



ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CLINIC: The law schools at Wayne State University and the University of Windsor are creating an international environmental law clinic that will give students experience with Great Lakes issues that overlap the countries' border, such as invasive species and water quality.

-TINA LAM

Detroit Free Press

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MSU prepared for state aid cuts

But Snyder's drop more than expected

By MAUREEN GROPPE
GANNETT WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — Michigan State University prepared for a big drop in state funding, but not one as deep as the budget cuts proposed last week by Gov. Rick Snyder.

MSU budgeted for a 13% cut, but Snyder proposed 15% — and a proposed change in revenue sharing for local governments would have an additional impact, MSU President Lou Anna Simon said Friday. MSU, and the state's other

universities, face even deeper cuts under Snyder's budget plan if they fail to hold tuition increases at or below 7%.

Still, Simon called the budget proposal a "brutal reality... but not a surprising reality."

Simon spoke at a panel discussion at the Brookings Institution in Washington, a public policy think tank, on how state and local governments can recover from the recession while making investments needed to prepare

for the future.

Panelist Mike Finney, head of the Michigan Economic Development Corp., said Michigan fell into recession first but wants to lead the nation out. "We will solve our structural deficit that our state faces and many states face."

The budget cuts some taxes, raises others and includes a range of spending cuts, including to universities, schools and in revenue-sharing payments for cities and townships.



Michigan State University President Lou Anna Simon called Gov. Rick Snyder's budget brutal, but not surprising.

Simon said the revenue-sharing change will affect MSU Extension, which serves every county through youth and economic development, land-use studies and other programs. About 30% of its funding comes from communities.

She said the reduction in state aid to the university

comes on top of cuts in past years that, combined, have reduced state funding by 25% over about five years. "There's been death by a thousand little cuts along the way where we've had to adjust."

At the same time, the number of students has increased, and the amount of money MSU spends per student is the smallest among Big Ten schools. But because of the state's structural deficit, MSU had prepared for cuts, including eliminating retiree health care benefits for employees hired after June 30 of last year.

Other panelists emphasized that governments have to prioritize spending while dealing with budget deficits.

"The governors and the states are under tremendous pressure not just to balance budgets, and not just to restart their economies, but frankly, to transform their economies," said Bruce Katz, who heads Brookings' Metropolitan Policy Program. "There really is no going back after this recession to the economy that (preceded) the recession."

■ FREE PRESS EDUCATION WRITER LORI HIGGINS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT.

Workers' rights rally is today

It's in solidarity with Wisconsin protesters

By DAWSON BELL
FREE PRESS LANSING BUREAU

A coalition of union and liberal activist organizations will gather today at the state Capitol in Lansing to protest what they regard as attacks on the rights of workers in Wisconsin and across the nation.

The noontime Rally to Save the American Dream is a coordinated effort led by public employee unions and MoveOn.org to turn out demonstrators at state capitols around the country.

More than 700 people had signed up online to attend the Michigan event by early Friday evening.

"It's to show support for organized labor, which has been under attack since November," when Republicans gained control of the U.S. House and many state legislatures, including Michigan's, said Ken Moore, president of the Michigan State Employees Association.

Organizers asked attendees to wear red and white, the colors of the University of Wisconsin, as a show of solidarity with demonstrators who have been swarming the Capitol in Madison in an attempt to block legislation that would sharply curtail the bargaining rights of public employees there.

Although the national focus will be on Wisconsin, Moore said he expects plenty of discussion at the Lansing event of initiatives by Gov. Rick Snyder and legislative Republicans to curb labor's clout.

Several thousand demonstrators appeared at the state Capitol on Tuesday and Wednesday to protest efforts to end compulsory arbitration for police and firefighters; dump requirements that workers on public construction projects be paid union wages, and give local school and municipal emergency managers the authority to nullify union contracts.

More information on the rally is at http://pol.moveon.org/event/events/index.html?action_id=238.

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■ WISCONSIN TEACHERS ARE WARNED OF LAYOFFS. 7A

AUTORAMA ROARS



Visitors pass a 1937 Ford Street Rod at the 59th annual Meguiar's Autorama, which kicked off Friday at Cobo Center in Detroit.

