

SUE MASON, EDITOR
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COMMUNITY LIFE

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THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1997

FAMILY ROOM



KAREN MEIER

Columnist bids farewell

Three years ago almost to the day I opened up the doors to this Family Room of mine and welcomed you in. And as promised in that first column I've spoken out about good things and comfortable things, and ordinary things, things one normally finds in that room in the house called the "family room." I've spoken out about family, about the awesome responsibility of parenthood, the adventures, the disasters, the victories, the journey itself.

Common, simple, universal, mainstream — once cornerstones of the "Family Room." But as time went on, it became clear that raising children (five in my case) is not mainstream. And if that weren't enough to find myself on the muddy banks and out of the mainstream for good then giving birth to a baby with "special needs" was.

And then to be proud and happy and joyful about it, to publicly declare what a gift this baby is, that shoved me so far away from the mainstream that now I'm on completely dry land. Having too many kids, having one with Down syndrome, speaking out happily, honestly, proudly about it all has put me outside the circle of propriety and what is decent and proper and acceptable, or so I've been told in one form or another by many.

I just don't fit the '90s norm for a woman: the co-income earner with 2.2 "normal" children and the rarely used pots and pans. Regardless of criticism I receive, regardless of ostracism I've endured, I can't be a '90s mainstream woman. I'm a stay-at-home mother and chief cook and bottle washer of five and one of the five is a baby with Down syndrome. I've stepped out of the mainstream for good. There's no going back.

No going back

And tell me. How could I possibly knuckle under, go back? Get rid of my "extra" children so I can fit the 2.2 model? Or perhaps just get rid of Steven, my baby, as some have suggested. I could never do that. Although that's exactly what's going on in many, many cases. Getting rid of the less than "perfect" people in the world because imperfection is not tolerated. At least not tolerated around here, in the '90s.

Let me be blunt. In the recent past, 7,000 children were born with Down syndrome every year. And now? It's 3,500. Half as many. And why is that? Because here on the cusp of the 21st century, this genetic disorder can easily be detected in utero and modern technology has made it easy and convenient to completely prevent this birth defect.

No, there has been no tremendous breakthrough to rearrange the chromosomes to cure the disease. That's not it at all. The genetic disorder is indeed being "wiped out," only half as many Down syndrome babies born now because the other half are never born, they are aborted. Ninety percent of pregnant women in the U.S. who find they are carrying a baby with the genetic disorder choose to abort. The horrible secret is out. That's what's going on. The intolerance of imperfection, of stepping out of the mainstream, has taken on a very sinister and deadly face.

And so I guess after reviewing statistics it should be no surprise to me that I find myself where I am now. I have spoken out too openly, too honestly, too happily, too proudly about my children, all of them, even the less than "perfect" one with his genetic disorder, the disorder so feared by so many and to such a degree that those with his disorder are categorically denied entry into this "perfect" world.

Uncomfortable message

So seeing what is out there, seeing the horrific statistics, in Wayne County alone one in five pregnancies ends in abortion for whatever reason, Down syndrome being one of those reasons, it's not a surprise that this column with its "imperfection is OK" message is not a "comfortable, ordinary" place for many, many people to be in. Few can get comfortable in this room that allows the level of imperfection I allow in.

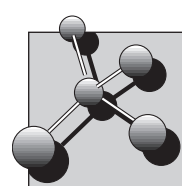
The "Family Room" has become a hotbed. The coals are too uncomfortable, folks are not willing to hear songs of praise for those who are less than the standard, less than perfect, for those who are right now being systematically eliminated from our midst because of their imperfection.

If you're still reading, let me tell you about this. Just this past Mother's Day, actually the day before, I delivered a speech before a group of some 70 women celebrating motherhood at their 10th anniversary meeting. A woman came up to me afterward to tell me that she wished her friend could have heard what I had to say, because a life would have been saved. The

Please see FAMILY ROOM, B2

Creative and curious Society builds on model hobby

■ The North American Model Engineering Society encourages the model engineering hobby through an annual exposition.

BY KIMBERLY A. MORTSON
STAFF WRITER

If you're curious by nature and delight in taking things like alarm clocks apart to find out what "makes them tick," model engineering

is the hobby for you.

"Most of us are inquisitive," said North American Model Engineering Society member Earl Gage. "We take apart lawn mowers and radios, we can read blueprints, are adept with our hands and are typically very innovative."

