

alling from the elv

Robert Petress, 41, of Detroit and Redford resident Damon

raining nom the sky

'Shower' of metal came from wing of Air Alaska cargo plane

BY DARRELL CLEM

STAFF WRITER

An Air Alaska cargo plane lost part of a wing over central Westland on Saturday afternoon, but authorities reported no crashes and no injuries on the ground from falling debris.

The plane littered metal debris on the northwest corner of Marquette and Carlson, on John Glenn High School property and in a back yard of a home on Fischer Drive, near Cherry Hill and Carlson, police reported.

"It was an Air Álaska cargo plane that was landing at Willow Run Airport (in Ypsilanti)," Westland Deputy Chief Alan Ramsden said. "It landed safely." The plane dropped a large metal chunk – part of a forward-section wing – that measured about 4.5 feet by 3 feet. The piece fell near the Marquette-Carlson corner, not far from Central City Park.

Two smaller chunks were found on Glenn High's front driveway area. One piece fell adjacent to the main door and another landed on the easternmost parking lot, according to police reports.

Still a fourth small chunk was found in a back yard by a man who lives on residential Fischer Drive, in the Cherry Oaks subdivision south of Cherry Hill and west of Carlson.

Police checked with Detroit Metro Airport and the Federal Aviation Administration, and FAA officials had iden-

Woman sentenced to jail for setting fire

tified the plane by Tuesday and picked up its missing pieces, which had been stored in a Westland Police Department garage.

The first report of falling plane parts came in about 3:15 p.m. Saturday when an anonymous caller told police that he saw debris falling from the sky near Marquette and Carlson. Police found a silver, yellow and black part of a plane.

Officers checked the area and found the smaller chunks on Glenn High's property. Ramsden learned from FAA officials on Tuesday that the plane already had been repaired.

"It has been fixed," he said, "and it's back in service."

dclem@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110

Two men were bound over for trial on felony charges of fraudulently obtaining new vehicles after waiving their preliminary examinations in 21st District Court Monday.

BY LEANNE ROGERS

STAFF WRITER

Charges against a third man were dismissed without prejudice and expected to be filed again shortly.

The three men, Richard Mayes, 51, of Southgate, Thomas, 37, were charged with more than 250 felony counts in a scam that netted 18 vehicles from dealerships, including what was then-Stu Evans Lincoln Mercury in Garden City.

The charges against the men included multiple counts each of conducting a continuing criminal enter-

PLEASE SEE SCAM, A5

You can be a ball kid for Detroit Pistons!

The Observer \Im Eccentric Newspapers is offering boys and girls ages 12-16 a chance to be a ball girl or ball boy at an upcoming Detroit

Pistons home game at The Palace, Go to www.home-

townlife. com and tell us who's your neihon favorite Piston. The ball girl or ball boy -- selected by random drawing - will receive four tickets (includes the ballperson) to either the Sunday, April 8, Pistons vs. Cleveland Cavaliers game at 1 p.m. or Tuesday, April 17, Pistons vs. Toronto Raptors game at 7:30 p.m. (last home

4

game of the season).

Each ball boy or ball girl will get a chance to rebound with the team before the game,

receive Pistons merchandise and have his/her pic-

> ture taken with a player. There's no purchase necessary. For entrants under age 13, parents will have to fill out the online form. Tickets and other information will be mailed to the win-

ners. There's no purchase necessary. Winners must abide by rules and regu-

must abide by rules and regulations outlined by the Detroit Pistons organization. Deadline to enter is mid-

night April 1.

A Detroit woman who set fire to the front door area of a Westland apartment with three people inside has pleaded guilty to an arson charge.

BY DARRELL CLEM

STAFF WRITER

Keli Angelique Coleman, 28, was sentenced last Friday to nine months in jail and three years of probation for a Dec. 26 fire at Willow Creek Apartments, on Newburgh south of Ford.

Coleman was sentenced by Wayne County Circuit Judge Timothy Kenny after earlier pleading guilty to arson of an occupied dwelling. In return, Wayne County prosecutors agreed to drop three charges of assault with intent to murder.

Had she been convicted as charged, Coleman could have faced penalties ranging up to life in prison.

She was accused of dousing the front door area with gasoline and starting a fire after mistakenly believing that residents had taken her 4-year-old daughter, police said.

Coleman had differences with the child's father, and she believed he had taken the child to the Willow Creek residence of his mother, police said.

Three adults inside the apartment

escaped the fire, which erupted about 11 a.m. Dec. 26 and mostly damaged the front door area. The child was not inside the residence.

An occupant and an arriving police officer managed to put out the fire.

Coleman was ordered to stand trial following a preliminary hearing in January in front of Westland 18th District Judge C. Charles Bokos.

Her defense attorney had argued that she shouldn't face trial because she was only trying to get back a daughter who had been wrongfully taken from her.

dclem@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110



LOCAL NEWS

www.hometownlife.com

It's showtime ...

Glenn thespians present 'Footloose'

BY SUE MASON STAFF WRITER

AZ

(W)

Step aside, Kevin Bacon. You're about to be replaced by J.J. Jefferson when it comes to Fancy footwork.

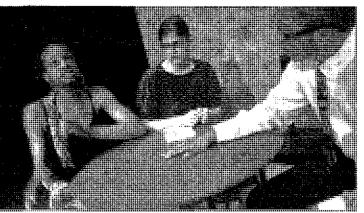
Jefferson will play the role of Ren McCormack in the John Glenn Theatrical Guild's produc--tion of Footloose, which opens this evening for a weekend run at the high school.

Directed by Sheri Grove and Belinda Walakonis-Semak, Footloose will be presented at 7 p.m. today through Saturday at the high school auditorium. Tickets are \$7 for students and \$10 for adults and are available at the door.

"This is a show the kids are "having the most fun with," Grove said. "There's a chemistry between this cast and they're connecting with the characters in the show."

Footloose is the story of Ren and his mother, who move from Chicago to a small farming town where they encounter rigorous flocal edicts, including a ban on dancing, instituted by the local preacher.

The preacher is determined to exercise control over the town's youth that he cannot command in his own home. His rebellious daughter, however, sets her sights on Ren while her roughneck boyfriend sets out to sabotage his reputation with many of the -locals who are eager to believe



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Layanna Young as Ariel argues with her mother Vi, played by Stacey Mayers, and her father, the Rev. Shaw, played by David Sumlin, in a scene from Footloose.

the worst about the new kid. The story that emerges is of a father longing for the son he lost and of a young man aching for

the father who walked out on him.

After several years of doing revues, the guild changed gears this year and went with something "big" and preparing for opening night has been a "rollercoaster ride," according to Grove.

"It seems like it's been a show with multiple obstacles and challenges," she said.

The play is set in multiple locations, so the sets will be "very symbolic, not detailed." The set will have symbolic pieces, allowing the focus to be on the story, she said.

"This story is more about dancing and singing, that's an

important message in the show," she added. "That's what we want to bring out."

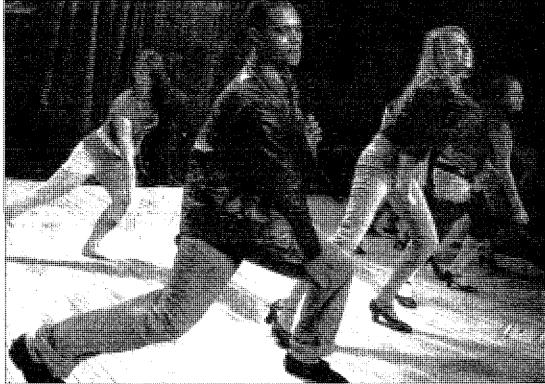
Two students, Julie Flacks and Amber Fernitz are serving as assistant directors.

"I've been in drama for three years and watched my friends take it one," said Flacks, who also plays the role of Ren's mother. "It's something I wanted to do."

The two teens like the idea of having a hand in the production beyond their stage presence. As assistant directors, they help warm up the cast and try to resolve problems that arise.

"I think this is easier to do when you know what the story line is," said Fernitz, who also plays Rusty.

Serving as assistant choreographers are Fernitz, Katie Flacks,



Jacob Jefferson as Ren McCormack dances with Kim Schepers (behind), Amanda Sparks and Colette Johnson and other members in a scene from Footloose during dress rehearsal for the John Glenn High School spring musical.

Amanda Sparks and Colette Johnson, while the technical director and set designer is Dan Fowler. Sarah Drum is serving as the assistant stage manager.

In addition to Johnson, the cast includes Layanna Young, David Sumlin, Stacey Mayers, Ashley Johnson, Zach Rogers, Jeremiah Austin, Aaron Hurst, J.C. Frowner, Joey Blouse, Angelo Settler, Justin Walker, Rasheed Salaam, Amanda Sparks, Kimmie Schepers, Jenn Huntoon, Jennifer Egan, Melanie DeView, Vanessa

Callanan, Cady Burns, Mason Eubank and an ensemble made up of Colette Johnson, Megan Kelly, Jessica Kidd, Dayna Krushlin, Kelly Sutherland and Megan Walker.

The cast has been rehearsing for six weeks and put the finishing touches on the production during dress rehearsals earlier this week.

"This is the first time I've ever encouraged them to watch the movie to gather information about their characters and the story," Grove said. "In the past,

I've discouraged it. I wanted them to discover the character and find their own way."

Admittedly it's hard to compete with a legend of a Hollywood movie, but Grove is confident her students are up to the challenge. The downfall of doing a well-known production is that the audience comes in with expectations, she said.

But there's one they can leave at home.

"They definitely won't see Kevin Bacon," Grove added. "Definitely."

Broadway comes alive at WMHS

BY SUE MASON STAFF WRITER

The Great White Way will come to the Stockmeyer Auditorium this weekend, when students at Wayne Memorial High School present Broadway Lights the Way!

Twenty different musical numbers from more than a dozen Broadway shows will be performed in the show which chronicles the trials and tribulations of three young woman on their way to an audition in New York.

"I chose my favorites and popular songs that we know the audience will be aware of," said director Katie Sullivan. "My three assistant directors created the script and the dialogue to connect the songs with the characters and the story." The play will be presented at 7 p.m. today through Saturday

For senior citizen rate,

please call 1-866-887-2737



Kim Chau sings Mama, I Am a Big Girl Now from the musical Hairspray in the Broadway revue. Playing the role of her mother is Heather Daniels.



at the auditorium located on the Wayne Memorial campus on Glenwood at Fourth Street. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$8 for adults and are available at the door.

According to Sullivan, the production, "is a show within a show," and is set in the



1960s. It features songs from hits like Bye, Bye, Birdie, The Wiz and Little Shop of Horrors as well as more recent productions as Hairspray, Lion King, Wicked, Cats, Grease and Smokey Joe's Café.

"As you go along, you see their struggles and their relationships build until they ultimately audition for the show," she said. "In the end they realize the journey they've experienced on many levels from building relationships to having fun with their friends. Ultimately they learn from their experiences." There will be singers.

dancers, actors and combinations thereof in the show and the show tunes will be presented in a different way in the revue.

Rather than a little girl and Daddy Warbucks singing I Don't Need Anything But You from Annie, the Wayne High production is performed by a

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Most vehicles • With Coupon • Expires 4-30-07

RADIATOR

FLUSH & FILL

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A cast.

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\$108.95

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One year (out of county)

6 Month

3 Month

The Westland Observer - Publication NO. USPS 663-530 Published every Thursday and

Sunday. Periodical postage is paid at Livonia, Michigan 48150

36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150

*3995

couple, Sullivan said. The cast has been in rehearsals for six weeks although Sullivan started organizing the songs a month before that and according to Sullivan, the script has been written "as we see how the characters interact."

As of last week, the script was written and most of the dances had been choreographed by Nicole Vasiloff and her assistants – Jordan Holland and Melissa Wincher. Helping Sullivan are assis-

tant directors Megan Londberg, Andy Rodriguez and Evan Williams. The vocal

Ford & Inkster Auto Center

director is Brian Buckner. Justin Monit and Andy Rowland are handling the technical side of the production while Shayna Lenox is on lighting and Fawna Cicotte on sound.

Featured in the production are seniors Gideon Ault, Cara Bell, Katie Bellenir, Heather Daniels, Kia Fuqua, Londberg, Andy Rodriguez, Ashley Sullivan and Williams. Also in the cast are Jacob Burnes, Kimberly Chau, Christina Curtis, Briana Dewyer, Lindsay Funk, Essence Grant, Alyssa Lucas, Mike McBee, Kristina Monty, Serrina

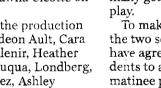
O'Brien and Shelby Watts. The production comes at the same time John Glenn High School is staging its spring musical. The two groups normally get to see each other's

To make it work this year, the two schools' principals have agreed to allow the students to attend each other's matinee performances in advance of opening night."

"It's definitely going to be a great theater weekend," said

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Sullivan. smason@hometownlife.com

the Road" from The Wiz, one of the show tunes in Wayne Memorial High School's Broadway Lights the Way!



Alyssa Lucas, Kim Chau, Gideon Alt, Megan Londberg and Ashley Sullivan finish their song and dance to "Ease on Down

PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY I STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

LOCAL NEWS

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PROSY'S JEWELRY CREATIONS

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ROSY'S JEWELRY

Final sale: Clyde Smith auction expected to draw large crowd

STAFF WRITER

www.hometownlife.com

A roadside produce stand that became the sprawling Clyde Smith and Sons Farm Market & Greenhouses will draw its last customers Saturday during a public auction.

The event will come as developers begin to fine-tune plans for the site.

After 173 years, Michigan's oldest business of its kind will sell off greenhouses, tractors, farm equipment, clay pots, an antique saw - even a stainless steel sink.

The six-generation family business folded after last Christmas season. It had lost its competitive edge, and developers wanted the prime land on Newburgh south of Joy.

As the 9 a.m. auction looms Saturday, Westland historian Jo Johnson recalled an era when Clyde Smith and Sons became a frontrunner for local produce and flowers.

"That was the only produce market we had around here," she said.

After starting its business in 1834, the Smith family used to sell produce at the old Western Market in Detroit. The property also was home to farm animals.

Johnson and others predicted Saturday's auction will draw a huge crowd of people, including some who want to buy a piece of history.

Not everything will be sold. The Smith family donated several antique farm tools to the Westland Historical Museum on Wayne Road south of Marquette.

"We're very thankful," said Johnson, president of the Westland Historical Commission.

As the past and future collide, the Smith property has been sold to D'Orazio Contracting Corp., which plans to build roughly 120 singlefamily homes on the 36-acre site.

Company president Paul D'Orazio estimated that the groundbreaking will be mid- to late-2008 on the site. He also plans to build a couple of commercial buildings fronting Newburgh



The sign at Clyde Smith and Sons Farm Market & Greenhouses says it all. In operation for 173 years, contents will be sold at public auction Saturday.

Road.

The project will complement another D'Orazio development, North Creek Estates, immediately to the north, he said.

Developers found the area appealing as a way to provide affordable housing for average families who want access to such amenities as good schools and shopping areas, D'Orazio said.

D'Orazio's company already has bought the Smith property.

During a recent Westland City Council meeting, D'Orazio won support to rezone the property from commercial/business to single-family residential.

Mayor William Wild complimented D'Orazio for having confidence in an economic turn-

around that will make the project viable. "I think this is the perfect use for this piece of property," Wild said.

dclem@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110

Politics takes center stage in CAPA concert

What do you get when you combine a heated presidential campaign, scandals, lobbyists, tabloid journalist and an outof-control senator?

It's the latest theatrical offering from 18-year-old playwright/composer Kristofer Wellman.

A concert version of "Vote Red, Vote Blue, Regardless I Love You" will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Churchill High School in

Livonia.

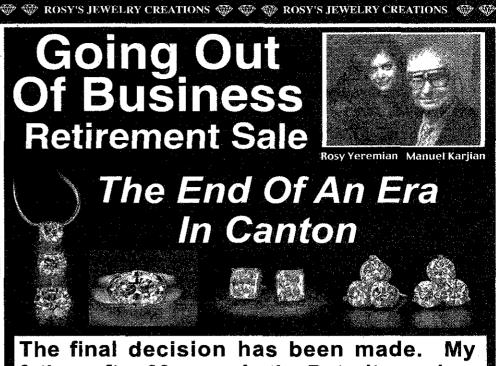
Set in 1952, main character President Arthur Bixby is up for re-election. Four more years are just within reach. Then, things go topsy-turvey when his newly nominated opponent turns out to be his wife. To make matters worse, an anti-Communist crazed-Senator and sexy Soviet spy are also on his tail.

"I'd Never Veto A Kiss," "Good American Fear," and

"Capitalism (Is My Favorite Ism)" are a sampling of the

original songs. Wellman has also written three full-length films, two full-length plays, many one-act plays, numerous independent film scores and a Web-television pilot.

Tickets for the concert are \$2 and are available at the Black Box Theater door. For more information, visit www.starringcapa.com.



Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, March 29, 2007

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ROSY'S JEWELRY

CREATIONS

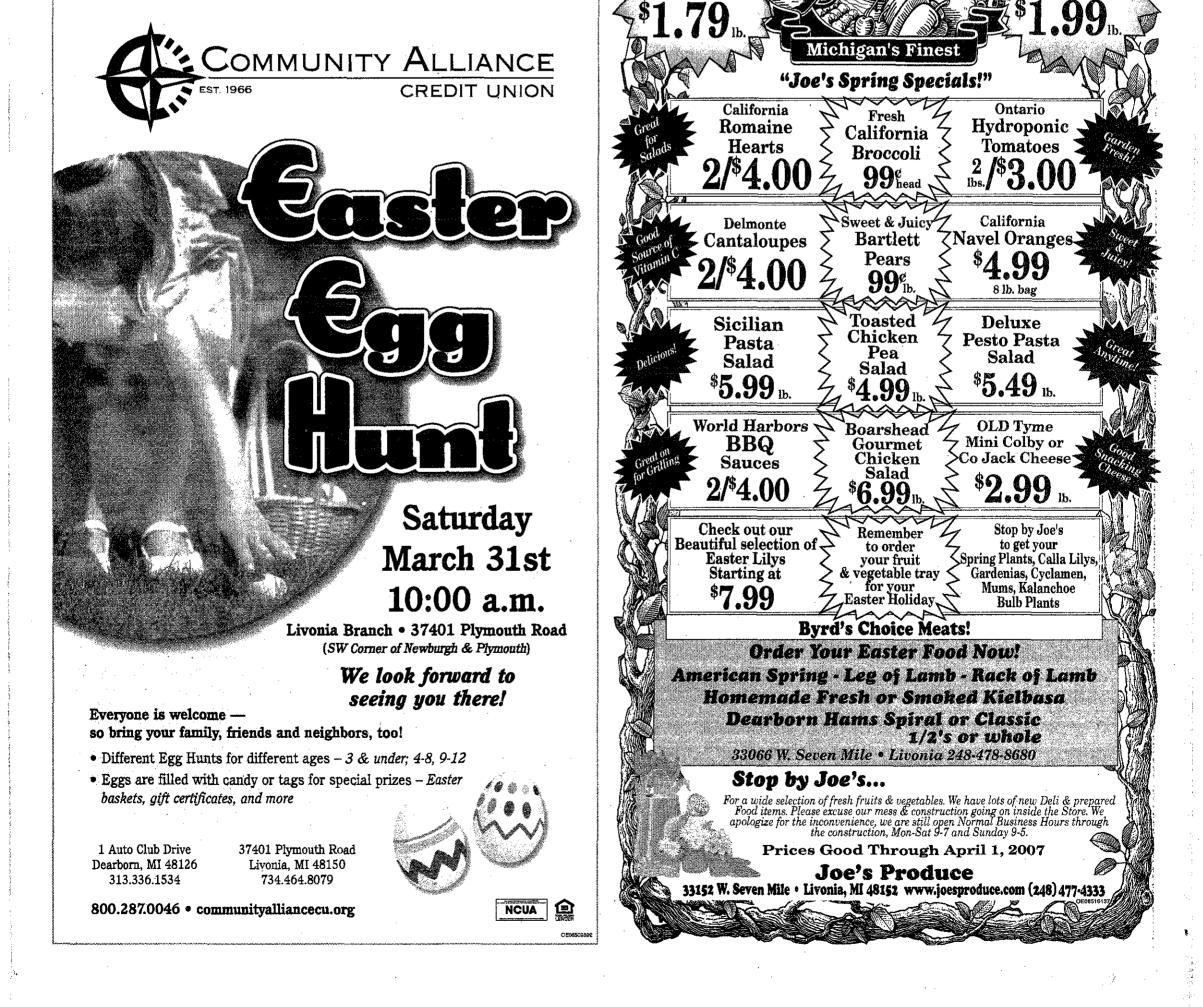
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ROSY'S JE

(W)

father, after 33 years in the Detroit area has decided to retire, so we are conducting a brief Going Out Of Business - Retirement Sale at Rosy's Jewelry Creations. We must liquidate more than one million dollars worth of Diamonds and Fine Jewelry! Everything must be sold. Nothing will be held back during this storewide Going Out of Business - Retirement Sale at Rosy's **Jewelry Creations. Rosy Yeremian**





A4

(W)



Walker-Winter first-graders sing "I Like School" at the blue ribbon ceremony.

PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Linda Forward of the Michigan Department of Education explains the blue ribbon award process to Walker-Winter students.

Walker-Winter has its blue ribbon day

BY SUE MASON STAFF WRITER

Standing along the wall in the gymnasium at Walker-Winter Elementary in Canton Friday afternoon, Daniel Sparks aimed his digital camera at his son, Edward Wilson, and snapped a picture.

"It makes me so proud to see how happy he is," Sparks said. "School has put a spirit and drive in him. He loves school more than anything. He loves being here."

Sparks was among parents at the Wayne-Westland school Friday to watch state officials honored the school as a 2007 Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School.

The students played a starring role in the ceremony, singing songs like I Like School and School Likes Me and chanting phrases like "Walker-Winter is

our name, education is our game."

They happily followed the directions of State Rep. Marc Corriveau, D-Northville, deafening adults with their shouts of thank you for the gift they've "received from the superintendent, principal, teachers and community."

They listened intently to the two winners of the school's blue ribbon essay contest, essays that pointed out the many things there are for students at the school and the help they receive.

"Our school won the Golden Apple, Lighthouse Award and blue ribbon," wrote Gloria Smith. "Our grades must be good because we won all of these awards."

Shelby Fielding pointed out that kids go to the school everyday and expect to learn, but they all experience "a boatload of fun." "Learning and fun are the

same thing at Walker-Winter,"

CITY OF GARDEN CITY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING April 2, 2007

she wrote. "That's why Walker-Winter is a blue ribbon school."

Linda Forward of the state Department of Education gave a kid's style explanation of what all the hoopla was about.

"You have to be a really good school," she said. "You have to do well and the staff has to do a good job. There are more than 3,000 schools in Michigan, 23 became special schools and you're one of those special schools."

Walker-Winter is the second Wayne-Westland elementary to receive the state blue ribbon honor. Edison Elementary in Westland received the award in 2005.

"It takes all of these people and these boys and girls to make what happened happen here at Walker-Winter," said Principal Pauline Koulouberis in accepting the award. "This belongs to all of you in this Wayne-Westland school community."

Wayne-Westland School Superintendent School Greg Baracy told students the ceremony was a "time to celebrate and

reflect on the extra contributions you have made to the Walker-Winter family."

Baracy offered praise to the school staff, citing their commitment, dedication and high degree of professionalism to provide students with a world class education. He also praised parents like Sparks for their support and willingness to work with the school staff, telling them that the district can't do it without them.

And he heaped praise on the students, citing the hard work and extra time they put in to excel and succeed.

"You've all done an excellent job," he said. "You want to continue to work hard and great things will come to you."

The ceremony brought tears to Sparks' eye, who said he was "kind of speechless."

"I think this is really good to make the kids feel they're doing something," he said. "I think it's awesome that they've made the kids realize how important education is."

smason@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2112



Kindergartners Madison Blankenship, Melanie Sanchez, Eric Henderson, firstgraders Tori Sheppard, Justin Reynolds and Elishbah Younus and the rest of the students join the fifth-grade students in doing the Walker-Winter School Chant.



Garden City Council will BY GIVEN hold a Public Hearing at the Civic Center, 6000 Middlebelt Road, Garden City, Michigan on April 2, 2007 at 7:25 p.m. regarding the proposed amendment to Chapter 50 of the Water Section 50.10.:

CITY OF GARDEN CITY

Ordinance # 07-____

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE V (PUBLIC WORKS), CHAPTER 50 (WATER) OF THECODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY AND ADD SECTION 50.10 (CROSS CONNECTIONS).

THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY HEREBY ORDAINS: That City Council shall enact an ordinance governing cross connections as follows:

50.10 CROSS CONNECTIONS

An ordinance regulating cross connections with the public water supply system, i.e., a connection or arrangement of piping or appurtenances through which water of questionable quality, wastes or other contaminants can enter the public water supply system.

That Garden City adopts by reference (A) the Water Supply Cross Connection Rules of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality being R325.11401 to R325.11407 of the Michigan Administrative Code.

That is shall be the duty of Garden (**B**) City to cause inspections to be made of all properties served by the public water supply where cross connections with the public water supply is deemed possible. The frequency of inspections and reinspections based on potential health hazards involved shall be as established by Garden City Water Department and as approved by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

(C) That the representative of Garden City shall have the right to enter at any reasonable time any property served by a connection to the public water supply system of Garden City for the purpose of inspection the piping system or systems thereof for cross connections. On request, the owner, lessees, or occupants of any property so served shall furnish to the inspection agency any pertinent information regarding the piping system or systems on such property. The refusal of such information or refusal of such access, when requested, shall be deemed evidence of the presence of cross connections.

That Garden City is hereby (D) authorized and directed to discontinue water service after reasonable notice to any property wherein any connection in violation of this ordinance exists and to take such other precautionary measures deemed necessary to eliminate any danger of contamination of the public water supply system. Water service to such property shall not be restored until the cross connection(s) has been eliminated in compliance with the provisions of this ordinance.

 $(E) \qquad \mbox{That all testable backflow prevention} \\ \mbox{devices shall be tested initially upon installation to be sure that the} \label{eq:E}$ device is working properly. Subsequent testing of devices shall be conducted at a time interval specified by Garden City and in accordance with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality requirements. Only individuals approved by Garden City shall be qualified to perform such testing. That individual(s) shall certify the results of his/her testing.

That this program covers all (\mathbf{F}) commercial and industrial users. A fee shall be charged to the above users per the City's Consolidated Fee Schedule.

Publish: March 29, 2007

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INVITATION TO BID

CITY OF WESTLAND

Sealed proposals will be received by the City of Westland Purchasing Division, 36601 Ford Road, Westland, Michigan 48185, on or before April 18, 2007 at 10:30 a.m. (no exceptions will be made) for the following:

NEW ROOF- DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Complete specifications and pertinent information may be obtained from the Purchasing Department at (734) 467-3204. Proposals must be submitted by the time stated above or they will be returned. The City of Westland reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

> Dwayne R. Harrigan Controller

OE08515831

Publish: March 29, 2007

GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT 6000 MIDDLEBELT GARDEN CITY, MI 48135

The following vehicles have been deemed abandoned and will be sold at public auction on Tuesday, April 3, 2007 at 9:00 A.M. The auction is to be held at Westland Car Care Towing, 6375 Hix Rd., Westland, MI 48185.

Please Note: The bidding will start at the towing and storage charges.

YEAR & MAKE	STYLE	VIN#
1986 FORD	\mathbf{PU}	2FTEF15Y1GCA03405
1993 MERCURY	$4 \mathrm{DR}$	3MAPM10J8PR632224
1996 MERCURY	$4 \mathrm{DR}$	2MELM75W9TX619322
1985 OLDSMOBILE	$2 \mathrm{DR}$	1G3GK47A9FR319092
1995 PLYMOUTH	$4 \mathrm{DR}$	1P3AA4631SF506298
1989 PONTIAC	$4 \mathrm{DR}$	KL2TN5164KB327381
1993 TOYOTA CAMRY	4 DR	4T1SK12E9PU278749

Publish: March 29, 2007 OE08516123

NOTICE OF LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION **OF THE ELECTORS OF** WAYNE-WESTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Please take Notice that the regular school board election of the school district will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2007.

The last day on which persons may register in order to be eligible to vote at the regular school election to be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2007, is Monday, April 9, 2007. Persons registering after 4:00 in the evening on Monday, April 9, 2007 are not eligible to vote at the regular school election.

You may register in your respective communities or at any Secretary of State Office.

TERRI BENNETT Canton Township Clerk

JUDI DUDZINSKI Dearborn Heights Clerk

LINDA CHOATE Romulus City Clerk

MARY CARNEY Wayne City Clerk

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OE08503938

EILEEN DeHART Westland City Clerk

Publish: March 29, 2007

OE08515845

Linda Forward (left) of the Michigan Department of Education and Walker-Winter Elementary Principal Pauline Koulouberis join with second-graders Tyler Gala, Jenna Snider, Christopher Rohn and Sabrina Retenbach in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The Architect will receive sealed bids for:

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION OF

SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADES AT:

JOHN GLENN HIGH SCHOOL WAYNE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

Bid Proposals will be received until the time and the place, as follows, where and when the opening of bid proposals will be conducted by the Owner in public:

Date: April 12, 2007

Time: 1:30 p.m. EST

Board of Education Place: Wayne-Westland Community Schools 36745 Marquette Westland, MI 48185

Attn: Sheila King, Supervisor of Business

Bidding Documents will be available for examination and distribution on or after March 22, 2007.

Examination may be made at the Office of the Architect, TMP ASSOCIATES, INC., Architects – Engineers –Planners, 1191 West Square Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48302; the MCGRAW-HILL CONSTRUCTION DODGE PLAN ROOM, Detroit, Michigan; or the CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Qualified Bidders may obtain bidding documents from the Office of the Architect, consisting of one (1) set of Drawings and Specifications.

Return Bidding Documents to the Architect within ten (10) days after opening receipt of proposals. Documents are to be complete, in clean and usable condition and free of marks or other defacement.

A sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship existing between the bidder and any member of the school board, school superintendents, or chief executive must accompany each bid. A board shall not accept a bid that does not include this statement. This statement is on the proposal execution form.

Bid Proposals shall be on forms furnished by the Architect, accompanied by a satisfactory Bid Bond or Certified Check for five percent (5%) of the Base Bid Sum maximum possible proposal amount.

Bidder shall agree not to withdraw Bid Proposal for a period of sixty (60) days after date for receipt of bids.

Accepted Bidder shall be required to furnish satisfactory Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

The right to reject any or all Bid Proposals, either in whole or in part, or to waive any informalities therein is reserved by the Owner.

OE08515867

This project is to be bid at the prevailing wage rate. Publish: March 29 & April 1, 2007

SNOW

FROM PAGE A1

SCAM FROM PAGE A1

felony.

Mayes.

off," Councilman Bill Johnson said. Bowing to earlier criticism, Godbout's proposal has been revised.

Residential and commercial property owners would face fines of \$50 for a first offense and \$100 for subsequent violations, rather than being slapped with a possible \$500 ticket.

And although they couldn't push their snow onto streets and roads, they could move it from their driveways and sidewalks to the public right-of-way, generally the area between the sidewalk and street.

"It's unavoidable not to blow snow into the street," said Councilman Michael Kehrer, whose property slopes toward the street. "I just don't see how I could comply."

The latest revision to Godbout's proposal would allow enforcement by four city departments - building, fire, police and public service. Godbout said many property owners blow snow back onto streets as soon as city workers plow neighborhoods.

"We spend a lot of money clearing these streets," he said.

A state law allows for some enforcement, but Godbout wants to give the city more teeth to

combat what he considers a potential hazard. Said Kehrer: "I disagree that there's a safety factor on a residential street. ... We've got a lot more bigger problems than this."

Public Service Director Kevin Buford said the worst situations involve property owners who push snow onto major roads.

Resident Charles Campbell said the city already doesn't have enough workers to enforce other problems, such as residents who refuse to move their cars during snow emergencies. He volunteered to ticket offenders himself.

Resident Lida Hartman indicated support for Godbout's plan and said, "I would never think of throwing snow in the street."

Residents Shaunna Jaynes and Judy McKinney said they have encountered dangerous situations while driving on major roads and having property owners blow snow toward their cars.

Some suggested the ordinance should apply only to major roads and school bus routes. But Hartman and others said buses picking up the elderly and handicapped students have to maneuver residential streets.

The council is expected to tackle the issue and vote on it during an April 16 meeting at City Hall.

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Chambers host legislative forum

Livonia and Westland lawmakers will meet with representatives from their respective business communities during an upcoming Legislative Forum designed to provide more information about the Michigan's budget struggles.

Members of the Livonia and Westland chambers of commerce will gather 6-7:30 p.m. Monday, April 16, in the auditorium of Livonia Churchill High School on Newburgh just north of Joy.

State Sen. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, State Rep. John Pastor, R-Livonia, and State Rep. Richard LeBlanc, D-Westland, are scheduled to attend the forum.

They will update the audience on developments in Lansing and answer questions about state issues, such as proposals for a service tax, funding for local police and fire services and cutbacks to state programs.

"Our lawmakers are looking for input from their constituents and our chamber members want a chance to present their ideas and opinions to deal with the state budget troubles," said Dan West, president of the Livonia Chamber of Commerce.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Michigan law-

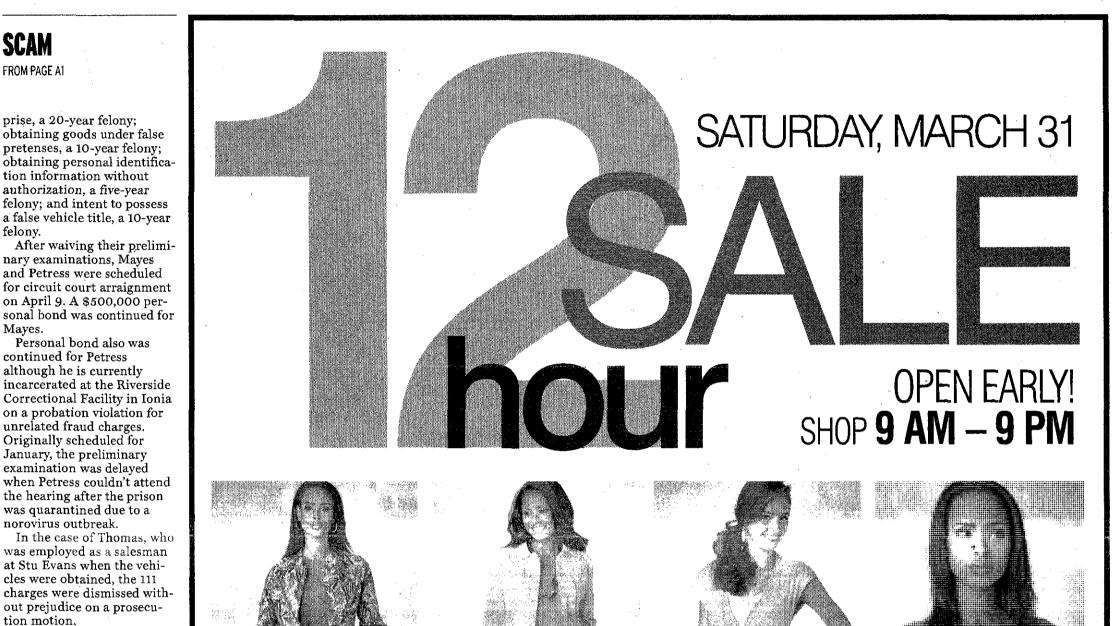
makers are engaged in intense discussions about how the state should cover a \$900 million budget shortfall for the 2006-07 fiscal year, and how to deal with a shortage of about \$1.8 billion next year when Single Business Tax expires at the end of 2007.

