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Tree lighting

Santa will help Mayor William Wild and Westland City Council members light the city's Christmas trees at 6:15 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5. The special night will include awarding the prize to the "What Christmas Means to Me" essay contest winner, a Christmas carol sing-along, the arrival of Santa, and the official tree lighting ceremony. The excitement continues with refreshments and a visit with Santa at the Central Fire Station next to City Hall. The ceremony will take place in front of city hall at 36601 Ford Road.

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Enter our Facebook contest for a chance to win two tickets to see the Detroit Lions take on the Minnesota Vikings on Dec. 11 at Ford Field. Our website, Hometownlife.com, is giving away two prime tickets to the game but you must act fast as the deadline for entries is midnight Dec. 8. To enter, visit us on Facebook and click on the sweepstakes tab, or go to Hometownlife.com, and click on Detroit Lion helmet in our Don't Miss module. Share the contest link with a Facebook friend and get an extra chance to win, if they also enter the contest. The lucky winner will be selected at random Friday, Dec. 9.

Santa letters

Youngsters can be sure Santa knows what they want by writing a letter to Santa. Santa Claus has given the Observer permission to print some of those letters in our Thursday, Dec. 22, issue. But to do that, we need letters. So youngsters, get out some paper and a pen or pencil or a computer and start writing. Letters should be e-mailed to smason@hometownlife.com. Parents, be sure to include a JPEG photo of your child, with their name, age, address and phone number. Only your child's name and age will be published. Letters can also be mailed to Letters to Santa, c/o Sue Mason, 615 W. Lafayette, Second Level, Detroit, MI 48226. The deadline for all Santa letters is Monday, Dec. 12.

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Grant boosts fire dept. ranks

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

Thanks to a \$1.8 million federal grant, Westland will be adding nine firefighters increasing the department manpower for two years. The funding, which will increase the number of firefighters from 54 to 63,

comes from the 2010 fiscal year Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response program. "I'm really pleased to hear that the Westland Fire Department was awarded this important grant," said Mayor William Wild, adding that hiring additional firefighters would increase

the lifesaving capabilities of the department and provide more training opportunities. The SAFER grant will pay 100 percent of the wages and benefits to hire nine additional firefighters by the end of 2011 for two years and will raise the department manpower. Part of

the grant requirements is that the grant funded firefighters are in addition to current staffing, not replacements. "We have to maintain our current staffing. We will have nine guys free for two years under the grant," said Fire Chief Michael Reddy. Over the next two

years, 13 firefighters are scheduled to retire and the grant requirements would have to be replaced. "With the numbers of guys who will be leaving, it's not likely that we would lay off except for maybe a month or two and that's the worst

Please see GRANT, A2

Tree of Life



Tim Miraditur from Garden City hangs an angel on Angela Hospice's Tree of Life for his wife Rose in honor of her father and brother.

Angel ornaments remember loved ones

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

Janina Hejka didn't know she'd see someone from her old neighborhood when she went to Westland Shopping Center Wednesday evening. She was there with her daughter Jeanette Perkovich for the opening ceremony of Angela Hospice's annual holiday Tree of Life and to find a gold angel hung on one of the four Christmas trees in honor of her husband, Thaddeus Hejka, who had died on Sept. 11, 2010, after suffering a massive stroke. And while looking for his angel, Hejka spotted Mary Czachor, the



Clara Mirti of Westland talks to volunteer Ann Czachor from Detroit after the ceremony.

Please see TREE, A2

New law moves W-W elections to November

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

School board members around the state have discovered that their time in office will be more than what they thought after Gov. Rick Snyder signed into law legislation that requires all school districts to hold elections during the general elections in November of even-numbered years beginning in 2012. Public Act 233 requires school board and intermediate school district elections to be held at the same time as the general November elections, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. It will add from six months up to 18 months to the terms of school board members. "It's the law and we'll deal with it as best we can," said Greg Baracy, superintendent of the Wayne-Westland Community Schools, which has always held annual school elections in the spring. State Rep. Kurt Heise, R-Plymouth, who sponsored the House version of the new law, said moving school board elections to November is a way to save taxpayer dollars and increase voter turnout. "With these changes, we are putting money back into classrooms by reducing the costs incurred by school districts and local governments associated with stand-alone elections," said Heise. "By saving money and increasing voter turnout, this reform will benefit students, taxpayers and local government."

In Wayne-Westland, the terms of school board Secretary Cindy Schofield and appointed Trustee Frederick Weaver will be extended six months. They will serve until Dec. 31, 2012. The terms of Board President Carol Middel, Vice President John Goci and Trustee Shawna Walker which would have expired on June 30, 2013, will be

Please see ELECTIONS, A4

Local parishes could see changes

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

Along with collaborating with two other parishes on programs, recommendations for metro area Catholic churches also includes an addendum regarding financial problems at Westland SS. Simon and Jude parish. Released last week, the report from the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council calls for the parishes of St. Mary Wayne, St. Richard and Ss. Simon and Jude, both in West-

land, to collaborate with Evangelization, Christian Service, Faith Formation, Youth Ministry and Vocations with fully functioning committees by June 30, 2012. Located in Norwayne, the report describes Ss. Simon and Jude as facing a severe financial situation. The report calls for the parish to submit a realistic debt repayment plan by June 30, 2012. If the plan is not received or approved, this parish should close, according to the report. • As recommended by the

Archdiocese of Detroit, St. Mary will begin the dialogue with St. Richard in exploration of an eventual merger of the two parishes. As recommended by St. Richard in the original response, the parishes will initially explore additional areas of collaboration as outlined on the responses to the other questions, and merger upon the retirement of the current pastor of St. Richard. One area of collaboration that

Please see PARISHES, A2

INDEX

Community Life..... B7
Crossword Puzzle.... C3
Education..... A4
Health..... B5
Homes..... C2
Jobs..... C1
Obituaries..... B10
Services..... C2
Sports..... B1
Wheels..... C4

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GRANT

Continued from page A1

case scenario," said Reddy. "When we hire them, we would let them know about the lay-off potential. It would only be for a short time."

Whether hired under the grant or to fill another vacancy, all of the firefighters will be hired under a concessionary new hire program that was recently ratified. The agreement includes expanding the pay scales from five years to seven years for 100 percent pay, the elimination of longevity pay and less costly medical insurance coverage — BCBS PPO2. In addition, pension reform was agreed to by reducing a firefighters average final compensation and decreases the city's long term pension obligations.

"Our goal is for this to have negative effect on the budget," said Wild. "With the retirements of many of our senior personnel in the firefighting ranks over the next

several years, this grant provides the city with the additional benefit of being able to completely train new personnel, giving them two years of valuable experience.

The nine firefighters, who are already on a hire list and certified as firefighters and paramedics, provide additional personnel on runs.

"We will be able to send more vehicles on runs. We can send two full vehicles, not either/or," said Reddy, noting the department at one time had 80 firefighters. "This will reduce our response time with full complements from our existing stations."

Since the firefighters likely to be hired are already trained, some working for other departments, Reddy said they should be ready to work after three or four weeks internal training.

"We're a pretty sought after department. We're progressive department. We're cutting edge," he said.

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Irene Schultz of Wayne writes a note to her loved one.

TREE

Continued from page A1

daughter of her good friend from their neighborhood in Detroit.

"She recognized me, I didn't recognize her," said Czacho. "It's surprising how many times you see people you know from other times."

The Livonia-based Angela Hospice is inviting people to write the name of loved ones on angels and hang them on one of trees set up in the mall's East Court. The program is free of charge although donations are welcomed.

"We do this to support our bereavement programs," said Sister Mary Giovanni who founded Angela Hospice Home Care Inc. in 1985. "We really do a lot of programs for adults and for children, but we get no

financial assistance. This helps pay for supplies and things that we use."

Czacho and her twin sister Ann still live in that Detroit neighborhood. They got involved with Angela Hospice following the death of their mother in 2005.

"We used the bereavement programs and we wanted to give back after our mother passed away," said Ann Czacho.

The two women are among volunteers who work two-hour shifts, assembling angels for people to sign and hang on the trees.

"It makes us feel like we're doing something positive," Mary Czacho said. "This is our third year helping with this."

Barb Iovan, events coordinator for Angela Hospice, estimates that more than 7,000 angels will be placed on a Tree of Life at Westland mall, Laurel Park Place in

Livonia, at three Community Choice Credit Unions in Livonia and Redford and at Co-Op Community Credit union in Westland.

"It's nice to see people take a moment at the tree, this is a meaningful thing to do between the hustle and bustle of the holidays," she said. "It's nice to take a moment like that, it's important to take a moment like that."

The tops of the trees were already filled with angels from people who chose to mail in their request and a donation. Guests at the ceremony hung their own ornaments. The trees will be up until Dec. 28 and, according to Sister Giovanni, "you won't be able to see any green stuff after awhile."

This is the first year that Perkovich and her mother have participated in the Tree of Life. According to Perkovich, her father wasn't in hospice, but the family did the hospice philosophy and were at his side when he passed. His passing left a mark.

"Mom looked at her watch and it had stopped," she said. "It stopped working at 10:30, that's when Dad died," she said. Hejka has put the watch away with the hands still showing that time.

Seeing Hejka brought a smile to Mary Czacho's face. She remembered the birthday parties she did for her 11 children and wondered how she did it.

"People are very pleasant, but you do have to be sympathetic," she said.

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PARISHES

Continued from page A1

is already being explored is Adult & Youth Ministry programs. St. Mary will continue to manage its ongoing Debt Reduction Campaign which is now in the second year of a three-year campaign. To date pledges in the amount of \$584,340 have been received of which \$255,482 or 43.72% has

been paid

The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, a group made up of mostly lay Catholics, handed over its document Wednesday to Detroit Archbishop Allen Vigneron, who make his decision on the changes in early 2012.

The recommendations attempt to deal issues of possible parish closures and mergers in light of a decreased population in the metro area, declining revenues and a grow-

ing shortage of priests. Closing nine parishes and reducing 60 parishes to 21 through mergers over five years are among the committee's recommendations for the future of the area's 270 parishes.

Westland parishes St. Damian and St. Theodore have already clustered and are working together presently to facilitate plans. St. Bernardine Church closed earlier this year when the priest retired.

Upon retirement of the pastor at Divine Savior, they will join the clustered parishes of St. Damian and St. Theodore. Beginning in January 2012, the clustered parishes of St. Damian and St. Theodore will begin working on the cluster plan to be implemented upon the retirement of the pastor at Divine Savior.

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School board reconsiders land sale to church

By Karen Smith
Observer Staff Writer

A controversial property sale is expected to go back before the Livonia school board for a vote, possibly as early as Monday.

The board is reconsidering selling 5.5 acres of vacant land for \$140,000

LIVONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

cash to St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Church,

which wants to build an outreach center, said Superintendent Randy Liepa. The board voted 4-3 against the sale April 4.

Liepa said board members continue to have a "wide range of opinions" regarding the sale, "the same thing as last spring."

Liepa said the board has since changed language

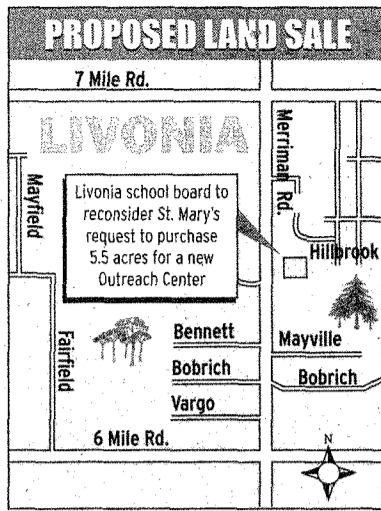
in its policy on the disposition of real property that some board members previously thought was too restrictive. The terms of the sale remain the same.

The church has been asking the board to reconsider the sale ever since it revised its policy, Liepa said.

The board discussed the proposed sale at a committee of the whole meeting last week. It will be on the Dec. 5 agenda, if language can be added before then clarifying what will happen if there is a dispute between St. Mary's and Livonia Public Schools over the definition of a K-12 school, the superintendent said. If not, the item will go on a future agenda.

The church had previously added deed restrictions to the agreement

preventing the congregation from ever building a K-12 school on the 5.5 acres, a concern some school board members had because they don't want the church to go into competition with the district for students. But language was not included clarifying how a dispute over the definition of what constitutes a K-12 school would be resolved should one arise between the two parties, Liepa



said. The Rev. George Shalhoub, archpriest at St. Mary Church, said he hopes the church will not be disappointed with the next vote.

"I hope and pray it will be a Christmas gift to the community this year," he said.

The outreach center, which would include a day care, a gym and possibly a senior residence in the future, would be open to the community, he said,

adding the church has no interest in building a K-12 school.

In addition to wording regarding use of the property for a school, school board members have expressed concern about selling the property, which adjoins a 40-acre parcel the district owns fronting Merriman, because it is the district's largest buildable site.

But Liepa said the site, even with the 5.5 acres, is too small for a modern-day high school. The 5.5-acre site includes a ravine, making it difficult to build upon, he said. The remaining 40 acres is large enough for a middle, elementary or technical school, Liepa said.

The church had 11.65 acres, including the 5.5-acre parcel, appraised in December 2009 for \$268,000, or \$23,000 an

acre. It decided to offer the school district more than what the property was appraised for, or \$25,454 an acre, Shalhoub said.

Liepa said the district conducted a follow-up on the appraisal to see if there were any property sales to compare it with.

"We ended up going with \$23,000 an acre," he said. "It's really tough right now because there are so few sales we can do comparables on," he said.

Some nearby residents spoke out against the proposed sale at a school board meeting in February, saying the purchase price — which breaks down to 58 cents a square foot — devalues their property.

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Allstate helps the Goodfellows

Farhat Allstate Insurance and Westland Goodfellows are teaming up to give needy families a big helping hand this holiday season.

Allstate Agency Owners Hassan and Sami Farhat of the Farhat Insurance Agency in Westland will donate \$5 each time a person obtains an insurance quote from the agency. In addition, the agency is collecting non-perishable food items and toys, until Saturday, Dec. 10 to support the annual drive.