Gage is an active member of the Livonia-based model engineering society that hosts the largest annual exposition in North America every April. Modelers and vendors from the United States and as far away as Australia, England, Germany and South Africa travel thousands of miles to participate and show engines at the renowned event.

Founded in 1990 by a small group of interested model builders, the sole purpose of the organization is to encourage the model engineering hobby through the annual exposition.

The North American Model Engineering Society (NAMES) affords modelers of all ages and levels of expertise the opportunity to display, operate, discuss and share their unique mechanical creations.

This past April, more than 4,500 spectators viewed approximately 900 models (40 states were represented), many of museum quality according to Gage, at the eighth annual expo. In operation were a variety of models, including hot air, steam and gasoline engines, running and operating scale model machinery, vehicles and other equipment.

The engines were in the form of antique farm, industrial, automotive, marine, aircraft, tractors, railway and military models of miniature proportion, yet entirely functional.

"The displays are model engines scaled down from full size, are made of the same material and operate the same way, some with gas or steam that can fit in the palm of your hand," said Gage.

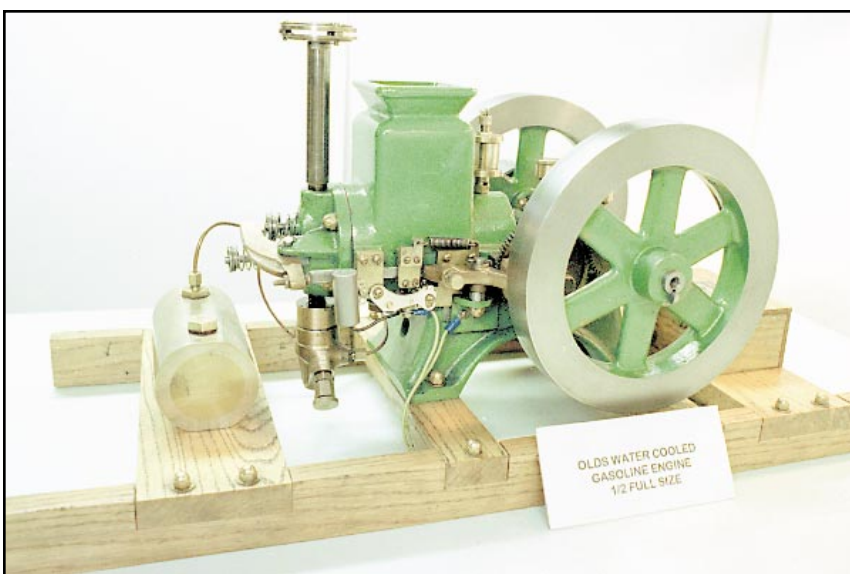
Fifty-five model engineering vendors displayed a range of merchandise that builders find essential to their unique art. Casting kits, machine tools, lathes and milling machines enable modelers to create their own engines, making modified projects authentic.

Gage said modelers become involved with the hobby for a variety of reasons; most common, however, is the satisfaction and accomplishment that comes with making an axle rotate, gears mesh, and rods push and pull, all through the grace of movement.



STAFF PHOTOS BY JIM JAGDFELD

Pumped up: Earl Gage of Livonia pours water into a miniature pail underneath the pump spigot to demonstrate the scale model pumping engine.



Scale model: This is a scale model of an Olds, Water Cooled, gasoline engine.

"Young and old can enjoy and watch," said Gage.

The group's leadership focuses heavily on the young hobbyist who sustains the fate of the hobby, if interest dwindles.

"The future of model engineering is no different from that of so many other hobby endeavors — it lies with the youth who will be the newcomers in 10 years and the

older generation in another two score years," said Gage. "Exciting their interest now and their satisfaction of creation of physical models now is important exposure for their future options that may well include the satisfaction so many exhibitors share."

Sparking an interest in school-age hobbyists is done through "Learning Day" seminars conduct-

ed prior to the general public's admission into the annual exposition. Area students and scout troops are invited to learn about the engines and witness firsthand how they operate.

Gage said more than 200 middle, high school and college participants took part in the hands-on experiences through discussions, cutaways and video tapes.

"In addition to explaining the general operation of the different engines, plans for construction of a simple hot air and steam engine were made available to the young people to increase their interest in model engineering," he said.

Children aren't the only participants who benefit from model engineering discussions as four seminars were held throughout the two-day event to benefit novice and expert builders alike.

Gage said he isn't surprised by the increased popularity of model engineering as it is a "great hobby and can provide a very rewarding activity for those who seek a better use of their leisure time."

