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THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 19, 1998

Periodical USPS 398920

Volume 41
Number 19
Four Sections
54 Pages plus Supplements



the NEWS

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Gov. Engler to tour Novi tech center

WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL
Staff Writer

Michigan Governor John Engler will be in town Feb. 26 to check out computer technology at Novi Community Schools.

Slated to appear in the Instructional Technology Center between 12:30 and 1:15 p.m., Engler is expected to get a hands-on tour of the district's technology.

"He will visit a couple of classrooms, a computer lab and then we will gather in the Forum where he will address parents, students and the community," explained Lisa Bar, communications coordinator at Novi Schools.

According to Bar, Engler chose Novi for its long-term commitment to integrating technology into academics.

"We learned he wanted to use Novi as an example of how technology can be used in the schools," she explained.

Part of what drew the governor's attention to the area was Novi's appearance as one of the first 50 schools in the nation to belong to the Family Education Network. The network allows users to access information about each school in the district including schedules, lunch menus, announcements and sports

results. In addition, parents have direct access to the staff's e-mail addresses.

During the month of October, the site received 8,775 visitors or "hits."

By linking up with the Family Education Network, the district is able to offer more than 8,000 pages of such information as local, state and federal education-related news and articles on various topics. The address is: <http://familyeducation.com/MI/Novi>.

Novi schools have received commendation from local and national groups for being on the forefront of technology use in the classroom. The 5,000-plus students in the district have access to more than 2,000 computers, 12 scanners, five Internet servers and 289 television sets. In addition, all schools can access an interschool cable television system.

Novi was one of four districts to be chosen by Engler for a visit. Oakland Schools, the intermediate school district for the county, asked Novi to submit an innovative school program for Engler to peruse. The governor already visited Troy, Lake Orion and Waterford schools.



Photo by HAL GOULD

Dancing the night away

Lyndsey, 7, and Chelsey, 4, can hardly believe their dad, Patrick Korte, knows how to do the chicken dance like that. Dad and his dates danced the night away last Friday in the

Novi Civic Center during the sixth annual Daddy-Daughter Dance, sponsored by Novi Parks and Recreation. More photos appear on page 13.

