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Mortgage workshops

Westland residents facing difficulties with their mortgages can find help through free loan modification assistance at workshops offered 6-7 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Dorsey Community Center, on Dorsey east of Venoy.

Participants learn from loan modification counselor, attorney and real estate professionals who will answer questions regarding loan modifications, foreclosure time lines, short sales and available government assistance.

Consultation is done in a private setting for all residents. Solutions include loan modification to lower mortgage payment or short sale of the home. They are largely based upon affordability and income. If a loan modification is declined and a short sale is a better solution, the program works with residents to find a home they can rent or rent to own at a price they can afford.

The program tries to find housing that allows families to stay in their current neighborhoods and children to stay at their current schools.

To participate in the program, call (313) 378-5418 or send an e-mail to lindamiller@nationalfaith.org.

Movie Night

Stop by the William P. Faust Library this Friday evening for a movie and snacks.

The library's will continue its Friday Night Movies for the month of January and will kick it off with *17 and Up*, a movie about two friends who discover that adding the act of sex to their friendship leads to complications. This movie is rated R and is for teens and adults. Snacks and refreshments are served, and there will be trivia and prizes before the movie.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., with the movie starting at 7 p.m.

The library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, north of Ford. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

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Voters face 3 ballot choices for presidential primary

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

Permanent absentee voter applications for the Feb. 28 presidential primary should be hitting Westland mail boxes as early as today (Thursday).

The applications will look a bit a different

and require different responses depending on which school district is involved. The Wayne-Westland Community Schools has a sinking fund question on the ballot in addition to the presidential primary.

First, all voters need to designate a party affiliation to receive either the

Republican or Democratic presidential primary ballot. But residents of the Wayne-Westland district will have a third option — voting only on the ballot question and not participating in the presidential primary.

“Only a Wayne-Westland resident can select ballot question only. The

way that the applications had to be printed, it will be confusing,” said Westland Clerk Eileen DeHart Schoof, noting that the absentee ballot applications are identical.

That means voters who live in the Livonia, Garden City, Taylor and Inkster school districts need

to ignore the ballot question only option and select a party preference to vote in the presidential primary.

“Voters must select one ballot type or we will not issue a ballot. If they don’t, we will put it back in the mail asking them

Please see **BALLOT, A2**

New site good fit for Firing Line

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

A larger facility, more parking and better visibility on a major road provided plenty incentive for the Firing Line to move to a new location nearly a decade after the business opened.

“We went from 14,000 square feet to 18,000 square feet. We’re on a main road close to the intersection,” said Grant Allen, who co-owns the business with Tommy Vaughan and Don Haigh.

Since it opened, the Firing Line had been located in an industrial area. It took about five months to renovate a former collision shop to house the Firing Line which not only sells a range of handguns, long guns, ammunition and other shooting supplies but also offers a variety of shooting and gun safety courses.

There are 16 shooting lanes on two 25-yard gun ranges with three additional shooting positions on the 50-yard indoor rifle range. And you don’t have to own or buy



Co-owner Grant Allen in front of a display at the Firing Line.

a gun to see how you like shooting.

“We have over 90 different handguns you can rent (to use on the range), we can rent long guns,” said Allen. “We’ll train you. We run classes

for CPL (Concealed Pistol Licenses), safety classes for kids and hunter safety classes. Dads and moms bring kids in because they want them educated about gun safety — they

don’t believe mom and dad.”

Those courses look at how to make a weapon safe and how the gun functions and operates.

“If there is going to be gun in the house, we’re

all for educating them and making it safe,” said Allen.

The Firing Line also offers Modern Arnis, a Filipino martial arts,

Please see **RANGE, A2**

Stottlemyer: Committed to his city

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

Robert Stottlemyer is being remembered by friends as “a good firefighter and a man actively committed to his community.”

A former Westland firefighter and City Council member, Mr. Stottlemyer died Friday, Dec. 30, at his home after a lengthy battle with Alzheimer’s. He was 75.

“He was always good and did what he had to do,” said retired Westland Fire Chief Ted Scott. “Bob always did his job, he had a good attitude.”

A longtime Westland resident, Mr. Stottlemyer was a firefighter for 25 years, served on the City Council for nine years, and was active in a variety of local organizations. He staged fundraisers for organizations ranging from the Wounded Warriors Project and Spark Inc. to even reaching into Detroit to help Mother Waddles and her charitable work.

“He was always giving of his time for others,” said his wife, Betty. “He did a lot of fundraising for the police and fire benevolent funds. He did a lot



FILE PHOTO

In 2003, then City Councilman Robert Stottlemyer was on hand to pass out awards at the Wayne-Westland Soccer League’s summer picnic.

for various organizations.”

Born on June 14, 1936, in Lincoln Park, Mr. Stottlemyer was a 1955 graduate of Wayne High School. He met his wife in 1952 when they both were counselors at a 4-H camp. They dated for four years before they married in August 1956.

He worked for the Ford Motor Co. until he was laid off. That’s when he built their first home. He also worked for a dairy and for Newburgh Lumber and eventually was hired as a firefighter by then-Nankin Township Fire Nathaniel. He joined the department on

Jan. 1, 1963, and worked for the fire service for 25 years before retiring from the Westland Fire Department on Jan. 1, 1988, as a driver engineer/sergeant.

“Bob liked Chief Savini and the chief liked Bob,” said Scott. “As an engineer, his responsibility was to assure the rig was ready for service, the equipment was in the right place and that it was ready to go on a moment’s notice.”

Mr. Stottlemyer was instrumental on obtaining used hospital beds and other equipment

Please see **STOTTEMYER, A2**

City clerk, four council members start new terms

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

Family, friends and supporters gathered at the Bailey Recreation Center Tuesday as City Clerk Eileen DeHart Schoof and City Council members were sworn in for new terms.

The re-elected council members taking their public oath of office included top vote-getter Adam Hammons, James Godbout, Bill Johnson and Michael Kehrer. The top three finishers earn four-year council terms while Kehrer will serve a two-year term.

Serving as master of ceremonies, Mayor William Wild began the program with a moment of silence in honor of former councilman and retired firefighter Robert Stottlemyer, who died last week at age 75 following a long battle with Alzheimer’s disease.

Surrounded by her family, including husband Butch, children and grandchildren, Schoof clearly had the largest group of supporters present, even without including Johnson, her brother.

“I want all of my family to

Please see **OATHS, A2**

STOTTLEMYER

Continued from page A1

from Annapolis and the former Beyer Memorial hospitals to be used for the fire department's loan closet. He also was active with the Westland Goodfellows, the Wayne Ford Civic League and Crippled Children's organizations and volunteered with The Parade Company and the Michigan State Fair.

He ran a security company and a lawn service and organized motivational programs at Stevenson Middle School, St. John Lutheran and the William P. Faust Public Library. He also liked the entertainment business and brought live acts to the area. Among the performers were Roger Miller, Chubby Checker and Lee Greenwood.

A popular event for the fire department was an open house at the Central station that included visits by members of the Detroit Lions and Channel 7 news anchor Doris Biscoe, Scott recalled.

Mr. Stottlemeyer also started two gardens for senior citizens and the underprivileged — one in Canton and the other on the grounds of the former Wayne County General Hospital. The latter became one of the largest

gardens of its kind in the country, according to his family.

"We also did a store out of our garage where seniors could come and buy fresh produce," said Betty Stottlemeyer. "They'd pay what we paid when we picked it up at the produce terminal."

Mr. Stottlemeyer was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Westland City Council in November 2000. Former council member Cheryl Graustadt remembers the back-and-forth they had over being top vote-getter in the her first election. She like to say she was the top vote-getter and he would say he was. She had won a four-year term and he ran unopposed for a two-year term.

"It was obvious to anyone who observed him on council that he was a very humble man, a very friendly man," she added. "He had a good sense of humor. He was very loving and wore his heart on his sleeve."

As a council member, Mr. Stottlemeyer helped start up of *Our Town on the Road*, cable TV shows promoting local businesses and hosted by council members. The idea came from a conversation with then-City Attorney Angelo Plakas, and it was Mr. Stottlemeyer who took it upon himself to do it,

Graustadt said. "It was just about high-lighting business," she said. "I know when it started it was about showing businesses in the city and the people who worked there."

Mr. Stottlemeyer decided to not seek re-election in 2009 after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

"It was hard for him because those years on council were busy, busy, busy, and he knew he would not be able to continue," said his wife. "It was sad to see."

"He really was the sweetest guy, I'm fortunate I got to know him and learn from him," said Graustadt. "He was someone I could trust. I felt I could come to him and talk to him."

Mr. Stottlemeyer is survived by his wife of 55 years, Betty, sons Chris (Ilene), Mark (Susan) and David (Karen); daughter Donna Beaupre, brother Donald (Lou) Stottlemeyer, sister Patricia Lloyd, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, Roland and Mary Jamieson Stottlemeyer.

Memorials can be made to the Wounded Warriors Project, Veterans Haven or Alzheimer's Association.

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(313) 222-6751



Surrounded by her family, Westland City Clerk Eileen DeHart Schoof took the oath of office to begin a new term.

OATHS

Continued from page A1

come up. It will be half the audience and it's only part of my family," said Schoof. "I could not have enjoyed all of the wonderful things I've been able to do without their support."

A former councilwoman, state representative and Wayne County executive staff member, Schoof said all of her accomplishments aren't very important without her family.

"I swear I will do the best job that I can," said Schoof, whose oath of office was administered by Deputy Clerk Tina Stanke.

After taking their oaths of office, the councilmen echoed Schoof's comments thanking family and friends for their support.

Thanking his wife, Melissa, for her support, Hammons also noted it was a special day for their son Nolan, who was turning 4 years old.

"I also want to thank residents for their support and having the confidence in me to re-elect me," said Hammons. "I look forward to working with the mayor, the administration and with my council colleagues."

Since his mother was unable to attend, Kehrler asked his aunt, Bernadine Vaughan, to hold the Bible while he took the oath of office.

"Everyone has mentioned the support of their family and friends in getting elected. To this day, I find getting



Westland Councilman James Godbout took the oath of office while his wife Sande held the Bible. Godbout was reelected as council president at the subsequent council meeting.



Top vote-getter Adam Hammons takes the oath of office for a four-year term on council. He was subsequently elected council president pro tem.



Westland Councilman Michael Kehrler takes the oath of office for a two-year term.



Morgan DeHart, granddaughter of City Clerk Eileen DeHart Schoof, brought her doll to the ceremony swearing in ceremony at the Bailey Recreation Center.

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BALLOT

Continued from page A1

to select. Not all cities are doing that," said Schoof.

In addition, Schoof said there are five things a voter must complete on the absentee ballot application in order to receive their ballot:

- Check the box stating the reason for voting absentee.
- Fill in their date of birth.
- Check the box indicating that the voter is a U.S. citizen — a new

mandatory step.

- Sign the application.
- Provide an address where the ballot should be mailed, if the voter will be gone, for example spending the winter in Florida.

There is also a spot for the voter to provide their telephone numbers and an e-mail address but Schoof stresses that information is not required to vote.

"You don't have to provide that information. It's for the (Republican and Democratic) parties to access to get support," said Schoof.

ister to vote in the Feb. 28 election is Monday, Jan. 30. Republicans can select from 11 candidates on the ballot while only President Barack Obama appears on the Democratic ballot. Schoof notes that designating a party preference to participate in the presidential primary has no impact on the Nov. 6 general election.

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools is seeking 10-year renewal of a nearly 1-mill sinking fund tax levy.

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RANGE

Continued from page A1

combined with combat handgun instruction. "It's a hand-to-hand self-defense. Just because you carry a gun, it's not necessarily the first option," Allen said.

Twice a month, the Firing Line offers Ladies Nights and monthly women's CPL classes, taught by female instructors, which can provide a more comfortable atmosphere, Allen added.

"For Ladies Nights, we'll take the rental guns and let them try different styles," he said.

Twice so far, the Firing Line has hosted weddings — the guests all shot on the range following the ceremony — along with some bachelor parties, pre-adult beverage consumption, of course.

Allen, who joined the business in 2006, is a



A customer, who asked not to be identified, shoots on the gun range at the Firing Line which recently opened in a new Westland location.

Westland police officer while both Vaughan and Haigh are retired Westland police officers. As a result, Allen said the Firing Line classes go beyond the minimum training mandated by the state.

"The state says eight hours and we do 12 hours," he said. "We go above on issues in our classes. We get more in-depth and look at legal issues. We have 20 people, including the owners and office staff. They come from all walks of life — current and retired police, Ford

retirees and housewives. A lot of different people and different experiences."

The Firing Line is a class three dealer, meaning it can handle weapons such as machine guns and under a new law, silencers.

"We keep it clean and professional. We have a vast experience and people with different styles of shooting," Allen said, including cowboy style shooting in costumes, law enforcement and competitive.

One employee, Robin Boruta, is the first female master of the International Defensive Pistol Shooting Association.

The Firing Line also offers more specialized advanced classes, such as low light shooting and reality-based shooting with scenarios involving movement.

Located at 33000 Ford, just west of Venoy, the business is open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

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Store helps artists market their work

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

For Jennifer Counihan, opening a business means coming back home.

The Howell resident grew up in Westland and she hung out at Westland Shopping Center while her mother ran the Coffee Beanery.

So when she and a group of women, including her mother, decided to open Sisters Arts and Gifts, she looked to the mall.

"I've always loved art, I love what people make, I love to hear their stories," said Counihan. "I'm not an artsy, crafty person, but I love hearing the artists stories."

The store, set up in the former Eddie Bauer store on the east side of the mall features the work of some 23 artists. The selection includes original artwork, metal yard decorations, per-



Chloe Dunklin is among artists marketing their work at the Sisters Art and Gifts in Westland Shopping Center.

sonalized embroidery, handmade jewelry and fudge, organic soap and tea. There are even kaleidoscope-style photos using such subjects as a car radiator, a melted record, a grasshopper and teeth.

Kristin Malinich of Metamora Stone Works has a selection of stone and granite products

like platters and cutting boards, and there's a selection of hand knit socks, hats and scarves as well as hand spun yarns from the Williamston Alpaca Shoppe.

According to Counihan, the store is the result of a group of women who banded together to make it work. They call themselves sisters and



Kristin Malinich of Metamora Stone Works has created platters and cutting boards from natural stone and granite.

"everyone contributes in different ways," she said.

Several other malls, including Laurel Park Place have a store like Sisters, and in looking around, Counihan decided to go where she could fill an need. Now, Briarwood Mall in Ann Arbor inquiring about a similar store.

Sisters opened its doors officially at midnight on Black Friday. It started with five artists and the number has continued to grow. The week before Christmas, merchandise

filled half of the store, and artists were stopping in to inquire about it. Artists come from Belleville, Canton and even St. Joseph. That artist hasn't been in the store, she sends her things by mail, Counihan said.

The artists rent space to market their work. They pay a 15 percent point of sale commission and work 16 hours in the store or hire someone, if they can't.

"We've had a lot of people ask questions about how it works," she added. "I'm surprised how many artists have approached us. That's good. I thought we'd have to go to them. The nice thing about all of us working here is it keeps the cost down, you don't have to pay employees."

Actually, it's Counihan's mother who has helped bring in artists. She has a connection with the arts and has helped set up and get the

store running. "Everyone loves it, we tell them everything is Michigan made and that excites them," said Counihan's mother, who declined to give her name because she is a silent partner.

The shop is open during mall hours and Counihan's excited that shoppers have noticed the store.

"I'm pleased, I'm really excited that it's picked up," she said. "This is the first time I've ever done anything like this. We're trying to do a lot of different stuff so all the items are unique. If you want something unique and different, you need to shop here."

Artists wanting more information about Sisters Art and Gifts can contact Counihan by e-mail at sistersartandgifts@yahoo.com.

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Westland council approves plans for business growth

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

A plans for a new business and expansion of two existing businesses in Westland were recently approved by the council.

The new business is an auto salvage yard which would be located on 1.85 acres at 300 S. Newburgh, south of Cherry Hill. There is an existing 2,277-square foot existing building on the property that was formerly an automotive towing and storage yard. The property was zoned correctly but council approved a special land use required for the auto salvage yard.

The special land use

was sought by Hussein Mcheik. Westland Planning Director Bruce Thompson said there had been some activity on the property such as removing old tires and scrap.

"I thank you for locating in Westland and going forward with the project," said Councilman Adam Hammons, who questioned how hazardous materials would be handled.

Any oil waste would be recycled, said Mcheik, adding a firm had been hired to collect and dispose of other hazardous materials.

"I appreciate these gentlemen coming into town. It's safe to say we haven't

approved a salvage yard in Westland in 40 years," said Mayor William Wild, adding the new business would be located between two existing salvage yards. "This property had been a bit of a mess."

Mcheik had mentioned the firm handling the hazardous materials was owned by Dan Wild, who the mayor said is his uncle.

"It's not me. There are not a lot of places where you can dispose of these materials," said Wild, who before becoming mayor worked for his family business Scrap Busters, a Wayne auto salvage business.

•Site plan approval was

granted for a 560-square foot addition to Rocky's Coney Island & Grill Family Restaurant, 1622 S. Wayne Road. The existing restaurant is 2,180-square feet and additional seating would be provided with the addition at the rear of the building.

Plans also call for installation of the Downtown Development Authority streetscape treatment along the Wayne Road side of the business. The site was once home to a Daly's Restaurant.

"These will be great improvement to this already improved site. It will update the exterior of the building," said

Thompson. "It will be a really great new fresh look."

Restaurant owner Rocky Gjoka was asked about another property he owns, the former Leright restaurant also located on Wayne Road.

"I would like to be open. Business is going better but I want to wait a year. I'm still paying taxes," Gjoka said. "I upgrade the building it every five years - it's good for the property."

There was a huge improvement to the property when Gjoka took over the property and opened his restaurant, Council President James Godbout said.

"This is nice. We appreciate it," he added.

•McDonald's Restaurant, 31355 Joy received a revised site plan approval that includes construction of a updated drive-thru system with the addition of a second drive-thru lane. There would be 15 stacking spaces for both lanes and a cash booth window addition on the east side of the building.

"We're looking to be a contributor to the community. We are adding business and paying more taxes," said Gary Winbush, McDonald's operation manager.

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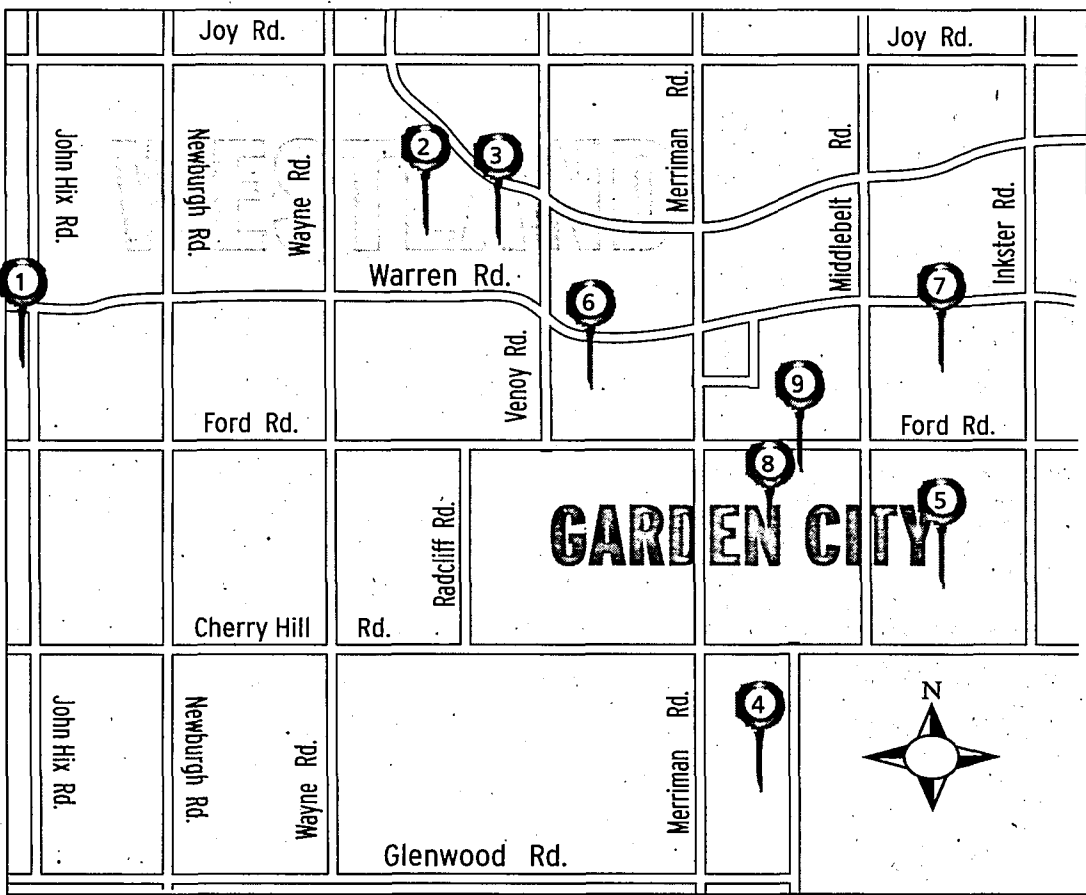
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PUBLIC SAFETY



Police arrest 3 for theft of car, gifts

Stolen vehicle

5 A resident in the 500 block of Gilman was loading Christmas presents into her idling vehicle when it was stolen Dec. 25 in Garden City.

