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WAYNE-WESTLAND OBSERVER

THURSDAY 03.24.16 || HOMETOWNLIFE.COM || PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Tests: Lead level not high in Westland water

LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

None of the water samples collected from 380 Westland homes showed actionable levels of lead, with the majority at or near the level of non-detection.

"Over 90 percent of the homes had less than action levels. No home exceeded the action level," said Fred Hoitash of RTI Laboratory in Livonia,

which conducted the testing for the city. "Most importantly, the results correlated with the lead and copper testing results over the years."

Hoitash presented the test results at Monday's council meeting. Unlike a recent special meeting, only one question was asked about the location that had the highest level among those tested.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency sets an ac-

tion level of 15 parts per billion for lead in drinking water. Of the water samples tested, 237 had no detectable level of lead; another 103 samples had less than 1 ppb; 31 samples were at 1-5 ppb; and two homes had samples in the 10-14 ppb range.

"With the two houses, one at 10 ppb and 13 ppb, we'll circle back to see if there is something we can help them with inside the house," Westland Mayor William Wild said. "We'll

also do that with those with levels over 5 ppb."

The council approved testing to reassure residents in the area bounded by Palmer to Glenwood, Wayne Road to Wildwood in response to allegations by a Department of Public Services worker that the city failed to replace lead water main leads to homes. In prior testing results, the city had not shown high lead levels.

The Michigan Department

of Environmental Quality was informed of the voluntary sampling done by the city. The city had last sampled 15 homes in 2014 and the DEQ asked that four specific addresses within the testing area be tested. The results ranged from non-detectable to 10 ppb.

In the follow-up inspection, only one lead pipe had not been replaced on the city side.

See LEAD, Page A2

Wayne's efforts to join authority moving forward

LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

Efforts by Wayne to join a regional public safety authority to fund police and fire services have taken another step forward.

A resolution from the Wayne Council seeking membership in the South Macomb Oakland Regional Services Authority was accepted by that group's three-member board at their meeting Friday.

"They accepted our resolution. Now it goes to their councils," Wayne Mayor Susan Rowe said. "There should be no problem with them passing it."

SMORSA currently has two member communities: Hazel Park and Eastpointe. The board members are Hazel Park City Manager Edward Klobucher, Eastpointe City Manager Steve Duchane and Macomb County Treasurer Derek Miller.

Financially strapped due to the recession drop in property values and unable to levy additional millage, even with voter approval, Hazel Park and Eastpointe joined to form the authority as a funding mechanism. The cities aren't contiguous and there is no operational merger.

If approved by their councils, an August primary ballot question would ask voters in Hazel Park and Eastpointe to approve Wayne joining SMORSA. That membership would be contingent on Wayne voters approving the a levy of 14 mills — a legal requirement because that is the amount levied by the other communities.

"With the vote for 14 mills, it is in effect approval to join SMORSA. There would be one question on the ballot," Rowe said.

That means that if voters in Hazel Park and Eastpointe approve Wayne's membership in August but Wayne voters reject the millage question,

See SMORSA, Page A2

WOMEN BEHIND BARS

USA TODAY NETWORK ILLUSTRATION | THINKSTOCK



Lakeshia Valdez appears in 17th District Court in Redford in 2012 during her murder trial.

Valdez on committing murder: 'I never expected it ...'

David Veselenak
Staff Writer

Throughout the halls of the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility, Lakeshia Valdez is known as inmate No. 855914.

That's the number she's been assigned while serving time for the murder of Redford resident Matthew Olivarez, whom Valdez stabbed and killed in 2011 during an argument at a house off Garfield Street, south of Six Mile, in Redford.

"We got into it. I grabbed the knife and I stabbed him," she said in an interview at the prison, located off U.S. 23 in Washtenaw County's Pittsfield Township. "He was talking to me. I stabbed him again. And I stabbed him again."

The house, along with Olivarez's remains, were later set on fire and several of his items were taken before Valdez left to go back home downstate. Some jewelry and other items were later recovered from a pawn shop in

See VALDEZ, Page A8

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

In our first installment of Women Behind Bars, ex-school teacher Nancy Seaman reflected upon a marriage that ended in murder. Now we hear from Lakeshia Valdez, a young mother of two who was just 19 years old the day she repeatedly stabbed her former boyfriend, then set his body on fire with the intent of evading justice. Reporter David Veselenak, who covered the original crime, found a more hardened Valdez this time around.

INSIDE

- » Nancy Seaman case fits domestic abuse pattern
- » Battered woman defense gaining attention

Prison: A story of conflicting lives

Welcome to the DOC." These words greeted me as I completed paperwork earlier this winter to gain visitor access to the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility in Pittsfield Township. A guard at the desk uttered them to me as I completed the initial visitor paperwork, adding to the intimidation factor of being in a place containing the state's convicted female felons.

Nothing to make me feel better about my first trip visiting a prison. I thought a lot about what a trip to the prison would be like for several



David Veselenak
STAFF COLUMN

See VISIT, Page A8



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SMORSA

Continued from Page A1

Wayne doesn't join SMORSA. With SMORSA formed in 2014 for 20 years, Wayne voters would be asked to approve an 18-year levy to coincide with the other communities.

Hazel Park only needed to levy 7 mills and as a result reduced its general fund levy 7 mills as an offset. The Wayne Council has also discussed an offset to not levy the full 14 mills.

"We are hopeful that we should be able to lower our operating mills — probably 5 mills at the maximum," Rowe said. "We have to see what happens with our property values."

When discussion about joining SMORSA began, one mill in Wayne was worth \$375,000. For 2016, the

city will only generate \$350,000 despite an average 1-2 percent increase in residential property values — the reduction comes through a drop in commercial and industrial values.

Before the property value decrease, Wayne had already been projecting a more than \$2 million deficit for the current fiscal year and that the city will run out of money by Labor Day 2017.

The attorneys for each city are working on ballot question language.

A citizen committee is being organized to support the 14-mill ballot question and expected to be meeting shortly.

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Albert's on the Alley sports bar closes doors again Saturday

Albert's on the Alley, a sports bar on Middlebelt and a fixture on the Garden City business scene, closed its doors Saturday night. A sign on the door announces "temporarily closed for restaffing and restructure."

Kim Dold, executive director of the Garden City Downtown Development Authority, said, "From what I understand, he's temporarily closed. That's pretty much all I know." Owner Steve Valenti serves on the Garden City DDA board.

"I haven't talked to him; waiting for him to give us a call," Dold said Tuesday afternoon. "That's what I was told," she added.

A *Garden City Observer* story of Sept. 15, 2015, was headlined "Albert's reopens after short closure." That story noted the resignation of a chef at the time of a major event, which Valenti cited for the closure then.

Valenti said at that time his business is up for sale with a restaurant planned. He declined to identify the potential buyer.

Valenti said last September he is losing money because area bars try to undercut each other. When his restaurant is sold, he plans to open another business, ideally in Garden City but he said then it's too early to know more specifics. Valenti could not be reached for comment Tuesday.



Albert's on the Alley closed its doors Saturday, a temporary move according to a sign posted in the window.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

WESTLAND OBSERVER

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LEAD

Continued from Page A1

Homes could still have pipes that need to be replaced on their property or inside their homes. The Great Lakes Water

Authority recently made a presentation on its testing procedures and treatment to avoid the corrosion-related problems that resulted in lead contamination in Flint.

RTI staff dropped off 650 bottles in the designated area with 350 collected with samples. Another 30 bottles were dropped by residents

after the pick up date. "That's over a 50-percent return rate — it's better than expected," Hoitash said.

All of the 380 homes have been mailed their results, City Attorney James Fausone said.

Prior to Monday's meeting, the council heard a presentation on the proposed 2016-17

Community Development Block Grant budget that included \$10,000 earmarked for interior lead pipe replacement on rental homes in Norwayne.

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Reading fun's going to the dogs at Garden City's Lucky Dog business

Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Pet-A-Pet reading dogs were guests of honor Saturday, March 19, at the Lucky Dog business on Middlebelt in Garden City.

Children were able to read to the friendly canines from a selection of books on loan from the Garden City Public Library, both picture books and beginning readers. Lucky Dog offers boarding and kennel services as well as grooming, other services for pets and a store.

It's done "because we love dogs and we love kids," said Stacy Karafotis, owner of Lucky Dog with partner Craig Poisson. "It kind of brings the community together. All the dogs really enjoy it."

This was the third time such an effort was held at Lucky Dog, with preschoolers on up signed up, including teen students with autism from the Garden City district's Burger Baylor School, which serves Wayne County.

"It's very calming for a kid to read to a dog because a dog doesn't judge them," Karafotis said. She appreciated the loan of books from the Garden City Public Library.

"It's such a great event for kids. Hopefully,

we'll be able to continue to do events with them in the future," said Erin Look, GCPL youth services librarian. She picked the books "to encourage kids to be more confident readers. Reading out loud is such a good way to help vocabulary. Plus it's fun."

Look picked titles from "what's fun for kids to read out loud, what's funny." She enjoyed doing the book selections and working with Lucky Dog staffers.

Karafotis urged a look at Lucky Dog's Facebook page with information on "WoofTrax," a collection of shoes for Third World countries. It's continuing through May 1 at Lucky Dog.

The Garden City business is also collecting gently used baby clothes, baby wipes and related items for a Community Baby Shower of the People's Community Church. Also being collected are plastic tops for pop bottles, detergent containers and others.

The plastic tops are taken to Indiana and converted to benches for local schools, with Memorial 1-2 Campus getting one last year, Karafotis said. This year's focus is on Lathers Pre K-K Campus.

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Livonia resident Joey Brake waits as Jackie looks at the pictures as he reads to her at the third annual Lucky Dog reading event held in Garden City on Saturday.



Garden City resident Dea Qazimi reads "A Cake To Bake" to Pippin at the Lucky Dog business as therapy dogs from Pet-A-Pet were on hand to the delight of over 40 children throughout Saturday afternoon.



Buttercup, a 2 1/2-year-old golden retriever, is in love with Mariam Safah as she reads "Is Everybody Ready for Fun?" this past Saturday at the third annual Pet-A-Pet reading event held in Garden City.



TOM BEAUDOIN Casey gets a hug from Lillian Smith of Garden City after reading at the Pet-A-Pet reading event held Saturday at Lucky Dog.

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Electrical problem linked to house fire

LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

An electrical problem is being listed as the cause of a fire that damaged a home in the 33000 block of Wallace in Westland on March 18.

"An electrical power strip malfunctioned. The fire originated from an outlet," Wayne-Westland Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal Kelly Eggers said. "We think it was an old fan with insulation that was compromised and got overheated. It was plugged into the power strip along with a phone charger."

The fan/power strip was plugged into an outlet in the homeowners' bedroom. "There were some housekeeping issues that caused the fire to spread — there was clothing and the bedroom was set up like an office," Eggers said.

The homeowner and his wife were not home but a cou-

ple who rents a room at the house was there and reported the fire at 11:39 a.m.

"They saw smoke coming out of the vents. There was a cold air return right above where the fire started," Eggers said. "They (the roommates) heard a pop, then saw the smoke."

The cold air return being above where the fire originated also resulted in heat and smoke being drawn into the rest of the house, causing significant damage to the house, he said.

"There was significant smoke and water damage but not really structural damage. The house will be able to be rehabbed," he added.

The roommates were able to escape the home without injury. Inside were two dogs and a cat. Firefighters utilized an animal respirator to give at least one of the dogs oxygen.

"This is the first time I've



WAYNE-WESTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT
The fire at this home in the 33000 block caused extensive smoke and water damage.

seen it used. There is a big mask that goes over the animal's snout," Eggers said. "It fits perfectly around the animal's face. You still get great seal and high pressure forces oxygen into the animal."

In this case, Eggers said one

dog was older and had been scheduled to be put to sleep prior to the fire. The owner signed the dog over to Westland Animal Control, which in turn gave the dog to the Michigan Humane Society to be euthanized.



WAYNE-WESTLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT
Wayne-Westland firefighters used an animal respirator to treat a dog rescued from a fire in a home on Wallace. The dog, described as old, was euthanized at the owner's request — something scheduled before the fire.

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WESTLAND COP CALLS

Larceny

» The owner of a vacant home in the 7300 block of Af-feldt told police March 19 that someone had stolen the central air conditioning unit from the home sometime over the previous three days. The owner, a resident of Woodstock, Ontario, valued the unit at \$2,760.

» A Westland woman told police March 20 that she went to check on a vacant rental home she owns in the 32000 block of Melton and found someone had removed the aluminum siding. She said she last saw the house sided Feb. 1. The siding was valued at \$2,500.

» On March 20, a Garden City man told police that he arrived at a vacant home in the 30000 block of Hiveley that he owns and is being remodeled to find a basement window broken. Inside, he said all the copper pipes from the basement, valued at \$600, were

gone.

» A Manchester woman told police March 17 that she is in the process of selling a home in the 300 block of S. Merriman and it has been vacant for sometime. The house is secured with dead bolt locks and has a realtor lock box.

The woman said she was notified by her real estate agent on March 10 that the lock box had been destroyed and the key used to enter the house. Missing were copper plumbing from the basement, along with a new stainless steel sink and five or six boxes of wood laminate flooring taken from the living room.

Fraud

On March 17, a Westland woman told police that she had been alerted March 1 that someone had withdrawn all the money off her Social Security benefits card. Two transactions, \$221.70 and \$289.21, were made in Nashville, Tennessee.

Suspicious circumstances

A resident in the 200 block of Lollypop at Westland Meadows Mobile Home Park told police March 16 at about 3 a.m. during a thunderstorm she heard someone jiggling the door to her mobile home trying to get inside.

In the morning, she said she found the driver's side window had been popped out of the track and forced down without breaking it. She said the vehicle was ransacked but nothing was missing.

Vandalism

On March 19, a resident in the 100 block of S. Parent told police that sometime overnight someone had thrown a rock through her front living room window causing a hole and shattering it. The rock came from her landscaping. The damage was set at \$1,000.

LeAnne Rogers

WAYNE COP CALLS

Larceny from a vehicle

On March 15, police were called to the area of Wilshire and Glenwood about a Ford Explorer missing its wheels and tires. The driver's side was resting on a three-ton jack and the passenger side was sitting on the brake rotors.

The vehicle was parked in the 36000 block of Glenwood where the registered owner also lives. The tires and wheels were valued at \$4,000. Police towed the vehicle as a hazard.

Stolen vehicle

A resident in the 5100 block of Gloria told police March 16 that someone had stolen his 2000 Chevrolet Silverado while it was unlocked and running in his driveway. He said he started the car about 9 a.m. and went back inside the house to get his work clothes. When he

came back out, he said the truck was gone.

Fraud

A Wayne man told police March 10 that he had been contacted by a collection agency about a \$3,559 outstanding balance on a closed account with Verizon Wireless. He said he had never authorized the account, which was opened in May 2015.

Checking his credit report, the man said it showed the past due account was \$4,782.

Larceny

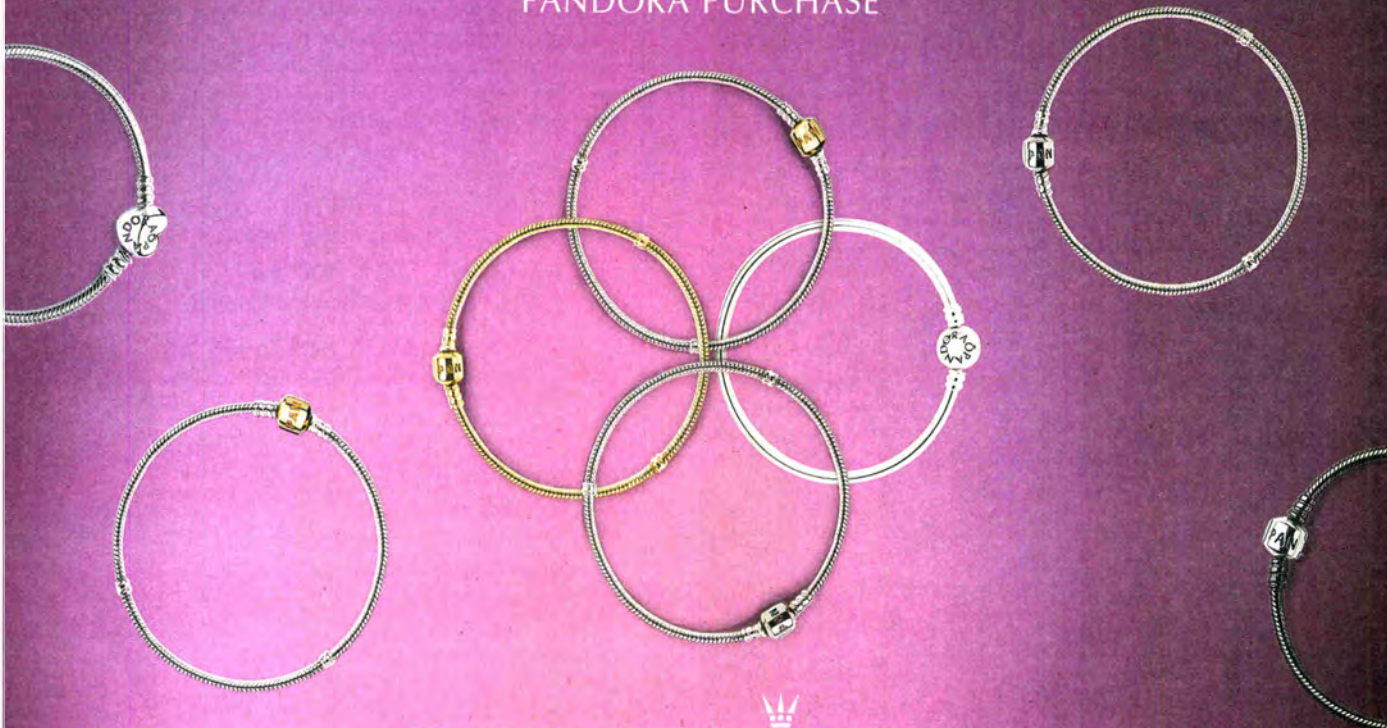
The owner of Helium Studio, 3127 S. Wayne Road, told police March 16 that a man was in the store looking at a ring. She said she was distracted by another customer and the man left. Later, she said she realized a stainless steel ring was missing and found the price tag on the floor. The ring was valued at \$28.

LeAnne Rogers

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Former Detroit Red Wing John Ogrodnick is a regular at the Hockey Night in Westland charity game.

Charity hockey game draws capacity crowd

The annual Hockey Night in Westland drew a capacity crowd to Mike Modano Arena to see the Red Wings Alumni take on Mayor William Wild's Wild Wings.

As they have for the past seven years, the Red Wings Alumni won the game. This year the 5-4 score was closer than most years but it raised money for improvements to the arena.

"It was a great night and raised a lot of money for the arena," said Wild, adding the totals raised at the event weren't known yet.

Wild's son Luke, 13, played in his first hockey night game but joined the Red Wings Alumni team.