SPECIAL REPORT: THE ROUGE RIVER WATERSHED

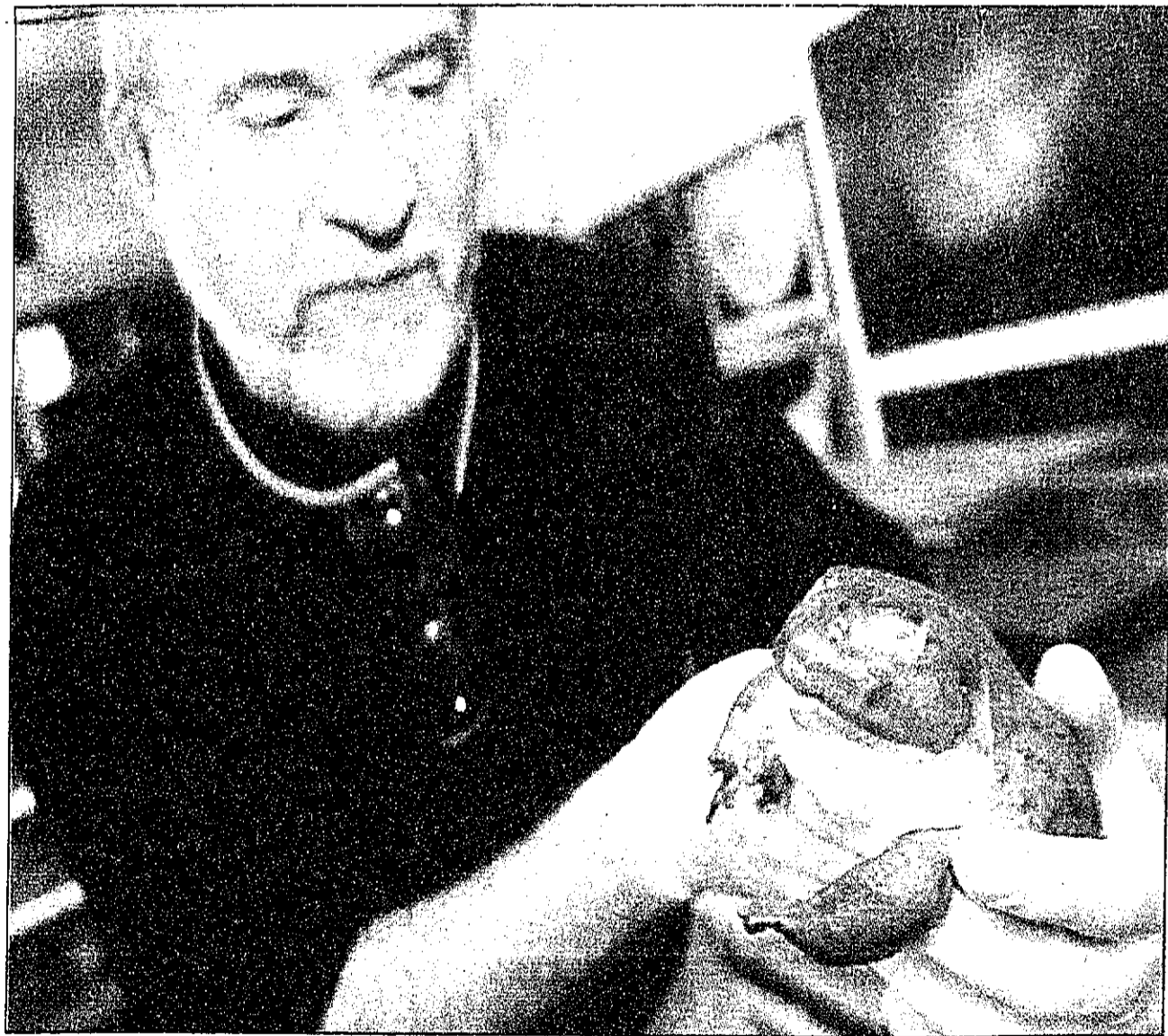


Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Dwight Sieggreen, teacher at Cooke Middle School and frog fancier, shows off one of his favorite amphibians.

Swampy Serenade

Volunteers needed to count frog and toad sounds

By Jan Jeffres • Staff Writer

Frogs and toads don't fare so well with humans. They get no respect.

We eat their legs. We use them to sell beer. We take their names in vain by listening to music by groups with names like Toad, The Wet Sprocket and plastering slogans like "To find a prince, you've got to kiss a lot of frogs" on T-shirts. For decades, as a public school rite of passage, we dissected them. Worst of all, we pollute and bulldoze their watery homes.

Now, after all this, frogs and toads are doing us a favor.

The tiny beings are alerting us to problems that may exist in their habitat - and ours.

For the first time ever, volunteers are being recruited in a 60-mile swath - including Novi, Northville, Walled Lake and Salem Township - for a mid-March through mid-May survey of the local frog and toad populations. It's all part

of the 1994 Rouge River Remedial Action Plan.

"Frogs and toads are good indicators of habitat and water quality ... because they absorb water through their skin and part of their lifespan is in the water," said Lara Spears, staff ecologist with Applied Science & Technology of Ann Arbor, which is running the program.

"You get a much more complete sense of the environment. It's not just looking at the quality of water, but the complete ecosystem."

This area, at the head waters of the Rouge River, was selected, Spears explained, because the river is cleaner than further downstream. Not that pollution doesn't exist. For one, lawn fertilizers get washed into the water course here as well as further down river.

continued on page 4

Expo traffic woes to be addressed

By WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL
Staff Writer

Stuck in traffic for 45 minutes in the Town Center parking lot, within sight of Novi Road but unable to get to it, Ron Wirkus began to worry about his health.

Wirkus, a Novi resident, has a heart condition. And if he needed medical help, he wondered whether emergency personnel would have been able to get to his car. The traffic jam occurred in

the early afternoon on Sunday, Feb. 1, as a result of the Spring Home & Garden Show at the Novi Expo Center.

"It was downright dangerous," Wirkus said. "If there had been a medical emergency, it would have been impossible to get to the car. Had there been a car fire, it would have been a disaster. The cars were so tightly packed, and there was no place to go."