If you would like to learn more about NAMES or are interested in attending the 1998 model engineering exposition April 26-27 at B.F. Yack Arena at Wyandotte, call (313) 464-6217.

Life Changers project teaches about rebirth

BY KIMBERLY A. MORTSON
STAFF WRITER

A project designed to provide young people an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the rebirth of Detroit neighborhoods began earlier this week by 100 students from across the state of Michigan.

Life Changers '97, a hands-on, co-educational youth missions program dedicated to revitalizing Detroit neighborhoods, will complete its second year in operation tomorrow, as workers put the finishing touches on painting, demolition, neighborhood cleanup and landscaping.

Northwest Detroit was the recipient of this year's focus as teams of young people from local communities such as Garden City, Westland, Canton, Livonia and Redford wielded scrapers, rakes, paintbrushes and garbage bags to improve homes and vacant lots of several predetermined residential areas.

"They will help bring us one step closer to completing our mission of revitalizing northwest

Detroit neighborhoods," said John O'Brien, executive director, Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development (NDND), the organization charged with managing the project.

The junior and senior high schoolers eagerly gathered together in Detroit's Harding neighborhood to sacrifice one week of their summer vacation to cleaning up homes and conducting youth ministry projects.

In the project's first year of service, Life Changers covered graffiti on six garages, painted seven housing units and cleaned several neighborhoods lots. This year the youth, who came from all corners of the state, did even more.

Mornings were spent on mission projects with afternoons dedicated to community service.

"Life Changers is a two-fold program," said the Rev. Joe Ryckman, director of missions, Greater Detroit Baptist Association, Redford resident and Life Changers sponsor. "Not only are the young men and women working to revitalize neighborhoods through physical and spiritual means, but they themselves will benefit. It's putting our faith

into action."

The community partner for Life Changers '97, NDND, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to organizing and implementing improvement projects in targeted Detroit neighborhoods.

Building on faith, says NDND coordinators, the group will construct 75 new housing units in the Westwood Park and Harding neighborhoods in 1997.

The Life Changers project will prepare the way for ground breaking in August 1997 on a 50-unit rental property development.

Expected outcomes from youth involvement are to offer youth groups a multi-faceted approach to mission experiences that expose them to urban needs and ministries, to offer a short-term partnership with local churches and to carry the message of Christ throughout Detroit and suburban areas.

If you are interested in participating in future volunteer projects with the Life Changers organization, call 535-9164 (NDND).

WEDDINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS

Rector-Worden

Dr. and Mrs. Michael Rector of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Sara Marie, to David Charles Worden of Algonac.

The bride-to-be has a bachelor of science degree from Madonna University and is working toward her master's degree at Central Michigan University. She is employed by Wright and Filippis.

Her fiancé has a bachelor of business degree in accounting from Central Michigan University and is studying law at the University of Detroit Mercy Law School. He is self-employed as a



residential builder.

An August wedding is planned at St. Mark's Catholic Church on Harsens Island.

Laszlo-Hatfield

Jerry and Patricia Laszlo of Sterling Heights announce the engagement of their daughter, Star, to Brian Matthew Hatfield, the son of Marsha and Charles Feucht of Livonia and the late Richard Hatfield.

The bride-to-be is a 1988 graduate of Chippewa Valley High School. She is employed as a hair stylist by Kimie K Salon in Troy.

Her fiancé is a graduate of 1989 Livonia Churchill High School and a 1992 graduate of the Specs Howard School of Broadcasting. He is employed as a disc jockey at WYCD-FM.

An October wedding is planned at St. Paul of Tarsus



Church in Clinton Township.

Galligan-Clark

James and Katherine Galligan of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Amy Katherine, to David Murray Clark, the son of Brian and Chris Clark of Lake Orion.

The bride-to-be, a 1985 graduate of Livonia Churchill High School, earned a bachelor of arts degree at Michigan State University.

She is a teacher at Holt High School.

Her fiancé, a 1988 graduate of Lake Orion High School, earned his bachelor of arts degrees in communications and advertising from Michigan State University. He is promotions director at Prism Productions in Ann Arbor.

A July wedding is planned at



Fox Hills Country Club in Plymouth.

Boyd-Coshatt

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Boyd of Redford announce the engagement of their daughter, Jill, to Earl Coshatt Jr., the son of Minnie Coshatt of Westland.

