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Thursday, December 7, 2000

Volume 110 Number 53

Novi, Michigan

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INSIDE

Officer of the Year

Diane MacGregor received the honor of Nov's Police Officer of the Year recently. Mayor Richard Clark stated she was a "credit to her profession." — Page 3A



Teen's design wins jewelry contest



Thirteen-year-old Keith Slawinski of Novi designed a .15 carat diamond necklace that will be on auction at Larson's Jewelry. All proceeds will go to Goodfellows. — Page 12A

LIVING

Chimney safety

Keeping chimneys and fireplaces clean will reduce the likelihood of fires. — Page 1AA



SPORTS

All-Area cross country



Three girls and three boys made it to the All-Area first team in cross country. Find out who these Wildcats are on... — Page 1B

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TICKETS
FIND YOUR SEAT IN TODAY'S CLASSIFIEDS

Expo abatement takes center stage

By RANDAL YAKY
Staff Writer

Novi Expo Center President Blair Bowman brought his argument for a tax abatement to city hall Monday and came away with positive feedback.

Bowman explained that the tax abatement was essential to the project going forward and to take the Expo Center Project to the "next level."

"There are certain limitations on the property and those limitations impede our growth," Bowman told council. "As a part of the relocation and enhancement, the critical component is the tax abatement."

Last winter, Bowman announced that the Expo Center

would be considering a tax abatement to help the project along.

"We're going to be dealing with 30,000 feet of exposition space," Bowman said. "We will provide good banquet facility that is lacking in this area."

Bowman said that his project was a catalyst of the \$5 million that the city was able to secure for the Grand River improvement projects. Bowman said he expects an additional \$250,000 or more annual impact on the southwestern Oakland County and approximately \$94,000 on the economy of Novi if the abatement is approved.

A number of business associates and local residents came out to support the new Novi Expo

Center. Novi resident Pete Hoadley said he thought the new Expo Center could be a boost for the entire area along Grand River.

"The bottom line is that this (Expo Center) will produce more sales tax for the community, more gasoline tax as people come in from outside the area," Hoadley said. "Convention centers are an asset to the type of business that we hope to attract. I am definitely for tax abatement in this particular business."

Though the majority of speakers came to support Bowman, there were detractors in the crowd as well. Novi Planning Commissioner Andrew Mutch said he had several concerns over

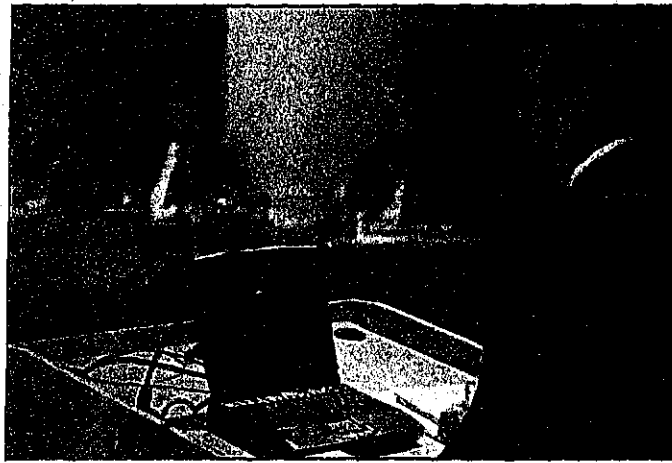


Photo by TOM HIBBELN
NEC President Blair Bowman addresses City Council Monday.

Continued on 5



Photo by TOM HIBBELN
These women perform a Korean Fan Dance during Monday's 'Holiday Celebrations From Around the World' at Novi Middle School.

Cultural event draws crowd

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE
Staff Writer

It was the largest multi-cultural event of the season, as the Novi community united for its first "Holiday Celebrations From Around The World," December 4.

With over 900 in attendance, the Novi Parks & Recreation event transformed the middle school into a cultural extravaganza of food, music, and fun activities.

"This is a fantastic showing," said Mayor Richard Clark, who acted as master of ceremonies. "We have received a wonderful response from the residents and this is a great learning experience for the community as a whole."

Clark said the holidays bring with it an opportunity for us, as residents, to embrace the many cultures in our community.

"We all celebrate the holidays differently, and this is a wonderful way for us to come together and share our cultures and backgrounds," he said.

With over ten countries featured, such as Brazil, Taiwan, Ireland, Korea, and Sweden, the event gave residents the chance to enjoy the individual uniqueness of the cultures in Novi.

Each country featured a cultural display, which included food, crafts, clothing, and activities.

Paige Plerdon from Novi Woods let her artistic side flow making masks in Japan, and Nakhita Surapaneni from Deerfield was busy learning about her own culture while making ornaments in India.

While the children were having fun participating in all the activities, the moms were having fun trying on an authentic Japanese wedding dress.

From start to finish, the celebration was filled with visual delights with colorful costumes, dance, music, and song.

Ireland captivated audiences with their traditional Irish dancing as did Brazil with their pastoral performance.

Special Events Coordinator for the city of Novi, Marcie Robinson-Bell, said she was really happy to see so many enjoying the event and was glad to be a part of it.

For many video-camera-happy parents, the highlight of the evening was when all the elementary school students joined together in the gym for a phenomenal performance of "Jingle Bells" in both English and Spanish.