Residents have the option of visiting or calling the agency at any

time for an insurance quote. In addition, the public is invited to the agency's open house to enjoy light refreshments 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8.

"Giving back is the best part of my job," said agency owner Hassan Farhat. "Supporting families who are in need is a natural extension of what my agency does every day — helping people prepare for the unexpected."

Consumers can visit the Farhat agency at 956 N. Newburgh 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Satur-

days to drop off non-perishable food and toys for needy Westland families. Farhat Insurance Agency staff can be reached by phone at (734) 467-7840.

The Farhat agency is one of the Westland Goodfellows 2011 Toy & Food Collection Partners. The Westland Goodfellows has proudly served the residents of Westland for more than 40 years with supplies such as toys, food and other items for less fortunate families. Visit the Westland Goodfellows website for more information.

ELECTIONS

Continued from page A1

extended to Dec. 31, 2014, and board Secretary Andrea Clawson and Trustee Tom Buckalew will have their terms extended from June 30, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2016.

Snyder in signing the bill last Wednesday said that "utilizing a standard election cycle will cut administrative costs and help schools maintain focus on educating students."

"This change also allows for more consolidated elections so voters have the best opportunity to make their voices heard," he said.

Baracy, however, is concerned that the nonpartisan school election could get lost among the federal, state and county rac-

es and ballot issues that would be on the ballot.

"The big problem No. 1 is that research shows those districts that have moved to the fall, the ballots are so long that a lot of people never finish the ballot," he said. "There's a lower number of voters in the school races."

He's also concerned that the move could hurt "our mom and pop candidates," that special interest groups will get involved and squeeze them out.

"It's always been the moms and pops that have run for school board, this could hurt them," he said.

Estimates are that the move to November elections could save some school districts up to \$8 million over a two-year election cycle. Baracy isn't sure. In 2004, the election consolidation law was touted as a way

of saving school districts money. In Wayne-Westland, the cost went up.

"When they took away the control of the election and gave it to the county, we were spending \$18,000, now it's \$50,000 because we have to pay the higher salaries they pay their poll workers and we have to pay fees to six communities."

The state law prohibits shortening the term of office for people already elected, however, it does allow boards to approve lengthening terms to six years to maintain their election cycles. In Wayne-Westland, two trustees stood for election one year, three the next and two the next. However, the change will have four positions expiring at the end of 2016.

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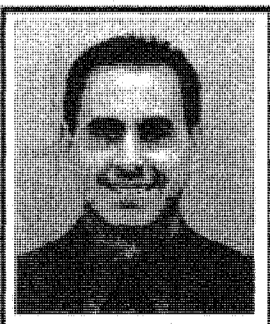
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Residents seek spots on new library board

By Sue Buck
Observer Staff Writer

Appointing a provisional library board and selecting a new library director will be the first steps in operating the Garden City Library.

Voters approved a new, one-mill, 10-year library millage Nov. 8 which guarantees consistent funding.

Now some changes are in order to comply legally, including appointing a new library board though there is a library board in existence now.

Garden City Board President Paul Werhane is on the board and hopes to be appointed to the new provisional board.

"The board will serve until the next regular election at which time, they must run for office," Werhane said. That will take place in two years.

With the passage of the millage comes independence, Werhane said.

The library is currently funded from the city's general fund budget.

The Garden City Council is expected to appoint a six-member provisional library board at its Monday, Dec. 5, meeting.

Interim Garden City Library Director Lisa Hausman recently forwarded the biographies

of the applicants to Garden City Manager Darwin McClary.

Three existing board members, Werhane, Billy Pate and Janet Smith have applied along with three newcomers, Andrew McMechan, Nancy Bailey and Nancy A. Schultz-Speck

• Paul Werhane
Werhane, a Farmington Road resident, is the current board president with a current term that would have expired in 2015. He was appointed to the Library Board in 1988 and for the past 12 years, Werhane has served as board president.

He has been a Garden City resident since 1953. Retired from BASF Corporation, he is active with the Friends of the Library and Garden City Amateur Radio Club.

• Billy Pate
Pate, a Deering resident, has a term which would have expired in 2016. He is a retired librarian and teacher from Livonia Public Schools as well as a historian and instructor at the University of Michigan School of Library and Information Science. He is active in the Friends of the Garden City Public Library.

• Janet Smith
Smith, a Helen Street resident, was recent-

ly appointed. Her term would have expired in 2014.

A Garden City resident for 40 years, she recently retired as an assistant to the library director. She was a Garden City Public Library employee for more than 30 years. She has been a member of the Friends of the Library since its formation. Smith is a graduate of Michigan State University.

• Nancy Bailey
Bailey, a Belton resident, retired from the IRS after 25 years of service, the last 20 years as a tax auditor. She took many college accounting classes while at the IRS. Bailey was the salutatorian of Garden City High School Class of 1956.

Bailey is an Enrolled Agent and owner of Bailey's Tax Service for seven years. She has been a Garden City library patron since age 11 and was active in the recent library millage election.

• Andrew McMechan
McMechan, a Whitby resident, is employed as a senior financial analyst in the corporate reimbursement department for St. John Providence Health System. With his wife, Jenna, they bought their first home in Garden City in 2004. They have a daughter, Avery, 6.

McMechan received his M.B.A. from Wayne State University in 2007 and a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Hillsdale College in 1999. He serves as the treasurer of the Garden City Elementary PTA.

• Nancy A. Schultz-Speck
Schultz-Speck, a

Krauter Street resident, is a media specialist for Garden City Public Schools. She earned a master of library and information science degree from Wayne State University in 2005 and a bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University in 1996. She has 15 years teaching experience with the

past seven in the school library setting.

She works on several school committees including the School Improvement Committee and the Technology Planning Committee. She sponsors the high school reading club.

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Detroit blogger to sign copies of book

Author John Carlisle will talk about some of Detroit's most unforgettable people detailed in his book, 313 — Life in the Motor City, at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8, at the Madonna University

Library. The event is free and open to the public.

Carlisle, also known as "Detroitblogger John," reports bi-weekly on stories about the people of Detroit. In April, he was presented with the Jour-

nalist of the Year Award by the Society of Professional Journalists.

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Legal Aid initiative addresses reduced funding

Legal Aid and Defender Association Inc. has launched its Advancing Justice Initiative to introduce itself to federal, state and county government officials with a breakfast for officials in Wayne County at LAD headquarters Nov. 14.

LAD is Michigan's largest provider of free civil legal services to low-income residents, serving metropolitan Detroit through its offices in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties. LAD also represents criminal defen-

dants in Wayne County and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. Including brief consultations and comprehensive legal services, the public law firm handles some 15,000 legal matters yearly.

LAD developed the AJI following a reduction in funding by the federal Legal Services Corp. that forced it to lay off 13 attorneys from the staff of its Civil Law Group.

"We're always there for the community," Dei-



Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano praises Legal Aid and Defenders for "making a difference."

erdre L. Weir, president and CEO of LAD, told the breakfast audience. "We're looking for new funding and partner-

ships."

LAD is an important partner of Wayne County, according to County Executive Robert A. Ficano, keynote speaker at the breakfast. He cited LAD's involvement in the county's STEP (Second Chance Through Expungement) and mortgage foreclosure programs.

"It's making a difference," he said, adding that Legal Aid and Defender is a key part of the nation's unique legal system.

LAD's three senior

attorneys - Donald Johnson, chief counsel of the State Defender Office, Miriam Siefer, chief counsel of the Federal Defender Office, and Joan Glanton Howard, chief counsel of the Civil Law Group - described the roles of their practice groups and the clients they serve.

In her talk, Howard cited the importance of the help LAD receives from pro bono attorneys from the private bar and corporate practice.

Two LAD clients, one a single mother with a

mortgage foreclosure problem, the other a restaurateur with serious health problems, also gave testimonials to the value of the help they received from LAD.

"We work with clients in a comprehensive manner, so that as we solve their legal problems, we help solve other problems as well," Weir said. "We help people rebuild their lives and help families stay together."

People seeking legal services can call (877) 964-4700 or visit www.ladadetroit.org.

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Church's nativity fundraiser helps homeless

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

A Canton church will embrace the true spirit of Christmas — helping those in need — by displaying more than 100 nativity scenes and collecting donations to fight Michigan's homeless problem.

Miniature to life-size nativity scenes from folk art to elegant and from whimsical to reverent will be on display this weekend inside the assembly hall of St. John Neumann Catho-

lic Church, on Warren between Canton Center and Sheldon, said Barbara Weir, one of the event coordinators.

St. John Neumann parish and The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Elizabeth Fagan Division will host the display to raise money for homeless programs sponsored by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which helps families in Canton and other communities.

Non-parishioners are welcome. Display hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and

5:30-7 p.m. Saturday and continue Sunday after the three morning Masses and then 1:30-4:30 p.m. and 5:30-7 p.m.

Simply titled "No Room at the Inn," the event draws from a biblical passage to illustrate the plight of the homeless and needy in the local area and beyond, organizers say. The event mirrors one started nearly 20 years ago in California that has since raised more than \$250,000.

According to a report from the Lansing-based Michigan Coalition on

Homelessness, 100,000 Michigan people, including 22,000 children, were homeless at some point during 2010. Many others remain on the brink of being without a warm home as cold weather tightens its grip.

Sally Harrison, director of rental assistance and homeless solutions for the Michigan Housing Development Authority, called the situation "sobering" in a letter contained in the coalition's annual report.

"The economy continues to take its toll," she

wrote, "and the foreclosure crisis persists."

Much like the coalition, St. John Neumann hopes to fight the problem by raising money and finding solutions to help the homeless.

Weir cited research noting that families are now the largest population of homeless. Moreover, she said many people in Canton and neighboring communities are one paycheck away from potential homelessness because they can't pay for housing, utilities, food and medical bills.

Weir said some people are living outdoors and out of cars, hotels or a friend's garage or porch as they struggle to find their independence — and many of them aren't counted among the homeless.

To arrange for tickets in advance or for more information, call Weir at (734) 453-1459 or Karen Stuard at (734) 844-0166. Information by e-mail may be sought at laohelizabethfagan@hotmail.com.

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Many factors to mull in pension vs. lump sum distribution

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

Q: Dear Rick: I will be retiring in a few weeks from a company where I've worked for over 30 years. It is a small family-owned business. I have a 401(k) and a pension. They have given me the option of a cash settlement on my pension or a traditional pension. What are your thoughts of which I should take? I am conservative and I am single and not concerned about leaving money to anyone. One additional note, if I take the pension, that amount and my Social Security will more than cover all of my living expenses.

A: Congratulations on retiring and on the fact that it appears that you have the resources to be



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

retired and to have a rising income throughout your lifetime. The decision whether to take a pension or a

lump sum distribution is two-fold. The first step is to crunch the numbers to determine the present value of your pension and then compare that with the lump sum distribution. The reason is purely financial. You want to know what is worth more in present dollars, your pension or a lump sum.

In doing this calculation, there are a number of assumptions you have to

make such as life expectancy. After all, the number will be totally different if you factored that you are going to receive the pension for 10 years vs. 30 years. The number crunching is only one step.

The second consideration is intangible and that is comfort. In other words, what allows you sleep at night? Are you more comfortable knowing that you have a set amount of money coming in every month for the rest of your life, or do you like the idea of being in control of your money and portfolio? Some people assume that taking a pension vs. the lump sum distribution is always the more conservative way of going, but that is not the case. After all, in a lot of pensions there is no

inflation adjustment and, thus, even though the dollar amount of the payout remains the same, the purchasing power goes down year after year. Of course, the offset is that if you take a lump sum distribution and your investments don't pan out, then you could run into difficulty.

Based upon the information that you have provided, which included what your pension would be and what the lump sum distribution is, along with the balance in your 401(k) plan, it would make sense to take the pension vs. the lump sum distribution. In making my calculations, I made the assumption that you are going to be around for at least another 20 to 25 years.

In making the decision between a lump sum distribution and a pension, one of the more difficult assumptions that you have to make is life expectancy. I recognize what the tables say, however, I always assume a longer life expectancy. My thought is I'd rather be safe than sorry. When it comes to life expectancy, you should always overestimate, not underestimate.

In making the decision between a pension and a lump sum, I was

also swayed by the fact that you have money in your 401(k) plan that you plan to roll over into an IRA. Those funds can be invested to provide some growth in the portfolio. One of the keys to making the determination of whether someone can afford to retire is whether they will be able to have a rising income throughout their lifetime. I have always been a believer that you cannot retire on a fixed income; nor can you retire on a shrinking income. You must have a rising income. I can't think of anyone who believes that five or 10 years down the road it will cost them less to live than it does today. Therefore, I always want to make sure that someone can have a rising income throughout their lifetime.

Those lucky enough to have a pension and who are making the decision between a pension and a lump sum distribution, can also get a bid on an immediate annuity. An immediate annuity is like a pension, however, you purchase it through an insurance company. Immediate annuities have some advantages in the fact that you can design them to fit your situation. You can design them

to pay you a set amount for the rest of your life or even factor in an inflation factor. With immediate annuities you have some flexibility. Therefore, when someone is making the decision between a pension and a lump sum distribution, it may pay to receive a bid from an insurance company for an immediate annuity. Keep in mind that immediate annuities they are irrevocable. So once you make your decision you can't change it. That is why if you are considering an immediate annuity, take your time and don't let the salespeople talk you into one direction or the other.

One last note and that is you have achieved the American dream in the fact that you can retire and have options. I think one of the keys to a good life is the ability to choose between different options as opposed to being in a situation where we have no alternatives at all. Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at money Matters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit his website at www.bloomassetmanagement.com.

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Grief center offers holiday card sales

New Hope Center for Grief Support in Northville offers Christmas cards for sale, with the proceeds benefitting the center's programs.

Cards are available in 20-card packages for \$25 (\$16 of which is tax deductible; receipt included with each package of cards).