"He didn't score but he had a blast. He's 13 and his games are much rougher," Wild said.

John Ogrodnick and Darren McCarty were among the former Red Wings players taking the ice.



Westland Mayor William Wild heads up the ice with former Detroit Red Wing John Ogrodnick behind him.



Westland Mayor William Wild headed the Wild Wings while his son, Luke, 13, (center) joined Darren McCarty on Detroit Red Wings alumni team for the annual charity Hockey Night in Westland game.

Easter event at Attwood Park is Friday

Wayne's annual Marshmallow Drop will be Friday at Anderson field in Atwood Park. There will be three drops: 10 a.m. for children up to age 4; 10:15 a.m. for ages 5-7; and 10:30 a.m. for ages 8-10.

This is a free event. Crosspointe Community Church in Wayne is sponsoring the Marshmallow Drop. There will be a Bunny Brunch immediately following the drop at nearby HYPE Recrea-

tion Center, 4635 Howe Road. Tickets are still available and can be purchased by calling HYPE at 734-721-7400. Tickets are \$6 for ages 3-11 and \$8 for ages 12 and up. Kids 3 and under are free.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Happily ever after

The Alexander Blue House at Greenmead hosts "Happily Ever After," a chance to reminisce about weddings, showcase vintage gowns and photos from 7-9:30 p.m. Thursday, April 14. Visitors will begin at the decorated Historic Newburg Church for a presentation, followed by the "reception" at the Alexander Blue House for hors d'oeuvres, sparkling beverages, wedding cake and coffee.

Advance tickets are \$15, available at the Greenmead office, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. All tickets are non-refundable and first-come, first-serve. No walk-ins. Tickets will be sold through Monday, April 11. All proceeds benefit the preservation of Greenmead Historical Park.

Kindergarten readiness

The South Redford School District Shear Kindergarten Readiness Program offers children who reside in South Redford and will be 4 years of age by Sept. 1 an opportunity to experience quality learning activities that foster development as they grow toward kindergarten.

Classes meet Monday through Thursday, morning or afternoon, for three-hour sessions. This is a tuition-free program (with the exception of a one-time material fee of \$75).

Registration takes place in the preschool room on Friday, April 22, from 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. The preschool room is in the Shear Early Childhood Center at 26141 Schoolcraft (Use the second parking lot south of Schoolcraft on Berwyn).

For more information, contact the Student Services Dept. at 313-535-4000, Ext. 1028 or visit srpreschool.weebly.com.

1,000 books

Families are invited to join the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program at the Livonia Public Library. It's a nationwide challenge that en-

courages parents and caregivers to regularly read aloud to their children. By reading just one book a night, families can reach the 1,000-book goal in three years and provide their children essential early literacy skills.

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program is available to all families with children between the ages of birth and age 5. Registration is open. For more information, call the library at 734-466-2493 or visit www.livoniapubliclibrary.org. This program is free of charge.

Spring bazaar

St. John's Episcopal Church hosts its Spring Bazaar from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 2, at the church located at 555 S. Wayne Road.

The event features arts, crafts, baked goods, etc., with lunch available. For more information call 734-721-5023 (Monday-Friday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.).

Mom2Mom sale

The Garden City High School Mom2Mom Sale takes place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at the high school, 6500 Middlebelt. Sellers and shoppers will get good deals on new and gently used baby and kids clothes as well as toys, games, DVDs, books, strollers, bikes, swings, bouncers, etc.

There will be more than 85 tables to shop from, a large item area, concessions and a bake sale. Admission is only \$1 (\$2 for early bird at 8:30 a.m.). Tables are \$25 for an 8-foot table/chair including standard rack space (you provide rack).

For more information including the table agreement, visit www.facebook.com/gcmom2momsale or email gcmom2mom-sale@hotmail.com.

Dr. Seuss selfie

The Redford Township District Library is hosting a "Dr. Seuss Selfie Contest" during March.

Kids can take a picture of themselves with something that repre-

sents the world of Dr. Seuss, perhaps a stuffed animal, a T-shirt they own, a drawing they did and have the picture on display in the library for the month of March.

The most creative entry will receive a prize chosen especially for them. For more information, contact the youth/teen services department at the library, 313-531-5960, ext. 117.

Maltese Bingo

The Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc., presents "Shamrock Bingo" Mondays and Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. at 33111 Plymouth Road in Livonia.

The MABSI is donating 50 percent of its proceeds from its fundraising bingo nights to help www.flintkids.org throughout March.

For more information, call 248-557-2000.

Vintage toy show

The Livonia Elks host a Vintage Toy Show from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 26, at the Elks Hall, 31117 Plymouth Road (east of Merriman).

Customers may find comic books, hot wheels, games, lunch boxes, Star Wars and Star Trek items, sport and non-sport cards, posters, movie/TV items, models, G.I. Joes, music memorabilia, records, beer signs and more. Admission is \$5; kids under 12 are free.

For more information, call Joe (daytime) at 586-775-3289 or Jacquie at 586-329-8213.

For more information, call Joe (daytime) at 586-775-3289 or Jacquie at 586-329-8213.

Family fun

InsideOut Church, 1075 Venoy in Garden City, hosts an afternoon of fun and exciting carnival games for families with children in fifth grade and younger 3-5 p.m. Saturday, March 26.

Kids can get their pictures taken with the Easter Bunny, Easter candy and a golden egg with the chance for their family to win a prize package worth \$100. For more information, call the church at 734-983-8376.

Karate tournament

Shotokan Karate Federation of Michigan hosts a Michigan Karate Tournament on Sunday, April 10, at Garden City Middle School, 1851 Radcliff.

Age groups include 5-11, 12-17, 18-34 and 35-older. Cost is \$40 for one event, \$50 for two events, \$60 for three events and \$70 for four events. Registration deadline is Sunday, March 27.

Doors open at 9:30 a.m. For more information, contact Sensei Tony Valvona at 734-658-5683 or email Tony@karatemi.com.

Letters of Intent Notice REQUEST PROPOSALS

The Senior Alliance (TSA) is requesting proposals to provide the following services to adults age 60 and older in the 34 communities of southern and western Wayne County, Michigan. Some adult day care and respite funding will include service to individuals who are age 18 and older.

Adult Day Care	Home Delivered Meal Program Assessments
Caregiver & Community Transportation	Kinship Caregiver Legal Aid
Caregiver Legal Aid	Safe-At-Home (Safety Modifications)
Elder Abuse Prevention Services	Nutrition Programs Administration
Friendly Reassurance	Medication Management
Evidence-Based Disease Prevention/Health & Wellness Programs	Legal Aid
Home Delivered Meals & Congregate Meals Preparation	Senior Center Staffing

****NOT ALL SERVICES LISTED MAY RESULT IN AWARD OF CONTRACT****

Service Period: FY 2017-2019 (October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2019)

Bidders must provide services in one (1) or more of the following communities. Additional criteria will be provided concerning serving residents of all listed communities.

Allen Park	Gibraltar	Plymouth	Taylor
Belleville	Grosse Ile Township	Plymouth Township	Trenton
Brownstown Township	Huron Township	Redford Township	Van Buren Township
Canton Township	Inkster	Riverview	Wayne
Dearborn	Lincoln Park	River Rouge	Westland
Dearborn Heights	Livonia	Rockwood	Woodhaven
Ecorse	Melvindale	Romulus	Wyandotte
Flat Rock	Northville	Southgate	
Garden City	Northville Township	Sumpter Township	

All prospective applicants for FY 2017-2019 funding for the above listed programs **MUST** submit a Letter of Intent **PRIOR** to submitting a formal application. Final funding levels for FY 2017 have not yet been determined. **Complete Letter of Intent requirements can be found at:** <http://www.aal1c.org/doing-business-with-us/request-for-proposal>

Letters of Intent may be mailed, delivered, or e-mailed to:

The Senior Alliance
ATTN: Nicole Jeffrey
3850 Second Street, Suite 100
Wayne, MI 48184
njeffrey@tsalink.org

Letters of Intent must briefly describe the basic elements of the program, major benefits of the applicant agency, major partners, and innovation/sustainability. Letters of Intent must not exceed one (1) page in length.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) documents will be available only to those who submit a Letter of Intent in writing NO LATER than 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2016.
TSA will hold an Application Workshop on May 2, 2016 and all bidders are strongly encouraged to attend.

For more information, please call: (734) 858-2238

ABSTRACT WAYNE CITY COUNCIL MEETING NO. 2016-09 March 15, 2016

A Regular Meeting of the City Council was held Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 8:00 p.m. at the Wayne Activity & Banquet Center, 35000 Sims Ave. MEMBERS PRESENT: Miller, Rhaesa, Porter, Sanders, Gabriel, Sutton. MEMBERS ABSENT: Rowe. Presentations were done for the Police Officer of the Year Abe Hughes, Jaws of Life by Capt. Gilstorff and the Senior Alliance. APPROVED: minutes of reg. mtg. of March 1; notice of public hearing for special assessments; budget amendment for \$25,389.00; resolution for FDCVT Grant; amendment to DDA Bylaws; communications and reports; and consent calendar. Adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Matthew K. Miller
City Clerk

Published: March 24, 2016

Wayne-Westland Community Schools Westland, Michigan 48185 ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Wayne-Westland Community Schools will receive sealed bids for:

PURCHASE OF Ford 2016 F-750 Gas Base Regular Cab Truck & Morgan Dry Freight Van Body

Bids will be received until the time and the place, as follows, where and when the opening of bids will be conducted in public:

Date: April 5, 2016
Time: 10:00 a.m. EST
Place: Board of Education
Wayne-Westland Community Schools
36745 Marquette
Westland, MI 48185

All bids received after the date and time stated above will not be considered. The sealed bid is to be date-stamped in the Business Office no later than Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. The outside of the envelope must include the bid title, due date and time and be addressed as follows:

Wayne-Westland Community Schools
David Kaumeyer, Senior Executive Director of Business and Operations
Purchase of Ford 2016 F-750 Gas Base Regular Truck & Morgan Dry Freight Van
36745 Marquette
Westland, MI 48185

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

Wayne-Westland Community Schools reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. Questions regarding this bid should be directed to Tony Spisak, Executive Director of Maintenance & Operations at 734-419-2162 or SpisakT@wwcsd.net. A copy of the RFP may be obtained by contacting Kim Droblich at 734-419-2048 or DroblichK@wwcsd.net.

Published: March 24, 2016

Livonia movers 'treat people right'

Observer: Please tell our readers about your company, including the goods and services you offer.

Men on the Move: We are a full service moving company, meaning pretty much whatever you need done we can do for you. We not only provide local moving service but long distance as well. We can help with other moving services as well, including storage, packing, loading or unloading rental trucks, or just looking to buy boxes and packing supplies.

Observer: What makes your business unique?

Men on the Move: A lot of movers are what we call fly-by-night movers. They don't have an office, they answer calls through their cell phones, not insured, not licensed. Men on the Move isn't that type of company. We have been serving southeast Michigan since 1991. We treat our employees like family and it shows; most of our staff has been here over 15 years, including the movers. I don't think we are unique at all. I think we just do good business and treat people right. That is how it is supposed to be and that is how we do it.

Observer: How did you decide to start your business?

Men on the Move: My partner, whose name is also Gary, was looking for a new business idea. He was already part owner of Nankin Hardware & Hobby in Westland and wanted something else. He purchased the rights to a moving franchise in 1991 and I became his first employee. I had previous experience in the moving industry before I joined the Army and he at the time didn't have any experience so it was a great fit for both of us. After three years I became a 25-percent partner and then, two years later, a 50-percent partner, which is where we are today.

Observer: Why choose Livonia?



Gary Bulson and his partner, Gary Wrigley, base Men on the Move's success on "treating people right."

MEN ON THE MOVE

Business name/address:

Men on the Move, 12400 Merriman, Livonia

Your name/title: Gary Bulson, co-owner with Gary Wrigley

Business opened: July 1991

Number of employees: Ranges from 15-30 depending on the time of year.

Business specialty: Our specialty is local residential moving, but we do also provide packing, storage and out of state moving for those customers who need those services.

Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Phone number/website: 734-744-9547 / www.michiganmovers.com

Men on the Move: We had been in Westland for 23 years and loved the community. But we service such a large area we wanted to try to move a little more north and closer to freeways for our better access to other communities. We had been looking for about five years for the right building to come along when we found our current location. The business that was here was closing because the brothers wanted to retire and they were motivated

to sell. Looked around and talked with several Livonia business owners and heard nothing but positive things about the city. The location, although not much farther north than Westland, had great freeway access and main street exposure for our business. That was in September 2014.

Observer: Do you have an amusing anecdote to share that shows the lighter side of small-business ownership?

Men on the Move: I have several stories over the years that I could tell but one of my favorites was from 2004, when we took part in the TV show *Home Extreme Make-over* for a family from Royal Oak. Over the course of a week we had to go in and pack up all of the family's belongings and move them to storage pods while the make-over took place. Once they finished updating their home we got to move all of the family's personal belongings back into this beautiful redesigned home. The experience of being a part of something like that I will never forget. Not only does it make you feel good but it was a great bonding experience for all my employees to be a part of.



The JARC Center for Autism and Rehabilitation Services hosts its grand opening March 31.

JARC opens autism center

JARC, an organization serving people with disabilities and their families, has announced the opening of the JARC Center for Autism and Rehabilitation Services.

Located at JARC's Lois and Paul Katzman Administrative Building in Farmington Hills, the new center will focus on providing Applied Behavioral Analysis, speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy services. The 3,500-square-foot facility features new state-of-the-art equipment, including a Pediatric Sensory Integration Room with a "Class Champs" gym set, a Pneu-Walker Body Weight Support System and a Thera-Band Rehab and Wellness Station, along with much more to aid in delivering the best possible care.

"The JARC Center was created to help meet a growing demand in our community for state-of-the-art, life-changing therapies and treatments," said Bob Blumenfeld, JARC's chief executive officer. "The center's unique approach incorporates

our Culture of Gentleness and our JARC Heart philosophy in a comprehensive array of evidenced-based practice that emphasizes safety, compassion and engagement."

ABA therapy, a primary service offering at the JARC Center, is widely recognized as the single most effective treatment for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Over 1,000 peer-reviewed, scientific articles describe ABA successes and show it to be the most effective method to teach children and adolescents with autism.

For individuals recovering from traumatic brain and spinal injuries, JARC understands the road to recovery isn't just about healing the body, but rebuilding lives. The JARC Center will provide customized physical therapy services and treatments for catastrophic injuries. Speech therapists will help patients relearn language and reading skills or find alternate ways to communicate. Expert speech and lan-

guage pathologists will help patients rebuild problem-solving abilities.

Highly-trained occupational therapists will help relearn decision-making and organizational skills while working on important memory techniques to help manage daily tasks. All therapies will come together toward the goal of regaining or sustaining the highest level of independence.

The center's grand opening is set for 4:30-6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 31. The event is open to the public. Guests will enjoy a tour of the new facility and light refreshments (RSVP by Friday, March 25). For more information or to make reservations, call 248-488-7564.

THE JARC Center for Autism and Rehabilitation Services is located at 30301 Northwestern Highway, Suite 300 in Farmington Hills, Michigan. It's open by appointment only Monday to Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call 248-912-1780 or visit www.jarccenter.com.

Co-signing a loan can leave you on the hook if it goes into default

The other day, a client contacted me with an issue. Unfortunately, I had to give the client some bad news. The client's situation is that about five years ago, after her daughter got married, she co-signed a loan so that her daughter and her new son-in-law could start a business.

The loan was for 10 years and, for the first few years, payments were made on time. Unfortunately, about a year or so ago, the daughter and son-in-law got divorced and closed their business. According to the divorce settlement, the husband assumed responsibility for the loan.

Not unexpectedly, about six months after the divorce, they each filed for bankruptcy; as a result, their liability on the business loan was discharged. Unfortunately, no one in the divorce proceedings took into consideration that my client had co-signed the loan. As a result, the bank contacted her and informed her that unless she paid the loan, they would begin legal proceedings.

My unfortunate job was to inform my client that she is responsible for the loan. Although her now ex-son-in-law and daughter were legally discharged from the loan, that had no effect on my client. As a result, as I informed her she was responsible for the loan.

At least a few times a year, I am faced with the issue of having to inform a co-signer that



Rick Bloom
MONEY MATTERS

Always think twice before you co-sign. If the bank doesn't think they have the wherewithal to repay the loan, it should cause you to seriously think about your decision.

they are responsible for a loan. Many people are under the misconception that if the primary signer of the loan goes into bankruptcy and receives a discharge, that somehow that discharge applies to the co-signer; it does not. In fact, if you take a step back, that is the reason why banks and other financial institutions many times will require a co-signer in order to approve the loan. I always tell people before you co-sign a loan, you have to accept the very real possibility that you can legally be on the hook to repay that loan. That is why I always say you better thoroughly think it through.

I recognize that family and friends want to help each other and, obviously, that is a good thing. However, when it comes to co-signing a loan, you definitely have

to think through the consequences. If you are forced to repay the loan, how will it affect you financially? If it would cause financial distress, then you probably should pass on the co-signing. If it would have minimal impact, then that is another thing.

There is a reason why banks and financial institutions ask for co-signers — they're not sure that the individual requesting the loan has the wherewithal and the financial resources to repay the loan. You always have to think twice before you co-sign. If the bank doesn't think that they have the wherewithal to repay the loan, it should cause you to seriously think about your decision.

When it comes to dealing with banks or financial institutions, you can negotiate some of the terms. For example, I recently dealt with a client who was co-signing a loan for one of her children. We were able to work with the bank to limit my client's obligation to the first two years of the loan. If the loan was paid on time for the first two years, she would be removed as a co-signer. We were able to limit her liability and that's something that you may also want to consider.

Good luck!
Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. His website is bloomassetmanagement.com. If you would like him to respond to questions, email rick@bloomassetmanagement.com.

City of Livonia - 02/17/2016 Regular Meeting Synopsis

Present: White, Bahr, Meakin, Kritzman, Brosnan, Jolly, and McIntyre

Absent: None

#60-16 Approving the minutes of meeting held on 2/01/16. Items were received and filed.

Public Hearings Announced - Monday, February 22, 2016 at 7PM - 1) PETITION 2015-12-01-13 submitted by Michigan Property Group, L.L.C., to rezone the property located at 28900 Schoolcraft Road, from C-2 (General Business) to M-1 (Light Manufacturing); 2) PETITION 2016-01-01-01 submitted by the City Planning Commission, to rezone the west 134.10 feet of property located at 9309 Newburgh Road, from PL (Public Lands) to R-1 (One Family Residential - 60'x120' lot).

Three X-items were announced and there was new data on Items 3,4,5,7,8, and X-3.

#61-16 Accepting bid of Ultra Green Lawn Solutions, for work in connection with the City's 2016-2019 Municipal Park Mowing Program; FURTHER, accepting bid of U.S. Lawns, as an alternate, in the event the lowest bidder is unable to perform the services.

#62-16 Require owners of lots and premises in targeted areas to install, repair or remove and replace sidewalks in connection with the 2016 Sidewalk Repair Program by July 1, 2016.