Clark said it was great to see so many parents show support for their children.

"It always amazes me the level of parental participation in this community," he said. "It's wonderful."

Continued on 11

Country Epicure will stay, for now

By RANDAL YAKY
Staff Writer

There is a twist in the tale when it comes to a long time favorite Novi eatery, Country Epicure.

Apparently, the business will stay open "as is" after buyers for the restaurant were unable to come up with financing to complete the deal.

The owners of the Post Bar group, which owns three bars in the metro Detroit area, pulled out of a deal to purchase the Country Epicure when they were unable to secure financing after months of negotiations, according to Karen Angelosante, Epicure owner said.

"It was a done deal," Epicure owner Karen Angelosante said. "They apparently have some problems with financing and there was something with the Liquor Control Commission."

Angelosante said that she had been waiting for months for the Post Bar group to finalize the deal but they kept putting her off.

"We told them to quit messing around," Angelosante said. "Then all of the sudden, they pulled out."

Angelosante said that the Grand River Avenue eatery would be remaining open as the Epicure but wasn't sure how long the popular dining spot would remain open or under current management.

"We'll just keep doing what we do," Angelosante said.

According to Angelosante, there have been Novi residents that have made comments to the effect they were disheartened that Epicure was closing.

"I'm glad they're staying but I wish they'd stay a lot longer," Novi Mayor Richard Clark said. "They

Continued on 11

Two finalists picked for DPW director

By RANDAL YAKY
Staff Writer

Novi City Manager Richard Helwig said that a new Department of Public Works (DPW) Director will be in place by the first of the year.

"We're interviewing finalists for the DPW position right now," Helwig said.

According to Chief Operating Officer Craig Klaver, the two finalists for the DPW position are William McCusker and Thomas Trice.

"Both men have about 25 to 30 years experience with municipalities," Klaver said. "McCusker currently works for the city of Wixom. We've known about him through joint projects with Wixom."

McCusker is employed by the city of Wixom and Trice is currently the director of public services for the city of Royal Oak. Trice had previously worked for the city of Farmington Hills.

The Par Group and specifically, President Paul A. Reaume, was hired last summer at \$25,000 plus reimbursable expenses at \$7,500 to search for a new DPW director and a new planning official. Trice was a recommendation of the Par Group for the director of DPW position.

According to Helwig, Reaume recently had surgery related to an illness he suffered after he was hired to begin the DPW director and planning official search.

The DPW Director is in charge of maintaining city roads and snow plowing during the winter months.

The DPW is currently under the split supervision of Director of Public Services Anthony Nowicki and the Superintendent of the Sewer and Water Department Bruce Jerome. The city has been

Continued on 11

Care group helps 'forgotten' seniors

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE
Staff Writer

Employees of the city of Novi have found a dramatic need for elderly assistance in our community.

Currently, 23 senior citizens residing in Novi's Whitehall and Charter House Living Centers do not have any family or outside support systems. These people have all but been forgotten except for the love and attention supplied by these nursing homes.

But, thanks to Officers Joyce Nelson, Randy Mince, and Lou Bigliardi of the Novi Police Department, the seniors' holidays may become far less lonely.

"Our goal is to let these residents know through cards, presents and personal attention, that they have not been forgotten," Nelson said.

Partnering up with the city of Novi and the Lioness Club, Nelson, Mince, and Bigliardi have formed Novi Cares For Senior Citizens, a group developed with a goal of supplying these residents with holiday cheer, birthday celebrations and most importantly, companionship. From now until December 8,

donations and volunteers are needed to help bring these men and women desperately needed items, as well as a few wish list dream particulars.

"We just want to get the word out and see people step up to the plate this holiday," Nelson said.

Nelson said these residents have to make do with very little, including the basic necessities most of us take for granted. Employees of each home have been known to spend their own money to supply items such as under garments, toiletries, and clothing.

"We are really excited," said Whitehall Activities Director Christine Valley. "This is a great way for the community to reconnect with our seniors who are less fortunate. We are really happy that they are able to benefit."

Valley said there are a wide variety of reasons why these seniors are "forgotten," including all their family members have passed away and they are the last remaining ones or they have just been

Continued on 11



Photo by JOHN HEIDER
Charter House of Novi residents Ilke David Jenish, center, will be welcoming the assistance of a newly-formed group called Novi Cares for Senior Citizens with help from Novi Police Officers Joyce Nelson and Lou Bigliardi, right. Charter House activity directors Amy Lawless, far left, and Christine Valley will help to find residents who can most benefit from its services.

To place a classified ad, call 248-348-3022

Newsroom: 248-349-1700

Home Delivery: 248-349-3627

Burglar entered home through garage door

A Novi man, 44, reported to police that his house in the 22000 block of Halifax was burglarized during the evening hours of November 29.

The home owner told police he left the home around 6 p.m. on November 29 and returned around midnight. When the victim arrived at his home, he found the garage door open and a number of items missing inside the residence, including a Rolex watch, laptop computer, a television, Cartier watch, and a 14K gold pendant. The homeowner also claims that about \$6,000 in cash and a hand gun were also taken from the residence.

