



To see the photo column Sign of the Times, which details the struggles of the state's economy, visit statenews.com/multimedia

MSU police sergeant, 51, dies of natural causes

CAMPUS+CITY, PAGE 3

E.L. project developer faces financial woes

By Kate Jacobson
THE STATE NEWS

An East Lansing-based development company in charge of a major downtown overhaul is facing financial problems across Michigan and in other states.

Strathmore Development Company, the developer behind East Lansing's City Center II project, is up against various foreclosures and unpaid property taxes for several developments inside and outside the state.

City Center II is a \$16.4 million mixed-use downtown development slated for the corner of Abbot Road and Grand River and Evergreen avenues.

Recently, seven properties that are a part of the City Center II project went into temporary foreclosure because of unpaid property taxes and defaults on a loan agreement, said Eric Sanko, vice president of special assets of Huntington National Bank.

This is not the first time this has happened to Strathmore. A

development in Bear Creek, Mich., went into foreclosure in March. Emmet County documents show National City Bank filed for foreclosure against Strathmore's Bear Creek properties.

"This is a project unrelated to City Center and part of an overall restructuring of the National City Bank debt that has been settled and is in the process of closing," said Scott Chappelle, the head of Strathmore Development Company, in an e-mail.

Other documents from Emmet

County show Strathmore owes more than \$51,000 in property taxes for part of the Bear Creek development, with some delinquencies dating to 2006.

The Bear Creek development has experienced problems before the 2009 foreclosure. The company placed lawsuits on both the township and the sewer authority of Bear Creek, citing it had faced delays in obtaining land-use approvals and sewer connections. The sewer authority was dismissed in the fall as having

done nothing wrong, said Stephen Tressider, an attorney representing the sewer authority. However, the decision is being appealed and will go to the Michigan Court of Appeals.

"Nobody's ever found that we inappropriately delayed anything once we knew we had to extend the capacity by the time it needed to be extended," Tressider said.

Chappelle sent out a press release Wednesday that stated many of the company's projects are going well, and some have

come to fruition. The release included a passage stating Strathmore had completed the construction and delivery of a municipal water well project for the city of Petoskey. However, Alan Terry, Petoskey's acting city manager, said Wednesday the company has a water well the city is interested in buying but has not purchased.

"It's well he had drilled years ago and we are looking to purchase."

See PROJECT on page 2

PRIVACY

MSU STRICT ON REVEALING INFORMATION

By Megan Hart
THE STATE NEWS

MSU withholds more student information than required by federal student privacy laws, university officials said.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, allows universities to release directory information about students without their consent, including home addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. FERPA guidelines were changed in December 2008. Earlier this month, MSU updated its policy to be in compliance with the federal law. As long as the university does not violate the federal law, it remains eligible for federal aid.

"We do have the duty to protect student information," MSU associate registrar Traci Gulick said. "FERPA says that we may disclose the information. It doesn't say that we must."

Before last year, MSU would release student directory information when it received a Freedom of Information Act request, but in July 2008, the Michigan Supreme Court ruling information could be withheld under the Freedom of Information Act privacy exemption. Since the decision, MSU has decided to not disclose directory information requested under FOIA.

"If a request for student directory information" was made under a FOIA request, we couldn't release that information," MSU FOIA Officer Radhika Pasricha said.

University of Michigan spokesman Rick Fitzgerald said his university's policy is not to release students' home addresses or phone numbers. In the 2008 case v. University of Michigan, the federal court sued for access to a list of U-M employees who didn't work for the university. Information released. The court ruled directory information could be kept private.

"My understanding was that it was the University of Michigan that sought to protect some of that information, and the court agreed that we could," he said.

Other public universities in the state have similar policies regarding student privacy.

Wayne State University assistant general counsel Linda Galane and Eastern Michigan University general counsel Kenneth McKersie said their universities review FOIA requests individually, but it's unlikely they would release students' addresses or phone numbers. Central Michigan University legal assistant Kathy Kelly said the university probably would release one student's information, unless that student had requested the information.

