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Thursday, February 5, 2004

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Funding cut drastically

The Student Services Department is doing everything it can to resolve and minimize the impact of the Learning Activities Enrichment Program, says Donna Tinberg. — Page 11A



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Second chance for brewery

A comedy club? An Italian restaurant? What's happening with the Local Color brew pub? — Page 14A

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Mayfair Realty

Abe Ayoub, broker and owner of Mayfair Realty, provides Realty services for all types of properties including properties in the Wayne County area from Livonia, to the entire South Lyon area and the Brighton area in Livingston County. — Page 4B

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STILL ON HOLD

Lack of funding leaves Wixom Road Bridge project off MDOT's five-year plan

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

A vote by the state Transportation Commission last Thursday left the Wixom Road Bridge project where it was last year — waiting in the wings.

Its vote left Novi's state legislative delegation flummoxed. However, state transportation officials noted the project hasn't ground to a complete stop.

Ben Kohrman, the Michigan

Department of Transportation's director of communications, said the agency plans to spend \$2.5 million set aside by Congress in its Omnibus Appropriations Bill for the reconstruction of the Beck and Wixom road bridges over Interstate 96 on "protective right

of way purchases" at the Wixom interchange.

Kohrman said that while that won't change the project's status in MDOT's five-year plan, it will save the state money in the long run. Buying right-of-way now, he said, will save the agency money when it eventually has funds to build the bridge.

State Rep. Craig DeRoche said he was "outraged" to see the Wixom project left out of MDOT's five-year plan after

being a part of it for five years. He promised "tough questions" for MDOT director Gloria Jeff, who was slated to appear before his House Transportation Policy Committee this morning.

Last month Jeff told DeRoche and others at an MDOT "listening session" in Troy said that the problem with the Wixom bridge is that the agency doesn't have the \$40 million necessary to complete the project. She added a big reason for that is the federal road

funding formula.

Last April Jeff shelved plans to complete replacement of the Beck and Wixom road interchanges as part of Governor Jennifer Granholm's "Preserve First" program, which deferred 32 other projects across the state. While local, county and state officials were able to convince MDOT to put the Beck project back in the pipeline, Wixom remained sidelined.

continued on page 3

Martinis make the money pour in



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Pouring a plethora of martinis for the upcoming Muscular Dystrophy Association "Martini Tasting and Teaching" are Fountain Walk's Bamboo Club bartender Tony Minicilli, its manager Carrie Dunn and MDA's Anthonie Burke. The Novi Bamboo Club will host the fundraiser on Feb. 11. See page 8 for the full story.

Funding for DNA testing sought

Technology useless without money, says Rep. DeRoche

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Two years ago Wixom police had the evidence to send a local man to prison for 22½ years for raping his neighbor at knife point, but they didn't know it.

Convicted of that crime in December, Jamey Ray Johnson now stands accused of raping a Highland Township woman twice during the eight months it took Wixom police to obtain warrants for his arrest.

That brought State Rep. Craig DeRoche to Wixom last Thursday to call for increased funding for DNA testing at the state's forensic laboratories.

Flanked by police chiefs from Wixom, South Lyon and Northville, DeRoche said there are 76,000 untested DNA samples at the Michigan State Police's forensic laboratories. The backlog is expected to grow by 8,000 a year, at least through 2007, if nothing changes.

DNA testing, said DeRoche, has the "power to convict criminals of rape or murder and it has the power to clear suspects." However, without adequate funding, the technology is powerless.

Wixom Police Chief Clarence Goodline said his investigators picked up Johnson



C. DeRoche

continued on page 5

School district earns mostly As and Bs

Administrators pleased with results of Education Yes! report cards

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Novi Community School District administrators were happy to see that many of their schools received As and Bs on the first Education Yes! Report Cards, issued on Jan. 30.

The only two schools that received no grades were Deerfield Elementary — because there is only two years of test data recorded so far, not enough for a grade — and Novi Meadows School, because math and English language arts are not tested on the fifth and sixth grade MEAP.

Novi High School received a B,

but is the only school in Novi to not make Adequate Yearly Progress because less than the required 95 percent of all high school students took the MEAP test.

According to Jane Hesse, director of K-12 Curriculum and Assessment, these scores are composites of many different aspects of each school. The reason the high school received a B is because other pieces of the composite score were very high. Over the next several years, if Adequate Yearly Progress is not attained further, improvement steps must be taken.

"The report card is based on

MAKING THE GRADE

Grades each school received in the Novi Community School District

- Deerfield Elementary School - No grade because there is only two years of test data from the school.
- Village Oaks Elementary School - A
- Orchard Hills Elementary School - B
- Parkview Elementary School - B
- Novi Woods Elementary School - A
- Novi Meadows - No grade because math and English Language Arts are not tested on the fifth and sixth grade MEAP
- Novi Middle School - A
- Novi High School - B (Did not make Adequate Yearly Progress because less than the required 95 percent of all high school students took the MEAP test)

Adequate Yearly Progress of math and English language arts on the MEAP," Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services Nancy Davis said.

Davis explained that some people may wonder why Novi Meadows wasn't even on the list.

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Hummer of Novi dealership makes it through round one

Planning commission approves zoning change

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Novi could be humming the tune of a new sport utility vehicle dealership on the northeast corner of Meadowbrook Road and Grand River Avenue following the first round of approvals.

Members of the Novi Planning Commission unanimously approved a rezoning of the property for a Hummer dealership at a public hearing Jan. 28. The rezon-

ing will go to city council for possible approval Feb. 23.

"In general, I think this is a very good use of the property. And, the developer has made some changes to the building design to make it more in line with the surrounding area," said Commissioner Mark Pehrson.