There was no visible forced entry to the home though police reports indicate that the intruder may have gained entrance through the garage. Reports also indicate that the burglar(s) scoured the home for valuables. Evidence was taken by investigators at the scene. There were no witnesses to the burglary.

BABY-SITTER ACCUSED

A northend resident told police that she believes her baby-sitter has been stealing from her for over a year on December 1. The victim, who lives near East Lake Drive, told police that the

Police News

sitter had been working for the family for over a year and during that time a number of items have come up missing from the home. One of the residents in the home apparently confronted the sitter who reportedly said "I don't know why I steal." The baby-sitter left the home on foot.

MAN ARRESTED FOR BRANDISHING KNIFE AT MALL

After he reportedly brandished a knife inside Twelve Oaks Mall, a Kentucky man was arrested for a concealed weapon violation on December 1 around 1 p.m.

The suspect, 39, apparently "dipped open" a knife inside the Rainbow Art store and told an

employee "don't bother me or anyone in here." The suspect was followed by store security and Novi police stopped the man as he was about to exit the mall. According to witnesses, the man had been walking through the mall for some time flipping open the "switch blade."

CREDIT CARD FRAUD

A Plymouth man tried to use a stolen credit card to buy a \$1,500 computer from the Sears store in Twelve Oaks Mall on the evening of November 30.

According to police reports, the man had a " " that he attempted to use to buy a computer with but store employees became suspicious of the man and called police.

Police arrested the man for credit card fraud. The case was closed after arrest.

MAN ESCAPES BEATING

A 30-year old Detroit man said a man attempted to assault him after an unsuccessful trip to return some merchandise at Home Depot in Commerce Township.

The victim told police that after he and three other individuals went to a Detroit blood bank, they decided to take a ride to Commerce Township and return some items to the Home Depot. After they left the store without success, the man said the driver attempted to assault him and left him at the Tower Automobile business at 22175 Haggerty on November 28.

According to police reports, the man said the driver of the car tried to assault him after he attempted to leave the vehicle inside the parking lot at Tower Automotive.

The victim, who was able to get away from the car with some of the merchandise, was released shortly after the incident.

Novi Briefs

2000 Winter Tax Bills
2000 Winter Tax bills have been mailed. Taxes are due and payable December 01, 2000 through February 14, 2001 without penalty. We have a dropbox available for tax payments located in the back of the Civic Center. If you have not received your tax bill, or if you have any questions, please contact the Treasurer's Office at (248) 347-0440.

Free food during December for needy
Oakland Livingstone Human Service Agency will be distributing free food through the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program in Oakland County during December. All people who are income eligible and not registered may do so at the site by bringing social security cards for all household members, verification of household income and photo I.D. Local distribution points and dates are listed below.

Novi Senior Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road in Novi on Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 12:30-2:30 p.m.

For income eligibility requirements or additional information, call Trudy

Long at OLHSA's Community and Family Services Department in Pontiac at (248) 209-2655 or 1-800-482-9250.

Buy a bench for the one you love
Trying to find that perfect gift? A commemorative park bench or 2001 annual vehicle permit gives the gift of the "great outdoors" at the Oakland County parks.

"In the past, people thought of benches as a memorial to a deceased loved one," Kim Sencerante, group sales coordinator said. "Now, we have residents selecting benches as long-term tributes."

A donation of \$400 includes either a cast bronze placard on a wooden bench or a cast aluminum placard on an aluminum bench. The parks system currently maintains 34 benches with six of those selected in the last year. There are 111 parks and golf courses to choose from when selecting a bench site.

Donors should check with a tax advisor.

Library Lines

LIBRARY HOURS
The Novi Public Library is open Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. The library is located at 45245 W. Ten Mile Road, just east of Taft. For more information, call 349-0720.

TINY TOT TIME REGISTRATION
Children ages 12-18 months are invited to join us for a half-hour of stories, songs and games on Friday, Dec. 15 at 11 a.m. Preregistration is required; you may register in person or by calling the library. Space is limited.

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High honor goes to MacGregor

By RANDAL YAKEV
Staff Writer

Diane MacGregor was not only named Novi Police Officer of the Year, but she has been a pioneer in law enforcement in Oakland County.

"You have to remember that in 1977 women weren't out working the roads," MacGregor said. "I'd walk into a place and watch the jaws just drop. I think there may have been one other woman working out here for the Oakland County Sheriff's office."

MacGregor is considered an expert in accident investigations and trains citizens to head up the Handicapped Parking unit that help locate parking violators in the malls of Novi.

Novi Mayor Richard Clark said that the city is honored to have her working on behalf of the citizens of Novi.

"She's a credit to this community and a credit to her profession."

Mayor Richard Clark
an Officer of the Year, Diane MacGregor

MacNamara was at the award ceremony when MacGregor received her accommodation, a plaque from the city, presented by Novi Mayor Richard Clark.

"I was fortunate to start with her in 1977," Lieutenant Tim McNamara said. "We were brought in under Lee BeGole. I got to know her as a friend as well as an officer."

MacNamara said that MacGregor, besides being a top accident investigator and working with security at Twelve Oaks Mall, trains crossing guards for local schools in the city of Novi.

"Diane trains citizen crossing guards to keep our children safe," MacNamara said.



Police officer Diane MacGregor was recently named officer of the year.

