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Information session - Wednesday, September 14
407 Rudder
7:00 p.m.
Any questions call -- Sabrina 845-1515

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Shootin' hoops
John Lucas, guard for the Milwaukee Bucks, helps Heather Underwood, 11, of Bryan, with her basketball techniques Tuesday afternoon at Aerofit. Lucas warned area youth of the danger of drugs.

Mafia jokes not amusing for lawyer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — If you link Italian-Americans to organized crime and the Mafia, generally jokingly, you will have to answer Gabe Bevilaqua.

And usually wind up apologizing. The 40-year-old lawyer is chairman of the Commission for State Justice of the Pennsylvania Grand Lodge of the Order of the Sons of Italy, which claims 58,000 members.

He fights discrimination, racism and ethnic stereotyping anywhere he sees or hears it — in a newspaper column, an advertisement, on television, from a comedian.

He does not deny that some Italian-Americans are involved in criminal activity, just as there are criminals among blacks, Irish, Hispanics, Poles, Jews, Anglos, and others.

"The question really is whether crime organizes along ethnic lines and I say it doesn't," Bevilaqua told a reporter.

He acts as the moral conscience for the 58,000 members of the Pennsylvania Sons of Italy, and even Italian-Americans everywhere across the country.

"The fascination the public has with the underworld always seems to center on Italian-Americans, and many wrongfully feel that organized crime equals Italian-Americans," said Bevilaqua.

Bevilaqua was born in Rome, Italy, who came to the U.S. with his parents at the age of 8.

He claims his anti-discrimination task centers on the next generation of Italian-Americans.

"Will they carry this burden as they try to get into better schools?" Bevilaqua asked.

"How many will shy away from associating with them?" he asked.

"That's the bottom line that worries me," he said.

"With about 30 percent of Pennsylvania's population being of Italian origin it is fitting that Pennsylvania lead the way," he said.

Getting rid of the bosses makes factory run much more efficiently

MOUNT PLEASANT, Iowa (AP) — The workers at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. plant have found out they can get along just fine without bosses.

For the past two years, the plant has been run by self-directed work groups made up of the 150 or so employees who make industrial and automotive rubber hoses.

It has been a successful experiment, says plant manager Robert Becker, one that is being used at other Goodyear plants.

Instead of having middle-level management positions such as production managers and floor supervisors, each work team chooses a coordinator who brings to Becker the group's ideas and complaints.

"The challenge we make to every person is, don't ever put that coordinator in the position of being an old supervisor," he said. "You're not fulfilling your responsibility as an employee if you put that guy in a supervisory mode."

The self-directed work teams may appear to mirror the way some Japanese companies run their operations, but Becker and officials at company headquarters in Akron, Ohio, said the idea is not the result of Japanese philosophy.

"... As far as we're concerned it's an evolution of what needed to be done in an American factory," Becker said. "It had nothing to do with the Japanese way of doing things."

Becker, who has been plant manager for about a year since moving from Lincoln, Neb., said production has increased more than 40 percent since 1985. Absenteeism and accidents also have declined during that time, he said.

In Goodyear's headquarters, Bill Fair, director of public relations for the company, and Mike Burns, director of organization development, said many of the company's 48 plants in North America are embracing the system in varying degrees.

"We think we have a very successful system at Mount Pleasant. It's on the leading edge of all the systems," said Burns. "The Mount Pleasant plant, overall, is considered a good plant."

Fair said employees at Mount Pleasant and at other Midwest plants, such as in Hannibal, Mo., have adopted "an entrepreneurial attitude" as a result of the work teams. "They view themselves as managing their own jobs," he said.

Becker said it goes beyond that, however.

"We operate on the principal of trust and mutual respect. We trust that our employees will do what is

expected of them, what is right, what is fair," he said.

"Fairness is the principal," Becker. "If you violate that trust, don't give second chances."

The system has made employees more than clock punchers working three shifts a day, nearly seven days a week, he said.

"They really have a fierce sense of ownership of this plant," he said. "They have a fierce sense of pride here in Mount Pleasant."

Pope asks Africans to help stop racism

GABORONE, Botswana (AP) — Standing on South Africa's doorstep, Pope John Paul II called on the people of this desert nation Tuesday to assist victims of racial discrimination who are "deprived of their legitimate rights."

The pope, on a one-day visit to diamond-rich and bone-dry Botswana, praised the nation as "an island of peace in a troubled sea."

Botswana, a landlocked country of 1.1 million people, has never fought a battle in its 22 years of independence despite bordering such turbulent places as Angola, Mozambique, South-West Africa and South Africa.

"You are a peace-loving and friendly people who believe in the basic equality and human dignity of every man and woman," the pontiff said to about 2,000 people who greeted him at the airport, including a choir of bare-breasted, teen-age schoolgirls.

Later, in a speech at the Cathedral of Christ the King, the pontiff clearly referred to South Africa and

"I gladly support your desire to be close to those who are unjustly deprived of their legitimate rights..."

— Pope John Paul II

its apartheid policies of racial segregation, without mentioning the country by name.

"You have witnessed the plight of those who are subjected by law to discrimination," the pontiff told the audience in Gaborone, 10 miles from South Africa's northern border. "I gladly support your desire to be close to those who are unjustly deprived of their legitimate rights and lack decent living conditions."

The pope arrived Tuesday in Zimbabwe, the first stop on his 11-nation tour of southern Africa.

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