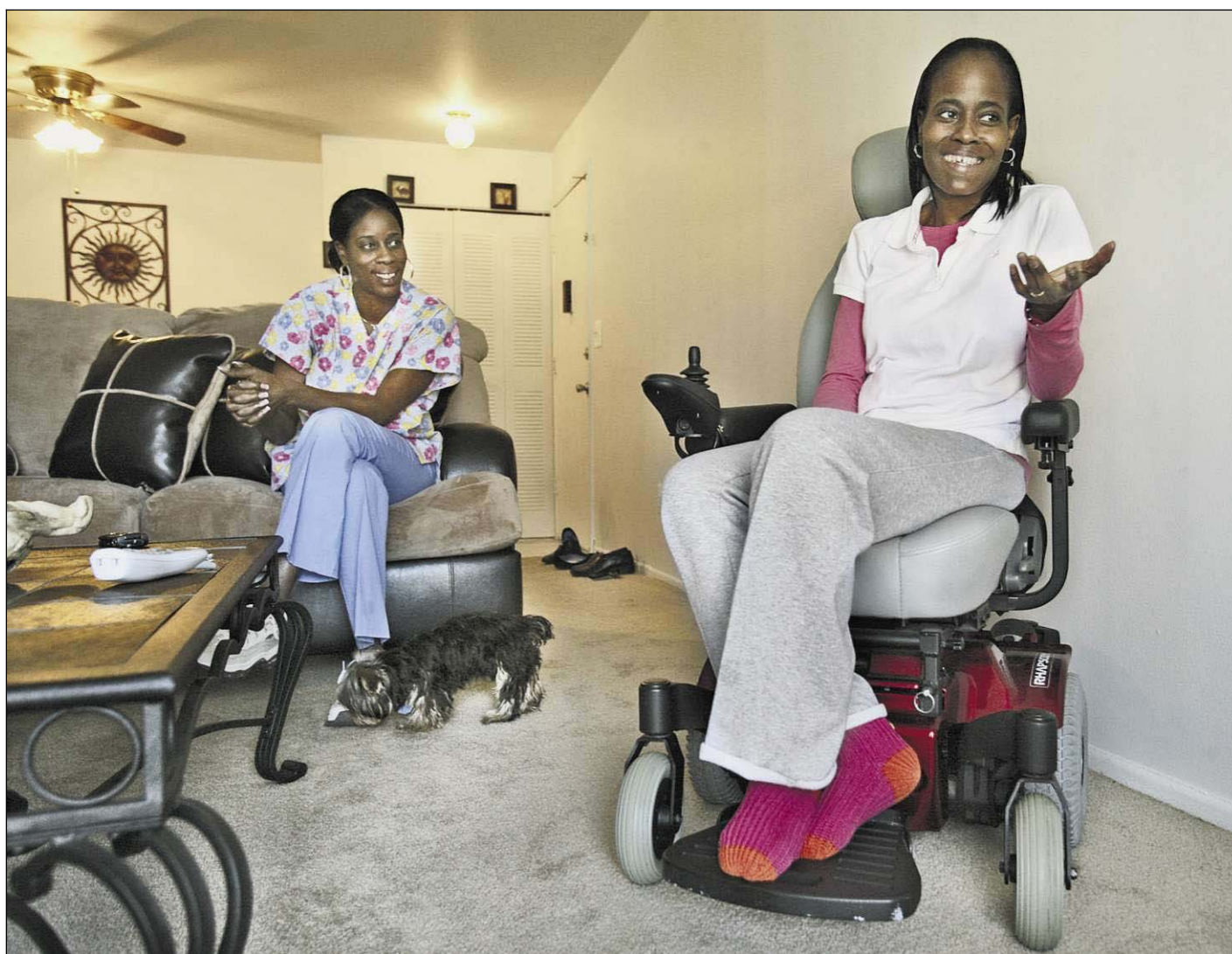
■ **MAYORAL DEBATE:** Detroit mayoral candidates Dave Bing and Mayor Ken Cockrel Jr. are to face off today in their second debate leading up to the May 5 general election.

The debate is to begin at noon in the Riverview Ballroom at Cobo Center and is sponsored by the Detroit Economic Club.

■ **GREEN SCHOOLS:** Just in time for Earth Day, 97 Oakland County schools have earned the Michigan Green School designation. The schools will be recognized next week. Earth Day is April 22. To be designated a Michigan Green School, K-12 schools must successfully undertake a minimum of 10 out of 20 activities prescribed by state law and submit an application.