The request by Scott Riddle, president of Turnkey Management Services of Bloomfield Hills, is for 6,721 acres to be changed from General Business zoning to the new Gateway East zoning recently adopted by city council.

"I'm disappointed that we had to have a special option with a development agreement," said commissioner chair Gwen Markham. "I like to work within the ordinances. This was a convo-



Illustration courtesy TURNKEY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The artist's rendering shows the proposed Hummer of Novi dealership planned for the northeast corner of Meadowbrook and Grand River. If approved by the city, the dealership could be open by the end of the year.

luted way to get there." A dealership does not fit in with a General Business zoning but does meet the requirements for

the new Gateway East zoning. "I also agree that we have much more discretion as to the design of the building with the Gateway

East zoning," said Commissioner Lynn Kocan. "I'm pleased that

continued on page 3

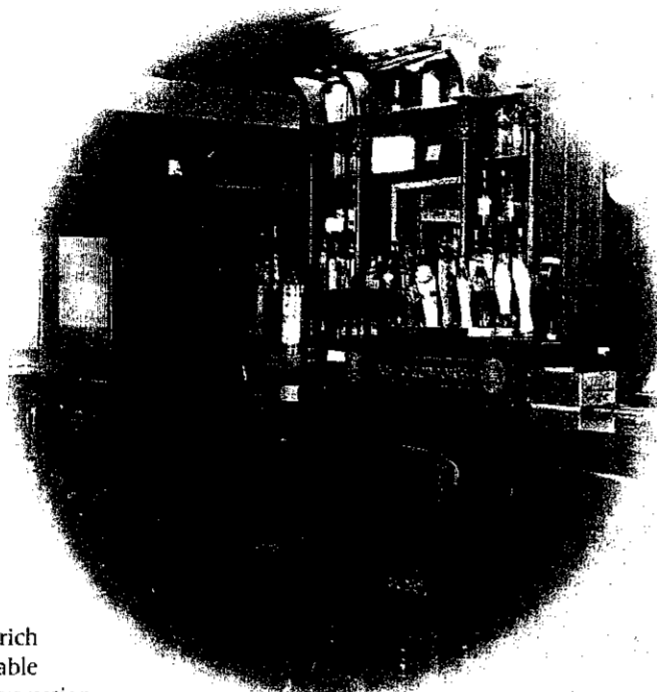
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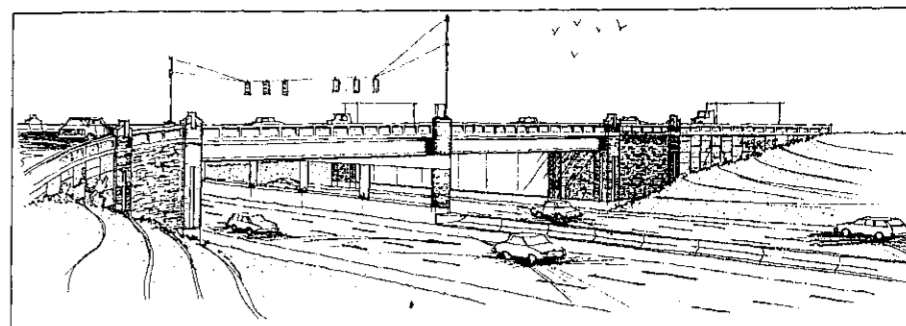


Wixom Road Bridge project still on hold

continued from front page

Leaving the project out of its five-year plan again this year was "the wrong decision," said Richard Helwig, Novi's city manager. However, he added that since MDOT redraws its plan annually and the Beck Road project won't be done until the end of 2005, there's still time to apply pressure on the agency.

State Senator Nancy Cassis, R-*Novi*, is already lining up her allies in Lansing. She said House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Scott Shackleton and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Shirley Johnson have assured her they will do everything they can to restore funding to the project.



URS Architects Engineers Planners' design concept for the I-96 interchange at Wixom Road, which is very similar to the Beck project.

She added U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter's office has told her there is another \$25 million in the federal pipeline for replacement of the Wixom and Beck road bridges in addition to the \$25 million already in the Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

"We are working on a number of fronts," Cassis said. Noting that the Road Commission for Oakland County spent money long before it would have otherwise on widening Grand River Avenue between Beck and Wixom roads because of pressure from MDOT officials, DeRoche said it was "alarming" that the project is not part of the state's five-year plan.

Wixom City Manager Michael Doman said the vote means he and his staff will have to work just that much harder to get the project back on the list next year. "We have to continue to demonstrate to MDOT and the governor that the Wixom interchange project, bar none, meets governor's economic development, job growth, job retention and preservation of existing infrastructure criteria."

Michigan and the Wixom project. "Clearly this is one of the more important projects on the horizon," he said.

Kohman noted that Congress is slated to reauthorize its transportation bill by the end of the month and his agency is hopeful that it will mean more funding for

Phil Foley is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700 ext. 108 or at pfoley@ht.homecomm.net.

Hummer zoning change approved

continued from front page

this is moving in the right direction."

A resident of the nearby Gateway Village condominiums expressed concern about increased traffic and lights from the dealership's parking lot.

"We have made every effort to comply with the development agreement and the GE requirements," Riddle said during the hearing.

The planning commission will see a conceptual plan for the approximately 22,000-square-foot dealership, but the preliminary site plan will be reviewed by city council.

Although an artist's rendering of the building has been completed, no actual plan has been presented to the planning commission as the rezoning had to be approved first.

"I am thrilled that we are getting something beautiful on this property," said Commissioner David Royle. "That land has been vacant for the 24 years that I've lived here."