The woman told police she ran back into the home for one more trip and, upon her return, the vehicle was gone.

Two days later, an officer on patrol spotted the vehicle at the gas pump at Cherry Hill and Middlebelt. It was occupied by three men. The officer called for assistance, blocked the vehicle in and approached the occupants. As the officer approached the men, he saw the driver draw a handgun from his waistband and place it on the floorboard.

The men were taken from the stolen vehicle and a loaded 40 caliber handgun was recovered along with a quantity of narcotics and a black neoprene face mask. The three men, two from Inkster ages 29 and 25, and one from Detroit age 37, were taken to the police department and held, pending further investigation. The gun had been reported stolen to Grosse Ile police in 2007, police said.

Stolen car

6 A red 1997 Ford Escort, reported stolen in Livonia on Nov. 7, was recovered Dec. 25 in the lot of Amantea's Restaurant, 32777 Warren Road, by a police officer on patrol. The officer reported the vehicle had heavy damage to the passenger side and was full of trash.

Break-in

7 An owner refurbishing a vacant home in the 28800 block of Rush in Garden City told police Dec. 23 that about \$1,500 in building supplies was stolen from the home overnight.

The man said he was working in the home the day before

and secured the residence when he left. When he returned the next day, he discovered the front door was forced open and several items, including tile, paint and sink, were taken.

Vehicles ransacked

8 Several vehicle owners in the area of Brandt and Sheridan in Garden City reported that their unlocked vehicles were ransacked and miscellaneous items like change and medication were stolen Dec. 24. The police were able to follow footprints in the fresh snow and it appeared that the culprit wandered around the neighborhood trying the doors on vehicles and struck when an unlocked door was found, according to Garden City Police Chief Robert Muery.

While investigating, officers recovered several pieces of jewelry that had been dropped in the area of Sheridan and Henry Ruff.

Speeding motorist

9 An apparently inattentive driver didn't realize there was a police car waiting next to him at a red light on Dec. 24. He accelerated to 55 miles per hour after the light changed on Ford at Henry Ruff.

While the officer paced the vehicle, the 23-year-old Plymouth man began tailgating another motorist and flashed his lights and honked his horn in an effort to get that driver out of the way.

The officer stopped the man and discovered he was driving on a suspended license and had a license plate that expired in September which bore a bogus renewal sticker. The man was arrested, processed and released with three violations.

Stolen truck

The used car dealership located at 32405 Ford in Garden City reported a 1994 red Ford F-250 valued at \$5,500 stolen from its lot sometime Dec. 26.

\$70,000 in plastic containers stolen from Westland company

Larceny

1 An estimated 300-350 plastic containers valued at \$70,000 were reported stolen Jan. 2 from Williams Bayer Industries, 39037 Webb Dr. An employee told police the collapsible plastic containers

WESTLAND

had been taken over the holiday weekend.

The employee told police that the containers were collapsed and stacked but likely needed to be moved with a tractor-trailer.

Break-ins

2 Police were called to a unit at the Wilderness Park Apartments, 7401 Drew Circle, Dec. 30 after a resident reported the front door had been kicked in. The res-

ident said he returned from work to find the door open. It appeared that a container of \$25 worth of assorted coins had been stolen.

Less than two hours later, a second tenant in the same building also reported the front door had been kicked in. That resident reported a digital camera, a 42-inch flat screen television and a laptop computer, valued at \$1,580, had been stolen.

Larceny

3 On Dec. 29, an employee of Coinmach, a Livonia-based business, told police that someone had broken into 19 washing machines and dryers located at Woodcrest Villa Apartments, 8300 Woodcrest Dr. The machines are leased to the apartment complex.

The employee reported that the security covers had been pried off with the entire tops being pulled off some machines and some were even turned upside down. An unknown amount of coins were reported stolen and the damage to the machines estimated at \$8,840.

Break-in

4 A resident in the 1200 block of Henry Ruff told police that he returned home in the early hours of Dec. 25 to find the front door to his home was ajar. He said he also found that the side door had been pried open and a window broken, apparently when someone tried to lift it out of the track.

Nothing was reported missing.

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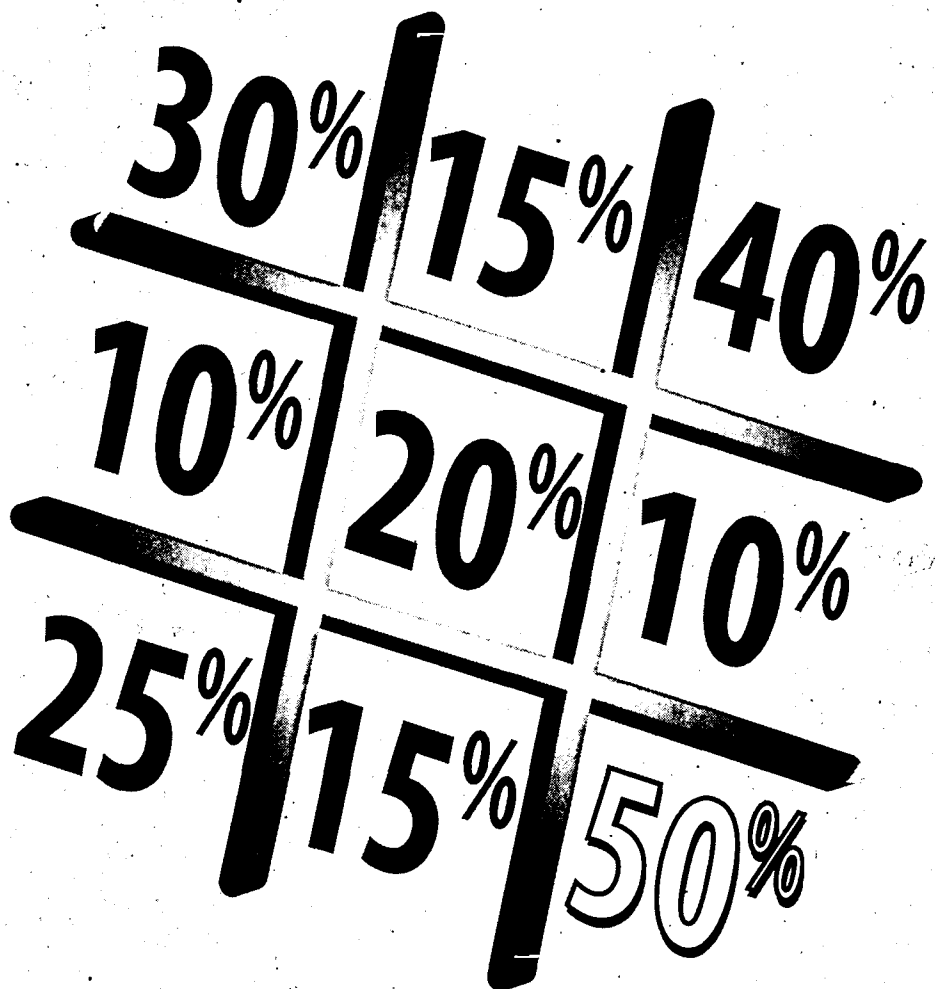
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Heart and sole

Cobbler helps clients put best foot forward

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

After Plymouth entrepreneur John Early started a mobile shoe shine company polishing and buffing shoes across southeast Michigan, he quickly realized his customers needed a cobbler shop for repairs — so he opened one in Canton.

Lawyers, bankers, accountants and other customers from Detroit to Midland have been putting their best foot forward ever since.

After retiring from his financial sector career, Early, 52, embarked last March on his idea to start The Shoe Shine Guys. He bought a shuttle bus and a sprinter van so that he, son-in-law Mike Kompoltowicz and sidekick Bob Keller could take their skills to Detroit landmarks such as Chase Tower, the Dime Building, One Kennedy Square and One Detroit Center, then roll on to office centers in places such as Troy, Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Southfield, Saginaw and Midland.

"We can shine 75 to 100 pairs of shoes in one day using both trucks," Early, company president, said.

They walk in, collect shoes their customers want shined, work their magic inside their vehicles for \$6 a pair and return the finished product.

"The vehicles are totally rigged out with shoe shine equipment," Robin Oesterwind, the company's marketing manager, said.

Customers who refuse to throw out a pair of \$300 Cole Haan shoes with worn-out soles needn't worry, either. They can send them with The Shoe Shine Guys back to Early's subsidiary, an old-fashioned cobbler shop known as The Great American Shoe Company, in Canton's Golden Gate shopping center on Lilley south of Joy. Early bought the business in August.

There, workers such as 61-year-old master cobbler Ace Shukeireh can repair a half-sole and heel, a woman's high-heel tips or fix whatever ails a shoe.

"I like to work with my hands, and I love being a cobbler," said Shukeireh, who has repaired shoes



Ace Shukeireh fits new heels to a customer's shoes.



John Early II pressing a sole to an old shoe in need of repairs.

since his early teenage years in his birthplace of Jerusalem. "When people really like their shoes and they're comfortable on their feet, they like to get them fixed and keep them as long as they can."

Given a rough economy, he said, it's cheaper for a professional to pay \$48 for a half-sole and heel repair than to spend several hundred dollars on new shoes.

As the number of cobbler shops continues to dwindle, Shukeireh said he believes the Canton shop has "the best reputation in the state of Michigan." He's a confident cobbler, with good reason. "Ace can pretty much fix anything that's leather," said John Early's son, John Early II, the shop's vice president. "I've seen Ace fix canes, hockey gear, snowboard boots. As long as it has leather on it, there's a strong possibility he can find a way to fix it."

Once he's done, The Shoe Shine Guys simply return the repaired shoes on their next outing.

Shukeireh, a Northville resident, has repaired purses, tents, car seats, boat covers and other

items. It's clear he knows his work — especially shoes. Inside the cobbler shop, he picks up a pair that looks beyond repair.

Yet, fix them he can. "The name is worn off of these, but they are Italian shoes," Shukeireh said, holding a pair of old but repairable shoes. "I can tell by the feel of the leather that they are Italian."

Early bought the cobbler shop in August, five months after starting The Shoe Shine Guys. It's clear by the nostalgic decor — shoes from the early 1900s, an old shoe stitcher and nailer — that he respects the cobbler's profession.

"It has become somewhat of a dying art," he said.

Early estimated that 80 percent of the shoes his company shines are men's, though women account for 70 percent of shoe repairs. Much of his business comes from Detroit and other cities with large office towers, but locals also bring in their shoes.

His neighbors have welcomed his business. Just ask Sharon Dillenbeck,

who owns D&M Art Studio, just two doors down. "We're really glad he moved in," she said.

For more on the company, go to www.theshoeshineguys.com or call (734) 645-2286.

dclero@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-2238

Former O&E executive, artist and musician remembered

Margaret Halava, whose remarkable careers ran the gamut from public service to business to music to painting, passed away at age 93 on Dec. 12, 2011. She was a former Farmington resident, past president of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce and a longtime corporate leader at the former parent company of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

"Margaret's range of capability was prodigious," said Philip Power, for whose newspaper publishing company she worked for 20 years.

"She brought enormous energy, terrific focus and ferocious loyalty to everything she did," said Power, founder and president of the Center for Michigan, a think tank based in Ann Arbor.

Power was, for nearly 40 years, owner of Home-Town Communications Network, Inc., a group of 62 community newspapers in Michigan and Ohio which included the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Halava's career at Home-Town Communications ended with her retirement in 1987 as vice president for human resources.

Previously, she served as secretary to two Michigan governors — G. Mennen Williams and John B. Swanson — and as district manager for Congressman Billie S. Farnum. She also held positions at the Mackinac Bridge Authority while the bridge was being built.

She followed her passion for music by enrolling in the School of Music at Michigan College, later Michigan State University. Insisting she needed a better way to support herself, her father insisted she enroll at Acme Business School, but she remained a passionate violinist all her life. She played violin at



Margaret Halava celebrated her 92nd birthday in Hawaii.

high levels, becoming Concert Master of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra.

Her interest in and growing skill at watercolor painting enriched her 17 years on Maui, Hawaii, where she moved after her retirement from business. While in Hawaii, she also taught both watercolor and violin to children.

She moved back to Michigan in 2010, where she lived in the Independent Living Area of Burcham Hills Retirement Center in Okemos. Her family held an enormous party there to celebrate her 93rd birthday, shortly before she passed away.

She is survived by her sons, Donald Ricks and Neil Halava and her daughter, Gail Halava, together with eight grandchildren, eight great grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren.

"Shortly before Margaret was born, somebody up there broke the mold," Power said. "I've never known anybody with as remarkable a range of talents as Margaret Halava. Her life enriched profoundly her family, her friends and her business associates."

Memorials honoring her life can be made to The Lansing Symphony Orchestra, 501 S. Capital Avenue, Suite 400, Lansing, MI 48933.

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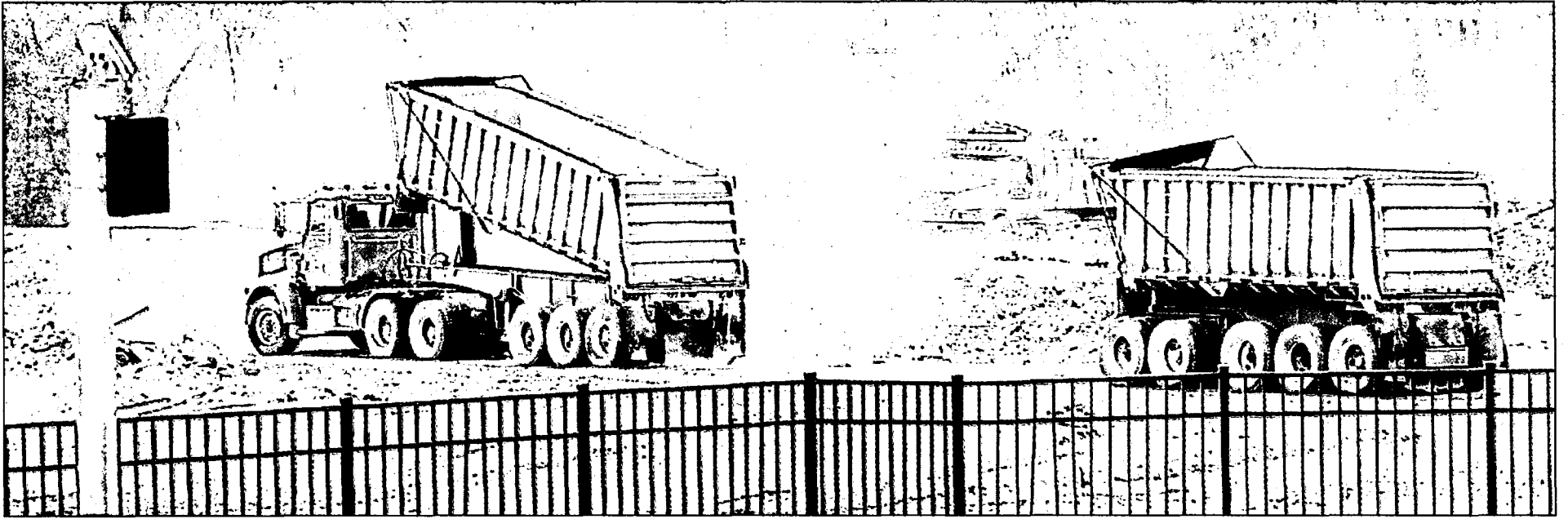
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FILE PHOTOS

Spring rains slowed the cleanup of 12 acres of Central City Park, but by May 2011, the work started in earnest as trucks hauled away contaminated soil.

Park cleanup, MJR make news in 2011

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

From the remediation of a portion of Central City Park, the grand opening of a state-of-the-art movie theater and the tearing down of the iconic Quo Vadis to parents and school officials taking on the governor and lawmakers over funding for K-12 education, 2011 was an eventful year.

The highlight came with the remediation 12 acres of Central City Park. In the spring, remediation and restoration work got under way in earnest at the park, which has been closed since 2006 due to lead contamination. Crews were slowed initially by wet weather but completed grading, placement of top soil and a geotextile membrane to isolate the contaminated soil.

The park has been hydroseeded, the walking and parking lots installed before winter weather set in. It's not yet known when the park will be reopened to the public.

In February, the Westland City Council approved its first ever



State Rep. Richard LeBlanc (from left) and State Sen. Glenn Anderson, both of Westland, Sen. Hoon-Yung Hopgood of Taylor and State Sen. Patrick Colbeck (right) of Canton were among lawmakers who participated in a n April town hall meeting on proposed school funding, hosted by the Wayne-Westland Community Schools.

diverse sign. In comparison, Garden City saw a 15.7 percent decrease in property values and a similar decline in Wayne while Canton saw a 1.9 percent decrease and 6.1 percent drop in Livonia.

The City Council adopted a balanced \$54.5 million general fund budget

provided additional funding to account for millage not allowed in determining its Proposal A per student foundation allowance.

The district faced with a \$14 million loss in revenue, but through the efforts of local lawmakers, the agreed to restore half of the Wayne-Westland language for the 2011-12 budget year.

The district got good news when it closed the books on fiscal 2010-11 and discovered that the closing of six elementary schools and the reconfiguration of its elementary program had saved the district more than the \$5 million it had anticipated. As a result, it finished 2011 with a fund equity of \$12.7 million. However, a portion of that money will be used to cover this year's revenue shortfall, shrinking it to \$8.7 million by the end of the current fiscal year.

City officials began the process of deciding what to do about physical problems with the current city hall which has a long history of extensive flooding due to it being constructed in an area with a high water table. Studies in response to a complaint filed by an employee found air quality levels acceptable. However, a subsequent engineering study of the building resulted in council moving towards a solution that will be likely result in city hall being demolished and a new building constructed on the same Ford Road location. Tentative plans call for city hall operations to

move temporarily to the Bailey Recreation Center.

In local elections, Wayne-Westland voters elected Michigan Education Association-backed candidates Andrea Clawson and Thomas Buckalew to the school board in the May school election. They replaced Jeffrey Hayton, who had been appointed to fill a vacancy created when board Secretary Martha Pitsenbarger resigned in January, and board President Skip Monit who failed to have enough signatures on his petitions to appear on the ballot.

Board Trustee William Gabriel resigned in May and, with the board unable to select a new member, the decision was made in August by the Wayne County RESA Board which selected former school board member Frederick Weaver to fill the vacancy.

In other news in 2011:

- Nearly a year apart, Nicholas Cottrell and Justin Yoshikawa were sentenced to prison for killing Westland teenager Carlee Jade Morse, who was lured from her family's apartment a late summer night in August 2010.

- Both men made statements to police describing the murder of Morse, 16, who was strangled by former boyfriend Yoshikawa in Cottrell's car. Morse's family spent months trying to locate her not knowing that she had been killed a short time after leaving her apartment.

- Both Yoshikawa and Cottrell were charged with first-degree murder and was sentenced to 25 to 50 years in prison. Yoshikawa, 20, also pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was later sentenced to 35 to 60 years in prison.

- Former Westland Youth Athletic Association president Galen Huren was charged with embezzling more than \$20,000 from the group which runs local youth sports programs. The

WYAA set the amount of missing money at \$31,000 taken from January to July 2010. Huren, who has pleaded not guilty to the charge, is scheduled for trial in February.

- Greg Angelosanto was sworn in as Westland police chief in May, replacing outgoing Chief Alan Ramsden, who retired.

- For the first time anyone could remember, Westland voters didn't have a primary election to narrow the field of candidates for City Council. Only seven candidates — four incumbents and three challengers — joined the race to fill four council seats.



The week-long heat wave in June made Westland's H2O Zone sprayground a popular destinations for both youngsters and adults.

When the Nov. 8 election was over, incumbents James Godbout, Adam Hammons, Bill Johnson and Michael Kehrer had topped newcomers Rick Ciaramiatro, Kevin Coleman and Peter Herzberg. Hammons was the top vote-getter earning a four-year term along with Godbout and Johnson. Kehrer was elected to a two-year term.

- The Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall made a visit to Westland — the second visit since 2006 — for four days in July. After the opening ceremony, the wall was on display for 24 hours each day.

- Westland Mayor William Wild's annual series of community gatherings included cake to help the city celebrate its 45th birthday. Plans are being made for a bigger celebration in five years.

- As the William P. Faust Library celebrat-

ed its 15th anniversary in November, it also introduced new library Director Sheila Collins and unveiled plans for an addition to the building. The Library Board is hoping to have the 6,000-square-foot addition completed by the end of the 2012. The additional space would be used for computer servers, additional public use computers and a conference room.

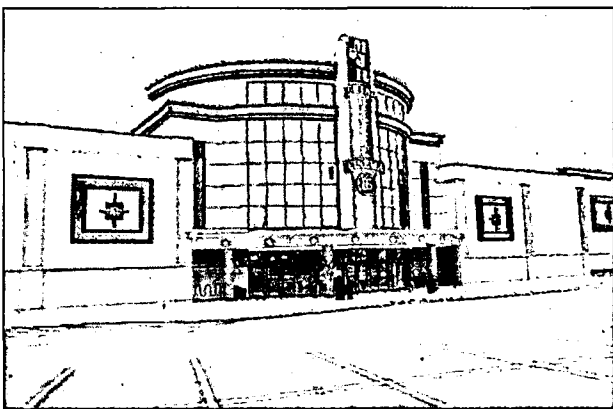
- Westland joined with Garden City, Wayne, Inkster and Dearborn Heights to study possible consolidations of district courts. A draft of the study prepared by consultants was received late in the year with the final recommendations coming in this year.