Proceeds from the sale of the cards will benefit the New Hope Center for Grief Support, a non-profit, Christian-based bereavement outreach center that assists adults, teens, and children throughout southeastern Michigan who are grieving after the death of a loved one. New Hope's services include free-of-charge support groups, seminars, workshops, and other bereavement resources.

Due to postage, staff, and volunteer time requirements, New Hope will be unable to mail/deliver cards.

Cards may be purchased at New Hope Center for Grief Support, 315 Griswold, Northville, MI 48167. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fridays. Payment options include cash, check (made out to New Hope Center), and charge.

For more information, call New Hope Center at (248) 348-0115 or visit www.newhopecenter.net.

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Attorneys Bieske and Alfonsi can often make a winning difference at the application stage. And, if an appeal is necessary they have won several hundred cases before a court date is even set.

Those denied can appeal on their own but statistics for many years reveal that those represented by attorneys win a much higher percentage of appeals. And attorneys who specialize in Social Security Disability cases win a much higher percentage yet.

In addition to practicing only Social Security disability law attorney Bieske has written a book for attorneys about the subject and has been interviewed on various television programs. Both attorney Bieske and Alfonsi have also been interviewed on radio programs and have given speeches to many groups.

Attorneys Bieske and Alfonsi offer free phone or office consultation. If they represent you, there will be no fee charged until after the case is won. The fee is a percentage of retroactive benefits.

Bieske and Alfonsi represent clients from all over the state of Michigan. Their Livonia office is on Six Mile Road just west of I-275. Their Novi office is located on Haggerty Road just north of 12 Mile Road. Call them at 1-800-331-3530 for a free consultation if you have been denied, or if you are thinking of possibly applying for Social Security benefits.

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Pay It Forward: Madonna students combine service with learning

By Jill Halpin
Correspondent

When some local Madonna University students signed up for a video editing class in the school's broadcast and cinema arts department, they were looking forward to learning how to use new equipment to make video productions in the school's new state-of-the-art broadcast studios. They never dreamed they would end up learning even more about themselves.

The students, from broadcast department director Chuck Derry's Field Production and Editing II class, were assigned a project that put their newfound skills to the test: make a professional six-minute video for local nonprofits to use in their actual marketing programs.

For many of them, the project has been life-changing.

"This project just affirmed that this is my career path: telling stories, editing and filming ... I like to do this; it makes me happy every day," said Mark Radwan, a 20-year-old junior from Livonia.

The project, called Pay It Forward, is part of an emphasis at Madonna to help students discover the value of public service while strengthening their ties to the community. Integrated into four courses at Madonna including sociology, health care, marketing and broadcasting and cinema arts, the program helps students gain insight into how organizations operate in the real world.

Giving back

"Students are gaining real experience that is relevant to their academic learning while address-



Students in Chuck Derry's Field Production and Editing II class at Madonna University put their newfound skills to the test: make a professional six-minute video for local non-profits to use in their actual marketing programs. For many of them, the project has been life changing.

ing community needs. The overall purpose of the Pay It Forward initiative is to introduce or deepen the understanding that our students have around philanthropy and giving," said Olga Martinez, director of Service Learning at Madonna.

According to Derry, local nonprofits were invited by his students to apply to be part of the program in early September. The seven program applicants then visited the class to give a presentation on their organization. Students in his class narrowed the field down to five by voting on the charities they felt were most deserving of their time, Derry said.

"After that process was complete, the students decided which group they would most like to work with and divided into groups to begin the process," he said.

The nonprofit organizations chosen by the students include Detroit Cristo Rey High School, The Methodist Children's Home Society in Redford, Farmington-based

S.O.U.L. (Source of Universal Love), Trinity Park Inc. of Livonia and Sweet Dreamzzz of Farmington.

The students then had three weeks to complete their task of creating six-minute DVDs, "a tangible product that organizations can use to further their goals," Derry said.

Derry said that the students were required to work quickly throughout the project, mirroring a real-life timeline.

Great experience

"This is a great real world experience for the students ... these are real businesses. The pressure is on and the product has to be delivered and delivered right," said Derry, who developed the broadcast and cinema arts program for Madonna and continues a longtime career in the field on a local and national level.

In addition to creating, filming, interviewing and editing the videos, the students also had the added benefit of making decisions about community partnerships, including how to award \$2,000

in funds from a service grant, Martinez said.

An added bonus for the participating nonprofits is the opportunity to gain up to \$1,000 in funding from Learn and Serve America, a national community service organization underwriting the grant.

"The class got a grant of \$2,000 and they have decided to award prizes for the top three videos," Derry said. The first-place winner will receive \$1,000, the second place will receive \$600, and the third place will get \$400. The money, in addition to the completed DVD's, will be given to the nonprofits to help further their missions, Derry said.

The project is a win-win for both the students and the organizations, he said.

"Students benefit from working as a team and gain perspective into the real-life working world. They also work on a commercial entity with a company that is interested in a good product that they can use," Derry added.

Although learning the ins and outs of producing professional videos is

important, the opportunity to provide assistance also has a great deal of significance for the students.

Madonna junior Hannah Welch of Dearborn was "deeply touched" by the mission of the Methodist Children's Home Society. "This project made a huge impact on my life. I was really impressed with their tagline, 'When you help a child, you change a life.' It is really powerful," said Welch. Although the message influenced her decision to spend her efforts with this particular group, she was also "very impressed with the fact that they are so well-established. They have been helping kids and families in need in the community for 95 years ... what a great way for us to be able to celebrate their birthday with them," she said.

She said she is excited for the opportunity to present the group with a promotional tool they can actually use to further their cause.

Working on the video for the Methodist children's group, which provides residential and foster care as well as adoption services, was particularly meaningful for Livonia resident Allison Follbaum, a junior.

"It was very personal for me. I have many friends who were adopted and I had to chance to see it from a different angle. I feel blessed that my friends were adopted into wonderful homes," she said.

She was impressed that although the nonprofits everywhere are struggling, the Methodist Children's group is passionate about its work and continues to shed a positive light on the foster care program.

Adding to Radwan's experience was the oppor-

tunity to learn about and help a Catholic high school in Detroit that he also believes is doing great work.

Christo Rey

Detroit Cristo Rey High School is located in southwest Detroit and provides a private college prep education for kids that "wouldn't usually get a private school education," said Director Michael Khoury.

All students in grades nine-12 spend five-six days per month working in entry-level professional jobs in hospitals, law firms and manufacturing businesses throughout the metropolitan Detroit area and their salaries are used to provide funding for the school, said Khoury.

"This year, students will have earned almost \$1.1 million for the school, he said.

Radwan said he was struck by the positive feeling displayed by students and staff alike at the school.

"It's a really great environment. Every student has to go to a job, so they are getting work experience, too," he said, adding that the school's lofty goal of a 100 percent graduation rate makes the school's mission even more valuable.

Khoury said he is grateful that his school was included in the Pay it Forward program.

"The fact that they could come and talk to us and help other people learn about us ... We think our kids are pretty incredible; this helps us get our story out there. A lot of the news about education in Detroit is not very encouraging; we are a bright spot," said Khoury, adding that it is important for others to learn about the positive strides his students are making.

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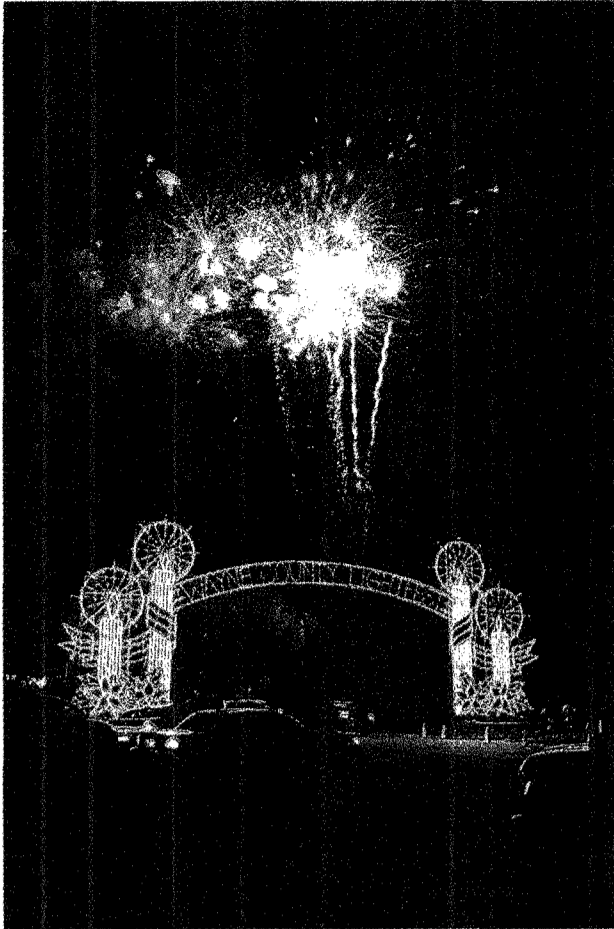
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Lightfest reopens after flooding

Wayne County Parks' annual Lightfest was expected to reopen this weekend after being closed during the week due to flooding.

Lightfest is billed as the Midwest's largest and longest light show - more than 45 giant animated displays and more than one million lights stretching more than four miles along Hines Drive from Westland to Dearborn Heights.

In its 15th year, Lightfest stretches from Merriman Hollow in Westland to Warrendale Park east of Telegraph and features such popular displays as the Celebration of Lights arch, Cecil the Magic Dragon, a large waving polar bear with cubs, an

animated Old Glory, animated snowflake arches and, new for this year, a music note tunnel.

Youngsters can stop and visit Santa's Workshop at Warrendale Park at the end of the Lightfest. Santa will be there from Thanksgiving until Dec. 23. They can bring their letters to Santa and put them in a giant mailbox outside of his workshop. Santa's elves will pick up the letters each night to get them to the North Pole.

Lightfest is open 7-10 p.m. daily now through Dec. 31, except for Christmas Day when it will be closed. Enter Lightfest at the Merriman entrance to Hines Park, north of Warren

Road. There's a \$5 fee per vehicle.

Although Lightfest begins at 7 p.m., Hines Drive will be closed to traffic beginning at 5:45 p.m. nightly.

Families also are invited to take part in the Family Holiday Fest and Tree Lighting 4-6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10, at the Nankin Mills Interpretive Center on Hines Drive at Ann Arbor Trail.

The Friends of Nankin Mills and Wayne County Parks are inviting the community to participate in the old-fashioned celebration. This is the 24th year the Friends of Nankin Mills have sponsored the event.

The event includes crafts and games from 4

to 5:15 p.m., followed by the tree lighting at 5:15 p.m.

There's a \$4 charge for the seasonal crafts which include make-and-take tree decorations. There also will be unique seasonal games, such as fruitcake bowling, Pin the nose on Rudolph and reindeer antler wreath toss. The second part of the program is free, and includes a short outdoor community Mill lighting and sing-a-long with an indoor visit from St. Nick, sponsored by the Friends of Nankin Mills. Refreshments will be provided.

For more information on these Wayne County Parks events, call (734) 261-1990 or visit www.waynecounty.com

The Wayne County Lightfest is open again after recent flooding closed Hines Drive.

Donate toys at Tuesday Lightfests

As Wayne County Lightfest reopens, visitors can lend a helping hand to disadvantaged children in Wayne County with Toy Night Tuesdays.

On Dec. 6, 13 and 20, the community is invited to bring a new, unwrapped toy in lieu of the \$5 Lightfest fee. Visitors are also welcome to contribute the recommended fee. Wayne County considers the donations an opportunity for the people of the community to partner with the county in an effort to make a difference in children's lives.

The charities partnering with the county for 2011 are Methodist Church Children's Home in Redford and the

Wayne County Family Center in Westland

New for the 2011 Lightfest is a musical note display for everyone to enjoy. Lightfest features more than 45 giant animated displays and more than one million lights; it is the Midwest's largest and longest light show. The complete Lightfest route is over four miles of Hines Drive. Bring the family to see this wonderful holiday light display from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. Lightfest is open now until December 31, 2011 (closed on Christmas Day). There is a \$5 fee

per car.

•Don't forget to visit Santa's Workshop at Warrendale Park at the end of the Lightfest. Santa will be there now until Dec. 23, along with a refreshment stand to buy coffee, hot chocolate and other snacks.

Don't forget to bring your letters to Santa. Outside of Santa's workshop there will be a giant mailbox where kids of all ages can drop off their letters to Santa. Santa's elves will pick up the letters each night, so make sure to get your wishes in early.

Although Lightfest begins at 7 p.m., Hines Drive will be closed to traffic beginning at 5:45 p.m. nightly. Visitors enter Wayne County Lightfest at Hines Drive and Merriman, 2 1/2 miles south of I-96 in Westland.

Lightfest is brought to you in partnership with Friends of Wayne County Parks, DTE Energy, ITC Holdings, DBT Marketing and Promotional Group, McDonald Modular and Entertainment Express Luxury Limousine, Oakwood Healthcare and Play Environments, Inc.

For more information on Wayne County Lightfest please call (734) 261-1990 or visit us at www.waynecounty.com.