The bride to be is a graduate of Redford Union High School and Wayne State University. She is employed as an account manager at American Computer Exchange.

Her fiancé, a John Glenn High School graduate, is employed as an installer at Sears.

An October wedding is



planned for St. Valentine's Catholic Church in Redford.

Cook-Hamby

Susan and Roger Cook of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Cindy, to Steve Hamby, the son of Doris and Jack Doddie of Livonia and Bill Hamby of Ypsilanti.

The bride-to-be earned a bachelor of science degree in elementary education from Missouri Valley College. She is employed as a substitute teacher by the Livonia Public Schools.

Her fiancé earned an associate's degree in CAD mechanical design from Schoolcraft College. He is pursuing a bachelor's degree in engineering from Lawrence Technological University. He is employed as a designer at Ford Motor Co.

An August wedding is planned at Newburg United Methodist Church in Livonia.



Taylor-Sullivan

Andrew Taylor and Deborah Ann Sullivan were married April 21 at Zephyr Cove, Lake Tahoe, Nev., by Judge Steven McMorris.

The bride is the daughter of John and Jeanne Sullivan of Westland. The groom is the son of Oliver and Joan Taylor of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

The bride is a graduate of Livonia Franklin High School and Schoolcraft College. She is a registered nurse.

The groom, formerly of Scotland, is a graduate of Concordia College in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He works in computer graphics.

Following a sunset dinner cruise on Lake Tahoe, the couple



left for a honeymoon in China. They are making their home in Denver, Colo.

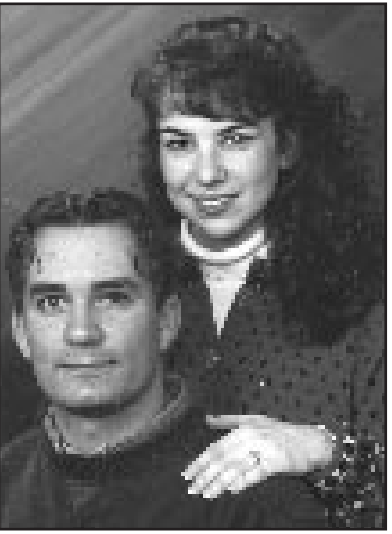
Roberts-Hurula

Salvation Army Lt. Cols. William and Nancy Roberts of Comstock Park announce the engagement of their daughter, Rebecca Lyn, to Donald J. Hurula, the son of Salvation Army Maj. William and Donna Hurula of Kansas City, Mo.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Wayne State University and teaches in the Livonia Public School District.

Her fiancé, a graduate of Chicago's DePaul University, works in public relations for the Salvation Army.

A July wedding is planned.



Pierson-Berghofer

Ronald and Frances Pierson of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Nancy Carol, to Robert Gilbert Berghofer, the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Berghofer of Garden City.

The bride-to-be is a Livonia Stevenson High School graduate. She earned a bachelor of science degree at Madonna University. She is employed by the clerk's office at U.S. District Court in Detroit.

A Garden City High School graduate, her fiancé is an electrician at Outbound Technologies, Inc., in Canton.

A September wedding is



planned at St. Maurice Catholic Church in Livonia.

Clark-Samuelson

Ann Christine Samuelson and Gregory Charles Clark were married May 23 at Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn by the Rev. Dr. James McGuire.

The bride is the daughter of Janet Samuelson of Plymouth and Norman Samuelson of Detroit. The groom is the son of Charles and Janet Clark of Port Huron.

The bride is a 1994 graduate of Hope College and is employed by the University of Michigan - Med Sports.

The groom also is a 1994 graduate of Hope College and Wayne State University. He is student teaching fifth grade at Greenfield Union Elementary School in Detroit.

Marcelynn Van Dyke served as maid of honor with brides-

maids Catherine Woller, Kristin Clark and Jennifer Clark.

Jeff Warren served as best man with groomsmen Randy Vesper, Andre Minkwitz and Scott Samuelson.

The couple received guests at the Henry Ford Estate before leaving on a trip to Sea Island, Ga. They are making their home in Jordanstown, North Ireland.

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ANNIVERSARIES

Groulx

Jon and Marcella Groulx of Livonia are celebrating their 25th anniversary during a small gathering of family and friends.

The couple married June 30, 1972, in Utica, N.Y. She is the former Marcella Burek.

They have two children, Karen and Katherine, both of Livonia.