- In December, Inkster resident Antonio Brandon, 22, and Nicole Roberts, 18, of Westland were charged with abusing and killing their two-month-old son Kayden Brandon. Brandon is charged with first-degree murder in the death of his son and two counts of first-degree child abuse for injuries suffered by the infant and his surviving twin Cameron, who had broken ribs and a broken femur.

- Roberts is charged with involuntary manslaughter and two counts of second-degree child abuse.

- An autopsy showed the baby died of asphyxia and blunt force trauma to the chest.

- Both are due back



While the shuttered Quo Vadis Theater was being torn down, a mile south workers were busy putting the finishing touches on the MJR Westland Grand 16 Digital Cinema.

Brownfield Development Plan which helped facilitate plans for the MJR Westland Grand 16 Digital Cinema. The project began with the demolition of the long-closed former Showcase Cinema building on Wayne Road south of Warren Road. The new theater complex opened on scheduled in early November and is expected to draw more than 800,000 patrons annually.

And as work began on the MJR theater began construction, a second former local movie house was being demolished. The Quo Vadis Theater, located on Wayne Road north of Warren Road, had been closed since 2002. While there had been unsuccessful efforts to preserve the building, constructed in 1966 with a design by Minoru Yamasaki, best known for designing the North and South Towers of the World Trade Center, owner National Amusements decided to demolish the building in hopes of better marketing the site.

Residential property values continued to decline in Westland as in other communities. City officials saw the smaller drop — 9 percent in 2011 down from a 16 percent drop in 2010 — as a posi-

that didn't have layoffs or an increase in millage rates despite 3 percent less revenues. There was a reorganization of the Building Department that eliminated full-time positions but allowed workers to bump in to other vacant jobs.

State lawmakers found themselves bombarded with letters and e-mails and made appearances at town hall meetings, hosted by the Wayne-Westland Community Schools and the Livonia Public Schools after Gov. Rick Snyder presented his proposed education budget. The proposal was to cut per pupil funding by \$300 and in the case of Wayne-Westland eliminate language that pro-



Robert Wagner comforts wife Tieng after they found the name of Ed Bova on the Moving Wall during its stop in Westland in July.

Staff Writer Sue Mason contributed to this story.

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Diaper bank hits million mark

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

Reaching a charitable milestone, the once-fledgling Detroit Area Diaper Bank has distributed its one-millionth diaper to nonprofit agencies across southeast Michigan that help needy families who can't afford a necessity forgotten by government safety-net programs.

Started in April 2009 by Canton volunteer Marybeth Levine, a mother of three, the DADB has collected and distributed 1,079,139 diapers to nonprofit organizations in Canton, Plymouth, Westland, Livonia, Redford and other communities after surpassing the one-million mark in December.

Levine can hardly believe it herself.

"When we made our very first donation of just over 3,000 diapers to a family services agency on April 27, 2009, the concept of distributing one million diapers seemed light years away," she said. "But instead of light years, it feels like we got

here in a flash."

Levine has lauded area residents, local companies, the national Huggies corporation and places such as the Canton Public Library for spearheading diaper drives and donations that allow the DADB to help dozens of social service agencies.

"It feels amazing to know we've been able to help so many of our neighbors in need already, but we know that the need is constant and ongoing and still larger than our reach," she said. "So our work continues."

Anyone seeking information about the diaper bank — or who wants to learn ways to help — may go to www.detroitareadiaperbank.org.

Meanwhile, the DADB has received its latest grant of \$5,000 from Walmart as the retail giant in December rolled out its 12 Days of Giving campaign across the nation, donating \$125,000 to charities.

"Any time we receive a grant — of any size — we're grateful, both for the resources it helps us bring in to distribute to

our partner agencies, as well as validation that we're doing important work in which others see value," Levine said. "But to receive this size grant (of \$5,000) at this time is particularly welcome because it means we will start the new year with resources to lean on during the winter months, when donations tend to slow down."

Walmart's grant will buy 60,000 child-size diapers, she said.

"We're very grateful to Walmart for seeing the value in our mission and supporting our community diaper bank in metro Detroit," Levine said.

Walmart's grant came less than a month after Huggies rolled into Canton with an 18-wheeler hauling 250,000 diapers, dropping them off at M.S.A. Delivery Service. M.S.A. helps Levine, as does other companies such as Extra Storage Space in Canton.

Volunteers from organizations such as Starfish Family Services, area Salvation Army centers and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul have benefit-



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Marybeth Levine runs the diaper bank from a donated storage room at Extra Storage Space in Canton.

ed from the DADB's diaper drives. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul distributes diapers through Sts. Simon & Jude Church

in Westland.

"Honestly, where would we get these (diapers)?" church volunteer Joan Carr asked. "Marybeth

and the diaper bank have been a godsend for us.

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First Step a lifeline for domestic violence, sexual assault victims

By Julie Brown
Observer Staff Writer

First Step has been helping victims of domestic violence and sexual assault since the late 1970s. In past years, staff and volunteers kept the shelter location under wraps, but that has changed.

New technology makes it easier to locate people, said associate director Theresa Bizoe, so when the new Wayne shelter opened this year a decision was made to put a

sign out. There's extra security and a good relationship with Wayne police.

"We're a shelter, but we're so much more," said Bizoe, a 1980 Westland John Glenn High graduate. First Step serves some 7,000 people a year, many of whom receive counseling. "We feel like we're a part of the safety net of the community."

The agency started in the late 1970s when a woman wished to get out of an abusive situation

and had difficulty finding help. "She ended up getting out of the situation," and a task force was formed, Bizoe said.

First Step serves people of both genders and all ages in 35 communities covering out-Wayne County. There's a Plymouth office for counseling and administration, the Wayne office with the safe house, as well as a location at St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church in Redford.

First Step has staff at some 10 area police

departments, helping with protection orders. There's also apartment housing for transitional clients who live there up to two years.

Most of those helped are children. A program started in 2008 is the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program to help those victims.

"It's a very critical program," Bizoe said. "It's the single most under-reported crime." Most victims are girls and women ages 12-22.

Bizoe lost a cousin and

a friend to domestic violence so her interest is both personal and professional. "Domestic violence can be very lethal," she said. There's additional information on the website www.first-step-mi.org or by calling the 24-hour help line at (734) 722-6800. The toll-free help line is (888) 453-5900. Police should be contacted at 9-1-1 in an emergency.

"We can teach these kids that violence is not the answer," said Bizoe, noting staff and volun-

teers visit elementary and secondary schools. "We're working to break the cycle."

First Step gets some state and federal money, although its status is uncertain these days. There's also United Way funding and donations.

"All of that adds up," Bizoe said. "A lot of churches will do mission outreach projects for us." The Zonta Club of Farmington-Novis does a regular fundraiser with Parisian at Laurel Park Place mall in Livonia.

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Four Seasons receives 2011 Award of Excellence



Representatives of Great Lakes Caring Hospice present the Four Seasons staff with its 2011 Award of Excellence.

Four Seasons Nursing Center, a Westland health facility, recently received the 2011 Great Lakes Caring annual Award of Excellence.

The facility was one of 76 skilled and assisted living facilities, doctors, and hospitals selected as recipients from more than 2,000 candidates in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana for the annual award which recognizes their collaborative efforts to help determine in a timely manner home health- and hospice-appropriate patients in order to provide meaningful and helpful quality care.

"It's important to recognize these partners who committed to their resi-

dents' and their patients' best interests," said Great Lakes Caring Chief Executive Officer William Deary. "This is the fourth year Great Lakes Caring has recognized outstanding partners for their care."

These honorees were chosen based on three specific criteria:

- Believing in the importance of good communications amongst the Great Lakes Caring and partner staffs.

- Keeping in mind the needs of residents/patients and the importance of making timely referrals.

- Supporting and understanding of the importance of collaborative care.

Other Wayne County facilities receiving the honor were Marycrest Manor in Livonia, Oakwood Healthcare System in Dearborn, Oakwood Home Medical in Allen Park and Wayne Health and Rehab in Wayne.

Located at 8365 Newburgh, south of Joy Road in Westland, Four Seasons Nursing Center offers skilled rehabilitation and nursing services, including 24-hour skilled care, physical, occupational, speech therapies, hospice services and respite care' psychosocial, nutritional, recreational services, and activities.

For more information, call Four Seasons at (734) 416-2000.

BUSINESS NEWSMAKERS

Snow Care for troops

Looking for a way to help out in the community this winter? Join Project EverGreen's SnowCare for Troops, a non-profit program entering its second year that matches volunteers with military families to provide free snow removal services. SnowCare for Troops is underwritten by THE BOSS Snowplow.

Following a successful launch last year, Project EverGreen hopes to double participation in SnowCare for Troops during the 2011-12 snow season. Nearly 1,000 volunteers have already joined to clear snow from driveways and sidewalks for military families with a spouse or family member serving in the armed forces.

"SnowCare for Troops got off to a roaring start and we'd like to thank BOSS Snowplow for their generous funding support," said Project EverGreen Executive Director Cindy Code. "Growing demand from local military families means many more volunteers are needed. When a loved one is serving away from home, having the added burden of snow removal lifted from the shoulders of the one left behind is a priceless gift."

It's easy to support the SnowCare for Troops program by:

- Offering free snow removal services throughout the winter to one or two families in your community.
- Loaning snow removal equipment to volunteers or groups.
- Donating money, trans-

portation or gas cards to offset snow removal and maintenance costs.

- Referring friends and/or military families to sign up for the program. SnowCare for Troops is open to anyone with a plow or other snow removal equipment who wants to lend a neighborly hand.

Project EverGreen's SnowCare for Troops and its sister program GreenCare for Troops are serving thousands of military families through a national network of lawn care, landscape and snow care professionals and volunteers dedicating thousands of service hours to military families.

To learn more about how to support SnowCare for Troops, visit www.projectevergreen.com/scft or www.bosspow.com/snowcarefortroops.

Being polite: the right thing to do

By Clarity Patton Newhouse
Guest Columnist

Pop survey: Have you ever been hung up on?

I can't imagine hanging up on anyone, let alone at work! Yet apparently this isn't uncommon. Yesterday I was talking with one of the nicest people I know, whose coworker had just done this to her. Are you kidding me?

Courtesy counts. Being polite is not only the right thing to do,

it's the smart thing to do. Unfortunately some business people seem oblivious to the fact that when they treat employees, colleagues or customers rudely they're hurting themselves by losing the respect and loyalty of the very people who could help them succeed.

On the other side of the equation, being courteous and showing restraint during frustrating situations are small acts that play a big role in earning respect and loyalty in the first place. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "Courtesy is as much a mark of a gentleman (or woman) as courage."

Whether being hung up on or feeling like hanging up, let's take the

high road - and have a sunny day!

P.S. "A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love." Saint Basil

Clarity Patton Newhouse is co-president of Sunny Media Group Inc., located at 39209 Six Mile, Suite 165, Livonia. She writes "A Sunny Note" to brighten the day with encouraging insights for business and life. "A Sunny Note" also is published online at ASunnyNote.com for readers across America and beyond. To reach her call (734) 855-4728 or find her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sunnynotes.



Clarity Patton Newhouse

Importance of teams in successful organizations

This is the conclusion of a three-part series on teams. Part I was featured Dec. 22. Part II was published Dec. 29.

By Martina Bogdanoska
Guest Columnist

No team can be without a leader. The basic role of a team leader is to direct the group to achieve a common goal. Its structure can be understood as the sum of the following activities:

1. Setting team goals
2. Certification of personal expectations within the team
3. Using the skills and qualities in the most efficient way possible
4. Giving a personal example by their own behavior
5. Talking about problems as they occur
6. Regularly monitoring the work of the individual and the group and giving feedback
7. Providing healthy relationships between the team and other teams in the organization.
8. Ensuring the successful execution of the task.

There are several ways in which the leader can move the team. They are not difficult and can be easily achieved. To inject enthusiasm into the work of the team, you first need to solve those problems that can be quickly solved. The leader should not impose targets that are easily met. Identify the problems and talk about them with the team.

- To generate a sense of urgency, team members need to believe that

they have before them an immediate task for which they are responsible. But it should be sufficiently flexible to allow changes that will shape their goals and approaches.

- Identify clear rules of behavior. Each team develops rules of behavior that help the team achieve its set goals. Some of them could be the following: no interruption of telephone calls, the existence of constructive confrontation, mutual respect in communication.

- Continuously inform the team leader. New information causes the team to redefine its understanding of goals and to help clarify goals.

- Enable joint development. The team should spend a lot of time together, especially at the beginning of its formation. Creative perspectives of team members as well as personal connection require mutual interaction.

The team leader should possess certain skills and values:

- To coordinate members — not to give commands
- To assist in determining, analyzing and solving problems
- To encourage cooperation
- To motivate team members
- To respect
- To believe
- To put the team first

The team needs to have four types of people to support a successful team: people who contribute, people who cooperate, people who are good at what they do and people who believe in the cause.

Perhaps the most important element for effective teams is the cli-

mate or atmosphere in which they operate and that they themselves have created. Successful teams do not create artificial tension. There is a commitment to the task and purpose and no signs of boredom, disinterest or dissatisfaction. The atmosphere of the team is relaxed. There is a healthy competition among members and they have high expectations. This leads to openness and honesty in discussion and the adoption of decisions even if they are not correlated with other attitudes and opinions.

There are several skills that team members should possess to enable successful teamwork:

- Listen: It is important to hear the ideas of others. When people are allowed to freely express their ideas, their initial ideas will produce other ideas.
- Inquiry: It is important to ask questions.
- Respect: It is important to support others' ideas and respect each other.
- Helping: The most important part of teamwork is that members help each other.
- Share: Team members must work together.
- Participation: All team members are encouraged to participate in the team.

Teamwork is a feature with an established and affirmed system of communication. Teams should be created if they are not already established.

Martina Bogdanoska is pursuing her doctoral degree in the field of human resource management within health care. She is an inspirational academic interested in transforming health care through innovative thinking. She holds a doctoral degree in dentistry and a master's degree in health management.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

LENDING WORKSHOP

Time/Date: 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 11
Location: Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty, north of Six Mile, Livonia

Details: Become an investor without spending any money of your own at a Mother/Daughter Micro-Lending Workshop 2012, hosted by Schoolcraft College and the Zonta Club of NW Wayne County. Each participating mother/daughter team will choose a small business in a developing country to support with a small loan, and will learn about strategies to make investment decisions, cultures around the globe, and the economic impacts of micro-lending. Discover the ways that small loans make a big difference to entrepreneurs all over the world. Explore their unique businesses, and learn how Zonta International clubs support them.

Contact: Register online today at zontanorthwestwayne.eventbrite.com.

INFANT CARE

Time/Date: 6:30-9:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12

Location: Classrooms 1 and 2 at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Five Mile and Levan, Livonia

Details: St. Mary Mercy Hospital is offering a "Getting to Know Your Newborn and Caring for the Sick Infant Care Class. Gain knowledge about caring for your newborn. This class taught by a registered nurse, will teach new parents the basic characteristics and needs of a newborn to include diapering, bathing, feeding, growth and development patterns. In addition to baby basics the class will also include how to recognize when a baby is sick. Car seat and home safety will also be covered. This class is open to anyone who cares for an in-

fant. We encourage spouses or support person to attend this class at no additional cost. The fee is \$55.

Contact: To register, call St. Mary Mercy Hospital's Marian Women's Center at (734) 655-1162, or register online at stmarymercy.org and click on "classes and events."

Widowed Friends

Time/Date: 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 22

Location: St. Kenneth Church, 14951 N. Haggerty Road, Plymouth

Details: Widowed Friends, a peer group in the Archdiocese of Detroit, invites the widowed to celebrate Mass together at St. Kenneth Church in Plymouth. It will be followed by refreshments, social time and information about other widowed activities in a safe and friendly setting. Check-in starts at 2 p.m., Mass is at 2:30 p.m.

Contact: For more information call Pat at (734) 895-6246.

ZUMBA FITNESS

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Thursdays, beginning Jan. 5

Location: Merriman Road Baptist Church, 2055 Merriman, Garden City

Details: Zumba Fitness classes at Merriman Road Baptist Church will feature rhythms set to high-energy Latin, international, and Christian music. Before you know it, you will be feeling fit and your energy level will be soaring. It's easy to do, and suitable for all exercise levels. Registration is 7:30 p.m., class begins at 8 p.m. and is approximately one hour long. Adults 18 years or older only. Wear comfortable workout wear - a sweat towel and a bottle of drinking water are recommended, too. A donation will be taken at the door for every class to cover the cost of the certified Zumba instructor's services. Visit www.MRBC.us and click on Women's Ministries, 'Girlfriends of Grace', and 'Zumba Fitness for Women' or e-mail us at info@mrbc.us

Contact: For more information, call (734) 421-0472.

GRIEF RECOVERY

Time/Date: 1:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8

Location: Our Lady of Loretto Church, 17116 Olympia

in the Six Mile and Beech Daly area of Redford

Details: Widowed Friends, a peer group in the Archdiocese of Detroit, invites widowed men and women to attend a six-week Grief Support Program, "Living with the Loss of a Spouse." The program will cover such things as loneliness and other difficulties related to the grief process. The program will be facilitated by trained "peer" members. The cost is \$20. Safe social activities are also explored near the end of the sessions.

Contact: Call Joan at (248) 478-1084 to register.

DIET PRESENTATION

Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 11

Location: Auditorium of St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Five Mile and Levan, Livonia

Details: Judy Swancutt, certified diabetes educator at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, will be the guest speaker for a presentation called "Why Diets Don't Work." Dieting in America is big business and yet people continue to gain weight. Find out what diets are popular, the focus of these diets, and what can realistically be done to encourage healthy weight management. This is a Diabetes Support Group presentation and is open to anyone with diabetes and their support family. There is no charge, and pre-registration is not required.

Contact: For more information call Community Outreach at (734) 655-8955 or (800)494-1650 (out of area only) for more information, or visit stmarymercy.org and click on "classes and events."

FOR SENIORS

FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Location: 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland

Details: The Senior Resources Department (Friendship Center) offers a variety of programs for older adults.

Contact: (734) 722-7632, www.ci.westland.mi.us

DYER CENTER

Location: 36745 Marquette, between Wayne Road and Marquette, Westland

Details: Offers activities Monday-Friday at the center.

Contact: (734) 419-2020

SENIOR FITNESS

Location: Maplewood Senior Center, Maplewood west of Merriman, Garden City

Details: The Senior Fitness Room is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. Sunday. Annual membership is \$50 per year or \$1 for a daily pass. Aerobic classes are held 8:45-9:45 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

Contact: (734) 793-1870

FIRST STEP

Details: First Step, which has been active in the effort to end domestic violence and sexual assault in western Wayne County and Downriver communities for more than 20 years, is looking for volunteers. Interested people must be at least 18, willing and able to travel to the Downriver area and complete a 55-hour training program.

Contact: (734) 416-1111, Ext. 223

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Time/Date: 7 p.m. first Monday of the month

Location: Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main, Plymouth

Details: For residents of southern and western Wayne County who are caring for family members and/or friends age 60 and older, or who are over age 60 themselves. Offered by Adult Well-Being Services through The Senior Alliance. Funded by The Senior Alliance and United Way.

Contact: Helen Streett at 74 629-5004. Call to confirm time and date, if coming for the first time.

CAREGIVERS - SPOUSES

Time/Date: 1 p.m. second Tuesday of the month

Location: Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main, Plymouth

Details: For residents of southern and western Wayne County who are caring for a spouse age 60 and older, or who are over age 60 themselves. Offered by Adult Well-Being Services through The Senior Alliance. Funded by The Senior Alliance and United Way.

Contact: Helen Streett at 74 629-5004. Call to confirm time and date, if coming for the first time.

CAREGIVERS - WESTLAND

Time/Date: 7 p.m. the third Thursday of the month

Location: American House III, 35700 Hunter, Westland

Details: For residents of southern and western Wayne County who are caring for family members and/or friends age 60 and older, or who are over age 60 themselves. Offered by Adult Well-Being Services through The Senior Alliance. Funded by The Senior Alliance and United Way.

Contact: Helen Streett at 74 629-5004. Call to confirm time and date, if coming for the first time.

VNA HOSPICE

Details: Visiting Nurse Association of Southeast Michigan's (VNA) hospice program needs volunteers to comfort and support patients at the end of life. Volunteers can provide companionship, write a memoir, provide respite for family or work as office support. A free 18-hour training program is provided at the VNA headquarters, 25900 Greenfield Road, Suite 600. Registration is required.

Contact: (248) 967-8361, www.vna.org

SEASONS HOSPICE

Details: Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care is looking for volunteers to provide companionship to patients dealing with life limiting illness. No special skills, other than objectivity and compassion, are needed. Training provided. Volunteers are matched with patients in their own community.

Contact: (800) 370-8592

LITERACY COUNCIL

Details: The Community Literacy Council (CLC) is looking for volunteer tutors in Western Wayne County to help adults improve their reading, writing and communication skills. The CLC will provide training to interested volunteers. Previous experience or a bachelor's degree is not required. The council will provide free training and materials, and then match you with an adult student in your area.