"This Legislative Forum will be a great opportunity for our business communities to provide input as our lawmakers look for answers on these budget challenges," said Lori Brist, president and CEO of the Westland Chamber of Commerce.

Together, the Livonia and Westland chambers represent some 1,300 businesses and organizations across two of metro Detroit's largest suburban communities. Two of the state's largest school systems, the Livonia Public Schools and Wayne-Westland Community Schools, serve portions of the two communities

All Livonia and Westland Chamber members are invited to participate in the free Legislative Forum.

This program also is open to the public. For more information, call the Livonia Chamber at (734) 427-2122 or the Westland Chamber at (734) 326-7222.



"It was requested that the charges against (Thomas) be dismissed because we had a need to talk with further witnesses," said Michigan State Police Lt. William Darnell of the Western Wayne Auto Theft Unit. "We plan to have all of the same charges reinstated against him."

The charges are that from late July through early September 2003, the defendants and others obtained vehicles using false or stolen identities.

In some cases, police said initial loan payments were made on the vehicles which resulted in the matters being treated as loan default. That delay provided additional time for falsified paperwork to be used to remove liens and allow vehicles to be sold. police said.

Western Wayne officers reported that all 18 vehicles, which were high-end products, such as Lincoln Navigators and Lincoln LS cars, were recovered. The value was estimated at \$540,000

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plus pick up your 20%, 25% or 30% off Reveal & Save coupont Also, from noon-4pm on Saturday, we'll have great

kids' activities. In our Children's Department

Spectacular. Shown: AK Anne Klein "Bartlett"



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30% off Bras by Vanity Fair and Bali, Reg. \$24-\$36. sale 16.80-25.20. Excludes speciality bras.



50% off

Easter dresswear for kids. Save on a large selection of styles by Bonnie Jean, My Michelle, Amy Byer, Claiborne and more. Girls' sizes 2-16 and Boys' sizes 4-20. Orig. \$22-\$120, sale \$11-\$60.



save 40-60%

Men's already-reduced designer suits by Tommy Hilfiger, Lauren and more. 2- and 3-button styles. Sizes 38-44S, 38-50R, 42-50L, Orig. \$495-\$795, now 199.99-399.99.



30% off Claiborne wrinkle-free dress shirts. In a variety of colors and patterns. Sizes 15-18, 32/33-34/35; Reg. 39.50-\$45, sale 27.65-31.50. Also save on coordinating neckwear. Reg. \$35, sale 27.99.

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12-Hour Sale prices effective March 31, 2007. No price adjustments for previously purchased clearance merchandise. Entire Stock offers exclude Clearance and Incredible Value merchandise. Regular and original prices reflect offering prices in effect during the 90 days before or after this sale, but not necessarily during the past 30 days. Savings may not be based on actual sales. Intermediate markdowns may have been laken. Merchandise, style and color availability may vary by store. Sorry, no mail, phone or internet orders. [13508A]

AROUND WESTLAND

Tax help

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Senior citizens with low to moderate incomes can get help preparing their taxes through an AARP program offered at the Westland senior Friendship Center, on Newburgh Road south of Ford.

Sessions will continue 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each Monday and Friday through April 13, but appointments are necessary. Call $(\hat{734})$ 722-7628.

Rubbish site

Westland's rubbish transfer site, located at the public service department at 37137 Marquette east of Newburgh, will open for the season Friday, March 30. Free dump days will be offered 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Proof of residency is required. For more information, call (734) 728-1770.

Hazardous waste

Wayne County residents can drop off hazardous household waste 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Sumpter Township Department of Public Works, 23501 Sumpter Road behind the Police Department. Wayne County is sponsoring the collection.

For more information, call (734) 326-3936 or visit the county Web site at www.waynecounty.com/doe.

Bowling with Bunny

Join the Grange and bowl with the Easter Bunny 1-3 p.m. Sunday, April 1, at Town 'N Country Lanes, 1100 S. Wayne Road, just south of Avondale. Each participant will receive one game of bowling, shoe rental, a hot dog and soda. Tickets are \$7 per person. A portion of proceeds will go to charity. To register, call (734) 722-6478 after 6 p.m.

Easter activities

CrossWalk Community Church of the Nazarene will hold a Easter Eggstravaganza 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 31, at the church at 38600 Palmer Road between Hix and Newburgh in Westland.

The event is for families, especially children ages 3-12.

Children through age 6 will need adult supervision. There will be an Easter egg hunt, crafts, games, prizes and snacks.

The suggested donation is \$1 per child, adults are free of charge. For more information. call (734) 721-5545.

Democratic Dinner

Presidential candidate John Edwards will be the keynote speaker at the Michigan Democratic Party's 2007 Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner Saturday, April 21, at Cobo Center in Detroit. For more information, call the Michigan Democratic Party at (517) 371-5410 or Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard at (313) 224-0902.

Open skating

Residents can enjoy open skating noon-1:45 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday, noon-1:45 p.m. and 6-6:50 p.m. Friday and 1-2:20 p.m. Saturday at the Mike Modano Ice Arena, 6210 N. Wildwood, just north of Ford. Admission is \$2.50 for children and senior citizens and \$3.50 for adults during the week and \$1 more on Saturday. Skate rental is \$2.50.

Read-In

The Lutheran Church of Our Savior will hold its first annual African American Read-In 6:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 27, at the church, 29425 Annapolis, Westland.

The event will celebrate African American Literacy during National Reading Month. There will be free books for those 18 years and younger, book displays and reading lists of African American literature, the reading of the work of African American writers and refreshments.

For more information, call (734)728-3440.

Crafters wanted

Craft space is available for St. Damian's annual spring craft show Saturday, March 31, at 30055 Joy, between Merriman and Middlebelt, Westland, Table rental is \$25. For more information, call (734) 721-4758 or email at nelius@comast.net. Show hours will be 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission will be \$1.

Mom 2 Mom Sale

St. Damian School is holding its Spring Mom 2 Mom Sale 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 21, 30055 Joy, between Middlebelt and Merriman, in Westland. Rental is \$20 per table rental and \$5 per rack. Call Dawn at (734) 983-0221 for more information.

Marathon bingo

Harris-Kehrer VFW Post 3323 will hold a marathon bingo noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 14, at the post hall, 1055 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Proceeds will support the post's veterans projects.

Tax preparation

AARP tax preparation is available free of charge to seniors with low to moderate income 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each Monday and Friday from through April 13 at the senior Friendship Center is at 1119 N. Newburgh south of Ford. Sessions will continue. Appointments are necessary. Call (734) 722-7628. Bingo

The Dyer Senior Center invites residents to play bingo at 1 p.m. Wednesdays at the center, 36745 Marquette, Westland. For more information, call Mary Browe at (734) 419-2020.

Praise and worship

Westwood Community Church holds praise and worship services at 10 a.m. Sundays at 6500 N. Wayne Road at Hunter in Westland. The church also offers a children's church and nursery.

For more information, call (734) 254-0093.

Pancake breakfast

The Westland senior Friendship Center holds an allyou-can-eat pancake breakfast second Thursday of the month at the center on Newburgh south of Ford. The cost \$4 per person for buttermilk or multigrain pancakes, coffee, juice, low fat milk, sausage and bacon. Sugar-free svrup will be available. The center holds pancake breakfasts on the second Thursday of the month.

Notable Books tour makes stop in Wayne

The Wayne Public Library will have notable author visit this spring.

Sue Stauffache, author of Michigan Notable Book Donutheart, will speak about her book at 7 p.m. Friday, April 20, at the library on Wayne Road south of westbound Michigan Avenue, as part of the 2007 Michigan Notable Books author tour.

The Wavne library is one of 67 facilities around the state included in the tour, according to the Library of Michigan. The tour is a state-wide series of free presentations and book signings by 19 of this year's Notable Books authors and illustrators. The tour runs April 5 through May 24.

Stauffache's book is a young adult sequel to Donuthead set in fictional central and west Michigan. The story is a mixture of funny and original characters, intermingled with the frustrating issues of growing

up. "With more authors making more tour stops than ever, residents of all corners of the state will have the

Former Westland District

elected secretary of the

Michigan Parkinson

Judge Gail McKnight has been

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McKnight, who lives in

Westland with her husband

Richard, also is the support

group facilitator for the Ann

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Four Westland residents

received degrees from Walsh

College at recent winter com-

Stacy Burgan, received a

master of business administra-

mencement ceremonies.

on the issues facing those with

The Michigan Parkinson

chance to enjoy an array of fascinating Michigan tales and meet some of our best writers," said State Librarian Nancy Robertson. "The 2007 Notable Books run the literary gamut - novels, historical accounts, poetry, biography, children's books - so the tour offers something for readers of all ages and interests." "The Library of Michigan

has done an outstanding job with this win-win program. It points readers to a lively variety of fine regional literature, and it helps writers gain much-needed attention for their books," said Anne-Marie Oomen, author of 2007 Michigan Notable Book, House of Fields: Memories of a Rural Education. "I'm delighted to receive this recognition and more than honored to be in the company of so many writers I respect.'

The full schedule of tour dates, locations and authors, and the complete list of 2007 Michigan Notable Books are available on the Web at www.michigan.gov/notablebooks.

The Michigan Notable

ACHIEVERS

tion degree, Michele Dickerson a bachelor of business administration degree, Deanna Leighton, master of business administration degree, and Christopher Richard, bachelor of business administration degree.

The college conferred a total of 442 degrees to September and December 2006 candidates.

Joshua Kendick, a Central Michigan University senior from Westland was named to fall semester honors list of students who earned 3.5 higher grade point averages.

Zhe Guan of Westland has received a \$250 scholarship in the Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition, sponsored

Books list is the Library of Michigan's annual selection of recommended books that reflect the state's rich cultural heritage by highlighting Michigan people, places and events.

Each year's list features 20 books published the previous calendar year that are about or set in Michigan or the Great Lakes region or are written by a native or resident of Michigan.

Selections include nonfiction and fiction and typically have a wide appeal to the audience, covering a range of topics and issues close to the hearts of Michigan residents.

The 2007 Michigan Notable Books program is sponsored by Borders, Cooley Law School, ProQuest, Auto-Owners Insurance Company, Fifth Third Bank, LaSalle Bank, the Library of Michigan, the Library of Michigan Foundation, the Michigan Center for the Book, the Michigan Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities and Schuler Books & Music.

by the Michigan Section of the Mathematics Association of America.

Guan was among 1,000 students who took Part II of the annual competition.

Brent Opiela of Westland, has been named to the President's List for the fall term at Northwood University in Midland. The son of Michael and Mary Jo Opiela, he had to earn a 3.85 grade point average to receive the recognition.

Angela Moran of Westland has become a member of the Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. She is the daughter of Elias and Shervl Moran.

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On March 30, National Doctors Day, we'd like to thank our doctors for their unsurpassed dedication and commitment to patient care.

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OUR VIEWS Rejecting raise was right idea

These are troubled times and after what happened in Lansing last week, it appears the trouble is only going to get worse. It may take more than penny pinching for cities like Westland to make ends meet.

The City Council had no way of knowing the city would face a 10 percent cut in its state shared revenue when it voted last week to hold the line on its wages. Its members unanimously rejected the increases the Local Officers Compensation Commission determined they should receive over the next two years.

The proposed pay hikes were very modest – just 1 percent per year – but in leading the charge to oppose them, council President Pro Tem Cheryl Graunstadt cited financial reasons.

There are those who might look on their decision as no big deal. We disagree. Their vote was fiscal responsible and the right one to make at this time.

City Council aren't paid all that much when you consider the amount of time they devote to their jobs which is more than sitting at council meetings or in study sessions. They spend a lot of time outside the public view talking with residents, listening to their problems and complaints and getting them answers.

With all that they do, the \$12,515 a year a council member receives, the \$13,760 for council president and \$13,137 for the president pro tem probably averages out to less than the per hour minimum wage.

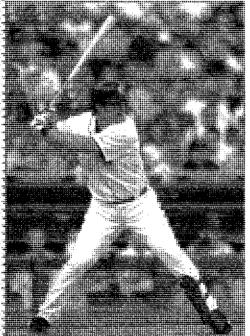
We believe the council's decision is a good one. As stewards of the city, they have shown a strong fiscal responsibility at a time when a cut in state funding means using up some of the surplus that has been salted away over the past six years to balance the budget.

We believe the City Council has shown it is committed to doing what it can to keep costs down in difficult times. While the amount saved is small, it is a savings nonetheless

Opening Day heralds new season of hope

On Monday afternoon, thousands of people from across metro Detroit will play hooky from work and help the Detroit Tigers kick off what has to be one of the most anticipated baseball seasons around here in two decades.

Opening Day is kind of the unofficial start of summer, even though the weather is oftentimes more winter-like. But there is just something about that crack of the bat,



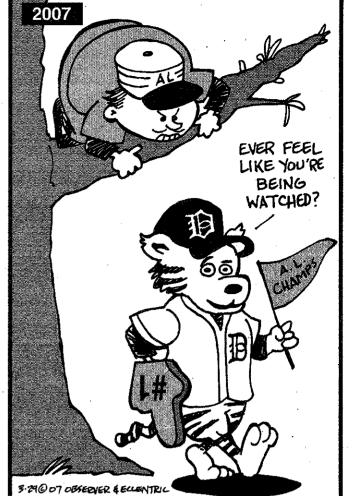
Napplic Untoffice and the rest of the Detroit Tigers

Soll open the 2007 season Manday equirat the

Toronto Blue Jays at Comerica Park.

pop of the glove and calls from the vendors selling





LETTERS

Wow, whatever happened to the majority rules concept this country was founded

Prop 2: People have spoken

Prop 2: People have spoken

2006

Wow, whatever happened to the majority rules concept this country was founded on by our forefathers (the original settlers, not the immigrants, there's a difference between the two). Since the 2002 election (where the then-presidential candidate ran on less big brother slogan), it has been nonexistent.

The people spoke in that election, but alas it didn't matter. Some backroom deal called an electoral college decided to give the election not to the person we the people legally voted into office, but to the person they wanted in office. And his brother Jeb did absolutely every thing he could to see that he was appointed into office, with the Florida fiasco and the hanging chad.

Anyway, in the present day we are again facing such shady deals, only this time it's on a state level. I'm talking about the Prop 2 fight. We the people stated in a legal vote to do away with a law we found unconstitutional, by way of discrimination. It was put to a public vote, shot down by a 2-1 margin, yet someone is still trying to over turn our vote, like we didn't know what we were voting on and it was all a big mistake. Who are these people anyway, are they people who were too lazy to get out and vote that day? Or are they people who thought that Prop 2 never would have been defeated so they never considered to vote that day. Forgive me but I thought the people had decided already. Sorry it didn't turn out like you planned. Better luck next time. And who is the idiot whose going to go against the wishes of the people. Is Prop 2 destined to bounce around the legal system until someone finds someone or pays someone to say "wait a minute," the people of this great and dying state didn't know they were wrong, but they were. Prop 2 lives. Have we gone so far away from majority rules that now it's commonplace to overrule the people and have us not even care. That's the sad part. We the people quit caring about the loss of our national identity. Majority rules a thing of the past.

they able to get the benefits they deserved. These people are trained to be killing machines and when they get out they are rarely trained to not be killing machines.

Another part of the story said one in three Iraq vets coming home will return with mental health issues, and what will we do to treat them? Probably nothing. The health care problem with veterans has been going on forever and not until recently with the Bob Woodruff story did it come to light. It took him getting hit by an IED for people to take notice.

In 1989, a movie was made starring Tom Cruise, Born on the Fourth of July, it is about Marine Ron Kovic. He was paralyzed after being shot in Vietnam. The depiction of the VA hospital is chilling, but true. Rats running freely through the hospital, staff that did not care about these people, and equipment that did not work. If you have not seen it, check it out. It will make you sick.

What is wrong with this country. They call these young men and women to "duty to country" and then abandon them when they come home. Where is the duty to care for them? In my opinion, if you are a veteran, under no circumstances should

port the United States' intervention and insist our country try even harder to bring lasting peace to the Iraqis.

It must be most disheartening to hear from some of the liberal sources in the States that so many are willing to play the game of wet pants today, withdrawal tomorrow. We must do better than this. We must support our troops.

Some day the Times may report on the new schools built in Iraq, the greater supply of electricity available to the citizens, the great and continued progress in the production in oil. But leftist the Times will remain and suspect.

Not a happy day.

Neil Goodbred Livonia

What Dems have done for us

In typical fashion, Democratic apologist Mark Blackwell is looking to blame the errors of HIS party on everyone else.

Here is all you need to know: Michigan ranks first in the nation in unemployment, our manufacturing base is rapidly declining, the cost of education continues to rise. If the Democratic majority in the state House has its way our taxes will be on the rise as well. Mr. Blackwell asks what Rep. McCotter has done for us lately. Here's an answer: Rep. McCotter has reduced our taxes; he has fought to keep jobs IN Michigan; he has worked to reduce the budget deficit; he has helped keep prescription drug costs down for senior citizens; he has worked to keep our borders secure and has fought against amnesty for illegal immigrants.

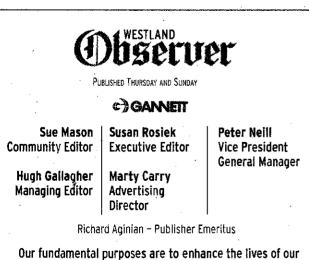
their peanuts and Cracker Jacks around the stadium that makes one think about warmer weather. They are not called the Boys of Summer for nothing.

> **Opening Day** is always anticipated by baseball fans, but this year, there is a bit of a bonus. The Tigers, fresh off of their improbable run to the World Series, will surely be

one of the favorites to get back there again this year. They will not surprise anybody this year as they did in 2006, but that is the price for fielding a quality team — something the club hadn't done in more than a decade until last year.