#63-16 Referring Petition 2015-12-02-26 to develop a Planned General Development, at 29200 Vassar Avenue, to the Committee of the Whole.

#64-16 Approved Petition 2015-12-08-20 to construct a new five-story Hampton Inn hotel on part of the property located at 28101 Schoolcraft Road.

#65-16 Approved Petition 2015-10-02-21 to develop and operate an outdoor storage yard for recreation vehicles located at 33710-33760 Plymouth Road.

#66-16 Waiving the hard surfaced requirement and authorizing the use of gravel for five (5) years from the date of this approval, in connection with the approval of Waiver Use Petition 2015-10-02-21.

#67-16 Referring Petition 2015-10-02-21, requesting waiver use approval, to develop and operate an outdoor storage yard for recreation vehicles located at 33710-33760 Plymouth Road to the Administration for its report and recommendation in connection with strengthening the role of Public Safety Officials in the approval process for indoor/outdoor storage facilities.

First Reading was given to an ordinance amending Sections 020 and 040 of Title 2, Chapter 76 (Library Commission) of the Livonia Code of Ordinances.

#68-16 Accepting bid of Baruzzini Construction Company for performing all work in connection with the Clements Circle Pool Reconstruction Project, in the total amount not to exceed \$1,331,153.00; authorizing an expenditure in an amount not to exceed \$900,000.00 from funds already budgeted for this purpose.

#69-16 Calling for an immediate repeal of the new language in Section 57, subsection (3) of PA 269 of 2016.

#70-16 Amending and revising Council Resolution 20-16, adding required necessary language.

#71-16 Accepting various cash and in-kind donations in the amount of \$2,350.00 to be used for the purposes, as designated by the donors.

#72-16 Accepting a cash donation from the Michigan Schools and Government Credit Union in the amount of \$1,000.00 to be used for the purposes, as designated by the donor.

#73-16 Accepting a Grant of Easement by Joel D. Lindman, Pastor, Bell Creek Community Church, for a variable width public utility easement (storm sewer) required in connection with recent parking lot improvements constructed at 30000 Five Mile Road.

#74-16 Suspend the rules.

#75-16 Confirming the reappointment of William Tancill to the Board of Review, for a three-year term.

#76-16 Confirming the appointment of Andrew Lendrum to the Board of Review, to fill the unexpired term of office of Cathryn White.

Brosnan stepped down from the podium at 7:59 p.m.

#77-16 Rejecting the proposal of DMC Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan and accepting the proposal (10/6/15) from Trinity Health Michigan d/b/a St. Mary Mercy Hospital and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Sublease and Health Services Agreement between the City of Livonia and Trinity Health Michigan d/b/a St. Mary Mercy Hospital. Brosnan returned to the podium at 8:11 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Full text of the official minutes available in the Office of the City Clerk.

Susan M. Nash
Livonia City Clerk

Published: March 24, 2016

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Battered woman defense gaining more attention

David Veselenak
Staff Writer

When it comes to battered woman syndrome, Cindene Pezzell said it's important to know it doesn't just affect women.

In fact, the legal coordinator for the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women said it can happen in any type of intimate relationship and affect anyone in an abusive relationship.

It's an area of legal study that seems to be gaining more attention in legal circles across the country, though Pezzell said there's still a lot of work to be done.

"We're seeing less push-back around it being an illegitimate field. There's so much science and research," said Pezzell, a Philadelphia resident and Michigan native. "At least some of this stuff is getting in, when it wasn't before all the time."

The issue of battering is brought up in courthouses across the country during cases where a defendant may have been the victim themselves against a domestic partner. In Michigan, typically expert witnesses can testify about signs that could point to a victim as being battered or threatened by retaliation by a partner, though oftentimes cannot make direct connections between a defendant and that person showing signs of being battered, said Carol Jacobsen, a University of Michigan professor and director of the Michigan Women's Justice and Clemency Project.

This is the defense former Farmington Hills resident Nancy Seaman has claimed caused her to kill her husband more than 10 years ago. She's claimed in appeals her attorney did not do enough to show she was abused in the relationship that led to the confrontation. She was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison, though she has ap-

"We're seeing less push-back around it being an illegitimate field. There's so much science and research."

CINDENE PEZZELL, National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

pealed her case through state courts and eventually in federal courts. A U.S. Court of Appeals panel of judges ruled in 2012 that using a defense claiming she was battered was not "a defense under Michigan law."

Jacobsen said there's been an increase recently in the amount of testimony brought in by defense attorneys to show some defendants were acting in self-defense because of the fear of retaliation, compared to older cases dating back decades in Michigan.

"Especially those earlier people, they did not present much evidence," she said. "Even today, it's not presented effectively by defense attorneys for the most part. It's really awful."

Each state different

Jacobsen hopes more state courts begin accepting fewer restrictions when it comes to testimony from experts, hoping for changes that would benefit women that show signs of being battered by partners.

"We felt, too, that Michigan's law is too restrictive on expert witnesses," Jacobsen said. "They do not get understood as acting in self-defense."

Pezzell said each state is different in how it approaches the topic, either

See **BATTERED**, Page A12

VISIT

Continued from Page A1

weeks prior to actually going. What would the atmosphere be like? What would talking to someone convicted of murder really be like? How would I be treated?

Plenty of stereotypes exist surrounding prisons. Popular culture is riddled with references, be it movies such as "Escape from Alcatraz," "The Shawshank Redemption" or, more recently, the Netflix series "Orange is the New Black." Most people's exposure to penitentiaries is strictly through their television sets.

So was mine until January. But with all those depictions fresh in my mind, I left the facility after my interview with a slightly different outlook.

From the outside

Prisons are isolated by nature. Some inmates never see the other side of the double chain-link fence once they get there. But I couldn't help feeling the two worlds weren't completely disconnected. After all, inmates walking the yard can see the staff's vehicles parked just feet from the fence. I could envision some inmates looking at those cars and being in awe of their design, since some have been locked up for decades.

The visiting area at Huron Valley isn't difficult to access, once clearing security. Two sliding doors controlled by a guard and another set of locked doors are all that separate inmates from the outside room.

There was a sense of normalcy that must have slipped through those doors into the prison. Save for my initial meeting with Lakeshia Valdez, the inmate I interviewed for this series, I never felt horribly uncomfortable in the room filled with convicted felons. It was a feeling I didn't expect to have throughout this experience. I saw smiles, heard laughter, even saw a mother reading a book to her young daughter who had come to visit her. Is that how it al-



The Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility is where Nancy Seaman has been sentenced to life as a convicted murderer.

ways is? I doubt it. But it certainly wasn't what I expected.

The only difference this had from a hospital visiting area was the DOC guard watching the area from one side of the room. Despite any feelings of normalcy, there was always a lingering reminder that you were in prison with those who had lost their freedom. There was no escaping it.

Everyone has a story

Inmates are assigned a number upon arrival. Behind those numbers, I've learned, are stories.

Valdez, who took a plea deal on a murder charge where she stabbed and killed a Redford man in 2011, talked of her hope of being released early on a commutation of her sentence, a rarity. Only a few hundred inmates have received one the last 45 years.

Despite this normal interview, it was important to keep the facts straight: This is a story about a prisoner, a person who committed a crime so heinous that she'll most likely never see freedom again. She spoke of missing her children, who are growing up without their biological mother.

It can be conflicting: How can one be so emotional about another person, when the rea-

son they're locked up is because they took away someone else's child? There's a reason people say two families suffer when someone is sent to prison for murder; not only is the family whose loved one died affected, but the inmate's family is affected, albeit in a different way.

At the end of our conversations, we said goodbye, knowing our paths probably wouldn't cross again. I told her I hoped her time in prison was productive and reflective on the horrible thing that she had done. As I left the room, I thought about this prison experience and other interviews I've done in my career.

I've interviewed political leaders, business owners, and everyday people. I added "convicted felon" to that list earlier this year. It's certainly not the most high-profile interview subject, but it is the only one I've done that required me to take off my shoes and socks.

David Veselenak is a reporter for the Livonia Observer. He can be reached at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter: @DavidVeselenak.

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VALDEZ

Continued from Page A1

Toledo.

Valdez, 24, of Adrian, is serving 40-80 years for second-degree murder after taking a plea deal in November 2012. At minimum, she'll be locked up until 2051, when she will be 60 years old. If she serves the entire sentence, Valdez will be 100 by the time freedom beckons from beyond the prison walls.

She was originally charged in 2011 with first-degree murder, arson, larceny in a building and tampering with evidence after being picked up by police less than 24 hours after killing Olivarez. She remembers being at her Adrian apartment and being told police were arriving outside.

"The moment I looked out my window and they surrounded my house, I knew what it was," she said.

A plea bargain

The legal system churned slowly — at one point Valdez's roommate testified that Olivarez was killed so his belongings could be sold to help pay rent. Valdez and the roommate also both had children and Christmas was approaching, the roommate said.

The evidence against her was strong, advised her attorney, and the brutality of the crime would play a factor in court. Valdez turned down an initial plea offer of 45 years, believing it was too long. Facing mandatory life without possibility of parole, Valdez decided against risking a first-degree murder conviction and took a plea bargain before the trial began.

Olivarez, who was also from Adrian, was remembered by friends and family as a loving man.

"I just feel she should do life in prison for what she did," Olivarez's uncle, Frank Olivarez, said during the sentencing hearing in 2012. "He had two good boys. He was a good father."

Valdez recently said the claim that she killed Olivarez for his items wasn't accurate. She said they had been involved romantically, but she decided to break it off. They continued to sell drugs together after the relationship ended and she would sometimes spend the night with Olivarez in Redford. She said the murder weapon was in his room and they got into an argument,



FILE PHOTO

Brenda Shead and her husband Louis Shead listen to testimony during the 2012 preliminary hearing of Lakeshia Valdez, who was later convicted of murder.

prompting her to grab the knife.

"That just never crossed my mind. I never expected it would go as far as it did," she said. "I did kill him, that's what it boiled down to."

History of issues

Valdez, who lived in Adrian most her life, said she wasn't always the best-behaved. She first got into trouble at age 11, when she was caught stealing from a local JC Penney. She also faced other criminal charges in Lenawee County, including receiving and concealing stolen property, disorderly conduct and retail fraud, according to the Adrian Daily Telegram.

She admitted to being wild during her teenage years.

"I messed with guys, who gave me whatever I wanted," she said. "I just had a good thing going."

She got pregnant at 15, an experience she said calmed her lifestyle somewhat, though she still got into trouble.

She fled to San Antonio when she was in her mid-teens with her child, taking a bus south and planning on staying there. It was her mother, a woman whom had never been in trouble a day in her life, who convinced her to come back to Michigan for Mother's Day. Valdez decided to remain in Adrian and didn't go back to

Texas.

She gave birth to another child several years later and wanted to make sure they were cared for. The arrangement with Olivarez followed.

"I never wanted to be without. I just lived my life," she said.

Prison life

Today, Valdez is one of about 2,200 women serving out their sentences at the facility in Washtenaw County. Classified as a Level II inmate, she shares a cell with a woman she originally met while in the Wayne County Jail during the year before her sentencing.

Serving time in jail, she said, was much worse than prison. Jail fights were more common in downtown Detroit, she said.

"I felt out of place in the Wayne County Jail," she said. "Wayne County Jail is much worse than here."

She has worked maintenance in prison, taking out the trash and removing snow, though that status was on hold in January due to a misconduct ticket issued by a guard. The job pays \$1 an hour.

Valdez also attends school, with the intent of earning her GED this spring. She tries to stay active, only spending time in her cell during count or at night.

Keeping busy, she said,

passes the time quickly.

"It's nothing like the movies," she said of prison life.

She doesn't spend a lot of time dwelling on killing Olivarez. She sorted that out years ago in a series of dreams about Olivarez.

"It made me at peace with what I did," she said, of those nights in Wayne County Jail.

At the sentencing, Olivarez's mother, Brenda Shead, addressed Valdez, telling her she hoped her actions would resonate with her for the rest of her life.

"Just know that every time you close your eyes, it will be him you'll see," Shead said in 2012. "She deserves everything she gets — and then some."

Shead said in a message to the Observer & Eccentric that the pain of running into people involved got to be too much in Adrian, a small town of about 21,000 just north of the Michigan/Ohio border. She moved out of state several years ago.

"We are forever changed; it affects a person deep inside," she said. "And unless you have experienced it, you could never really understand."

"As for me, my heart will forever be broken, but I continue to smile through the tears for the love of my son Matthew and the ones that he loved and left behind."

Not likely to be released early

Valdez arrived at the prison in 2012 and was at first taken aback by the barbed wire, guard towers and correctional officers.

"I'm just like, 'Damn, 40 years of this (expletive),' she said. "For real?"

In all likelihood, she'll be here at least another 36 years.

In 2013, the Michigan Court of Appeals rejected the merits of her appeal. Valdez has not appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Because of truth-in-sentencing laws, approved in 1998, inmates who committed crimes after 2000 are required to serve at least their minimum sentence, eliminating good behavior and disciplinary credits. Valdez hopes to apply for a commutation of her sentence, something the governor can approve and allow for the minimum sentence to be changed to time served, allowing her to go before the parole board for a hearing for possible release.

That's a route, Valdez said, she may take in several years after living straight in prison, including finishing her GED and other programs.

"I'll get a certificate for everything I did," she said. "I want to be a better person."

Getting her sentence commuted is something that's statistically not likely to happen. Since 1969, only 320 commutations have been granted by Michigan governors, according to the Department of Corrections. Since Gov. Rick Snyder took office, only five commutations have been granted, all for medical reasons.

A total of 2,581 inmates have applied to have their sentence commuted since Snyder began his first term in 2011; the rate of approval is 0.19 percent.

Valdez believes even convicted murderers deserve a shot at redemption if they're willing to work for it. One inmate she knew served 28 years and found two jobs after being released from prison, she said.

But that will have to wait. She's got decades to serve behind the barbed wire fencing that separates prisoners from the rest of society.

And deep down, she knows she has to serve her time.

"At the end of the day, you did kill this man," Valdez said.

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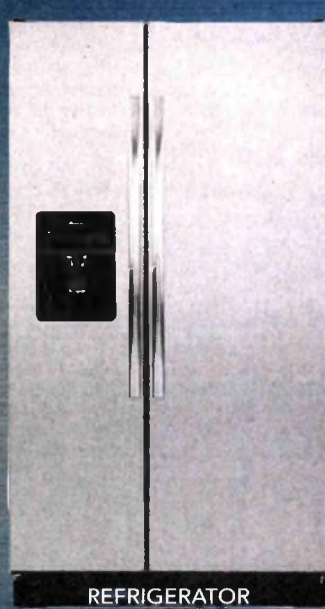
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OUR VIEW

Teen years tough: Parents, community can help

Parents know to take their children to the pediatrician for physical checkups, but mental health is as important as physical well-being.

A child's teenage years can seem stressful. Teenagers enter high school, where they must make new friends. Increased academic and athletic competition can make teens feel inadequate or overwhelmed, the American Academy of Pediatrics notes on its website.

Parents can help their teenagers navigate these difficult years. First, parents should ask their pediatrician to evaluate their teenager's mental well-being. Pediatricians develop close relationships with their patients, so teenagers might feel more comfortable discussing sensitive subjects, like depression, stress and sex, with their doctors instead of their parents.

Teenagers need a trusted adult to speak with, whether that adult be parent, pediatrician, teacher or counselor. Make sure that your teenager knows that stress, sadness and anger are normal and that talking about her feelings can really help her cope. Remind her of the people who can help her and tell her that reaching out is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Second, parents should make sure that they're not putting too much pressure on their teenager. Too-high expectations can often become damaging, but parents should still make sure that their teenagers have strong support systems at home.

"Kids tend to live up, or down, to the expectations of their parents," says Dr. Renee Jenkins of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "Teens who understand what standards are expected of them stand a better

chance of setting realistic goals for the future."

Third, parents should help their teenagers feel empowered to change circumstances for the better. If your teenager says that she feels stressed, help her to identify the source of her stress. Ask your teen to brainstorm about possible solutions to her situation.

Discuss the pros and cons of her suggested approaches, making sure to consider future ramifications. Decide on the best course of action. Parents can help teens learn from their mistakes, gain better judgment and develop stronger senses of identity – the tools that will help them through the rest of their lives.

For more information on children's and teens' mental health, go to the American Academy of Pediatrics' at aap.org and search for "mental health tips."

LETTERS

Man up, Governor

I believe the Republican legislature and Governor Snyder are to blame for the Flint water crisis. We voted down the Emergency Manager Law and within a month a few sentences were changed and money was added to the bill and it became law against the will of the people. Was it legal? Yes. Was it moral? No. Has it improved lives? No.

Our Republican leaders shouldn't blame low-level bureaucrats for this crisis. They have demonized government workers for years. So if they believe what they say, then they must have known that these workers must be incompetent.

Right to Work has created a "catch-22" for employees in that if an employee does speak up and doesn't agree with a decision made by an emergency manager they can be fired for not being a team player.

They shouldn't blame the EPA because our "Create-a-Bigger-Emergency-Manager" didn't make sure all the guidelines and procedures were in place before the switch was made. If the EPA had asserted itself, our leaders would have claimed government overreach including the fact that the Republicans have three candidates running for President who want to get rid of the EPA.

Part of the Republican

mantra is individual responsibility. It's time for the governor to "man-up" and resign.

Terry Cannon
Livonia

Fleeing the fragile

How often have we seen these stories about how senior citizens are tricked out of their money by unscrupulous scam artists? These can include fake lottery scams, 'pigeon drops' and fake grand-kid telephone calls. Such scams have often occurred in Livonia.

Usually nothing is done to prevent these crimes. The Livonia Police offer their same, generic, worthless, canned advice about being cautious and yet seniors keep getting shorted out of some of their money.

People who have older relatives should look out for them more. Rather than spending money on drivel newsletters which constantly tout how great the city is, our City Hall should send out a tip-sheet of suggestions to our seniors on how to avoid scams.

Our senior centers should also 'get the word out' as regards the scams which target seniors.

Leo Weber
Livonia

Oppose anti-historic district bills

There was a time when answering "Northville" to the question, "Where do you live?" was like sheepishly admitting to ramshackle digs. The once-proud town, well past its heyday, was little more than an assemblage of sad-looking, slowly rotting Victorians – a dilapidated outpost on the fringe of Detroit's urban sphere that few cared about and fewer still considered viable as a place to call home.

Then I-275, completed in 1977, opened up the "western frontier," making remote Northville more accessible. But an even bigger boon to Northville was the genesis of its historic district three years earlier, in 1974. In fact, the establishment of the historic district is arguably the main reason forgotten and decaying Northville

was veritably resurrected to morph, 42 years hence, into one of the most sought-after communities in the entire state.

Considered in this context, it matters not whether one makes his Northville home within or without the historic district. The benefit to the desirability and valuation of his house is the same. This institutionalized respect for Northville's past is Northville's greatest asset. Without it, we are just another nondescript suburb with nothing special, nothing unique, to offer. Remove the historic district and the commission that oversees it and one has set into motion the death knell of our quaint and lovingly maintained town.

My wife and I labored for decades to turn our once veritable dump of a circa 1895 Queen Anne, in Northville's Historic District, into something that we could be proud of and the original owners whom, we like to think, are admiring in spirit over our shoulders. Were our house sited anywhere

else, it would in all likelihood have been bulldozed. But this is Northville where because of the preservation ethic that undergirds the community, no amount of effort at preservation goes unrewarded.

Legislation currently under consideration in Lansing (HB 5232 and its identical Senate counterpart, SB 720), seems designed by its sponsors to do away with all of Michigan's historic districts, including Northville's. Why? Big money. Northville's real estate boom (look at how the real estate bust afflicting the rest of the country was largely unfelt here), owes the entirety of its success to our historic district and the preservation-minded who inhabit it.

Were it up to me, every Northville property owner would get on the horn with his state representative to voice his concerted objection to these two ill-conceived amendments. The very substance and future of our proud town is at stake.

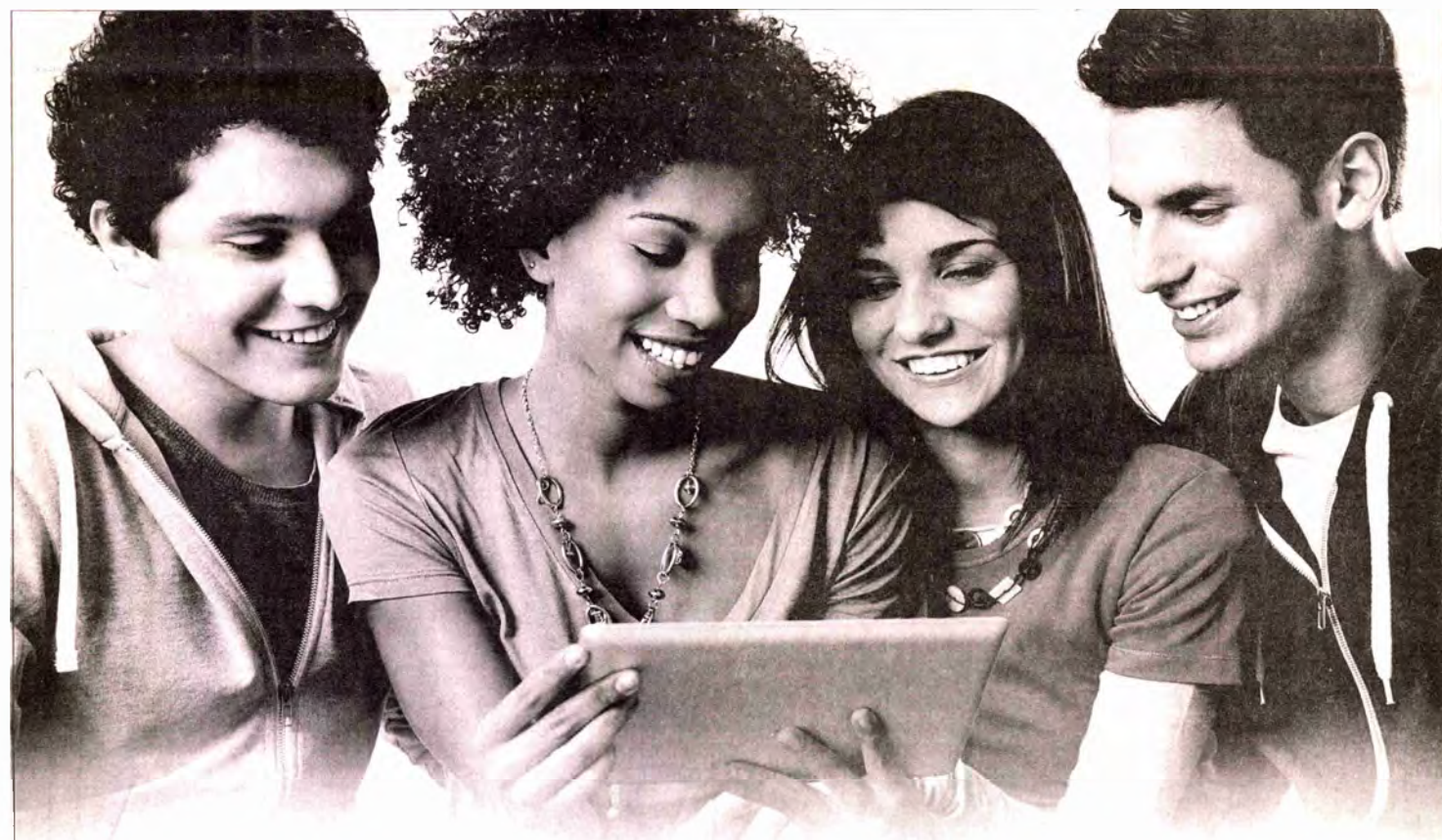
Ken Kilpatrick
Northville

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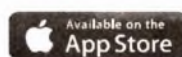


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HIGH SCHOOL GOLF PREVIEW

Chargers ready to grip and rip

Senior Spayde set to lead Churchill

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Led by an ace named Spayde, Livonia Churchill's boys golf team will be playing with a full deck this spring.

Senior Sam Spayde, a four-year varsity player, will headline a Charger team that lost

just one senior to graduation. "Sam is arguably one of the best players in the (KLAA Kensington) conference," said Churchill head coach Paul Worley. "He shot a 71 and won the conference tournament last year, so he has a good all-around game."

Senior Griffin Ahmet and junior John Doyle, who along with Spade played for Churchill's highly-successful hockey team this past winter, give the Chargers a formidable

top-of-the-lineup trio.

"Griffin came on late last year and played his best round in the district tournament," Worley added. "And from what I've seen so far this year, he's improved even more since last spring."

"John is one of those players who doesn't have one part of his game that stands out above the others — although he is a decent putter — but he



ED WRIGHT

Pictured (from left) are Livonia Churchill varsity golfers John Doyle, Sam Spayde and Griffin Ahmet. All three also play hockey for the Chargers.

See **CHARGERS**, Page B2

COLLEGE SPORTS

Anderson excels on track and in class

Former Churchill speedster spinning gold at Aquinas

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

How does Sydney Anderson maintain a 3.98 grade-point average while pursuing a challenging degree at an institution as well-respected as Aquinas College?

"I try not to procrastinate," the former Livonia Churchill three-sport standout said during a Tuesday-night phone interview. "I try not to put things off."

Judging by her recently-completed accolades-filled indoor track-and-field season at Aquinas, the ex-Charger doesn't procrastinate on the track either.

Competing in the daunting 800-meter run — an event that demands a unique blend of speed and endurance — Anderson won

See **ANDERSON**, Page B2



AQUINAS COLLEGE

Livonia Churchill graduate Sydney Anderson has been a standout performer in track-and-field for Aquinas.

PREP BASEBALL PREVIEW



ED WRIGHT

Franklin senior center fielder Joe Chinavare eyes a fastball during a game last season.

Franklin primed to build on 2015 success

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

The ceiling is sky high for the Livonia Franklin baseball program this spring following a success-coated 2015 season.

With several highly-productive seniors back in the fold this spring, the Patriots have all the ingredients they need to improve on last year's 19-14 campaign, which included runner-up efforts in the competitive KLAA South Division and in its Division 1 district tournament in Dearborn.

"The nice thing about this year's team is that everybody is competing for playing time, and we have a lot of kids who can really play," said Franklin head coach Matt Fournier. "This may be the deepest pitching staff we've had since I've been here and it's also one of the quickest groups."

"This year's schedule is basically 30-some games crammed into a nine-week season, so our pitching depth will help as far as that goes. We usually have two, three or four guys we know we can rely on. This year, it's more like seven

or eight guys we can count on — and they're nice, quality arms."

The Patriots' mound crew will be led by senior Adrian Reed and junior Kolby Dewhirst. Reed went 4-4 as a junior with a deceptive 2.98 earned-run average, which was sub-2.00 prior to a season-ending outing against Dearborn.

Dewhirst, whose season was cut short last spring by a now-healed injury, was 4-0-1 with a

See **FRANKLIN**, Page B4

Wayne hoops honors

The Wayne Memorial girls basketball program is reaping in a series of post-season accolades after posting a resurgent season under second-year head coach Jarvis Mitchell.

Earlier this month, Mitchell was named the Class A coach of the year by the Associated Press.

Also honored for an outstanding season was Wayne point guard Camree' Clegg, who was voted second-team All-State by the AP.

Stevenson pom clinic

The Livonia Stevenson varsity pompon program will host a clinic on Saturday, April 9, for students who are currently in grades first through 11th.

The clinic will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Stevenson field house. Check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m.

The clinic fee of \$30 includes a light snack and T-shirt for clinic participants.

The clinic will be instructed by members of the Stevenson coaching staff and current pom athletes.

For more information, contact Stevenson varsity pom coach Shaylyn Sikorski at stevensonvarsitypom@gmail.com or 248-880-1881.

AAU hoops tryouts

Tryouts for the Livonia Commodores 16/17U AAU basketball team will be held March 29 and March 31 at St. Damian parish, which is located at 30055 Joy Rd. in Westland.

The tryouts will run each night from 7-9 p.m.

The Commodores' season will run from early April through early June. Players who try out must have an AAU membership card and copy of their birth certificate.

Questions can be directed to Dante Ufferman, who can be reached at daufferman@hotmail.com or 734-837-6173.

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HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL PREVIEW

Cougars' mission: Connect the puzzle pieces

Led by Glenfield, GC returns solid nucleus

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Early on at least, the bulk of the Garden City softball team's lineup will be as unsettled as a jigsaw puzzle tossed into a blender.

After 75 percent of their 2015 starting infield walked across the stage at graduation in June, the Cougars will be looking to piece together a formula that will lead them to the kind of post-season run the program's fans have come to expect.

Given head coach Barry Patterson's track record, it's not a matter of if the Cougars jell, but when.

"This team is a lot like a jigsaw puzzle that is still in the box," said Patterson, smiling. "All the pieces are there; we're just not sure yet where they're all going to end up. I'm excited to see what the puzzle looks like in the end."

"We graduated almost our entire infield from last year, so we're going to have to move some players into different roles. It may take us a while to find the right position for everyone, but we'll get there."

One thing is for sure about this season's Cougars contingent: Senior Kaylen Glenfield will be right in the thick of things.

A four-year varsity starter headed to Western Michigan University on an athletic scholarship (she is also a brilliant student), Glenfield will anchor the defense at shortstop and the batting order from the (probably) the three hole.

"Kaylen is definitely a known commodity for us," Patterson said. "She's been one of the premier hitters around the past two years, but her biggest strides have been defensively. She has worked extremely hard to get better with the glove, and it shows."

Starring in the circle for the second consecutive season will be sophomore April Rudolph, who put together a 20-6 record last year.

"April did everything we could have asked from her as a freshman," said Patterson. "She was very productive. This year, we're asking her to try to improve a little bit on three things: location, more consistency with her movement and developing her change-of-speed pitches more. She's not a big strikeout pitcher, so she needs to try to keep the hitters off balance."



Garden City shortstop Kaylen Glenfield will provide offensive firepower.

"All the pieces are there; we're just not sure yet where they're all going to end up. I'm excited to see what the puzzle looks like in the end."

BARRY PATTERSON
head coach

With the departure of two-year starting catcher Rachel Spellman, who accepted an academic scholarship to Central Michigan University, the Cougars are scrambling to find a replacement. The lead candidate as of this week was multi-talented senior Mikaela Smolar, who will shift from her usual comfort zone of left field to take on the demanding catching duties.

"Catcher is a huge position for us because that's the player who quarterbacks the team," said Patterson. "Mikey is a tremendous left fielder and she had a great year at the plate for us. Although she had never caught before this year, she's a selfless kind of player who volunteered to step up and help us out there."

Joining Glenfield on the infield will be junior Alicia

Ascencio, who can play both corner positions as well as swing a powerful bat; sophomore Natalie Billings, a jack-of-all-trades who can also play third and outfield; and Turnbull, who will be in the third-base mix.

Filling the left field void created with Smolar's move will be junior Brittany Radtke, who played well in a reserve role throughout 2015. One of the main candidates to patrol right field is junior Aleea Montgomery, who is fast and has some pop in her bat.

Additional players who will be counted on to provide vital depth to the roster include seniors Emily Ward and Hannah DeHetre, both of whom can catch and play the outfield; junior catcher/outfielder Shelby Casey; sophomore first baseman Amy Portner and junior Sydnee Charlton, who can pitch and play the outfield.

"We're in a position where we can be competitive in our league (the WWAC Blue) and in our district," said Patterson. "As long as we make strides throughout the season. There is some uncertainty early on regarding who is going to play where, but I'm excited about this team's potential."

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Ocelots add a Rocket



Westland John Glenn senior softball standout Mackenzie Huren recently committed to play at the next level for Schoolcraft College. Also pictured are Schoolcraft coach Ray Linares, John Glenn athletic director John Young and Huren's parents, Dan and Bridget.

Pitching in to help Gleaners



Members of the Livonia Franklin baseball program traveled to Detroit Saturday to help the Gleaners Food Bank pack boxes of food for less-fortunate people in the area.

USA HOCKEY

NTDP coaches praise camp

Orientation gives nation's best chance to join Team USA

Tim Smith
Staff Writer

USA Hockey Arena in Plymouth Township was brimming with activity Friday through Tuesday as young prospects from all over the country attended the annual National Team Development Program orientation camp.

There were 48 players born in 2000 who took part in scrimmages, attended meetings and even watched this year's two NTDP squads each play a Unit-

ed States Hockey League contest.

Whether or not any of those 16-year-olds are among the 22 selected to comprise the 2016-17 NTDP Under-17 team remains to be seen.

But coaches Danton Cole and Don Granato concurred that the orientation is an important, essential and even invigorating event that caps a two-year scouting process by the evaluation team led by Ryan Hardy, director of player personnel for USA Hockey/NTDP.

"It's been really good," Cole said Sunday following the U18s' 2-1 loss to Youngstown. "It's been really good. Ryan Hardy and his staff do a real good job and identify talent; there's a lot of really good kids here. It's

always exciting, it's a lot of fun.

"There'll be 22 of those guys that will be the ones that are here next year and working away for the U.S.A."

Area hopefuls

Among those prospective players are Canton's Jacob Semik, Plymouth's Max Ellis, Novi's Chrystian Krygier and Rochester's Jonathan Gruden.

Semik and Krygier are defensemen, from the Detroit Honeybaked and Detroit Little Caesars teams. Ellis and Gruden are Honeybaked forwards.

Granato, who this year coaches the NTDP U17s, also praised the USA Hockey scouting staff in even boiling down the number of elite players to 48 in time for the orientation.

"They identify 50 or so of the top guys," Granato said.

"There's hard choices after that. There's not a lot of falloff when you're looking at the top 50 in the country."

"This is testament to all the youth hockey coaches out there that developed these kids in all different markets. It's amazing, it's way different from when I was a kid. There's quality coaching at all these markets, something that wasn't there 25-30 years ago."

Both Cole and Granato will be involved in the process moving forward, whittling the list of hopefuls down to the 22 players that will skate at USA Hockey Arena next season.

But Cole will be their coach for two years; Granato moves

up with his current team when this year's U17s become next year's U18s.

That is how the NTDP operates; each coach rotates from team to team and stays with the same group of players during a two-year span.

"It's fun. These guys come in and really lay it on the line for two years," Cole said. "They get better and they progress and then they test themselves at the World Championships and then a new group comes in. It's a really neat process."

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ANDERSON

Continued from Page B1

a Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference indoor individual title earlier this month.

The smooth-striding junior also anchored the Saints' gold medal 3,200-meter relay contingent.

And that's not all.

During this month's NAIA National Indoor Meet in Johnson City, Tenn., Anderson was a member of the school's distance-medley quartet that earned the first-ever national title in any indoor event for the Aquinas women's track program.

"Winning the 800 was exciting for me because our team still had a chance to finish first and we needed the points," she said. "The biggest key for me when I'm running the 800 is to make sure I stay with the lead

group of runners and then kick it the final 200 meters. The 800 goes by fast, so you can't fall too far behind."

Anderson, who competed in cross country, basketball and track at Churchill, first laced up a pair of running shoes as a seventh-grader at Frost Middle School in Livonia.

"Actually, the first event I tried in middle school was hurdling," she said, smiling. "Once I tried the 800, I was hooked."

Anderson's quickest clocking in the open 800 is 2 minutes and 17 seconds. Her fastest relay time is 2:15.

The Saints' 3,200 relay and distance-medley relay teams that Anderson contributed mightily to broke school records that had stood for 16 years.

Anderson's ultimate career goal is beyond noble: helping kids with learning disabilities.

"Teaching runs in my fam-

ily, so that's always been something I thought I would enjoy," she said. "I'd like to possibly work in a resource room."

Anderson's already-stunning resume was bolstered at the NAIA national meet when she was awarded the coveted "Champions of Character Award," which is presented to one athlete from each participating school.

The criteria for the award reflect the high standards Anderson lives by — documented display of exemplary character and sportsmanship on the field, on campus and in the community that exemplify the core values of integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship and servant leadership.

Anderson said she has no doubts that she will continue to run — at least leisurely — during her post-college life.

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CHARGERS

Continued from Page B1

knows how to get the ball in the hole. If there is an area that he needs to work on, it's probably his pitching and chipping."

Churchill's clear No. 4 player is junior Aaron Walton, who was a varsity-level performer as a sophomore.

"Aaron progressed really well last year; he's a good ball-striker," said Worley. "He's done a good job of improving his weak point last year — his short game."

Senior Matt Matley has also looked good during pre-season rounds, Worley noted.

Leading the charge of young players for Churchill is freshman Max Proulx, who has already posted rounds in the mid-40s.

"He's a big kid with a good

"Aaron progressed really well last year; he's a good ball-striker."

PAUL WORLEY
Churchill head coach

set-up and good swing," Worley said.

Idylwyld Golf Course will be the site of two important early-season tournaments: the Livonia City Tournament, set for April 15, and the Kensington Conference pre-season event.

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PREP SOFTBALL PREVIEW

John Glenn charged by strong battery

Talented pitcher-catcher duo lead Rockets

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Westland John Glenn's softball team may not possess the top-to-bottom-of-the-roster depth that it takes to be a serious contender in the rugged KLAAs South Division, but the Rockets' nucleus is solid enough to give every team they play fits.

"Our strengths are probably our pitching and catching," said first-year head coach Dan Huren, who was a varsity assistant coach for the previous five seasons.

The Rockets' No. 1 pitcher — and their top power hitter as well — is senior Mackenzie Huren, Dan's daughter. Huren recently committed to play college softball beginning next

season at Schoolcraft College.

