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# WATCH THE MAGIC HAPPEN

## MSU BASKETBALL LEGEND EARVIN "MAGIC" JOHNSON WILL SIGN COPIES OF HIS NEW BOOK TUESDAY, PAGE 3A

SETH WENIG/AP

The State News

UNIVERSITY

# New trustees prep for role by working with officials

By Justin Harris
THE STATE NEWS

When the MSU Board of Trustees meets Friday, two new faces will closely watch how things are run, in preparation for their time on MSU's governing board.

Elected in November, Democrats Dianne Byrum and Diann Woodard will take their place on the board in January. Attending Friday's board meeting will cap a preparation process that started before the election.

"I really started (preparing) during the time between state convention and election, where I met with several people from different departments on campus and just did some research," Byrum said.

As members of the Board of Trustees, Byrum and Woodard will be responsible for knowing about a wide variety of issues and topics — including the university's budget of almost $2 billion, its full spectrum of academic programs and its expanding worldwide presence.

MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon said new trustees are similar to new students in that they come to MSU familiar with only certain aspects of the institution.

"It's a matter of knowing the array of academic programs and how those fit together," she said. "I think that's why they're eight-year terms. It gives them a chance to start in a place they're interested in and comfortable with and learn and grow more and more with the university."

Woodard, a Detroit-area school administrator, said she's talked to several trustees on the board in an effort to get acquainted with her position.

"It wasn't so much about advice — they were all just very welcoming," she said.

Woodard said although she's read about MSU-related issues online in addition to her conversations with the trustees, some first-meeting jitters

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"Even though you don't feel it at the time, the support is there."

**Arlene Nickless,** "Extreme Makeover" recipient

PHOTOS BY SAM RUIZ/THE STATE NEWS

**Mason High School students, from left, Haley Scott, 17; Rachael Love, 18; Mike McConnell, 18; and Stacy Olivas, 18, cheer Sunday as the Nickless family enters Breslin Center for the viewing party of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."**

# BUILDING A FUTURE

'Extreme Makeover: Home Edition' episode featuring Holt family shown at Breslin Center

By Krystle Wagner
THE STATE NEWS

While most of the country watched ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" from the comfort of their homes Sunday, about 500 people braved snowy weather to attend a viewing party featuring an episode filmed in Holt. During seven days in late September, community members and businesses joined forces with the extreme makeover team to build a new home for the Nickless family.

Tim Nickless, a father of three, died in January after contracting Hepatitis C. The former critical care nurse was pricked by a needle on the job. He left his wife and family behind in a home that had fallen into disrepair.

"I've learned that in tough times, you really need to

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**Brothers Noah, 9, left, and Andrew Nickless, 7, hold their mother, Arlene Nickless, as she speaks about the death of her husband at the "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" viewing party Sunday evening at Breslin Center.**

CAPITOL

# MICH. LEGISLATURE TO CAST FINAL VOTES BEFORE END OF SESSION

By Kelly House
THE STATE NEWS

With six work days left for the state Legislature this year, there are several issues that could see action before the holiday break. There's no telling which, if any, will be passed, however.

The Michigan House of Representatives and Senate will return to session Tuesday after a two-week fall break.

The Legislature has been largely inactive for the second half of the year, but there is potential for a lot of action before the final day of session, said Jack McHugh, a senior legislative analyst for the Mackinac Center for Public Policy.

"They could do a lot of damage," he said.

Bill Ballenger, editor and publisher of Inside Michigan Politics, said measures that could see action include proposals to expand Detroit's Cobo Center and create a light rail transit system on Detroit's Woodward Avenue. He said a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan-supported health care reform bill and a statewide smoking ban also might be up for a vote.

With the Nov. 4 election decided, many outbound legislators might try to pass their pet initiatives while they still have the chance, Ballenger said.

"Legislators want to get little dog- and cat-bills passed that would build their legacy," he said.

Although he won't be leaving office at the end of the year, state Rep. Mark Meadows, D-East Lansing, said he hopes to see action on two bills he has sponsored: The Mozelle Senior Medical Alert Act, which is scheduled for a Dec. 10 hearing, and a bill to protect children from being left alone in motor vehicles.

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SCOUT'S HONOR

**A local Boy Scouts chapter is looking to form a first-ever Eagle Scout university club, page 3A.**

HOPES DASHED

**MSU volleyball wins its first match and loses the second, eliminating hopes for an NCAA berth, page 1B.**

Weather

**Snow**

High 33° | Low 24°

Three-day forecast, page 2A

RESEARCH

# MSU professor shares expertise in climate change study

By Kayla Habermehl
THE STATE NEWS

An MSU professor will help "give science advice to the nation" in regard to future environmental policy.

Thomas Dietz, the director of the MSU Environmental Science & Policy Program, was selected to participate in the America's Climate Choices study, sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, or NAS. The data gleaned from the two-year study will help advise the U.S. Congress on its environmental policies.

Researchers will split the eight-part study between two groups. A main committee will study four topics, while specialized panels will each study one of the four other topics, said Ian Kraucunas, a senior program officer within NAS.

The individual panels will each focus on one of the following: how to limit the amount of climate change in the future, the adaptations that will have to be made to live with climate change, how to further understand climate change and its impact on people and ecology, and how to inform decisions and tactics in regards to climate change.

Dietz, chosen from about 1,200 nominations, will serve on the main committee, the Committee on America's Climate Choices. He also will serve as vice chairman of one of the four subcommittees, Advancing the Science of Climate Change.

"There aren't that many of these appointments, period ... It's an honor for anyone at MSU to be selected for something like this."

**Jeff Andresen,** Department of Geography associate professor

Dietz said a contributing factor to his appointment is MSU's reputation as an innovator. He said MSU collects data from computer models to make predictions about climate change and its impact on Michigan. The university also plays a role in work done to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"What's really unique at MSU is we bring in people who study how decisions are made," Dietz said. "We always work with stakeholders."

Jeff Andresen, an associate professor in the Department of Geography and one of Dietz's colleagues, said the appointment reflects years of hard work.

"There aren't that many of these appointments, period," Andresen said. "It's an honor for anyone at MSU to be selected for something like this."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provided almost $6 million for the study, Kraucunas said.

"Congress and the government has no influence (on the study)," Dietz said. "The studies are very carefully peer reviewed. Congress doesn't get to take a look at the study in advance."

The study will use data from existing scientific liter-

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