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OLIVE MATRONS (G)
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UNREMEMBERABLE (PG-13)
TUEWED 1:30, 3:30, 7:45, 9:55
THE 6TH DAY (PG-13) MON 2:00, 4:30
TUEWED 2:00, 4:30, 7:55, 9:40
MON OF MON (R) MON 4:45, 6:45, 9:10
TUEWED 1:40, 4:15, 6:45, 9:10
CHARLIE'S ANGELS (PG-13)
TUEWED 2:00, 7:30, 9:35
RIBBON IN PARIS (G) MON 2:55, 5:00, 6:50
LEGEND OF BAGDAD VANCE (PG-13) 9:00
MON 12:10, 4:25, 10:10, 9:20
TUEWED 12:10, 2:20, 4:35, 7:10, 9:20

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Meadowbrook gives a glimpse

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE
Staff Writer

The highly anticipated Meadowbrook Commons Adult Residential Community was unveiled Friday night in an open house reception.

City officials and local residents on Dec. 2 joined the housing's crusader Kathy Crawford, who has waited 20 years to see the senior citizens project become a reality.

"I never lost faith or patience," she said. "I knew it would happen."

The \$15 million project is the first city-owned senior citizen housing community in Novi, and many people are raising their glasses to Crawford.

When Crawford established the Novi Senior Center in 1980, she began identifying key areas of concern as expressed by senior citizens in the community.

"The first was the need for transportation and the second was availability of affordable senior housing," she explained.

Crawford approached Novi City Council with her findings and in 1986, they adopted a resolution to form a Senior Citizen Housing Needs Study Committee.

For over ten years, the committee performed a number of studies to help formulate a strategy to provide affordable housing to seniors and retirees.

"We looked at other senior housing in surrounding areas, as well as what sites would be suitable to build on," Crawford said.

In 1998, funding for the project was granted by council and the site received the final okay in 1999.

The new senior housing community, which sits atop 96 acres, includes 60 two-bedroom ranches, at \$900 a month, and a 115 unit housing complex, ranging from \$530-\$850 per month.

"The complex is three stories and also includes a general store, hair salon, and exercise room," Crawford said that the wonderful thing about the new senior community will be its safe, maintenance-free environment.

Marcia Stevens, the housing's Property Manager, explained that the units will first be made available to Novi residents over the age of 62, followed by those 62 and older with Novi relatives, and then to former Novi residents and those over 55.

Since seniors first heard about the new housing, they've been flooding the complex with applications and inquiries.

"Some were peeping in the windows before we even had our first ranch complete," she laughed.

Stevens said due to the enormous amount of interest, it is best to stop in the office to set up an individual appointment.

While only 8 of the ranches are complete, the remaining 52, and the 115 unit complex will be completed in the spring.

As the ranches become available, they may be rented, Stevens said. "The ones that are complete now are ready to be moved into."

One major component to the new complex, will be the Novi Senior Center, which will be moving their activities there.

"It's going to be wonderful," said Crawford. "This will kind of be a homebase for senior activities in Novi."

However, Crawford said they will continue some of their programs at city hall.

Crawford added that the events will even be broadcast live in all the rooms, so seniors can see what is going on, and hopefully join in on the fun.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Attendees of Friday night's open house got a first look at Meadowbrook Commons, Novi's soon-to-open senior housing complex on Meadowbrook Road.

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Large turnout for hearing

Continued from 1

allowing the project to go forward. Bowman has made significant contributions to the community," Mutch said. "But this is a public policy issue. This city has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on Novi Road and to the Expo Center. My concern is establishing a district at this time is premature. There is no Expo Center zoning in place at this location. Our master plan does not speak of the Expo Center at this location. And do we understand the impact of this development at this location?"

Mutch told council that the area where Bowman wishes to construct the new Expo Center, along Grand River, northeast of Tall Road, should be put under review for other options on the property. Mutch said that he was concerned with the traffic that would be traveling along Grand River and potentially impact local neighborhoods in the area.

"Before we approve of a tax abatement for that area, I think we should understand the land uses," Mutch said. "I think there should be a long term analysis of the potential development of this area."

Mutch, who had previously questioned how a tax abatement would effect the schools, had some questions answered when Novi Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operation Jim Mosler told city council that the tax abatement would have "virtually no effect" on the district.

"I'll have to check on that," Mutch said outside council chambers. "The information I received told me different."

Local Resident Paul Sherbeck has been an outspoken opponent of increased taxes in Novi and tax abatements.

"Our liberties are being eroded

methodically by those who use the government to get what they want at the expense of the taxpayers," Sherbeck said. "Our freedoms are being taken away in the name of economic development."

Still, there were more than two to support Bowman. Ron Mays, who owns a Livonia floor covering business, said that Bowman had helped him by providing work for him and his employees.

"I think he's a great asset," Mays said. "He represents the trickle down effect [Expo Center] has on the area."

Bowman quieted some who said that the old Expo center was left without a tenant after the new center is constructed.

"This facility will not be vacant," Bowman said of the old Expo Center. "We have a long term lease in place but once we determine a re-use, the current landlord has the right to buy us out."

The exposition ordinance, if the current facility is vacated, would revert back to industrial uses, Bowman said.

State Rep. Nancy Cassis (R-Nowi), a supporter of Bowman, said she sees the new Novi Expo Center as a catalyst for new growth along Grand River.