If approved, the Hummer of

Novi dealership will be the fourth in the Metro Detroit area, with the others located in Southfield, Troy and Clinton Township. It's designed based on what the city of Novi has asked for according to the Gateway East ordinance, according to Riddle.

The proposed building will be brick with stone and glass similar to the Main Street Novi architecture.

Hummer of Novi will be owned by the owners of Detroit Hummer just south of Nine Mile Road on Telegraph in Southfield.

"If approved, this will be our sister dealership," said Deborah Kassak, general manager of Detroit Hummer. Kassak noted that the Detroit Hummer dealership is the number one Hummer dealership in the country as far as sales.

"General Motors really wanted a Hummer dealership in Novi because of the desirable location at Meadowbrook and Grand River. It's a unique franchise because it's a premium brand, similar to Jaguar, Mercedes Benz and BMW. It's not a high-volume brand. This

is more of a niche product in the automotive retail world," Riddle said.

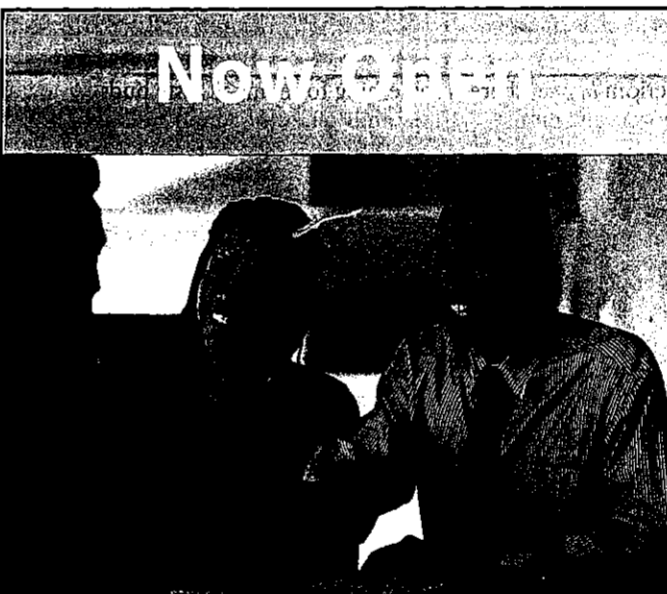
The Hummer caters to people who are looking for something unique and different for transportation, Riddle added. He expects to have the Novi location open for business by the end of the year.

There are currently two Hummer models available — the H1 and H2. The H1 is more of a military-style vehicle, while the H2 is more luxurious. An H3 model, which will be a smaller version of the H2 and is more affordable, is targeted for release by spring 2005.

"Interestingly enough, a large segment of our market for Hummers is women. Just like male buyers, they, too, want to drive a vehicle that is unique. Women are particularly attracted to the safety of the Hummer," Kassak said.

For more information, visit www.detroithummer.com.

Paul Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or at pfleming@ht.homecomm.net.



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Novi not seen as 'Second City' by comedy firm

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

The ink is almost dry on the deal that will bring The Second City, the world-famous comedy troupe, to the building formerly occupied by the brewery/distillery and restaurant Local Color.

"We haven't finalized any deal right now. I expect that we will within 24 to 48 hours," said Kelly Leonard, producer, The Second City, Inc., Tuesday.

City of Detroit officials were obviously not pleased when, after 10 years, the comedy troupe decided to leave its downtown location, leading to rather negative press on the move.

The Second City Detroit is currently located inside the Hockmeyer Cafe on Woodward.

"The thing I love about it is the name. The Second City came from a series of derivative articles written in the 1930s by A.J. Liebling in the New Yorker. He was putting down Chicago, saying that it wasn't a real city. It was like a 'second city.' Us adopting that name was our way of thumbing our nose at that level of snobbery," Leonard said.

"Now, it's clearly ironic that some of the press coverage has embraced

the same kind of put-downs of Novi that we saw people doing with Chicago. History is repeating itself," Leonard said.

"We don't consider Novi a 'second city.' Quality is not geographic," Leonard said.

Leonard said that The Second City has agreed to terminate the relationship with Olympia Entertainment, owned by the Mike Blach family, at the end of March.

"We hope to be in the new space by April or May," he said.

Leonard said the move to Novi was no sudden decision.

"For the last couple of years, we and members of the Olympia team had looked at other venues in the city itself or the suburbs. Nothing worked until we scouted the site in Novi that fit all of our criteria," Leonard said.

"Besides the physical plant being what we were looking for was the fact that the location is so close to two major universities (University of Michigan and Michigan State University) in Ann Arbor and East Lansing. That's a very important audience for us."

Leonard said that in Chicago and Toronto, Ontario, The Second City is a "night of passage" for this age group as far as that type of enter-

tainment. The comedy firm also has a location in Flamingo Las Vegas hotel and in Los Angeles.

"Satirical, political and social commentary is what Second City is known for," Leonard said.

"The participation of that crowd as far as students for classes and potential talent for our stage is crucial to our success," Leonard said.

The Second City first opened its doors in Chicago in 1959.

"We're about ready to celebrate our 45th anniversary," Leonard said.

"We're the most famous comedy theater in North America and probably the world."

The Chicago location is known for producing such comedians as Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi, Bill Murray, Mike Myers and Tina Fey of Saturday Night Live; Bonnie Hunt, George Wendt, John Gandy, Martin Short and others.

Peter Paisley, owner of Local Color, said that he has signed the deal to move the brewery/distillery to Green Oak Township. "That's signed and done."

However, he wouldn't shed any light on additional details on The Second City's move to the building or the possibility of a new restaurant coming to the location.

WHO GETS NOVI'S LAST LIQUOR LICENSE; ONLY ONE OUT OF 32 GRANTED LEFT

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

With The Second City moving into the former Local Color building, attention is now being focused on the possibility of a restaurant also occupying that space.

The family-owned Andiamo chain of eight Italian restaurants in the Metro Detroit area is rumored to be considering the site, but that could not be confirmed by city officials or restaurant employees.

Also in question is whether the comedy club or proposed adjacent restaurant will be granted the city's last available liquor license.

The Novi city clerk's office confirmed Tuesday that two businesses have recently applied for the outstanding license — Lucky Strike, a bowling alley planned for 44375 Twelve Mile Road in the Fountain Walk shopping center, and the Hax Fish Inn, an Asian restaurant at 31162 Novi Road at Fourteen Mile.

Hooter's Restaurant has also applied for a transfer of its Class C liquor license from Highland Township to Novi.

Neither The Second City nor the proposed restaurant to be located adjacent to the Comedy Club has applied for a license.

The number of liquor licenses that the Michigan Liquor Control Commission grants to a city is based on population. Novi's quota, with a population of about 50,000, is now 32, according to July Wendt, director of licensing for the commission in Lansing.

One liquor license granted to Jake's Fish House at 47690 Grand River Avenue at Beck Road is not being used since the restaurant went out of business. This license could be transferred to another owner if the owner of Jake's agrees.

Peter Paisley, owner of Local Color, however, can't transfer his liquor license to either The Second City, Inc., or the proposed restaurant since he has a manufacturer's license making him a producer of brandy, spirits, a microbrewery, and a small wine maker. This license enables him to only sell alcohol actually brewed or distilled on site.

The Second City and the proposed restaurant going in with the theater would have to have an on-premise retail license to serve alcohol.

"If the restaurant that goes in next to the Local Color building is from Oakland County, the owners could transfer one of their on-premise licenses to their new location," Wendt said.

The granting of any new liquor license location or transfer will have to first be approved by city council.



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Paisley waits for water decision

By Jim Totten
DAILY PRESS & ARGUS

Novi restaurant Peter Paisley said Brighton-area government officials are working on a way to supply him with water so he can flip the switch on his proposed brewery/distillery at the former Thermoff building in Green Oak Township.

"I want to be open in three months," said Paisley, owner of the popular Local Color restaurant and brewery in Novi.

Paisley said he's planning on making vodka, rum, gin and beer at the Thermoff industrial building, which has been vacant six years since a huge fire destroyed part of the business. The site is on Whitmore Lake Road in Green Oak Township and is next to the

Brighton city border.

Paisley said he's trying to negotiate an emergency connection so Brighton could supply the Local Color brewery/distillery with water until Green Oak Township gets its water authority well operating.

Officials said the township would be installing new water lines in front of the Thermoff site within the next two months, but the water won't be available until early summer.

"Everyone is working to pull it together," Paisley said. He said Brighton city and Green Oak Township officials, as well as the Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce, have been working to resolve his situation.

Dana Frazier, Brighton city manager, said a subcommittee of the

Brighton City Council has discussed the water issue with township officials, and negotiations are under way to meet Paisley's need.

Unlike his Novi location, Paisley said there will be no restaurant on the new site, only a small tasting room for visitors. He said the facility would also make energy drinks, root beer soda and cream soda. Local Color's most popular product is a blueberry vodka called Voda, which is sold all over the state.

Paisley said there's a "ton of work to be done to the building." He said his next step will be submitting plans to the Green Oak Township Planning Commission.

Paisley said he expects to employ 25 people at the brewery this year. He said it could grow to 40 by the end of 2005.

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Author: Credit card debt top financial problem in nation

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Typically, right behind getting physically fit, the No. 2 resolution with most Americans is to become more financially fit, according to financial author, speaker and syndicated columnist Lynnette Khalfani.



L. Khalfani

Khalfani came to Borders Books & Music in Novi last month to talk about how to improve one's financial footing in 2004.

A financial news journalist for more than 10 years, she is on a book tour for her new release, "Investing Success: How to Conquer 30 Costly Mistakes & Multiply Your Wealth!" Discount brokerage giant Charles Schwab wrote the forward for the book.

The South Orange, N.J., resident was with Dow Jones for nine years and was formerly a reporter for the Wall Street Journal. She has also appeared on CNBC, worked for the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Associated Press and was a financial writer for Fox-TV in Philadelphia.

She wrote the book "Investing Success" because she saw so many people making mistakes with their money. And, she said when it comes to personal finances, credit card debt is the number one problem facing Americans today.

She often gives people who attend her investing seminar a financial assessment, asking them to answer yes or no to 10 statements, such as:

- I have enough money to buy, do or have the things that I want.
- I have an updated will.
- I know that I have adequate life and disability insurance.
- I know exactly where my money goes each month.
- I know exactly how much debt I owe and how much I'm paying in interest on a monthly or annual basis.

"Out of the 10 questions I ask on this financial fitness assessment, 70 percent score between 0 and 3," Khalfani said.

"People need to look at their financial situation more realistically," she said. "But don't feel that it's hopeless because of your age, what you've done in the past, the economy or how the stock market is doing. None of that matters. There are many concrete steps that you can take to put your finances in good health if you learn how to avoid certain mistakes and do the right thing," she said.

Khalfani has interviewed well over 1,000 financial experts and now wants to share what she's learned.

"People who are successful with their money admit they've made mistakes, correct them and move on," she said.

"Not everyone is ready to invest," she added. "People should take care of the financial basics first. And, that means taking care of credit card debt. It is the No. 1 financial affliction affecting America. I think it's a plague. I compare it to alcoholism," she said.

"The average U.S. household has 13 credit cards, is about \$9,000 in credit card debt and pays an average of 15 percent interest. If you have \$8,000 in debt at this interest rate, it will take you 16 years to pay off this debt if you only make the minimum

payment," she said. "Credit card companies want you to pay the minimum amount because it's a revenue stream for them. But, you should really be paying three times the minimum payment," she said.

Khalfani suggests calling creditors and asking them to lower your interest rate. "If they refuse, switch to another creditor," she said. Although debt consolidation has received negative press, she believes going into a debt management program is better than continually paying late and/or overlimit fees.

Khalfani noted also that new legislation may make it more difficult to wipe out credit card debt in a bankruptcy filing.

"Congress is reviewing this. You would have to work out something with your creditors and would still owe credit card bills even after you have filed for bankruptcy. This could happen as early as 2004," she said.

Khalfani believes people should also have a "cash cushion" before considering investing.

"You should have several months' worth of income set aside in case you're laid off, fired or something else happens," she said.

City draws line in sand over subdivision roads squabble

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Novi City Council has given a Northville developer until close of business Monday to begin steps to turn the streets in a westside subdivision over to the city or risk being sued.

The council voted 6-1, with Council Member Laura Lorenzo dissenting, to give the ultimatum to Northville developer Ken Nanda at its Feb. 2 meeting after learning that Nanda had sent the county Registrar of Deeds a letter informing it that he was withdrawing his offer to make public the streets in Cheltenham subdivision off Beck Road public.

Noting that the project had been planned in 1998, City Attorney Gerald Fisher called it an "extraordinary event." According to Fisher, Nanda's letter to the county amounted to an attempt to amend an approved plat without city permission.

Nanda has been involved with a long-simmering dispute with a neighboring developer, William Lokey, over secondary access roads. Last year Lokey sold Wilshire Abbey, a 29-lot subdivision adjacent to Cheltenham, to Claudio Rossi's Mirage

Development Company.

After Mirage won final plat approval for Wilshire Abbey from city council in November, Nanda came to city council in December asking it rescind its plat approval, saying the roads in his project are still privately held and he didn't want construction traffic on them. Nanda's attorney told council members that since Nanda is required to maintain a \$250,000 construction bond for two years after he turns his streets over to the city, Nanda was afraid he'd be held responsible for damage caused by contractors driving into Wilshire Abbey.

The city told Nanda and Rossi to work things out. At city council's Jan. 26 meeting, Novi City Manager Rick Helvig told council members that Nanda needed to live up to his commitment to turn Cheltenham's streets over to the city. Two days later, according to Fisher, the county got a letter from Nanda indicating he is going to keep the streets private.

Fisher charged this amounts to consumer fraud since 28 lots in Cheltenham were sold with the representation that the roads would be made public.

Cheltenham Association Board, told council members, "I never would have bought in his subdivision if I'd known the roads were going to remain private."

Because the roads are private, the city's Department of Public Works will not salt them or plow them following a snowfall.

Garabelli said he and his neighbors are being "held hostage." He added it's the city's responsibility to make Nanda live up to his promise to turn the neighborhood's streets over to the city.

Denying that he's committed consumer fraud, Nanda warned council members that they have a mini-Sandstone on their hands. According to Nanda, the city "made several mistakes," among them allowing Lokey to split a piece of property off the Wilshire Abbey development that abutted Beck Road, forcing potential Wilshire residents to drive through Cheltenham to get to the main road.

Council Member Laura Lorenzo argued against giving Fisher permission to begin legal action against Nanda. She said that while the Cheltenham residents might have a reason to sue and that Rossi might have a reason to sue, "I'm not sure it's our responsibility."

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Quick Hits



Rousseau is key in win

The Novi Wildcats were quite capable of earning a win over the state-ranked Howell Highlanders two weeks ago, but it couldn't have been done without the puck handling of Steve Rousseau. The sophomore lefty had little trouble picking apart the Howell defense in the final period of play as he scored the final two goals of the game. The first tied it up, and the second nailed the coffin shut on the Howell skaters.

NOVI 6
HOWELL 5

Correction

The player featured in last week's varsity volleyball photo was not Jenna Kuhn. It was Amanda Taffoli.



South Lyon takes win in lackluster Novi showing

The Wildcats boys basketball team not only came out looking as though they figured they were just going to get a win over their KVC rivals last week, they looked as though they expected that victory to be handed to them. Unfortunately, the squad found out the hard way what happens when you don't come ready to play in this conference.

--- See Page B2

LIONS 46
CATS 34

Impressive performances by combined gymnastics team

The Novi-Northville Wild Stangs gymnastics team had two impressive performances last week as they topped conference foe Salem and then took second place in the highly-competitive Farmington Invitational with a season-high final score. More and more gymnasts are qualifying for the Regional, which coach Lindsay Schuitz said is important this late in the regular season.

--- See Page B2

GAME OF THE WEEK



Novi
Wildcats
Hockey
vs
Hartland

Wednesday, February 11
6:30 p.m. at Novi

Back to getting victories

The Novi Wildcats hockey team found out the type of games that are played by the best of the best last week, and ended up with two losses thanks to it. This week, however, they are looking to get those wins pouring back in as they skate into the final stretch of the regular season. The Wildcats will be looking to get a win over the Hartland Eagles at home. *Novi News* sports writer Sam Eggleston thinks they are not only going to get one, but they'll do it in style.

--- See Page B3

A QUICK RECOVERY

Wildcats fall to Milford, get right back to winning ways

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi Wildcats volleyball team should be about as excited as they can be.