Continued on 12

St. Joe's plans center at Sinai Hospital site

By JAN JEFFRES
Staff Writer

The Ann Arbor-based St. Joseph Mercy Health System has plans for an 130,000-square-foot outpatient health care campus on 70 acres at the southeast corner of Twelve Mile and Meadowbrook roads, with a late 1998 groundbreaking eyed.

Forty acres at the same location were targeted by Sinai Hospital for

a \$20 million medical campus, but Sinai backed out in early 1997 after a merger between that hospital and the Detroit Medical Center.

St. Joseph's preliminary designs call for an ambulatory facility with primary, specialty and support services, to include a 24-hour emergency services center; cancer care; non-invasive cardiology testing; women's health

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2-19-98

City considers major rezoning for R & D firms

By WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL
Staff Writer

More than a year after creating an ordinance to bring high tech research and development firms to Novi, the city is ready to "put their ordinance where their hopes are," as said by Planning Commission Chair Eda Weddington.

"Their hopes are in the M-5 'Haggerty Connector' corridor between Twelve and Fourteen Mile roads."

"We need to take some sort of action," Weddington said at a Feb. 4 commission meeting. "The development community is anxious to see if the City of Novi is serious about the OST or not."

The Novi City Council and planning commission decided in a joint December meeting it was time to get moving on designating where the ordinance would fit. The only rezoning request since the ordinance's inception was for Commissioner Kim Thomas Capelle's industrial office park on Grand River Avenue. A site plan has not yet been presented.

The planning department has long pursued the "Office Service and Technology" master plan designation and zoning specification to bring a wealthier tax base to the city.

"I am anxious to see OST on map and being used," said Weddington. "It has tremendous potential to diversify tax base and bring in high quality development our city needs."

Under an OST zoning classification expensive computer equipment and other technology can be counted as inventory and taxed along with property taxes, according to city consultant Brandon Rogers. Although the numbers can fluctuate from year to year, counting that inventory can bring in

double the tax revenue. In addition, he noted, the need for city services is the lowest of all land uses.

The commission reviewed seven target areas within the city chosen by the planning department and city consultants. The section between M-5 and Haggerty Road is a perfect place, say consultants, because it is largely undeveloped, will have high visibility and will be separated from residential property by the new roadway.

The additional traffic, which increases from an estimated 4,600 residential trips in a 24-hour period to 27,800 under OST, would be more easily handled by M-5, traffic consultant Rod Arroyo said. In addition, Thirteen and Fourteen Mile roads would need to be widened to three to five lanes to accommodate the growth.

Utilities already run to the site, consultants said.

"The only real obstacle is the large number of woodland and wetland wildlife habitats, according to Linda Lemke, city environmental consultant."

Still, planners and city officials want to move ahead and capture the high tech market while it's hot. "We are getting an increasing number of contacts regarding this type of development," said City Planning Director Jim Wall. "The City of Farmington Hills has been popular for quite a number of years, but their development sites are filling up... We are right on the threshold of taking advantage of those opportunities."

"I think we're headed in the right direction," said City Manager Ed Kriewal. "More developers in the past 2-3 weeks have called spurred on by the OST zoning. They claim there's a scarcity of sites. There's a lot of opportunity out here if we get moving."

1,630 ACRES OF ZONING CHANGES PROPOSED FOR NOVI

The Novi Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on April 1 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss changing the 680 acres between M-5 and Haggerty Road north of Twelve Mile Road, master planned for Residential Agricultural, to Office Service Technology.

Other study eyed for change are:

- Approximately 300 acres bounded by Twelve Mile Road, M-5, I-96 and Twelve Oaks Mall.
- An 80-acre area bounded by Twelve Mile Road, CSX railroad, I-96 and West Oaks.
- About 140 acres bounded by I-96, Grand River Avenue, Tait and Beck roads.
- More than 360 acres bounded by Twelve Mile Road, CSX railroad, City of Wixom and residential zoning to the east.
- A 70-acre parcel on south side of Twelve Mile Road between Wixom and Napier roads.

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As Northville Old Village School student Brendan Keith, 13, holds onto a barn cat in the background, Maybury State Park farmer John Beemer talks about his efforts with OVS special needs kids.