"As goes Grand River, so goes Novi," Cassis said. "And it would be a shame if Novi lost the Expo Center."

Bowman has said that if he was not able to secure a tax abatement from the city of Novi that he would consider moving the project to another city.

Bowman sets sights on rest area

By RANDAL YAKY
Staff Writer

The future of the I-96 rest area east of the Beck Road interchange could have a twist as Novi Expo Center President Blair Bowman suggests he would turn it into a part of the new Novi Expo Center.

At the Monday city council meeting, Novi Expo Center President Blair Bowman said that he has been in negotiations with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to purchase the property for the new Expo Center after the Beck Road interchange is completed.

Bowman said if he is able to secure the property, he would incorporate it into the new Expo Center plans.

"It is my understanding the state of Michigan does plan on abandoning the rest area once the Beck Road interchange is done," Bowman said. "We are currently in negotiations with the state of Michigan concerning the property. I'm confident, if the project goes through, that it (rest area) will be included in the overall assembly project."

MDOT Spokesperson Brenda Peek said that there had been numerous discussions with Bowman over the rest area property.

"We have had discussions with him, quite a few actually," Peek said. "When we put the new interchange in, that property will be little use to us."

According to MDOT, the Beck Road Interchange would be a traffic liability to the area with the interchange and cars coming out of the rest area. Peek said that MDOT usually offers the property to municipalities first but noted that Bowman was the primary interested party.

"I don't see who would have more interest in that property other than him (Bowman)," Peek said.

Randal Yakey is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700.

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Public Access

Monday, Dec. 11
 10:00 a.m. - Potpourri: Jamie Jacobs, Santa
 10:30 a.m. - The Cutting Room Floor
 11:00 a.m. - Harvest Ministries
 11:30 a.m. - Cosby and Company: Al Sikes
 12:00 a.m. - Intercessions
 Word Ministry
 12:30 p.m. - (cont'l)
 1:00 p.m. - Adventures with Pirate Pete
 1:30 p.m. - The Hobby Corner
 2:00 p.m. - Movie Lovers Guide to Holiday Films
 2:30 p.m. - (cont'l)
 3:00 p.m. - Ribbons and Wreaths
 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Bro Choir
 5:00 p.m. - New Millennium Medicine
 5:30 p.m. - Aray News Watch
 6:00 p.m. - Christian Singles Today
 6:30 p.m. - Bagels and Talk

with Tracy
 7:00 p.m. - Everything You Wanted to Know About Santa But Were Afraid to Ask
 7:30 p.m. - Holiday Stroll
 8:00 p.m. - A Little Christmas Magic
 8:30 p.m. - The Chimes
 9:00 p.m. - Senseless Death
Tuesday, Dec. 12
 10:00 a.m. - Legislative Forum
 10:30 a.m. - A Little Christmas Magic
 11:00 a.m. - Mountain Ski
 11:30 a.m. - Financial Strategies: Prepaid Legal Services
 12:00 a.m. - Summit University
 12:30 p.m. - (cont'l)
 1:00 p.m. - Chamber Spotlight
 1:30 p.m. - Home For Life: Night Stand
 2:00 p.m. - Everything You Wanted to Know About Santa But Were Afraid to Ask
 2:30 p.m. - The Chimes

3:00 p.m. - SANT Health Insurance
 3:30 p.m. - Streetbeat M.A.D.D.
 4:00 p.m. - Community Comments
 4:30 p.m. - Pet Talk
 5:00 p.m. - The Why, The Truth, and The Life
 5:30 p.m. - People Who Make Things Happen: A Day in Jerusalem
 6:00 p.m. - Harvest Ministries
 6:30 p.m. - Holiday Shopping
 7:00 p.m. - Potpourri: Jamie Jacobs, Santa
 7:30 p.m. - The Hobby Corner
 8:00 p.m. - Movie Lovers Guide to Holiday Films
 8:30 p.m. - (cont'l)
 9:00 p.m. - Out in the Open: Men in Robes
 9:30 p.m. - (cont'l)
Wednesday, Dec. 13
 10:00 a.m. - Holiday stroll
 10:30 a.m. - Ribbons and Wreaths
 11:00 a.m. - Everything You

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Sandstone decision could take a year

By RANDAL YAKY Staff Writer

The Sandstone Vistas lawsuit is still spinning its wheels as Novi attorney Gerald Fisher said it may be midway through next year before any action is taken on the case at all.

According to Fisher and the Court of Appeals administration, the case has yet to come before a panel.

"You file a claim for an appeal," Fisher said. "You file a brief and the opposing party files a brief and you could wait for a year before the case is scheduled for a hearing."

Fisher said that the city could "easily" be waiting until next summer before a hearing on the case.

"It could be the end of next summer before the arguments are even scheduled," Fisher said. "This isn't an easy task."

The development, called the Vistas of Novi subdivision, is located along Novi Road between 12 1/2 Mile and 13 Mile Roads in the northeastern end of the city. There are approximately 1,200 homes in the development. An initial lawsuit was filed in 1995. Last May, Oakland County Circuit Judge Barry Howard ruled

that the city of Novi breached their contract with Sandstone Vistas when they failed to complete the Decker Road expansion within a reasonable two year span, barricaded the road, and created a \$3 million special assessment district on land donated to the city by Sandstone Vistas which the city used to block off the entrance to the subdivision causing irreparable harm to the project.