Contact: (734) 416-4906

HEARTLAND HOSPICE

Details: Heartland Hospice is looking for caring and dedicated people with an interest in serving terminally

ill patients and their families in Washtenaw, western Wayne, Monroe and Livingston counties. Volunteers provide a variety of services including companionship, light housekeeping, errand running, grief support and clerical services.

Contact: (888) 973-1145

SCHIZOPHRENICS ANONYMOUS

Time/Date: 4:30-5:30 p.m. every third Thursday of the month

Location: Room 124 of Hegira Programs Inc. from in at 8623 N. Wayne Road, Westland

Details: Schizophrenics Anonymous meetings are open to those with this mental illness or related conditions. The remaining days the group will meet are Aug. 18, Sept. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17 and Dec. 15.

SUPPORT GROUP

Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month

Location: American House III, 35700 Hunter, Westland

Details: Adult Well-Being Services through The Senior Alliance is sponsoring a support group that provides support and guidance for families caring for an older person.

Contact: Chris Goldberg at (734) 629-5004. Call to confirm meeting, if coming for the first time.

FOR YOUR HEALTH

W-W NAMI

Time/Date: 7 p.m. the first and third Thursday of the month

Location: St. Johns Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road, Westland

Details: The Wayne-Westland affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) provides support and information for individuals and families dealing with mental illness.

SAFE PLACE

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Thursdays

Location: Fellowship Hall at Merriman Road Baptist Church, 2055 Merriman, Garden City.

Details: A SAFE PLACE is based on the Alcoholics for Christ program.

Contact: Russ Weathers at (734) 422-1995.



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NOTICE OF PROPOSED TOILET ROOM UPGRADE WORK

THE WAYNE HOUSING COMMISSION IS SOLICITING SEALED BIDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MULTIPLE TOILET ROOM UPGRADES IN THE CITY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN. DETAILED INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE COMMISSION'S ENGINEER/ARCHITECTS: SCALES AND ASSOCIATES, INC. AT THE FOLLOWING FTP WEB SITE:

To obtain an electronic copy of the construction documents send an email containing the words Wayne Housing Commission Toilet Room Upgrade to:
cscales@scalesassoc.com
An email containing a link to download the plans will be immediately returned.

Engineers/Architects Address:
Scales and Associates, Inc.
Suite 1100 Grand Park Centre
28 West Adams Street,
Detroit, MI 48226-1617
Phone: 313.962.8830
Fax: 313.962.3776

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OUR VIEWS

A new year

Let 2012 be better for all

To know where we are going, we need to know where we have been. In looking back to Jan. 1, 2011, who would have thought we'd face yet another year of financial crisis, that a newly elected governor would link words like transparency, dashboard and best practices to money and that reinventing the state and creating a business-friendly tax structure would leave cities and school districts facing their biggest challenge yet?

Last year was the pivotal point in a decade of decline in Michigan, a point when we were all put on notice that what was will no longer be. President John F. Kennedy's message more than 50 years ago is just as relevant today as it was then. We can no longer ask what our government can do for us, but what we can do for it.

New Year's Day is when many people decide on a resolution, a goal they hope to accomplish in the coming year. The success rate is dismal at best. Of the 45 percent of Americans who usually make New Year's resolutions, only 8 percent are successful.

According to Stephen Shapiro, one of the foremost authorities on innovation culture, collaboration and open innovation, the less happy we are, the more likely we are to set New Year's resolutions. That's especially true for those who set money-related resolutions: 41 percent are not happy, 34 percent are moderately happy, and 25 percent are happy.

And since there is no correlation between happiness and resolution setting/success, Shapiro recommends that instead of looking forward to what you want, we should spend our time reflecting on what we have, which is especially important during these troubling economic times.

Shapiro has a point. We should reflect on what we have. In Michigan in 2011, a lot was asked of all of us. We made sacrifices to help move the state forward and did whatever we could to help those who didn't have any more to give.

And as dismal as it is here in Michigan, we still have a lot. It may not seem like it, but we do. We still have police officers patrolling our streets and firefighters to respond to every emergency. There may not be as many as in the past, but they are still there to keep us safe.

We still have good schools and good teachers to educate our children. There may be less money, a curriculum may be more rigorous and a few more children in a classroom in the past, but they are learning and being prepared for life in the 21st century.

Our wealth can be measured in more than dollars. We are a caring, generous group of people and that caring spirit of residents is apparent in all we do for those who are less fortunate. We need only look to this past Christmas to see how much was done by volunteers to make it merry for youngsters and adults alike.

As we start the New Year, we do have a hope that it will get better for all of us, even if it is only a small improvement. We hope that this is the year that instead of hearing about job losses, we see the unemployed getting jobs. We also hope for an end to home foreclosures and that the shine will come back to the tarnished dream of home ownership.

And what we hope for most in this coming year is a return to sensibility and civility in government. We can't hope to make progress toward a better life with acrimony and self-serving posturing. Government shouldn't be about which party is in control and how they want to subjugate the minority, but about we the people.

And we the people also must do our share. If we do, 2012 may be a better year.

We can only hope.

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Sue Mason,
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Susan Rosiek,
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COMMUNITY VOICE

What memory stands out for you in 2011?

We asked this question at Westland Shopping Center in Westland.



"Finding out I was going to have two grandsons being born 10 weeks apart. I have one and I'm waiting or the second."
Karen McCloud
Westland



"I think it would be the tornadoes in Mississippi and Alabama."
Margaret Adams
Romulus



"My grandson coming home. He's been up in Frankenmuth for a year."
Bill Adams
Romulus



"I don't think I have an answer. I don't know."
Tracy M. Canton

LETTERS

Thanks for poem

Greetings from San Antonio, Texas. It made my Christmas to read the beautiful inspirational poem from my classmate of Garden City, Michigan!

I pray 2012 holds many blessings for all of Michigan. This meant a lot to be so far from home, yet having home with me on this Christmas day.

Keep up the good work all of you do!

Nancy Kaye

Time to regulate

Marijuana is called a controlled substance. In reality marijuana prohibition means no control, whatsoever.

Prohibiting a substance doesn't make that substance go away. It just pushes production and distribution underground, outside of legitimate oversight. Prohibition means no control over where marijuana is produced, how it is distributed or who it is distributed to.

Isn't it time to regulate and tax marijuana? So that we can finally control marijuana.

Greg Francisco
Paw Paw

Sam Logan will be missed

Detroit, Michigan and America lost a man that stood tall with the passing of Sam Logan, the publisher of Michigan's largest African American weekly newspaper. Sam was a fierce fighter for what is good and right.

His vision, spirit and integrity transcended politics, gender or race.

He was an accomplished journalist and business leader who nurtured the young and gave hell to politicians and business leaders who deserved it.

His lifelong commitment to serving Detroit and Detroiters will remain an inspiration for many generations to come. He was a trailblazer not only in journalism and business but also in human decency and kindness. He was a man of grace with a keen wit and a readiness to laugh and embrace life.

I am deeply saddened by his passing. Mr. Logan asked me to write for the *Michigan Chronicle* and it is an honor to be associated with the flagship newspaper he lead.

I extend my sympathies to our community, his colleagues at the *Chronicle* and to his family during this time of sorrow.

Mr. Logan, you will be missed.

Tom Watkins

former state superintendent of schools and regular contributor to *The Michigan Chronicle*

Right to repair

The Engine Repower Council strongly supports the Motor Vehicle Owners' Right To Repair Act (HR 1449) to foster a

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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competitive automotive repair industry where car owners, not car companies, decide who repowers or repairs their vehicles.

The Right To Repair Act simply ensures that vehicle owners and their trusted independent repair shops have access to all the information necessary to accurately repair, reprogram today's modern vehicles. Without complete access to critical safety and repair information, motorists will be forced back to the dealer for vehicle service, which may not be convenient or easily accessible to the car owner. Right To Repair would not require car manufacturers to disclose their trade secrets and would not affect the dealer's warranty agreement.

Engine repowering by installing a rebuilt/remanufactured engine is an excellent option for many motorists when their original engine cannot be repaired. A rebuilt/remanufactured engine is as good as or better than the original, extending the life of a vehicle and offering engine performance, cost savings and environmental benefits. Passage of the Right To Repair Act is critical to ensure this option continues to be available to all car owners.

We encourage all vehicle owners to visit www.right-torepair.org to send a letter to each of their congressional representatives urging them to support the Right to Repair Act. For more information on rebuilt/remanufactured engines and those qualified to provide and install them, visit the Engine Repower Council's website at www.enginepower.org.

Ken Carter

chairman
Engine Repower Council

Bogus campaign

I am writing this letter to your newspaper to relay a story about Thaddeus McCotter's bogus presidential campaign.

Although I am not a resident

of Michigan, I became familiar with Thad McCotter listening to *The John Batchelor Show* on podcasts. McCotter, earlier this year, was a frequent guest of John Batchelor on his nightly WABC New York radio show. I found McCotter quite enlightening, intelligent and have a similar political persuasion to my own. Being a very conservative Republican, I am drawn to hear what a noted congressman from the 11th Congressional District of Michigan had to say. McCotter did good interviews with the host and his ideas were superb.

It was with this in mind, that when I heard that Thad McCotter was running for President of the United States, I was so moved to donate a small amount of money to his presidential bid. I am 71 years young, retired and drawing on my Social Security. Only occasionally do I contribute to politicians. I included a letter with my donation to McCotter with some thoughts and suggestions. I awaited a thank you or acknowledgment for months, but it never came. My bank statement arrived though, with a debit on my account for the money I sent to McCotter for President.

I never saw McCotter once on the campaign trail and upon inquiry, learned that he pulled out. How could he do that so soon? I sent him the check Aug. 1 with no reply.

Several weeks ago, I decided that since my money was for his presidential endeavor and he gave up the pursuit, McCotter for President campaign should return my money (and anyone else who gave to his drive). I called his campaign office but that was the wrong office. I was given another telephone number to call from someone who answered. No human on the other end, though, just a recorded voice mail. I left my message saying I wanted my money back and left my e-mail, home address and phone number. I never heard from anyone after that call.

So, persistent as I am, I made another call 10 days or so ago. Again, no human voice and I left the same message. I said "it is unprincipled for a politician not to acknowledge a contribution." Furthermore, please send my money back so that I may contribute to a REAL Republican candidate for President.

I believe all Americans should hold their politicians to the highest of standards ... arrogance is a vice that no one should adhere. My communication with Thaddeus McCotter and this letter is all about principle, not "the \$5."

In spite of this reprimand, do re-elect Thaddeus McCotter to Congress.

Jack Abel
Washington state

Christmas gifts, new TV go to homeless shelter

'Littlest Angel' video features local talent

Christmas came a little early this year for the deserving residents of the Wayne County Family Shelter on Michigan Avenue in Westland.

On Wednesday, Dec. 21, Westland Mayor William Wild and members of his administrative team loaded up four vehicles with gifts and delivered them to the center.

Each resident of the center received a gift — toys, games and books for children and sets of brand-new sheets for the adults.

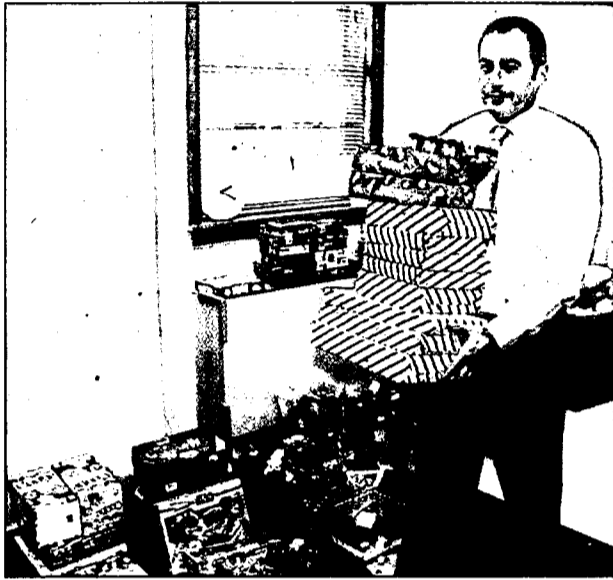
In addition, the mayor and his staff provided gifts to the center itself. A large flat-screen television was donated by the administrative staff — the final donation in a two-year soon-to-be-completed renovation project that saw the remodeling of all family rooms and public spaces.

"I don't think there is anything more fun than getting to play Santa Claus to those who can most use a helping hand and especially during the holidays," said Wild. "My administration and I do our best to support various charitable causes and certainly during these sustained difficult economic times, we recognize our personal good fortune and are grateful we are able to help these Westland residents in this small way."

The Wayne County Family Center, operated by Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, is the only homeless shelter in southeast Michigan that enables families to stay together. Up to 100 people can be housed in the 24 family rooms.



Westland administrative staff show some of the gifts they recently donated to the Wayne County Family Center.



Westland Mayor William Wild carries some of the gifts that he and his staff donated to the Wayne County Family Center for Christmas.

transportation as well as counseling and case management service to help parents get back on their feet and move to independent housing. Families can stay at the center for up to two years.

Among the services the center offers are case management, employment and training and housing assistance. Unique to this facility is a day care center.

Bath towels, washcloths, pillows, twin size sheets, diapers and laundry detergent are just a few examples of items that are needed throughout the year. To make a donation, volunteer your time or obtain a complete list of items needed, call the center at (734) 721-0590.

With a little movie magic, a well-known children's story is being retold — with the help of Michigan talent.

The Littlest Angel, produced in Michigan by Anchor Bay Studios and directed by Dave Kim, was recently released. The animated film features multi-talented Michiganders Ed Kelly, playing a variety of characters including the dog Halo and Mr. Creepedeep, and Clarity Patton Newhouse, president of Livonia-based Sunny Media Group, playing Angel Eve.

Based on the children's book by Charles Tazewell, *The Littlest Angel* tells the story of a young boy who becomes the littlest angel in heaven. Home sick and lonely, he travels back to earth with a friendly pup Halo to retrieve a most selfless and precious gift for the Baby Jesus.

What follows is a story of love, laughter and courage based on one of literature's most popular children's stories.

"It was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my 25 year voice acting career," said Kelly. "I was very pleased to see what a great movie the filmmakers created with the animation, music and voices all working together to create a delightful film for children of all ages."

Working with the filmmakers Dave Kim, Lance Thompson and Rex PIANO was a wonderful experience," said Clarity Newhouse. "Sunny Media Group was thrilled to be involved in the movie and we appreciate the business they brought to Michigan. I'm also a huge Ed Kelly fan and love seeing all the characters come to life in the movie."

The Littlest Angel is available on DVD online at www.amazon.com/Littlest-Angel-Ron-Perلمان/dp/B005J4N5G8 and at in major retailers. More information about Sunny Media Group is available at www.SunnyMediaGroup.com and about Ed Kelly at www.EdKelly.tv.



Ed Kelly plays a variety of characters, including the dog Halo and Mr. Creepedeep, in the Anchor Bay Studios' produced 'The Littlest Angel.'



Clarity Patton Newhouse, president of Livonia-based Sunny Media Group, plays Angel Eve in 'The Littlest Angel.'

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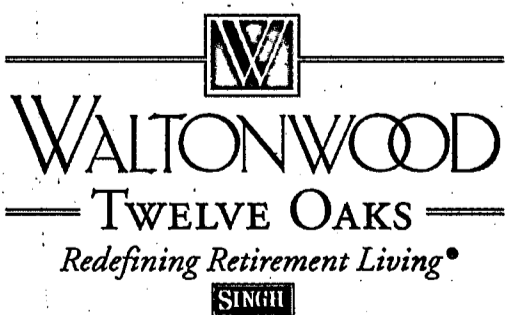
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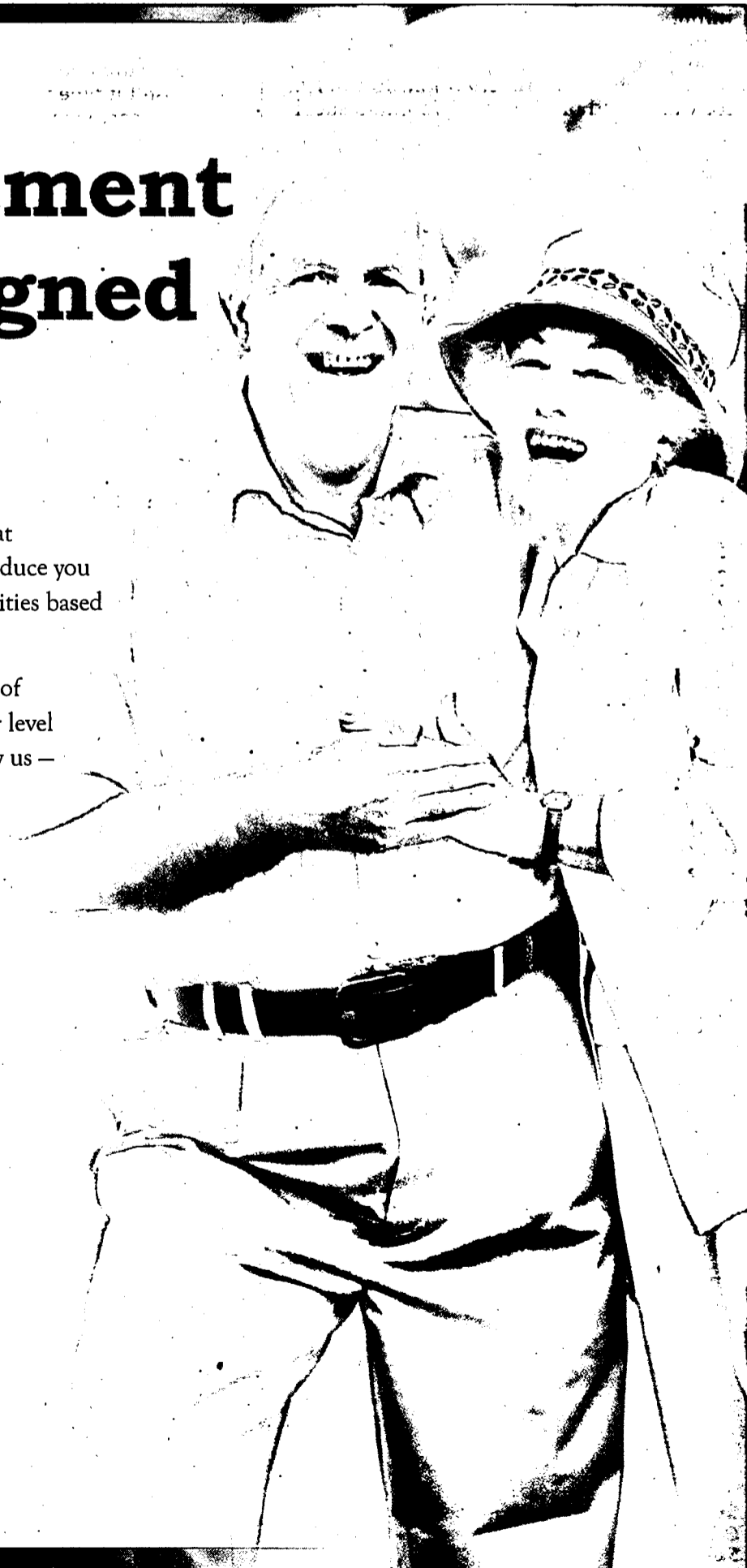
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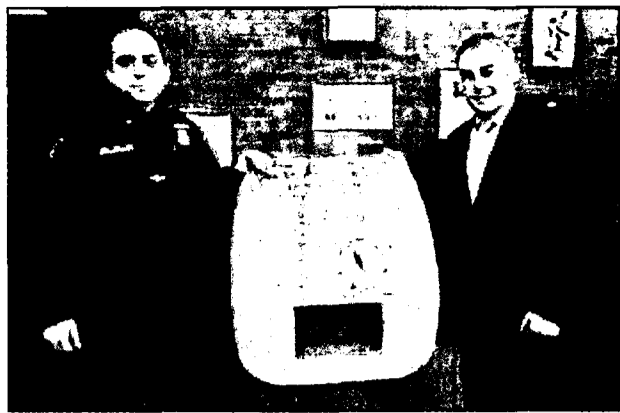


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Westland Police Chief Greg Angelosanto and Westland Mayor William Wild show off the new drug disposal box located in the police station lobby.

Medication drop-off box available 24/7

Westland is offering an answer to a question facing many residents — how to dispose of unwanted or expired medications.

A new prescription drop box is now available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in the lobby of the Westland Police Department, 36701 Ford, just west of Central City Parkway.

The drop box allows Westland residents to take their old, unwanted medications to the police department to be properly disposed of at no charge.

"In order to protect our families and the environment, we must ensure that medications and personal care products are properly handled, stored and disposed of," said Westland Mayor William Wild. "We are proud to offer this new disposal service to our residents to ensure safety."

Drugs accepted for drop-off include:

- Prescriptions
- Prescription patches
- Prescription medications
- Prescription ointments
- Over-the-counter medications

- Vitamins
- Sample medications
- Pet medications

Every day nationwide, it's estimated that more than 2,500 teenagers abuse prescription medication for the first time. Teens often experiment with medications they find right at home. Therefore, consumers should take certain precautions before tossing them out, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

Previously it was suggested to flush unused prescription drugs down the toilet. However, increasing amounts of prescription drugs and personal care products are being detected in rivers, waterways, and groundwater. Wastewater treatment facilities are not equipped to filter out these chemicals, so drugs like antidepressants, cholesterol reducers and antibiotics are being detected in drinking water supplies.