Farmer John

Children with special needs cultivated by Maybury staffer

By WENDSY WHITE
Staff Writer

John Beemer is modest about the work he's done for children with special needs.

For 20 years, Beemer has tended to the land and animals at the Maybury State Park farm. For the last six, he has invited children from Northville's Old Village school to assist him.

"They feed the chickens, gather eggs, sweep the floor, feed the rabbits, kittens, ducks and geese. I quite often feel the animals are theirs," Beemer said. "They're the ones who take care of them."

Twice a month, a bus load of students with varying mental and physical disabilities visit the farm. Brendan Keith, 13, is one of them. When he arrives, he walks purposefully to the barn, fills a bucket with chicken feed and grabs a basket for collecting eggs.

Although his language skills are minimal, Keith shooes the chickens out from underfoot as he enters the coop. He knows just what his duties are. He gently removes the eggs from the straw, and safely packs them in Styrofoam containers.

Without realizing he is learning, Keith gains language and math skills as he counts the eggs out loud and cooperates to get the job done.

His reward is being permitted to play with the resident kittens or newborn piglets.

"It's just to give them something to do, give them some responsibility. That's my goal," Beemer said. "Whatever I can do, I do, to reach that goal."

According to teachers, the students look forward to their Maybury visits all day, and the hours Beemer puts into making these visits possible have finally been recognized.

Nominated by the staff and students of Old Village, he's been named an honor award recipient by the Michigan Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Beemer will accept his award during a banquet at the Anway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids on March 5.

"I've just been so impressed with his ability to interact with the students and explain things to them in a way they understand," Clinton-Cali said. "He treats them with such respect and high expectations that the students want to achieve things just to please him."

Paraprofessional Ethel Anderson, who has accompanied the children on jaunts to the farm for years, said on top of gaining academic knowledge, the children acquire social skills there.

"Above all they learn kindness

and independence," Anderson said. "That's what's really been so wonderful for our kids, showing them how to take care of things. No matter what John is doing, he'll stop and take time to explain what he's doing for the kids."

Beemer lives right on the farm, off of Eight Mile Rd. west of Beck, with his wife Norma. Together they have three children, and a brand new grandchild born Dec. 29. Their St. Bernard Mitzzy looks on from the farmhouse porch as Beemer works.

This spring, he will use horses to plow 40 acres of land for growing corn, oats, wheat and hay for the animals.

He'll take a day off in May to host a family hay ride, which gives the disabled students a chance to show their parents all they've learned.

And there will also be other classes to attend to; over 200 school groups are slated to visit the farm this fall.

Despite the patient work Beemer has devoted to sharing the farm with students of all abilities, he is reluctant to gloat over his recent award.

"I think it's great but I don't think I should be getting it. I don't deserve it, these guys do," he said, motioning to the children. "Seeing what they can accomplish is just great. It's an honor."

Fire hits Oxford Inn Wednesday

By WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL
Staff Writer

A raging fire swept through the Oxford Inn restaurant on Grand River Avenue during the early morning hours Wednesday.

According to Novi Fire Chief Art Lenaghan, the damage is estimated at \$150,000 to \$175,000.

"The call came in at 2:19 a.m. When we arrived the place was pretty well charred with smoke and the fire had broken through the roof," he said.

Most of the damage was heat and smoke related, but structural damage to the roof and beams was assessed. He expects the place will be closed for several weeks.

Two engines responded to the blaze, which was spotted by a passing Novi Police patrol car. It took about 40 minutes to get the fire under control, the chief said, but the department and Oakland County Sheriff's fire investigators were on site until 6 a.m.

"We've pretty well determined it was electrical," Lenaghan said.

Windy, rainy weather conditions brought electrical wires down last night, but that's not necessarily the cause, he said.

"It was accidental. There was certainly nothing suspicious about it," Lenaghan added.

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1998 NORTHVILLE RECORD/NOVI NEWS RESTAURANT POLL



Rocky Rachwitz and the winning team at Rocky's of Northville enjoy yet another victory.

Three Cheers for Rocky's!

By CAROL DIPPLE
Feature Editor

Competition for the top slot in *The Northville Record/Novi News* Restaurant Poll is usually pretty close and this year was no exception. For the third year in a row, Rocky's of Northville received the most votes for the Best Overall Restaurant of 192 respondents to the poll which ran during the month of January.

Border Cantina in Novi moved back into second position after being absent from the top three last year.

MacKinnon's Restaurant in Northville dropped from sec-

ond to third this year. In the Best Inexpensive Restaurant, Charley's Deli & Grille in Northville Township, moved up from second place capturing first by a slim margin over Border Cantina who had not been in the top three since 1996 when it was rated first. Dandy Gander in Northville returned to come in third, having dropped from the second place slot it occupied in 1996.

There was a lot of juggling in other categories as well. Although Dandy Gander remained the Best Breakfast Restaurant for the third year in a row, Guernsey Farms Dairy in Northville and Bob

Evans Restaurant in Novi switched positions from 1996. Guernsey Farms Dairy came in second and Bob Evans came in third this year. Neither ended up in the top three in 1997.

Worth noting is that MacKinnon's has been voted the Best Restaurant for Desserts since the poll began in 1990 except for one year in 1991, when the former Crawford's Restaurant was voted as having the most delectable sweets. There was no poll in 1994.

Another category that has seen fierce competition between two pizzerias vying to be top slice since the poll began in 1990 is the Best Pizza category. This year's winner,

Pizza Cutter, has been voted number one for all but one year. 1991, when Papa Romano placed first. Papa Romano tied with Pizza Cutter in 1995. Newcomer Jet's in Novi jumped right into the game and ended up in second position. Papa Romano came in third this year.

Another new restaurant, Poole's Tavern in Northville, also managed to end up in the top three in Best Gathering Place, a category that was added in 1997. Border Cantina came in first, Rocky's finished second with Poole's in third.

For complete results, see the accompanying story.

Winners of the 1998 Northville Record and Novi News Restaurant Poll

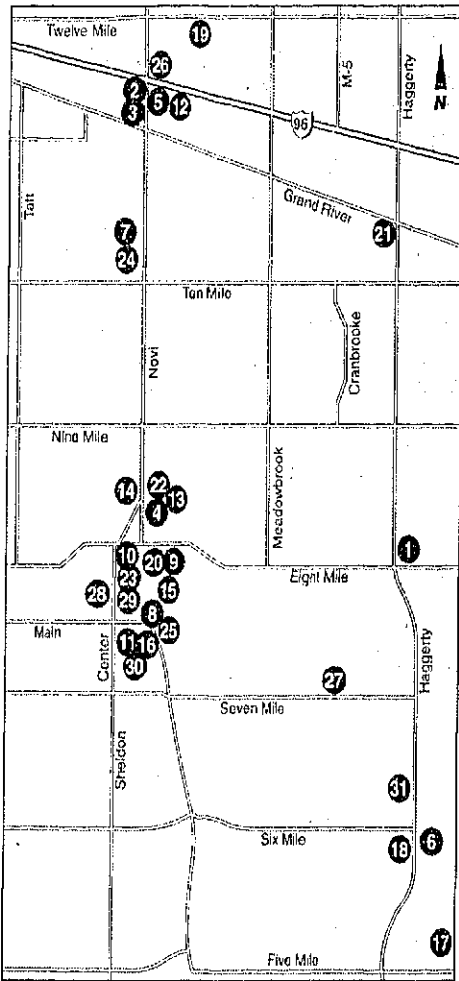
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Best Overall Restaurant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. Border Cantina 3. MacKinnon's Restaurant | <p>Best Pizza</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pizza Cutter 2. Jets 3. Papa Romano |
| <p>Best Inexpensive Restaurant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charley's Deli & Grille 2. Border Cantina 3. Dandy Gander | <p>Best Burgers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. Starting Gate Saloon 3. Poole's Tavern |
| <p>Best Breakfast Restaurant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dandy Gander 2. Guernsey Farms Dairy 3. Bob Evans Restaurant | <p>Best Seafood</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. Red Lobster Restaurant 3. MacKinnon's Restaurant |
| <p>Best Sandwiches</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charley's Deli & Grille 2. Rocky's of Northville 3. Genitti's Hole-In-The-Wall | <p>Best Ethnic Food</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Border Cantina 2. Little Italy 3. Tie - China Cafe and Charley's Deli & Grille |
| <p>Best Desserts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MacKinnon's Restaurant 2. Tie - Rocky's and Border Cantina 4. Tie - Emily's, Edward's Caterer, Guernsey Farms Dairy | <p>Best Fast Food</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. McDonald's 2. Boston Market 3. Wendy's |
| <p>Best Coffee</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tuscan Cafe 2. Rocky's of Northville 3. Big Boy Restaurant | <p>Best Soups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. MacKinnon's Restaurant 3. Charley's Deli & Grille |
| <p>Best Salad</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. Tie - Uptown Cafe and MacKinnon's Restaurant 4. Grady's American Grill | <p>Best Steak</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rocky's of Northville 2. MacKinnon's Restaurant 3. Grady's American Grill |
| | <p>Best Gathering Place</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Border Cantina 2. Rocky's of Northville 3. Poole's Tavern |