The developers said their dream project, which would have created an urban area complete with a downtown and parks area, was destroyed by the city and Judge

Howard agreed. At the time, Howard called the city's treatment of the developer's project "malicious" and "vindictive."

It is estimated that if the city loses the main appeal, the residents of Novi could be forced to pay as much as \$200 a year extra in taxes to make up for the lawsuit.

Randal Yaky is a staff writer for the Novi News. His e-mail address ryaky@ht.homecomm.net

Sports programs will be funded by St. William's Dad's Club sale

Buy a tree and help a good cause at the same time. The St. William's Dad's Club is having their annual Christmas tree sale from now until Saturday, December 23. An excellent variety of trees are available in a wide range of prices as well. Select from Blue Spruce, Scotch Pine, Douglas Fir and Fraser Fir trees.

The St. William's Dad's Club provides the majority of funds for all the sports programs sponsored within the parish, allowing children to participate for little or no cost to their families.

The tree sale is located in front of St. William's school grounds off Pontiac Trail and O'Flaherty. Hours are weekdays from 5 to 9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Or, for further information, visit their website at www.StWilliamDadsClub.org

December Events... OPEN to the PUBLIC!

• Thurs., Dec. 7 (7 p.m.)...Country Our Way-Music
 • Fri., Dec. 8 (6 p.m.)...Charlie Gehringer at the Piano
 • Mon., Dec. 11 (10 a.m.)...Lecture Presentation: "Getting through the Holidays"
 • Wed., Dec. 20 (12:30 p.m.)...Choral: "The Laker Express"

Wed., Thurs., Fri. Dec. 6-7-8
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The holidays are fast approaching. Here at Sunrise, in the warmth of our gracious home, we are already preparing for the season's highlights. As you get ready for all that this time of year offers, and you sense that your senior loved one may benefit from the comforts of a charming home with round-the-clock care, life-enriching activities and delicious meals, we can help. Visit us to meet our compassionate caregivers who offer only the gentlest of assistance, and tour our lovely home. As a token of our gratitude for making us a part of your family during this holiday season, we are now offering special savings to new residents until December 31. Please stop by or call for details. Join us for a complimentary lunch or dinner.

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- AT&T - \$75.00 rebate with any new activation Additional rebates also available with purchase of phones!
- Voicestream - Prepaid Calling - A Great Gift Idea \$9.99 + tax equals phone and 208 minutes No credit check, No Monthly Bills

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20215 Middlebelt Road, Livonia Ph. - 248.478.0077 Fax. - 248.478.1059
 Holiday Store Hours: 9-7 M-F, 10-6 Sat., Closed Sun.

The Log Book

Monday, Nov. 27
 Medical, 44148 Durson, 12:46 a.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 44580 Mansfield, 9:48 a.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 24062 Taft Road, 10:54 a.m., Squad 3.
 Injury accident, Novi and Little Falls, 1:27 p.m., Squad 3.
 Medical, 25647 Madison, 4:13 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 27475 Huron Circle, 4:33 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 26255 Maryland, 4:59 p.m., Squad 4.
 Injury accident, M-5 and Fourteen Mile Road, 6:34 p.m., Squad 1.
Tuesday, Nov. 28
 Medical, 22050 Perth, 3:39 a.m., Squad 4.
 Medical, Twelve Oaks Parking, 1:17 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 45125 Ten Mile Road, 6:10 p.m., Squad 3.
 House fire, 31051 Woodstone, 6:47 p.m., Engines 2, 1.
 Car fire, 24078 Cranbrook, 7:36 p.m., Engine 3.
 Medical, 30205 Celeste, 7:44 p.m., Squad 2.
 Fire alarm, 25345 Taft Road, 8:32 p.m., Engines 4, 1.
 Medical, 40000 High Pointe, 9:36 p.m., Squad 3.
Wednesday, Nov. 29
 Medical, Ten Mile and Hampton Hill, 9:26 a.m., Squad 3.
 Fire alarm, 42200 Grand River, 10:58 a.m., Engine 1.
 Medical, 41108 Vincent, 12:17 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 42450 Twelve Mile Road, 1:41 p.m., Squad 2.
 Medical, 24381 Bashlan, 4:45 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 40756 Village Wood, 7:27 p.m., Squad 3.
 Fire alarm, 45182 West Park Road, 1:41 p.m., Squad 2.
Thursday, Nov. 30
 Medical, 50395 Ten Mile Road, 9:38 a.m., Squad 4.
 Fire alarm, 27475 Huron Circle, 12:25 p.m., Engines 1, 2.
 Medical, 1555 Ocher, 6:51 p.m., Squad 4.
 Fire alarm, 26863 Lowery, 8:19 p.m., Engines 1, 2.
 Medical, 27500 Novi Road, 9:12 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 31030 Westgate, 9:51 p.m., Squad 2.
Friday, Dec. 1
 Medical, 22844 Cottage, 6:48 a.m., Squad 3.
 Medical, 41677 Sleepy Hollow, 1:18 p.m., Squad 2.
 House fire, 309 Eubank, 1:32 p.m., Engines 2, 1.
 Wire arcing, Twelve Mile and Beck Road, 2:08 p.m., Engine 4.
 House fire, 40390 Gullford, 2:14 p.m., Engines 3, 1.
 Medical, 31245 Wedgwood, 5:25 p.m., Squad 2.
 Investigation, 30237 Celeste, 6:41 p.m., Squad 2.
 Medical, 23277 Balcombe, 7:09 p.m., Squad 3.
 Car fire, 43075 Crescent, 10:04 p.m., Engine 1, Squad 1.
 Medical, Novi and Wimbieton, 10:08 p.m., Squad 2.
Saturday, Dec. 2
 Medical, 25150 Trans-X, 9:14 a.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 47250 Ten Mile Road, 11:26 a.m., Squad 4.
 Medical, 41929 Canterbury, 1:44 p.m., Squad 2.
 Injury accident, M-5 and Twelve Mile, 1:46 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 31056 Eagle, 4:55 p.m., Squad 2.
 House fire, 24105 Elizabeth, 6:24 p.m., Engines 4, 3.
 Medical, 39581 Twelve Mile Road, 9:16 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 39581 Twelve Mile Road, 9:30 p.m., Squad 1.
Sunday, Dec. 3
 Investigation, Edgewater and Peach Tree, 12:33 a.m., Engine 3.
 Medical, 21104 Glen Haven, 4:58 a.m., Squad 3.
 Fire alarm, 25460 Novi Road, 10:47 a.m., Engines 3, 1.
 Medical, 42516 Wimbieton Way, 10:57 a.m., Squad 2.
 Wire down, 50293 Nine Mile Road, 12:47 p.m., Engine 4.
 Injury accident, Ten Mile and Meadowbrook, 1:40 p.m., Squad 1.
 Medical, 21266 Glen Haven, 2:14 p.m., Squad 3.
 Medical, 43100 Crescent, 7:31 p.m., Squad 1.