The risk to humans and animals of long-term exposure to these contaminants in drinking water is unknown, but Westland's new drug disposal initiative will alleviate these concerns.

Life insurance isn't always the best option

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

Happy New Year! As I was out and about during the holidays, I was approached by a man who told me that he was going to be retiring in 2012. We talked about a number of different issues with regards to his retirement and, on the whole, I think he was in pretty good shape. One area in which he needed some advice was term life insurance. He told me that about 10 years ago when he was married (he is now divorced), his wife convinced him to buy an additional life insurance policy. The policy he referred to is a term policy with about five years still remaining before it ends. The policy also has a conversion



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

option which would allow him to convert to a whole life policy without any health check. Although the man's agent is telling him that he should take advantage of this option, he is not sure it makes sense. He asked me what issues he should consider in deciding whether to convert the policy or not.

I told him the first issue to consider would be whether anyone would lose out financially after he passed away. As I've mentioned many times, life insurance is not an investment but a means of covering risk. Therefore, when it comes to life insurance, you must always determine if there is anyone financially dependent upon you. If there is no one financially dependent upon you, then you do not need life insurance. In fact, if that was the situation, I told him that not only should he not convert the policy, but he may even wish to no longer make any further premium payments. One of the things that people are sometimes unaware of is that if you

have a term life insurance policy you can cancel it at any time. Simply said, if you don't make the premium payment, you have in effect cancelled the policy.

I believe that life insurance is a need-based item and you should only buy it if a need exists.

If he needs life insurance, converting was certainly an option. However, that doesn't mean that he could not shop for a new policy. Over the last decade, lots of things have changed with life insurance and I told him that it may be possible to shop around and get a new policy that would be better than converting the old policy.

I also told him that another legitimate reason to keep the life insurance is simply because he wants it. Many people will buy life insurance policies because they want to leave something extra to a charity or some other organization. In addition, some people like to buy life insurance just so they can leave extra money to a loved

one. Although life insurance may not be the most effective way of accomplishing this, it certainly is something to consider.

For as long as I've been in the financial world, one thing that I have consistently seen is insurance being oversold, particularly life insurance. Not everyone needs life insurance and life insurance is not a good investment. After all, in order to collect, someone has to die and I'm sure that is never the goal of an investor.

One last thing regarding life insurance and that is never let an agent talk you into anything that you're not comfortable with. Take your time, shop around and receive competitive bids. Make a decision when you feel comfortable. Good luck!

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



First baby of 2012

Proud parents Kevin Robinson and Kelsey Soronen of Westland hold Caiden James Robinson, the first baby born at Livonia's St. Mary Mercy Miracle of Life Birthing Center in 2012. Caiden was born at 4:20 p.m. Jan. 1. He weighed seven pounds, five ounces and was 19.75 inches long. He is Robinson and Soronen's first baby.

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SPORTS

Raiders' rally nets win over city rivals

North Farmington beats Farmington in boys basketball

By Dan O'Meara
Observer Staff Writer

Though his team trailed by 18 points in the second half, North Farmington coach Todd Negoshian wasn't about to give up on his basketball team Tuesday.

His faith in the Raiders (4-4) was rewarded as they rallied from a 42-24 deficit early in the third quarter to defeat city rival Farmington in a boys game, 71-65.

"I just thought, if we could battle for 32 minutes and play a complete game, win or lose, the tide would turn and things would start going our way," Negoshian said. "We looked better defensively and, with a little more intensity, the tide turned for us.

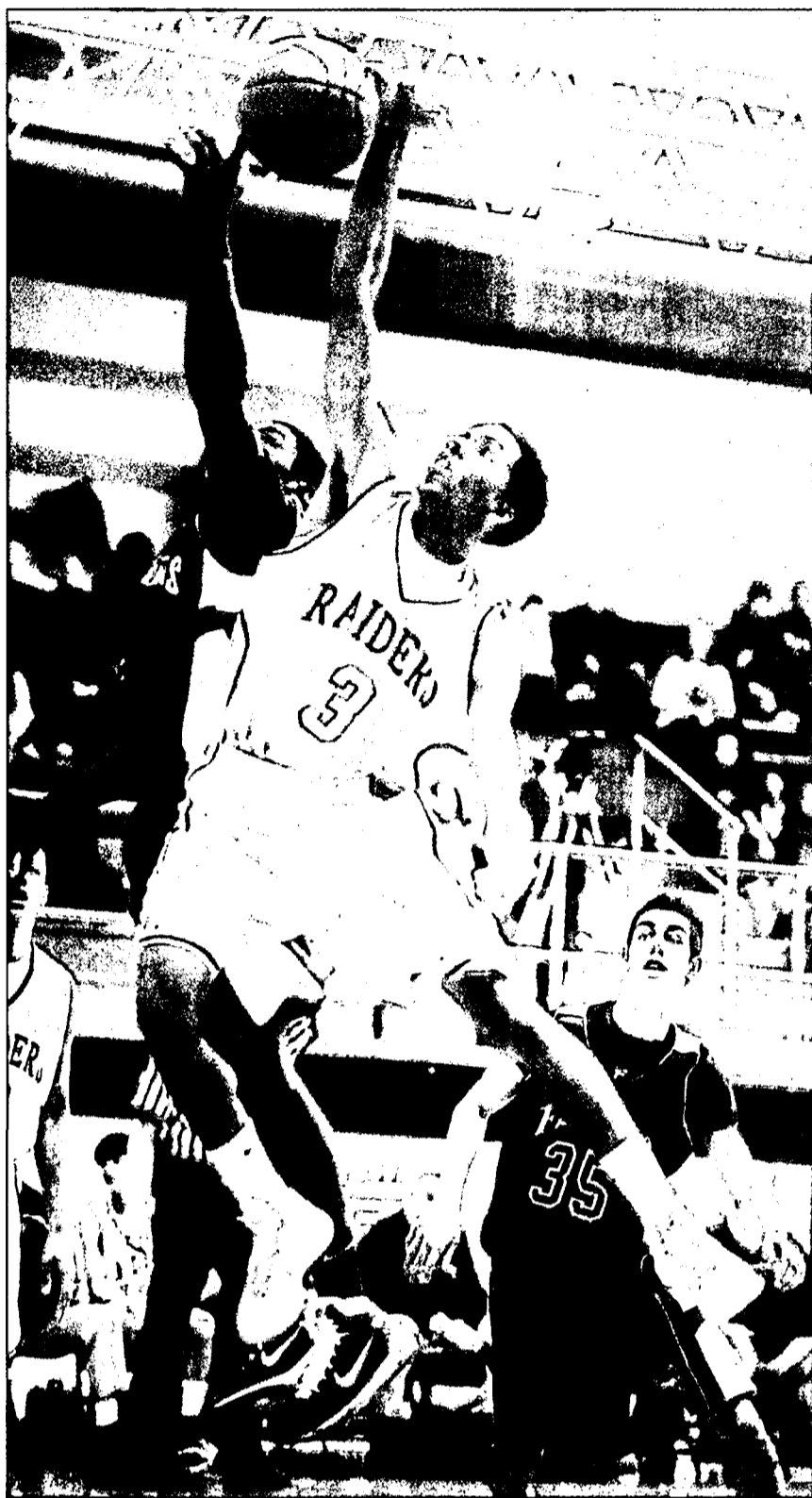
"The biggest thing is our guys really stepped up to the challenge at halftime. We needed to play hard. We played two so-so games over break and didn't play well. We needed to make sure we played well over the final 16 minutes."

Farmington (2-3) got control of the game in the first half and led at halftime, 34-22. A run of eight unanswered points that included a pair of three-point plays by Ken Hammond and Chris Hare expanded the lead to 42-24.

The Raiders climbed back to within one, 46-45, and were down three at the end of three, 50-47. Caleb Hogans and Do'rrell Foster combined for 16 points in that period.

"I think we lost our aggressiveness," Farmington coach Terrance Porter said. "They made their run and we didn't make a run back. They became

Please see RAIDERS, B3



North Farmington junior Sterling Sharp and a Farmington player go after a rebound. Jeron Rogers (0) and Nick Gojcaj (35) follow the action.

JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Canton's Pia Simon is the picture of concentration as she works the uneven parallel bars during Tuesday's dual meet against Northville.

Canton gymnasts spring to victory

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Thanks partly to the return of Ayana Lewis from injury, the Canton girls gymnastics team opened its KLAA schedule with Tuesday's 144.45-129.05 win over Northville.

The Chiefs (3-0 overall) won three of four events in the A-team competition during the dual meet at Plymouth High School.

Lewis — the Division 1 state champion on vault last season — scored a 9.15 on vault (third place) in her first competition of the season.

She really was at her best on floor exercise, sharing first place in that event with teammate Melissa Green.

"You can see the height on her floor," said Canton coach John Cunningham, about how the diminutive Lewis jumped high off the mat during floor exercise. "She's got elastic legs. It's fantastic, really."

Other Canton A-team firsts were scored by Erica Lucas on vault (9.625) and Nicole Lasecki on balance beam (8.925).

"I think 144.45 is a tremendous score, this early in the season," Cunningham said. "I'm really pleased with that. But we've got a lot of room for improvement."

Cunningham's 2010-11 team finished second in D1 with a 146.51. Sharper routines as the year progresses could

Please see GYMNASTS, B3

Rocket wrestlers romp to Elks tourney victory

By Ed Wright
Observer Staff Writer

Westland John Glenn's wrestling team ended 2011 with a bang, launching a victorious assault on 20 other teams Friday in the Plymouth Elks Varsity Wrestling Tournament at Salem.

The Rockets scorched the brackets to the tune of 161.5 points to wrestle the title away from runner-up Livonia Franklin, which pinned down 151 points.

Saline placed third with 115 points, followed by Howell and Dearborn Heights Crestwood, both tied for fourth with 111.5.

The host Rocks' 65

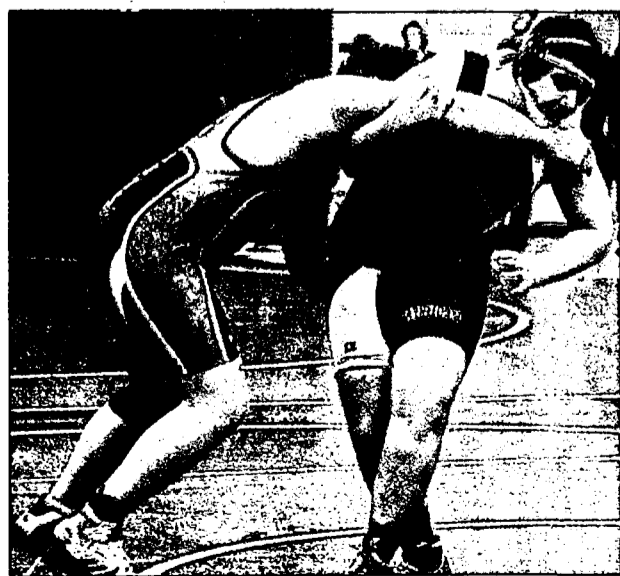
points were good enough for 15th, two slots better than Wayne Memorial (56).

Other Observerland-area teams competing included Redford Union (18th place), Livonia Churchill (20th) and Garden City (21st).

Leading the Rockets' championship charge were weight-class champions Kyle Gillies (112 pounds) and Kevin Wacker (145).

John Glenn received second-place points from Jordan Brandon, who was upended 5-3 by Wayne's Dimitrus Renfro in the 215-pound final.

Please see WRESTLING, B2



ED WRIGHT

Livonia Franklin's Omar Haymour (facing camera) defeated Westland John Glenn's Dylan Morantes in this second-round 285-pound match at Friday's Salem Varsity Wrestling Tournament.

Chiefs ramp it up, edge Hornets

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Canton's boys basketball team at times resembled an acrobatic troupe during Tuesday's 42-36 win over visiting Saline in the first game following the holiday hiatus.

There were flying blocks, diving stops and plenty of spin moves through the paint as the Chiefs (5-1) turned up the intensity in the second half to win the nonconference tilt. It was Canton's first game following the holiday hiatus.

After Saline closed out the second quarter on an 11-0 run to go up 22-18 at the intermission, Canton head coach Jimmy Reddy stressed the importance of playing harder and defending stronger against the previously undefeated Hornets.

"We came in at halftime and our coach was pretty fired up," said Canton senior forward Paul Baumgart, who led the way with 15 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks. "He got us ready to play when we came out for the rest of the game."

Canton evened the score at 31-31 after three frames before taking over midway through the fourth.

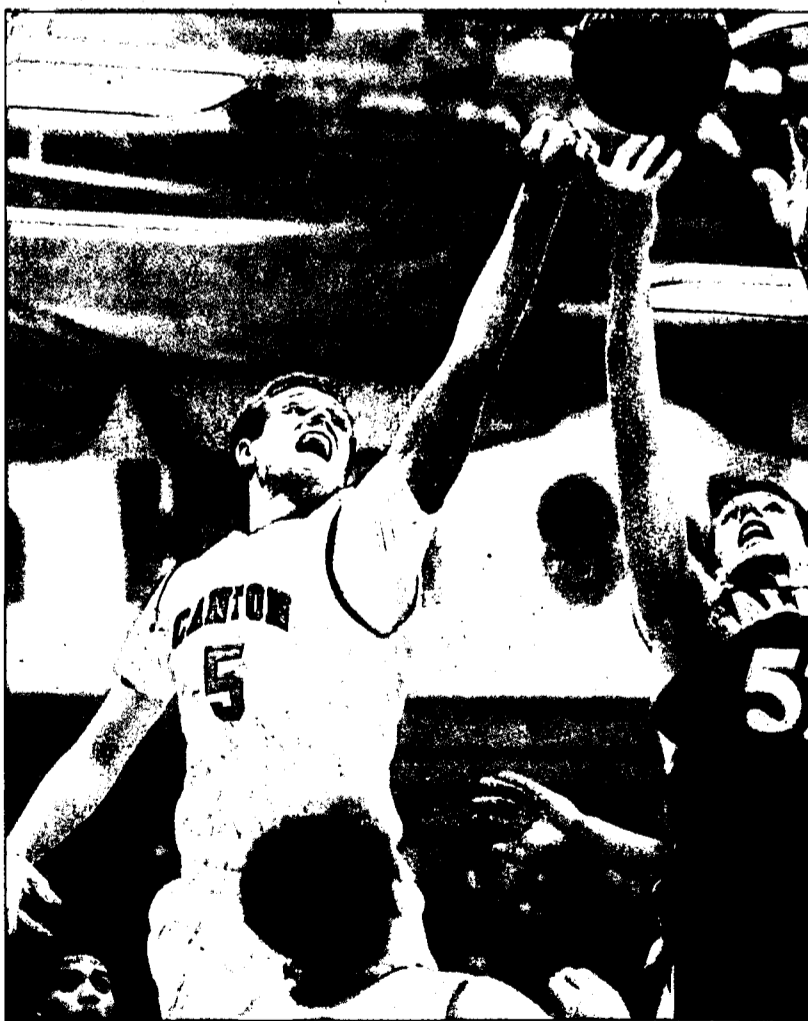
Junior point guard Josh Mayberry (nine points, six assists, five rebounds) hit a jumper to make it 35-35 and then delivered feeds to Baumgart down low for two more buckets. Canton never relinquished the lead after that.

"Coach tells us to have urgency," Mayberry said. "So I just thought about fighting hard."

Energized

He and his teammates immediately took heed following the locker room pep talk.

Mayberry connected on a bank shot and a rainbow trey from well behind the three-point arc during the first 2:10 of the third to put



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Vying for a rebound Tuesday night are Canton's Paul Baumgart (5) and Saline's Michael Smutny (52).

Canton back in front (26-24).

Also coming up clutch in the stanza was senior guard Kyle Adams, who drained two triples (one from each corner) to account for all six of his points.

"Defensively he (Mayberry) was pretty good," said Reddy, agreeing that it was one of the player's best games so far. "He was really good offensively in the second half. He made a three and maybe two pull

ups in the lane."

Saline head coach Matt Seidl, whose team fell to 6-1, said Mayberry "was quick and we didn't do a good job of containing him."

"Another key was they must have blocked six or seven shots around the rim," he said. "That's unique in high school."

Chipping in with six points each

Please see CHIEFS, B2



PHOTOS BY ED WRIGHT

Garden City's Britton Borlace (top) gets the upper hand against Clinton's Mike Sexton during a 119-pound match at Friday's Salem Varsity Wrestling Tournament.

WRESTLING

Continued from page B1

"I was pleased when I heard the final results because I really didn't think we won the tournament," John Glenn coach Bill Polk said. "I wasn't very pleased with how our guys performed on the day but collectively as a team, they got the job done. This season has had its ups and downs so far but we look forward to turning the page in 2012. Hopefully, this tournament started us off the right way and we will continue to take steps toward districts, regionals and the state tournaments."

The Patriots were bolstered by first-place performances from Gabe Martinez (125), Jordan Atienza (140) and Allen Steele (171).

"I was pleased overall with the way we performed," said Franklin coach Dave Chiola. "There were 21 teams, and a lot of the competition were teams we don't see that often."

"Jordan Atienza is wrestling really well right now. Each match he looks a little better. He has such a wide arsenal of moves it's hard for me to know what he's going to hit, much less his opponent. He's matured a lot since last year which I think is going to pay off at the end of the year."

"Gabe and Danny Martinez are also wrestling very tough. They drill and wrestle each other a lot in practice, and are constantly making each other better. Danny took his first loss, but overall I was happy with how they are both wrestling. Allen Steele got back on track after a rough Wayne County tournament and looks like he's heading in the right direction."

Salem's best efforts came from 160-pounder Tyler Gross and 189-pounder Jake McCabe, both of whom placed second in their respective weight class.

"Jake McCabe lost a tough match in the finals to Skochelak from Henry Ford," Salem coach Pete Israel said. "He was a takedown away from tying things up and battled to the finish. With matches like that one, along with a few tweaks, Jake will be very competitive at 189."

"Tyler Gross had a good outing, too. He was pretty dominant until the finals, but I think this is a good mid-season learning moment and he will continue to improve."

RU's Collin Rankin continued his strong junior

season, placing fourth at 171.

The bulk of Churchill's 34 points were the result of a pair of fourth-place showings.

Garden City's highest finish was eighth.

2011 Plymouth Elks Wrestling Tournament FINAL STANDINGS: 1. John Glenn, 161.5; 2. Livonia Franklin, 151; 3. Saline, 115; 4. (tie) Howell and Crestwood, 111.5; 6. Woodhaven, 101.5; 7. Dexter, 91; 8. Richmond, 87.5; 9. Monroe Jefferson, 80; 10. Lincoln, 73.5; 11. Yale, 70; 12. Henry Ford, 69; 13. Lincoln Park, 67; 14. A.A. Pioneer, 66; 15. Salem, 65; 16. Melvindale, 63.5; 17. Wayne, 56; 18. Redford Union, 44.5; 19. Clinton, 43; 20. Livonia Churchill, 34.5; 21. Garden City, 33.

103 pounds: 1st place: Kendall Freeman (L) decisively Mohammed Yousef (M), 4-2; 3rd: Billy Cobb-Gulley (AAP) pinned Tim anner (MJ) in 2:54; 5th: Zeke Breuninger (D) dec. Xavier Nuckles (R), 8-1.

112: 1st: Kyle Gillies (JG) dec. Taylor Tickner (SLN), 5-4; 3rd: Ramzy Yousef (M) dec. Josh Perez (LC), 2-0; 5th: Dylan McLeod (LP) dec. Danny Brandt (HF), 9-2.

119: 1st: Ben Calandrino (H) major dec. Dan Martinez (LF), 15-7; 3rd: Ali Ayache (DHC) dec. Jordan Markey (L), 6-3; 5th: Alex Muzljakovich (R) pinned Tyler Foland (MJ) in 2:19.

125: 1st: Gabe Martinez (LF) pinned Jake Jones (LP) in 5:01; 3rd: Nick Kupke (HF) dec. Adam Bruley (SLN), 5-1; 5th: Sejad Al-Hussein (DHC) dec. Quinn Dupraw (JG), 7-2.

130: 1st: Alex Calandrino (H) major dec. Nate O'Sullivan (SLN), 10-0; 3rd: Andrew Barron (M) dec. Tevin Machart (HF), 7-3; 5th: Austin Cattera (R) dec. Tito Sanchez (W), 12-6.

135: 1st: Cody Volker (MJ) major dec. Adeeb Alcodray (DHC), 15-4; 3rd: Quandre Thomas (AAP) dec. JP Birmingham (D), 3-1; 5th: Eric Smither (C), dec. Moe Salameh (DHC), 10-3.

140: 1st: Jordan Atienza (LF) pinned R.J. Smith (Y) in 5:32; 3rd: Hayden Hughes (H) dec. James Chapman (LP), 11-4; 5th: Alex Cornelius (SLN) dec. Logan Robbins (R), 8-6.

145: 1st: Keven Wacker (JG) pinned Bailey Bischer (Y) in 1:09; 3rd: Beau Barton (R) pinned Roberto Davis (LP) in 4:55; 5th: double forfeit.

152: 1st: Eddie Nuttall (L) dec. Derick Hillman (W), 9-7; 3rd: Danny Muzyka (DHC) major dec. Anthony Long (JG), 10-2; 5th: Ryan Wellings (SLN) major dec. Nick Frazier (LF), 17-5.