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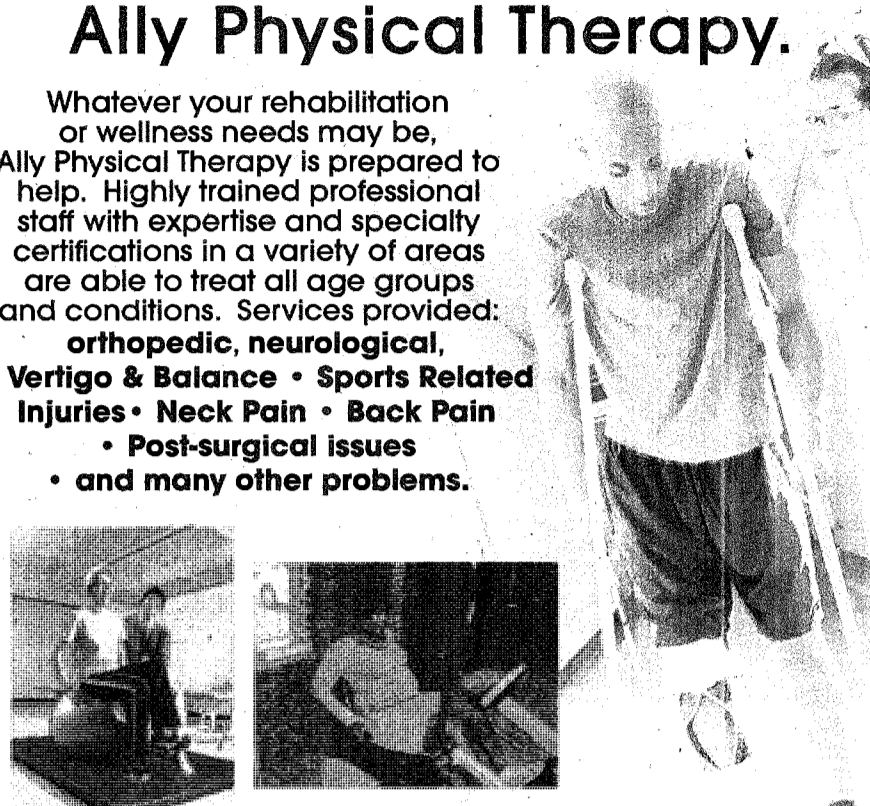
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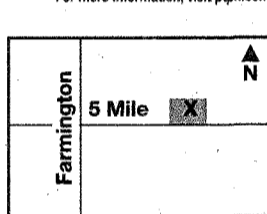


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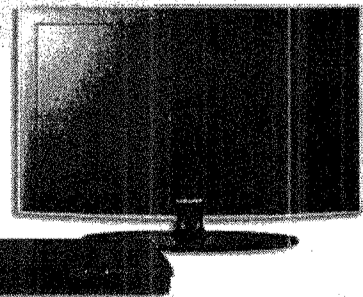
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AROUND WESTLAND

Cancer benefit

The VFW District 4 Ladies Auxiliary Pool League is having a dining to donate fund-raiser for cancer aid and research.

Christmas party

The Westland Community Foundation will hold its annual Christmas reception 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, in the media center of John Glenn High School.

Hospital reunion

The 27th annual holiday reunion for Wayne County General Hospital retirees and former staff will be held at the Café Marquette in the William D. Ford Technical Center in Westland 5-9 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6.

The Sgt. Romanowski VFW Post 6896 is holding a New Years Eve Celebration Saturday, Dec. 31. Doors open at 7 p.m., and a show, featuring Sherman Arnold as Elvis.

Skate with Santa

Santa is making a special trip to the Mike Modano Ice Arena to join arena skaters in presenting a special holiday program to benefit the Westland Goodfellows.

Season of Lights

Downtown Wayne will host its family friendly "Season of Lights" 4-8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 9. A thousand luminaries will light Michigan Avenue between Wayne Road and Second Street.

Cookie Walk

First United Methodist Church of Wayne is holding a cookie walk 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 10. Homemade holiday cookies and candies will be available.

Tax preparers

The Accounting Aid Society seeks volunteers for the upcoming tax season to learn to prepare taxes and file credits for middle- to low-income families in southeast Michigan.

American Legion

The American Legion, Westland Post 251, meets at 7 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Harris-Kehler VFW Post, 1055 S. Wayne Road, Westland.

Free workshop

Westland residents at risk of losing their homes can attend a free Loan Modification and Short Sale Workshop held 6-7 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Dorsey Community Center, 32715 Dorsey east of Venoy.

Annette Compo of WJR Real Estate 411 and Linda Miller, an MSHDA-certified foreclosure counselor with National Faith Homebuyers, will be on hand to meet with residents one-on-one to do an overview of the foreclosure process and present them with various options for their situation.

House panel supports I-275 project

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

Canton has moved closer to winning full support from the Michigan Legislature for a long-sought project to reshape the I-275/Ford Road interchange and ease traffic congestion around one of the state's most accident-prone areas.

The state House could potentially vote as early as this week to endorse the project after the 17-member House Transportation Committee gave sweeping approval Wednesday to a resolution already passed in the Senate.

"What we have now is, we are well on our way to having the full Michigan Legislature recognize the huge (traffic) problem there," township Supervisor Phil LaJoy said. "This is huge. I feel very good about the direction we took trying to get the state legislature involved in this."

The legislative support doesn't come with any guarantee of funding. However, Canton officials hailed the bipartisan support from state lawmakers as critical for two reasons:

• It could potentially boost the project's chances of securing \$20.3 million from a third-round federal grant program dubbed TIGER, or Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery. Federal officials have twice rejected the I-275/Ford proposal.

• If federal authorities snub the project a third time, the burgeoning support from the Michigan Legislature could

become a springboard to get the plan on a state priority list for road work.

The supportive vote by the House Transportation Committee came Wednesday after LaJoy, Canton Municipal Services Director Tim Faas and state Sen. Patrick Colbeck, R-Canton, testified before the panel about the need to improve the I-275/Ford interchange.

"I really got a sense that everyone really believed what we were presenting and that this has to become a high priority for the state," Faas said, adding that the hearing "went great. We're very happy."

The House Transportation Committee-approved measure was one of two resolutions introduced by Colbeck. Officials hope both measures could sway federal officials as they weigh the TIGER proposals.

Faas acknowledged that competition is fierce. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has announced that federal officials received \$14.1 billion in TIGER requests — or 27 times more than the \$527 million allocated by the U.S. Congress.

"The tremendous demand for these grants clearly shows that communities across the country can't wait any longer for crucial upgrades to the roads, bridges, rail lines and bus routes they rely on every day," LaHood wrote on his blog. "These vital investments will put Ameri-

cans back on job sites rebuilding transportation systems that badly need attention."

Canton officials have tried to sell the I-275/Ford project by saying it will create some 200 jobs and improve dangerous roads. A stretch of Ford Road near the interstate is among the state's most accident-prone.

The project calls for adding two ramps, or slips, allowing motorists on the southbound I-275 exit ramp to access northbound or southbound Haggerty without using Ford Road. It also suggests a service drive along the east side of the interstate from Cherry Hill to north of Ford Road.

Officials say the measures would ease the traffic burden along Ford.

Already, Faas said, Canton and MDOT officials have visited the interchange area to begin deciding what would be needed in a pre-construction environmental impact study. The site visit came as officials hope to get the project included as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, or SEMCOG, considers in March a series of amendments to its regional transportation plan.

Canton officials have drawn support from neighboring communities such as Westland, Plymouth Township and Livonia in their efforts to improve the interchange. Officials have called the project regional in scope.

dclem@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-2238

KNOW THE SCORE CHECK OUT THE NUMBERS IN TODAY'S SPORTS SECTION

CITY OF WESTLAND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC NOTICE
The following appeals will be heard at a public hearing to be held in the Council Chambers of Westland City Hall, 36601 Ford Road, Westland, MI on Wednesday, December 21, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. at which time comments may be directed to the Board during audience participation.

Abandoned vehicle auction: 12/10/2011 12pm
Sparks Auto and Towing, 31797 Block Street Garden City MI
1. 2004 Dodge 1B3AS76F94D612202
2. 2006 Dodge 1D7HW48N46S626811
3. 1990 Buick 1G4NJ14N01M047567
4. 1994 Nissan 4N2DN11W5RD848454

NOTICE OF MEETING
The annual meeting of stockholders of Wayne Masonic Temple Association, a Michigan non-profit Corporation, will be held at the Corporate Office located at 37137 Palmer Rd., Westland, Michigan 48186 on Tuesday December 13, 2011 at 8:00 PM for the election of Directors and other such business as may properly come before said meeting.

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Orphaned cubs arrive at zoo

By Sandra Armbruster
Eccentric Staff Writer

ROYAL OAK — Three orphaned grizzly bear cubs, rescued last month by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, must have felt right at home Friday morning when they arrived at the Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak.

After all, about an inch of new snow greeted the grizzlies when a Federal Express air craft out of Anchorage touched down at Detroit Metro Airport at around 5:15 a.m. Friday. They arrived at the Detroit Zoo shortly after.

The cubs had traveling companions all the way.

"Two members of our animal care staff traveled to Anchorage to accompany the cubs to Detroit. The bears were shipped in crates," said Patricia Mills Janeway, communications director for the zoo. "Three additional animal care staff met the FedEx plane at DTW this morning and transported the cubs in two Detroit Zoological Society vans."

Happy to bring them to their new home was Ron Kagan, Detroit Zoological Society director.

"We're just very excited because the cubs seem to be in good health and they're very busy exploring their new environment," Kagan said.

The cubs are under a strict quarantine for 30 days.

"We are following strict quarantine protocol, so not even our own photographer is allowed in the area where the cubs are spending their 30-day quarantine," Mills Janeway said.

The cubs will remain in quarantine at the Detroit Zoo for 30 days to ensure they have no health



JOHN GOMES/ALASKA ZOO

Three orphaned grizzly cubs arrived in Royal Oak at the Detroit Zoo Friday morning.

issues and to give them time to become acclimated to their new surroundings. Visitors can expect to see them in the bear habitats sometime around New Year's.

The zoo re-issued photos of the cubs taken while they were in Alaska. Clearly, there was plenty of snow on the ground in their native state.

The 11-month-old

brothers — named Mike, Thor and Boo by zookeepers at the Alaska Zoo where they were temporarily housed — were orphaned in October when their mother was shot and killed. The cubs are approximately 2½ to 3-feet tall and weigh 100 to 125 pounds. They could grow as tall as 8 feet and weigh 800 pounds at maturity.

After the mother griz-

zly bear was killed, the cubs were spotted in residential areas around Anchorage looking for food. The ADFG contacted the Detroit Zoo seeking a home for the trio after determining that the cubs would not survive Alaska's harsh winter on their own. A female grizzly bear typically cares for her young until they reach about 3 years old.

The Detroit Zoo is also home to two other rescued grizzly bears — 27-year-old female Kintla and 26-year-old Lakota — both of which arrived at the zoo as 2-year-olds.

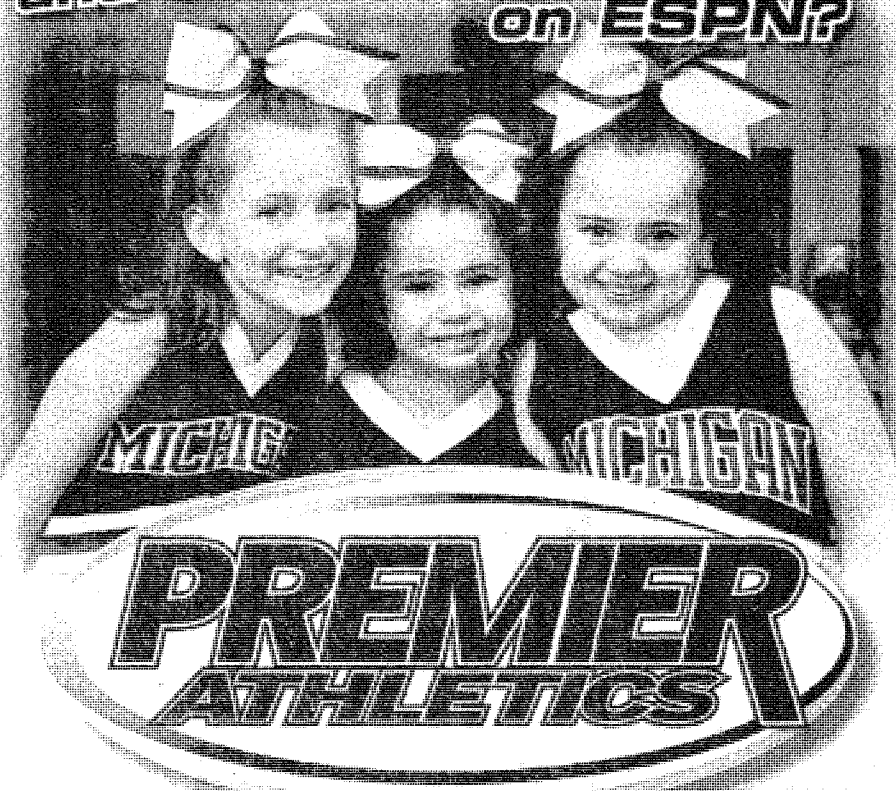
For many years, the Detroit Zoological Society has helped rescue and provide sanctuary to animals in compromised situations. Among the 316 rescued animals at the Detroit Zoo are a polar

bear from a South American circus, three lions from a junkyard in Kansas and hundreds of animals seized from a Texas exotic animal dealer in the largest animal confiscation in U.S. history.