"Mackenzie can be overpowering at times, depending on the opponent, and she has good command of several pitches, including a change-up, drop and rise," Dan Huren said. "Obviously, when we play teams like Canton, she's going to have to rely on her command more because there aren't too many pitchers that can overpower that line-up."

Huren is a force at the plate. After blasting eight home runs last season, she is slotted to hit either in the three hole or clean-up.

When Huren is not pitching, she'll play first base, yielding the mound to Renee Casey, who has a ton of potential.

Both hurlers are fortunate to be able to throw to three-year starting catcher Julia Michalowski, who Huren tabbed as the best defensive catcher he's ever coached.

"Julia is a very talented all-around player," said Huren. "She has a great arm, great defensive technique and she's a switch-hitter at the plate. She'll probably be our No. 2 hitter, which is rare for a catcher."

The Rockets' defense will be anchored by three-year varsity shortstop Megan Buford, a switch-hitter who is likely to serve as the team's lead-off hitter.

"Megan has matured so much in the past three years," said Huren. "She doesn't let things bother her like she may have when she was younger. She's a very good athlete — fast, strong and a great fielder."

When Huren is pitching, first-base duties will be handled admirably by senior Cheyenne Grim, who played well last season, her head coach said.

Sophomore Madison Wetmore has earned the start at

second base thanks to an off-season filled with hard work.

"She's improved quite a bit over the winter," Huren said. "She's very fast, so she'll either lead off or bat ninth for us."

Lindsey Prough and Alexis Guajardo are locked in a stiff competition for the starting third-base slot.

Katie Thorne, the team's lone returning starting outfielder, will start in left, while sophomore new-comer Carley Loving is the early favorite to open the season as the starting center fielder.

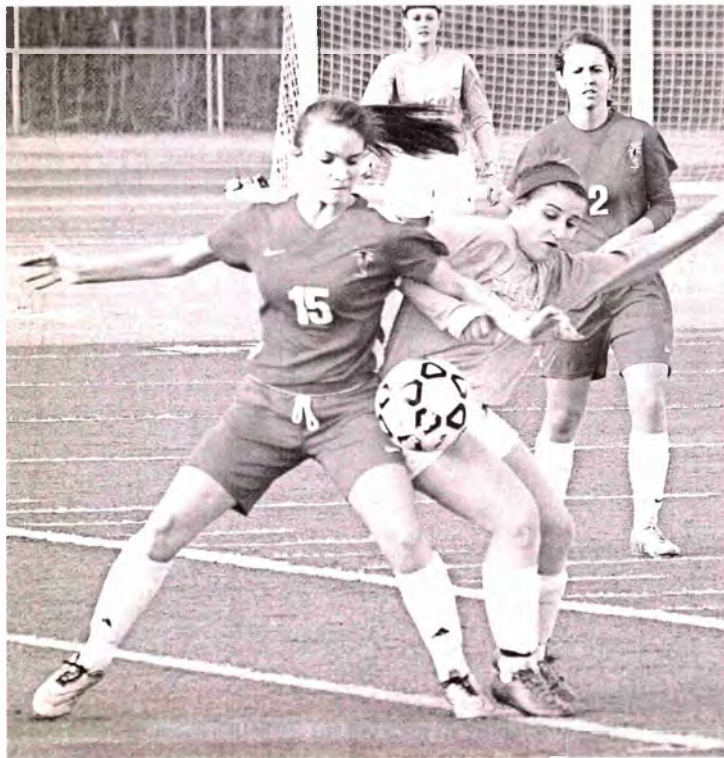
"Carley had never played softball before this season, but you'd never know it," said Huren. "She is such a work horse — staying after practice to get better, asking for extra defensive reps. She's an amazing athlete."

Zharia Jackson is expected to open the season as the Rockets' right-fielder.

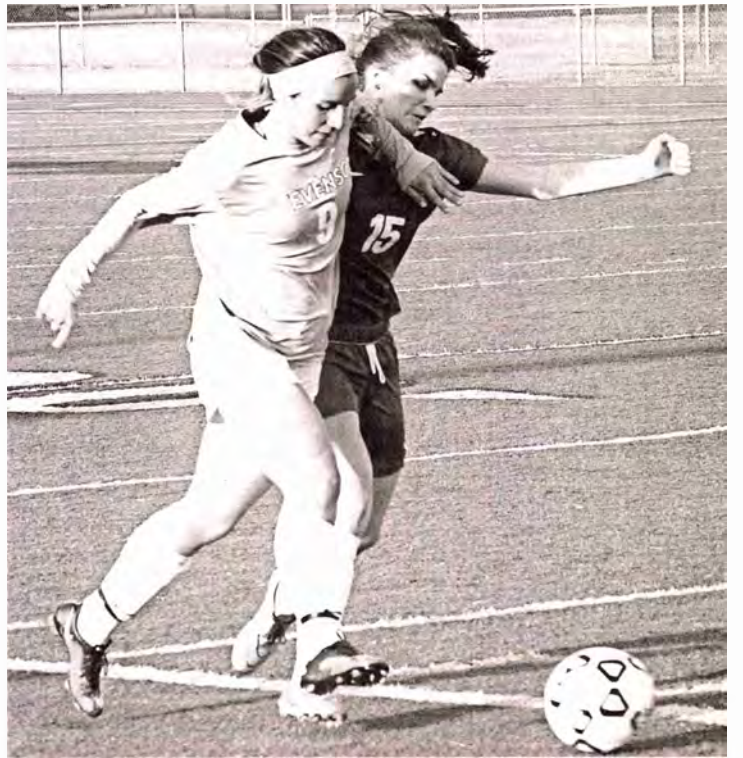


John Glenn shortstop Megan Buford motors around the bases during a game last spring. Buford is one of the Rockets' top fielders and hitters.

HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER PREVIEW



Livonia Stevenson sophomore Audrey Kopitz goes toe-to-toe with a Divine Child player during Tuesday's pre-season scrimmage.



Livonia Stevenson senior Alia Basierbe gets a step on a Divine Child defender Tuesday night.

ATTACKING IN WAVES

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Talented Stevenson squad deep and dangerous

Deep, talented and hungry for success, the 2015 Livonia Stevenson girls soccer team has made a positive first impression on new head coach Ken Shingledecker.

"My style of play is different and my delivery of information is different, but the girls have responded very well," said Shingledecker, who also coaches the Spartans' boys team. "I'm very excited about our depth at all spots on the field."

"We have a large roster (25 players), but that will help us, especially when we get into the KLAAs Central Division schedule. There will be weeks when we will face tough opponents on Tuesday and Thursday, so the more you can run in and out quality players,

the better."

Serving as field generals for the Spartans will be senior captains Paige Ackman, a mid-fielder/forward, and Jenna Thom a center-back.

"First of all, they're both big-time players," Shingledecker said of his co-captains. "Jenna is more of a lead-by-example captain while Paige is the more vocal of the two, so they complement each other well."

The Spartans' goal-keeping situation reflects the layers of good players they possess across the board. Three keepers — seniors Jess Schoenfeldt and Hannah Reamer, and freshman Haley Demers — will all vye for time between the posts.

"All three of them have looked real-

ly good," said Shingledecker. "There will be a lot of competition between the three, which is a good thing."

Among those joining Thom along the back line are sophomore Kennedy Thurlow, seniors Samantha Dickson, Jessie Wagner, and juniors Jasmine Jaafar and Alyssa Benvenuti.

Wagner and Dickson are primed for a busy spring as they will also compete for the Stevenson track-and-field team.

"I have a great relationship with the track coach and we will work out any scheduling conflicts as they come up," said Shingledecker. "Our No. 1 goal is to strengthen the overall Stevenson athletic program, and allowing these two athletes to contribute to both teams will do that."

In addition to Ackman, the Spartans' mid-field is well-stocked with the return of junior Megan Verant, a three-year varsity performer, and senior Maria Tjilos.

Versatile players Alia Basierbe, a senior who will play college soccer for Adrian, and junior Grace Lamerson will contribute in the mid-field and up top for the Spartans.

Sophomores Audrey Kopitz, one of the team's leading goal-scorers as a freshman, and Kayla Gacioch should be among the team's top net-fillers this spring, Shingledecker noted.

"We have a lot of very talented players, so our expectations and standards are high," Shingledecker said.

Stevenson will open its season April 4 against cross-town rival Livonia Churchill.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Tough start costs Ocelots in NJCAA D-II tourney

Schoolcraft falls 79-76 to South Suburban in quarterfinal

Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Cold opens might work for good television, but not in college basketball.

Unfortunately, the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team found that out in crushing fashion Thursday night, losing 79-76 to South Suburban in the quarterfinal of the National Junior College Athletic Association Division II tournament in Danville, Ill.

The Ocelots fell behind 37-30 at halftime, connecting on just 10 of 28 shots from the field (36 percent) and 4-14 from beyond the three-point line.

Although the shots started falling more frequently in the final 20 minutes, enabling Schoolcraft to briefly take a one-point lead with 8:35 to play, the Ocelots could not put the clamps on Jovan Mooring (21 points, 11 rebounds; 4-6 in triple tries).

"This is a great tournament with many very good teams," Schoolcraft head coach Abe Mashhour said. "Teams have great size, athleticism and talent.



Schoolcraft College's Tyler Johnson (right) guards Lansing Community College's Javon Haines during a recent contest.

To win it all is a great task as you have to play well for four consecutive days just to have a chance.

"I thought we played pretty well against South Suburban but they played well too and made some timely shots and defensive plays. That's the thing about the tournament, because the quality of teams is so high — you can play well and still lose."

Leading Schoolcraft with 14 points each were sophomores Dre Black (Westland John Glenn) and Tyler Johnson (Howell). Contributing 12 points each were Ja'Christian Biles and R.J. Coil.

Registering nine points and four rebounds was sophomore forward and Canton alum Davon Taylor. Also scoring nine points was Esa Abduljami.

Despite the loss, which pushed the Ocelots down into the consolation bracket, there is no denying 2015-16 was an outstanding season for Mashhour and his squad.

The team took a 23-11 record into Friday's fifth-place semifinal game against Parkland.

Schoolcraft — Michigan Community College Athletic Association champions and in the national tournament for the second straight season — reached the Elite Eight with a 96-82 win Wednesday against Cecil Community College.

Spearheading the Ocelots with 22 points was Biles, a sophomore guard who has committed to play next season at University of Detroit Mercy.

Also strong, as he has been all season, was Taylor, with 19 points and 14 rebounds (nine on the defensive glass).

Black (12 points), Johnson (eight points) and sophomore forward Anthony Wartley-Fritz (seven points) also were solid as the Ocelots surged to a 50-43 halftime lead and carried on from there.

"In game one we played pretty well," Mashhour said. "But we needed some time to get rhythm going after being off for a week and a half."

CLASS A BASKETBALL STATE TOURNAMENT

Raiders roll into final four

North defeats Stevenson, 70-57, advances to Class A state semis

Dan O'Meara
Staff Writer

North Farmington senior Alex Darden is looking forward to his 18th birthday Friday, and it's certain to be a memorable occasion for him and his basketball teammates.

The Raiders (23-2) will make their school's first appearance in the semifinals of the Class A boys state tournament that afternoon at the Breslin Center in East Lansing.

"It'll be a great birthday present for me," Darden said. "This is what we set our sights on. To actually be here and see all of our hard work pay off, it's incredible. Words can't describe it right now."

The 6-foot-6 Darden played a major role Tuesday in North's 70-57 win over Sterling Heights Stevenson at the University of Detroit Mercy.

He went to the defensive glass with authority and made key baskets early as the Raiders jumped to a 10-0 lead and never trailed in the quarterfinal victory.

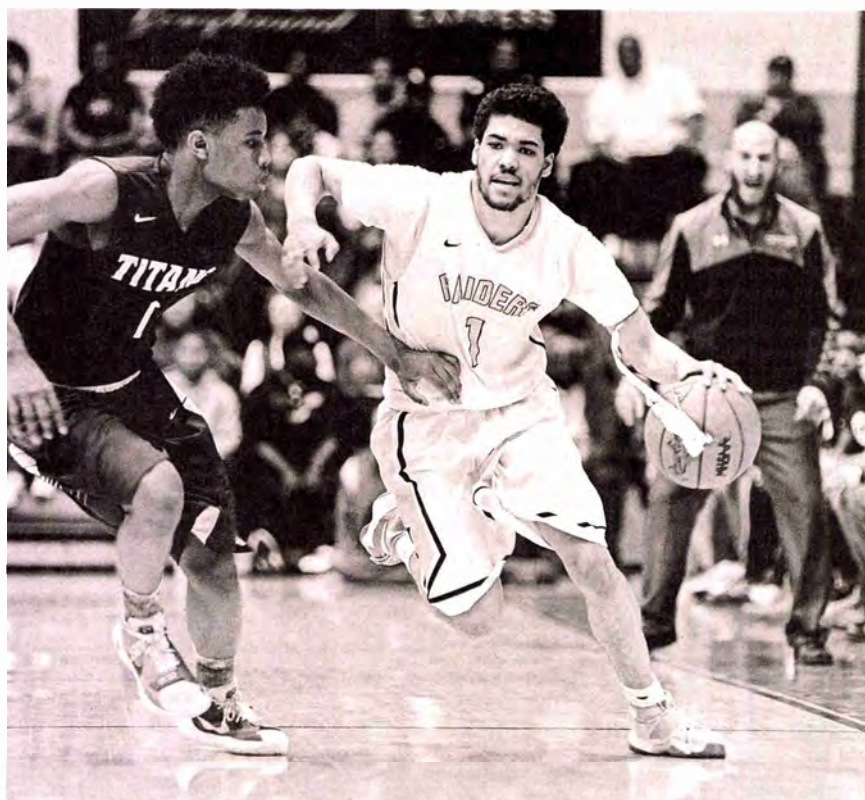
Jacob Joubert and Billy Thomas made 3-pointers to help fuel the good start. The Raiders made four of their five treys in the first quarter and had a 22-11 lead at the end.

But it was the play of Darden, who scored a team-high nine points in the first half and held the Titans (20-4) to one shot on many early possessions, that set the tone.

Darden, who had 15 rebounds, disagreed with Stevenson coach Mark LaCombe's statement the Raiders don't go to the glass to get rebounds.

"That's what I pride myself on every game, crashing the boards," he said. "I might get the big numbers, but a lot of credit goes to my teammates for boxing out and letting me sweep up the boards."

"We might be a little undersized, but we fight for every rebound. I think we proved that tonight."



Senior Billy Thomas fends off the reach of Mylon Weathers as he pushes the ball up the court.

Darden and his teammates also kept the ball alive on the offensive glass and, just when it appeared a Stevenson player had it, knocked it away, got the free ball and scored.

"You can't defend a good team twice, and we made ourselves do that," LaCombe said. "We defended them; we got a stop and couldn't finish."

North appeared to be on the verge of a blowout, leading 35-17 late in the second quarter, but Stevenson trimmed the margin to 11 at halftime, 36-25.

The Raiders were never in jeopardy of losing their lead, but the Titans stayed just close enough in the second half to make it interesting.

"They have kids who shoot it so well," Negoshian said. "You can't take possessions off. You have to guard five guys all the time."

"At times I thought we weren't mentally there. But we live to see another day, and that's all that matters."

Stevenson got within seven points — 50-43 at the end of three periods and four times in the fourth. Hardy made four layups in the last quarter. Joubert and Thomas were a combined 8-of-9 at the foul line to help secure the victory.

"I'd like to say we did a great job as a coaching staff," Negoshian said. "But our guys know what's on line. With a chance to get to the final four, we really played well; we played hard. I thought we ran out of gas near the end, but we live to see another day."

Hardy scored 14 second-half points and led a quartet of North players in double figures with 18. Thomas finished with 15, Joubert 13, Darden 12

and Josh Hogans eight. Darryl Dunlap added four.

"The 10-0 run gave us a lot of confidence," Darden said. "They made a little bit of a push, but we definitely wanted to hold them to one shot. We wanted to crash the boards, because we knew they were a little undersized."

"They were a very good shooting team. We knew, if we gave them second-chance opportunities, we wouldn't have the outcome we did tonight."

"He does a lot of little things for us that people don't realize," Negoshian said of Darden. "He's a guy who enjoys his role. To be a good team, you gotta have guys who don't want the spotlight. He does all the dirty work. He enjoys it; he relishes it."

Vince Ramaci scored 13 of his 15 points in the second half



Senior Darryl Dunlap makes a layup off a long-court feed for a 52-43 lead to start the fourth quarter.

for the Titans. Bryce Miller had 12, Stacy Howard and Luke Lamoreaux 11 apiece.

North shot 47 percent (27-of-57) and Stevenson 42 percent (23-of-55). Each team made five threes. The Raiders were 11-of-15 at the line, the Titans 6-of-9.

"It's disappointing because this senior class that took us this far is a lot better (than it showed)," LaCombe said. "Sometimes, the ball doesn't bounce the right way."

"When you get down, when you don't have the rhythm and the flow, it's tough. It never got to be our style except for very small spurts when we looked good."

LaCombe added he never would have guessed the Titans would be outplayed as they were in the battle for rebounds.

"We scouted the heck out of them," he said of the Raiders. "They don't go to the glass that hard. It's just that we didn't clean up loose balls."

Darden's birthday will be all the more special and memorable should the Raiders win their game with Lansing Everett (16-10) and get to the championship game Saturday.

Tipoff is set for 2:50 p.m. Friday. Everett advanced with a 63-54, double-overtime victory Tuesday over Hudsonville.

USA HOCKEY

Miscue costly for NTDP U18s

Short-handed goal by Youngstown difference in contest

Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Sunday afternoon's USHL game featured an untimely momentum shift for the U.S. National Team Development Program Under-18 squad.

Just 19 seconds after Youngstown's James Winkler received a major penalty and game misconduct for slamming U.S. defenseman Luke Martin into the boards from behind, the Phantoms snapped a 1-1 tie on a short-handed goal.

The perfect shot taken by Noah Lalonde flew over the blocker of U18 goaltender Joseph Woll at 12:33 of the final period, putting Youngstown up 2-1. That's how the contest ended, to the dismay of about 1,100 fans at USA Hockey Arena.

"It was a bad turnover and we didn't support the puck very well," U.S. head coach Danton Cole said. "You know what, we got a little lackadaisical and we paid for it."

"Then we just couldn't get the next goal. Sometimes, you get what you deserve."

Team USA did have the remaining 4:41 of Winkler's penalty to do something on the power play, but the home team could not muster much of an attack.

In the meantime, the Phantoms nearly cashed in a second short-handed goal when Alex Esposito crossed the U.S. blue line and had a clear cut path to Woll.

But out of nowhere, forward Clayton Keller dove to knock the puck off of Esposito's stick.

On the doorstep

In the final minute, Keller — who scored the lone U.S. goal of the day — nearly had the equalizer.

He took a sharp-angle shot



Clayton Keller (front), skates against the Youngstown Phantoms at USA Hockey Arena. Keller scored the lone U.S. goal Sunday.

from the left side of the Youngstown net that goalie Ryan Bednard got a piece of. The puck got behind Bednard and slid close to the goal line before the play was whistled down.

"Their goalie just had it smothered up; we thought it was loose," Keller said. "But I guess it's just how it goes. They just played harder than us."

Bednard stopped all 14 shots he faced in the final period, including a glove stop on U.S. forward Kieffer Bellows that looked headed for the back of the Youngstown net.

Earlier in the third, defenseman Adam Fox wheeled in from the half-wall and clanked a shot off the crossbar.

"He's a very good goaltender; he's won a lot of games in this league, he made a lot of big saves," Cole said about Bednard, who stopped 31 shots. "We had some point-blank ones early in the third and didn't get anything. They got their chance and they were able to bury it."

"That's the way it goes sometimes. We need to be



All season long, Clayton Keller has been part of a dynamic top line for the U18s, along with Kieffer Bellows and Joey Anderson.

better and we've got to keep elevating our play."

On the board

Keller and his linemates Bellows and Joey Anderson did display plenty of tic-tac-toe passing during the contest.

A prime example of that resulted in the U.S. goal, at 8:52 of the middle period to tie the score at 1-1.

Bellows backhanded a centering pass from the right corner that Keller chipped in for his 12th USHL goal of the season. Also assisting was Anderson.

"Our 'D' made a good (play) at the red line," Keller said. "And then Joey had a nice chip to Kieffer and he threw it to the net and I got lucky. It hit off the side of my shin pad."

Youngstown opened the scoring at 4:18 of the second period, just six seconds into a power play.

Off the face-off, forward Yushiroh Hirano snapped a shot from the right point that linemate Chase Pearson tipped past Woll (26 saves).

The game was the U18s first in nearly two months at USA Hockey Arena and the team has one more home game (March 31 against Muskegon) before going to Grand Forks, N.D., for the 2016 IIHF World U18 Championships.

"We haven't lost many games here. Usually, we play real well," Cole said. "I thought we were OK, we weren't great and then you leave the game up to chance."

They'll be ready

Despite Sunday's loss, Keller said he and his teammates are gearing up for the U18 tournament, which will end the group's two-year stint together.

In the NTDP, players are brought in for the U17s and remain together the following year before moving on to college teams and other programs.

"I think we're getting better every day," Keller said. "We struggled a little bit over in Finland and we're just starting to get out of that."

"We're playing better and more simple and we'll be ready. It's a big tournament and something that we work for here in our two years. Everyone will be fired up for that."

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FRANKLIN

Continued from Page B1

miscue 1.31 ERA as a sophomore.

"I expect both of these guys to do well this season," said Fournier. "Adrian throws 82, 83 (miles per hour) with good command and he changes speeds well."

"Kolby had a very, very good season going last year. When we lost him (in May), it kind of took us out of our comfort zone because we had to move some kids around defensively."

Both Reed and Dewhirst will help anchor the infield when they're not on the mound. Other key hurlers include seniors Bobby Mandrink and Jay Hopson, juniors Harrison Merrill and Kyle Wollam, and Collin Metzler, the lone sophomore on the roster.

Wollam caught a bulk of the innings behind the plate for the Patriots last season, however, with the return of senior catcher Nate Binkiewicz, who missed 2015 with an injury, Wollam will get an opportunity to pitch.

Juniors Nick Hoyer, Jon Montie and Jake Giacobbi are also skilled throwers who will add to the team's pitching depth.

Franklin's defense is strong up the middle, thanks to the catching combo of Wollam and Binkiewicz, the middle infield combo of Reed (who will play shortstop when he's not pitching) and second baseman Mandrink, and senior center fielder Joe Chinavare, who is a three-year varsity standout and the team's lead-off hitter.

The Patriots' batting order is solid throughout with senior first baseman Ryan Prohaska providing a ton of power from the clean-up spot.

Among those battling to join Chinavare in the outfield are Giacobbi, Chris Nehasil and Alec Gorman, all juniors.

Seniors Brendan Sanders and Mark Smart both provide strong defensive skills on the infield. Smart also pitches.

One of the highlights of the Patriots' early-season schedule is an April 9 double-header against Garden City at Wayne State University.

RELIGION CALENDAR

MARCH

BIBLE PROPHECY SERIES

Time/Date: 7:15 p.m., beginning March 28
Location: Metropolitan School Gymnasium, 15585 N. Haggerty, Plymouth
Details: An in-depth Bible prophecy series called Unlocking Revelation will examine prophecies of Scripture. Go to www.UnlockRevelation.com to see all locations and pre-register and receive a free Bible Prophecy DVD on the first night. Snacks will be served
Contact: www.UnlockRevelation.com

BUDDHISM CLASS

Time/Date: 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, March 24, April 14 and 28, and May 12 and 26
Location: The Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington, 25301 Halsted, Farmington Hills
Details: Free five-week secular practical Buddhism class will apply Buddhist teachings to daily life through meditation, reflection and discussion. Secular Buddhism emphasizes the teaching of Eastern philosophy practices in a way that allows each individual to become their own teacher. Ideas such as "awakening" and "enlightenment" are goals in which there is no "one true way"
Contact: 248-478-7272; uu-farmington.org

DRAMATIC EASTER MUSICAL

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Friday-Saturday, March 25-26
Location: Merriman Road Baptist Church, 2055 Merriman, Garden City
Details: "Bow the Knee"
Contact: Church office at 734-421-0472; Russell Weathers at 734-536-3553; pastor@mrbcc.us

EASTER FAIR

Time/Date: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday, March 25
Location: Newburg United Methodist Church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia
Details: Egg hunt, crafts, prizes, interactive Bible stories, lunch. Children also will have the opportunity to "search" for items to make a hygiene kit for boys in foster care at the Methodist Children's Home, in Redford
Contact: 734-422-0149; newburgumc.org

EASTER FUN

Time/Date: 3-5 p.m. Saturday, March 26
Location: Inside Our Church, 1075 Venoy, Garden City
Details: The event will include carnival games, photos with the Easter Bunny, Easter candy and chances to win a prize package worth \$100, for families with children, fifth grade and younger
Contact: 734-983-8376

EASTER FUN

Time/Date: 1 p.m. Saturday, March 26
Location: Faith Community Wesleyan Church, 14560 Merriman, Livonia
Details: Family-friendly event with crafts, egg hunt, and presentation of the Easter story. Bring a basket for the egg hunt, which is for ages 12 and under
Contact: Melissa at 734-765-1827

EASTER WEEK

Time/Date: Maundy Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 24; Good Friday, 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 25; Easter services 8:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Sunday, March 27
Location: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 28000 New Market Road, Farmington Hills
Details: Maundy Thursday service includes communion
Contact: 248-553-3380

EASTER WEEK

Time/Date: Maundy Thursday service, 7 p.m. March 24; Good Friday meditation, noon-1 p.m. March 25; Easter service, 10 a.m., March 27
Location: Unity of Livonia, 28660 Five Mile, Livonia
Details: A continental breakfast follows the Easter service
Contact: 734-421-1760; office@unityoflivonia.org

EASTER WEEK

Time/Date: Maundy Thursday service, 7 p.m. March 24; Easter worship, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and egg hunt at 9:15 a.m., Sunday, March 27
Location: First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, 26165 Farmington Road, Farmington Hills
Details: Maundy Thursday worship commemorates the Last Supper and will consist of Holy Communion and a Tenebrae service with song, prayer, scripture and a meditation. Brunch will be served between the two services on Easter
Contact: 248-474-6170; farmington-pres.org

MARCH 27

Location: Good Hope Lutheran Church 28660 Cherry Hill, Garden City
Details: Maundy Thursday service on March 24; Good Friday service is March 25 and Easter service on March 27. An Easter breakfast also will be held at 9 a.m., followed by an egg hunt at 9:30 a.m., March 27
Contact: 734-427-3660

EASTER WEEK

Time/Date: 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 25 Passover Seder; 10:30 a.m. worship, Sunday, March 27
Location: Warren Road Church, 33445 Warren Road, Westland
Details: The Passover Seder retells the story of God's salvation of his people from Egypt through the elements of the Passover meal. The evening will conclude with a dinner that includes roast chicken and mashed potatoes. Breakfast kicks off Easter morning at 9 a.m., followed by the worship service
Contact: 734-458-7301

EASTER WEEK

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday service, March 24; 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Good Friday services, March 25; 9:30 a.m. service on March 27
Location: Lola Park Lutheran Church, 14750 Kinloch, Redford
Details: Free Easter breakfast from 8-9:15 a.m.. All visitors will receive a free DVD, "My Son, My Savior."
Contact: 313-532-8655; 734-968-3523

LABYRINTH WALKS

Time/Date: 1-6 p.m. and 7 p.m. worship, March 24; 7 a.m.-7 p.m., with worship at 7 p.m., March 25
Location: Northville United Methodist Church, 777 W. Eight Mile, Northville
Details: Participants use the labyrinth as a "walking prayer"
Contact: 248-349-1144

PILGRIMAGE

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, March 30
Location: Carpool to the Divine Mercy Center in Clinton Township from St. John Neumann parish office, 44800 Warren Road, Canton.
Details: Cost is \$10 and includes tour and lunch. Deadline to register is March 23.
Contact: Janet Gilbo at jgilbo@wowway.com or Sharlene Borke at sharborke@gmail.com

SUNRISE EASTER SERVICE

Time/Date: 7:15 a.m. Sunday, March 27
Location: Faith Community Wesleyan Church, 14560 Merriman, Livonia
Details: Service will be held outdoors except in extreme weather conditions. Coffee and refreshments will be served after the service. An Easter breakfast will start at 9 a.m.
Contact: Mary at 248-471-1322

VESPERS

Time/Date: 6 p.m. Sunday, through April 17
Location: St. Mary the Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, 21931 Evergreen Road, Southfield, March 27; Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, 39851 W. Five Mile, Plymouth, April 3; St. Michael Russian Orthodox Church, 26375 W. Chicago Road, Redford, April 10; and St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church, 2160 Maple, Troy, April 17
Details: Members of the Clergy Brotherhood of St. John Chrysostom of Metropolitan Detroit will conduct the services. An inter-Orthodox chorus will sing the responses
Contact: Olga Liskivsky at 248-252-8184; Olga-liss0910@gmail.com

APRIL CONCERT

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Sunday, April 3
Location: Trinity Episcopal Church, 28660 LaMuera, Farmington Hills
Details: Benefit concert for Farmington Neighborhood House features Wayne State University's Motor City Cabaret. A free will offering and canned goods will be collected
Contact: 248-474-2860; trinityfarmingtonhills.org

CONCERT

Time/Date: 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 16
Location: St. Hugo of the Hills Catholic Church, Bloomfield Hills, 2215 Opdyke, Bloomfield Hills
Details: Features Aeolian Choral, Carlos Seise, tenor, Quinto Milito, baritone, Timothy L. Huth, ars musica doctoris organ, John Sittard, conductor. Presented by the church and Friends of the Opera of Michigan. Free will offering will be accepted
Contact: 248-644-5460

DEVIATIONS, SWIECONKA

Time/Date: Starting at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, April 3
Location: St. Colette Catholic Church, 17600 Newburgh, just north of Six Mile, Livonia
Details: 12:30 p.m. Mass, 1:20 p.m. exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 1:45-3 p.m. silent adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation, 3 p.m. praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet and a spiritual talk, 3:30 p.m. benediction; followed by Swieconka Polish Easter meal at 4 p.m. Menu includes ham, kielbasa, potato salad, blessed hard-boiled eggs, beet horseradish, rye bread, butter lamb, salad, babka, lazy perogi, beets, cheese cake and beverages. Cost is \$15 per person. Meals must be paid in advance. Send a check or money order payable to WSDPAHS, to Laurie A. Gommuk, 32040 Grand River Ave., Unit #47, Farmington, MI 48336. Include number of attendees. Must be received by March 26. Sponsored by the West Side Detroit Polish American Historical Society
Contact: 855-POLONIA; detroit-polonia.org

MOM-TO-MOM SALE

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 23
Location: Connection Church, 3855 S. Sheldon, Canton
Details: Shop 100 tables of mom- and child-related items. Strollers welcome after 10:30 a.m. Admission \$2
Contact: 734-397-1777

ONGOING CLASSES/STUDY

Our Lady of Loretto
Time/Date: 6:30-7:30 p.m. Monday
Location: Six Mile and Beech Daly, Redford Township
Details: Scripture study
Contact: 313-534-9000
St. Michael the Archangel Parish
Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. second and fourth Thursday, through May
Location: 11441 Hubbard, just south of Plymouth Road, Livonia
Details: Gary Michuta, author and Catholic apologist, leads a study of Isaiah. Bring your own Bible
Contact: 734-261-1455, ext 200 or on line at www.livoniaist-michael.org



Members of Merriman Road Baptist Church in Garden City rehearse a scene from their Easter play, "Bow the Knee," which will be staged March 25-26, at the church.

Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday
Location: Parish office, 15089 Newburgh, Livonia
Details: Group meets for singing, praying and short teaching. Fellowship with snacks follows
Contact: Parish office at 734-464-1223
St. Michael Lutheran Church
Time/Date: 6-7 a.m. Monday-Friday
Location: 7000 N. Sheldon, Canton
Details: Praying silently or aloud together; prayer requests welcomed.
Contact: 734-459-3333 for additional information

RISEN CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Time/Date: 1-4 p.m. third Saturday of the month
Location: 46250 Ann Arbor Road, between Sheldon and Beck roads, Plymouth
Details: Recycle your cell phones, laser cartridges, inkjet cartridges, laptops, iPods, iPads, tablets, eReaders on the third Saturday of each month. Use the doors on east side of church.
Contact: Lynn Hapman at 734-466-9023

SINGLES
Detroit World Outreach
Time/Date: 4-6 p.m. Sunday
Location: 23800 W. Chicago, Redford, Room 304
Details: Divorce Overcomers group is designed for individuals going through divorce, those who are divorced or separated.
Contact: 313-408-3364

FAMILY MEAL
Time/Date: 5-6 p.m. every Thursday
Location: Salvation Army, 27500 Shiloh, Farmington Hills
Details: Free meal
Contact: 248-477-1153, Ext. 12

HEALING SERVICE
Time/Date: Arabic service, 3-4 p.m. first Tuesday of the month; English service, 3-4 p.m. third Tuesday of the month
Location: The Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of Saint Mary, 18100 Merriman, Livonia
Details: The service includes prayers of petition and intercession, hymns, Scripture readings and the anointing of the sick. Offertory candles are available for a free will offering in the vestibule of the church.
Contact: Rev. George Shalhoub at 734-422-0010 or email Stacey Badeen at sbadeen@bosm.com

MOMS
Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church
Time/Date: 9:30-11:30 a.m. second Tuesday, September-May
Location: 14175 Farmington Road, Livonia
Details: Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) is aimed at mothers of infants through kindergartners
Contact: Ethanie Defoe at 248-227-6617 and Jody Fleszar at 734-658-2463

Dunning Park Bible Chapel
Time/Date: 9:30-11:30 a.m. first and third Tuesdays
Location: 24800 W. Chicago Road, Redford
Details: MOPS is a place where moms can build friendships, receive mothering support, practical help and spiritual hope.
Contact: Amy at 313-937-3084 or Kristen at 734-542-0767

PET-FRIENDLY SERVICE
Time/Date: 1 p.m. Sunday
Location: Dunk N Dogs, 27911 Five Mile, Livonia
Details: All Creatures ULC sponsors the service, which is conducted in an informal setting. Pet blessings are available after the service.
Contact: 313-563-0162

PRAYER
St. Edith Church
Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday
Location: 15089 Newburgh, Livonia
Details: Group meets for singing, praying and short teaching. Fellowship with snacks follows
Contact: Parish office at 734-464-1223

St. Michael Lutheran Church
Time/Date: 6-7 a.m. Monday-Friday
Location: 7000 N. Sheldon, Canton
Details: Praying silently or aloud together; prayer requests welcomed.
Contact: 734-459-3333 for additional information

RISEN CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Time/Date: 1-4 p.m. third Saturday of the month
Location: 46250 Ann Arbor Road, between Sheldon and Beck roads, Plymouth
Details: Recycle your cell phones, laser cartridges, inkjet cartridges, laptops, iPods, iPads, tablets, eReaders on the third Saturday of each month. Use the doors on east side of church.
Contact: Lynn Hapman at 734-466-9023

SINGLES
Detroit World Outreach
Time/Date: 4-6 p.m. Sunday
Location: 23800 W. Chicago, Redford, Room 304
Details: Divorce Overcomers group is designed for individuals going through divorce, those who are divorced or separated.
Contact: 313-255-2222, Ext. 244 » Farmington Hills Baptist Church
Time/Date: 7-9 p.m. second Tuesday of the month except January, July and August
Location: 28301 Middlebelt, between 12 Mile and 13 Mile in Farmington Hills
Details: Western Oakland Parkinson Support Group
Contact: 248-433-1011

Contact: The facilitator at 313-283-8200; lef@dwo.org
Steve's Family Restaurant
Time/Date: 9 a.m. second and fourth Thursday
Location: 15800 Middlebelt, 14 mile north of Five Mile, Livonia
Details: Widowed men of all ages may attend the Widowed Friends Men's breakfast. This is an informal "peer" group where men have an opportunity to meet with others.
Contact: 313-534-0399

SONG CIRCLE
Congregation Beth Ahm
Time/Date: Noon to 12:30 p.m. every Shabbat
Location: 5075 W. Maple, West Bloomfield
Details: Sing zemirot (Shabbat songs) and celebrate Kiddush following morning services. Lyrics are provided in transliteration as well as the original Hebrew.
Contact: 248-737-1931 or email nancyellen879@att.net.

SUPPORT
Apostolic Christian Church
Time/Date: 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily
Location: 29667 Wentworth, Livonia
Details: Adult day care program at the church's Woodhaven Retirement Community. Funding available from TSA, AAA 1-C Older Americans Act.
Contact: 734-261-9000; www.woodhaven-retirement.com

Connection Church
Time/Date: 7 p.m. Friday
Location: 3855 Sheldon, Canton
Details: Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery for all hurts, habits and hang-ups. Child care is available for free
Contact: Jonathan@connectionchurch.info or 248-787-5009

Detroit World Outreach
Time/Date: 7-8:30 p.m. Tuesday
Location: 23800 W. Chicago, Redford, Room 202
Details: Addition No More offers support for addictive behavior problems
Contact: 313-255-2222, Ext. 244 » Farmington Hills Baptist Church
Time/Date: 7-9 p.m. second Tuesday of the month except January, July and August
Location: 28301 Middlebelt, between 12 Mile and 13 Mile in Farmington Hills
Details: Western Oakland Parkinson Support Group
Contact: 248-433-1011

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Deadlines: Friday, 4:00 p.m. for Sunday papers
 Tuesday, 4:00 p.m. for Thursday papers
 Holiday deadlines are subject to change.