After taking an unfortunate loss to one of the top Kensington Valley Conference teams, Milford, in five games, the squad bounced back nicely on a trip to Midland for the Northwood Invitational. Not only did the team show they are capable of rebounding from the agony of defeat, they showed that they can do it in style as they won the highly competitive tourney.

"It was phenomenal," Novi coach Julie Fisette said. "I'm extremely proud of the way the girls played. They played some exceptional volleyball."

Novi rolled through pool play at the Invitational, which was held January 31 at Northwood University, and found themselves facing off against an extremely talented Bullock Creek volleyball team.

The Wildcats were poised, and though they had just gone through an entire day of volleyball, managed to pull out two very convincing wins in consecutive games, 21-10, 21-13.

The tournament victory came on the heels of the KVC loss just two days prior to the Milford Mavericks, who were undefeated in league play at the time.

Novi gave the squad a run for their money though, pushing the match to five games. Novi fell behind in the contest in the first two games, 25-23 and 25-13, but came back with a vengeance in the third and fourth, topping the Mavs 25-22 and 25-20.

The fifth and final game was the breaking point though, and the 'Cats fell 15-8.

"It was a great match," Fisette said.

The loss to Milford was extremely reminiscent of the victory Novi gathered January 26 against Hartland. That time, however, the Novi Wildcats volleyball team managed to squeak by Hartland in five games.



Photo by John Heider

Novi's Anna Rickard (10) and Kim Zarczynski (9) go up for a block shot in a home game in early January.

The first and second games put the Wildcats on their heels as they fell behind with two straight losses, 25-23 and 25-21.

In what appeared to be a loss about to go on their record in Kensington Valley Conference play, the Wildcats were able to dig deep and find it in themselves to come away with two

straight wins to tie the contest, 25-23 and 25-20.

In the fifth and final game, both squads were prepared and ready to play with every ounce of energy they had. In the end, it was the Wildcats who proved to have the conditioning and stamina to win the match as they dominated with a 15-8 performance for the win.

Novi climbed to 4-2, in the Kensington Valley Conference with the victory, while Hartland dropped to 2-4.

Currently sitting in first place is undefeated Milford, with Howell a game back in second. Novi sits alone in third place, while South Lyon, Lakeland, Hartland and Pinckney are all tied for fourth. In last place are

the Brighton Bulldogs, who are winless in league play.

The Wildcats are slated to be back in action when they participate in the Mount Morris Invitational Saturday. Then, the squad will visit the Lakeland Eagles February 9 at 6 p.m. before playing host to Brighton in the Novi Field House February 12 at 5:30 p.m.



Photo by John Heider

Wildcat Brett Jaussi takes up position in Novi's defensive end during a recent game against Brighton.

Wildcats get pounded by state's top teams

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

It isn't easy to take on the best teams in the state — especially one right after the other.

The Novi Wildcats hockey team did that, and paid for it, as they fell to Division I's top-ranked team in Brighton, 7-3, before taking a loss to second-ranked Ann Arbor Pioneer just days later, 9-1.

Against Pioneer, Novi suffered their worst loss of the season as they took a beating against the Pioneers in non-conference play. The game, which was played at Ann Arbor's home ice rink, found Novi falling to 7-9 overall.

Novi's Mario DeGrazia scored the only Novi goal of the game with just 45 seconds remaining in the contest. He took the puck down the ice on a breakaway and put it past Jonas Kyllainen, Pioneer's goalie, for the 9-1 final. DeGrazia's goal was unassisted.

Kyllainen, who is a transfer student from Finland and one of the

major reasons the Pioneers have been playing so well this year, made 24 saves and stopped three-of-four breakaways.

The final result of their game against Brighton wasn't much better. Though the Wildcats scored three goals, they just couldn't contend with the top-ranked team in Michigan and fell 7-3 by the end of the third period.

Brighton came into the Novi Ice Arena and played a physical contest that paid off in the end despite collecting six penalties.

The first period was as close as they get as Novi found themselves behind just 3-2 following scores by Brighton's Mike Hautamaki, Addison Doyle and Jeff Wiley.

Novi actually started off with the first goal of the night as John Janssens found the back of the net less than two minutes into the game on a powerplay. The assist went to Eric Cunningham.

Novi scored their second goal of the game, down 2-1 at the time, as Cunningham earned yet another

assist on a pass to Brett Jaussi, who took it in for the score.

Brighton collected a goal from John Kivisto and Wiley before Novi's Chaz Bulbuk was able to collect the final Wildcat goal of the night off a pass from Steve Rousseau.

In the third period of play, the Bulldogs nailed the coffin shut with authority, earning goals from Eric Swiatek and Hautamaki to earn the conference victory over Novi.

Goalie Dan Morrison handled the net in both high-profile contests and did well despite the losses.

Novi was also without defenders R.J. Makoski and Bryan Ellis, who were out due to injuries in both contests.

The Wildcats are slated to be back in action when they visit U of D Jesuit at 4:30 p.m. Saturday. Then, the squad will host Hartland February 11 at 6:30 p.m. in a Kensington Valley Conference game.

Chris Alberty Sophomore Swimming and Diving

Though the swimming and diving team has been facing a lot of obstacles this year, they have managed to make their mark in more than one pool. One of the reasons happens to be Alberty. In the last two meets, Alberty has taken a first place in diving despite the Wildcats coming up short in the final score.



Athletes OF THE Week

Jacqueline Gazette Freshman Gymnastics

Gazette is one of the youngest members of the combined Northville-Novi Wild Stangs gymnastics team, but that doesn't stop her from being an impact. Last week, Gazette collected an 8.80 on the vault during the Farmington Invitational to help her squad to a second-place finish and their highest point total of the year.

If your business would like to sponsor our Athletes of the Week, please contact Jennifer Dinning, advertising executive, at (248) 349-1700 or by e-mail at jdinning@ht.homecomm.net.

REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

4B

Novi News

Thursday, February 5, 2004

Avoid shock at grocery checkouts

My grandmother spent between \$65 and \$75 each month at the Winslow, Ariz. Win. G. Dagg Mercantile Co. to feed her four children and my grandfather, a barrel-chested man who stood over 6 feet 2 inches tall.

On one shopping excursion, according to her store account statement dated August 20, 1931, she paid 50 cents for six pounds of green apples; 15 cents for one head of lettuce; 40 cents for one pound of cheese; 35 cents for one dozen eggs; and 35 cents for one pound of butter.

Today it can cost more than \$150 a week to feed a family of six.

If you're finding that you're spending more on groceries than you want to, consider employing these money saving strategies from Consumer Reports magazine.

• Use coupons—wisely. A coupon won't save you money if you're buying the item just because you have a coupon. Look for stores that will double or triple your coupon's value.

While most coupons are provided in newspaper inserts, you can also download them at CoolSavings.com and SmartSource.com. But beware that you have to supply personal information—your name, address, city, state and zip, gender, birthday and e-mail address—to register. Type in your zip code at ValuPage.com and you can look up a store in your area for a list of discounted items. When you purchase those items you receive the red and white ValuPage Savings certificates/coupons from the cashier at checkout good toward a future purchase.

• Look at endcaps. The items stacked neatly at the end of the aisles may catch your eye, but resist the temptation to put them in your basket until you evaluate whether they're really discounted.

• Eye level is at a premium. Have you ever searched for a bottle of shampoo and saw the most expensive brands were right at eye level? That's because companies pay a premium to have them placed there. Look on the top and bottom shelves for better buys.

• Say "no" to checkout temptations.

Feeling hungry and thirsty after a grueling hour of comparing prices? Resist the temptation to reach for that 20-ounce bottle of soda and chocolate bar. They're apt to cost more at the checkout stand. Feeling weak? Look for the "candy-free" aisle found at many grocery stores.

• Pitfalls of shopper's club cards. Critics say prices at stores that have shopper's club cards are higher than stores without them. And there's the privacy issue. Consumers often have to provide a name, address and telephone number to get a card, which means the store can track your buying habits.

While stores maintain they use the information for marketing purposes, one doesn't know whether the data collected—for example, one's alcohol buying habits—could potentially be used against a consumer. Check your store's privacy policy before you join a shopper's club.

• Avoid packaged foods and buy store brands whenever possible. Generics are typically produced by the same manufacturers that ultimately bear a brand name.

Mary Davis manages public affairs for the Michigan Credit Union League (MCUL), a statewide trade association representing Michigan credit unions. Send your financial questions to "Your Money Matters" c/o the Michigan Credit Union League, P.O. Box 8054, Plymouth, MI 48170-8054, or stop by our Web site (www.mcui.org) to learn more about smart money management. Comments about this column may be e-mailed to mcd@mcui.org.

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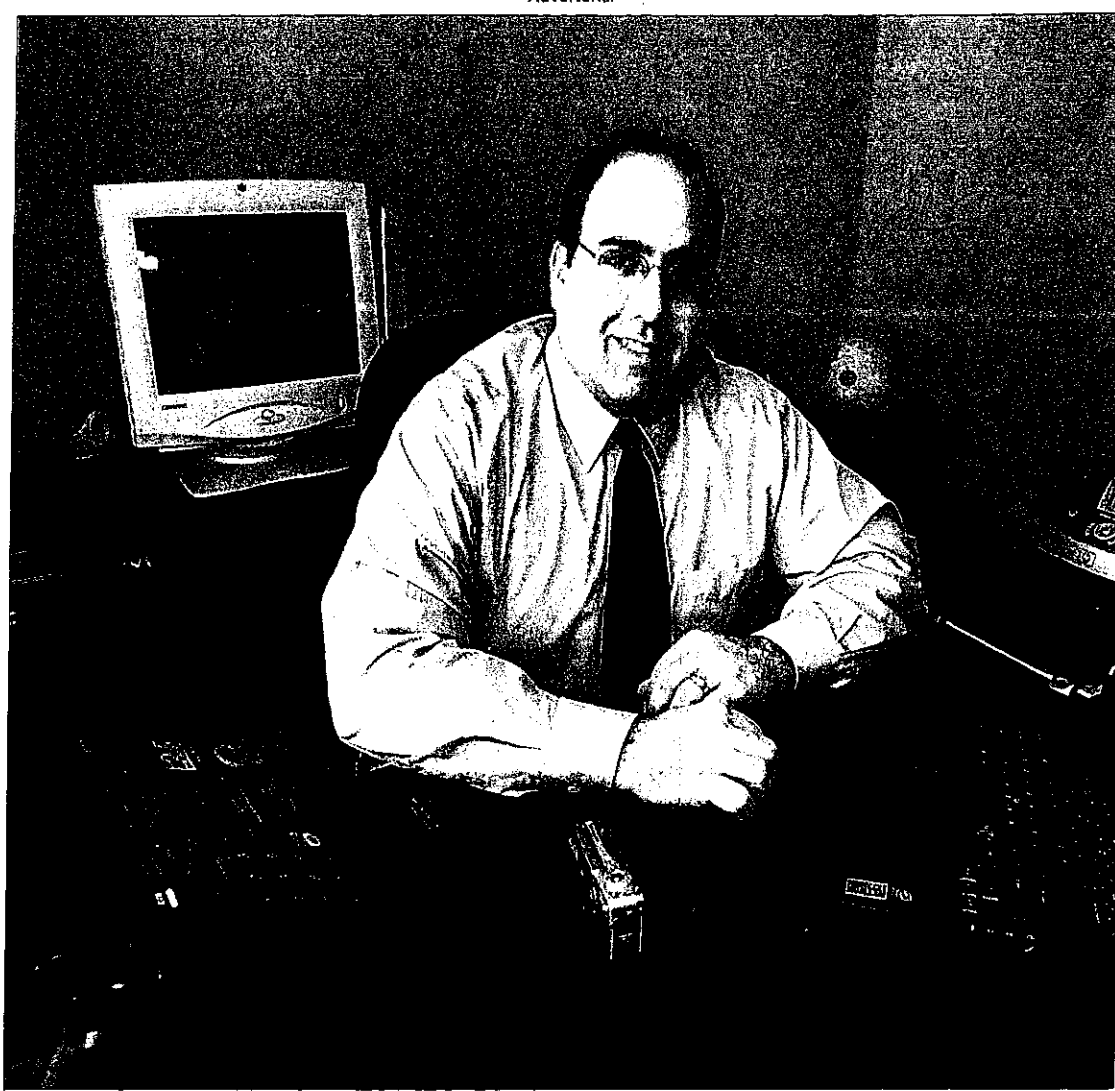


Photo by HAL GOULD

Abe Ayoub, broker and owner of Mayfair Realty, provides Realty services for all types of properties including properties in the Wayne County area from Livonia, to the entire South Lyon area and the Brighton area in Livingston County.

Buying or selling? Call Mayfair Realty

By Annette Jaworski
SPECIAL WRITER

When it comes to selling your home, you need a realtor to work hard for you—an agent who will put your needs first. Abe Ayoub of Mayfair Realty believes there's a lot more to selling a home than just putting the sign in front of a house. It takes legwork, experience, and customer service.

One way he goes the extra mile is taking the time to host open houses; they're great for letting future buyers see a home first hand, he believes. It's a good way for a seller to showcase a home's special features. It makes sense for everyone.

"Some realtors believe it's not advantageous to have an open house on Sunday, I estimate I've made about 40 percent of my sales on a Sunday," Abe said. "Walking into a home makes a huge difference."

Customer service is crucial for a service industry and especially so in the real estate business. Just because we sell \$300,000 or \$400,000 homes every day, or whatever it costs, we can't take it for granted, he adds. It's a lifetime decision for the customer. Throughout the process, it's important to stay on top of details and keep the customer informed. He prides himself on being accessible 24/7 to his customers.

"Keep in touch and do it efficiently," he said.

Another valuable tool the agent uses are website virtual tours. Today's Internet capabilities give everyone access to available homes at their fingertips.

How about that confusing paperwork? Not a problem. South Lyon resident,

Arlis Cogar says he was pleased that Abe managed the piles of legal paperwork and handled all the details. It's just another way that he serves his customers. Cogar notes that the realtor gave him exceptional service while selling his home. He appreciated Abe's honesty and hard work.

"He's been there all the way... he's the type of guy you can believe," said Cogar.

And if you're thinking about selling, there's no better time than the present. Traditionally people think of spring as the best time for homebuyers. Abe recommends if you're in a market to sell, consider the months of February or March. In that case, you can get a jump on the competition before the market is flooded with other homes. With the principles of supply and demand, there are fewer homes to compete with. Fewer homes on the market allow the seller to command a higher price.

In addition to today's continued favorable interest rates, there's no reason to wait if you're considering buying or selling a home. Those who never thought they could afford a home can now purchase their first starter home. Current homeowners will be pleasantly surprised that they can afford more home for their dollar and possibly upgrade.

As a long-term asset, there's never a better investment than a home, he believes.

"The stock market goes up and down. I don't remember the last time I've seen a house value go down," Abe said.

Abe began selling real estate part-time about 12 years ago for extra money and eventually became a broker/owner at Mayfair Realty. Success dictated that it would be his future.



Above are two of the homes listed with Mayfair Realty. Call (248) 486-8867, or page (248) 314-1411.

"It just kept growing," he explained. Abe specializes in all types of properties including the Wayne County area from Livonia, to the entire South Lyon area and the Brighton area in Livingston County.

"You need to be well versed on all the different prices in different areas," he said. That's where the 12 years of experience makes a difference. When there are other deals on the table, you need to be aware of market values in adjacent communities, he added. If there's a sale contingent on another offer, he is careful to review all contracts. An informed consumer is more likely to be a satisfied consumer.

Abe is proud to be a resident of the Lyon Township/South Lyon area. You

TIPS FOR SELLING A HOME

Abe's top tips for home sellers:

■ Don't forget the curb appeal, it's very important. For example, keep up the landscaping, cut the lawn and weed the flowerbeds.

■ Put up a new mailbox if the old one is rusty.

■ Put new address numbers on the home. "It looks much better if your numbers aren't old and rusty," he pointed out.

■ Clean will sell. Make sure your house is spotless before showing. If you're not up to it, hiring someone is well worth the money.

■ Freshen up with paint. "Painting is one of the most inexpensive things you can do for the most return," he added. Don't forget to paint the front door if it's needed.

might see him or his wife, Maureen, at the ice rink with their son, 6-year-old Brian, who is a member of the Mini Mites, or at Destination Imagination with their daughter, 9-year-old Lauren. He's active in the local community as a member of the Lyon Township Fire Department, the Chamber of Commerce and the South Lyon Kiwanis.

For all your real estate needs, contact Abe Ayoub at Mayfair Realty. Call (248) 486-8867 for more information, or (734) 522-8000 and pager at (248) 314-1411. Check out his website at soldabe.com, or email him at soldabe@comcast.net.

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