"We're happy to be able to participate in another animal rescue and provide sanctuary to these cubs," said Kagan.

sarmbruster@hometownlife.com

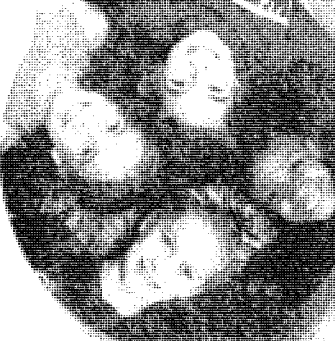
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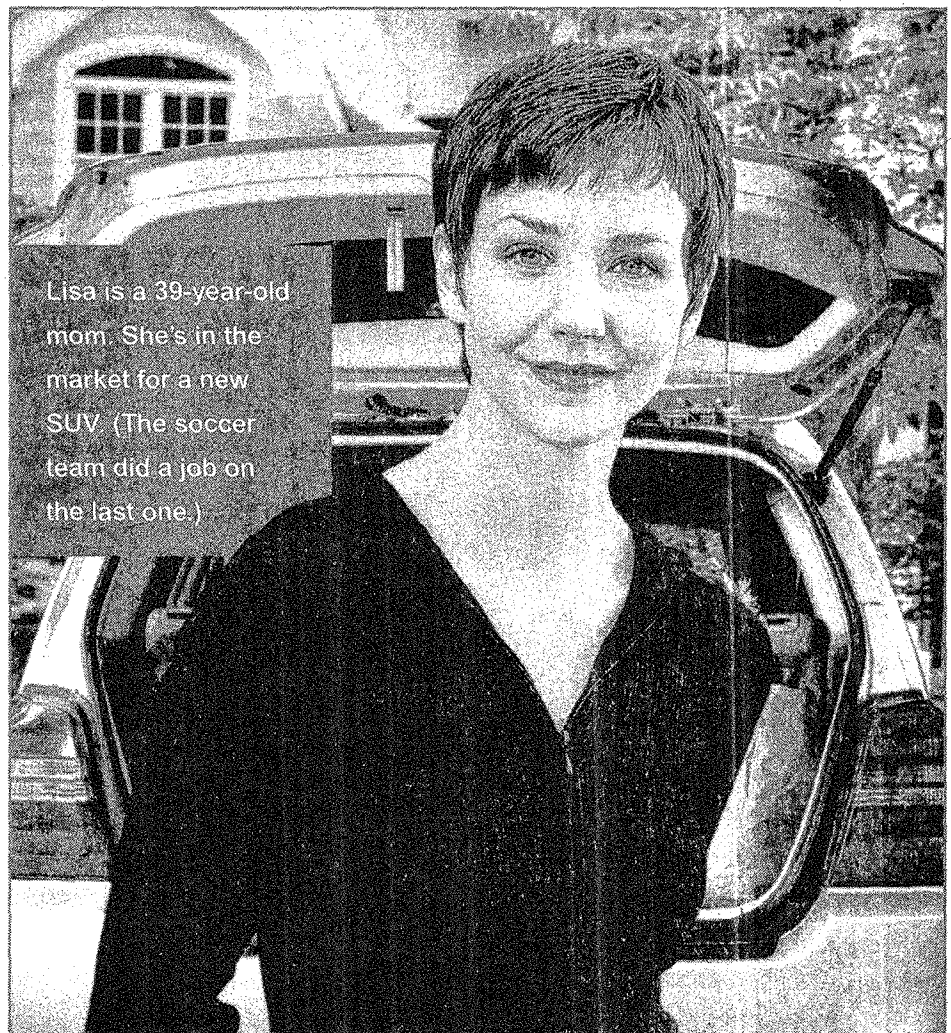
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Deadline for submissions: 12/28/2011

All entries need to be received at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers by close of the business day on Dec. 28th. Winners to be announced in the January Scoop's Hound Dog Highlights.

Scoop's Craft Corner:

Want to make a special ornament for your Christmas tree? It is super easy and lots of fun. All you need is salt, flour, water, vegetable oil, a rolling pin, a cookie sheet, decorations, some help from your parents and lots of imagination.

Materials Needed:

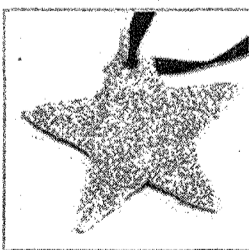
- 2 Cups Flour
- 1 Cup Salt
- 2 Tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 3/4 - to - 1 Cup Water

Instructions:

Mix together flour and salt. Add the oil and then slowly add the water and stir until you get a nice clay consistency. Once completely mixed, make into the

desired shapes. Bake in a 250 degree oven for approximately 1 hour. This will vary depending on how thick your creations are. One hint, do not make shapes too thick or they will crack with baking.

Before star is placed in the oven, make a hole for the ribbon using the end of a straw. Once the star is out of the oven and cooled, use your creativity. Use colorful ribbon to hang your new ornament. Have FUN!



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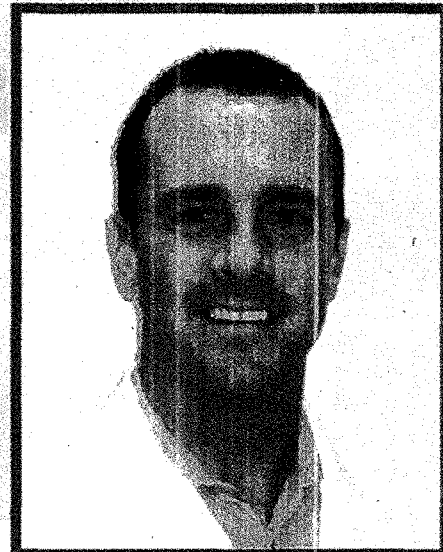
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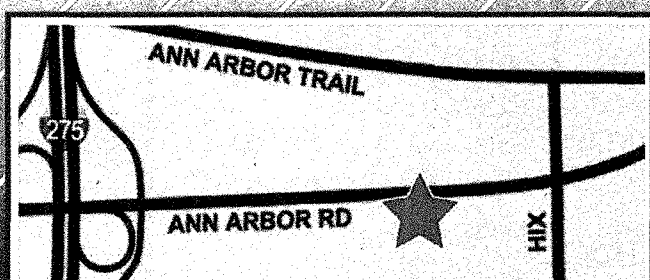
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HOOP PREVIEW

Short season

Spartan guard eligible 9 games

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

New Livonia Stevenson boys basketball coach Brandon Sinawi finds himself in a somewhat precarious position entering the 2011-12 season.

His best player, and arguably the area's top guard in 6-foot Jonathan Campbell, is eligible for only the first nine games.

Campbell, a first-team All-Observer pick, averaged 14.5 points and 4.5 assists per game last season as the Spartans finished 19-4 overall and reached the Class A regional semifinals before losing to eventual state runner-up Detroit Southeastern, 52-45.

Campbell is currently in his eighth semester after being home schooled. He turns 19 this winter.

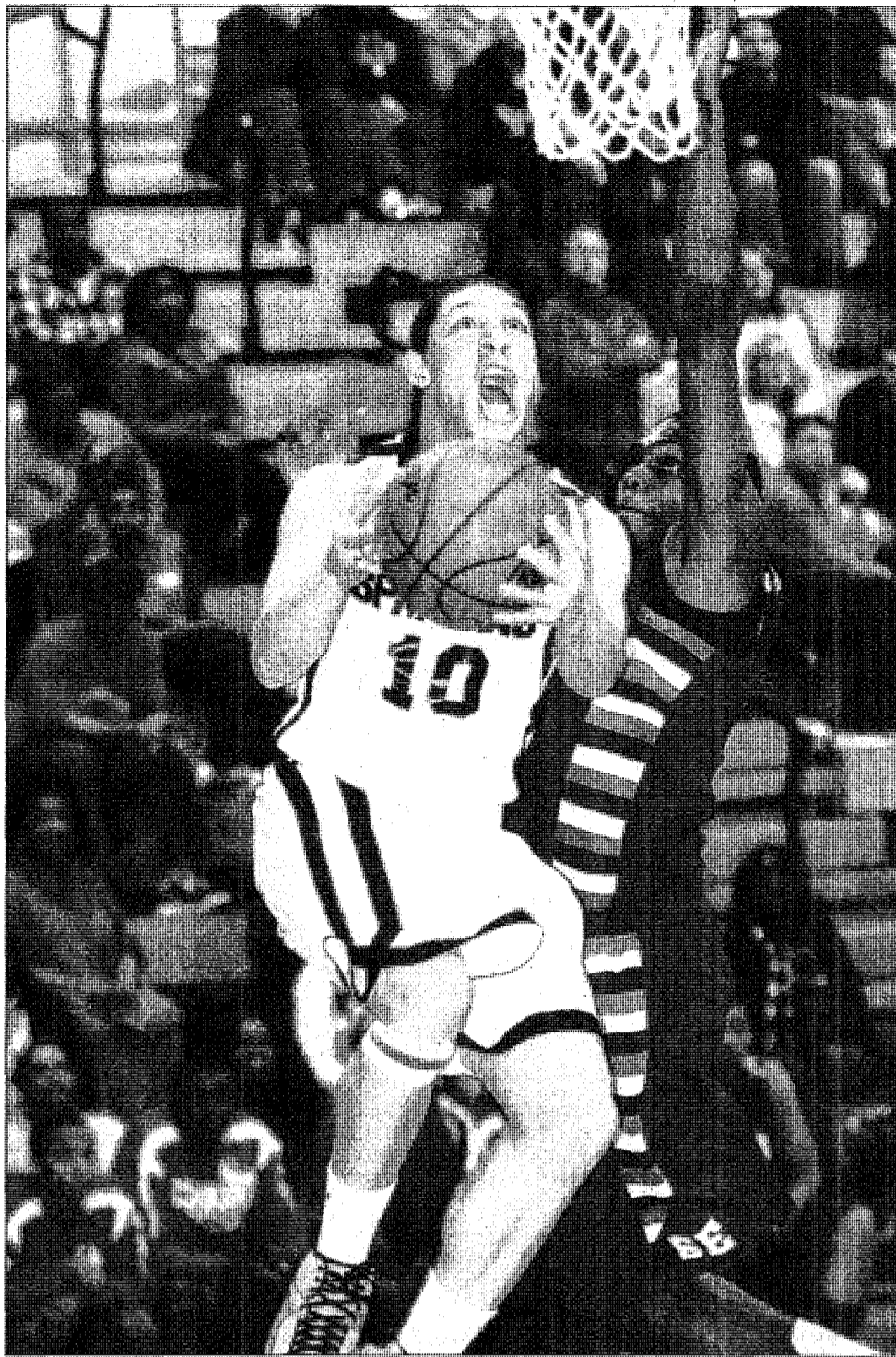
"We did try to appeal it through the MHSAA," said Sinawi, who replaced Mike Allie after leading the Stevenson JV squad to an 18-2 record last season. "He (Campbell) enrolled before the second semester of his freshman year and they counted that as an eligibility and his first semester. He'll finish out this year in January."

That means Campbell's last game with the Spartans will be Jan. 20 at Novi.

"That's all he's eligible for," Sinawi said. "We're going to try and transition that the best way we can and allowing other guys the opportunity to score, not just have Campbell be the whole idea of the offense."

Campbell, one of the state's best three-point shooters, will move into the point-guard spot replacing

Please see PREVIEW, B3



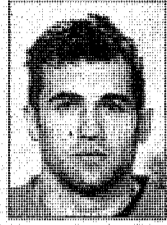
BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Stevenson's Jonathan Campbell had a stellar game last year against Detroit Southeastern in the Class A regional semifinals.

Wings recall Chris Conner

Westland native Chris Conner made his Detroit Red Wings debut Friday night at Buffalo after

being recalled Thursday from the Grand Rapids Griffins of the American Hockey League.



Conner

The 28-year-old right winger had four shots on goal and played 13 minutes and 39 seconds in the Wings' 4-1 victory over the Sabres. He led Grand Rapids in scoring with 20 points on seven goals and 13 assists in 20 games.

The 5-foot-8, 180-pound Conner, who was acquired as a free agent on July 6 by the Wings, played four seasons at Michigan Tech and has enjoyed three different NHL stints with the Dallas Stars and two more with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

In 139 career NHL games, Conner has 16 goals and 40 assists to along with eight Stanley Cup game appearances.

Conner played in 60 games last season with the Penguins scoring seven goals and adding nine assists for 16 points.

The move was precipitated by the Wings placing forward Patrick Eaves on seven-day injured reserve list after he broke his jaw last Saturday in a 4-1 win over the Nashville Predators.

Chargers upend defending state champ

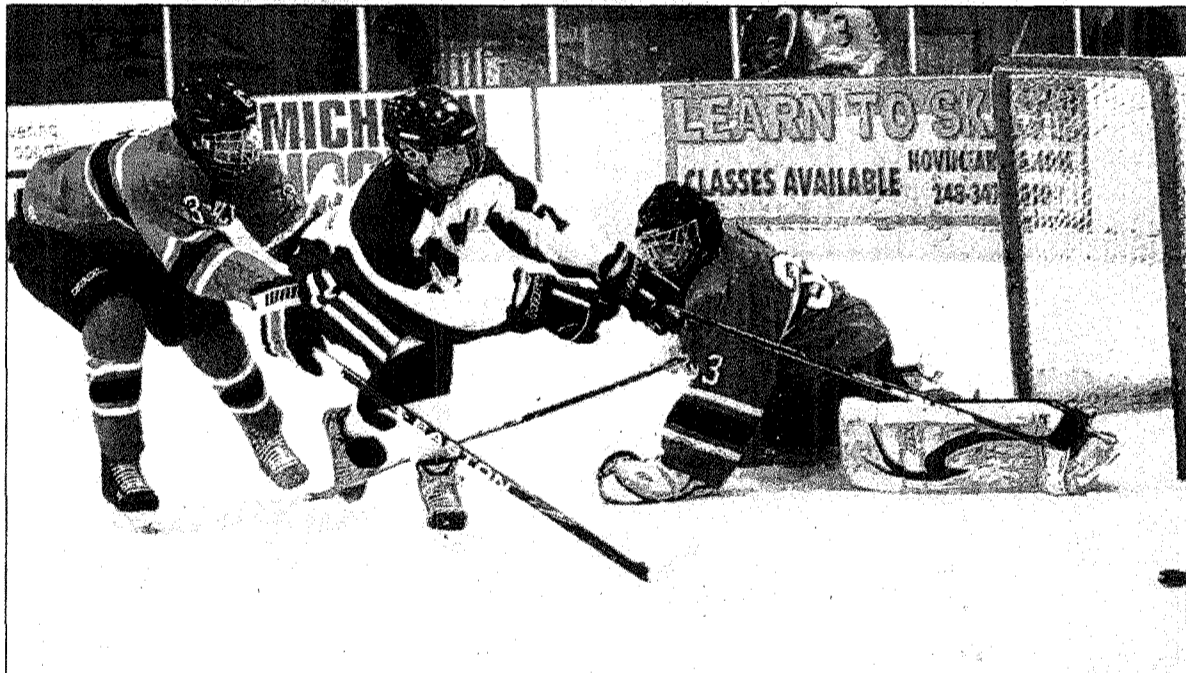
Defending 2010-11 MHSAA Division 1 boys hockey champion Novi raised its championship banner Wednesday night, but it was visiting Livonia Churchill that ruined the celebration with a 3-2 victory at Novi Ice Arena.