MILLER

OLGA R. 88, of Farmington Hills, died March 11, 2016. Loving mother of Chris (Vanny) Miller, Peggy (Andy) Miller-Zelanko, William Miller, II, and Patricia (Mark) Barlow; dear grandmother of 11 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren and special friend of Helen. Sadly, Olga was predeceased in death by her husband, William (d. 1986) and daughter, Jeanne Miller. Funeral Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, 23615 Power Rd., Farmington. Interment Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Memorial contributions suggested Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Church, Hamtramck. Arrangements entrusted to Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington.
heeney-sundquist.com



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- 1993 Lincoln 1l1m91v8p754884
- 2007 Mazda 1m3er293670118107
- 2000 Ford 2fmda311y8e9179
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Project Engineer II - Controls for an independent company in Plymouth, MI engaged in the development of powertrain systems with internal combustion engines & transmissions as well as instrumentation and test systems. Requires Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering or related field and 2 years experience planning & executing functional integration & optimization of powertrain software & control systems into vehicle platform for engine, transmission, and driveline systems including reviewing engineering projects for compliance with engineering principles; performing controls algorithm and software analysis & development; performing technical studies, technical plans, failure mode analysis, timing and data analysis & validation and planning and executing engine performance research & development. The position is located in Plymouth, MI with 10% travel. **Powertrain Engineering, Inc., Attn: Jacqueline Kern, 47603 Holyard Drive, Plymouth, MI 48170-9208. Please indicate PE/II in subject line.**

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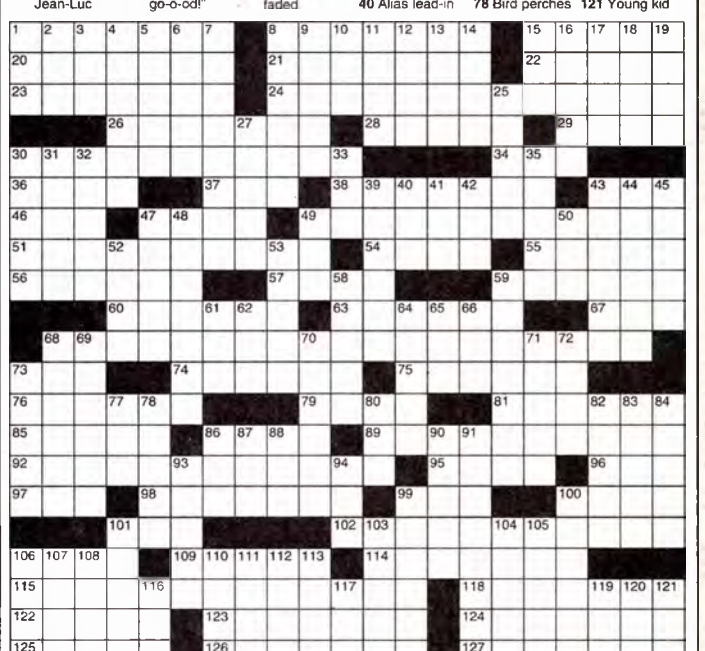
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22 Novelist Munro
23 Bands of fibrous tissue enclosing muscles
24 Inept warrior in armor?
26 Like escaped convicts
28 See
29 Slaughter of the diamond
30 Member of a certain antelope fraternity?
34 Plasma particle
36 "Hurlyburly" playwright David
37 Med. drips
38 Certain book of liturgy
43 Anti-DUI ad, e.g.
46 Ending for Alp or salt
47 Concept, to Jean-Luc
- DOWN**
1 Out of whack
2 Pro-gun org.
3 Auto fluid
4 Set free
5 Spitz variety
6 Province
7 More moony
8 Singer Boz
9 Light unit
10 "La Dolce"
11 "La Dolce"
12 Chilled
13 Pivot
14 Wife of Zeus
15 With
90-Down, actor Jean-Claude
16 Foreign
17 With
28-Across, ink the contract
18 Canyon reply
19 Puts (down)
25 - light (lamp on a film set)
27 Ominous bird
30 Prudish sorts
31 - Barbara
32 Flanged girder
33 News svc.
35 Like Mork, per his planet
39 Reaping tool
40 Alias lead-in
- 49** Activity when shopping for sweaters?
51 Person who repositions tiny flies?
54 "Life of Pi" novelist
55 Something easy-peasy
56 Apia resident
57 "Nothin' -" ("Easy-peasy!")
59 In the dossier, e.g.
60 First-class
63 Sword stopper
67 Breme tool
68 Shoe lace snarl of note?
73 Young male, urban-style
74 Like many offshore rescues
75 Outdoor enclosure for tabbies
76 In a mischievous way
79 Inside: Prefix
81 Beautiful guy
85 Persian-founded faith
86 "That feels go-o-od!"
- 89** "One-l lama" poet, grind your teeth!?"
92 Had some friends south of the border?
95 Poker cost
96 Norma - (Field role)
97 Horse's kin
98 Call halfway to a walk
99 "Delish!"
100 Wound, after a few days
101 Twisty letter by trolls?
102 Far northern city inhabited
106 Sheep's hair
109 Wear down
114 Convenient kind of shopping
115 Confession after hitting your physician with your leg joint?
118 Angel, musically
122 Big rig, e.g.
123 Lava spewer
124 Automaker
125 Impetuously
126 Very vivid
127 Totally faded
- 41** Maya of architecture
42 Cable TV's Spike, once
43 Rack-and- steering
44 Camp for Colonel Klink
45 According to
47 "But is -?"
48 Faye of films
49 NBA'er, e.g.
50 Rubber check abbr.
52 Food-order option
53 French political units
58 "What a piece of work -"
59 Aromatic substance
61 "Where - start?"
62 Bungle
64 Wearing a disguise, informally
65 Airport info
66 Illuminated
68 Holy books of Islam
69 Cubbyholes
70 Bray sound
71 Swift push
72 A party to
73 Easter cake
77 Hem and -
78 Bird perches
- 80** Toledo "two"
82 User busters
83 Rockabilly singer Chrs
84 "Come Back, Little -"
86 Rocker Rose
87 Be laid up
88 Drama unit
90 See
91 15-Down
91 Got tangled
93 Slacked off
94 Eggy quaff
99 Manly of "The Misfits"
100 Depleted
101 Opt
103 Lunchtimes, often
104 Early name in arcades
105 "Bonanza" star Greene
106 Among
107 Creole pod
108 Difficult task
110 Shankar of Indian music
111 Take too much, briefly
112 Knucklehead
113 Nero's "Lo"
116 Stretch (out)
117 Almond-hued
119 Prefix for "equal"
120 Erwin of films
121 Young kid



For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702/4247 or smcclellan@michigan.com. Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

SUDOKU

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

4	5		3	7	9			
8								6
			8	1				
	6		5					
7	1		6		2		5	
			2		3			
			8	9				
6								4
9	3		4	5				2

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WORDS

ARABESQUE HURDLER
AWESOME JUDGE
BASE JUMPS
CAPTAIN LIBERTY
CHANT MOTION
CHEER POM-PON
CHOREOGRAPHY PYRAMID
COACH ROUND-OFF
COMPETITION ROUTINE
COUPE SHOUT
DISMOUNT SPOTTER
EXECUTION SQUAD
EXTENSION STAR
FLIER STUNT
GYMNASTICS TRY-OUT
HANDSPRING TUCK
HANDSTAND TUMBLING
HEEL VARSITY

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

Crossword Answers
ON GUARD SLAVISH VASES
FRANKER GUTTICLE ALICE
FASCIAE AMATEUR KNIGHT
AT LARGE ADEAL ENOS
PHIGAMMAGNU ION
RABE TVS PSALTER PSA
INE TOEE PICKING KNITS
GNATTURNER YANN ASNAP
SAMOAN TOIT ONFILE
GRADEA SHIELD OAR
KNOWORTHMENTIONING
BOJL ATRISEA GATLONING
ARCHL ATRISEA GATLONING
BAHAI AAAH OGDENGONAS
KNEW MEXICANS ANTE RAE
ASS BALL TWO MMM SCAB
ESS GNOME ALASKA
WOOL ERODE ONESTOP
IKNEE DOCTOR HARPIST
TRUCK VOLCANO ERNESTO
HASTE INTENSE DIED OUT

Word Search Answers
ARABESQUE
AWESOME
BASE
CAPTAIN
CHANT
CHEER
CHOREOGRAPHY
COACH
COMPETITION
COUPE
DISMOUNT
EXECUTION
EXTENSION
FLIER
GYMNASTICS
HANDSPRING
HANDSTAND
HEEL
HURDLER
JUDGE
JUMPS
LIBERTY
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Murder mystery show aids CAPA scholarships

Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

As national director of The Murder Mystery Company, Justin Issa oversees interactive dinner theater in 30 cities nationwide.

Troupes at each location perform dozens of public shows and even more private parties every year, making the Grand Rapids-based theater company one of the busiest in the country.

"We've done shows in Vegas, on boats, in people's basements. Everywhere," Issa said.

But none of them compare to the performance that Issa and Adam Mack, Murder Mystery Company creative content director, plan each year in Livonia. The show raises funds for the Anna K. Bonde Scholarship, which benefits students from the Creative and Performing Arts Program (CAPA) at Churchill High School. It also involves CAPA students and it's the only public Murder Mystery Company show in Livonia.

Mack, a 1997 Churchill graduate, and Issa, a 1999 graduate, both live in Chicago, Ill., but take a hands-on approach to the benefit performance, which is set for 6:30 p.m. April 7 at Burton Manor, located on Schoolcraft, west of Inkster Road. The seventh annual event will include a three-course dinner, the interactive murder mystery called "Dressed to Kill," and a silent auction. Tickets are \$25.

"We don't usually plan any of these (Murder Mystery Company) events. This is the only one we plan ourselves," Issa said. "We're selling the tickets and making sure everyone in Livonia is buying a ticket."

"Anna was a good friend. She lost her life too early."

Triple threat

Like Issa and Mack, Anna Bonde was a member of CAPA at Churchill, where she appeared in such productions as "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," "South Pacific," "Stage Door," and "Picnic." As a junior she played the role of Peggy Sawyer in "42nd Street," and the following year landed the role of Anne in CAPA's production of "The Diary of Anne Frank."

She graduated in 1999 eighth in a class of 400 and double-majored in theater and dance at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. She died during spring break in 2001 while heading to a New Orleans, La., to volunteer at an elementary school. A drunken driver struck the car she was in, also killing two of her friends.

"She was a good singer, dancer and actor. She's what people call a triple threat," Issa recalled of his classmate. "But she was also very sweet-natured and kind. Theater kids can be crazy, but she was always level-headed and intelligent with that 'old soul' feeling."



Murder Mystery Company cast members include Dan Herdegen, performance coach; Livonia Churchill graduates Adam Mack ('97), creative content director; and Justin Issa '99, national director; and Anna Schmidt, director of public events and sales.

Since 2002 the Anna K. Bonde Scholarship Committee has awarded 39 scholarships totaling more than \$60,000. In 2009 The Murder Mystery Company pitched in to help and raised \$30,000 over six years.

"I am deeply touched that Anna's friends come from around the state and across the country to do this fundraiser in her honor each year," said Debra Bonde, Anna's mother. "This speaks to the lasting impact that Anna made in her 19 years with us. She was an honor student and a talented performer, but what touched people the most was her uplifting, caring spirit and her gift for making everyone around her feel loved and valued."

Working with students

The benefit show started out as a potluck affair with professional actors from The Murder Mystery Company and CAPA students performing at Churchill. The show was moved to Laurel Manor and a catered meal replaced the potluck.

What hasn't changed is the student component of the show.

"The most fun part is coming back for a day to work

with high school kids," Issa said. He and Mack taught The Murder Mystery Company's style of improvisation to the students, held an audition and cast 15 students to perform in the upcoming show. Issa, Mack and other professional actors from The Murder Mystery Company will join them at the event.

Although the show's plot, including the identity of the murderer, is scripted, interactions between guests and actors are improvised.

"It's as much a game as it is a show," Issa said, adding that guests at each dinner table work together to solve the mystery.

"We encourage people to get up and mingle. I think what makes our events great is that people get into it and play the game and are having fun with it."

For more information about The Murder Mystery Company or to buy tickets to the benefit show, visit grimprov.com.

To donate to the Anna K. Bonde Scholarship, send checks, made to "Emmanuel Lutheran Church," and mail to Debra Bonde, 34721 Pembroke Ave., Livonia MI 48152

sdargay@hometownlife.com



Anna Bonde plays the part of Peggy Sawyer in Livonia Churchill High School's production of "42nd Street" in 1998. She was killed by a drunken driver three years later. An annual murder mystery dinner theater show helps generate funds for a scholarship in her memory.

MOVIES OPENING SOON

Check local theater listings for screening times.

Friday, March 25

"**Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice**" stars Ben Affleck as Batman/Bruce Wayne, and Henry Cavill as Superman/Clark Kent. Zack Snyder directs the characters' first big-screen pairing. With Batman and Superman at war with one another, a new threat quickly arises, putting mankind in greater danger than it's ever known before. Also starring Amy Adams, Jesse Eisenberg, Diane Lane, Laurence Fishburne, Jeremy Irons, Holly Hunter, Gal Gadot, Scoot McNairy, Callan Mulvey, Tao Okamoto. Rated PG-13.

"**Eye in the Sky**" stars Helen Mirren as Colonel Katherine Powell, a UK-based military officer in command of a top-secret drone operation to capture terrorists in Kenya. Through remote surveillance and on-the-ground intel, Powell discovers the targets are planning a suicide bombing and the mission escalates from "capture" to "kill." But as American pilot Steve Watts, played by "Breaking Bad's" Aaron Paul, is about to engage, a young girl enters the kill zone, triggering an international dispute. Also starring Alan Rickman, Barkhad Abdi, Jeremy Northam, Iain Glen and Phoebe Fox, the film is directed by Gavin Hood and

written by Guy Hibbert. Rated R.

"**My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2**" is the follow-up to the highest-grossing romantic comedy of all time. Written by Nia Vardalos, who stars alongside the entire returning cast of favorites, the film reveals a Portokalos family secret that will bring the beloved characters back together for an even bigger and Grecker wedding. Stars Nia Vardalos, John Corbett, Lainie Kazan, Gia Carides, Joey Fatone, Elena Kampouris, Alex Wolff, Louis Mandylor, Bess Meisler, Bruce Gray, Fiona Reid, Ian Gomez, Jayne Eastwood, Mark Margolis, Andrea Martin, Michael Constantine. Directed by Kirk Jones. Rated PG-13.

"**Remember**" opens exclusively at the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor. It tells the story of Zev Guttman, played by Christopher Plummer, a 90-year-old Holocaust survivor struggling with dementia who is living out his final years in a bucolic retirement home. A week following the death of his beloved wife, Ruth, he suddenly gets a mysterious package from his close friend, Max, played by Martin Landau. The package contains a stack of money, a gun, and a letter detailing a shocking plan. Both Zev and Max were prisoners in Auschwitz, and the same sadistic guard was responsible for the death of both their families — a guard

who, immediately after the war, escaped Germany and has been living in the U.S. ever since under an assumed identity. Max is wheelchair-bound but in full command of his mental faculties; with his guidance, Zev will embark on a cross-continental road-trip to bring justice once and for all to the man who destroyed both their lives. Not rated.

Friday, April 1

"**I Saw the Light**," is the story of the legendary country western singer Hank Williams, who in his brief life created one of the greatest bodies of work in American music. The film chronicles his meteoric rise to fame and its ultimately tragic effect on his health and personal life. Written and directed by Marc Abraham, the film is based on Colin Escott's award-winning biography and stars Tom Hiddleston, Elizabeth Olsen, Bradley Whitford, David Krumholtz and Cherry Jones. Rated R.

"**Meet the Blacks**" is about a family out of Chicago in hopes of a better life. After Carl Black, played by Mike Epps, recently came into some unexpected funds, Carl takes his family and leaves the hustling lifestyle behind for something better. Carl, his wife Lorena, played by Zulay Henao, son Carl Jr., daughter Allie, and cousin Cronut pack up and move to Beverly Hills. As luck wouldn't have it, Carl

couldn't have picked a worse time to move. They arrive right around the time of the annual purge, when all crime is legal for twelve hours. Starring Mike Tyson, Gary Owen, King Bach, Charlie Murphy, George Lopez. Directed by Deon Taylor. Rated R.

Friday, April 8

"**The Boss**" stars Melissa McCarthy as a titan of industry who is sent to prison after she's caught for insider trading. When she emerges ready to re-brand herself as America's latest sweetheart, some persons aren't so quick to forgive and forget. Also starring Kristen Bell, Peter Dinklage and Kathy Bates. Directed by Ben Falcone, the comedy is based on an original character created by McCarthy and written by McCarthy and Falcone alongside their Groundlings collaborator, Steve Mallory. Rated R.

"**Demolition**" is about a successful investment banker, Davis, played by Jake Gyllenhaal, who struggles after losing his wife in a tragic car crash. Despite pressure from his father-in-law Phil, played by Chris Cooper, to pull it together, Davis continues to unravel. What starts as a compelling letter to a vending machine company turns into a series of letters revealing startling personal admissions. Davis' letters catch the attention of customer service rep

named Karen, played by Naomi Watts, and, amidst emotional and financial burdens of her own, the two form an unlikely connection. With the help of Karen and her son Chris, played by Judah Lewis, Davis starts to rebuild, beginning with the demolition of the life he once knew. Rated R.

"**Krishna**" opens exclusively at the Birmingham 8. Winner of both the Grand Jury and Audience Awards at the 2015 South-by-Southwest Film Festival, and official selection of Critics' Week at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival, "Krisha" is the story of a woman's return to the family she abandoned years before, set entirely over the course of one turbulent Thanksgiving. When Krisha shows up at her sister's Texas home on Thanksgiving morning, her close and extended family greet her with a mixture of warmth and wariness. Almost immediately, an unease permeates the air, one which only grows in force as Krisha gets to work cooking the turkey and trying to make up for lost time by catching up with her various relatives, chief among them her nephew, Trey. As Krisha's attempts at reconciliation become increasingly rebuffed, tension and suspicion reach their peak, with long-buried secrets and deep-seated resentments coming to the fore. Rated R.

Courtesy of Allied Integrated Marketing

MOVING OUT A BIT



A growing share of home buyers are millennials, and more of them are purchasing single-family homes outside of urban areas, according to a study.

Millennials often buy single-family home, study finds

A growing share of home buyers are millennials, and more of them are purchasing single-family homes outside of urban areas, according to the 2016 National Association of Realtors Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends study, which evaluates the generational differences of recent home buyers and sellers. The survey additionally found that although student loan debt is more prevalent among millennial buyers, they aren't the generation with the largest student debt balances.

The share of millennials buying in an urban or central city area decreased to 17 percent (21 percent a year ago) in this year's survey, and fewer of them (10 percent) purchased a multifamily home compared to a year ago (15 percent). Overall, the majority of buyers in all generations continue to purchase a single-family home in a suburban area, and the younger the buyer, the older the home they purchased.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says while millennials may choose to live in an urban area as renters, the survey reveals that most aren't staying once they're ready to buy. "The median age of a millennial home buyer is 30 years old, which typically is the time in life where one settles down to marry and raise a family," he said. "Even if an urban setting is where they'd like to buy their first home, the need for more space at an affordable price is for the most part pushing their search further out."