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Friday, December 8th from 6-11 pm

- * Shop, dine and enjoy holiday entertainment as the streets of downtown Northville are aglow with hundreds of luminaries
- * Bring the kids to visit Santa From 6-8 pm
- * Enjoy FREE horse and carriage rides from 6:30 - 10:30 pm
- * Many downtown shops will have special offers and late hours

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PLYMOUTH Saxtons Garden Center Inc. 587 W. Ann Arbor Trail	REDFORD George's Lawn Mower Sales 26118 Plymouth Rd.	NORTHVILLE Mark's Outdoor Power Eq. 16959 Northville Rd.
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Seniors to receive attention through Novi care program

Continued from 1

Ignored.

"We have residents whose family lives two hours away and they visit once, twice a week, and then we have those whose own family members live right here in Novi and they never get a visit," she said.

Charter House Activities Director Amy Lawless said the generosity from the police department and the city has been wonderful, and that it will allow many forgotten residents to have a nice Christmas.

Biglardi said there is a big need to help those seniors who don't have anyone and this is a positive way to have a tremendous impact on their lives.

"By organizing this type of program and developing personal relationships with these people, we can bring a little joy and happiness into their lives," he said.

Nelson explained that with the money collected, 1/3 will be used for the holidays, and 2/3 will be used for birthdays.

Stephanie Fordyce is a staff writer for the Novi News. Her e-mail address is sfordyce@ht.homecomm.net

Country Epicure deal falls as Post Bar pulls

Continued from 1

add an element of class and a menu that is excellent."

Angelo said that she has been on an emotional roller coaster since the purchase was first proposed. In September, Angelo said she told the Novi News that the Post Bar representatives called her up on the phone and asked if the restaurant was for sale. Representatives for both sides supposedly had a deal until the Post Bar group "suddenly" pulled out of the deal, Angelo said.

"It's been hard," Angelo said. "When you've been building a business for fifteen years and then thinking about selling it, well, it's just been hard on everybody."

The Country Epicure had been having trouble keeping a full staff but Angelo said with the upcoming holiday season, the staff has been secured.

The Country Epicure has been in business for 15 years.

The Post Bar Group has three locations in Ferndale, Mt. Clemens and downtown Detroit. Representatives at the Post Group were unavailable for comment at press time.

Randal Yakey is a staff writer for the Novi News. His e-mail is ryakey@ht.homecomm.net

Cultural event first of its kind in Novi

Continued from 1

Monday's celebration also included a welcome performance by the Novi Middle School Girls Select Choir, refreshments by the Novi Newcomers, safety tips by the Novi Fire Department, and a bake sale put on by the Novi Neighborhood Girl Scouts. The Novi Jaycees were also there collecting cans for the Needy Family Christmas Program.

Santa also stopped by, taking a sleigh full of orders on his way home.

Six-year-old Chris Nally from Parkview was looking to score a scooter and master truck from Saint Nick, while 5-year-old Taylor Ann Callahan from Novi Woods was hoping to find roller skates and Barbie dolls under her tree.

Stephanie Fordyce is a staff writer for the Novi News. Her e-mail address is sfordyce@ht.homecomm.net

DPW director named soon

Continued from 1

Without a DPW director for the past year and a half. The last director, Craig Smith, was fired in June 1999 after 22 months.

DPW Foreman Rick White, handles most of the day to day duties at the DPW.