The Chargers got a short-handed goal from Nick Proben off an assist from Matt Sinclair with 9:20 left in the final period to improve to 4-0 overall and 2-0 in the KLAA's South Division.

"This was the first time we really faced some adversity this year," Churchill coach Pete Mazzoni said. "I thought we responded well. Special teams was the difference. We killed all of our penalties - scored short-handed and another power play. It was a quality win versus and good opponent."

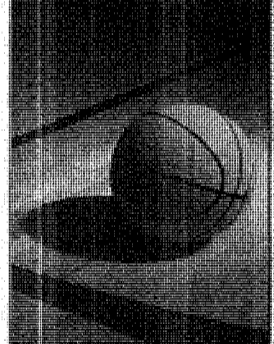
Novi jumped out to a 1-0 lead with 13:45 left in the first peri-

Please see HOCKEY, B3



CHRIS JACKETT

Novi's Ryan Kobylarek (7) tries to slip through against Churchill defenseman Charlie Yost (3) and goaltender Alex Estes (33) during Wednesday's Kensington Conference crossover game.



Hoop Shoot

The 2011 Elks Hoop Shoot contest, sponsored by the city of Livonia Department of Parks and Recreation, will be Saturday, Dec. 3, at the Livonia Community Recreation Center, located at 15100 Hubbard (at Five Mile Road).

Registration is free and starts at 8:30 a.m., followed by competition at 9 a.m. for boys and girls ages divisions 8-9, 10-11 and 12-13.

Each contestant will shoot 25 free throws.

Age-group winners advance to district competition in January.

For more information, call (734) 466-2410.

Pom clinic

Livonia Franklin will stage a pom pon clinic for girls ages 5-12, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 15, at high school.

Included in the \$20 cost is T-shirt and snack.

Participants will do a performance during the Franklin boys basketball game Friday, Dec. 16.

The registration deadline is Monday, Dec. 5. To pre-register, call Nancy at (734) 502-0877.

Lindsey powers MU upset victory

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

What a way to start the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference schedule for the Madonna University women's basketball team.

The Crusaders got a career-high 31 points Wednesday night from first-year transfer guard Michelle Lindsey and knocked off Indiana Tech, the NAIA's 15th-ranked team in Division II, 97-95, in overtime at the MU Activities Center.

Lindsey, a 5-foot-9 sophomore via Hillsdale College, fed teammate Kaylee McGrath (Livonia Stevenson) inside for the game-winning basket with only seven seconds remaining in

OT as MU evened its overall record at 3-3.

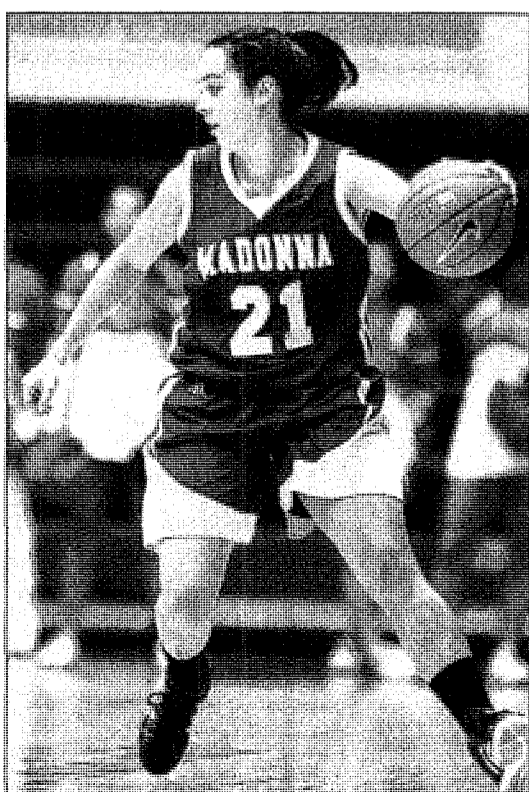
Lindsey, who prepped at Bloomfield Hills Marian, once scored 31 points in a Catholic League game against Dearborn Divine Child.

But it was her sixth assist of the game that proved to be the difference.

"I was trying to get to the basket ... the girl played good defense on me and I just saw McGrath cut in the corner of my eyes and was just able to get it through," said Lindsey, who made 11-of-18 shots, including a pair of threes, along with 7-of-9 foul shots.

McGrath, a 6-1 junior center, contributed a double-

Please see UPSET, B3



TIM BUSCH | MADONNA SPORTS INFORMATION

Madonna University sophomore guard Michelle Lindsey poured in a game-high 31 points in a 97-95 overtime victory over 15th-ranked Indiana Tech on Wednesday night.

COLLEGE HOOPS

Schuba's '3' stuns No. 7 Indiana Tech

The Madonna University men's basketball team posted perhaps its biggest road victory in school history with a dramatic 66-64 triumph over host Indiana Tech, the No. 7-ranked team in NAIA Division II, at the Schaefer Center.

Travis Schuba's fadeaway jump at the buzzer gave the Crusaders the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference win. It was also MU's fifth straight victory, equaling a school-record streak set during the 2007-08 season.

The game-winning shot came after Indiana Tech had the ball with 1.1 seconds

Please see COLLEGE, B2

T-Birds' Gaedke nets 52 Stevenson loses in triple OT, 89-87

Marie Gaedke spoiled Livonia Stevenson's girls basketball opener Friday night in more ways than one.

The 5-foot-7 senior guard hit clutch shot after clutch shot en route to a 52-point performance as the host Thunderbirds pulled out an improbable 89-87 triple overtime victory over the Spartans.

Gaedke, coming off a 26-point outing in a 60-42 loss Tuesday to Westland John Glenn, doubled her total by hitting 17 field goals, including three triples, while going 15-of-22 from the line.

Stevenson (0-1) went on a 13-6 fourth quarter run to take a 60-58 lead at the end of regulation, only to have Gaedke sent it to overtime at 60-all.

It was 66-all after the first 4-minute OT session as Gaedke again tied the game.

Not to be outdone, Gaedke did it again at the end of the second overtime with a triple to make it 79-all and then hit the game-winning shot in the third OT.

"It was a hard-fought, scrappy game with both teams answering," Stevenson coach Jen Knoph said. "It probably took the whole game to get into a rhythm and we finally

came around in the fourth quarter. I just wish we had come alive sooner."

There were plenty of fouls to go around and then some as Stevenson went 36-of-50 from the line, but lost five players with five personals each including starting guards Jordan York and Molly Knoph in the first OT.

"Our replacements came in and did an awesome job," Jen Knoph said.

Sophomores Charlesann Roy and Rachel Wilkinson tallied 19 and 17 points, respectively, for the Spartans.

York added 11, while Molly Knoph and Allie Koestering each added 10.

Edsel, going 24-of-37 from the line, got an additional 13 points from Carly Koos.

Four Thunderbird players fouled out, but the story was Gaedke, who scored 52 of her team's 89 total points.

POWERS 54, LADYWOOD 48: A 15-7 fourth-quarter run carried Flint Powers Catholic (1-0) to a victory Friday over visiting Livonia Ladywood (1-1).

Emily Sweet and Sarah Ruhstorfer each tallied 11 points for the victorious Chargers, who overcame a 41-39 third quarter deficit thanks to a pair of triples in the final period.

Junior guard Andie Anastos paced the Blazers with 16 points and 10 rebounds, while junior guard Shelby Walsh

added 13.

Senior guard Briana Combs also contributed nine, all on threes.

Ladywood was 11-of-13 from the foul stripe, while Powers hit 6-of-9.

LUTH. WESTLAND 48, ANNAPOLIS 36: Aldreanna Fikes had 12 points and 10 rebounds as four players scored in double figures Friday to propel Lutheran High Westland (1-1) to a non-league win at Dearborn Heights Annapolis (0-2).

Erica Killian chipped in with 11 points, while Hannah Conley and Amanda Terranella each added 10 as the Warriors outscored the Cougars 29-18 in the second half after being tied 34-all late in the third quarter.

"It was probably the first time in two seasons we put together two full halves," said Lutheran Westland coach Sandi Wade, whose team made 14-of-24 foul shots.

Beth Sherman led Annapolis with 14 points.

W.L. WESTERN 54, FRANKLIN 35: Freshman guard Jayla Nichols poured in a game-high 19 points to propel Walled Lake Western (1-1) to a non-conference victory Friday over host Livonia Franklin (1-1).

Nichols made four 3-pointers, while Erickah Woods chipped in with 10 points.

Junior point-guard Katelynn Devers and senior guard Alexis Smith tallied 12 and 10, respectively, for the Patriots.

"Their full-court press wore us as the game progressed," said Franklin coach Bob Ostrowski, whose team trailed 30-19 at halftime and 46-26 after three quarters.

Franklin was 11-of-24 from the foul line, while Western made 10-of-18.

INTER-CITY 53, CLARENCEVILLE 33: Rachel Muscat and Ashley Raburn tallied 14 and 10 points, respectively, leading Allen Park Inter-City Baptist (2-0) to a win Thursday at Livonia Clarenceville (0-2).

Inter-City won despite making only 3-of-17 free throws.

Clarenceville, going 5-of-16 from the line, got 11 points from senior Lauren Katz.

The Chargers led 7-6 after one quarter and broke it open with a 20-2 second-quarter run.

"Three of our five starters were in foul trouble the first half and we couldn't stay the course," Clarenceville coach Katrina Vanover said.

COLLEGE HOOPS

Jones keys Lady Ocelot triumph

Sophomore guard Dmonique Jones pumped in a game-high 23 points as Schoolcraft College rolled to a 77-43 triumph Friday over Sinclair (Ohio) Community College in the opening round of the Gillette Invitational hosted by Kalamazoo Valley CC.

Jones, who nailed three triples, also snared seven rebounds as the Lady Ocelots improved to 7-1 overall and set a date in the Gillette final Saturday afternoon against the host Cougars (8-0).

Shawnicka Thomas added 15 points, seven rebounds and eight assists for Schoolcraft,

which led 43-26 at halftime and held Sinclair scoreless during a seven-minute stretch during the second half to put the game away.

Other contributions for the Lady Ocelots came from Charlise Slater (11 points) and Shanequa Braggs (10 rebounds, five assists).

Sinclair (4-3) got 14 points from Hailee Ritteger.

S'CRAFT 67, KELLOGG 58: Ashley Beemon's 12 points off the bench paced a balanced scoring attack as Schoolcraft College (6-1) extended its home court NJCAA Division II winning streak to 66 with a non-conference win Wednesday night against visiting Kel-

logg Community College.

The Lady Ocelots, who improved to 6-1 overall, led 34-27 at halftime before breaking open the game with a 15-4 second-half run to take a commanding 55-39 advantage.

Charlise Slater added 11 points, while Shawnicka Thomas contributed nine points, 10 rebounds and six assists for Schoolcraft, which shot only 35 percent from the floor (28-of-79) and only 8-of-16 from the foul line.

Shanequa Braggs finished with nine points and Diamond Tolliver added eight on Spirit Night.

Samantha Krueger led Kellogg (3-3) with 12 points, while Danielle Fraley added 10.

Janeesa Jamieron led all rebounders with 15 for the Bruins, who outrebounded Schoolcraft, 56-48.

COLLEGE

Continued from page B1

after a shot clock violation by MU. The Warriors attempted a pass down the floor, but it sailed out of bounds without being touched giving Madonna an inbounds play directly under the basket.

Schuba, a sophomore from Rapid City, finished with 16 points, including 4-of-10 from three-point range.

Sophomore point-guard Bobby Naubert (Livonia Stevenson), who played all 40 minutes, led all scorers with 25 points on 9-of-14 shooting to go along with game-best 10 assists.

Matt Jenkins chipped in with 12 points as MU improved to 5-4 overall (after an 0-4 season start).

MU shot 49.1 percent from the floor (26-of-53) and committed just 10 turnovers.

"I could not be more proud of the team, to go

on the road against an undefeated opponent with the quality post players Tech has is a great accomplishment for our guys," MU coach Noel Emehiser said. "Our players were able to make adjustments that kept Tech from getting comfortable and plays on offense to give us a chance at the end."

Indiana Tech (8-1, 0-1), which led 34-29 at intermission, got a team-high 16 points and 12 boards from Rodney Bartholomew.

Chris Ware and Jordan Hickman contributed 14 and 11 points, respectively, for the Warriors, who shot 45 percent from the floor (26-of-60).

Madonna returns to WHAC action Saturday against Cornerstone (4-5, 1-0), the defending NAIA Division II national champions.

SCHOOLCRAFT 80, LORAIN 50: Wayne Memorial's Daniel Hill scored 19 points and pulled down 17 rebounds Friday as Schoolcraft College (5-1)

defeated host Lorain County Community College (5-5) for the second time this season in Elyria, Ohio.

Schoolcraft led only 28-23 at halftime before outscoring Lorain 52-27 in the second half.

Karl Moore added 15 points and 15 rebounds for the Ocelots, who shot 10-of-15 from the foul line.

Corey Reynolds (Livonia Clarenceville) added 10 points, 14 boards, four assists and four steals, while Richmond Jackson hit three triples en route to 10 points.

Jacob Pope paced the Commodores with 15 points.

SCHOOLCRAFT 102, KELLOGG 78: Livonia Clarenceville High grad Corey Reynolds, a 6-foot-3 forward, made the most of his first start of the season Wednesday with 12 points, 19 rebounds and seven assists to lead host Schoolcraft College (4-1) past Kellogg Community College (2-4).

Karl Moore scored a game-high 25 points and grabbed 16 rebounds while Daniel Hill (Wayne Memorial) chipped in with 11 points. Deon Dunn added 10 points and five boards on Spirit Night.