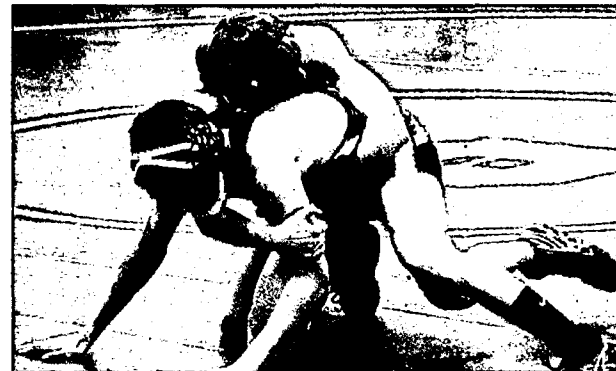
160: 1st: Drew Barnes (D) pinned Tyler Gross (SLM) in 40 seconds; 3rd: Mickey Sutton (W) pinned Chris Slattery (SLN) in 4:01; 5th: Sam Ekanem (WM) pinned Jacob Gulette (R) in 3:55.

171: 1st: Allen Steele (LF) dec. Hunter Dunn (MJ), 12-8; 3rd: Danny Croft (JG) pinned Collin Rankin (RU) in 2:04; 5th: Kevin Cook (C) pinned Samer Abboud (DHC) in 4:52.

189: 1st: Dave Skochelak (HF) dec. Jake McCabe (SLM), 11-9; 3rd: Chris McCowan (JG) won by default over Raed Mourad (DHC); 5th: Nick Maher (W) dec. Daven Gardiner (RU), 6-5.

215: 1st: Dimitrus Renfroe (WM) dec. Jordan Brandon (JG), 5-3; 3rd: Yousef El-Sayed (DHC) dec. Jani Hilliard (AAP), 5-4; 5th: Chris Gutmann (W) dec. Robbie Keefer (H), 4-3.

285: 1st: Shawn Chamberlain (D) pinned Omar Blaymour (LF) in 38 seconds; 3rd: Cam Englund (H) pinned Manny Haddad (LC) in 1:26; 5th: Quintin Ruddell (W) pinned Karaun King (M) in 2:30.



Salem 112-pounder Alex Arble eventually escaped from this hold by Wayne's Tyler Mulligan to record a second-period pin at Friday's Salem Varsity Wrestling Tournament.

North girls claim FPS hoops crown

North Farmington captured the Farmington Public Schools city championship in girls basketball Tuesday with a 48-39 victory over host Farmington Harrison.

The Raiders (5-2) were outscored in the first and fourth quarters by a combined tally of 23-18, but they dominated the middle periods, 30-16.

"It was a nice win for us," North coach Tim Carruthers said. "We struggled early and then we really played well. The kids executed well and we shot the ball a little better than we have in the past couple games."

"Harrison was ready for us. They had a good game plan, and our kids didn't panic with it."

Senior guard Jasmine Harris (U-Mass) scored a game-high 22 points for the Raiders, who led by 17 in the fourth quarter. She also had seven rebounds and three assists.

Holly Snabes netted 10 points; Megan Keller had a balanced effort with eight points, five steals and four rebounds, and Kaitlyn Kendall added six points and five rebounds.

Kyla Roland led the Hawks (1-6), who jumped to a 6-0 lead, with 15 points. Marissa Cotton added 11 and Tiera Parker 10.

North sank nine of 20 free throws; Harrison was 7-of-8 at the foul line.

DIVINE CHILD 45, MERCY 35: The host Falcons took charge of the Catholic League Central Division opener for both teams in the first half Tuesday and held on through the second.

Divine Child, the defending Class B state champion, rolled to a 25-9, halftime lead and withstood a Mercy comeback in the second half (26-20).

"We were just very sluggish early in the game at both ends of the floor," Mercy coach Gary Morris said. "We struggled shooting the ball early. That impacted our defense because we were missing shots and were slow getting back on defense."

"We played a little better in the second half, but we still need to play a little faster, at a faster tempo. This is what we can expect in the Central Division where we're going to have to match other teams' level of competitiveness. That's what we look to do next time out."

Cara Miller scored 12 points and Morgan Blair 11 for Divine Child. Mercy was led by Sarah Benson and Sam Bauer with 10 and nine points, respectively.

Both teams are 5-2 overall. The Falcons made three of four free throws, the Marlins four of 12.

Mercy plays host to Pontiac Notre Dame

Prep in a Catholic League crossover game Friday.

INKSTER 38, CANTON 36: Despite an excellent defensive performance against high-powered Inkster, the visiting Chiefs were nipped in Tuesday's non-conference matchup.

Canton, which lost for the first time this season, fell behind 10-5 after the first and trailed 20-17 at halftime. Inkster held a 32-28 lead entering the fourth.

"The girls played extremely hard," Canton head coach Brian Samulski said. "We just came up a couple plays short. Defensively, to hold them to 38 points is outstanding."

It didn't help that the Chiefs (5-1) hit only six of 13 free-throw attempts, while the Vikings made nine of 12.

Canton senior point guard Robyn Mack scored 20 points and collected six rebounds while Kiara Schneider tallied six points and eight rebounds.

Contributing four points each for the Chiefs were Kelsey McDougall and Rachel Winters.

W.L. CENTRAL 55, FRANKLIN 35: Despite falling behind 11-7 after one quarter, host Walled Lake central (2-4) cruised to a victory Tuesday at home over Livonia Franklin (1-5).

Kara Bierell led the victorious Vikings with 16

points.

Central outscored Franklin 18-7 in the second period to take a 25-18 halftime lead and put it away with a 17-4 third-period run.

Junior guard Katelyn Devers paced the patriots with 16 points.

Franklin shot 16-of-26 from the foul line, while Central made 2-of-9.

CHANDLER PARK 51, N. FARM 50: North Farmington outscored Chandler Park Academy by three in the fourth quarter, 16-13, but the Raiders fell short of making up a 38-34 deficit at the end of three periods Dec. 30 in the Motor City Roundball Classic.

Chandler Park jumped to a 17-5 lead after one quarter, but North rallied to get within two at halftime, 23-21.

North senior Jasmine Harris (University of Massachusetts) scored 19 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lead all players in both categories.

Kaitlyn Kendall had 16 points, four rebounds and three steals for the Raiders, and teammate Megan Keller had seven points, eight rebounds and four steals. Holly Snabes and Stevie Jones chipped in five rebounds apiece.

Chandler Park was led by Rashawn Hankins' 15 points; Jada Ivy added 10. Each team made five free throws; North shot 10 and Chandler Park 11.

Daniels' FTs catapult Glenn boys by Tigers

Just in the Nick of time.

Junior guard Nick Daniels scored a game-high 23 points, including four straight free throws in the final 23 seconds to propel Westland John Glenn to a 59-55 boys basketball win Tuesday night at home over Belleville.

Isaac Everette's basket with 51.1 seconds to play in regulation tied the game at 55-all and Daniels sealed the win with four consecutive foul

shots.

Senior forward Eric Covile chipped in with 19 points for the Rockets, who improved to 3-2 overall.

Jamie Pearson and Bryce Moon tallied 21 and 14, respectively, for the Tigers (4-2).

Glenn trailed 41-39 heading into the final period before going on a 20-14 fourth-quarter run. The Rockets made 12-of-21 free throws (57.1

percent), while Belleville nailed 14-of-18 (77.7 percent).

JOHN GLENN 44, G.P. SOUTH 30: Junior guard Nick Daniels scored 13 points Friday as Westland John Glenn (2-2) posted a non-league victory over Grosse Pointe South (2-2) in the Metro Detroit Basketball Coaches Association Christmas Tournament at Ypsilanti.

Senior forward Eric Covile added 11, while

Desmond Cervera and James Pruitt each chipped in with six for the victorious Rockets trailed 20-17 at halftime before going on a 13-3 third quarter run to take a 30-23 advantage.

Glenn then outscored the Blue Devils 14-7 in the final period.

Kevin Reck led South with six points.

Glenn went 3-of-4 from the foul stripe, while South hit 4-of-8.

CHIEFS

Continued from page B1

for the Chiefs were senior center Terrell Sewell (also tallying seven boards and two blocks) and freshman guard Greg Williams (six points in his first varsity start).

For Saline, guard Garrett Stark scored 11 points and added seven rebounds. Contributing 10 points and four boards was 6-8 senior center Michael Smutny.

Buckle down

Seidl said Canton's work ethic was a major factor to the outcome. The Chiefs outrebounded Saline by a 32-25 margin.

"We usually hold our own or even dominate the glass," Seidl said. "Tonight, Canton took it to us. They got a lot of offensive rebounds (nine), more than we're used to giving up."

"They kind of outworked us tonight,

which is not what you want to say after a game."

Canton turned second efforts into spectacular displays in the second half. With less than two minutes to go in the third, Sewell came flying out of nowhere to block Matt Grasley's layup attempt.

Baumgart soared to spike another layup bid, this one by Gabriel Becton, as that frame ended.

Then in the final minutes of the contest, and Canton nursing a 39-36 lead, senior guard Miles Felton flung himself along the sideline near the scorer's table to save an errant in-bounds pass from all the way across the court — helping the Chiefs maintain possession.

"Our second half, we played with the urgency we need if we're going to win," Reddy said. "We're going to be a good team if we do that."

Canton will visit Westland John Glenn at 7 p.m. Friday, looking to make it two straight victories in 2012.

tsmith@hometownlife.com | (734) 469-4128



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

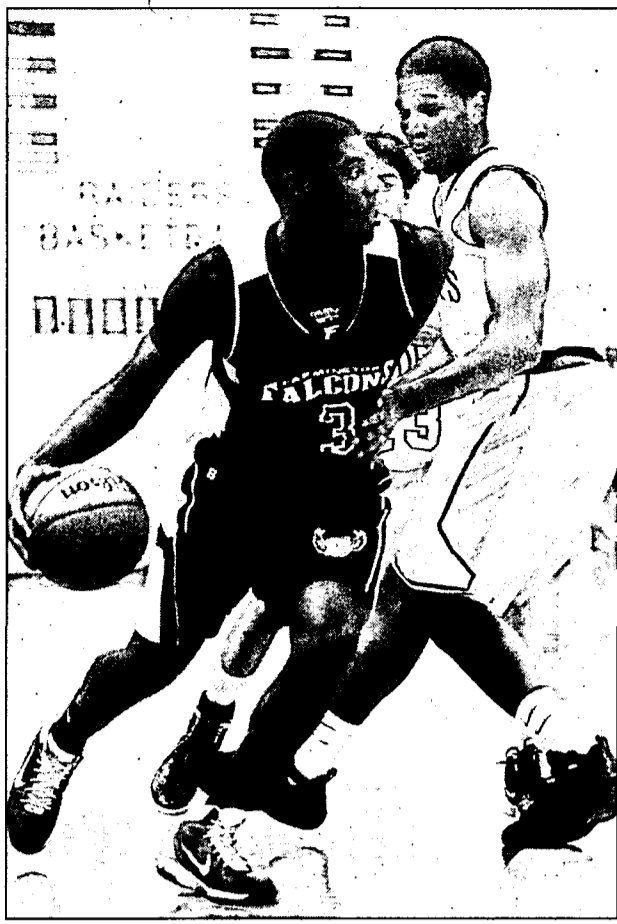
Making his way through a maze of Saline players is Canton junior forward Scott Gring, one of several Chiefs whose hustle helped them earn a 42-36 win.

THE WEEK AHEAD

- BOYS BASKETBALL Thursday, Jan. 5 Thurston at Woodhaven, 3 p.m. Franklin at Wayne, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 6 Thurston vs. Westside Christian at Woodhaven Tourney, 3 p.m. South at Luth. W'sld, 5:30 p.m. HVL at Taylor Baptist, 7 p.m. Cville at Lutheran North, 7 p.m. Plymouth at Churchill, 7 p.m. Stevenson at S. Lyon, 7 p.m. Canton at John Glenn, 7 p.m. Salem at Northville, 7 p.m. Harrison at W. Bloom., 7 p.m. N. Farm. at Clarkston, 7 p.m. PCA at Roeper, 8:30 p.m. GIRLS BASKETBALL Thursday, Jan. 5 Thurston at Woodhaven, 3 p.m. Wayne at Franklin, 7 p.m. Athens at Farmington, 7 p.m. N. Farmington at Troy, 7 p.m. Oxford at Harrison, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 6 Thurston vs. Westside Christian at Woodhaven Tourney, 3 p.m. Churchill at Plymouth, 7 p.m. S. Lyon at Stevenson, 7 p.m. John Glenn at Canton, 7 p.m. Northville at Salem, 7 p.m. South at Luth. W'sld, 7 p.m. Cville at Franklin Road, 7 p.m. PCA at Roeper, 7 p.m. N.D. Prep at Mercy, 7 p.m. Regina at Ladywood, 7:30 p.m.

- PREP HOCKEY Friday, Jan. 6 Plymouth vs. Warren Mott at Arctic Edge, 8 p.m. Franklin vs. Salem at Ply. Cultural Ctr., 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7 Canton at Midland, 5:15 p.m. Wat. Mott vs. North-Harrison at Farm. Hills Arena, 7 p.m. Salem vs. Big Rapids at Ply. Cultural Center, 6 p.m. Plymouth vs. Flushing at Arctic Edge, 7:30 p.m. Churchill vs. S.C. Shores Unified at S.C. Shores Arena, 7:30 p.m. Ladywood vs. G.P. North at Arctic Pond, 7:30 p.m. PREP WRESTLING Thursday, Jan. 5 Clarenceville Quad, 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 6 Harrison at Lake Orion, 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7 Lakeland Invitational, 8 a.m. Bishop Foley Invitational, 9 a.m. CC Invitational, 9 a.m. Howell Invitational, 9 a.m. Wyandotte Invite, 9:15 a.m. Clarenceville Tourney, 9:30 a.m. Roch. Adams Invitational, TBA. PREP BOWLING Thursday, Jan. 5 Ladywood vs. A.A. Richard at Drakeshire Lanes, 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7 Ladywood Holiday Tourney

- at Super Bowl, 12:30 p.m. BOYS SWIMMING Thursday, Jan. 5 Seaholm at N. Farm., 6:30 p.m. Adams vs. Farmington-Harrison, 6:30 p.m. at Farmington High. Saturday, Jan. 7 Salem Invitational, noon. GIRLS GYMNASTICS Thursday, Jan. 5 Livonia Blue at Plym., 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7 Rockford Inv., 10 a.m. Fraser Invitational, TBA. COMPETITIVE CHEER Wednesday, Jan. 4 Franklin Quad, 6 p.m. Stevenson Quad, 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 5 Canton Quad, 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7 Novi Invitational, 9 a.m. Allen Park Tourney, 10 a.m. Oxford Invitational, 10 a.m. Titan Invitational, TBA. MEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS Saturday, Jan. 7 MU at Davenport, 3 p.m. S'craft at Wayne County, 3 p.m. WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS Saturday, Jan. 7 Davenport at Madonna, 1 p.m. S'craft at Wayne County, 1 p.m. ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE Saturday, Jan. 7 Saginaw vs. Plymouth Whalers at Compuware Arena, 7 p.m.



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Farmington's Bryan Green looks past Do'rell Foster for an open teammate.

RAIDERS

Continued from page B1

the aggressors, and we didn't match their intensity.

"In the first half, we were doing a great job of attacking their pressure, getting layups and wide-open shots; we were passing the ball.

"In the second half, we lost some of that. We started dribbling through their pressure. They forced some turnovers and they capitalized."

Foster, who was 23-of-18 at the foul line and scored a game-high 30 points, pulled the Raiders within one again in the fourth quarter, 54-53, with four straight free throws.

Hogans, a junior point guard, nailed consecutive three-point shots following Farmington turnovers to give North its first lead since the first quarter, 59-54.

The Raiders never trailed after that, although the Falcons got as close as one, 60-59, and three 66-63. Hogans, who finished with 26 points, and Foster were 5-of-6 at the line in the final half minute to secure the win.

"We put them at the line too much," Porter said. "They had 28 points off turnovers. That's the game right there. If we take care of the ball, they don't have an opportunity to score those points."

"In the first half, we limited our turnovers, and we were attacking and scoring. In the second half, we had some

costly turnovers that they capitalized on."

Sterling Sharp added 13 points, which included four triples, for the Raiders, who made 27 of 33 free throws and shot 41 percent (18-of-44) from the floor.

"I just think we started to play with a lot more intensity defensively," Negoshian said. "Greg Joyce really stepped up for us and took a couple charges."

"We had more of an edge to use defensively (in the second half). For the first two and a half quarters, they took it to us and manhandled us with how hard they played. We were not able to match it until late in the third quarter."

"I think Farmington is a very talented team. We knew they were going to be organized, and they were going to play hard. They were playing for the city championship tonight, and Terrance does a great job with them. So we knew what we were going to be facing coming into it."

Chris Morgan scored 22 points to lead the Falcons; Bryan Green posted 18 and Chris Hare 14. Farmington was 11-of-18 at the foul line and 24-of-46 from the field (52 percent).

"We knew they were going to pressure us," Porter said, "but it was a situation where we just got away from our game plan in the third quarter. That's something we'll work on in practice over the next week to get ready for our next game."

Ocelots pull out win in double OT, 98-90

The Schoolcraft College men's basketball team returned from its 20-day layoff Friday by pulling out a 98-90 overtime victory at Glen Oaks Community College.

The Ocelots, who improved to 7-3 overall, got 28 points and 12 rebounds from Karl Moore.

Richmond Jackson added 18 points, including four second-half three-pointers to help Schoolcraft erase a 44-32 halftime deficit.

Guard Mohamed Elhaj, who dished out 12 assists, hit a triple with 32 seconds remaining in regulation to send the game into OT at 80-all.

Schoolcraft, getting some defensive stops from Deon Dunn and Reshard Anders, then outscored the Vikings 18-10 in the extra five-minute session to earn the win.

Daniel Hill (Wayne Memorial) chipped in 12 points and seven rebounds for Schoolcraft, which shot 18-of-25 free throws (72 percent) on the afternoon.

Karvel Anderson scored a game-high 35 points for Glen Oaks (7-7).

BETHANY (KAN.) 73, MADONNA 58: On Friday, No. 21-ranked Madonna University (10-6) couldn't recover from a 42-31 halftime deficit as Bethany College (4-7) earned the victory at Johnson & Wales University's Wildcat Center in Denver, Colo.

Quenton Jennings, hitting five triples, paced Bethany with a game-high 19 points.

Trey Beachum and Haydon Parks chipped in with 14 and 12, respectively.

MU got a team-high 16 points from sophomore guard Travis Schuba, who made 4-of-10 from three-point range.

Sophomore point-guard Bobby Naubert (Livonia Stevenson) added 13 points and five assists, while Eoghann Stephens added 12 points.

MU shot only 37.1 percent from the field (23-of-62), including 6-of-22 from three-point land (27.3 percent).

Rocks go 1-2 in Traverse City

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

The annual trek to Traverse City provided Salem boys hockey coach Ryan Ossennmacher with more evidence that his young team is still a work in progress.

The Rocks led in all three games at the Scott Miller Memorial Hockey Tournament Dec. 28-30 in Traverse City. But Salem managed just one victory.

"We continue to get better, but we are still in the process of learning how to win," Ossennmacher

said. "We have had a lead in eight of our nine games this year, but have failed to finish on five of those games."

"These are all growing pains that can be expected with a young team, but if we continue our progress we should be ready by playoff time."

The highlight was the 3-0 win on Dec. 29 over the Bay Area Reps (a combined team of players from Traverse City high schools).

Lighting the lamp for the Rocks were Michael Manser (two goals) and

Mark McGee.

Goalie Anthony "George" Veresan earned the shutout for Salem.

That win came on the heels of a sloppy 10-7 loss on Dec. 28 to Midland.

An early 3-1 lead evaporated as Midland scored four times in the middle stanza.

McGee registered a hat trick with single tallies by Austin Sartorius, Kyle Downey, Jake Sealy and Jason Newel.

Ossennmacher said his team's best effort went for naught, in a 3-2 loss on Dec.

30 to Traverse City West.

Jake Fedel scored both goals for the Rocks, who ran into a hot goaltender. Salem led 2-1 after two frames only to give it up.

"If we play like this on most nights the outcome will be a favorable one for us," Ossennmacher said.

According to Ossennmacher, the trip to TC "went very well and all the players represented Salem very well on and off the ice."

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Whalers' Noesen nabs NHL contract, scores three

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Stefan Noesen celebrated his entry-level NHL contract by scoring three goals and assisting on another as the Plymouth Whalers won 7-3 Friday over Saginaw at Compuware Arena.

Noesen also earned an assist Saturday as the Whalers scored five third-period goals in a come-from-behind, 7-4 victory over the host Windsor Spitfires.

The hat trick was the icing on the cake for Noesen. It was announced last Thursday that the

18-year-old right winger signed a three-year entry-level contract with the Ottawa Senators.

Noesen was Ottawa's second first-round pick (21st overall) in the 2011 National Hockey League draft.

With 13 goals and 21 assists in 30 Plymouth games this year, Noesen is the latest in a long line of Whalers to score NHL contracts.