Photos by WILLIAM ARCHIE/Detroit Free Press

59th annual Meguiar's Autorama

When: 9 a.m.-10 p.m. today; 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday

Where: Cobo Center, Detroit

Tickets: At the event: \$18, \$5 for children 6-12. At O'Reilly Auto Parts: \$15, \$4 for children 6-12.

For more information: www.autorama.com/casi/show/detroit.php



Myron Mitchell, 48, of Burton takes a photo of a car on display. About 1,000 vehicles are showcased.



Thousands of attendees admire the vehicles on display. Autorama is billed as America's greatest hot rod show.

HOT RIDES CATCH EYES

Cobo custom car show starts up

By ERIC D. LAWRENCE
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

With every pass of Paul Caudill's polishing cloth, the red on his '57 Chevy got a little brighter.

Caudill, a Taylor resident and General Motors retiree, was prepping the four-door automatic for the 59th edition of Detroit's annual homage to all things custom and chrome: the Autorama, which got under way Friday at Cobo Center.

Caudill said he bought the car — a make and model he favored growing up in Kentucky — after his wife, Pauline, died of cancer in 2008. He said he used the \$5,000 he got from selling Tonka toys the couple had collected over the years to buy it. The couple would have been married 50 years this month.

"She wanted us to have something like this," he said.

Caudill's ride is one of about 1,000 vehicles at the Autorama, which attracts visitors from across the country. About 165,000 people came last year. The show runs through Sunday and showcases everything from rebuilt classic cruisers and drag racers, to souped-up motorcycles and custom bicycles.

This year's show got off to an eventful start when a racing truck accidentally struck a replica of the General Lee, of "Dukes of Hazzard" fame, as vehicles were setting up Thursday afternoon. The truck's driver and a bystander who also was hit were treated and released

from an area hospital. The truck driver left the show, but the iconic 1969 orange Dodge Charger is on display with a few dents and scrapes that are partially obscured by a "Dukes" movie banner.

In addition to the General Lee, the Autorama features several other TV and movie cars, including the Monkeemobile and the 1966 Chrysler Imperial that starred as the Black Beauty in the "Green Hornet" series.

Raymond Mrosewske built his 1964 Plymouth Belvedere as a replica of one of NASCAR racer Richard Petty's cars. The retired Marine from New Baltimore spent 12 years matching each detail, including spending \$1,900 on some of the decals.

Now, Mrosewske said, the car is worth \$500,000: "I built 90% of the car myself. Just about everything is new or rebuilt."

When Petty saw the car last summer during an event at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum in Auburn Hills, he photographed the dashboard.

"He said, 'That's one beautiful car,'" Mrosewske said.

Garrett Barker, 16, and Nicholas Green, 17, were part of a class trip from a Bath, N.Y.-area vocational school. They both said they want to work with cars.

"I'd like to take something that's not in the best condition and turn it into something like new," Green said.

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Wayne

DETROIT

Godbee to say police to return to precincts

Police Chief Ralph Godbee Jr. is expected to announce Monday a return to precincts for the department.

"This realignment is a step toward moving toward a precinct structure because the mayor and chief heard the people say this is something they wanted," Karen Dumas, Mayor Dave Bing's spokeswoman, said Friday evening.

When Bing campaigned for mayor in the 2009 special election, he said he would return the city's Police Department to a precinct structure.

Officer John Bennett, who critiques Bing and the department on his blog, said acting inspectors were named Friday for the new precincts.

Michigan

2 con artists told to repay churches

Michael J. Morris and William T. Perkins, two Maryland men serving prison terms of up to 20 years for defrauding 21 Michigan churches, were ordered Friday to pay \$363,416 in restitution.

Joy Yearout, a spokeswoman for the Michigan Attorney General's Office, said the fraud involved an attempt to collect \$660,000 in payments for phony leases of educational video terminals to the churches.

Poll: Most oppose guns in more places

Sixty-eight percent of Michigan residents surveyed in a poll oppose legislation that would let people with concealed weapons permits carry handguns in schools, day care centers, sports arenas and churches.

Poll results released Friday by EPIC-MRA show 29% of the 600 people questioned Feb. 12-17 favor the legislation; 3% said they are undecided. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

— COMPILED FROM REPORTS BY NAOMI R. PATTON, BILL LAITNER AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS