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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2013 • hometownlife.com

City changes retirement benefits for new hires

By LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

Elected and appointed Westland officials will have changes in their retirement benefits aimed at reducing the city's future legacy costs. "I think Westland has come a long way and we're on a good financial footing," Westland Mayor William Wild said. "We are still facing \$236 million in unfunded retiree liabilities."

In January, Wild said he will ask the council to meet and find a way to address the unfunded liabilities. On Monday, the council approved plans for new hires appointed and elected employees that will eliminate retiree health care. Instead the city will provide a \$2,000 annual contribution to a health care savings account. Instead of a defined benefit pension, going forward employees will be offered a de-

fined contribution retirement plan — the municipal equivalent of a 401k plan. The city would contribute to the plan on a 2-to-1 match for participating employees with a \$12,500 annual maximum cap. If the employee doesn't contribute to the retirement plan, the city would not be obligated to make any match.

Millions saved

Under this scenario, Wild said the city would save \$4.8

million over the life of the employee. "The numbers start to get amazing with these two changes as we move forward," Wild said. "We want to get those same concessions from all our employee groups. We're starting at the top." As approved, the plans affect the department directors, mayor's staff, city clerk and deputy appointed or elected after Jan. 1. "There are no proposed

raises for in the Appointed Officials and Mayor's Pay Plan," said Wild, adding that pay increases are tie-barred to the police command officers contract which will be negotiated in January. Council President James Godbout handed the meeting gavel to President Pro Tem Adam Hammons to make motions regarding the pay plans. "The mayor is to receive

See BENEFITS, Page A2



The Rev. Teodor Petrutiu proudly shows the certificates of naturalization after he and his wife Roxana took the oath of citizenship. PHOTOS BY TOM BEAUDOIN

Buford retires as Westland DPS director

By LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

It's likely that Kevin Buford will be answering his telephone a lot less often now that he has retired as Westland Department of Public Services director. "Twenty four/seven you could get a hold of him. It's always, 'Sure, we'll get that done.' You'll be greatly missed," Westland Council President James Godbout said.



Buford

During Buford's last council meeting, other council members shared similar comments noting they had Buford on speed dial and how frequently they spoke with him about concerns or questions. "Kevin has been our right-hand man at DPS — snow, water events, water main breaks," Westland Mayor Wil-

See BUFORD, Page A2

Priest becomes U.S. citizen before congregation

By LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

Taking the Oath of Allegiance to become an American citizen Sunday, the Rev. Teodor Petrutiu shared that milestone with his congregation at Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church.

"Taking the oath in front of the parish community, I think it was a special touch," said Petrutiu, who was joined by his wife Roxana in becoming U.S. citizens. "It was a tribute not just to me and my wife but to all the immigrants who built their homes and the church."

Parish priest at Sts. Constantine and Helen in Westland since 2007, Petrutiu and Roxana, whose has the title presbytera as the priest's wife, are both natives of Romania. The couple came to the United States in 1998 when Petrutiu served in a Romanian Orthodox parish in Cleveland.

In 2001, Petrutiu was accepted in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, where he served as deacon to the Metropolitan and Registrar of the Metropolis of Detroit. Petrutiu served in that role until being appointed to serve the Sts. Constantine and Helen parish.

"Most of the people here (Sts. Constantine and Helen) are immigrants or descendants of immigrant," Petrutiu



Federal Judge Sean Cox administers the oath of citizenship.

See CITIZEN, Page A2

Wayne city manager search to continue

By LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

It looks like Wayne Department of Public Works Director Ramzi El-Gharib will be wearing two hats for awhile longer. The council interviewed two potential candidates for the vacant city manager position Saturday. Council members decided neither was a good fit and will revisit the search after the holidays. That means El-Gharib will continue serving as acting city manager. The council is looking into getting some additional help with the upcoming budget preparation as the city faces a \$2 million deficit. "I know the caliber of candidates applying was disappointing," said William Costick, a retired city manager working as a consultant on the city manager search. "It's not Wayne. A lot of managers are looking to leave Michigan for places without the financial issues here."

See SEARCH, Page A2



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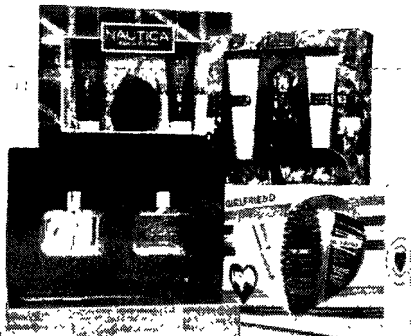


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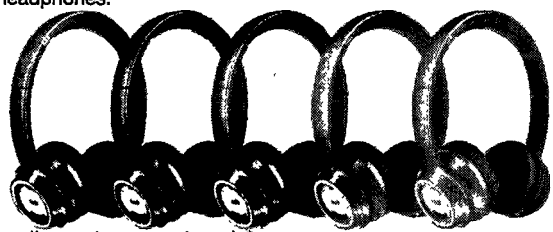


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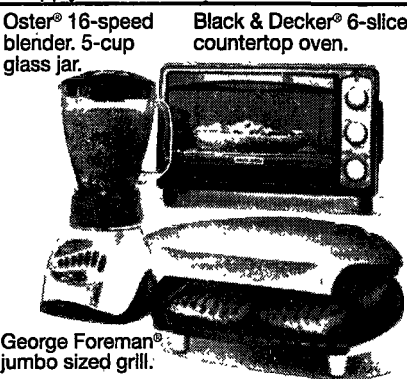


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Church's vision: Glory to God, service community

By Sue Mason
Staff Writer

Anthony D. Shannon was a business person, working food service for Marriott, when he heard a voice inside him. It told him what he was doing wasn't what he was supposed to be doing. The voice told him he was supposed to be a minister.

Twenty-four years later, he is the pastor, teacher and prophet of The Victory Church International, bringing God's words to residents in the Norwayne Community and beyond.

"I'm still amazed," Pastor Shannon said. "When I was younger, I had a speech impediment. They told my mother I was retarded and would never graduate from high school. That's why it's amazing when God said he wanted me to preach the gospel."

Victory Church held its first service on Christmas Day 2012 in a vacant church on Grand Traverse across from the community's Liberator Park. Sixty people were in attendance. In March, the church was dedicated.

"We declared it back to God and the community," Pastor Shannon said. "On the front is the words, 'For the glory of God and service to the community.' It was built in 1947 and obviously was built to honor God and work with the community. That's our inherited vision."

Finding a home

Pastor Shannon has been a minister since 1989 and has been a pastor for seven years. He was with a church on Woodward Avenue in Berkeley and moved to Inkster and the Beyond the Veil International Church. He turned to prayer to find out what area it was that God



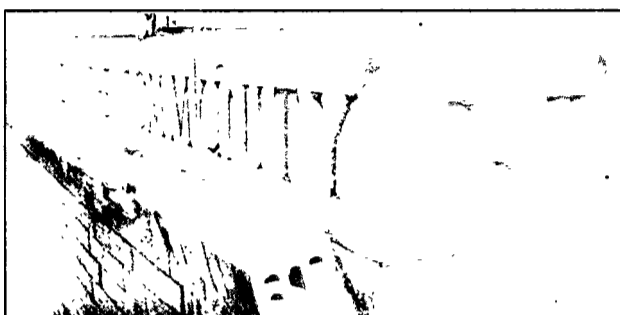
Pastor Anthony D. Shannon talks about the programs offered by his church. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

wanted him be.

"We didn't really have a home, we prayed and the Lord told us Westland, Canton or Romulus," he said. "I was at a service at Detroit Outreach and was told about this vacant building and I decided to do it."

The vacant building was the original church in Norwayne. It had gone through several different affiliations and had been sitting empty for eight months when Pastor Shannon bought it. Missing is the large cross that once hung on the facade above the front door, but the message, etched in stone, is still there.

"We have a vision," Pastor Shannon said. "We didn't want to be squatters or lease, we want to be the owners so people can see that we're here for the long run. When I talked with Hank Johnson, I said we were here to bring change and hope to the community. They're concerned about the community and we're community minded."



The cornerstone shows the year the church was built.

In addition to renovating the church, Pastor Shannon has already begun looking at ways to provide services to the community. His plans include a service to honor and bless the police, fire and EMS, as well as a gas buy in which the church purchases gasoline in bulk and then sells it to the community at 40-50 cents off the regular price. He did it in Detroit and had enormous lines.

He also wants to do a feeding program. He also did one two days a week in Detroit and had 700-800 people attend. The

Wayne-Westland Salvation Army and the city provide food, and Pastor Shannon wants to join. He wants to eventually have people come in to eat and provided them with 80-90 pounds of food, enough to feed a family of five for almost two weeks.

"We already have a partnership with Gleaners and Forgotten Harvest," he said. "We want to be able to give them food so they can make a well-balanced meal."

The church also adopted 12 families at Thanksgiving. Last year it had a Christmas dinner in the

basement of the church and the plan is to do it again on Christmas Day. It also provided a summer program for 60 youngsters and staged a Family Fest with clowns, a circus, petting zoo, food court and entertainment that attracted 2,000 people.

'Know we're here'

But to make those plans happen there needs to be an awareness of the church.

"People need to know we're here, we need volunteers to help with our community projects," Pastor Shannon said.

The Victory Church International is an independent church. It's part of the Joel Osteen Champions Network, and Pastor Shannon is a member of the Association of Independent Ministers. His wife Glynis also is first lady and a minister.

In addition to services on Wednesday evening and Sunday morning, Pastor Shannon has also

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taken to the airwaves with a weekly radio show at 10:30 p.m. Wednesdays on 1440-AM. He also hosts Prophetic Knights once a month.

"We actually use the gift to pray for people," he said. "One lady saw there would be sickness in her life. When it happened, she went through it and knew what was coming. People come back with testimonials, so we know it's working. It's miraculous. It's God through me helping them."

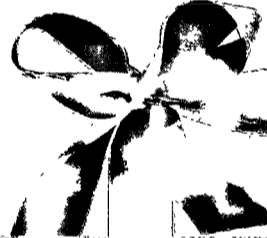
Pastor Shannon also sends out words of encouragement by email. Called the Word of the Day, the messages are meant to encourage recipients. One recent email simply said, "Never ever forget what he's done."

"Everything we do is about winning, and about teaching people how to win and overcome their problems," he said. "We teach them from abundance so they can see they can get out of the box. We empower them."