There are expectations now, especially from the home-"town fans, who were starved for so long. The Tigers proved last year that this is a baseball town. They also showed how a baseball team can bring together a region that is often consumed with petty differences.

So as we get ready to start a new season, let's give three cheers that the Tigers can repeat the magic of last year. We're all pulling for you. Bless you, boys!



readers, nurture the hometowns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

Don Pechin Westland

Sponsors needed

I can't believe I see corporate sponsorship everywhere but I can't get sponsorship for the people that have fought and died for this country.

On Saturday, Aug. 4, we are putting on the first "GI Blues Festival" to support homeless veterans. I am looking for someone to step up to the plate and help us out with sponsorship of this event.

If you think the freedom that you have right now is worth the men and women that have fought and died for you, call me -(734) 478-0822.

Scott Romp public relations, Veteran's Haven

dumping the snow into the street and causing the potential for hazards."

Treat veterans like heroes

While watching the national news last night, I hear one in three veterans are homeless, more than 200,000 vets are living "in the streets," 47 percent of those are Vietnam vets. You remember them, the "forgotten heroes," when they served it was NOT A WAR. It was not a war until Ronald Reagan, while president, recognized what they did. So only then were

N,

you ever be homeless, broke, ill because you can't afford treatment.

These men and women should be taken care of. If they served in action, we should give these people homes, cars, whatever they need to exist, to live, to survive, to be pain-free. More importantly to be taken care of for the rest of their lives. They spend billions to fight these wars and yet can't take care of the people fighting them. Instead they have to come home and fight for their rights, so they, in fact, fight an extra war.

With the most recent stories coming out of the VA hospitals according to the ABC reports, and Bob Woodruff doing the interviews of these men and women, treatment is still bad. These brain-injured troops are not getting the treatment they need, or should I say deserve. They say war is hell ... sounds to me like coming home could be and is hell also.

To our government, national and state, it is time to take care of our heroes. Stop messing around. Hopefully they have got the right man to be in charge after firing the other guy. Thanks to the ABC story. These people are heroes, treat them like it. And once again to all of our troops, Thank you.

Bud Somerville

Westland

Must support our troops

Many, most, of the Vietnam War veterans believe John Kerry's complicitous, include your name, address and phone number duplicitous behavior, sequestered with Communists in France during the Vietnam War, was responsible for the increase in the punishment of American prisoners of war held by the North Vietnam, even the deaths of many.

The lack of support for our troops in Iraq today by the unknowing, uncaring and unthinking left oriented among us is reported to our troops as America's suasion and preference. The left evidently doesn't realize how devastating such lack of support can be.

The New York Times has writers who suggest that the majority of our service- E-mail: men are against the participation of American forces, probably knowing that

the converse is true. The soldiers sup-

QUOTABLE

"My intent was not to prevent people from putting snow in the right of way. The intent was just to prevent people from

Councilman James Godbout about his proposal to penalize Westland property owners for pushing snow onto city streets.

Mail: Letters to the editor Westland Observer 36251 Schoolcraft Livonia, MI 48150

Fax: (734) 591-7279

content.

smason@hometownlife.com

Now I have a question for Mr. Blackwell: What has the Democratic majority in Congress done for us lately?

They've tried to cut funding to our troops on the battlefields of Iraq; they've passed legislation that will increase the cost of prescription drugs to seniors and leave them with fewer choices on their needed prescriptions; and they're promising to raise taxes so they can spend more of our hard-earned money.

And they're doing all of this without committee hearings and the possibility of amendment!

I guess that's what Mr. Blackwell would consider "Progress."

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

for verification. We ask that your letters be 400

words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please

Lori O'Brady Garden City

Perceptions are always at play when schools involved

recently received an e-mail from a reader who was really peeved about our coverage of the announcement last month that Canton's Walker-Winter Elementary School earned a Blue Ribbon Award from the state board of education.

I have to admit I was a bit surprised by the woman's note, considering it was our lead story on the front page. But she was upset because our story didn't mention that Walker-Winter is a Wayne-Westland school – until the third paragraph. By waiting that long, she thought we were trying to mislead readers into thinking the school was part of the Plymouth-Canton district.

Kurt

Kuban

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I think she was off-base, but, in the last

paragraph of her note, she does bring up a valid point about perceptions when it comes to public schools in the area.

"As a Canton resident with children attending Walker-Winter, I've endured a lot of grief from members of my community who are convinced that all Plymouth-Canton schools are superior. Articles like this only fuel their fire. You clearly waited too long to credit Wayne-Westland with this high honor," she wrote.

She is certainly right that there is a perception out there that children attending Plymouth-Canton Schools are getting a superior education to those children who happen to live within the Wayne-Westland or Van Buren districts. To back this up look no further than the cost of real estate. I'm told Canton homes in either the Wayne-Westland or Van Buren districts run \$50,000 less than those in the Plymouth-Canton boundaries, and that is based solely on the perception of the school districts.

Wayne-Westland Supt. Greg Baracy, who says about 2,300 Canton children attend schools in his district, and other Wayne-Westland officials will come together last Friday at Walker-Winter to celebrate the Blue Ribbon Award achievement. And I certainly think it is a grand achievement for not only Walker-Winter, but the entire Wayne-Westland district. The main reason: it helps break down those dreaded perceptions the letter writer alluded to.

I think it proves you can get a quality education in Wayne-Westland. Walker-Winter, which is located on Michigan Avenue east of I-275, was one of 23 elementaries in the state, and one of just three in Wayne County, to earn the award this year. According to state officials, the award recognizes schools that have achieved outstanding improvement in delivering a quality education to students.

And this is just the latest feather in Wayne-Westland's cap. The district recently dedicated a 12,000-square-foot, state-ofthe-art addition to Wayne Memorial High School's Alumni Arena – a \$4.3 million project that added a fitness room, basketball court, and a room with batting cages and a practice area for golf.

Most of the cost was paid for with funds from a sinking fund millage district voters approved in 2003 that is expected to raise about \$28 million over 10 years, which the district has been using to upgrade its facilities. Anyone who has recently been to Wayne-Memorial in particular can see what dividends the sinking fund has paid. The high school campus has been dramatically improved and is reminiscent of a college campus. Schools across the district similarly have been upgraded. Plymouth-Canton officials have been hoping to do similar upgrades, but district voters have shot down three straight bond measures that would have paid for them. Now, the district is looking at making serious budget cuts that could even impact the classroom. Still, the perception that Wayne-Westland is inferior persists.

Sometimes, though, I wonder if these perceptions are less about the actual schools than they are about who attends the schools. Baracy says the main reason Wayne-Westland is seen as inferior is there are no \$400,000-plus mansions in the district like there are in Plymouth-Canton. The district is certainly much more blue-collar.

Undoubtedly some will disagree with me, and argue that Plymouth-Canton schools perform better on standardized tests than their Wayne-Westland counterparts. This is true. But anyone who is honest with themselves will admit socioeconomics play a major factor in test scores. Again, it is about who attends the school, and not the teachers and administrators or schools.

Let's face it, even within Plymouth-Canton Schools similar perceptions exist that some schools are better than others.

Does anyone remember the flap a couple years ago when Plymouth Township residents living in the upscale Heather Hills and Rolling Oaks subdivisions blasted the district's plan to move their children from Bird Elementary to Farrand Elementary? While in public they argued they were against the move because of long bus rides and that test scores at Farrand were worse, it became known the real reason they were upset was because their children would have to go to school with children from a nearby trailer park. If that were to happen, they argued, the value of their homes would drop.

You could also see an intra-district animosity rear its ugly head during the last two bond elections between residents living in Canton, where a new middle school was going to be built, and those in Plymouth, who complained all the money was going to Canton – despite the fact that the vast majority of the district's recent growth has been in Canton. Plymouth voters overwhelmingly voted against the bond measures – a major factor in their defeat.

I guess the point I'm trying to make is these perceptions are always evident when it comes to our public schools. And that's probably because they play such a vital role in the quality of life we all want for our families. But perceptions don't make or break a school's ability to teach.

I have to admit, I've often fallen into the same trap of believing Plymouth-Canton is a superior district than Wayne-Westland – and I'm a product of John Glenn High School (I'm not sure if this is an endorsement or indictment of the district). Looking back, I have fond memories of the education I received there. I had great teachers who cared about their students. I'm sure the same can be said for Wayne-Westland's teachers today – not to mention those at Plymouth-Canton, Van Buren or any other district you want to look at.

So I salute the students, administrators, teachers and parents who came together at Walker-Winter. My guess is they probably won't be thinking about the fact that some consider them second-class citizens in Canton. Because they certainly shouldn't be.

Kurt Kuban is editor of the *Canton Observer*. He can be reached at (734) 459-2700 or by e-mail at kkuban@hometownlife.com.

LETTERS

Granholm did reform

We take exception to the March 15 opinion article — "State must live within its means; the solution isn't new taxes" — by State Representative John Pastor.

It is wrong to suggest the Governor has failed to reform government spending. Governor Granholm has cut more from state government than any other governor in Michigan history. In addition to cutting \$3 billion in the past four years, she has called for an additional \$400 million in budget cuts — a plan that Republican lawmakers rejected — and has outlined government reforms that have been met by Republican resistance, too.

Because the Legislature voted to eliminate the state's business tax without replacing it, and due to the global challenges to our manufacturing sector, Michigan is now facing a \$3 billion deficit in the general fund budget. It is the general fund that pays for higher education, health care, human services and corrections. Yes, Michigan receives federal and restricted funds that bring our total state spending to a higher figure, but the vast majority of those monies can only be used for specific purposes, like road construction.

The budget the Governor and lawmakers control — and the budget they must balance — is the general fund budget. Governor Granholm has offered a solution to the general fund deficit that includes a blend of cuts to state spending, government reforms and revenues. While Rep. Pastor and others oppose the Governor's plan, they have yet to offer one of their own.

Governor Granholm believes we must invest in our state by making college affordable, job training available and offering access to affordable health care for the uninsured.

These are the initiatives that will make the Next Michigan — a state where our people prosper, our children and grand children 'have opportunities, and our industries thrive in a global economy.

Liz Boyd,

press secretary, Office of Gov. Jennifer Granholm

Domestic violence

March is Women's History Month, a time to reflect on the struggles and victories of courageous leaders whose achievements helped change the lives of all American women today. Though women's rights movements have resulted in widesweeping societal changes throughout the country, many women face their greatest oppressor not in the public domain, but rather, in the privacy of their own homes — as victims of domestic violence.

(W)

According to the American Institute on Domestic Violence, 5.3 million women are abused each year. In fact, nearly onethird of American women report being physically or sexually abused by a partner.

Though domestic violence is an issue that frequently remains behind closed doors, raising the awareness and prevention of this widespread problem is of public concern.

Nonprofit domestic violence prevention agencies are literally lifesavers, but the corporate community can also provide invaluable resources to victims of abuse. For example, through its award-winning HopeLine phone recycling program, Verizon Wireless collects used wireless phones in its stores throughout the country and donates the proceeds, equipment and airtime to domestic violence awareness and prevention agencies, including those in southeast Michigan. Leveraging its strength and resources, a corporation can find a variety of ways to provide relief to thousands of women and their children every year. To learn how your business can help in the fight against domestic violence, contact Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence at

www.caepv.org. In honor of Women's History Month, let's recognize the great and renowned women who fought with courage to build better lives for their daughters, but let's not forget the nameless women, victims of domestic violence, who continue to fight for their lives each day.

> **Greg Haller** Region president Verizon Wireless

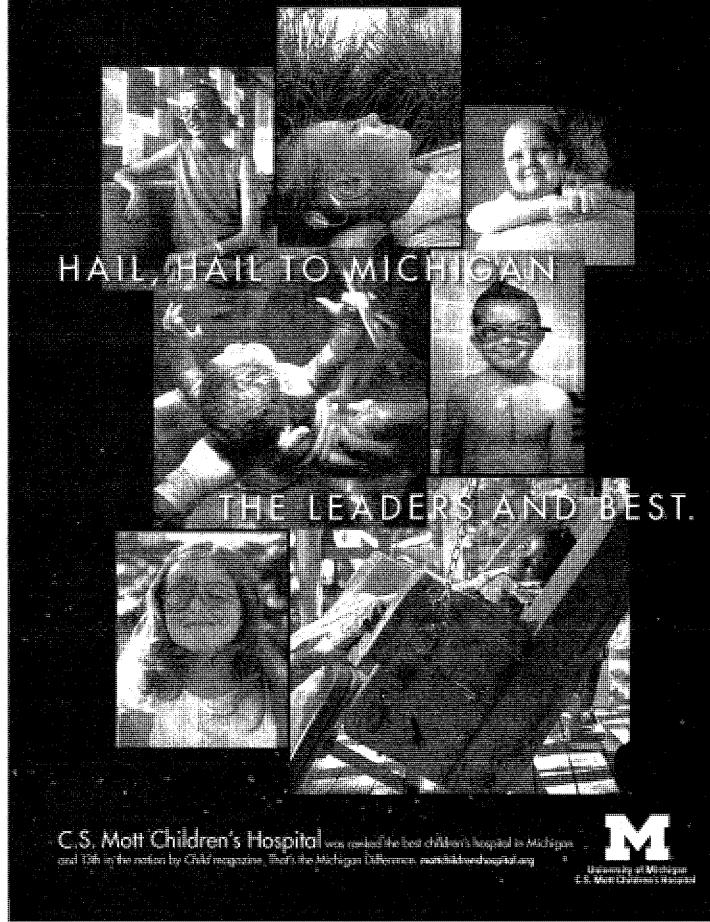


Sciatica?

Suburban Detroit - A new free report has recently been released that reveals an amazing new medical breakthrough that has proven 86% successful treating debilitating back pain. Even with multiple herniated discs. Find out how space travel solved astronauts back pain treatment today. For your free report entitled, "How Space Age Technology Is Solving Back Pain Without Drugs Or Surgery!" call 1-800-469-3618 and listen to the toll-free 24 hr. recorded message for all the details. If phone lines are busy, visit: www.midischerniation.com



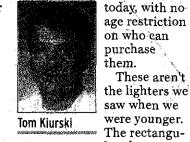
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Playful looking lighters could be deadly

ow many times have your children noticed an item in the checkout line of a store or on the counter of a gas station and asked you to buy it for them?

If your kids are anything like mine, this has happened plenty of times. But check closely before you agree, because some of the items meant to attract their attention could harm them, as well as other individuals in your home. The items I am speaking about are called novelty lighters, and are being sold



lar chrome exterior that opened and exposed the mechanism that started a fire are being replaced by a much coolerlooking lighter that entices young children to play with

These aren't

them. And they fool parents by looking like innocent kids toys. One lighter is shaped like a fancy pen, and it even writes! But when the top is flipped back, a flame shoots out. Another looks like a cellular telephone. When you push the button on top that looks like a retracted antenna, the "phone" rings three times and erupts into a twoinch flame. If your child puts it near their face, the results can be devastating.

Other lighters shaped like fun toys include one that

looks like a miniature fire extinguisher (ironic, isn't it?), a toy car with wheels that roll, a miniature adjustable wrench, a replica of a motorcycle and one that does a fancy sparkling light show through its clear case before sending fire into the air.

I shudder to think how many parents may have purchased these novelty lighters for their children, thinking they were harmless toys, and didn't know of their inherent dangers. Statistics from the

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) tell us that fireplay is the leading cause of fire deaths among preschool children. Most of the people killed by childplay fires are under six years of age, although the victims of these fires are not limited to the children who play with fire. In many cases, the fatal victims are often younger siblings or playmates of the children who start the fires. With approximately 20

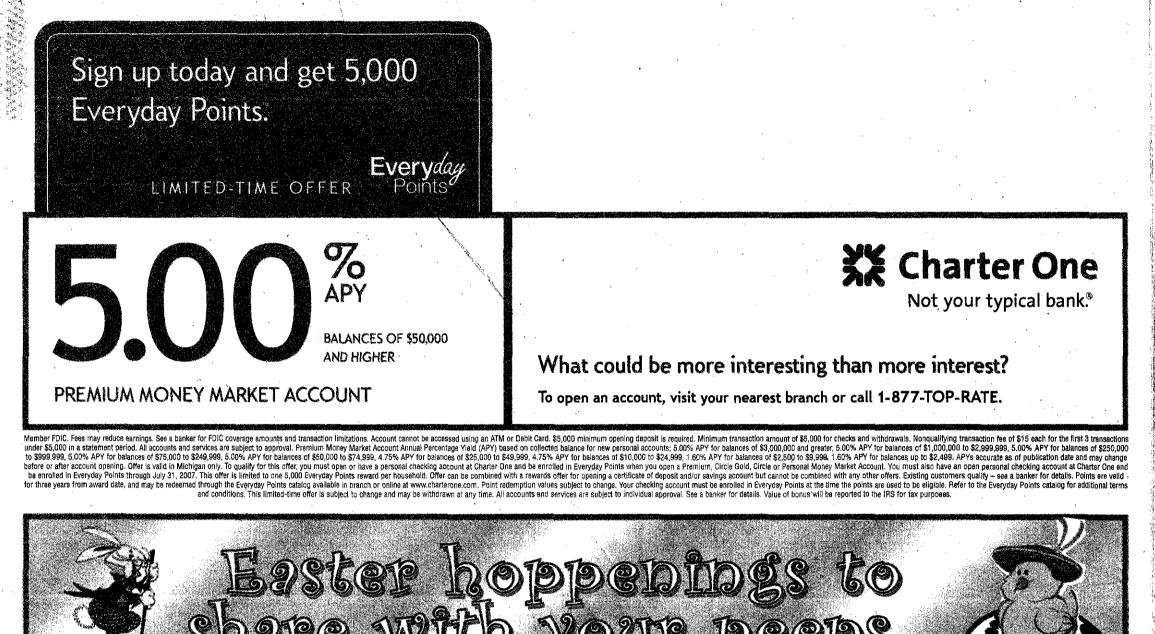
million lighters being sold in the U.S. each year, the

potential for one of these lighters starting a home fire is high. A study suggests that most novelty lighters have a useful life of less than one year, but it only takes one spark to set off a deadly blaze.

www.hometownlife.com

Thoroughly inspect anything your child asks you to purchase for them. Many of these items are within easy reach of the children near check-outs, and are dangerous. Be safe!

Tom Kiurski is a Livonia firefighter.







Churchill to host national girls mat tournament

BY BRAD EMONS STAFF WRITER

On the heels of the NCAA **Division I Men's Wrestling** Championships hosted recently at the Palace of Auburn Hills, it's time for another tournament to take center stage for the opposite gender. We're not talking

Wrestlemania at Ford Field, it's the 10th annual U.S. Girls Wrestling Association National Tournament scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at Livonia Churchill High School's main gymnasium.

A field of nearly 700 female

wrestlers, elementary through college-age, will compete for national titles in four different divisions.

Competitors will descend upon Livonia from all 50 states, including Hawaii and Alaska.

"It's an incredible atmosphere, it's different in that the competitors are so supportive of each other," said Charlotte Tripp, who is secretary for the Motown Ladies Wrestling Club.

Wrestling is a family affair for the Tripps, who also belong to the Trojan Wrestling Club at Clarenceville HS where son Matthew, 11, and Amanda, 12, are involved.

Tripp's 9-year-old daughter Jennifer, who attends Grandview Elementary School in Livonia, will compete in the K-five division at the Nationals.

Following a weigh-in Friday night, competition begins at 9 a.m. Saturday and will continue all-day before resuming on Sunday. Admission, which entitles fans with a two-day pass, is \$25

Churchill, which hosts the high school Observerland Invitational each year, takes over the USGWA Tournament from Lake Orion HS.

In addition for the Collegiate Open division, one of the most

competitive divisions will be High School (grades nine-12). Titles will also be at stake for Middle School (grades sixeight) and Elementary (K-five).

Two Michiganders, Paige Rife of Fowlerville and Samantha Gorman of Allendale, are ranked No. 1 in their respective weight classes of 152 pounds and 144, respectively, in the High School division.

Also expected to compete at the Nationals is Nicole Woody of Arundel High in Gambrills, Md., the top-ranked 100pounder who was featured recently in a Sports Illustrated article.

At U.S. high schools, Sports Illustrated noted that the number of female wrestlers tripled from 1,629 to 4,975 during the last decade.

Women's wrestling has increased in popularity internationally. It was added as an Olympic sport at the 20004 Summer Games in Athens, Greece.

To register for the USGWA Nationals, visit

www.usgwa.com; or e-mail tournament director Kent Bailo at kbailo@tier.com. The pre-registration fee is

\$40 (or \$50 at the door). For more information, call Bailo at (248) 627-8066.

Lineup cards set Ladywood squad could be at top of list again

BY BRAD EMONS STAFF WRITER

No fooling.

And it isn't even April 1 yet. Some area high school girls softball teams took to the diamonds on a warm, but stormy Tuesday afternoon as the 2007 season was launched.

So who are the contenders and pretenders this season?

Livonia Ladywood, 27-11 a year ago and Division 2 quarterfinalist for the third straight year, will be piloted by former

Blazer player Sara Thiesmeyer,

Area capsule previews, B2.

who takes over for Bob Lulek (now at Novi). The defending Catholic League A-B Division champions lost All-Area shortstop Jill Schulz (now at Central Michigan), but return two other first-team selections in pitcher Lauren

Taylor and senior second baseman Erin McLaughlin. Taylor, who owned a victory over defending Division 1 state champion Harper Woods Regina, finished 14-9 last year with a 1.86

earned run average. She struck out 147 batters in 193 innings. McLaughlin hit

.344 a year ago with 20 RBI and is joined by two returning starters in Alyssa Abramoski, a junior first baseman who collected 39 hits, and junior eatcher Kyle Suchy, who knocked in 21 runs. Another new coach in the area also returns to her alma mater as former Wayne State pitcher Meghan Misiak-Hall takes over for Carrie Koricam. Hall, an All-Stater at Churchill, inherits a 20-11 team that captured the Western Lakes Activities Association crown, but lost two key players in four-year pitcher Bridget Long and first baseman Cat Sidor.

PREP SOFTBALL PREVIEW

The top returnee is senior catcher Amber Holod, who batted .386 en route to All-Lakes Division and second-team All-Observer honors.

Fifth-year Livonia Stevenson coach Rob Witherspoon lost his entire infield to graduation including All-State catcher Roya St. Clair (now at Michigan).

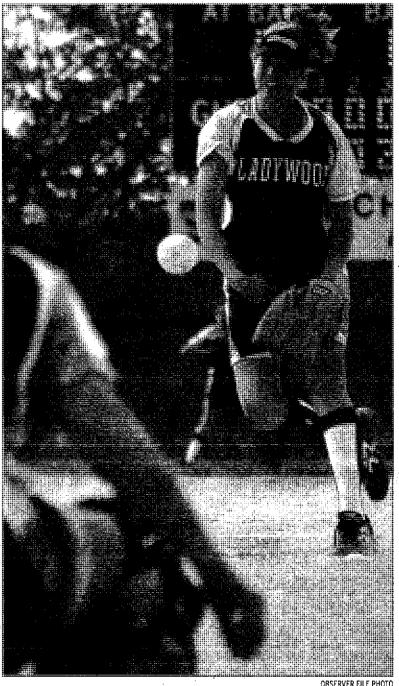
The Spartans, who finished 20-12 a year ago, ended a 22-year drought by winning the Division 1 district title at home. Second-team All-Area pitcher Jamie Johnson

returns, but she is being pushed by two other quality throwers in sophomore Laura Deacon and freshman Emily Hollandsworth.

Both Canton and Plymouth, members of the WLAA's Western Division, will be highly formidable teams in 2007.

The Lakes Division, however, appears to be wide open.

"The WLAA will be tough again," Stevenson coach Rob Witherspoon said. "There will be some excellent pitching, so we have to produce runs vs. that pitching. If we grow, if we mature and get through growing pains with our inexperience as varsity team, I think we can equal or exceed what we did last year. We hope to challenge on our side of the (Lakes) division."





Crosby saluted

Western Michigan University senior Brady Crosby (Livonia Stevenson) was named Mid-American **Conference Male Scholar** Athlete of the Week for March 18 in men's tennis.

Crosby, who carries a 3.77 grade-point average in finance, won both of his matches to help the No. 44 nationally ranked Broncos defeat Wright State, 7-0. Crosby, ranked No. 89

in the country, won his match at No. 1 singles and teamed up with partner John Pelton to win at No. 2 doubles against the Raiders to improve his dual-match record to 7-1.

The MAC Scholar Athlete of the Week is presented to the top male and female studentathlete who has a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or better and performs well during that week's competition.

Pentathlete 2nd

Livonia native Sheila Taormina turned in the best performance of her modern pentathion career Sunday capturing the silver medal in the second World Cup stop of the season in Cairo, Egypt, according to the US Olympic Team official Web Site release.

Taormina posted a total of 5.512 total modern

pentathlon points to

reach the podium in a

loaded competitive field

that included the 2006

World Champion, the

2006 World Cup Finals Champion and the 2004

Olympic gold medalist.

winners in 2006 also

Taormina battled throughout the day to climb the ladder.

competed.

Each of the World Cup

Despite a rough start in

the shooting (31st place),

Following the fencing competition she was in 28th place. A first place

time in the swim moved her up to 18th place overall. A perfect score in the

ride moved her up to 12th

place and finishing first

in the run moved her all the way to second place.

The Stevenson High grad, now residing in

Colorado Springs, Colo., is

attempting to make histo-

ry by making her fourth [

U.S. Olympic Team in an

unprecedented third sport.

ed in the Olympic Games

in the sports of swimming

(1996) and triathlon

A graduate of the Georgia, she won a gold

(2000 and 2004).

medal at the 1996

She has already compet-

Livonia Franklin (16-14) could be a sleeper in the Western Division with the return of sophomore twins Brittany and Briauna Taylor.

Brittany, an outfielder, earned first-team All-Observer honors after hitting .404, while Briauna, a shortstop, batted .411.

The key to the Patriot hopes will be the development of pitchers Alecia Geraghty and Natalie Sanborn.

Westland John Glenn (1-22), a member of

PLEASE SEE SOFTBALL, B2

Ladywood pitcher Lauren Taylor returns for her senior season for the Biazers, who reached the Division 2 quarterfinals and won the Catholic League A-B Division playoffs.

Whalers take command of series

BY ED WRIGHT STAFF WRITER

Following Tuesday night's 7-1 dismantling of Guelph, the Plymouth Whalers are clearly in the driver's seat in their first-round Ontario Hockey League playoffs series with the Storm. And Tom Sestito is clearly the driver.

Two nights after signing a professional contract with the Columbus Blue Jackets, Sestito sealed the Storm's fate by delivering a hat trick in a one-sided contest played before 3,276 at the Compuware Sports Arena.

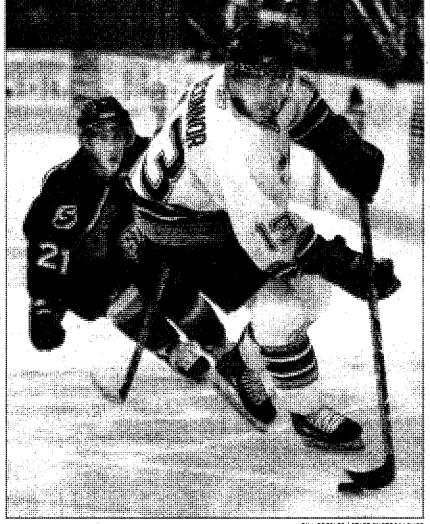
Plymouth is now up 3-0 in the best-ofseven series heading into tonight's Game 4 in Guelph. Games 5 and 6, if necessary, will be played Saturday and Sunday nights in Plymouth and Guelph, respectively.

The Storm offered plenty of lightning and thunder in the opening two games, which were competitive from the opening face-off to the final horn. However, on Tuesday, Guelph put up about as much resistance as a passing shower as the Whalers were never threatened after bolting to a 3-0 first-period lead.

"I think the key tonight was that we came out strong right away," said Sestito, who led the Whalers in goals scored during the regular season. "We started slowly in the first two games. Scoring three goals like we did in the first period really got us going."

Sestito's middle goal was worthy of an ESPN Sportscenter highlight. With the Whalers enjoying a 5-1 lead and a 5-on-3 power play, the rangy 6-foot-5 forward secured a rebound seven feet in front of the net and flipped a no-look back-hander past Storm goalie Thomas McCollum, much to the delight of the home crowd.

PLEASE SEE WHALERS, B4



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

and a second second

The Whalers' Sean O'Connor (right) wisks the puck away from Guelph's Jeff Hayes during Tuesday night's OHL playoff game.

Prep baseball teams eyeing improvement

BY, BRAD EMONS STAFF WRITER

For the love of the game.

That's the theme for many area high school baseball teams as they embark on the 2007 season this week.

Two teams return with winning records - Livonia Stevenson (17-13) and Livonia Churchill (17-

14) - while two others came away with district championships - Wayne Memorial (10-15) in Division 1 and Lutheran High Westland (9-13) in Division IV.



Winning seasons eluded Westland John Niemczak Glenn (11-15), Livonia

Franklin (9-22), Westland Huron Valley Lutheran and Livonia Clarenceville (0-19) in 2006.

So what can we expect in 2007? Stevenson could make the biggest jump as nine seniors return despite the loss of two first-team All-Area picks in Clayton Pack and Tony Pounders.

Third-year coach Rick Berryman will rely on a veteran pitching staff that includes seniors Matt Tuttle, Andy Jones and Larry Klemczak. The offensive attack is led by senior center fielder

PLEASE SEE BASEBALL, B3



Blazers stopped

Olympic Games in Atlanta,

swimming the third leg of

the 4x200-meter relay.

Kate Stevenson scored four goals and Louise Vasher added a hat trick as host Ann Arbor Pioneer rolled to a 9-1 seasonopening girls lacrosse win Monday at home over Livonia Ladywood.

Isabel Wanty stopped 11 of 12 shots for Pioneer. Lauren Anastos scored the lone goal for the Blazers, who trailed 9-1 at intermission. The game was stopped at the 30-minute mark because of lightning.

LOCAL SPORTS

Lauren Taylor

LIVONIA CHURCHILL Head coach: Meghan Hall, first year. League affiliation: Western Lakes Activities Association (Lakes Division). Last year's overall record: 20-11. Titles won last year: Western Division and WLAA champions

B2

(LW)

Notable losses to graduation: Bridget Long (first-team All-Area); Cat Sidor (first-team All-Area); Alecia Czapski (second-team All-Area); Liz Jagenow, Brynn Kerr. Leading returnees: Amber Holod, Sr. C (second-team All-Area, .386 batting average; All-Oivision); Hilary Antal, Sr. OF: Paula Guzik, Soph. utility; Jordan Kerr, Jr. Inf.-P (.330 batting ave; .902 fielding ave.); Lauren Kroll, Sr. OF-C; Julie Lewandowski Sr. P-Inf. (.907 fielding ave.); Katie Stodulski, Soph. Inf.; Chelsea Wydick, Sr. utility.

Promising newcomers: Rachel Elery, Soph. utility; Taylor Kerr, Fr. Inf.; Sarah Krakowiak, Soph. Inf.; Emily McShane, Jr. utility; Katina St. Pierre, Fr. OF.

Hall's 2007 outlook: "We're looking for our returnees to be leaders on and off the field. In addition, our younger players are expected to take charge and play good ball. "The league is competitive, and as a result. we need to practice hard, play smart and be tough."

LIVONIA FRANKLIN Head coach: Linda Jimenez, 12th year. League affiliation: WLAA (Western Division). Last year's overall record: 16-14. Titles won last year: Livonia Public Schools Invitational champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Kim Topolewski.

Leading returnees: Brittany Taylor, Soph. OF-C (first-team All-Area, .404 batting ave.); Briauna Taylor, Soph. SS (second-team Allarea. .411 batting ave.); Natalie Sanborn, Soph. P (.415 batting ave.); Heather Jaroh, Sr. C (.376 batting ave.); Allison Bonsall, Sr. OF-2B; Kelsey Garbutt, Sr. OF; Jessica Stailey, Jr. 18; Meghan Schemanske, Jr. OF-P; Emily Silsbee, Soph. 1B.

Promising newcomers: Ong T. Erin, Sr. OF; Ashley Geraghty, Jr. 1B; Jenny Adams, Jr. OF; Natalie Polakowski, Soph. OF; Leslie Giacobozzi, Soph. 3B; Nicole Emery, Fr. 2B; Alecia Geraghty, Fr. P; Keely Wilson, Fr. OF. Jimenez's 2007 outlook: "Despite returning nine, only the Taylor twins return to their positions. Everyone else is learning a new position. Our pitchers are very young with Alecia Geraghty and Natalie Sanborn (ninthand 10th-graders) having no varsity experi-

"Heather Jaroh will move from second to the catching position, which should help our

PUPAT ENTERTAINNEN A

young pitchers. Our three seniors are providing leadership along with the sophomore class. 'Right now our strength is our offense, but I know that defense and pitching will ballgames, so we'll keep working to improve on those areas.'

LIVONIA STEVENSON Head coach: Rob Witherspoon,

fifth year. League affiliation: WLAA (Lakes Ladywood Division).

Last year's overall record: 20-12. Titles won last year: Division I district champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Roya St. Clair (first-team All-Area); Amanda Alpert (second-team All-Area); Danielle Smith, Danielle Wozniak.

Leading returnees: Jamie Johnson, Jr. P (second-team All-Area); Monica Piekarski, Sr. OF: Lauren Brueck, Jr. C: Laura Deacon. Soph. P-18: Amanda Paison, Soph, SS: Janice Hollandsworth, Sr. OF: Kathleen Hoehn, Soph. 28: Danielle Kotlarczyk, Soph. OF-util-

Promising newcomers: Shelbie Wilson, Fr. OF-utility; Tara Sharpe, Fr. C; Emily Hollandsworth, Fr. OF-P; Nina Bonanno, Fr. OF: Kristina Vaclavek, Soph. 3B; Kristina Kroph, Jr. OF; Kristina Fetter, Jr. Inf.-utility Witherspoon's 2007 outlook: "It's going to be interesting. We essentially lost our whole infield. We lost four senior quality players. We'll miss their leadership, dedica tion and knowledge of game. "We have three pitchers who will compete

for starting job. All are high quality. Our strength is on the mound. If we can produce some runs - and the girls have been swinging pretty well so far in practice - we can be successful.

'Defensively, we're very young. We'll make some mistakes, but hope to mature, grow and develop as we go on. We should improve. We have competition for positions here than we've ever had before.

WESTLAND JOHN GLENN Head coach: Julie Rogers, first year. League affiliation: WLAA (Lakes Division). Last year's overall record: 1-22. Notable losses to graduation: Bridget Berg. Leading returnees: Lisa Pecoreili, Sr. SS; Brittany Holbrook, Soph. P; Stacey Truskowski, Soph. 3B; Shelbi Lyons, Jr. C; Edna Nealy, Sr. RF.

Promising newcomers: Katie Down, Fr. 2B; Sheena Martin, Jr. LF; Joye Clenney, Jr. 18; Tarra Anderson, Sr. CF; Jennifer Bone, Jr. P. Rogers' 2007 outlook: "We're trying to build a program. They need to get the train-



Erin McLaughlin Brittany Taylor Franklin

> ing and we've been working with them. They've had seven coaches in the last 10 years. That's a lot of turnover. We did a lot of conditioning starting in January and we're getting our system together. "I have a varsity assistant coach in place, Nicole Falardeau, and a JV coach, Kristin Potniec. I'm really optimistic. We trying to build a cohesive team with the returning girls and new faces.

Last year's overail record: 3-24. Notable losses to graduation: Alysa Henning, Carrie Laurbernds.

Jessie Harris, Soph. P-Inf.; Taylor Krohn, Soph. P-Inf.; Jessica Hensley, Jr. C. Promising newcomers: Nicole Kwolek, Jr. OF; Virginia Reid, Jr. C; Kristin Spade, Jr. 1B-P; Megan Zaccaro, Jr. OF; Ashley Ringel, Soph. Inf.; Jessica Novak, Jr. Inf.; Bianca Hayes, Soph. Inf.; Jordan Berry, Fr. Inf.; Colleen Blake, Soph. Inf.; Kathy Harris, Soph. OF; Jaclyn Serna, Fr. Inf. Woodard's 2007 outlook: "We're very young. We're are working hard and trying to improve every day.

LIVONIA LADYWOOD Head coach: Sara Thiesmeyer, first year. League affiliation: Catholic League (Central Division).

Titles won last year: Catholic League A-B Division playoff champs; Division II district and regional champions.

Notable losses to graduation: Jill Schulz (first-team All-Area): Donna Mainella (second-team All-Area); Katherine Mancini, Kasey Shelton, Rachel Jachym, Kaitlyn Huddas, Katie Blackmer.

Leading returnees: Lauren Taylor, Sr. P (first-team All-Area, 14-9, 1.86 ERA, 147 Ks, 193 innings); Erin McLaughlin, Sr. 28 (firstteam All-Area; .344, 20 RBI); Alyssa Abramoski, Jr. 18 (39 hits); Kyla Suchy, Jr. C

(21 RBI); Abigaji Blackmer, Jr. OF; Sarah Stempin, Jr. OF-P; Jordan Searcy, Soph. C; Courtney LaValley, Soph. SS.

Promising newcomers: Michelle Wyniemko, Jr. Inf.; Meredith Stasa, Jr. P; Jessica Rodriguez, Jr. OF; Jessica Payne, Jr. OF; Jordan Searcy, Soph. C; Gina Sykes, Fr. 3B; Alyssa Gietl, Fr. OF. Thiesmeyer's 2007 outlook: "Although we lost seven seniors I think the new additions to the team will do a wonderful job.

"Senior Lauren Taylor will lead our pitching staff with Kyla Suchy behind the plate. Senior Erin McLaughlin and junior Alyssa Abramoski return as solid infielders. "This team has great potential. Their drive and determination will get them far. The key to a successful season will be playing together as a team."

LIVONIA CLARENCEVILLE Head coach: Joe DeCaire, sixth year.

League affiliation: Metro Conference. Last year's overall record: 7-15. Notable losses to graduation: Cassidy Sublette (first-team All-Metro); Chelsea Carbonneau (second-team All-Metro); Laure Noble, Mai Tamashiro, Stephanie Fink. Leading returnees: Jenna Mrljak, Sr. SS Abby Sochacki, Sr. P; Kellie Manis, Sr. CF (second-team All-Metro): Nicole Lexson, Sr. OF; Kelly Ouinn, Sr. OF; Samantha Sillanpaa, Jr. OF; Chelsea Lawler, Jr. 2B; Becky Simpson, Sr. 1B.

Promising newcomers: Lisa Wilson, Soph. 3B; Charmaine McOueen, Soph. OF; Amber O'Halloran, Jr. 2B; Brittany Brooks, Soph. 1B; Danielle Maples, Jr. P; Sara Beattie, Jr. C: Miranda Cummings, Soph, OF: Malina James, Sr. OF; Val Sochacki, Fr. utility; Katie Murphy, Sr. OF.

DeCaire's 2007 outlook: "Last year we struggled with our overall defense and scoring runs. It's going to be a difficult task replacing All-Conference players Subjette and Carbonneau. along with the transfer of (Robin) Smith. Each of these players did something special and were the core of our team last year. "Some interesting events to look out for is

our pitching-catching combination with Abby Sochacki taking the circle this season. She has worked hard this off-season (since June) to become a serviceable pitcher and learn what it takes to pitch at the varsity level. She will be throw to two new, inexperienced catchers, in Beattie and Lexson. 'Our senior shortstop Jenna Mrijak will anchor the infield. Our leadership will be on the shoulders of our captains - Mrljak, Abby Sochacki and Manis."

LUTHERAN HIGH WESTLAND Head coach: Paul Guse', fourth year. League affiliation: Metro Conference. Last year's overall record: 5-15. Notable losses to graduation: Sarah Rider,

Sarah Bossard, Emily Thompson, Stephanie Rose (All-Conference). Leading returnees: Rachel Becker, Sr. C;

Katherine Matyas, Sr. 3B; Lenore Mazurek, Sr. OF; Kristine Smith, Sr. 1B; Jessica Voetberg, Sr. 2B; Stephanie Christensen, Jr.

Promising newcomers: Amanda DeVries, Jr. P: Andrea Guse', Sr. Inf.: Erica Pressley, Sr. utility; Beth Street, Sr. utility; Megan Bollinger, Jr. utility; Lauren Harris, Jr. inf.; Kara Jackson, Jr. CF; Cheisea Plunkett, Jr. utility. Guse's 2007 outlook: "As usual, we'll go as

"We'll be more athletic this season, with monia. Several others have nagging injuries

and illnesses." HURON VALLEY LUTHERAN Head coach: Eric Ruth, 10th year. League affiliation: Michigan Independent Athletic Conference (Red Division). Last year's overall record: 14-3. Titles won last year: MIAC Red Division chamns (12-0) Notable losses to graduation: Renee

Leading returnees: Amanda Gruenewald, Sr.

"Our pitcher (Gruenewald) is pretty solid. The infield remains the same. Defensively, we should do pretty well.



Southfield Christian dodged Westland Huron Valley Lutheran and the rainfall Tuesday to earn a season-opening 3-2 crossover girls softball win between divisional rivals in the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference.

Junior pitcher Kristi Hoffenbacher struck out 16 and allowed just two hits and two runs (both

PREP SOFTBALL

unearned), to lead the host Eagles.

She outdueled Huron Valley senior Amanda Gruenewald, who fanned 11 and helped her own cause with a two-run sin-

Meredith Zammit col-RBI and run scored for

Southfield Christian. HARRISON 8, JOHN GLENN 2: Pitcher Marley Westcott scattered seven hits and struck out 13 over seven innings Tuesday to propel Farmington Hills Harrison to a season-opening win at Westland John Glenn, spoiling Julie Rogers' debut as varsity coach. Glenn led 2-1 through

three innings before the

Celebrate Special Occasions! 70%

1

Hawks exploded for six runs in the top of the fourth aided by three Rocket errors.

Sarah Hrutky had two of Harrison's 12 total hits, while Lisa Pecorelli collected two of Glenn's seven hits.

Losing pitcher Brittany Holbrook struck out two and walked two in six innings.

FROM PAGE B1 🙍 the WLAA's Lakes Division.

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pete in the Birmingham

outlook.

Seaholm district tournament.

New coach Julie Rogers, a

science teacher at Glenn, takes

over for the Rockets with a new

Glenn's top returnees are

senior shortstop Lisa Pecorelli

Rival Wayne Memorial (3-

under third-year coach Wayne

Woodard, who welcomes back

Henning and pitchers Taylor

In the Metro Conference,

Livonia Clarenceville (7-15) will

Jenna Mrljak, along with senior

"A number of our players on

our roster this year gained a lot

of experience last year and this

should help out throughout the

season," Clarenceville coach Joe

DeCaire said. "Despite the trou-

ble last season, I was very

impressed with the positive

attitudes and hard work put

forth this off-season by our

players. Already during this

preseason, I have witnessed a

better knowledge of the overall

Lutheran High Westland (5-

15) lost All-Conference player

Stephanie Rose to graduation,

Amanda DeVries, a junior,

but returns senior catcher

game and what it takes to be

successful in doing the little

things."

WLAA's Western Division

junior shortstop Heather

Krohn and Jessie Harris.

be led by senior shortstop

pitcher Abby Sochacki.

24) hopes to be improved in the

and sophomore pitcher

Brittany Holbrook.

would like to forget about last season when the Rockets failed to field enough players to com-

far as our pitching and defense takes us. Amanda DeVries is ready to take over as our number one pitcher. She is consistent, but not overpowering. Yet, we'll have to improve on our defense from last year in order to be successful.

much better team speed, so we'll look to be more aggressive on the base paths. "We'll start the season a little shorthanded Kara Jackson is out with a broken orbital bone, while Andrea Guse' is out with pneu-

Wendland.

P (All-MIAC, two-time MVP); Sarah Schaffer, Jr. C (All-MIAC); Catherine St. John, Jr. 2B (All-MIAC): Brandy Nocella, Jr. 3B: Nicole Smith, Jr. SS; Katie Kipfmiller, Jr. RF; Erin Henkel, Sr. LF: Emily Helwig, Jr. 1B. Promising newcomer: Anna Schaffer, Fr. CF;

Kady Belshaw, Soph. P. Ruth's 2007 outlook: "The same lineup is pretty much intact. We should hopefully win the conference this year, but we have a pretty tough schedule this year. We play a lot of Blue Division teams in the MIAC this year.

"We need consistency in making the right decisions. We do have a JV team this year, which should benefit our freshmen class."

> Gusé. Next-door neighbor Westland Huron Valley Lutheran (14-3) seeks to defend its Red Division title in the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference.

Coach Eric Ruth, now in his 10th season, has a talented squad led by senior pitcher Amanda Gruenewald, a twotime MIAC MVP.

The entire infield returns led by All-MIAC catcher Sarah Schaffer, shortstop Nicole Smith, third baseman Brandy Nocella and second baseman Catherine St. John.

The Hawks opened their sea-



gle.

lected two hits with and

Ladywood

"Right now our hitting needs to get better." WAYNE MEMORIAL

Leading returnees: Heather Henning, Jr. SS;

Last year's overall record: 27-11.

League affiliation: WLAA (Western Oivision).

Head coach: Wayne Woodard, third year.

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LOCAL SPORTS

PREP BASEBALL CAPSULE OUTLOOK

LIVONIA CLARENCEVILLE Head coach: Mike Korczyk, fourth year. League affiliation: Metro Conference. Last year's overall record: 0-19. Notable losses to graduation: Jarrod Rice, Scott Treichel.

Leading returnees: Allen Mazur, Sr. P-IB-C; Brad Schwartz, Sr. C; Nick Garant, Sr. CF-SS; John McAlpine, Jr. SS-P. Promising newcomers: Andrew Abbott, Sr. 2B-P; Mike Schiffman, Fr. SS-2B. Korczyk's 2007 outlook: "We hope to improve from last year. We didn't have a very successful year last season. We'll try to get better each day in practice. "Our motto Is: 'If we want what we've never had, we must do what we've never done.' We'll try to do some things differently and try and get a better outcome than we've had."

LUTHERAN HIGH WESTLAND Head coach: Kevin Wade, third year. League affiliation: Metro Conference. Last year's overall record: 9-13. Titles won last year: Division IV district champs.

Notable losses to graduation: None. Leading returnees: Chris Ake, Sr. 2B (second-team All-Area); Dan Kryzske, Sr. P-OF; Sean Vandenbrink, Sr. OF; David Rider, Sr. 1B; Jake Wiemer, Sr. OF; C.J. Garber, Sr. 3B; Rob Seltz, Jr. 2B; Ryan Baglow, Jr. P-SS; Aaron Derminer, Jr. utility; Adam Zehel, Jr. OF; Billy Meler, Jr. OF-C; Nate Bachert, Jr. 1B; Derek Fleetham, Jr. P; Dan Abbott, Jr. C; Sam Ahlersmeyer, Soph. 3B-P. **Promising newcomers:** Micah Hausch, Soph. OF-P; Austin Baglow, Fr. P-SS.

Wade's 2007 outlook: "This should be our most competitive year out of the three I have coached. We have a backup at every position, which should create a lot of competition and only make us better as a team. "We also have quite a number of people who can give us good innings on the mound, which is also quite exciting."

HURON VALLEY LÜTHERAN Head coach: Matt Schaewe, seventh year. League affiliation: Michigan Independent Athletic Conference (Red Division). Last year's overall record: 6-10. Notable losses to graduation: John Sharrow, Erik Gruenewald. Leading returnees: Ryan Jones, Jr. P-SS; Kurt Metzger, Sr. 2B-P; Scott Hoff, Sr. 1B. Promising newcomers: Jeremy Elias, Sr. 3B; Richie Mamo, Fr. C. Schaewe's 2007 outlook: "We have 20 play-

ers, but we're very young. Six of our nine starters last year were seniors, but I think our younger guys have improved in the offseason. "Jones (Rvan) has really picked up speed on

his fastball and his curveball has come a long way. He's bigger and stronger, hitting the ball better." LIVONIA CHURCHILL

Head coach: Ron Targosz, fourth year. League affiliation: Western Lakes Activities Association (Lakes Division). Last year's overall record: 17-14 Notable losses to graduation: Rob Laichalk (second-team All-Area); Matt Dykla, Joel Hall, Steve Merlo, A.J. Stodulski. Leading returnees: Bryon Niemczak, Sr. P Inf. (first-team All-Area, .46B batting average, 35 RBI); Kirk Ciarrocchi, Sr. P-C-Inf.-OF (.276); Matt Luneack, Sr. P-OF (4-2 wonloss); C.J. Gustitus, Sr. C-OF (.971 fielding percentage); Mike O'Keefe, Sr. OF (.960 fielding percentage); John Rodeman, Sr. P-3B (.9D8 fielding percentage); Vince Carozza, Jr. P-OF (3-0, 3.60 ERA); Steve Jones, Jr. C-1B (.333 batting average). Promising newcomers: Tyler Cotter, Jr. Inf.-P; Brian Runge, Jr. OF-P; Shea Dwyer, Jr. OF P; Anthony Marietti, Jr. Inf.-OF-P; Eric Mitchell, Jr. Inf.; Josh Matigian, Jr. Inf.-OF-P; Eric Opiela, Jr. OF; Derrick Poremba, Jr. utility: Ryan Holton, Jr. 18-P; Tyler Bledsoe, Soph. C-2B.

Targosz's 2007 outlook: "The number one thing that I can say right now is that this team will not get outworked by anyone. We have IB players that have competed, and I believe will continue to do so the entire season. This alone will make us better as the season goes along.

"About half of our players have varsity playing experience, so until some of our other players gain that experience, I will be looking for some of our veterans to assume a leadership role. Our seniors are obviously a big part of this, so I'm looking for big things from them."

LIVONIA FRANKLIN

Head coach: Matt Fournier, first year. League affiliation: WLAA (Western Division). Last year's overall record: 9-22. Titles won last year: Livonia City champions. Notable losses to graduation: D.J. Tracy (second-team All-Area); Joe Horning, Curtis Ebbitt, Drew Thompson, Ryan Alderman, Andrew Haynie, Kyle Manni, Matt Lee, Dan Kozlowski.

Leading returnees: Jesse Carpenter, Jr. P-OF; David Leins, Sr. P-Inf.; Sean Sciba, Sr. P-Inf.; Tyler Canyock, Sr. OF; Matt Mill, Sr. Inf.; Matt Madaj, Sr. Inf.; Cal Brunning, Sr. Inf.; Neil Copeland, Sr. OF.

Promising newcomers: Garrett Gumm, Soph. inf.-P; Michael Basner, Soph. Inf.-P; Brian Humenay, Jr. OF; Jeff McCullough, Jr. Inf.-P; Anthony Andrus, Jr. OF; David Muller, Jr. OF; Derek LeBlanc, Jr. OF; Frank Pencola, Jr. OF; Alex Dominguez, Jr. DF. Fournier's 2007 outlook: "As a coaching staff, we feel we will have a young, but competitive team. We have a good mix of seniors/returners, and newcomers from a couple of good JV teams the last two years. "Our goal as a team is to improve on a weekly basis. We expect to be playing our best baseball when the state tournament starts."

LIVONIA STEVENSON

Head coach: Rick Berryman, third year. League affiliation: WLAA (Lakes Division). Last year's overall record: 17-13. Notable losses to graduation: Clayton Pack (first-team All-Area); Tony Pounders (firstteam All-Area); Kyle Thom, Chad Casey, Ben Schroeder, Matt McWilliams.

Leading returnees: Matt Tuttle, Sr. P; Andy Jones, Sr. OF-P; Larry Klemczak, Sr. P; Luke Knochel, Sr. CF (second-team All-Area, 400 batting ave.); Matt Loney, Sr. SS (.310 batting ave.); Nick Plinka, Sr. 2B; Nick Coram, Sr. OF; Derek Severson, Sr. OF; Jake Wilson, Soph, 3B-C.

Promising newcomers: Dan Rozek, Sr. C-1B (transfer); Sam Vomastek, Jr. C-3B; Jon Samaan, Jr. P-OF; Eric Krauss, Jr. SS-2B; Chris Summers, Jr. OF; Mike Tuttle, Soph. P. Berryman's 2007 outlook: "With nine seniors on the 2007 squad and improved pitching, the coaches are very optimistic about a successful season.

"Many of the players worked hard to improve their baseball skills in the off-season. After a year of second places in the division, district and city tournaments, the Spartans look forward to some firsts. "Improvement in pitching and hitting should help Stevenson reach its goals."

WESTLAND JOHN GLENN Head coach: Matt Howton, fifth year. League affiliation: WLAA (Lakes Division).

Last year's overall record: 11-15. Notable losses to graduation: Nate Lopez, Shawn Dunford, Ryan Sharp.