Late last season, forwards Tyler Brown and James Livingston inked pacts with NHL teams Philadelphia and San Jose, respectively.

The Noesen scoring

burst against the Spirit, before about 3,400 fans at Compuware, sparked the Whalers to another big offensive night.

On Dec. 28, Plymouth rolled to a 6-1 win over London. The victory over Windsor gave the Whalers three straight wins and 20 goals scored since coming off the OHL's winter break.

Another player who is on a hot streak is defenseman and team captain Beau Schmitz, of Howell. Schmitz scored against Saginaw and tallied a hat trick against Windsor. He was honored Monday as the OHL Player of the Week.

In the victory over the Spirit, forward Matt Mistelet netted his first OHL goal.

Whalers head coach and general manager Mike Vellucci gave Mistelet and other rookies extra ice time after the team built a 5-1 lead entering the third period.

Rookie forward Danny Vanderwiell earned an assist in the Windsor game.

Plymouth (24-9-2-1, first in the OHL West Division) will again host Saginaw at 7 p.m. Saturday.

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Farmington United wins Brighton Invite

Farmington United Gymnastics was a winner in its only competition last month, taking first place in the Brighton Invitational Dec. 8.

Farmington posted a 144.025 team score to finish ahead of the host school, Howell and Pinckney.

Veteran gymnasts Alysa Bresso and Amanda Lumley led the team with 36-plus all-around scores. Bresso had a 36.925 total and Lumley a 36.875.

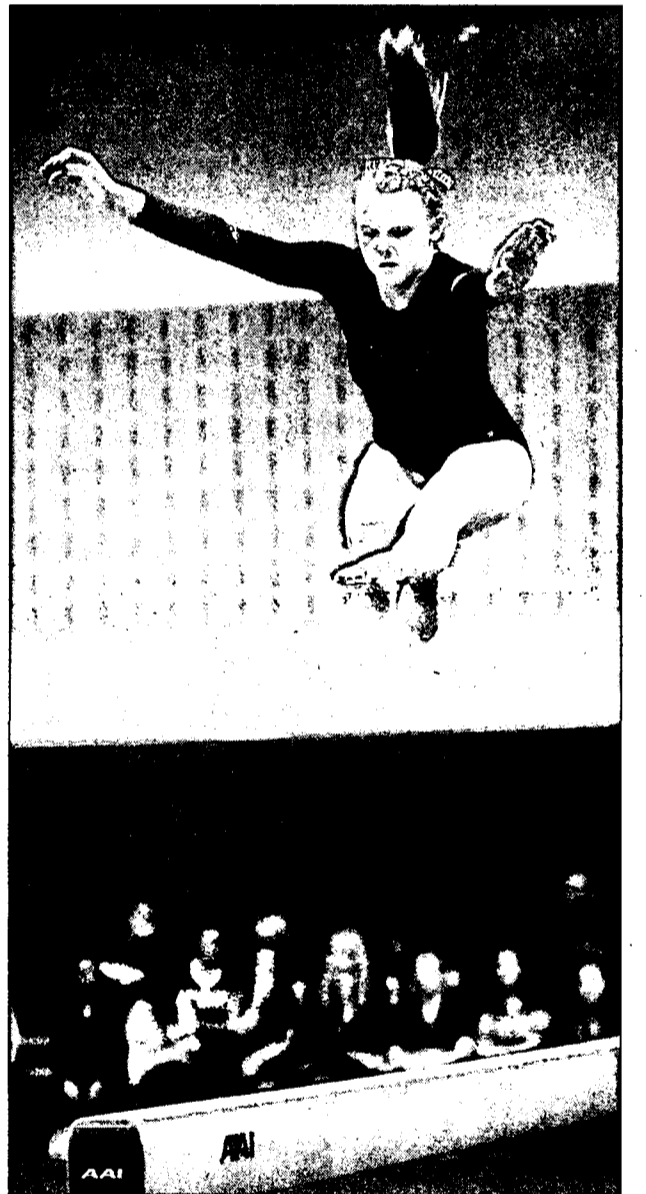
Both were among the team's top four in each event. On the vault, Lumley had a 9.3, Bresso 9.05; bars: Bresso 9.25, Lumley 8.85; beam: Lumley 9.25, Bresso 9.20; floor: Lumley 9.475, Bresso 9.425.

Meredith Jonik's scores also counted in all events. She had a 9.0 on vault, 8.65 on bars, 9.35 on beam, 8.95 on floor.

Farmington counted scores by Megan Campbell on vault (8.65), Alysa Millinoff and Sierra Nathanson on bars (8.8), Millinoff on beam (8.4) and Marissa Lapinsky on floor (8.575).

Other gymnasts with regional-qualifying scores were Deanna Burns, Karen Johnson, Kristina Franchi, Julia Matherly, Taylor Cherry, Marissa Schuh, Rachel Ewald and Kalli Hooper.

Farmington's second competition is the Rockford Invitational on Saturday.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Getting ready to land on the balance beam Tuesday is Canton's Jocelyn Moraw.

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Moose vs. Wings

The Detroit Moose Hockey Club and Detroit Red Wings Alumni will face off at 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 7, at Arctic Edge Ice Arena on Michigan Avenue in Canton.

All proceeds from the game will be directly donated to Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International.

More information about the charity contest — including how to buy tickets — is available at detroit-moose.org.

Canton Broncos hoop tryouts

Boys currently in grades 6-8 are invited to open tryouts for the Canton Broncos travel basketball club.

Tryouts will be 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12 and 6-7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 13 at High Velocity Sports, 46245 Michigan Ave. in Canton.

Player registration will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 12. Each player must bring an adult; a \$5 tryout fee will be collected to help pay for the gym rental.

The Broncos are looking to have enough players to fill a team per each grade level.

For more information, contact Canton Broncos director Mike Cashin, (734) 778-1879.

Salem girls tennis meeting Jan. 30

A mandatory meeting for those interested in playing on the 2012 Salem girls tennis team is slated for 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 30 in the Salem High School library.

It will be the only opportunity for players to order uniforms for the coming season.

Spring tryouts will begin on Monday, March 12. For more info, contact Salem coach Lin Ware at (734) 453-0669 or via e-mail at tenniscoachware@gmail.com.

Pitching clinic

Detroit Tigers pitching coach Jeff Jones will be the featured instructor at the pitching clinic hosted Sunday, Jan. 22, by the Livonia Stevenson High baseball program.

Jones will be joined by former pro pitcher Dave Marcon, owner and scout of Indy Pro Showcase, along with the Stevenson coaching staff.

Session I (ages 9-12) will be from 10 a.m. until noon followed by Session II (ages 13-18) 12:30-2:30 p.m. at the Stevenson fieldhouse.

GYMNASTS

Continued from page B1

help the deep-and-talented Chiefs approach that mark again.

"We've got lots of room for improvement at 144, and we were 146.5 last year with second place in the state," he added. "So we're just cleaning up, finishing up. We're going to get better."

The team also was without senior captain Marina Milad and Cunningham noted that a few of his girls had their scores docketed 5/10ths of a point each for having falls on beam.

Meanwhile, Northville coach Erin McWatt said the main thing about early season matchups is making sure girls continue to make progress on their routines.

That progress could help them begin to work toward qualifying for the state regionals. Girls must reach designated qualifying scores four times per event to do so.

"We're looking to see improvement in every event and improvement

in team totals," said McWatt.

Top Mustangs against the Chiefs included Daisy Ference, who won on uneven parallel bars with a score of 9.7, and Taylor Dempsey — among the top five in three events.

Cunningham said the Chiefs will compete Saturday at the Rockford Invitational, near Grand Rapids. Among teams on hand will be Farmington United.

"It should be interesting, it's a good test. We'll see how we look against the west," he said.

CANTON 144.45 NORTHVILLE 129.05 Jan. 3 at Plymouth

VAULT: 1. Erica Lucas (C), 9.625 points; 2. Melissa Green (C), 9.2; 3. Ayana Lewis (C), 9.15; 4. Jocelyn Moraw (C), 9.025; 5. Pia Simon (C), 8.9.

BEAM: 1. Daisy Ference (N), 9.7; 2. Lewis (C), 9.3; 3. Moraw (C), 9.2; 4. Green (C), 8.7; 5. Taylor Dempsey (N), 8.45.

BAR: 1. Nicole Lasecki (C), 8.925; 2. Moraw (C), 8.75; 3. Lewis (C), 8.7; 4. (tie) Green (C), Dempsey (N), 8.525.

FLOOR: 1. (tie) Lewis (C), 8.925; 2. Moraw (C), 8.75; 3. Lewis (C), 8.7; 4. (tie) Green (C), Dempsey (N), 8.525.

Team records: Canton, 3-0; Northville, 0-2.

Passages

Obituaries, Memories & Remembrances

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Deadlines: Friday 4:15 p.m. for Sunday • Wednesday 9:45 a.m. for Thursday

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1/5/12

04



FLAMINI, KEITH

Age 58, December 30, 2011 of Garden City. Loving father of Alicia (Bradley) Jonckheere, Jennifer (John) Jacobs, and Keith (Susan) Flamini Jr. Loving grandfather of 10 grandchildren. Beloved son of Mamie "May" and the late George Flamini. Dear brother of Dorothy (Craig) Teddy, George (Terri), Tim, and the late Donald Flamini. Funeral Service was held at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 980 N Newburgh Rd, Westland. Memorials may be made to the Michigan Humane Society. To share a memory, please visit: vermeulenfuneralhome.com



McMURTREY, WILLIAM R.

Age 87, beloved husband of Gloria for 65 years, and father of Kathryn and Marcia McMurtrey, departed this "mortal coil" (as he no doubt would phrase it) on Christmas Eve, 2011. He was preceded in death by his brothers: James, Tom, and Harold, and by his daughter, Deborah. A Hoosier and proud of it, he was born to Samuel T. and Iva L. in Clinton Township, Ind. In his youth he worked as a paperboy, on the railroad, and as a movie theater manager. In 1943, Bill served in the field artillery of the US Army. He entered the Livonia Public School system in 1949, first, as a teacher at Bentley High School and then as a principal of Riley Junior High. He became a well-respected and admired educator and school administrator. To know William was to love him. His tender heart, keen intellect, and dry sense of humor, are and will always be sorely missed. A celebration of his life will be scheduled and held in the Spring.

PAGE, NORMA RITCH

Age 79, December 31, 2011. Beloved wife of Earl. Loving mother of Sue Page-Girbach and Robert (Linda) Page. Proud grandmother of seven grandchildren. Daughter-in-law of Edith Keller Johnson. Services were held at the First United Methodist Church of Birmingham. Memorials to Leukemia & Lymphoma Society appreciated. Arrangements by Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, Royal Oak, 248-541-7000. Share your memories at: www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com

In memory of



QUINN, YOLANDA

Born January 6, 1912. Died March 20, 1995. Remembered with love on the 100th anniversary of birth, by her family.

SCHULTZ, JANET A.

Of Plymouth, December 20, 2011. Age 60. Loving mother of Matthew and Phillip. Dear sister of James (Cynthia) Allison. Memorial Service Saturday, January 14th at Trinity Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 10101 West Ann Arbor Rd, Plymouth at 11:00 am. A Memorial Gathering at the church will begin at 10:00 am. Arrangements by Czopek Funeral Directors (734) 285-9000.

SUND, A. RUSSELL

Dec. 24, 2011, age 87, of Howell, formerly of Livonia. Loving father of Gail (Tom) Garrity, Gary (Jennifer) Sund & the late Sandy Sund. Grandfather of ten. Dear friend of Lynne Bunce.

WIETING III, HARRY NYE

Age 86, passed away January 1, 2012, Born in New Haven, Connecticut October 26, 1925. Harry attended Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. He went on to serve in the United States Navy during World War II. Harry attended the University of Michigan earning a degree in business. He was also a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity. Harry worked for United Technologies Corporation and retired as a Vice President of the automotive division. In retirement he resided in Leland, Michigan and Naples, Florida. Mr. Wieting is predeceased by his mother, Marion Cluff Wieting, his father, Harry Nye Wieting Jr. and three sisters, Georgia Klingbeil, Ruth McKisson and Marion Jamieson. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Jean Wyckoff Wieting, daughter, Gretchen Kay Wieting Sherwood, son, Cary Nye Wieting and daughter-in-law, Patricia Watson Wieting. There are five grandchildren: Roderick MacKenzie Sherwood IV, Hunter C. Wieting Sherwood, Harry Wieting Sherwood, Julia Kay Wieting and Harrison Nye Wieting. A family memorial is planned this summer in Michigan.

RELIGION CALENDAR

Send items for the religion calendar to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com. If including a photo, it must be in jpg format, attached to the e-mail.

Jan. 5-11

CATHOLIC PROGRAM

Time/Date: 7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 11-Feb. 15

Location: St. Michael the Archangel Church, 11441 Hubbard, Livonia

Details: "Catholics Returning Home," is a six-week series of meetings designed to answer questions and provide a forum for non-practicing Catholics who might be interested in discussing a possible return to the church. Each session will be facilitated by former lapsed Catholics in a very casual, non-threatening environment, with plenty of opportunities for practical and open questions, answers, conversation, and discussion

Contact: (734) 261-1455, Ext. 207

DVD SCREENING

Time/Date: 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 10

Location: Congregation Beth Ahm, 5085 W. Maple, West Bloomfield

Details: Beth Ahm will honor the memory of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, who was a poet, philosopher and teacher of Torah, during the week of his upcoming yahrzeit by screening a DVD of his last televised interview. The interview was conducted by Carl Stern of NBC News a few weeks before Heschel's death. Admission is free, although donations will be accepted

Contact: (248) 737-1931 or e-mail Nancy Kaplan at nancyellen879@att.net

FILM SERIES

Time/Date: 5:30 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 8, 15 and 22

Location: Congregation Beth Ahm, 5075 W. Maple, West Bloomfield

Details: An Israeli film series explores the beginning of modern Israeli politics and the interplay between Jewish tradition and secular Israeli culture. Howard Lupovitch will introduce each film and lead a discussion afterward. Films are "I Love You Rosa" on Jan. 8, "Three Days and a Child" on Jan. 15, and "Flames of Revolt" on Jan. 22. Cost is \$15 per session

Contact: David Goodman at (248) 851-6880

GRIEF RECOVERY

Time/Date: 1:30 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 8

Location: Our Lady of Loretto, 17116 Olympia, near Six Mile and Beech Daly, in Redford

Details: The six-week support program, Living with the Loss of a Spouse, offered by Widowed Friends, will cover issues related to the grief process, including loneliness. A trained peer member will facilitate. Cost is \$20. Widowed Friends is a peer group in the Archdiocese of Detroit

Contact: Register by calling Joan at (248) 478-1084

NEW SERVICE

Time/Date: 10:10 a.m. Sunday, beginning Jan. 8

Location: Plymouth First United Methodist Church, 45201 North Territorial Road in Plymouth

Details: A new 55-minute contemporary worship service called Impact will feature a praise band, lots of upbeat music and a powerful message in a relaxed atmosphere. Child care will be offered

Contact: (734) 453-5280

PARENTING CLASS

Time/Date: 12:30-2:30 p.m. beginning Sunday, Jan. 8

Location: Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church, 23925 Northwestern Highway, on the southbound service drive of the Lodge freeway, between Nine Mile and 10 Mile, Southfield

Details: This is a five-session parent skills training program designed to help parents break out of established patterns that unwittingly support aggressive, defiant, oppositional and disrespectful behavior. It's designed for parents of children, 10-17. Jerome A. Price, founder of the Michigan Family Institute in Southfield leads the classes. Materials cost is \$25

Contact: the Rev. Kimi Riegel or Jerry Price at (248) 548-2376

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Time/Date: 1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8

Location: Prentis Apartments, located on 10 Mile, east of Greenfield in Oak Park

Details: The group creates and studies Judaic needlework. At its next meeting, it will discuss future charity projects.

Coming up: At its Feb. 12 meeting, Judy Galperin will teach a Passover runner

workshop. Fee for the kit is \$10

Contact: Judy Galperin at (248) 661-5337

Jan. 12-31

BETHANY

Time/Date: 9:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 21

Location: Leon's, 30149 Ford Road, Garden City

Details: Friends of Bethany Monthly Breakfast with Kathy and Pat

Contact: Kathy at (734) 956-0715

BIBLE STUDY

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 12-April 12

Location: New Life Church, 33111 Ford Road, Garden City

Details: Study is titled Understanding the End Time Prophecy

Contact: (734) 326-7000

BREAKFAST

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 15

Location: St. Theodore Social Hall, 8200 N. Wayne Road, Westland

Details: All you can eat pancakes, French toast, ham, sausage, scrambled eggs, applesauce, coffee, tea, milk, juice; \$3 adults; \$1.50 children, 2-10. Sponsored by St. Theodore Men's Club

Contact: (734) 425-4421

CONCERT

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21

Location: Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, 14175 Farmington Road, Livonia

Details: London, England-based Tenors Un Limited present original compositions and favorites in "The Rat Pack of Opera." Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students and children, and \$50 for a family ticket, (two parents and two students or children)

Contact: Michele at (734) 464-8513 or e-mail to tenorstickets@yahoo.com

WIDOWED FRIENDS

Time/Date: 2:30 p.m., Jan. 22; check-in starts at 2 p.m.

Location: St. Kenneth Church, 14951 Haggerty, Plymouth

Details: Mass followed by refreshments, social time. Widowed Friends is a peer group within the Archdiocese of Detroit that offers activities for widowed men and women in a safe and friendly setting

Contact: Pat at (734) 895-6246



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comfort
in Family and
Friends

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Saturday Mass 11:00 a.m.
Sunday Masses 7:30 & 10:00 a.m.
Confessions Heard Prior to Each Mass
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www.orchardumc.org
248-626-3620

Worship:
9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. Christian Education for all ages
Pastors: Carol J. Johns, Jim Braid, Margo Dexter

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(734) 422-0494

Friends in Faith Service 8:00 am
Traditional Service 10:30 am

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For information about our many programs

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www.christoursavior.org

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Sunday School/Bible Class 9:45 am
Early Childhood Center Phone 734-513-8413

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734-522-6830

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Sunday Worship - 11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening - 6:00 P.M.
Family Night - Wed. 7:00 P.M.
NEW HORIZONS FOR CHILDREN LEARNING CENTER
(734) 455-3196

PRESBYTERIAN

Fellowship Presbyterian Church

Adult Sunday School: 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. • Worship: 10:30 a.m.

Childrens Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.

Pastor: Dr. Jimmy McGuire

Services held at: Saint Andrews Episcopal Church
16360 Hubbard Road in Livonia • South of Six Mile Road
Nursery provided • www.fellowship-presbyterian.org

EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN

WARD CHURCH

40000 Six Mile Road
Northville, MI 48168
248.574.7400
www.wardchurch.org

Traditional Worship at 8, 9:30 & 11 a.m.
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The Plymouth Oratorio Society performs its 25th anniversary concert last year. The choral group sang Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and was joined by the Michigan Sinfonietta Orchestra. Its spring concert is May 6.

Sing your way through 2012 in a local chorus

By Sharon Dargay
 O&E Staff Writer

Make your voice heard this year — join a community singing group.

Local adult choirs are beginning to meet for weekly rehearsals — or have scheduled auditions — as they gear up for spring concerts.

"We are definitely an audition chorus. Your admittance to the chorus is based on audition," said Shelly Addison, manager of the Farmington Community Chorus. "It's not a difficult audition, but your voice is tested, range is tested and ear is tested."

"We say you really don't have to have previous chorus experience but do have to have a feel or ear



The women in the Livonia Community Chorus are decked out in new attire that they wore for holiday concerts last month. Livonia Town Hall helped defray the cost of the costumes.

for music. You won't pass the audition if you don't have some musical experience."

Reading music is an optional skill. All members receive a rehearsal CD to help them mas-

ter the songs planned for the group's holiday and spring concerts.

"Even if you do read music, it's still helpful to hear it," Addison said.

Auditions for the Farmington Community Cho-

rus are 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 10, 17 and 24 at the Costick Activities Center, 28600 W. 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt, in Farmington Hills. The group rehearses from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays

through early May at the Costick Center. Call Addison at (248) 250-1447 with questions, or visit www.farmingtonchorus.com.

Director Steve SeGraves and accompanist/assistant director Susan Garr will lead the auditions.

The spring show runs Friday-Saturday, May 4-5 at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills. The group repeats its spring concert in August at Heritage Park.

The Farmington Community Chorus is in its 32nd year and draws singers from throughout metro Detroit.

"We've been running about 70 members," Addison said. "We'd like to build that up a little. All voices are welcome, espe-

cially men. We're always looking for men."

