



National Coney Island coming to downtown E.L.

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Lansing rally promotes Mich., American pride

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SN editorial board: Public should know Sotomayor's views

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MICHIGAN

GM ENTERS BANKRUPTCY, EFFECT MIGHT BE LIMITED

From staff and wire reports

General Motors Corp. went into bankruptcy protection Monday and the effects will ripple through Michigan with the closure of seven plants, but they might not be detrimental to Lansing, experts say.

The fallen giant, the largest U.S. industrial company ever to enter bankruptcy, is shedding some 21,000 jobs and 2,600 dealers. Sparing few communities, the retrenchment amounts to one-third of its work force and 40 percent of its dealerships. About 8,640 of those jobs are in Michigan where the unemployment rate is 12.9 percent.

"We are acting as reluctant shareholders because that is the only way to help GM succeed," President Barack Obama said of the temporary nationalization of the 100-year-old company.

Robert Wiseman, an MSU professor of management, said this outcome has been expected possibly for a couple of years and the effects on Lansing might be minimal.

"The effect on the Lansing area will be somewhat muted because they have already closed down (plants) they should have closed down here," he said. "The new manufacturing facilities that they have built here are probably pretty much safe and will be part of the new GM that emerges."

Statewide, however, the failure of GM could cause additional bankruptcies, Wiseman said. "There is a ripple effect throughout the supply chain," he said. "As they eliminate brands like Pontiac, that is going to have an effect on the supplier network and could push some suppliers over the edge to bankruptcy themselves."

Reckless spending and investing was influential in GM's bankruptcy said Jackie Douches, a general business and pre-law senior.

"This is a long time coming," Douches said. "GM has been giving away too many benefits to those who are fired and retired. This bankruptcy is nothing but good."

Obama lauded what he called a "viable, achievable plan that will give this iconic American company a chance to rise again" as GM followed Chrysler into bankruptcy court. Of Detroit's Big Three automakers, only Ford Motor Corp. has avoided bankruptcy restructuring and has not taken federal bailout money.

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Down on the Farm

More students opting to take on farming opportunities in summer, as career choices



PHOTOS BY SEAN COOK/THE STATE NEWS

MSU Student Organic Farm employee Ben Vanos picks spinach and tosses it into a bucket. The spinach later will be rinsed and boxed before either being taken to the stand on Farm Lane where the farm sells vegetables or it will go to a Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA, member. CSA members pay for a share of the farm, and in return receive a weekly box of the organic vegetables.

By Daniel Luscombe
THE STATE NEWS

Growing up in metro Detroit, Adam Montri, outreach coordinator for the MSU Student Organic Farm, didn't consider farming to be a career choice. "I definitely grew up in the suburbs and thought of agriculture as something you did on the weekend or after school or that kind of thing," he said.

While a student at MSU, Montri spent time working at the Student Organic Farm, which eventually led him to earn a master's degree in horticulture from Penn State University. Now, Montri, who graduated from MSU in 2001, owns his own organic farm in Bath, Mich.

He's one of a growing number of people who have or are pursuing agricultural education through internships on organic farms.

Ethan Schaffer, one of the creators of Organic Volunteers and the corresponding Web site Growfood.org, which has more than 20,000 members, said there has

been an increased interest in internships and volunteer opportunities on organic farms. Web site membership has increased from 300 to 600 new members per month in 2009, he said. "Our membership has doubled since the recession, and we've done no extra advertising or marketing," Schaffer said.

Homegrown interest

Students are encouraged to garner experience outside of MSU if they want to pursue organic farming, said Jeremy Moghtader, an academic specialist in the MSU Department of Horticulture and instructor on the

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Students in the Organic Farming Certificate Program Lauren Bonney, left, and Joanna Lehrman, talk while rinsing aphids from the leaves of a fresh batch of soy. The soy plants pictured are among the first greens harvested from the field this season.

For an audio slideshow of students on MSU's Student Organic Farm, visit stateneews.com/multimedia.

NATION

Sotomayor criticism not likely to affect her Supreme Court nomination

By Meredith Skrzypczak
THE STATE NEWS

The criticism surrounding the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court has escalated since her nomination, but MSU faculty are regarding it as nothing more than political chatter.

"I think if the Republicans are smart, they will focus on her judicial philosophy and leave the political gamesmanship out of it," said Frank S. Ravitch, an MSU law professor and Supreme

Court expert. Only a bombshell could sway the confirmation of Sotomayor, and the only thing that should matter is her judicial record, Ravitch said.

Sotomayor is being critiqued by the media, state and U.S. officials for a statement she made at a 2001 lecture. In the lecture, Sotomayor said a "wise Latina woman" would more often reach a "better conclusion" than a white man who "has not lived that life."

Many disagree on whether the

meaning of Sotomayor's statement is different when put in context with the entirety of the lecture.

"I think she probably feels that way," said Benjamin Kleinerman, an MSU assistant professor of constitutional democracy. "It's probably more a position of difference—a Latina woman is going to see the law differently than a white man ... not that she sees the law better."

Others said proper context would make a difference in the

statement's meaning. "I think that some important context has to be provided for that," said Brian Kalt, an MSU law professor and constitutional law expert. "To make the comments certainly less objectionable than they appeared out of context."

Besides what Sotomayor has said in the past, other critics bring up her Catholic upbringing and its effect on the dynamics of the Supreme Court. "I suspect that is just going

to be an issue that the media is going to raise," Ravitch said. "I don't think that one's religious background should be relevant to one's judicial confirmation unless one is unable to maintain judicial balance because of one's religious background."

Sotomayor is expected to stay mum on her beliefs when it comes to certain topics such as abortion, gay rights and the death penalty, Kalt said.

"What we've seen in the last few hearings is that the nominees

don't want to look like they have pre-judged the issue; they want to appear open-minded," Kalt said. "Some experts believe with a need for Hispanic votes, Republicans might stray from harsh criticisms during the confirmation hearings."

"I think there's two schools of thought in the Republican Party right now," Kleinerman said. "There are those that really want to go after her ... but I think

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