He is a buyer with Jervis B. Webb Company, while she is a paralegal at Brasher, Tangora and Spence. They are active members of St. Priscilla's Catholic Church in Livonia.

**Bramigk**

Dennis and Deborah Bramigk of Canton are celebrating their 25th anniversary with a cruise and at a barbecue given by their son Troy.

The couple were married on May 19, 1972, in the Church of



the Holy Spirit. She is the former Deborah Lynn Evans.

Employed at GM Powertrain Plant in Ypsilanti, he is a member of the Plymouth Community Choir and the Powertrain Golf League. She is employed by Garden City Hospital.

Waineo

Albert and Sarah Virginia Waineo of Livonia celebrated their 50th anniversary with a luncheon at the Dearborn Inn, given for them by their children and grandchildren. It was followed by a roast of the golden jubilarians by their children, friends and family.

The couple exchanged vows on June 6, 1947, at Dearborn Chase Road Church of Christ. She is the former Sarah Victoria Barry.

The couple has three married children - Glenn and wife Jane of Canton, Bryan and wife Debbe of Northville and Dean and wife Nancy of Rochester Hills. They also have nine grandchildren.

He has been employed by Trio Tool Co. for more than 40 years.



A former secretary who has been a homemaker for 45 years, she enjoys painting, doll making and ceramics.

They have been active members of the Livonia Church of Christ since its beginning more than 40 years ago. They also enjoy traveling.

Hamilton

Reginald and Evelyn Hamilton of Garden City celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary with a renewal of their vows and Mass at St. Raphael Church, followed by family luncheon. The couple will also go on a cruise to Alaska, a gift from their children.

The Hamiltons married June 1, 1951, in Angola, Ind. She is the former Evelyn Kostelnik. They moved to Garden City in December 1953.

They have five children - David of Bellingham, Wash., Craig of Garland, Minn., Judith Hamilton Rounsifer of Garden City, Theresa Hamilton Knickerbocker of Howell, and Reginald C. of Ann Arbor - and nine grandchildren.

He is retired from Chrysler Corp., while his wife is a former Kroger employee. They have



spent their retirement time traveling throughout the United States in a motor home.

Nagi

Charles and Frances Nagi of Garden City celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on April 27.

They were married April 27, 1957, in Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Detroit. She is the former Frances Hallik.

They have three children - Chuck of Livonia, Tom of Clarkston, and Kathy of Fraser. The Nagis also have three grandchildren - Sydney, Tyler and Katie.

Charles Nagi retired after more than 25 years at Sperry-Vickers Corp. where he worked as a machine operator. Prior to



her marriage, she was employed by Chrysler Corp.

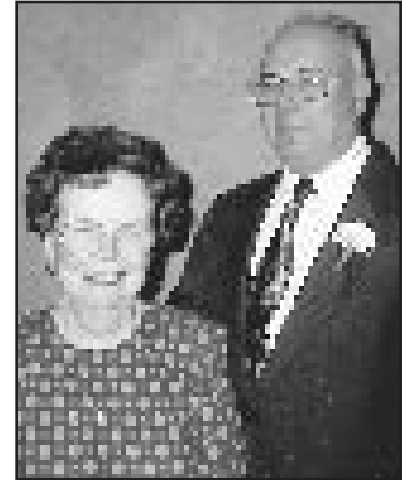
The couple are active in their church and enjoy fishing.

Morris

Charles and Marcella Morris, 45-year residents of Livonia celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 22 with a noon Mass at St. Michael Catholic Church in Livonia, followed by a dinner reception for family and friends at Joy Manor in Westland.

The couple married on June 21, 1947, at St. Rose Church in Detroit. She is the former Marcella Sweeney.

They have nine children - James S. of Jamaica Plain, Mass., Timothy of Takoma Park, Mo., Sally Anne of Pontiac, Mary Jo Cole and husband Jerry of Beulah, Terence of Middlebury, Vt., Margaret Candela and husband Victor of Troy, Edmond and wife Denise of Garden City, Ellen Laurentius and husband Louis of Livonia and John Smith of Garden City, husband of the late Colleen M. (Morris) Smith. They also have 13 grandchildren.



She worked for Livonia parishes from 1977-1982. She is a member of the St. Michael Women's Guild and volunteers on election days.

An avid fisherman, he retired from Parliament Design. He annually participates in the MS150 bike tour.

The couple's gift to each other is a trip to Ireland in September.

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Church, minister mark anniversaries

The Rev. Gene Sorensen and Unity of Livonia Church will celebrate their 25th and 35th anniversary, respectively, on June 22, 1997.