— COMPILED BY ZACHARY GORCHOW, NAOMI R. PATTON AND FREE PRESS STAFF

Thursday is National Health Care Decisions Day, a perfect time for all adults to be specific about how they'd want to spend their final days



Photos by PATRICIA BECK/Detroit Free Press

Charnette Raheem, 40, of Southfield, right, has a rare disease. In 2001, she made end-of-life arrangements for herself. She picked her funeral home, selected an urn, wrote her eulogy and gave power of attorney to her niece. At left is her sister, Lynn Raheem.

# MAKING A PLAN TO EASE GRIEF

By MEGHA SATYANARAYANA  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Charnette Raheem of Southfield has a rare disease that is slowly destroying her body. The disease is killing her cells to the point where she is so drained of energy, her 40-year-old body doesn't work.

"I'm in the hospital more than I'm out," she said.

The National Hospice Foundation said Raheem is among the 25% of Americans who are formally leaving guidelines with loved ones about their deaths. These advanced directives include medical power-of-attorney papers, living wills and do-not-resuscitate orders.

Thursday is National Health Care Decisions Day, and the Visiting Nurse Association of Southeast Michigan is encouraging people to plan ahead, said Lynn Pekar, who oversees quality of care for the group.

One option is "Five Wishes," a living-will booklet that allows people to decide everything from life-support to the music they want played while they're in the final stages of life.

"It's not as much about dy-

ing as living well," she said.

In 2001, as Raheem's disease progressed, she wrote her eulogy, chose an urn, created a living will and gave her niece and best friend decision-making power over her medical care.

Raheem can change her wishes at any time, and Pekar said that shows it's a good idea for anyone older than 18 to prepare advance directives.

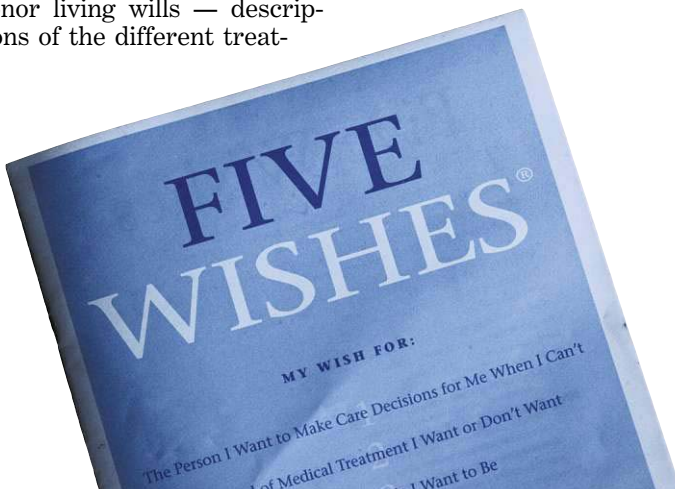
But there are technicalities, said Brad Geller, a lawyer and Michigan long-term-care ombudsman. Unlike do-not-resuscitate orders and power-of-attorney documents that are legally binding, medical professionals are not required to honor living wills — descriptions of the different treat-

ments and life-sustaining measures a patient would or would not want. He suggests also having other Michigan-specific documents.

Patients who have no plans could end up with a court-appointed guardian.

Harley Manela, a Farmington Hills attorney, suggests signing a document that ensures medical records can be discussed with family members.

"A doctor can say, 'Your mom didn't give me permission to talk to you,'" he said, "even if she's lying on the ground and you're trying to figure out what medicines she took."



The booklet "Five Wishes" helps people plan their final medical care.

## End-of-life care

With National Health Care Decisions Day set for Thursday, the Visiting Nurse Association is encouraging people to prepare power-of-attorney documents, living wills and do-not-resuscitate orders before they need them. Here are resources:

■ Get living-will options and state-specific information at [nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org/takeaction/advance\\_directive](http://nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org/takeaction/advance_directive).

■ Michigan-specific information can be found at [michigan.gov/mdch](http://michigan.gov/mdch), by clicking the left link, Physical Health and Prevention, then Services for Seniors in the middle of the page, then End of Life at the bottom.

■ The Visiting Nurse Association of Southeast Michigan will provide a free copy of Five Wishes, a booklet that allows people to outline their wishes, [www.vna.org](http://www.vna.org); 800-882-5720.

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