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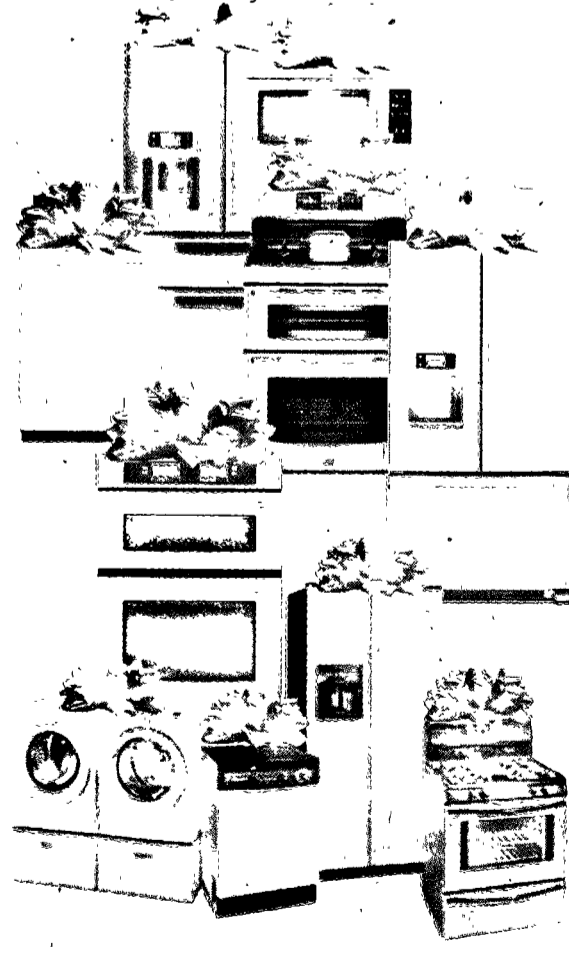
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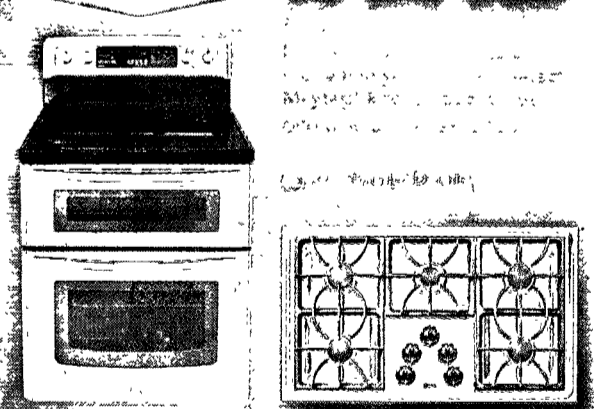
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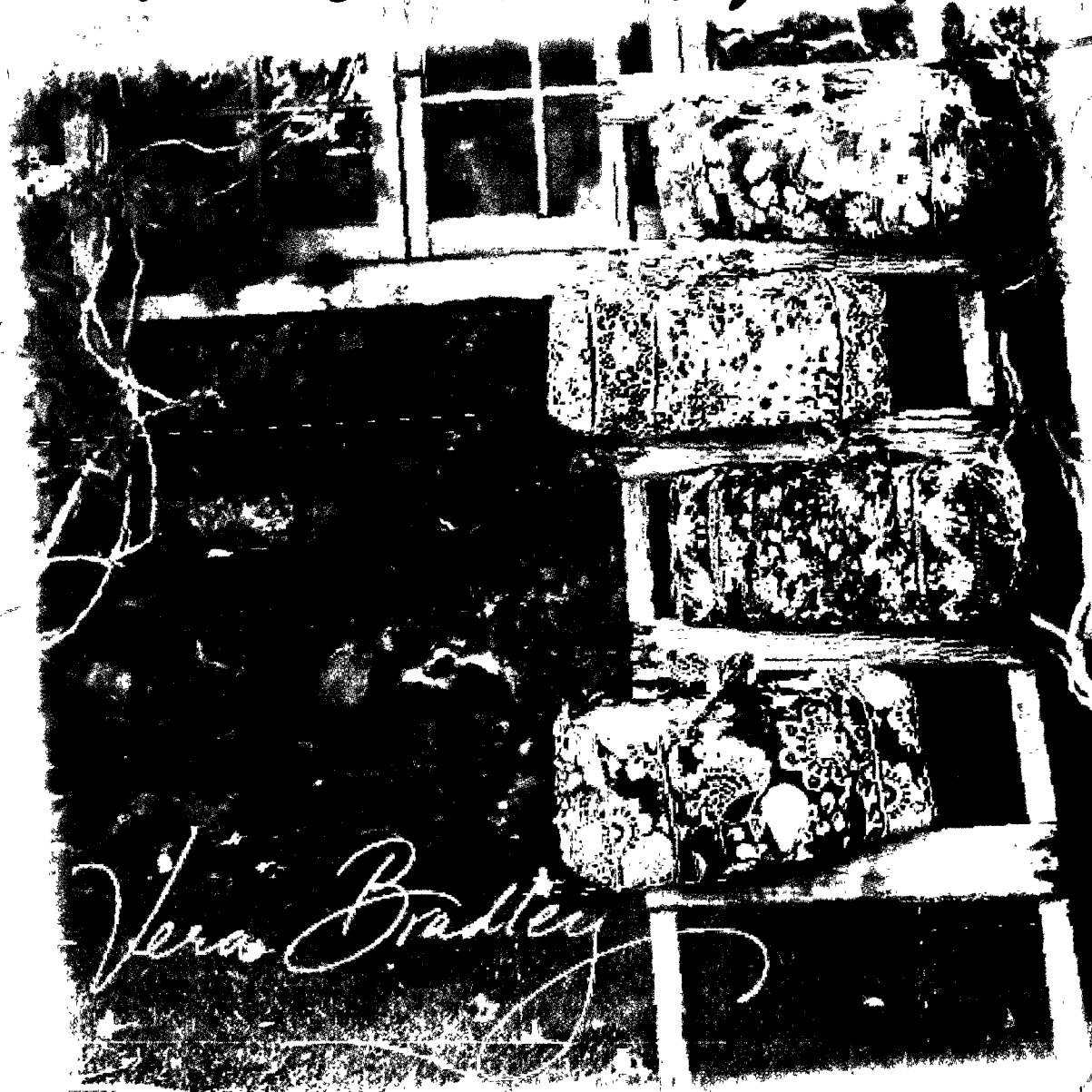


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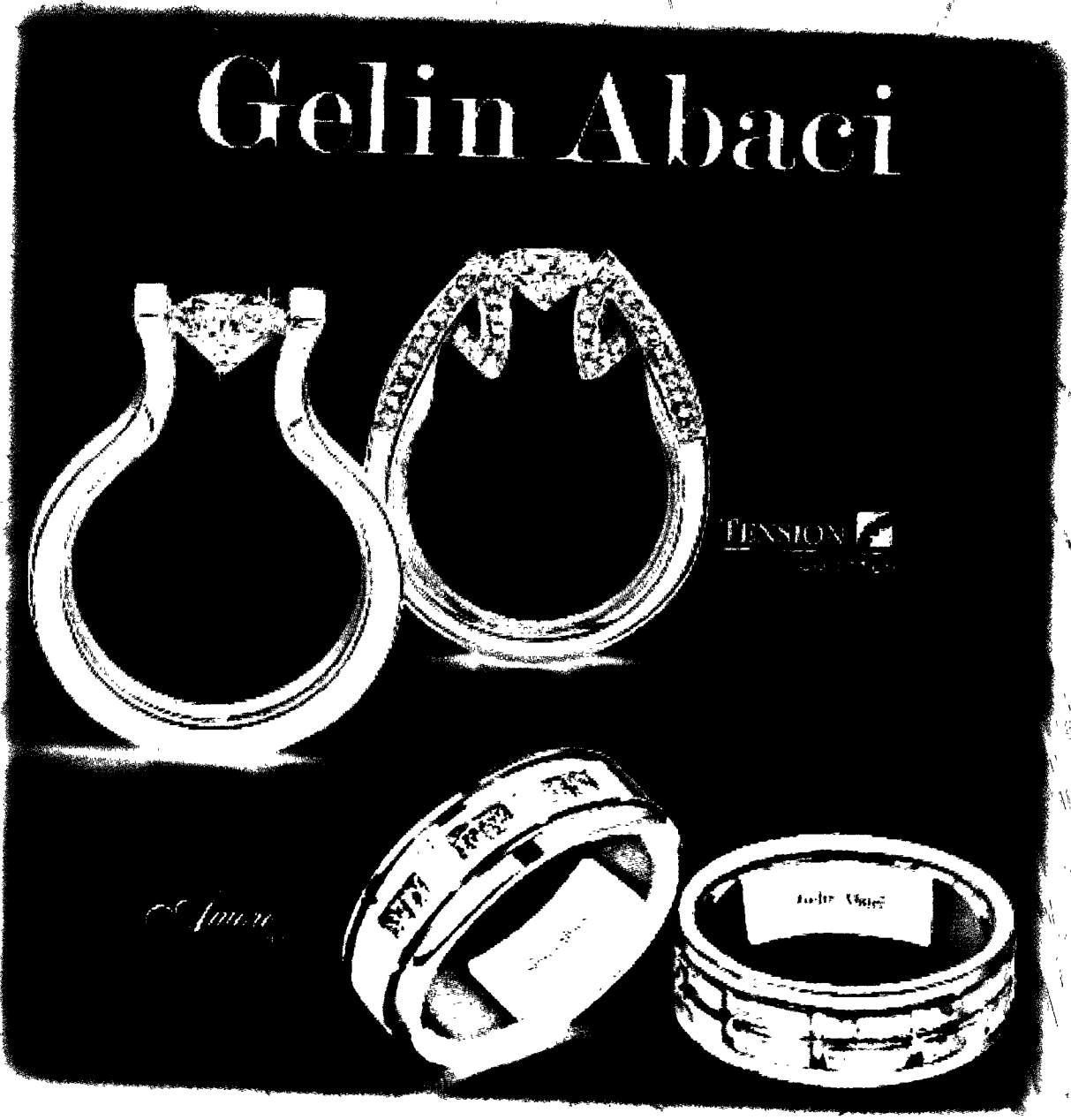
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Glenn-Pershing hoops game called after fights in stands

Incidents deemed unrelated to Tip-Off Classic at Detroit Edison

By Brad Emons
Staff Writer

A day-long celebration of prep boys basketball met an ugly conclusion Saturday night in the Horatio Williams Foundation's Tip-Off Classic held at Detroit Edison PSA Early College of Excellence.

There were no tensions on the court during the final game of the day between Westland John Glenn and Detroit Pershing, but two unrelated incidents

in the jam-packed gym, including one that filtered onto the court to start the third quarter, caused tournament officials to cancel the second half.

Pershing was leading the Rockets 34-12 when the game was called. The Glenn-Pershing game, which originally was scheduled to start at 8:40 p.m., started an hour later. The Rockets (0-2) played without their top player Isaac Everette, a 6-foot-4 senior who missed his second straight game with a broken finger. Starting 6-foot-7 senior forward James Pruitt played, but was nursing a sore ankle.

Glenn coach Dan Young said the incidents, which turned violent, had

nothing to do with the two schools. The previous game featured Detroit Consortium College Prep and Detroit Frederick Douglass.

"The teams were fine," Young said. "It was just people in the crowd. It was just unfortunate, so we'll what happens. They said maybe we can try and make up the second half ... maybe later in the year and try to do that, or otherwise we'll take it as a loss."

Glenn has played in the Tip-Off Classic four different times.

"The Horatio Williams Foundation has put on games for years and years and we've never had a problem," Young said. "This was an unfortunate situation

where the games got later and there were some unfortunate fights in the crowd. It just got to where it felt unsafe and they shut our game down at half-time."

The Horatio Williams Foundation offers academic, life skills training and sports programs in Detroit.

"I don't think it's a reflection on the people that run it or the people trying to do the right things down there," Young said. "It was one of those things. They're great guys and they do a lot of great stuff. They called me to me to apologize for it."

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BOYS BASKETBALL

Rockets find a way against Stevenson

Glenn earns tough 49-42 win on road

By Brad Emons
Staff Writer

It's been a tough start for the Westland John Glenn boys basketball team.

The Rockets had to go without their top scorer and senior leader Isaac Everette (broken finger) in lopsided losses to Detroit Public School foes Pershing and East English Village.

But Glenn showed a glimpses of promise Tuesday night with a hard-fought 49-42 win at Livonia Stevenson, which dropped its third straight after winning its season opener.

"I thought we were pretty good defensively," Glenn coach Dan Young said. "The offense is going to come. When you lose a guy like Isaac, it just changes your whole focal point. It changes your whole rhythm. So we're working on that. It's going to take time."

And with Everette out of the lineup once again, Glenn started slowly — hitting just 3-of-15 shots from the floor in the first quarter — but still led 9-6.

It was 23-23 at halftime, but Glenn outscored Stevenson 16-10 in the third quarter and built a 47-34 lead with 4:44 left in the fourth quarter on a basket by 6-foot-7 senior forward James Pruitt.

Stevenson, however, went on a late 8-0 run to cut the deficit to 47-42 on a runner by Noah Campbell with 1:09 left.

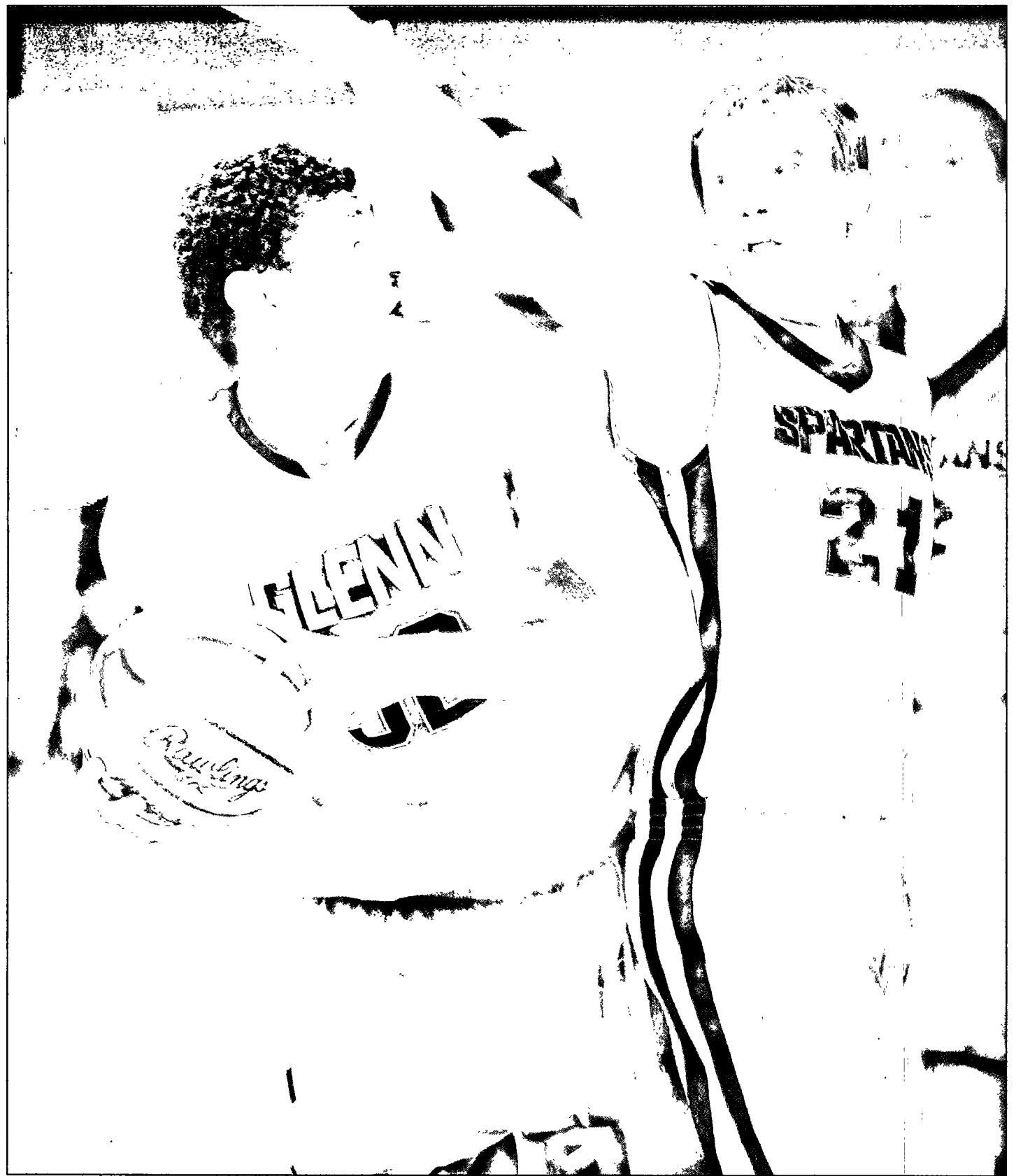
The Spartans then forced a Glenn turnover with 30 seconds left, but promptly returned the favor with a turnover of their own after a timeout.

Glenn was then able to run out the clock.

"We draw up a nice out-of-bounds play for Noah to come off and make a three-pointer for us, and we turned it over," Stevenson coach Brandon Sina-wi said. "It never happened and that was a big possession."

Junior guard Mychael Bradley paced Glenn in scoring with 13 points, while Pruitt added 12. Mo Foani and Mike Edwards added nine and eight, respectively.

Stevenson's top scoring tandem was led once against by Campbell, a junior guard who tallied 16, along with Jailen



See CAGERS, Page B4 Glenn's 6-foot-8 center Mike Edwards (left) vies for position against Stevenson's Nolan Bradford (21). DOUGLAS BARGERSTOCK

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL



Madonna University senior point guard Bobby Naubert matched a career-high with 31 points in a loss to No. 9 Davenport. PATRICK MOORE | MU SPORTS INFORMATION

Crusaders can't hold off Davenport

Panthers stop Madonna, 86-80

By Brad Emons
Staff Writer

The Madonna University men's basketball team is literally limping into the holiday break.

Despite a career-high 31 points from senior point-guard Bobby Naubert, the Crusaders missed a golden opportunity to stay in a tie for first in the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference with a 86-80 setback Saturday at home against No. 9 Davenport.

Javontae Ford paced Davenport (9-2, 5-2) with 28 points, while Dominez Burnett and Mike Betcher added 15 apiece.

MU led 37-36 at intermission, but trailed a majority of the second half.

With 2:04 left MU's Jeff Schmitz made a layup to pull the Crusaders to within two, 80-78, but Ford answered

with a jumper with 1:46 to play and Burnett added a layup with 51 second remaining to help seal the win.

Davenport had 30 points inside the paint to MU's 16 and also won the second-chance points battle, 13-3.

"That's really what it came down to — they were able to get to the rim and they were able to get to the basket," said MU coach Noel Emehiser, whose team slipped to 7-6 overall and 5-2 in the WHAC. "And then they were able to get shots that they didn't miss on the offensive glass. In the second half we were just a step late, unable to stop a drive and late in the rotation. We just gave them too many opportunities on the run. They made a couple of more plays than we did unfortunately."

Davenport shot 50.8 percent from the floor (31-of-61), including 7-of-17 from three-point range.

"Good teams find a way and they're certainly a good team," Emehiser

said. "They made one or two more plays down the stretch than we did."