In Livonia

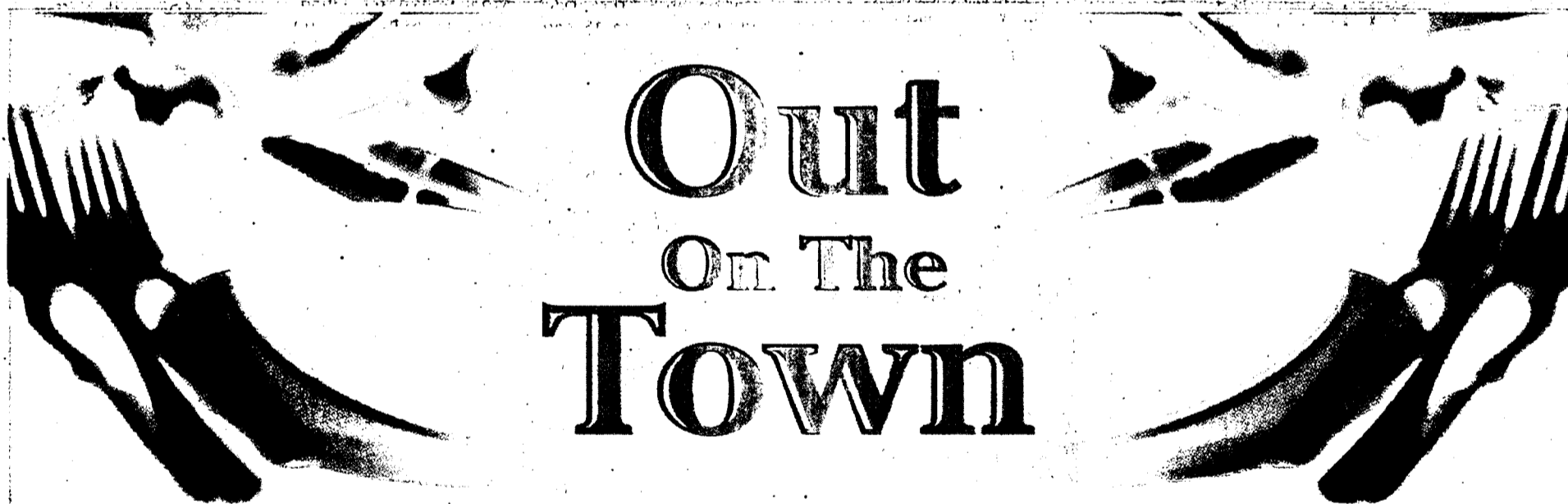
Livonia Civic Chorus could use a few more male voices, too.

"Yes, we'd like to increase the number of 'Men of the Chorus,' Peggy Gaskill, president, wrote in an e-mail to the *Observer*. She said membership in the mixed group averages about 50 singers.

Rehearsals begin Jan. 10 and run 7:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays, at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 Seven Mile, at Gill, in Livonia. Dues are \$50 for the January-May concert season.

The group's spring con-

Please see CHORUS, B6



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Olive oil is key in a well-stocked pantry

An increasing number of Americans are choosing to eat in, swapping expensive restaurant meals for budget-friendly dishes they can enjoy at home. One often-overlooked trick to stress-free home cooking and entertaining is simply having the right ingredients on hand. A well-stocked pantry not only makes cooking more efficient, it also helps stretch food budgets and leads to creativity in the kitchen.

Start with these basics and your menu options will be endless. Stock up on basic cooking ingredients, such as common spices and seasonings, including salt, pepper, basil, oregano, thyme, rosemary, red pepper flakes and garlic. Other staples should include olive oil, balsamic and red wine vinegars, and chicken, vegetable and beef broths.

Olive oil is a good all-around cooking oil that offers a variety of flavors. It's also a good choice if you're trying to control fats in your diet. Of the cooking oils commonly available in grocery stores, olive oil is one of the richest sources of monounsaturated fats and is naturally cholesterol-free.

For baking, keep flour, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, nuts and dried fruits in your cupboards. And heartier staples such as canned beans, rice, pasta, onions, potatoes and carrots help round out the basics for delicious home-cooked meals that won't break the bank.

"As Americans rediscover the joy of cooking at home, they're also learning how to cook more efficiently," stated Bob Bauer, president of the North American Olive Oil Association (NAOOA).

The NAOOA has developed several new recipes ideal for cool-weather cooking — from hearty breakfasts to delicious desserts — that highlight pantry staples and offer flavorful meals that are easy to make and fun to eat.

Mirepoix Chicken Skillet

Prep Time: 17 minutes
Cook Time: 10 minutes
Total Time: 27 minutes
4 servings

- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon garlic pepper seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon thyme leaves
- 8 boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- ½ cup finely chopped celery
- ½ cup finely chopped carrot
- ¾ cup white wine or chicken broth

Combine flour, garlic pepper and thyme in large plastic food storage bag. Add chicken; shake to coat; set aside. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add vegetables; cook and stir 1 minute. Push vegetables to outside of pan. Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil to skillet; increase heat to medium-high. Add chicken; cook 2 to 3 minutes per side to brown lightly.

Add wine to skillet; cover and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook 8 to 12 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cooked. Serve vegetables spooned over chicken or pull chicken into large chunks and mix with vegetables before spooning onto plates.

Phyllo Apple Galette

Prep Time: 20 minutes
Cook Time: 40 minutes
Total Time: 55 minutes, plus cooling time
6 to 8 servings

- 4 Braeburn or Gala apples, peeled, cored and coarsely chopped
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ cup slivered almonds
- 8 sheets phyllo dough (17-by-12-inch sheets)
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar

Heat oven to 375 F. In large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil over medium heat. Add apples, cranberries, brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg; mix well. Cook and stir 2 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in almonds and set aside.

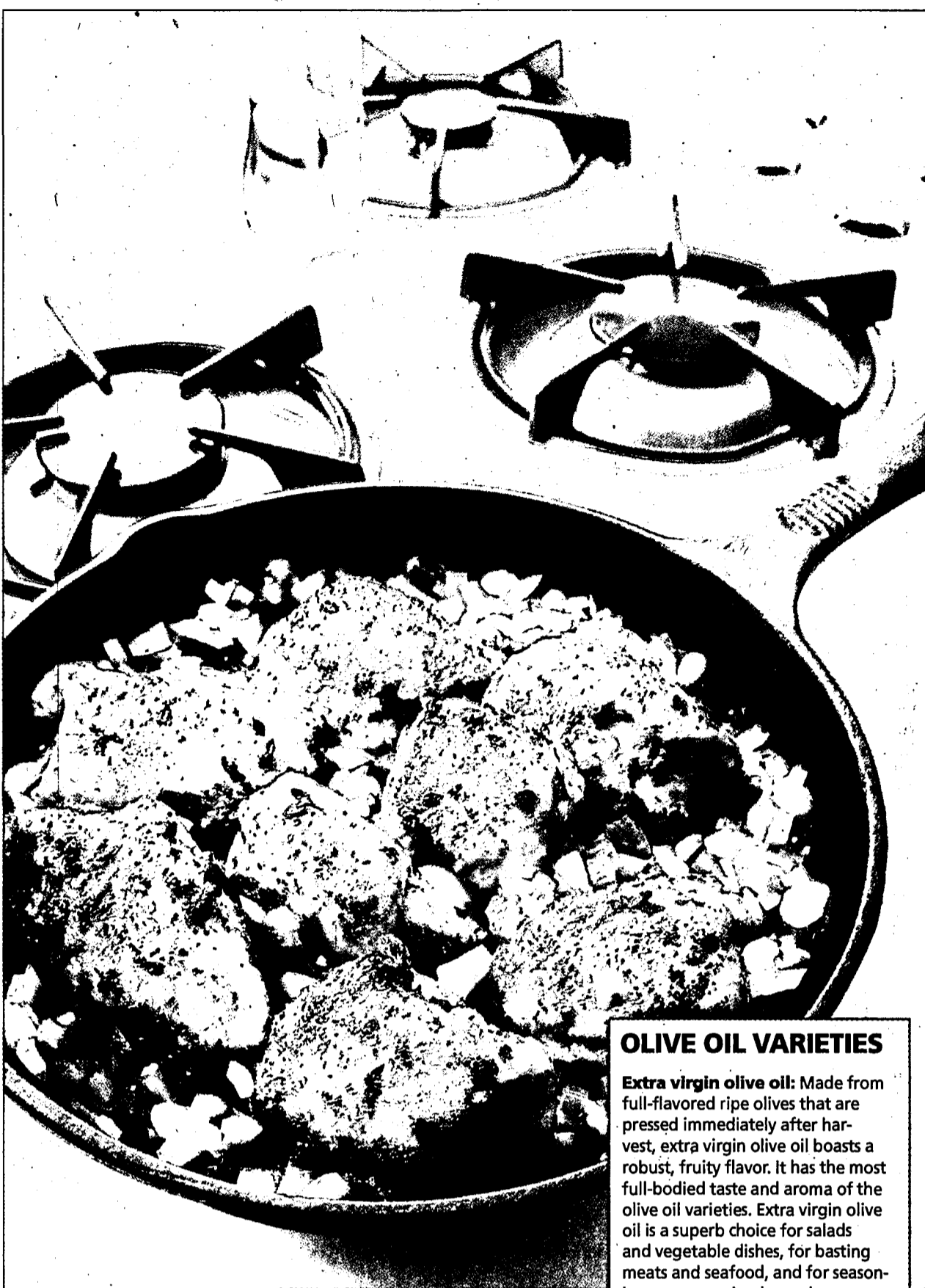
Place 1 phyllo sheet in center of baking sheet; brush with olive oil. Top with another sheet of phyllo and brush with oil. Repeat with remaining oil and phyllo sheets.

Pile apple mixture in center of phyllo, leaving 2 to 3 inch border. Fold sides up to form an edge around apples. Lightly brush edges with oil. Bake at 375 F for 40 to 50 minutes or until phyllo is light golden brown. Cool to room temperature; dust with powdered sugar if desired.

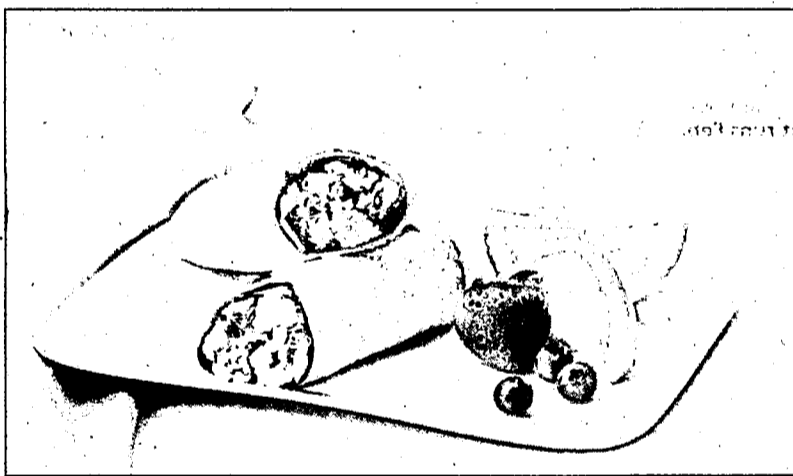
TIP: When working with phyllo dough, thaw if frozen. Allow unopened package to stand at room temperature at least 2 hours before using. Room temperature phyllo is much easier to work with than cold. Keep unused sheets covered with plastic wrap and a dish towel to prevent drying while brushing stacked sheets with oil.



Layered Phyllo Apple Galette



Mirepoix Chicken Skillet



Vegetable-Cheese Breakfast Roll Ups

Vegetable-Cheese Breakfast Roll Ups

Prep Time: 12 minutes
Cook Time: 6 minutes
Total Time: 18 minutes
3 servings

- 4 eggs, beaten
- ½ teaspoon tarragon, optional
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon coarse ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup coarsely chopped mushrooms
- ¼ cup chopped red pepper
- ¼ cup diced fully cooked ham
- 3 tablespoons shredded Monterey Jack cheese

3 8- to 10-inch flour tortillas, warmed
In medium bowl, beat eggs, tarragon, salt and pepper; set aside. Heat oil in large skillet

over medium heat. Add onion; cook 1 minute. Add ham and pepper; cook 2 minutes, stirring once or twice. Add mushrooms; cook and stir 1 minute. Pour egg mixture over vegetables.

Stir, scraping sides and bottom of pan 2 to 3 minutes or until eggs are desired texture. Remove from heat. Sprinkle with cheese; cover and let stand 1 minute to melt cheese.

Spoon onto tortillas; roll to enclose egg mixture.

Lemon Crunch Cod Fillets

Prep Time: 6 minutes
Cook Time: 18 minutes
Total Time: 24 minutes
4 servings

- ½ cup seasoned dry bread crumbs
- ¾ teaspoon dried dill weed
- ¼ teaspoon lemon pepper
- 4 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 pound cod fillets, thawed if frozen
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel, optional
- Parsley, optional

Heat oven to 375 F. Lightly grease small baking sheet or shallow baking dish with additional olive oil; set aside. In small bowl, mix bread crumbs, ½ teaspoon dill and ¼ teaspoon lemon pepper. Drizzle with 2 teaspoons olive oil and mix well until moistened. Set aside. Pat fish dry with paper towel; place on baking sheet. Brush fillets with remaining 2 teaspoons olive oil; sprinkle



Lemon Crunch Cod Fillets

with lemon peel if desired, remaining ½ teaspoon lemon pepper and remaining ¼ teaspoon dill. Top evenly with crumb mixture, pressing lightly to adhere. Bake 18 to 22 minutes or until fish flakes easily in center. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley, if desired.

OLIVE OIL VARIETIES

Extra virgin olive oil: Made from full-flavored ripe olives that are pressed immediately after harvest, extra virgin olive oil boasts a robust, fruity flavor. It has the most full-bodied taste and aroma of the olive oil varieties. Extra virgin olive oil is a superb choice for salads and vegetable dishes, for basting meats and seafood, and for seasoning soups, marinades and sauces. Or use it alone as a dip for breads. Reach for extra virgin olive oil when you desire a full, rich flavor in your foods.

Olive oil: Sometimes described as "pure," olive oil is an excellent all-purpose cooking oil that is more golden in color than extra virgin olive oil. It has a mild flavor with just a hint of fruitiness. It can be used for everything from sautéing and stir-frying to basting grilled or oven-roasted meats, poultry and seafood. Olive oil also works well as a flavor enhancer for sauces, marinades and dressings.

Extra light olive oil: With its light golden color and just a hint of olive flavor, it is the mildest of the olive oils. It's an excellent choice for all types of cooking, especially baking. It can be used in place of plain vegetable oil in most recipes. Extra light olive oil also is the best choice for high-heat cooking methods, because it remains extremely stable and won't burn. Extra light olive oil has the same amount of calories and the same nutrient content as other olive oils.

Cranberry Carrot Cookies

Prep Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 26 minutes
Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes
Makes about 2 1/2 dozen cookies

- 1 (18.25 ounce) package white, spice or carrot cake mix
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup quick or rolled oats
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup shredded carrot
- 1 small apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup golden or dark raisins
- ½ cup coarsely chopped almonds, optional

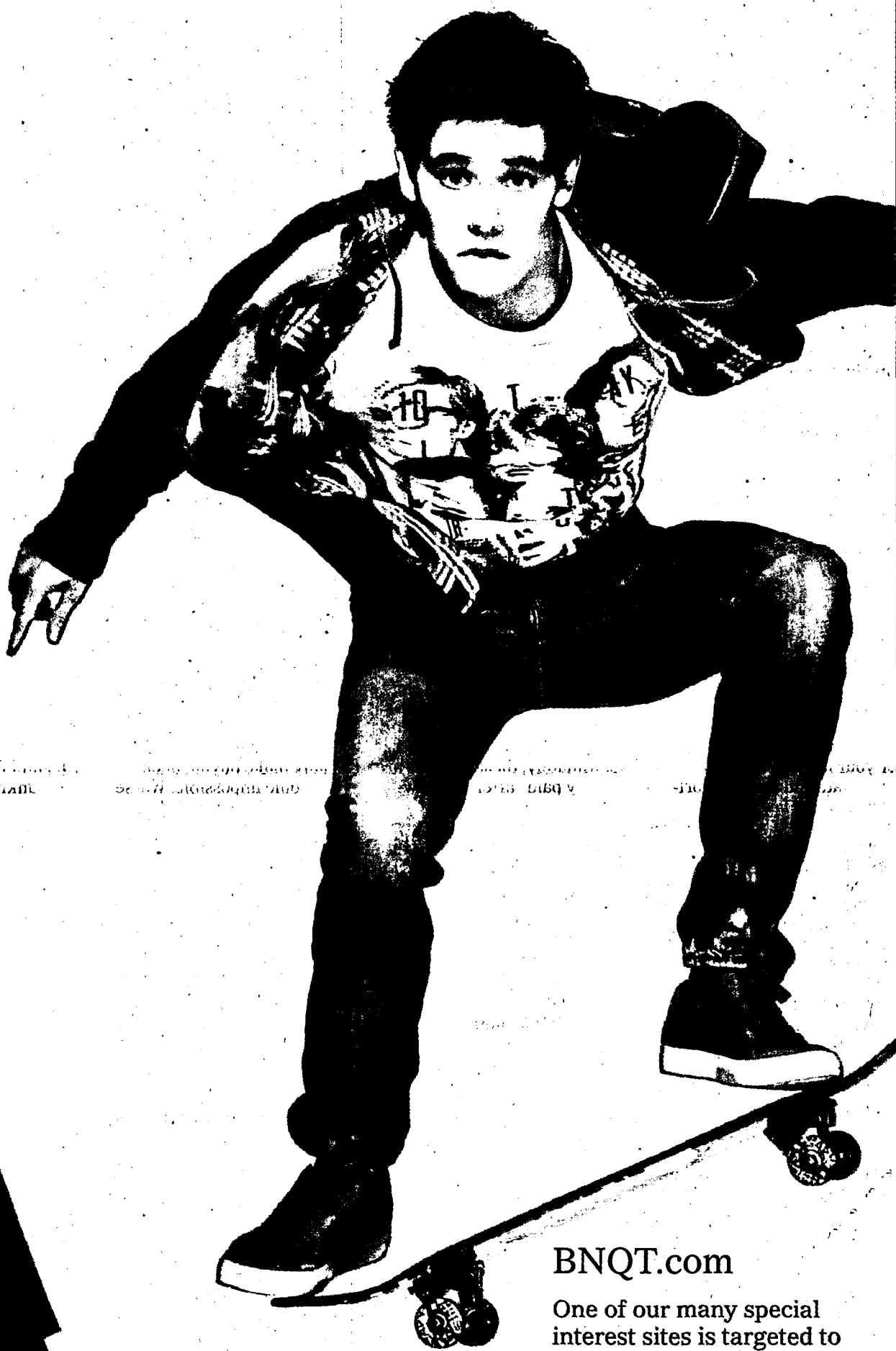
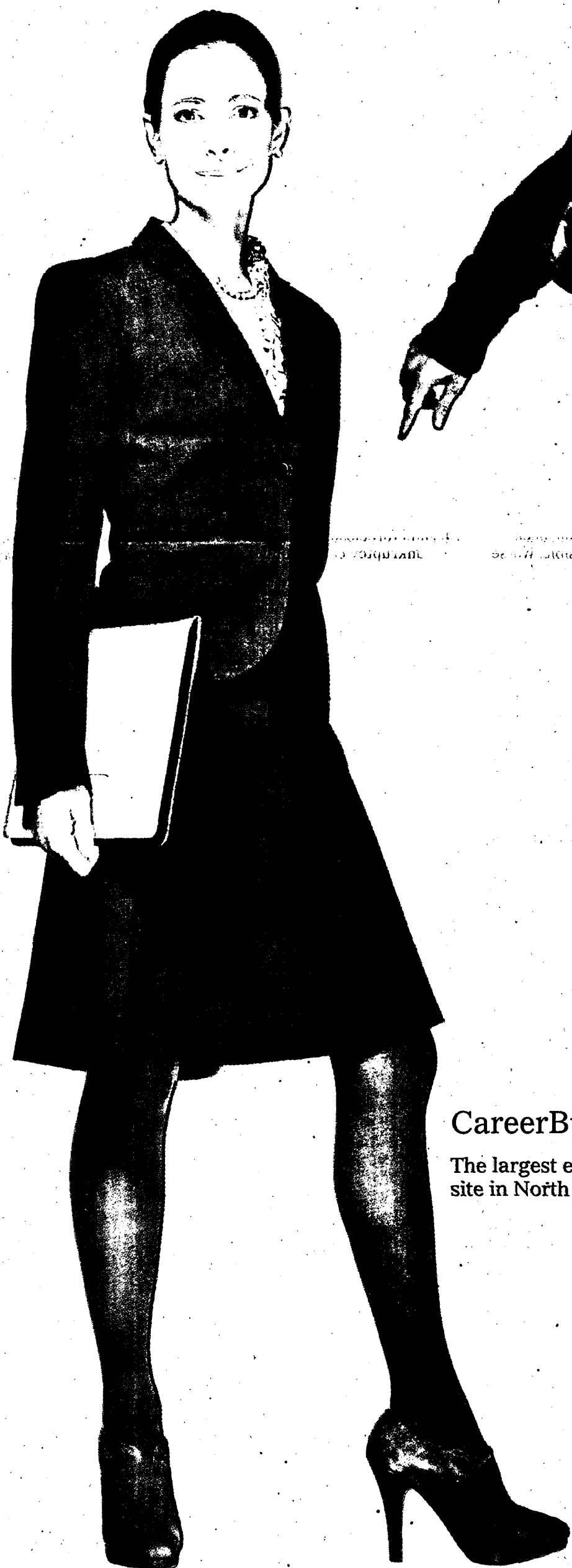
Heat oven to 375 F. Combine all ingredients in mixing bowl; mix well.

Drop by heaping teaspoons onto ungreased baking sheet. Bake 10 to 13 minutes or until light golden. Cool 1 minute on baking sheet; remove to rack to cool completely. Dust with powdered sugar, if desired. Repeat with remaining dough.

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