Leading returnees: Jerry Smith, Sr. P-OF (second-team Alf-Area); Nate Cover, Sr. P-Inf.; Jeff Girgen, Sr. P-Inf.; Jake Murawski, Sr. C; Justin Reid, Sr. P-Inf.; EJJ. Roach, Sr. P-Inf.; Alan Siepierski, Sr. Inf.; Ryan Wakeford, Sr. OF; Robert Fraser, Jr. P-Inf.; Chris Kangas, Jr. P; Kevin LaFave, Jr. OF; Ryan Looez, Jr. OF.

Promising newcomers: Jon Gillis, Jr. P-OF; Don Brady, Jr. DF; Dan Tamaroglio, Jr. P-Inf. Howton's 2007 outlook: "We have a lot of guys with good experience at the varsity level. They have played baseball together for most their life contributing to great team chemistry. "It's a good group that I have high expecta-

tions for the 2007 season. If they continue to work as hard as they have, good things can happen for us." WAYNE MEMORIAL

Head coach: Frank Garcia, second year, League affiliation: WLAA (Western Division), Last year's overall record: 10-15, Titles won last year: Division I district champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Justin Collop (first-team All-Area); Earl Martin (first-team All-Area); Andrew Kaleto.

Leading returnees: Clint Cavanaugh, Sr. P-SS-2B. (.370); Michael Green, Sr. 3B; Trey Reynes, Sr. P-1B; Brent Rexin, Jr. P-2B; Andrew Ponican, Sr. C-P; Jamie Harris, Sr. P-OF; Jon Smoes, Sr. 1B-OF; Josh Lewis, Sr. OF; Brent Patterson, Jr. 2B.

Promising newcomers: Ryan Collop, Jr. P; Tim Siegfried, Jr. OF; Jack Zimmerman, Jr. OF; Eric Schmitt, Jr. OF; Eric Robertson, Jr. 2B; Jon Bryant, Soph. P-SS.

Garcia's 2007 outlook: "This year's team really is looking to prove themselves. After losing Collop, Kaleto and Martin, some players are going to have to step up and try and fill their shoes. The season will come down to whether some underclassmen can step up and become varsity pitchers. (have seen some good things, but they will have to be consistent in order to have success. I really expect the offense to be the team's strong point. The seniors swing the bat well."

Crusaders rock-and-roll in lopsided victory

BY TIM SMITH STAFF WRITER

So far this spring, it's been raining down on Ilitch Ballpark, enough to force Madonna University's baseball team to twice postpone homeopening games.

On Tuesday, with late-afternoon thunderstorms looming, plenty of Crusader runs were all that rained down – at least, until after the 23-2 victory over Rochester (Mich.) was in the books.

Madonna (11-7) came out swinging, scoring runs in each of the first four innings to build a commanding 9-2 advantage over the Warriors. Just for good measure, the Crusaders then put a 12-spot on the scoreboard in the sixth to take a 21-2 margin into the

COLLEGE BASEBALL

a pair of doubles was sophomore shortstop Ryan Morrow.

The beneficiary of all the hitting was junior right-hander Carl McDevitt (Canton), who started on the mound and pitched the first five innings. He gave up just two runs and five hits while fanning five.

Succeeding him on the mound were sophomore Joe Kennedy (Belleville), sophomore Ryan Brodowsky (Farmington), senior Mike Hand (Farmington Hills), freshman Pedro Guerrero and freshman Keith Lelli.

For Rochester (4-7), Birmingham Brother Rice alum Jeff Pickens went 2-for-4 and scored a run. Taking the loss for the fielder Dan Miller. Other local products with a

hit included senior second baseman Matt Humenay (Westland/Livonia Churchill), junior catcher Ryan Powell (Canton), senior right-fielder Tony Luttman (Farmington) and junior left-fielder Mike Cauzillo (West Bloomfield).

Winning weekend

Madonna took two out of three from Spalding (Ky.) University over the weekend at Derby City Field in Louisville. After splitting a Saturday doubleheader, the Crusaders scored three runs in the top of the ninth to come away with a

6-3 triumph on Sunday. Junior catcher Garrett Ignasiak (Waterford) delivered a bases-loaded two-run single to left to break a 3-3 tie and John Glenn alum Will Kennedy to even be in position to win late.

Kennedy pitched seven innings and allowed three runs on seven hits, walking just one and striking out seven. He blanked Spalding from the second through the seventh innings

before tiring in the eighth. Collecting two hits each for the Crusaders were Ignasiak, Luttman and McCracken.

On Saturday, homers by freshman catcher Zach Flavin (2-4) and McCracken helped MU to the first-game 7-0 triumph. Combining for the twohit shutout were junior lefty Eric Wendling (five innings, two hits) and Brodowsky.

Junior right-hander Ryan Bardoni was the tough-luck loser in the 3-1 nightcap. He allowed one run and three hits

BASEBALL

FROM PAGE B1

Luke Knochel, who batted .400 last season.

Down the road, Churchill also hopes to make waves in the Lakes Division of the Western Lakes Activities Association.

The Chargers are led by firstteam All-Observer infielder and pitcher Bryon Niemczak, who hit .468 with 35 RBI as a junior. Pitcher Matt Luneack, who went 4-2 as a junior, should anchor the pitching staff.

"The thing that is going to make this season even more fun is that our entire roster is filled with kids that just love to play the game," Churchill coach Ron Targosz said. "I'm not sure I have ever coached a team that has been as focused and hardworking as these players. I'm looking forward to getting the season started and seeing where we'll stack up with some of the teams in our area."

John Glenn already has one victory under its belt this season (see related story) and the Rockets could make noise in the Lakes thanks to the return of second-team All-Area pitcher-outfielder Jerry Smith, a senior.

Coach Matt Howton also has a plethora of pitchers to choose from led by seniors Nate Cover and Jeff Girgen.

Wayne earned a district title a year ago under first-year coach Frank Garcia, who must replace two first-team All-Observer picks lost to graduation – pitcher Justin Collop and outfielder Earl Martin.

Senior pitcher Clint Cavanaugh and senior third baseman Mike Green are two of the top returnees for the Zebras, who lost to Allen Park in the first round of the Plymouth regional to Allen Park on a walk-off homer in the 10th inning. Franklin, under new coach Matt Fournier, will try and make amends for last year's sub-par campaign. The Livonia City champs return pitchers Jesse Carpenter, David Leins and Sean Sciba, along with outfielder Tyler Canyock.

"Our kids are determined to prove that last season's record was a fluke," said Fournier, the former JV coach who takes over for Paul Newitt. "We lost a lot of close games last season. If we continue to work as hard as we have been, learn from our past experiences, and have some of our younger players play to their potential, we'll have a successful season."

In the Metro Conference, Lutheran Westland keeps its entire lineup intact from its district championship squad.

Senior second baseman Chris Ake earned second-team All-Area honors a year ago for we coach Kevin Wade.

"We're hoping to finish in the top-half of the conference this " year," the third-year Warriors coach said. "We have finished eighth and seven the past two years, and we are hoping that this year we can get to the next level."

Meanwhile, Clarenceville coach Mike Korczyk literally will take it one game at a time as the Trojans try and find ways to earn a victory.

"I think we should be able to bit better than we did last year," the fourth-year coach said. "We're focusing on that a little bit. Some of our seniors have developed since last year and should be better at the plate.

"We have to get better at every facet of the game – throwing the ball, catching the ball and hitting the ball."

Westland Huron Valley Lutheran (6-10) lost six of nine starters to graduation. The Hawks hope to compete in the Red Division of the MIAC led by junior pitcher-shortstop Ryan Jones.

bemons@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2123



(LW) **B3**.

final stages.

The Crusaders belted four homers, two each by sophomore right-fielder Scott Boyer (3-3, five RBI) and junior first baseman John McCracken (2-6, four runs, five RBI). Lacing

Bethel in DH

Warriors was Joey Watros, who gave up the first nine runs.

All in all, 13 Madonna players contributed to the 19-hit attack. Also with two hits were senior third baseman Gary VanAllen and senior center-

Alan Siepierski went 3-for-4

with three singles and drove in

four runs Tuesday to lead the

visiting Westland John Glenn

Senior right-hander Jerry Smith pitched five solid

innings to earn the win. He

struck out seven, walked two

and allowed four of North's five

at North Farmington.

to a 6-2 season-opening victory

then Luttman followed with an RBI single to center.

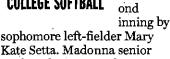
Hand pitched two scoreless innings of relief for the victory, but Madonna received a sterling performance from junior right-hander and Westland in 5.1 innings, but walked six batters.

Madonna took an early 1-0 lead on an RBI double to leftcenter by Ignasiak, but the Crusaders could only muster four safeties the rest of the way.

MU swept by Rockets down North Farmington in opener

Madonna University's softball team couldn't quite crank up the offense Sunday, dropping a doubleheader to host

Bethel College (Ind.). The Crusaders (13-8) lost the opener 1-0, managing just a single in the second



Kate Setta. Madonna senior pitcher Shannon Noder deserved a better fate, allowing just one run on four hits in six innings.

Bethel (8-6) then scored four runs in the bottom of the fifth – with the help of two MU errors – to eke out a 6-4 win in the nightcap.

The Pilots entered the frame down 4-2 but scored an unearned run and then went ahead on a two-run double by designated hitter Brittney Fisher.

Madonna looked good early on, going ahead 3-0 in the fourth on run-scoring singles by sophomore catcher Danielle Richardson (2for-3), freshman first baseman Caitlyn Sidor (Livonia Churchill) and freshman third baseman Brittney Scero (Canton).

After Bethel answered with two runs to cut MU's lead to 3-2, the Crusaders scored in the top of the fifth on a sacrifice fly by sophomore shortstop Tedi Johnston (2-for-2).

Also tallying two hits each in the game for the Crusaders was junior right-fielder Heather Richardson (Canton).

Madonna is slated to play a doubleheader beginning at 1 p.m. Saturday against visiting Cornerstone. PREP BASEBALL

hits. Robert Fraser finished the game on the mound.

Smith helped his cause at the plate, going 2-for-4 with a double and a triple; he scored two runs. Jeff Girgen and Fraser chipped in RBI singles. The Raiders used a handful

was the starter, gave up three runs in the first inning. The Rockets had a total of 10 hits. Glenn added single runs in the second, fourth and sixth

of pitchers. Alex Manion, who

innings. North scored in the second and sixth innings. Matt Cole was 2-for-4 with a

pair of singles for the Raiders, who also made their season debut.

Register for a chance to win a Wii video game system or other prizes!

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ROMULUS 5875 Middlebelt Road **WAYNE**

34620 Michigan Avenue

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(LW)

B4

Whalers rally for win on road vs. Storm

Sean O'Connor's power play goal at 14:24 of the second period snapped a 3-3 tie and the Plymouth Whalers came all the way back from a 3-0 deficit to defeat the Guelph Storm, 5-3, in Game 2 of the best-fourof-seven Ontario Hockey League Western Conference Quarterfinal game played Sunday night before 3,811 at the Guelph Sports and Entertainment Centre.

The victory extended the Whalers' lead in the series to 2-0.

Dan Collins led the Plymouth attack with two goals, while James Neal, Tom Sestito and O'Connor scored singles. Ryan Pottruff, Jamie Arniel and Drew Doughty replied for Guelph.

After being outshot, 14-4, in the first period, the Whalers

WHALERS

FROM PAGE B1

rallied to take the game over, outshooting Guelph, 44-14, over the final forty minutes. Plymouth outshot Guelph, 48-28, in the game.

Guelph built their 3-0 lead on power plays – Pottruff, roofing a shot from the slot at 10:26 of the first period, Arniel, in tight at the left doorstep at 17:26 of the first period and Doughty, hard shot from the slot at 2:55 of the second period.

Collins started the Plymouth comeback in the second period by scoring twice in the span of 38 seconds – slamming home a rebound from the left wing at 9:05 of the second period and then deflecting Wes Cunningham's point shot from

the hashmarks at 9:43. Neal scored his first of the playoffs to tie the game at

10:57, taking Brett Bellemore's pass from the right point in the Guelph zone and one-timing a shot from the lower rim of the left circle. O'Connor capped good Plymouth pressure on a power play at 14:24 when he rammed home a rebound from a hard Jared Boll shot from the slot.

Sestito scored the only goal of the third period to close the scoring at 10:42. PLYMOUTH 3, GUELPH 2 (OT): Evan

Brophey's goal at 2:14 of overtime snapped a 2-2 tie and the Plymouth Whalers came from behind to defeat the Guelph Storm in Game 1 of the OHL first-round playoff series played Saturday night before 2,832 at the Compuware Sports Arena.

Brophey took Chris Terry's pass from center ice and skated over the Guelph blue line.

He took a shot from the top of the left circle that Guelph goaltender

Thomas McCollum got a glove on, but the puck trickled over the line.

Daniel Ryder and Sean O'Connor scored the other Plymouth goals. Jamie Arniel and Matt Kennedy scored for Guelph.

Guelph outshot Plymouth, 34-26, with Whalers goaltender Michal Neuvirth recording his first OHL playoff victory in stopping 32-of-34 shots.

Plymouth (49-14-2-3, 103 points) finished 25 points ahead of Guelph (33-23-3-9, 78 points) in the regular season standings, but the Storm built a 2-1 lead in the first period on goals by Arniel (0:50) and Kennedy (17:05) sandwiched around O'Conner's marker at 10:08.

After a scoreless second period, the Whalers tied the game at 13:21 of the third period when Ryder batted home a rebound out in front of the Guelph goal after McCollum made stops on Dan Collins and James Neal. That set the stage for Brophey's

game-winning goal.

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Senior men's golf

A general membership meeting for the Livonia Senior Men's Golf League will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 21 at the Civic Park Senior Center, 15218 Farmington Road, Livonia.

The \$25 registration fee includes a \$15 ticket to the annual awards banquet. Membership is open to all male residents of Livonia who are 62 years of age and older.

League play begins Tuesday, May 1 and is scheduled through Tuesday, July 31. There are five handicapped flights. You must play at least 10 nine-hole rounds during the league year to establish a handicap and be eligible to participate in the flight championship tournament beginning in August.

For more information, call league president Tom Amadori at (734) 261-4718; or league secretary Don Hooper at (734) 464-6975.

Drop in H.S. hockey

High school drop in hockey will be available from 3:30-5 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays at Eddie Edgar Arena, 33841 Lyndon, Livonia.

The fee is \$8 per player. It is limited to 24 players and four goalies.

All players must show their high school I.D., read and sign a rules form, along with a liability waiver form.

Hockey skills camp

Livonia Churchill will stage a summer skills hockey camp from 8-9:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, July 16-20; and from 9-10:30 a.m., July 23-27, for grades 9-12 (fall of 2007).

You must pre-register with Community Education.

For more information, email Churchill coach Pete Mazzoni at Pmazzon@livo-

Need pom coach

Livonia Stevenson High School has an opening for a varsity pom pon head coach. For more information, call Stevenson athletic director Lori Hyman at (734) 744-2894. LHA golf outing

The 11th annual Livonia Hockey Association golf outing will be Friday, June 15, at the Links of Novi Golf Course.

begins with bag drop at 9 a.m.

tion. A shotgun start follows at

The cost for golf and dinner is

\$125 (dinner only \$35). Included

in the cost is 18 holes (with cart),

hot dog lunch at the turn, and a

competitive select division for those members of their high school baseball teams along with a non-select division for youths currently not playing for their respective high school squad.

Rosters may be limited. Early registration is encouraged and forms are available in the high school business offices. Coaches are also wanted for both divisions.

For more information, call George Coram at (248) 478-5071 or Curt Kreutzfeld at (734) 522-5413.

Girls fastpitch

Registration for the 2007 Westland Lightning girls fastpitch softball program (ages 8-16) is being held from 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. until noon Saturdays at the Westland Youth Athletic Association Compound, 6050 Farmington Road, Westland. Birth certificates are

required.

For more information, call (734) 421-0640; or visit www.wyaa.org.

Soccer signup

Registration is underway for the Livonia YMCA spring soccer for boys and girls ages 3-8, along with boys and girls. under-9, -10 and -11.

The season runs April 14 through June 2 and fees vary. For more information, call

(734) 261-2161.

Komen Bowl-a-Thon

Livonia Clarenceville High School varsity girls and boys bowling coach Pam Jones will hold a fund-raiser as she participates in the Susan G. Komen for the Cure 3-day, 60mile walk for breast cancer.

The bowling fund-raiser will be at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 12 at Country Lanes, 30250 W. Nine Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

The cost is \$20 per person (includes bowling, mystery games, pizza).

Reservations are required. For more information, call Jones at (248) 476-3201.

WYAA registration

Registration for the 39th season for Westland Youth Athletic Association baseball and softball is underway and runs through March 31 at the WYAA's Lange Compound, 6050 Farmington Road (north of Ford Road).

The WYAA offers programs ding: T-Ball (ages 5-6)

"Tom actually works on shots like that in practice," said Plymouth head coach Mike Vellucci. "He's been great for us all year. Whenever he gets the puck in front of the net like he did tonight, he's very dangerous." The Whalers' penalty-killing unit ranked right up there with Sestito in terms of effectiveness as it snuffed out 11-of-12 shorthanded situations. Following a calm and uneventful opening 20 minutes, the overhead

scoreboard at Compuware was lit up like a Christmas tree for most of the second and third stanzas during which flashing neon "No vacancy" signs would have been appropriate for the penalty boxes.

"We've worked all year on our penalty-killing and it has shown in the games," said Vellucci. "The most important thing you need to kill penalties is a great goalie and we have two of them."

Getting the nod between the pipes on Tuesday for Plymouth was Michael Neuvirth, who also started the opener before giving way to Jeremy Smith for Game 2 on Sunday. The Czech Republic native was brilliant, stopping 34-of-35 shots.

Neuvirth's most impressive save came with 2:55 left to play when he stoned a two-on-none Guelph breakaway. Seven secs later, Sestito scored hi



Michai Neuvirth makes the stop for the Whalers, who blasted Guelph Tuesday night at Compuware Arena, 7-1, to take a commanding 3-0 lead in the Ontario Hockey League playoff series.

the referees to measure James Neal's stick immediately after he was whistled for a twominute penalty. If the men in stripes ruled that the stick's curvature was beyond legal limits, the Whalers would have been assessed a second twominute penalty, giving the Storm a 5-on-3 advantage.