Readers' comments

- "Bright and cheerful. You're made very welcome (at Northville Crossing). Always Courteous." - *Connie Wilson*
- "Northville lost a great place to eat when the original Crawford's sold their restaurant. No one has filled in the gap." - *Pat Allen*
- "What about vegetarian, friendly, best dinner rolls as categories." - *A. Schmidt*
- "How about a new restaurant category? (There's so many now.)" - *Susan Wheelan*
- "Really love the pizza at the Starting Gate." - *Barbara Leeds*
- "Nothing beats (Charley's). The cleanest restaurant in Northville/Novi (1997 Poll)!" - *Lara Al-Ghishan*
- "Emily's is one of the best restaurants in the world - and we've traveled all over the world!" - *Susan Saris*
- "The restaurants have always been great in Northville/Novi and new ones are coming." - *Joseph Anstett*
- "We need more seafood restaurants in the area. How about someone talking Joe Muer into reopening his restaurant - say in the old white house manor or at Red Timbers?" - *Gary Susatta*
- "J. Alexanders is the best restaurant I've ever been to. I'm so impressed with them I've attempted to try to work there." - *Wayne Worosz Jr.*
- "New and very, very accommodat-
- ing and friendly (Steve & Rocky's)." - *M. Weenert*
- "Too bad with the more expensive restaurants coming into our area, you should have a price range on restaurants. Otherwise everything is fine." - *Aldo Mastro*
- "Panera Bread is the kind of place I've been waiting for! In addition to an amazing variety of pastries, bagels and great lunches, the service is wonderful." - *Teresa Pilarz*
- "Must be using clones at the Cutter - pizza's consistently good." - *Richard Bazzo*
- "Restaurants now impose music on us. They risk us turning around and leaving when rap and rock disturb good meals and conversation. Are you a rap/rock bar or a restaurant?" - *Dan Boland*
- "For all around home town cheerlike atmosphere, there's no place like Gatzbys." - *Fred Young*
- "I can't tell you how much we enjoy Dandy Gander. The food is excellent and the atmosphere is very relaxed. Also, they keep the coffee coming - which is very important when you're eating breakfast." - *Shannon Moore*
- "Rocky's is wheelchair accessible which is important. They will adjust the menu for bland diets. Very accommodating." - *Marian McKinnan*
- "Unlike the previous two years, I still find MacKinnon's to be a wonderful gathering place with a welcoming atmosphere and the finest gourmet dining experience." - *James McLeod*