The Ocelots bolted out to a 50-32 halftime lead and never look back.

Steve Roper led the Bruins with 18 points, including five triples.

Darius Holman added 14 points.

Schoolcraft made 12-of-19 foul shots.

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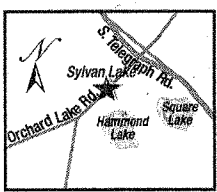
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Trial offers free cataract surgery

Patients participating in a clinical trial of a new multifocal lens will receive free cataract surgery, eye drops and pre-and post-surgical office visits at the Coburn-Kleinfeldt Eye Clinic, which has offices in Livonia and Dearborn.

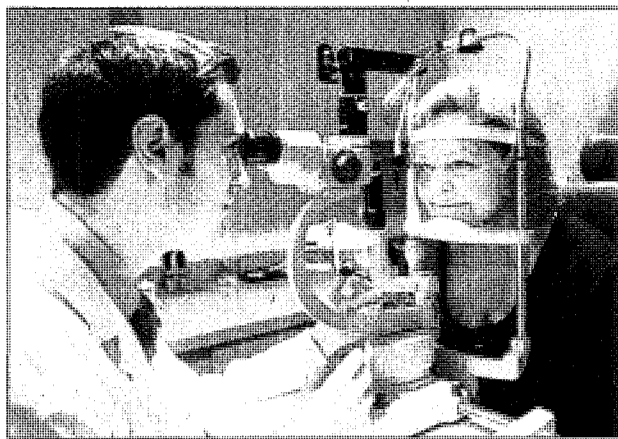
The lens, by Alcon, is designed to improve vision after cataract surgery. Alcon will cover costs associated with the surgery and provide a stipend for patients who complete all required office visits.

The clinical trial is approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Half of the patients will receive the new multifocal lens and half will receive a

lens which is currently approved for use after cataract surgery. A multifocal lens, which reduces the need for glasses after cataract surgery, usually costs about \$2,000 and typically is not covered by insurance.

The Coburn-Kleinfeldt Eye Clinic is one of only 16 sites nationwide for the Alcon multifocal lens clinical trial. Patients will be examined at the Coburn-Kleinfeldt Eye Clinic at 33400 W. Six Mile, Livonia or at the Dearborn Office, 24800 Michigan Avenue. Cataract surgery will be performed by board-certified ophthalmologists.

The clinical trial requires that patients



Dr. Nate Kleinfeldt examines a patient.

are over 18 years of age, need cataract surgery in both eyes and meet specific vision criteria. Individuals who have had previous eye surgery, dry eyes or retinopathy are not eligible. Enrollment continues through February 2012.

ment continues through February 2012.

For information about qualifying for the clinical trial, call (734) 421-2020 during business hours.

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

December

ST. MARY MERCY

• Kevin Moore, director of rehabilitation and wound care services at St. Mary Mercy Hospital will talk about fall prevention at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7 in the hospital auditorium. The hospital is located on Five Mile at Levan, Livonia. Participants will learn to recognize fall risks and develop strategies to minimize the prospect of serious injury. This presentation will focus on impaired vision, medications, physical fitness, osteoporosis and the environment. It's free, but registration is required. To register visit stmarymercy.org and click on "classes & events" or call (734) 655-8950.

• Dr. Harmesh R. Naik, an oncologist at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, will give a presentation, "Nutrition, Medication and Treatment of Breast Cancer," from 7-8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13 in the Our Lady of Hope Cancer Center Atrium at the hospital, located at Five Mile and Levan, in Livonia. Call St. Mary Mercy Hospital's Marian Women's Center at (734) 655-1162 for more information or visit stmarymercy.org.

INTERACTIVE SEMINAR

Dr. Tina Schuster, co-director of DMC Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital's Robotic Surgery Program, will discuss prostate health, cancer and the latest treatments for urologic problems, including robotic surgery, during a free, online seminar, noon-1 p.m., Friday, Dec. 9. Participants will be able to submit questions and receive responses from Schuster by e-mail through an online "chat" format. Participants can join the online live discussion by logging onto www.hvsh.org/prostatehealthchat. Advance registration is not required but individuals may sign up in advance for an e-mail reminder.

Ongoing

AQUATIC CLASSES

The YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit and the Arthritis Foundation have partnered to offer aquatic classes designed to ease the pain of arthritis. Classes are held 10-11 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday at the Farmington branch; 1-1:45 p.m. Monday and Wednesday at the Livonia branch; and 2-3 p.m. Wednesday and Friday, at the Birmingham branch. All classes are offered to members and nonmembers of every age and participants do not need to know how to swim to participate. To join, interested individuals can contact their local YMCA branch or visit www.ymcadetroit.org.

ARTHRITIS SUPPORT GROUP

2-3:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at the Krieger Center, DMC Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital, 1 William Carls Drive, Commerce. Enter the building via the South Garden entrance. Registration not required.

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

Meets 6:30-8 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month in the Atrium of Our Lady of Hope Cancer Center, St. Mary Mercy Hospital, 36475 Five Mile (use south entrance off Levan Road), Livonia. Call (734) 655-1100, or visit www.stmarymercy.org.

BIPOLAR SUPPORT

Depression Bipolar Support Alliance meets 6:30-8 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesday at Lincoln Behavioral Services Center, 14500 Sheldon Road, Suite 160B, Plymouth. It is accessed through the Plymouth Executive Park driveway north of M-14. It is a self-help group for people suffering from depression and bipolar disorders. Meetings are open also to family members. All DBSA leaders are professionally trained and attend two trainings for every year to update their skills in leading the group. Call Nancy at (734) 536-3457 or Katrina at (734) 837-7700 with questions.

Get advice on fibromyalgia support

Helping Our Pain and Exhaustion (H.O.P.E.), a fibromyalgia education and support group in Farmington Hills, is offering kits designed to help recipients start and maintain their own fibromyalgia support groups.

"Support groups are critical tools that tell our friends, family and neighbors suffering with fibromyalgia that they are not alone," stated Sharon Ostalecki, H.O.P.E. executive director. "Twenty years ago, my own life changed completely when I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia. At that time, information was scarce and help was hard to find. With the help of other fibromyalgia sufferers I learned to understand my condition and discovered how to manage my own pain."

"These kits are our free gift this holiday season to fibromyalgia sufferers across Michigan, so they can learn to better manage their pain, find relief and know that they are not alone."

The organization is offering the kits, which contain educational and training materials, in response to requests from individuals who are



Fibromyalgia support group kits are available from Help Our Pain and Exhaustion.

interested in starting support groups and learning about the support available in their communities.

Fibromyalgia is a disease primarily afflicting women. Patients experience long-term, body-wide pain and tender points in the joints, muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues. In addition to pain, fatigue and problems with sleep are seen in almost all patients with fibromyalgia. Many

complain that they can't get to sleep or stay asleep, and they feel tired when they wake up. The disease has also been linked to headaches, depression, anxiety, and other symptoms.

The author of numerous books, Ostalecki graduated from Eastern University with a bachelors' of science degree and a master's degree in physical science. She holds a Ph.D. in nutrition and specializes in fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue. Her practice is in Novi.

H.O.P.E. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to develop and execute programs dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with fibromyalgia. The Michigan-based organization's vision is focused on raising fibromyalgia awareness and providing advocacy for chronic pain patients and their families.

A small shipping charge may apply to the kits. For more information about fibromyalgia and H.O.P.E. or to obtain a support kit, call (248) 344-0896 or visit www.hffcf.org.

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Guest speaker Kevin Moore, OTR, MSA, WCC
Wednesday, December 7, 7 p.m.
Call 734-655-8950 to register or for more information.
- **Michigan Bariatric Institute Seminar**
Guest speaker Tallal Zeni, MD
Thursday, January 5, 6 p.m.
Call 877-WHY-WEIGHT to register or for more information.
- **Keeping Your New Year's Resolution**
Be successful at keeping your exercise and nutrition goals.
Guest speaker Kevin Moore, OTR, MSA, WCC
Thursday, January 19, 7 p.m.
Call 734-655-8950 to register or for more information.
Location: Bailey Center in Westland
- **Center for Joint Replacement Seminar**
Guest speaker David Mendelson, MD
Thursday, January 26, 6 p.m.
Call 734-655-2345 to register or for more information.
- **Michigan Bariatric Institute Seminar**
Guest speaker Tallal Zeni, MD
Thursday, February 2, 6 p.m.
Call 877-WHY-WEIGHT to register or for more information.
- **"Stay Awake" Series: Insomnia and Sleep Hygiene**
Guest speaker Punitha Vijayakumar, MD
Neurologist and Board Certified Sleep Specialist
Thursday, February 9, 7 p.m.
Call 734-655-4640 to register or for more information.

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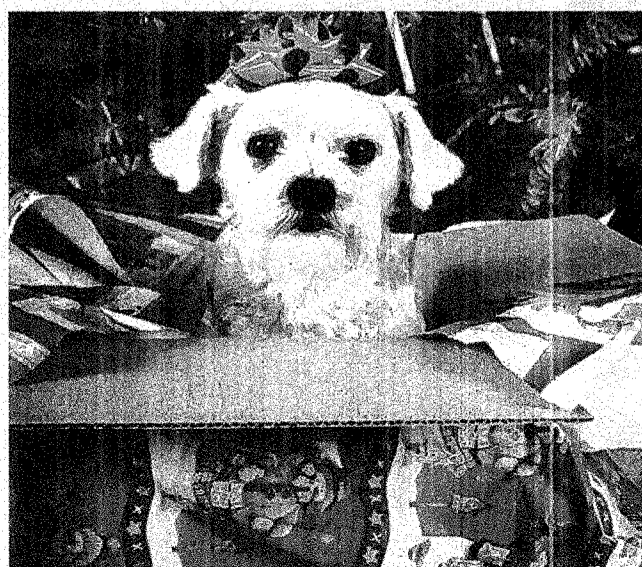
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Making a difference

Say 'Happy Holidays' while helping animal rescues

By Sharon Dargay
O&E Staff Writer

Batty Koda was left for dead on the side of the road.

Ginger nearly succumbed to a fatal disease.

Barkley lost his family.

They're among 17 dogs whose stories — all with happy endings — and smiling faces grace the pages of a 2012 wall calendar designed to raise funds for foster-based Last Day Dog Rescue, in Livonia. The piece was designed by Aileen Klebba, a graphics design student at the College for Creative Studies and a Last Day member, also raises awareness about homeless animals, fostering and volunteering with the group.

"I thought, what better way to get our name out there than in a calendar," Klebba said. "We got a photographer (Jessica Yeager) who donated her time to us. Every penny goes to the rescue."

"The pictures are so darn cute. I love doing it because we have all sorts of dogs."

Last Day Dog Rescue, which saves animals from high-kill shelters, as well as strays and owner-surrendered pets, sells the calendar for \$12. Buy five and the sixth one is free.

They're available by contacting Klebba at aklebba@comcast.net and can be mailed in time for holiday gift-giving or picked up at a Last Day adoption event. See the group's Web site at www.lastdaydogrescue.org for a list of locations. Proceeds help pay

for food, vet bills and continuing the group's work.

"We pride ourselves in taking in all breeds and all ages no matter what kind of shape they are in," Last Day president, Pam Peterson, wrote in the calendar. "There is not a cat or dog too old or too homely we will not take in to find them a home."

Although most animal welfare organizations say their priority needs are volunteers and monetary donations, merchandise sales also help defray their expenses and market their cause. Many of the items they sell make perfect holiday gifts for pet lovers. Here's a sampling of other local groups with items for sale:

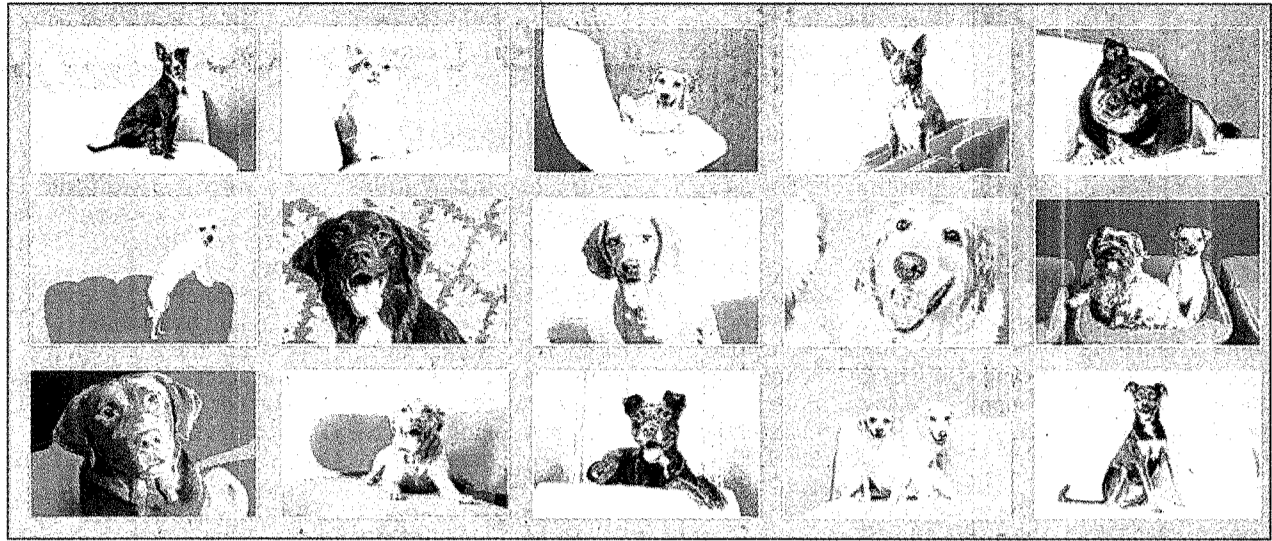
• Better Life Canine Center

The group takes mostly owner-surrendered dogs and trains them in obedience before sending them to permanent homes. Founder Brenda Woody, along with volunteers, instructs the dogs at her Westland home.