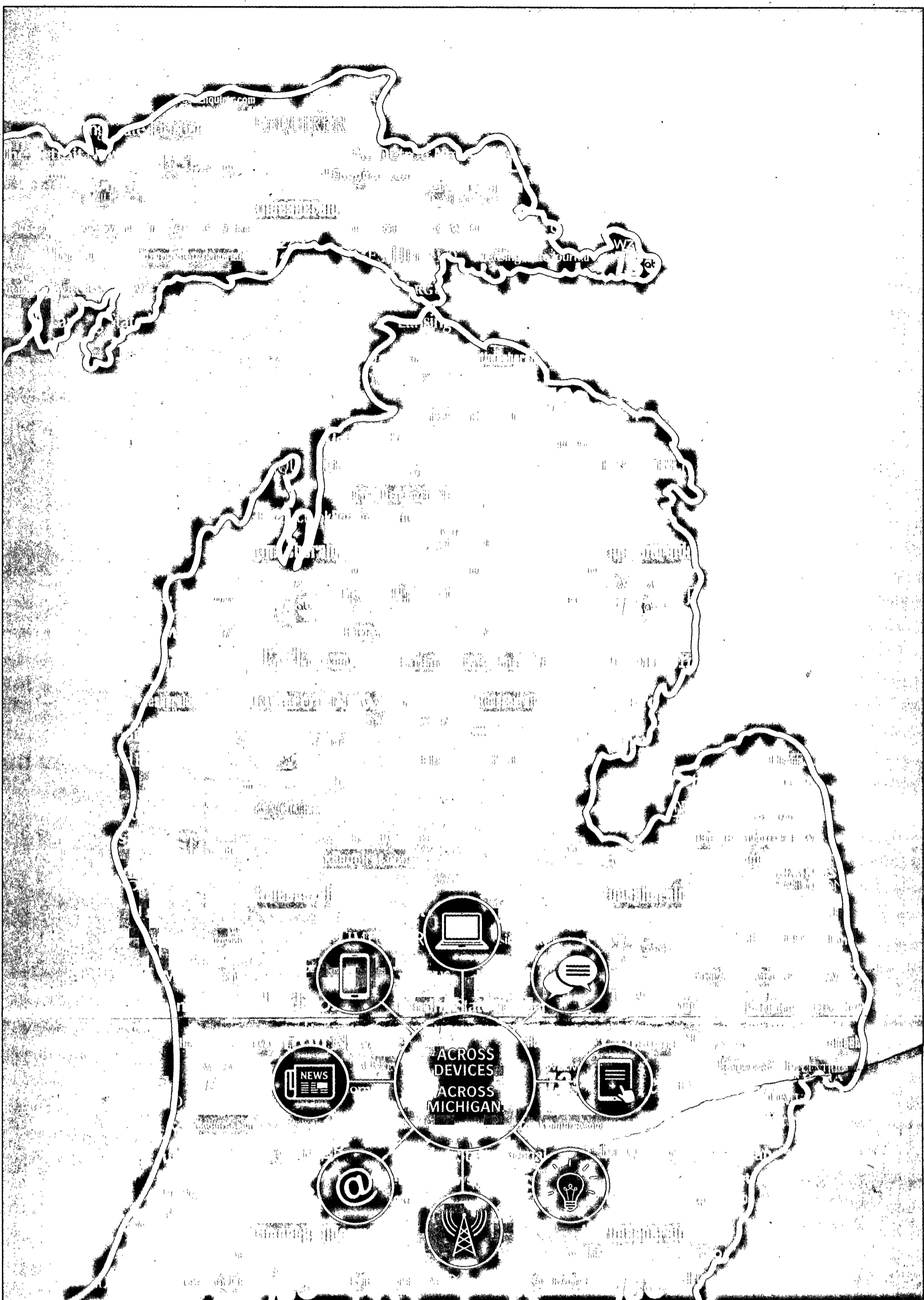
With key reserve senior forward Derek Lennon missing his third straight game with a high ankle sprain, the Crusaders also lost senior forward Fred Williams, the team's third leading scorer, to a possible Achilles tendon injury midway through the second half.

Williams was awaiting test results on Thursday.

"We're praying Fred (Williams) will get a good diagnosis when he sees a doctor," Emehiser said. "But we're certainly spread thin now in the post position. As a team we're going to have to collectively step up with two huge losses there."

Junior center Donald Owens added 13 points, while the team's second leading scorer Travis Schuba added 10 for the defending WHAC tournament

See MADONNA, Page B4



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