Where to find Northville and Novi's favorite restaurants

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Big Boy Restaurant, 20800 Haggerty Road, Novi 2. Big Boy Restaurant, 26401 Novi Road, Novi 3. Bob Evans Restaurant, 26425 Novi Road, Novi 4. Border Cantina, 21420 Novi Road, Novi 5. Boston Market, 43363 Crescent Boulevard, Novi 6. Charley's Deli and Grille, 16873 Haggerty Road, Northville Twp. 7. China Cafe, 24299 Novi Road, Novi 8. Dandy Gander, 333 W. Main, Northville 9. Edward's Caterer, 116 E. Dunlap, Northville 10. Emily's, 505 N. Center, Northville 11. Genitti's Hole-in-the-Wall, 108 E. Main, Northville 12. Grady's American Grill, 43350 Crescent Blvd., Novi 13. Guernsey Farms Dairy, 21300 Novi Road, Northville 14. Jets, 1053 Novi Road, Northville 15. Little Italy, 227 Hutton, Northville 16. MacKinnon's Restaurant, 126 E. Main, Northville 17. McDonald's, 39700 Five Mile, Northville Twp. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. McDonald's, 39555 Six Mile, Northville Twp. 19. McDonald's, 42665 Twelve Mile Road, Novi 20. Papa Romano's Pizza, 117 E. Dunlap, Northville 21. Papa Romano's Pizza, 39711 Grand River, Novi 22. Papa Romano's Pizza, 21520 Novi Road, Novi 23. Pizza Cutter, 340 N. Center, Northville 24. Pizza Cutter, 24289 Novi Road, Novi 25. Poole's Tavern, 157 W. Main Street, Northville 26. Red Lobster Restaurant, 27760 Novi Road, Novi 27. Rocky's of Northville, 41122 Seven Mile, Northville Twp. 28. Starting Gate Saloon, 135 N. Center, Northville 29. Tuscan Cafe, 150 N. Center, Northville 30. Uptown Cafe, 160 E. Main, Northville 31. Wendy's, Haggerty, Northville Twp. |
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The 1998 Northville Record/Novi News PEOPLE'S CHOICE ACADEMY AWARDS

First Annual
Northville Record and Novi News

People's Choice Academy Awards

Which of the 273 eligible movies will win "Best Picture of the Year" according to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences? You'll have to wait until the 70th Academy Awards is televised on March 23.

But in the meantime, if you had a chance to decide which movie of 1997 was a cut above the rest or which actor or actress gave an outstanding performance, how would you vote?

Now's your chance. Fill out the following People's Choice Academy Awards ballot and return it to *The Novi News/Northville Record*, 104 W. Main Street, Northville, MI 48167.

All ballots must be received by Feb. 27.

One ballot will be selected at random to receive dinner and a movie for two compliments of *The Novi News/Northville Record*.

And the categories are:

- Best performance by an actor in a leading role: _____
- Best performance by an actor in a supporting role: _____
- Best performance by an actress in a leading role: _____
- Best performance by an actress in a supporting role: _____
- Best cinematography: _____
- Best costume design: _____
- Best picture of the year: _____

Best animated film: _____

Best visual effects: _____

Number of movies I've seen at the theater during 1997: _____

Number of movies I've rented during 1997: _____

PLEASE NOTE: The following name and address blank must be filled out. Ballots without this information will be discarded.

Your name _____

Street _____

City _____

Phone _____

Brings you:

Christian Singles Network

Dedicated to bringing local area Christians together

FREE Printed
FREE Personal Voice Greeting
FREE Message Retrieval once per day

To place your FREE ad and be matched instantly with area singles, call 1-800-739-4431 24 hours a day!

To listen to area singles describe themselves or to respond to ads, call 1-900-933-6226 ONLY \$1.98