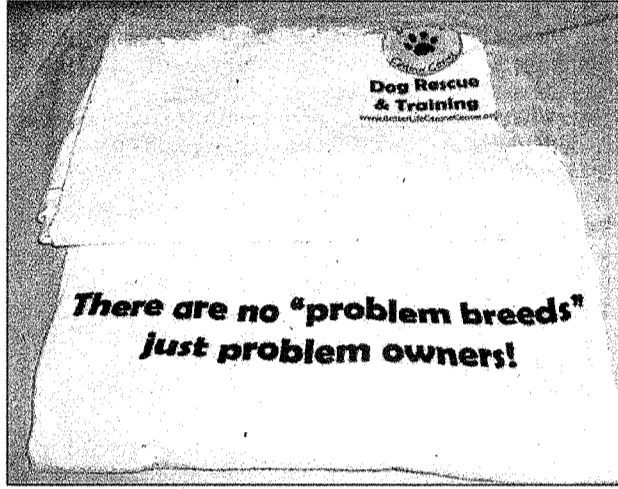
The T-shirt the group sells includes the group's logo and the message that "there are no problem breeds, just problem owners."

"There is a scripture from proverbs on the shirt, too. It's about having wisdom," Woody said. "Gaining understanding and having wisdom is what we're about."

Shirts sell for \$15 and are available at the group's adoption events. Visit www.betterlifecaninecenter.org for



Last Day Dog Rescue's 2012 calendar includes stories and photos of canines that have found new homes through the organization.



Better Life Canine Center's T-shirt sports its logo on the front and saying on the back.

more information.

Woody also accepts monetary donations on behalf of gift-givers. Donate to the group in a loved one's name and she'll send a specialty letter confirming the gift on their behalf.

"You can't have bake sales to raise money and do this kind of rescue," Woody said. "We had five dogs come in with heartworm. The medicine cost us \$600-\$1,000 for each dog."

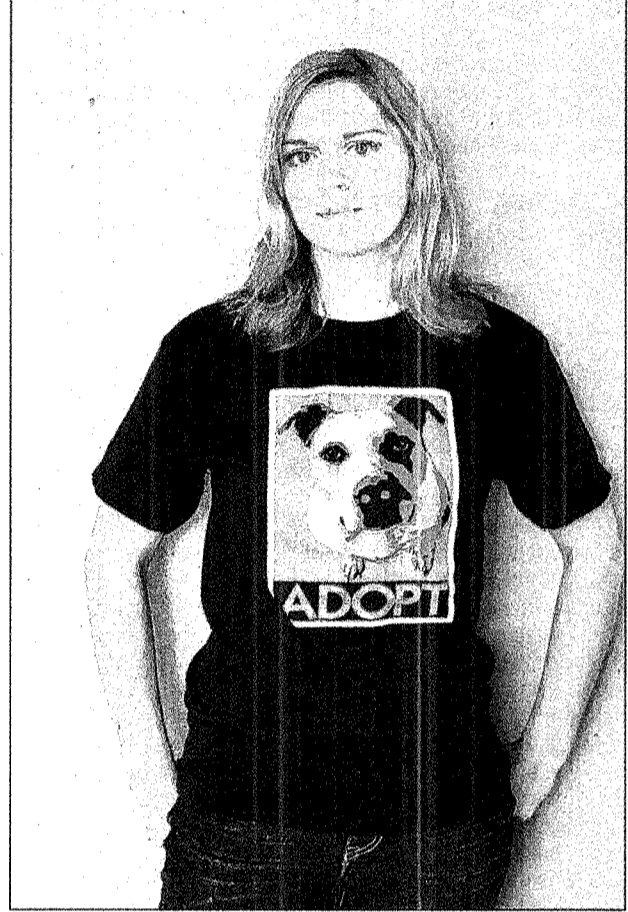
• New Beginnings Animal Rescue (NBAR)

The group's navy blue T-shirts sport the word "adopt" in bold letters along with a colorful illustration of a cat or dog. Shirts cost \$12.

For \$40, pet lovers can commission one of the organization's adoptable cats to paint on canvass.

Jennifer Fritz, a Garden City resident and NBAR vice president, said she and NBAR founder, Lisa Hill, of Royal Oak, came up with the cat painting idea after visiting Best Friends Sanctuary in Utah.

"We watched pot-belly pigs paint and thought,



Jennifer Fritz, a Garden City resident and board vice president of New Beginnings Animal Rescue models the group's "Adopt" T-shirt. A cat version also is available.

if pigs can do it, our cats can, too," Fritz wrote in an e-mail.

Customers pick the paint colors and the cat

or let NBAR choose the feline artist.

"Little known fact is

Please see RESCUE, B8

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Event aids health, arts organizations



Joey Catalano of Livonia will perform in a comedy skit at an event benefiting the Alzheimer's Association and The Actor's Workshop.

Performarama, a mix of song, comedy and acting, will benefit the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Michigan and The Actor's Workshop, at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 6, at The Magic Bag theater, just north of Nine Mile in Ferndale.

Joey Catalano, a Livonia resident, is among the actors from The Actor's Workshop, who will perform in "The Uranus Players Theater presents Nick Danger - Third Eye," a comedy radio skit originally performed by Firesign Theater.

Other featured performers will include actor-singer Jeff Caponigro and recording art-

ists Stewart Francke and L'Stubbs. Blaine Fowler of WDV-D-FM 96.3's morning show, "Blaine and Allyson" will emcee the event, which is presented by film and state director Brian Lawrence and producer Aida Munoz.

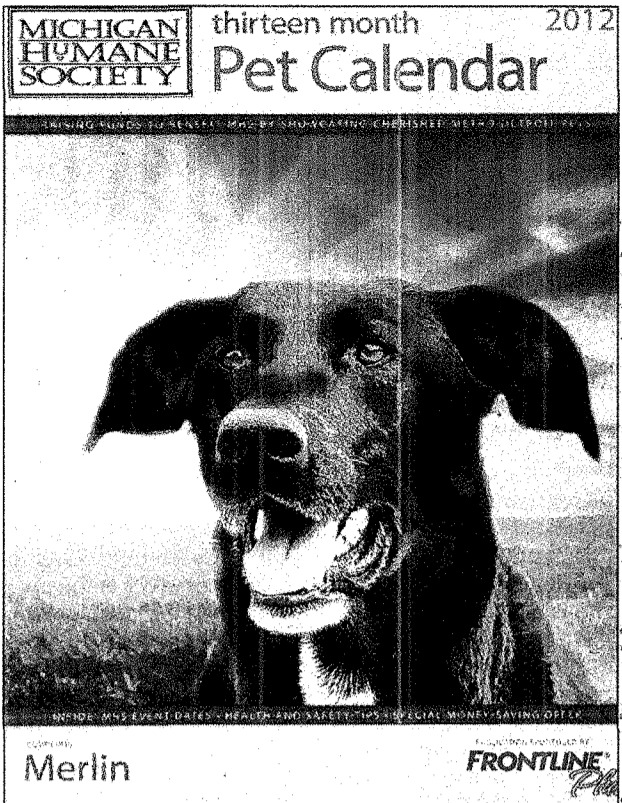
Lawrence also founded and directs The Actor's Workshop in Royal Oak.

Kerby's Coney Island, the event's food sponsor, will provide free food to attendees. A cash bar also will be available. Individuals must be at least 21 years old to attend the show.

"Considering the steep prices of concerts and other forms of enter-

tainment these days, for only \$25 someone can support both a major health concern and Michigan arts; experience a most unusual show of world-class entertainers; see Detroit-radio star Blaine Fowler in person; and, get free food from Kerby's Coney Island," stated Marc Berke of the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Michigan Chapter.

Advance tickets are \$25 and available by calling the Alzheimer's Association at (248) 996-1060 or by visiting www.performarama.eventbrite.com. Tickets at the door are \$30.



The Michigan Humane Society calendar features local pets.

Keep the holidays safe with these tips

Christmas Trees

• Always buy a fresh cut, healthy tree. You can check by looking and feeling. The tree must be green, the bark moist and green, and the needles should bend and not break.

• Run your hand down a branch. If the tree is fresh, some needles will fall off but only a few.

• Tug on a few needles; they should be difficult to pull off.

• Bend a few branches; if they snap off or crack, the tree is too dry and won't last.

• When you get the tree home, cut a few inches off the bottom of the trunk at an angle so the tree can absorb more water.

• Set the tree in a sturdy tree stand. Make sure the base or legs are sturdy to keep the tree stable so that it will not tip over, which can pose a danger to children and small pets.

• The stand should be able to hold a lot of water and the water should be checked and maintained. A six-foot tree requires approximately one-gallon of water every other day.

• Do not place the tree next to, or close to fireplaces, heaters, radiators, heat registers or candles.

• Never place the tree in front of

a doorway or in the path of any exit source in case of an emergency.

• If you use, or are planning on buying an artificial tree, make sure it is fire resistant.

• Install a smoke/fire detector as well as an ABC fire extinguisher in the room with the tree.

• Ribbons and tinsel are a big temptation for small children, cats and dogs. It can wreak havoc in the pet's intestines or stomach. Small children also love the shiny tinsel and bows on presents and need to be supervised or the tree needs to be barricaded.

Holiday plants

• Poinsettias are a common household Christmas plant, but toxic to little ones and pets. The sap from the leaves may cause vomiting and skin irritation. Avoid placing it where pets and children may reach it.

• Christmas Mistletoe is also a favorite to hang where people can kiss under it. Hanging it high up is best as the berries from this plant are highly toxic for children and pets. Remove the berries for the best safety precautions.

Lights

• Only use UL listed labeled lights and cords.

• Never use electrical lights on a metal tree.

• Before using any and all holiday lights, inspect all connections and cords. Look for cracked, brittle or frayed wiring or cords.

• Do not coil or tie extension cords when in use. They could overheat.

• Inspect all lights for broken or damaged sockets.

• Make sure the bulbs work and are not loose or missing.

• Never use indoor extension cords, outdoors.

• Never lay cords under carpets or across walks or steps.

• Outdoor light sets should be marked "waterproof."

• Never shorten or splice light sets.

• Make sure all outside lights are plugged into a ground fault circuit interrupter (G.F.C.I.) outlet.

• Do not overload electrical outlets. If you are trying to use dozens of light sets, plug them into different outlets on different circuits.

• Turn off, or better yet, unplug all tree lights and decorations when going to bed or leaving the house.

Lon Grossman is president of Technihouse Inspections Inc., a southeast Michigan residential and commercial inspection company. E-mail your questions to him at drdiy@comcast.net. Call (248) 855-5566. Visit his website www.technihouse.com. Follow Lon's Blog at <http://drdiy.wordpress.com/>.

RESCUE

Continued from page B7

that every cat is a great painter. People who have gotten the paintings just think they're cool and unique."

NBAR maintains a pet food pantry for South Oakland County residents and adopts cats and dogs out to "forever" homes in the tri-country area. For more information, or to buy shirts or cat paintings, visit www.nbar-michigan.org. Payment also can be sent to NBAR, P.O. Box 298, Garden City, MI 48135.

Humane Society of Huron Valley

A small gift shop sells logo items, such as T-shirts, as well as pet-related goods, at the shelter, located at 3100 Cherry Hill Road, Dexter. Buy the 2012 shelter calendar, featuring

photos of animals that have been in the organization's care, inspirational quotes and pet care information, for \$15 at the shelter or online at www.hshv.org. Holiday cards and gift certificates also are available. (734) 662-5585

The Michigan Humane Society

The organization, that maintains shelters in Westland, Detroit and Rochester Hills, sells apparel, mugs, games, pet items, and more through its online store at www.ShopMichiganHumane.org. Its 2012 pet calendar costs \$15 and features photos contributed by area pet owners. The organization also sells holiday greeting cards. Buy the calendar and cards online or visit the Berman Center for Animal Care at 900 N. Newburgh, in Westland; (734) 721-7300.

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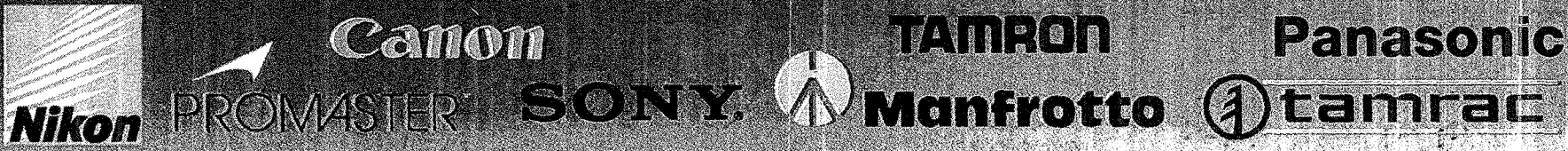
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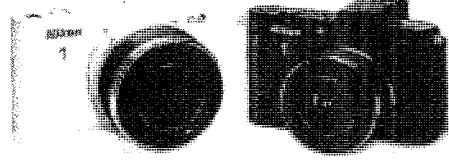


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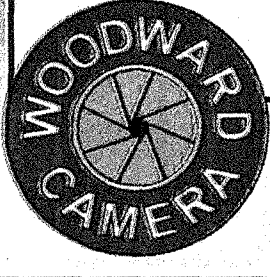
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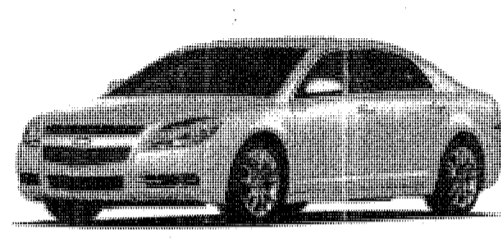
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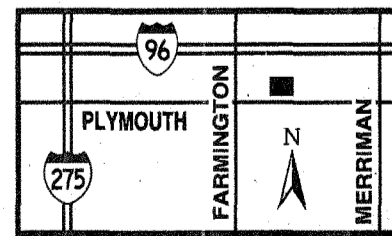
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