

STREET TALK

What You Can't See ...

By Business Journal Staff

Published: June 5, 2006

Science may have found a solution for West Michigan NIMBYs. Since neither 23 is Enough's gambling opposition or Mayor **George Heartwell**'s strip club ban are being waged for moral reasons (It's all about blight, baby! And bigger government!), it would be safe to assume that if no one can see the offending institutions, development and quality of life should continue unabated.

According to the journal Science, physicists **J.B. Pendry** of Imperial College London and **David Smith** and **David Schurig** of Duke University have developed a way to make high-tech "metamaterials" that can funnel light around an object and make it invisible.

Within a year, the scientists hope to be able to shield equipment from microwave radiation, and within a decade provide protection from visible light in the manner of **Harry Potter**'s invisibility cloak.

But rather than an Invisible Man, suppose the material could be used to create a giant tarp, or perhaps an exterior wall covering. This way, neighbors can rest assured that kids and customers won't be gawking at the XXXs next door — because they won't be able to see it!

- Michigan's three-year-old Club Game program was the second highest grossing U.S. club program last year. The games, commonly found in restaurants and bars, recorded median sales per retailer of \$13,000 per month. Club Keno led the way with a 61 percent increase; Pull Tab sales were up 56 percent. In total, Club Games were responsible for \$82 million of the state lottery's record \$667.6 million contribution to the State School Aid Fund.

According to Michigan Beverage Journal, four West Michigan establishments ranked among the top 20 Club Game retailers in the state. Florentine's Pizza Restaurant and Sports Bar in Grand Rapids was the highest grossing establishment in the state. Eldo's Bar & Grill in Grand Rapids and Stan's Bar in Spring Lake broke the top 10. Tommy Brann's Steak House in Wyoming clocked in at No. 14.

Tommy Brann is a 23 is Enough member, but he's apparently not on the same page as the group's lawmaker members, or at least state representative **Fulton Sheen**.

Before the U.S. House Resources Committee, the Allegan Republican was asked by Saginaw Democrat **Dale Kildee**, "Has your organization taken any position against this type of gaming which takes place in Michigan (that) has really proliferated?"

"Are you asking me how I feel about repealing the lottery?"

"Yes."

"I would be happy to put that bill forward ... At this point the main concern of 23 is Enough is just that: 23 casinos is enough... We haven't discussed whether they support or are against the lottery." **BJX**

GRAND RAPIDS BUSINESS JOURNAL EXPRESS

549 Ottawa Ave. NW Suite 201
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-1444