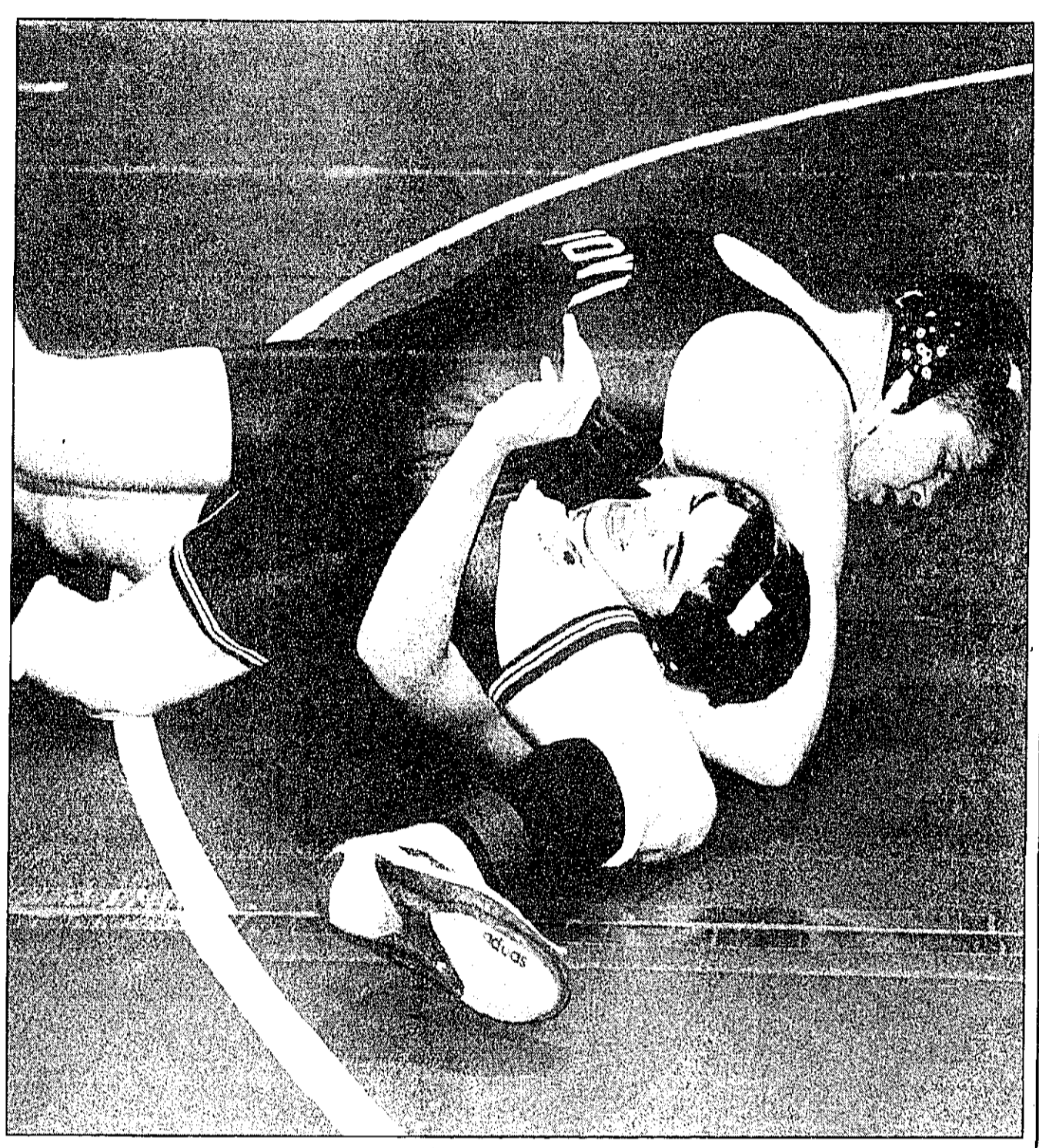
Advertisement for Christian Singles Network featuring various categories of singles such as Females Seeking Males, Males Seeking Females, and various personal ads with contact information.

the NOVI NEWS Sports

Novi has had enough

Cats stop Hartland, win KVC championship

By JASON SCHMITT Sports Editor
It's been a long 10 years for the Novi wrestling team. But Saturday's Kensington Valley Conference meet proved the wait was well worth it.



Senior Andy Kalik won the KVC championship at 171 pounds for Novi Saturday. Kalik improved to 29-9 with the wins.

Senior Andy Kalik won the KVC championship at 171 pounds for Novi Saturday. Kalik improved to 29-9 with the wins. The tournament draw has Novi taking on Pinckney in the first round and Northville taking on South Lyon.

DISTRICT WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

Table showing district wrestling tournament matchups: Northville vs. Novi, South Lyon vs. Pinckney.

Matches start at 4p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19 at Novi High School.

Swimmers survive scare at Pinckney

By JASON SCHMITT Sports Editor
Novi completed one of its best boys swim season's in recent history with a pair of victories over Pinckney and Fenton last week.



Photo by HAL GOULD

Novi won more races than Pinckney (7-5), but finished second just twice. That meant that the Wildcats had to dominate the middle spots to get a win, and they did.

Block places at Junior Olympics

The Livonia Junior Rifle team lived up to its national reputation this past week when teammates Kurt Williams and Jeremy Block won three medals in the Junior Olympic Shooting Championships held in Livonia and Grand Rapids.