Both Sorensen and Unity have witnessed a lifetime of changes.

"I wanted to become a minister as far back as junior high school," Sorensen said. "My faith was challenged in college as I majored in philosophy. But our Unity beliefs relate to a branch of philosophy (metaphysics) and can be traced back to philosophers like Plato. So, I followed my calling after all."

The native of Sacramento, Calif., graduated from Sacramento College in 1959 with a bachelor of arts degree with a philosophy major and speech minor. He then attended Unity School and began his early clergy years with churches in Fort Worth, Texas, and Shreveport, La., and metropolitan Los Angeles.

A decade earlier, in Livonia, a soon-to-grow suburb of Detroit, a group of people met at the Howard Johnson Hotel for the purpose of establishing a Unity Church in the Western Suburbs, and thus began Unity of West Suburbia.

The Rev. Diane Siemen held Tuesday night meetings until Sunday services were held that summer at Bentley High School also in Livonia.

The next effort took place around 1964 when a house and two other buildings and property on Curtis Road were acquired by the church. An airplane hangar was used for the church, a garage became the Sunday School and the family room housed kindergarten. That property was then sold for the acquisition of the current church property on Five Mile Road just east of Middlebelt. Worship services were moved to Clarenceville High School.

Seaman left in 1969 and she was succeeded by the Rev. Marilyn White. On June 23, 1972, the Rev. Gene Sorensen, now pastor, broke ground for the current church structure.

"Early in the history of Unity churches, I'd guess about 80 percent of our ministers were women," Sorensen said. "I feel that women in the Unity ministry have an intuitive grasp of spiritual things and are good



Gene Sorensen

communicators. Also, in those days, it was hard for a man with a family because a minister's pay was pretty low. Many of our female ministers were married, so they depended on their husband to earn a living while they tended to the church."

Upon receiving his appointment as pastor of Unity of Livonia in Spring of 1972 Sorensen, his wife, Lucille, and their three young sons piled into their American Motors Rambler Marlin family sports car and made the trek across the country to Livonia.

"I remember my first service, I was a little nervous and I popped a button on my suit," Sorensen recalled. "Our property consisted of 3 1/2 acres of mostly weeds, that white house and a green shack where I set up my office."

With Livonia now anchoring the burgeoning western Metro Detroit suburbs, Unity sought to expand its operation and attract the increasing neighborhood population.

"We experienced tremendous growth," Sorensen reflected recently. "Bill Lindhout, our Church architect, won an award for our facility on Five Mile Road (just east of Middlebelt). People had to walk on planks of wood over the mud because our parking lot was not paved. Our 125 members quickly grew to 250 persons, the capacity of our auditorium."

As Unity of Livonia Church attendance exploded, so did plans for the facility. The church has had three major building programs and the entire facility consists of 15,000 square feet of meeting

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rooms and church auditorium.

During the '70s growth phase, Unity hosted off-premise services at the Renaissance Center in Detroit attracting 760 people to a speech by Ruth Carter, sister of then-president Jimmy Carter and an Easter Service in 1988 at the Mai Kai Theatre that drew 1,200 people.

According to Sorensen, zoning problems with the city, and a general trend towards downsizing by corporate America, were among the factors that caused Unity to re-think its "big is better" growth plans.

"People say I've changed, and I probably have," Sorensen said. "To paraphrase a line from a Kevin Costner movie 'Field of Dreams,' there is a line of thought 'build it and they will come.' But that's not necessarily true. Bigger, in the world of churches is not always better."

"Today, I focus on the spiritual needs of our people," Sorensen said. "We hired a professional church administrator (Lorraine Kuhl) to tend to the business matters of our institution. We are debt-free and the Unity church seems to have the right message for the time. I was born to be a minister and that's what I enjoy doing."

Today, Unity of Livonia Church holds a variety of church services each week including two on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. plus a full schedule of non-denominational activities such as yoga classes, self-help meetings, events for senior citizens and others.

Sorensen lists watching his three sons grow up and move into successful careers, trips with his congregation to the Holy Land, Alaska and the Caribbean among the highlights of his career.

"Both Lucille and I have enjoyed this community tremendously," he said. "It is a great community. Our boys got a good education here, the people have been and are wonderful."

"Our focus for now and the future is a quality ministry," he said. "Our church is and wants to be an integral part of this wonderful community. We want to be good neighbors."