See PRIVACY on page 2

MSU summer camps barely profit



KATIE RAUSCH/THE STATE NEWS

Girls participating in the three-day volleyball camp warm up together Tuesday afternoon at Jensen Field House. Almost 400 girls between sixth and 12th grade participated in the camp, which included tutorials from the MSU volleyball team as well as coaching from the MSU players.

By Meredith Skrzypczak
THE STATE NEWS

Thousands of dollars in summer camp and program fees are collected by MSU each year, but profits for the university are lower than some might expect.

Some programs and camps break even, while others generate a small profit for the university. The money goes toward everything from salaries for instructors to housing and feeding campers. Although programs range from less than \$50 to about \$1,500, the university isn't collectively making a large profit from them.

Money-makers

Last summer, the MSU Athletics Department accrued a profit of less than \$100,000 from the summer camps program, said John Lewandowski, associate athletic director for communications, in an e-mail.

The money then became part of the overall Athletics Department budget, he said. Residence halls on campus generated \$2.5 million in revenues from students in some overnight Spartan Youth Programs last summer, said Carla Hills, communications manager for University Outreach and Engagement.

Any net income accumulated by the MSU Division of Residential and Hospitality Services is used to renovate facilities such as dorms, said Bob Patterson, chief financial officer for the Division of Residential and Hospitality Services.

Revenue generated by the summer camps held at MSU might indirectly affect students, he said.

"If we can get some of the money from the summer camps ... that does help to reduce the cost for room and board for the students," Patterson said.

The reductions would be very small because summer camps are a small percentage of total



KATIE RAUSCH/THE STATE NEWS

Michelle Nelson, a comparative cultures and politics senior, goes over positioning with a group of girls she coached Tuesday afternoon at Jensen Field House. Nelson, who is a middle blocker for MSU's volleyball team, joined the rest of her teammates in helping run the three-day volleyball camp.

"We don't really do it to make a profit. We do it more to have people exposed to our programs."

Jillian Winn, outreach specialist for the Department of Telecommunication, Information Studies and Media

business, he said.

Colleges and their departments hold programs for thousands of students ages 6-18 throughout the summer, with some price tags as high as \$1,900.

Despite these costs, individual colleges must cover

camp and program expenses.

High profits are not realized by many of the colleges and departments holding summer programs, but creating a profit is not the goal, university officials said.

See CAMPS on page 2

TECHNOLOGY

New company helps clients use Internet

By Kate Jacobson
THE STATE NEWS

When Julieann Gibbons was a child struggling with Crohn's disease, she found her only way to communicate with the rest of the world was through her computer.

"I looked at the Internet as my only way to do anything," Gibbons said.

"My mind has just developed like that. I look at everything going, 'How can we do this online?'"

After attending MSU for four years and as a part of ASMSU, MSU's undergraduate student government, Gibbons has started her own business, iStrategies, which is focused on Internet communication.

Located in the East Lansing Technology Innovation Center, 325 E. Grand River Ave., Gibbons helps clients strategize how to use the Internet and social networking Web sites to their benefit. Some of her clientele include nonprofit organizations and campaigning politicians.

"I help them do whatever they're trying to do, whether it's market a new program, or if it's just general outreach to the public," she said. "I put together a strategy that all kind of work together through the greater goal."

Gibbons works closely with Cliff Lampe, an MSU professor of telecommunication, information studies and media, whose research deals with social networking. Lampe said he sees social media expanding to more companies and organizations in the future.

"My own sense is that people, especially nonprofits and campaigns, are struggling with all of the options that social media can give them," Lampe said.

"(Gibbons) is on the cutting edge of a service that a lot of people are going to find that they need."

Director of Alumni Career Services John Hill also works with Gibbons, traveling with her around Michigan to give talks about how to use social media. Being from MSU, both Gibbons and Hill have the advantage of affiliation when it comes to networking through the Internet.

"When you're looking at an opportunity to find clients, to find employees, you often look towards affiliation," Hill said. "They've become a very good business tool, a good networking tool."

Gibbons said she wanted to start her business in her home state of Michigan because she fears small start-up companies such as hers can make Michigan grow.

"I think the Mid-Michigan area is a really ripe area for small business growth," she said.

To see a video of a volleyball camp, visit statenews.com/multimedia.