Added Yun, "Furthermore, limited inventory in millennials' price range, minimal entry-level condo construction and affordability pressures make buying in the city extremely difficult for most young households."

For the third straight year, the largest group of recent buyers were millennials, who composed 35 percent of all buyers (32 percent in 2014), more than the combined amount of younger and older boomers (31 percent). Generation X were 26 percent of buyers, and the Silent Generation made up 9 percent.

Financing the purchase

This year's survey underlined the challenges debt had

on some buyers' ability to purchase a home. While debt delayed saving for a down payment for a median of four years for all buyers, the number of years postponed increased from three years for millennials to six years for older boomers.

Among the share of buyers who said saving for a down payment was the most difficult task, millennials were most likely to cite student debt (53 percent) as the debt that delayed saving, while credit card debt was indicated more by Gen X (44 percent) and younger boomers (36 percent).

According to Yun, student debt is likely impacting more than just the millennial generation's ability to buy a home. "Whether it's from financing their own education or borrowed for their children, it's somewhat surprising to see a higher median amount of student debt among Gen X (\$28,000) and younger boomer buyers (\$29,100) compared to millennials (\$25,000)," Yun said. "One of the many reasons housing supply has been subdued in recent years may be because a segment of homeowners have decided to delay trading up or moving down in order to pay down their debt, including from student loans."

This year's study found that 86 percent of all buyers in the past year financed their purchase (88 percent a year ago). Younger buyers who financed their home purchase most often relied on savings for their down payment, whereas older buyers were more likely to use proceeds from the sale of a primary residence.

Overall, the median down payment ranged from 7 percent for millennial buyers to 21 percent for older boomers and the Silent Generation. Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of millennials cited a gift from a relative or friend — typically their parents — as a source of their down payment.

Characteristics of buyers

The median income of millennial home buyers in this year's survey was \$77,400 (\$76,900 in 2014), and they typically bought a 1,720-square-foot home costing \$187,400 (\$180,900 a year ago). The typical Gen X buyer was 42 years old, had a median

income of \$104,700 (\$104,600 a year ago) and typically purchased the largest home compared to other generations (2,200 square feet), costing \$263,200 (\$250,000 last year).

Generation X buyers (71 percent) were the most likely to be married, younger boomers had the highest share of single female buyers (20 percent), and 12 percent of millennial buyers were an unmarried couple.

This year's survey found that the millennial generation's desire to own a home of their own as the primary reason for their purchase is increasing, up to 48 percent (39 percent a year ago). The desire for a larger home was the highest among Gen X buyers (16 percent), and older boomers (at 20 percent) were the most likely to buy because of retirement.

Searching for and buying a home

Nearly all buyers predominantly used the Internet and a real estate agent during the home search process. Eighty-seven percent of millennials and Gen X buyers used an agent, and they were also the most likely to use mobile or tablet applications and mobile or tablet search engines during their search. Gen X buyers were the most likely to visit an open house.

NAR President Tom Salomone, broker-owner of Real Estate II Inc. in Coral Springs, Florida, says buyers of all ages continue to seek the advice and guidance of Realtors. "Supply shortages, strong competition and rising home prices in today's market can make buying a home very stressful," he said. "While the Internet is the initial go-to destination to search for available listings, consumers want the expertise and insights of a Realtor® to help them find the right home within their budget."

Gen X buyers represented the largest share of single-family home buyers at 89 percent (85 percent a year ago), and younger boomers were the most likely to purchase a townhouse or row house (9 percent). A combined 3 percent of millennial buyers bought an apartment, condo or duplex in a building with two or more units (7 percent a year ago).

Among the biggest factors influencing neighborhood choice, millennials were most

influenced by the quality of the neighborhood (63 percent) and convenience to jobs (60 percent); convenience to schools was most desired by Gen X buyers, and proximity to friends and family by the Silent Generation.

Characteristics of sellers

Those more likely to be trading up (Gen X homeowners) or trading down (older boomers) represented the largest share of sellers in the past year, at 25 percent and 24 percent, respectively. Millennials — also likely to be move-up buyers — stayed in their home the shortest amount of time before selling (five years).

Even though younger sellers were more likely to need a larger home or move because of job relocation, older boomers were far more likely to move further away. Sellers overall moved a median distance of 20 miles, with older boomers traveling the furthest at 75 miles.

Across every generation at 88 percent or above, sellers overwhelmingly used a real estate agent or broker to sell their home. When asked what sellers wanted most from their real estate agent, younger sellers were more likely to want their agent to help price their home competitively or sell within a specific time frame, whereas helping find a buyer was desired more by younger and older boomers.

In July 2015, NAR mailed out a 128-question survey using a random sample weighted to be representative of sales on a geographic basis to 94,971 recent home buyers. The recent home buyers had to have purchased a primary residence home between July 2014 and June 2015. A total of 6,406 responses were received from primary residence buyers. After accounting for undeliverable questionnaires, the survey had an adjusted response rate of 6.7 percent. All information is characteristic of the 12-month period ending in June 2015 with the exception of income data, which are for 2014.

Condo amenity provides for garage storage

Q: I read somewhere about a car garage condominium. What can you tell me about it?

A: The concept is interesting in that it provides for you to store your car in a garage area where it can be taken out and run on a test track with, presumably, other amenities in the condominium. Almost anything can be condominiumized, and the notion here is that people will put their specialized vehicles in a garage facility so they can take them on a test track. Of course, as in any condominium, the rules and restrictions will have to be tailored to this type of condominium development and, as is the case with any type of commercial condominium, there must be cooperation among the owners and the administration on the condominium project to ensure that the goals of the condominium are met.

Q: I have a business on a thoroughfare that has had a temporary loss-of-access and which someone has referred to as "mere circuitry in travel." Do you think I have a basis for compensation?

A: There is much litigation regarding what is commonly referred to as "orange barrel litigation." For example, if a construction project forces cars to travel an additional distance through a detour to visit a particular business, it has imposed what is called a circuitry of travel. However, the courts have said that merely causing patrons to travel the additional distance does not constitute a taking as the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution discusses which means that in the case of a taking, you would be entitled to due compensation. Simply stated, if a business is unaffected by the fact that its patrons have to take a circuitous route to the shop, then the business has generally been deemed to have not suffered an injury, much less a pecuniary or substantial injury. However, if as a result of the fact that the only route to the business is circuitous, and customers stop patronizing a store, then the store has clearly suffered an injury. You are best advised to talk to an attorney who specializes in this form of real estate law.



Robert Meisner

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of "Condo Living 2: An Authoritative Guide to Buying, Selling and Operating a Condominium." He is also the author of "Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track," second edition. Visit bmeisner@meisner-law.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Investors

The Real Estate Investors Association of Wayne will have an open forum. Investors will answer questions and offer a market update. Meetings are at 6-9 p.m. the third Tuesday of each month at the Red Lobster on Eureka in Southgate.

Members are free, guests \$20, which will be applied to their membership. The Red Lobster is next to 7-Eleven, near Trenton Road. Call Bill Beddoes at 734-934-9091 or Wayne Koehler at 313-819-0919.

Short sales

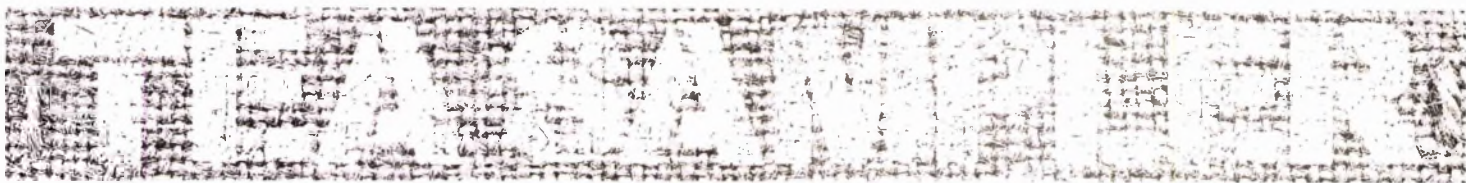
If you owe more than what your house is worth, you may be interested in a free informational seminar on short sale procedures.

Bonnie David, broker/owner of Quantum Real Estate, is the presenter. It will be 6-7 p.m. each Thursday at 129 N. Lafayette, downtown South Lyon. Call 248-782-7130 or email june.quantum@gmail.com.

Free foreclosure tours

Free foreclosure tours are 1 p.m. every other Sunday. Meeting place is Panera Bread on the southeast corner of Middlebelt and I-96.

Email Georgia@addedvaluerealty.com or visit FreeForeclosureTour.com.



A USA TODAY NETWORK ILLUSTRATION/THINKSTOCK

SIP, SAMPLE CHINESE TEAS AT 'EVERYONE'S READING' EVENT

Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

Tea tasting is a little like wine tasting.

"Think of your white, light teas as being your white wines. And when we get to the heavier, black teas, they are like heavier red wines," Barb Gulley, owner of Barb's Tea Service, told listeners recently at the Baldwin Public Library in Birmingham.

There's even a vintage Chinese tea, sheng pu-erh that improves with age, just like a fine wine.

"It's not considered fully done until it's fermented 30 years. Then we have the shou pu-erh. This is a tea that is processed to mimic a vintage pu-erh. So, the fermentation period is forced and it's rapid. It's not going to get better with age. It's just like wine. Some, if you let them age for 30 years, they are going to be great. And then other wines won't improve. In fact, they may taste worse."

Gulley led her audience through a Chinese tea tasting and presentation as a part of the Everyone's Reading program sponsored by public libraries in Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties. This year's focus is on Lisa See's "Shanghai Girls," a novel about two sisters who leave China to marry and settle in Los Angeles' Little Chinatown during the early 1940s.

Gulley will present her "Tea from China" talk and tasting again at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 17 at the Canton Public Library, 1200 S. Canton Center Road. Registration opens March 26. Visit cantonpl.org for more information.

Tea education

Gulley, a Troy resident and former marketing teacher at Oakland University, started Barbs Tea Shop about 10 years ago. The company, renamed Barb's Tea Service this year, offers tea tastings, and information on tea etiquette, rituals and history. She also published a book, "Michigan Tea Rooms," last year.

"Our primary focus is tea education. I'm authorized by the Protocol School of Washington to teach tea etiquette," she said. "We do an Eleanor Roosevelt tea, a Jane Austen tea and a Downton Abbey tea.

She's a fan of Earl Grey tea and her daughter, Rachel Gulley, who assists with programs, likes chai teas, but said Chinese tea "is nice because it's simple."

"It is what it is. You know exactly what you are getting," Rachel Gulley said. "It's very nice."

"Teas, tea ceremonies, it all started in China," Barb Gulley said.

Tea categories

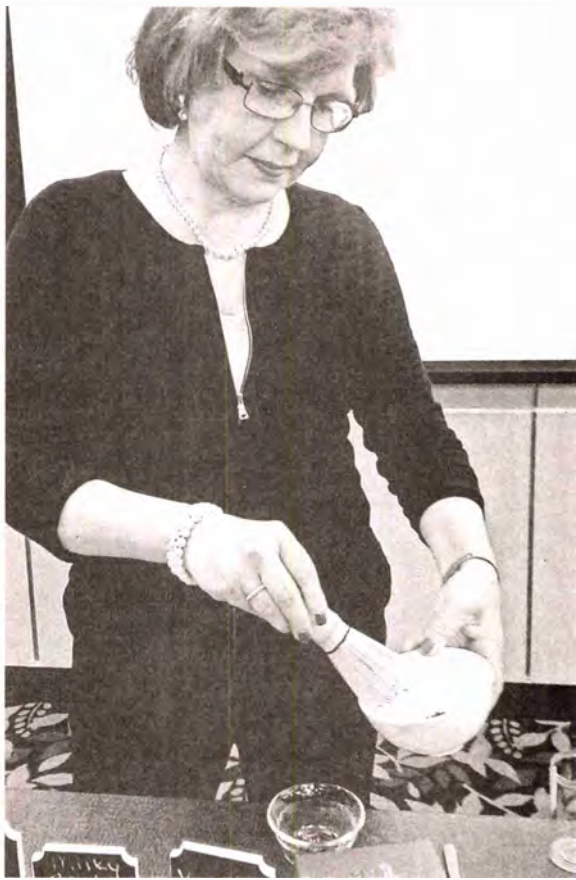
All tea, except herbal teas, comes from the plant *Camellia Sinensis*. The primary difference between the four major tea categories, white, oolong, green and black, is their oxidation period — how long after

"There is a whole intricate process of getting yellow teas. They are very rare because a lot of work goes into them. You don't see a lot of it around the market."

BARB GULLEY, owner of Barb's Tea Service



A clay tea pot from China

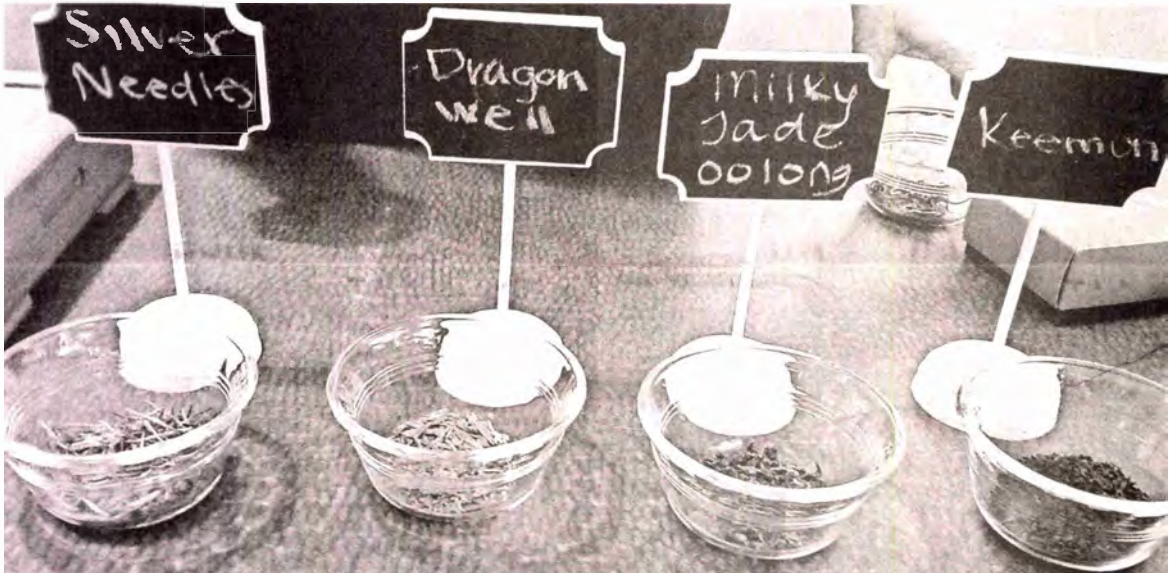


Barb Gulley demonstrates the use of a tea whisk.

SHARON DARGAY



Pu-erh tea cake (left) with powdered tea and the Everybody's Reading selection for 2016, "Shanghai Girls," by Lisa See.



Four teas are ready for tasting at the Everybody's Reading program on Chinese tea.

SHARON DARGAY

the leaves are picked from the plant and exposed to the air.

"There is a lot that goes into what makes a tea a different tea, because other than oxidation, you can steam it, pan fry it. You can have older leaves, younger leaves. There's a lot that goes into it," Gulley said.

Processing sets two other Chinese tea categories, yellow and pu-erh, apart from the rest.

"There is a whole intricate process of getting yellow teas. They are very rare because a lot of work goes into them. You don't see a lot of it around the market."

Pu-erh, with its smoky, earthy taste, is a fermented tea

that is compressed into the form of a small cake, about the size of a truffle.

"China is the only country that produces all six kinds of tea," Gulley said.

Tasting

Gulley prepared white, oolong green and black tea for audience members and offered flavor notes.

White tea has no oxidation. It's minimally processed and has a short harvest period of a few weeks.

"It tends to be expensive. It was once reserved for emperors and the elite," Gully noted. "What you are drinking now, Silver Needles, is the absolute

new growth of the tea plant. It has the downy leaves. Anyone picking up any vanilla notes? Roasted peanuts?"

They sampled Dragon Well, a green tea with its own legend about a dragon in a well that cured a village drought, and they tried Milky Jade, an oolong made from leaves exposed to a steamed milk bath.

"They take in some of that creamy milk taste. You should be getting that," Gulley told her listeners.

A black Keemun, with a slight oaky note, rounded out the tasting.

Steeping times and tea grades also affect tea flavors.

"You'll have just the leaf

and some will include parts of the leaf, so you get a mixture. There is a whole grading system, which is how you get the variants in the different tea groups. You'll go from leaf, then to broken leaf and all the way down to fanning."

Fanning, or particles of tea, make up the contents of most tea bags sold at grocery stores.

"Basically, it's just the dust," Gulley said. "They call it the dust."

For more about Gulley's programs, visit barbsteaservice.com. For more about the Everyone's Reading event, visit everyonesreading.info/.

sdargay@hometownlife.com

Running for Brews member weighs in on beer, 5K route

Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

For Rick Garcia, a good beer and a 5K run go hand in hand.

Garcia is a member of Running for Brews, a 901-member running club that mixes the fun of running with the pleasure of drinking beer every Monday night in downtown Royal Oak. Runners — and some walkers — gather at 7 p.m. at O'Tooles on Fifth Ave., just east of Washington Street. They pose for a group photo and then follow a 5K route through Royal Oak neighborhoods, sometimes running through nearby Huntington Woods.

Afterward there's plenty of time for socializing and beer.

Garcia, a Madison Heights resident who works in informational technology, has been

running for about 12 years.

"I used to go to the gym a lot and bike a lot and I decided I wanted to try something different. So instead of biking to the gym, I ran," he said.

Eventually he got rid of his bike and concentrated solely on running. For the past two years he has spent most Mondays with Running for Brews, and has tackled the 5K in all kinds of weather.

"Even on those cold days, when you are done running, you're really warm," he said, explaining why a cold brew hits the spot after a run regardless of the season.

The Observer asked Garcia to talk about his most recent run, along with the brew he drank. Next week, another runner will weigh in on both beer and sport.

Q: What did you drink after today's run?

A: Moosedrool from Missoula, Montana.

Q: Describe it.

A: Brown ale, medium-flavored beer not too heavy, not too light. It's one of my favorites because it is very easy to drink, it doesn't have an overpowering taste and it doesn't make you feel full after one.

Q: What kind of food would you pair it with?

A: Spicy buffalo wings

Q: How was the run today?

A: Great run, temps were in the high 50s, new route that took us through other neighborhoods in the Royal Oak area. We had a very large turnout with daylight saving time kicking in and the sun still out.

Q: Any running tip you can offer?

A: Make sure you have shoes that fit, don't have hot spots that may rub as they could cause blistering.



SHARON DARGAY
Rick Garcia, a member of Running for Brews, enjoys a beer.

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