

Buyers favor nice views more than acreage

A new University of Michigan study suggests many home buyers really want a view of nature as opposed to more acreage when they talk about "open space."

The study suggests there might be more development options that provide homes on smaller lots with nature views as opposed to big homes on big lots.

Rachel Kaplan, professor of environment and behavior at the School of Natural Resources and Environment, said the research — centered on 18 developments in Livingston County's Hamburg Township — found many buyers just as happy with homes on lot sizes of one-half to two-thirds of an acre.

Kaplan was one of three professors to work on the study. The study asserts there is confusion of the term "open space" when used by planners, developers and home buyers. What many buyers are most interested in is nearby views of nature and not necessarily a big lawn, the professors concluded. The findings are being published in the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Kaplan said.

Museum seeks \$40M

The Detroit Historical Society is talking with some of its donors to gauge their interest in helping fund a \$60 million expansion of the Detroit Historical Museum to double its size and update permanent exhibits.

"We would like to bring the museum more up to date through 2000 to tell the stories through the last century," said Bob Bury, executive director of the society.

The museum's permanent exhibits, such as "Frontiers to Factories" and "The Streets of Old Detroit," tell the story of Detroit up through 1900, Bury said.

In November 2000, Detroit voters approved a \$20 million capital bond that the society could use for such an expansion, he said.

"We would like to find other sources to match that \$20 million on the government side, and would probably need an equal amount from private sources,"

Bury said. "We would expect a public announcement of the campaign is at least a year away."

The Detroit Historical Museum is a division of the Detroit Historical Department, operated by the city of Detroit. In 2003, the museum operated on a budget of \$4.5 million, made up of city funds and money raised by the Historical Society.

Publisher expands, pens 'up north' kids' tales

The wife of the former owner of Sleeping Bear Press has launched two publishing companies and written two Michigan-focused children's books.

Anne Lewis, owner and president of Mackinac Island Press, recently published *Tears of Mother Bear*, a tale about the origin of Petoskey stones, and *Hidden Cherries*, about the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City. Mackinac Island Press publishes children's books and Lewis' Petoskey Publishing regional titles.

Lewis said the new books are popular locally and are available in stores such as Borders and Barnes & Noble.

"It's a way for people to have a piece of up north downstate," she said.

Her husband, Brian Lewis, former publisher at Sleep-



ing Bear Press, is an editor at Petoskey Publishing but has no role with Mackinac Island Press because of non-compete agreements, Lewis said. The children's division of Chelsea-based Sleeping Bear Press was sold to Thomson Gale in 2002.

What's in a name? \$250K for Miracle League field

The Miracle League of Michigan is looking for a naming-rights sponsor for the new baseball field in Southfield it officially opened last week.

The price for the 20-year naming rights is \$250,000.

The nonprofit is negotiating with a national retail chain for the naming rights but has not sealed the deal, said Stephen Peck, chairman of the local nonprofit.

"We have a quarter-million into the field right now, and all of that has been done through corporate sponsorship," he said. Sponsors include the Pepsi Bottling Group of Detroit in Detroit, Wright & Filippis Inc. in Rochester and Hubbell, Roth & Clark Inc. in Bloomfield Hills.

The Miracle League is a national organization that provides a rubberized playing surface so children with physical or mental disabilities can play in an organized league.

The Michigan field, on Evergreen Road south of I-696 in the Southfield Municipal Complex, is the seventh the group has built since 1999, Peck said.

Naming-rights sponsors at the other fields include the Chicago White Sox, which named the field in that city after the Sox, and McDonald's Corp., which dubbed the field in Conyers, Ga., "McMiracle Field."

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Web poll: Of the 85 respondents to the question, "Would you support a tax on tickets to plays and concerts, sporting events, museums and zoos, and movies, with the money going to support arts and culture?" 54 or about 64 percent say "no" and the rest "yes." To vote, go to the "Tell us what you think box" on the lower lefthand side of our home page.