Initially, the referees said the stick was OK. However, after Guelph coach Dave Barr insistthe rets reed on a re-check

referring to stick-gate. "It kind of set the tone for (Guelph), too, because I think their players realized it was a desperate act and it kind of demoralized them when they didn't get anything out of it."

Plymouth struck first on Jared Boll's off-the-post goal 7:19 into the opening period. He

Neal doubled the lead to 2-0 when he maneuvered through three Guelon defenseman before back-handing a floater past McCollum with 6:11 left in the opening period. The Whalers' first-period onslaught continued when Ryan McGinnis scored from Wes Cunningham and Sean O'Connor with just 15.9 seconds

left before the intermission.

Guelph sliced its deficit to 3-1 on Rafael Rotter's power-play lamp-lighter with 17:07 to play in the second. However, Sestito subdued any momentum the visitors may have envisioned with a goal off a rebound at the 8:12 mark of the second.

O'Connor (from McGinnis and Dan Collins) and Sestito (two) found the back of the net in the third period.

11 a.m.

The foursome scramble followed by 10 a.m. re

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

nia.k12.mi.us.

was assisted by Evan Brophey.

third power-play goal of the night to close the scoring.

Desperate times required desperate measures for the Storm 23 seconds into the third period. With a 4-1 deficit looming over their heads, the Guelph coaching staff asked

measured and ruled that it was an illegal piece of equipment. Unfazed, the Whalers killed

off the Storm's two-man advantage.

"I think that fired us up a little bit, especially after we killed the penalties," said Vellucci,

Plymouth outshot Gueiph, 58-35, after getting outshot 12-10 in the opening period.

In celebration of signing his first pro contract, Sestito pledged to take his teammates out to dinner.

"But only after I get my first check," he said, smiling.

barbecue steak dinner. Prizes will be awarded to the winners for longest drive and closest to the pin. You can also purchase 50-50 raffle tickets.

All payments much be received by June 8. For more information, call (734) 422-5172; or visit livoni-

ahockey.org.

Colt-Palomino signup

Registration for Livonia Baseball-Softball Association Colt (ages 15-16) and Palomino (17-18) baseball will be from 10 a.m. until noon, Saturday, March 31; and from 6-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 18, at the Livonia Civic Center Library

Two divisions of play will be formed. It includes a highly

Coach-Pitch with machine (7-8),/Mustang (9-10), Bronco (11-12), Pony (13-14), Colt (15-16), Palomino (17-18), along with girls slow-pitch and fastpitch softball.

For more information, call (734) 421-0640 during normal business hours or 10 a.m. until noon Saturday and 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays; leave a message).

You can also visit www.wyaa.org.

Baseball Academy

The Bernie Carbo Pro Secrets Baseball Academy will be staging individual, small group and team skills session in power pitching, hitting and fielding.

Marketing showcase sessions for high school players are available.

Former Phillies minor league All-Star Mark Rutherford will be the featured instructor. For more information, call (734) 421-4928.

Sestito signs pact with Jackets

On Tuesday, Columbus announced the signing of Plymouth Whalers' left wing Tom Sestito to a three-year entry-level contract.

Sestito was Columbus' third pick (85th overall) in the 2006 Entry Draft.

"It's exciting, but I really haven't thought about it much because I'm trying to focus on helping the Whalers win," said Sestito, moments after Tuesday night's 7-1 victory over Guelph in which he contributed his

seventh hat trick of the season, "Columbus still had a year to sign me, so there wasn't a lot of pressure to get things done right away.'

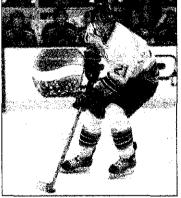
Sestito, 19, tallied 42 goals and 22 assists with 135 penalty minutes and a plus-six plus/minus rating in 60 games with Plymouth during the 2006-07 regular season.

He led the club and ranked 13th in the OHL in goals; and was tops on the team and eighth in the OHL with 21

power-play goals. He also led the Whalers with four shorthanded goals and was sixth on the club in points.

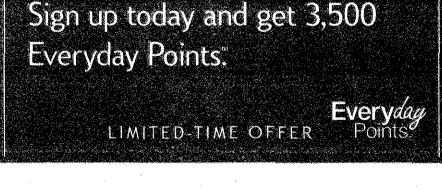
He helped lead Plymouth to a 49-14-2-3 regular-season record, which was tops in the West Division and second in the league.

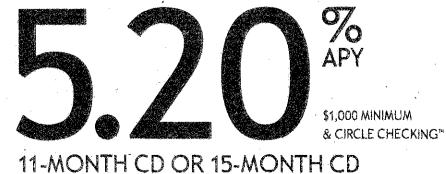
The 6-5, 212-pound Rome, N.Y. native has appeared in 152 career OHL games with the Whalers, registering 53-35-88, 399 penalty minutes and a +3 plus-minus rating.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER Plymouth Whalers forward Tom

Sestito gave Guelph fits Tuesday night, scoring three goals in the Ontario Hockey League playoff game.





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LOCAL SPORTS

www.hometownlife.com

Harrison's hat trick trumps John Glenn

BY DAN O'MEARA STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Harrison improved to 2-0 in girls soccer Tuesday with a 5-2 victory over visiting Westland John Glenn. The game was stopped with 17:05 remaining in the second half due to bad weather as a thunderstorm passed through the area. The result will stand as a completed game.

Sophomore Kendal Wong scored a hat trick for the Hawks, who have their first OAA Division III game tonight at West Bloomfield.

"I can tell you we're pretty excited (about being 2-0)," Harrison coach Stacy Punzal said. "It's nice to be on the winning end at the beginning of the season.

"It really builds momentum going into division play. It helps build confidence for our young players and team unity."

John Glenn (0-2) scored first at 27:44 in the first half when Margie Shup knocked in a loose ball following a direct kick before Harrison goalie Allison Liberty could control it.

Kendal Wong scored her first goal at 24:20 after taking a through ball from Janel Carter, and her second with 10:05 on

PREP BASEBALL

Thursday, March 29

Wash. Christian at Huron Valley, 4:30 p.m.

Friday, March 30

Franklin at Garden City, 4 p.m.

Lathrup at Clarenceville, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 31

(all doubleheaders)

John Glenn at Farmington, 11 a.m.

Wyandotte at Wayne, 11 a.m.

Churchill at Thurston, noon

Novi at Stevenson, noon.

Franklin at Allen Park, 1 p.m.

GIRLS SOFTBALL

Thursday, March 29

Stevenson at Dearborn, 4 p.m.

Friday, March 30

Novi at Franklin (2), 4 p.m.

Lathrup at Clarenceville, 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 31

(all doubleheaders)

Garden City at Stevenson, 11 a.m.

Redford Union at Franklin, 11 a.m.

Wyandotte at Wayne, 11 a.m.

Huron Valley at Lutheran N'west, 11 a.m.

the clock gave Harrison a 2-1 halftime lead.

As the Glenn goalie was coming out to cut down the angle, Wong knocked the ball to left, went around the keeper and shot a long ball to the net for her second goal.

Rennie Jones made it 3-1 early in the second half (35:36), following up a shot by Riley Steen with a hard shot to the right corner of the net.

Wong's third goal at 33:35 was unassisted, and Steen's shot to the right top corner capped the Harrison scoring at 30:23.

Jones took over as the Harrison goalie with 26 minutes left. Glenn capitalized on a defensive breakdown at 24:02 for its second goal by Megan Nikula from Ashley Bailey.

"We were very unfocused when the game started," Punzal said. "It took us about 15 minutes to get in the game.

"(The Hawks) settled down and started working well together. We started sending through balls and making overlap runs, and that's what opened up the game for us.

"Things started to click after they scored their first goal. It just took us some time to settle in."



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHEF

Harrison junior Kelly Avery gets to the ball before her Westland John Glenn adversary Tuesday night at Harrison. The 2-0 Hawks won the rain-shortened game, 5-2.

THE WEEK AHEAD

GIRLS SOCCER Thursday, March 29 Bishop Foley at Ladywood, 5:30 p.m. Friday, March 30 Clarenceville at Wayne, 5 p.m. Churchill at A.A. Pioneer, 5:30 p.m. Novi at Stevenson, 7 p.m. Saturday, March 31 Ladywood at Notre Dame Prep, 1 p.m. **BOYS TRACK & FIELD** Thursday, March 29 Annapolis at Clarenceville, 4 p.m Saturday, March 31 Patriot Invitatonal at Franklin, 9 a.m. Huron Relays at EMU, 10 a.m. **GIRLS TRACK & FIELD** Thursday, March 29 Annapolis at Clarenceville, 4 p.m. Saturday, March 31 Patriot Invitational at Franklin, 9 a.m. Huron Relays at EMU, 10 a.m. **BOYS TENNIS** Friday, March 30 Wayne at Taylor Truman, 4 p.m. **GIRLS GOLF** Thursday, March 29

Wayne vs. Taylor Truman at Woodlands-Van Buren, 3 p.m. John Glenn at Edsel Ford, 3:15 p.m. **GIRLS LACROSSE** Saturday, March 31 Ladywood Tournament, 9 a.m. MEN'S COLLEGE BASEBALL Saturday, March 31 Madonna vs. Siena Heights at Ilitch Ballpark (2), 1 p.m. Sunday, April 1 Madonna at Siena Heights (2), 1 p.m. WOMEN'S COLLEGE SOFTBALL Saturday, March 31 Madonna vs. Cornerstone at MU University Park (2), 1 p.m. Sunday, April 1 Madonna at Siena Hts. (2), 1 p.m. **ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE PLAYOFFS** Thursday, March 29 Whalers at Guelph Storm, 7 p.m. Saturday, March 31 (if necessary) Whaters vs. Guelph Storm at Compuware Arena, 7:05 p.m. Sunday, April 1 (if necessary)

Whalers at Guelph Storm, 6:30 p.m.

Patriots get late goal to nip Crestwood, 1-0

Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, March 29, 2007

Junior forward Molly Perkins' goal in the 70th minute was the difference Monday as host Livonia Franklin launched its girls soccer season with a 1-0 victory over Dearborn Heights Crestwood.

Kelly Powers, a junior forard, set up the goal when she dribbled down the sideline, made a cut-back move and served it into the box where Perkins placed it home.

"We started well, but it was obvious we had a bit of nerves or uneasiness," Franklin coach Jen Barker said. "As the game went on, we got more and more comfortable. The girls started to move the ball around and realize that if they would relax, and do what we worked on in practice, things would fall into place."

The match was halted for 30 minutes because of lightning with 27 minutes to play.

"We were able to get the game right back at the tempo we had left off at," Barker said. "For our first night out, I'm pleased with how we looked and our result."

STEVENSON 1, SALINE 1: In a nonconference match Monday, Livonia Stevenson (0-1-1) and the host Hornets (0-0-1) battled to a draw.

Both goals came in the first half. At the four-minute mark, Taleen Mergian came out of a scramble just outside Saline's 18-

yard box and tucked a shot neatly into the corner for Stevenson's only goal. The Spartans missed a chance to go up 2-0 after Victoria Slavin was

go up 2-0 after Victoria Slavin was tripped inside the box after a nice through ball from Kat Griffith, who missed the penalty kick.

Kellie Stepaniak's direct free kick outside the 18 wrapped around Stevenson's wall for Saline's lone goal midway through the first half to knot the game at 1-all.

Stevenson goalkeeper Rachel Simari made the initial stop, but an unfortunate hop landed the ball in the net.

The Spartans gave up only a

GIRLS SOCCER

corner kick and free kick the rest of the way. Stevenson mounted heavy second-half offensive pressure, creating several chances, but could not convert.

Liz Tokarsky, returning from an illness after missing the Pioneer match, gave the Spartans "a great boost defensively,"

according to coach Chris Pinta. "We played well tonight," he said, "and tonight we had plenty,

we just couldn't covert." **PIONEER 4, STEVENSON 0:** Ann Arbor Pioneer scored four times within a 15-minute span in the first half Friday night to spoil host Livonia Stevenson's season opener.

Brooke Ufer's hat trick carried the Pioneers against a somewhat short-handed Spartan team which had only five returning starters in the lineup due to injury and illness.

Eight players were making their varsity debuts, including three freshmen.

"I thought the game started out very well for us as we went back-and-forth with Pioneer, even generating the first solid opportunity," Stevenson coach Chris Pinta said. "We were tough, going toe-to-toe with them for the first 25 minutes.

"Then, they knocked a ball from the left flank into our box, where some miscommunication in our backline left (Brooke) Ufer wide open. Brittany (Vella) came off her line and got a piece of her attempt, but Brooke followed and finished to put Pioneer up 1-0."

Ufer added two more goals before the half, while Mikki Dennis added another when she buried a slotted ball into the upper corner.

"We were better defensively the second half, limiting Ann Arbor had to only a couple of opportunities," Pinta said. "Catherine Fitzimmons (Pioneer's keeper) had to make three to four solid saves."

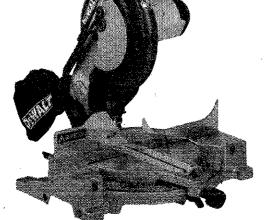
Rachel Simari finished in goal during the second half for the Spartans.

"Pioneer is a very solid team," Pinta said. "They are experienced all over the field. I was proud of how well my girls fought to the end, never giving up. We'll learn from this and move on."

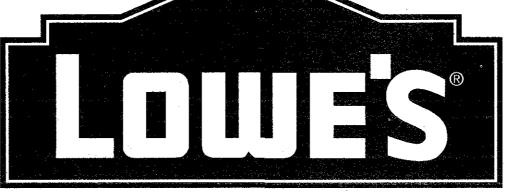




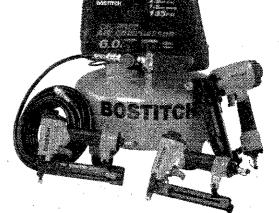
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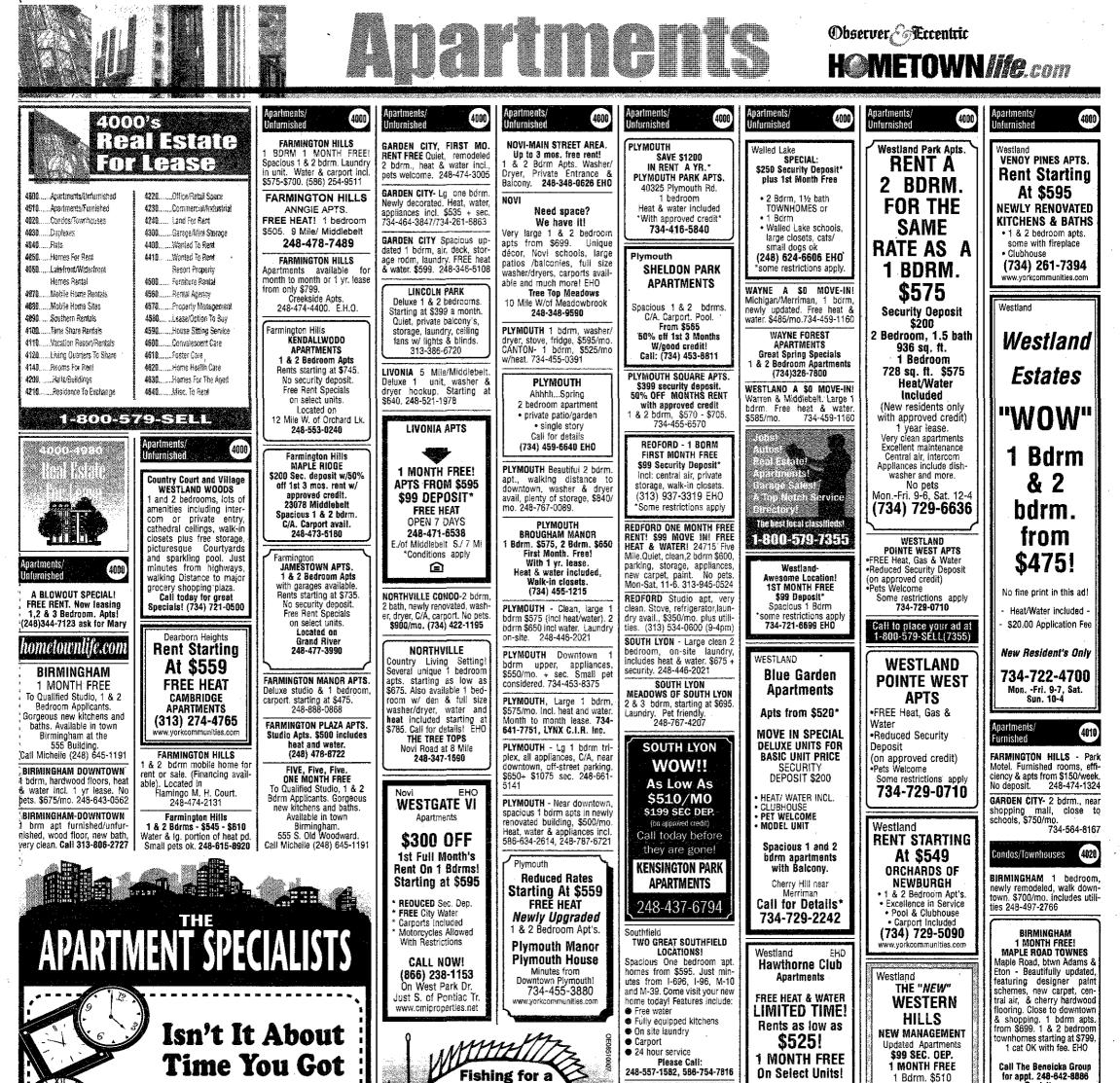
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