Former City Planner James Wahl, who was brought in as an expert on downtown development 15 years ago to help develop the Novi Town Center, left last summer to become planning director in a suburb of Cincinnati.

Randal Yakey is a staff writer for the Novi News. His e-mail address is ryakey@ht.homecomm.net

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Dearborn 24417 Ford Rd. 313-278-4491	Rochester Hills 3035 S. Rochester Rd. 248-853-0550	Troy 1913 E. Big Beaver Rd. 248-526-0040
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Northland Mall 248-514-4282	Twelve Oaks Mall 248-735-3973	

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The important thing to keep in mind when it comes to buying gemstones of all types, including Iolite, is that one should choose a true professional, one who loves his art. For anyone totally unfamiliar with gemstones, and fine jewelry, knowing and having confidence in his or her jeweler is of the utmost importance.

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Necklace designed by teen will raise money for charity

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE Staff Writer

Larson's Jewelry on Main Street is making one local boy an artist and at the same time helping out the Novi Goodfellows.

To help raise money for local charities and organizations in Novi, each year Larson's Jewelry chooses one sparkling design created by a local youngster. Larson's then takes the paper creation and brings it to life, by turning the design into an actual, wearable, work of art.

From now until December 20, the piece will be on display for silent auction at Larson's Jewelry, with all the proceeds going to the Novi Goodfellows.

The designs were collected at the 5th Annual Main Street Holiday Walk in late November.

Novi Middle School student Keith Slawinski, 13, was this

"It was very unique and very artistic."

Brian and Nancy Larson
Larson's Jewelry
on local teen's drawing of necklace

year's gem inventor, who drew an overlapping ribbon-esque charm with a diamond in the bottom center.

"It was very unique and very artistic," said owners, Brian and Nancy Larson.

The charm, handcrafted by Brian Larson, is 14 kt yellow-gold with a .15 diamond. The pendant is valued at \$275.

Currently, the bid is at \$60. "I was really surprised,"

Slawinski said. "I can't wait to see it."

Slawinski, who lives in Novi, is the son of Ed and Laurie Slawinski.

The Novi Goodfellows are paid-on-call fire fighters who help needy, local families during the holidays. Most of the families are referred by the school district. Each family submits a list detailing what they seriously need, and another list of items that may include toys.

If you would like to help this charitable organization or see the teen's design, visit Larson's Jewelry in Novi, at 43155 Main Street, Suite 304. For more information call Larson's at (248) 347-4653.

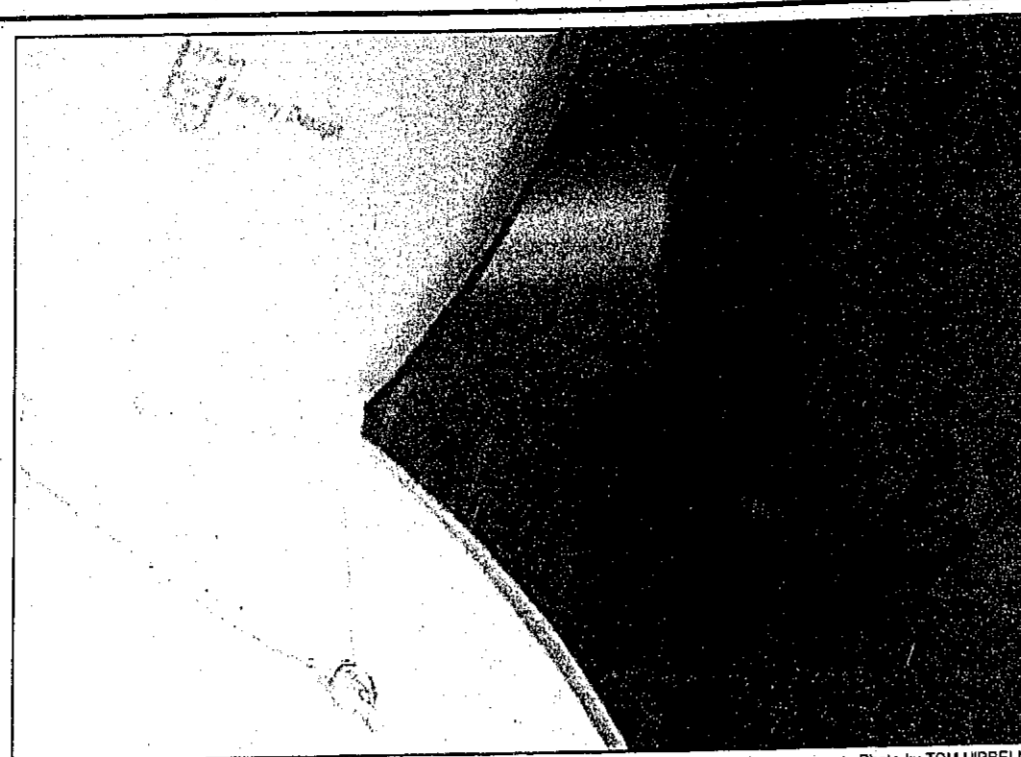


Photo by TOM HBBELN

Jeweller Brian Larson, of Larson's Jewelry in Novi, holds a .15 carat diamond necklace designed by Keith Slawinski.

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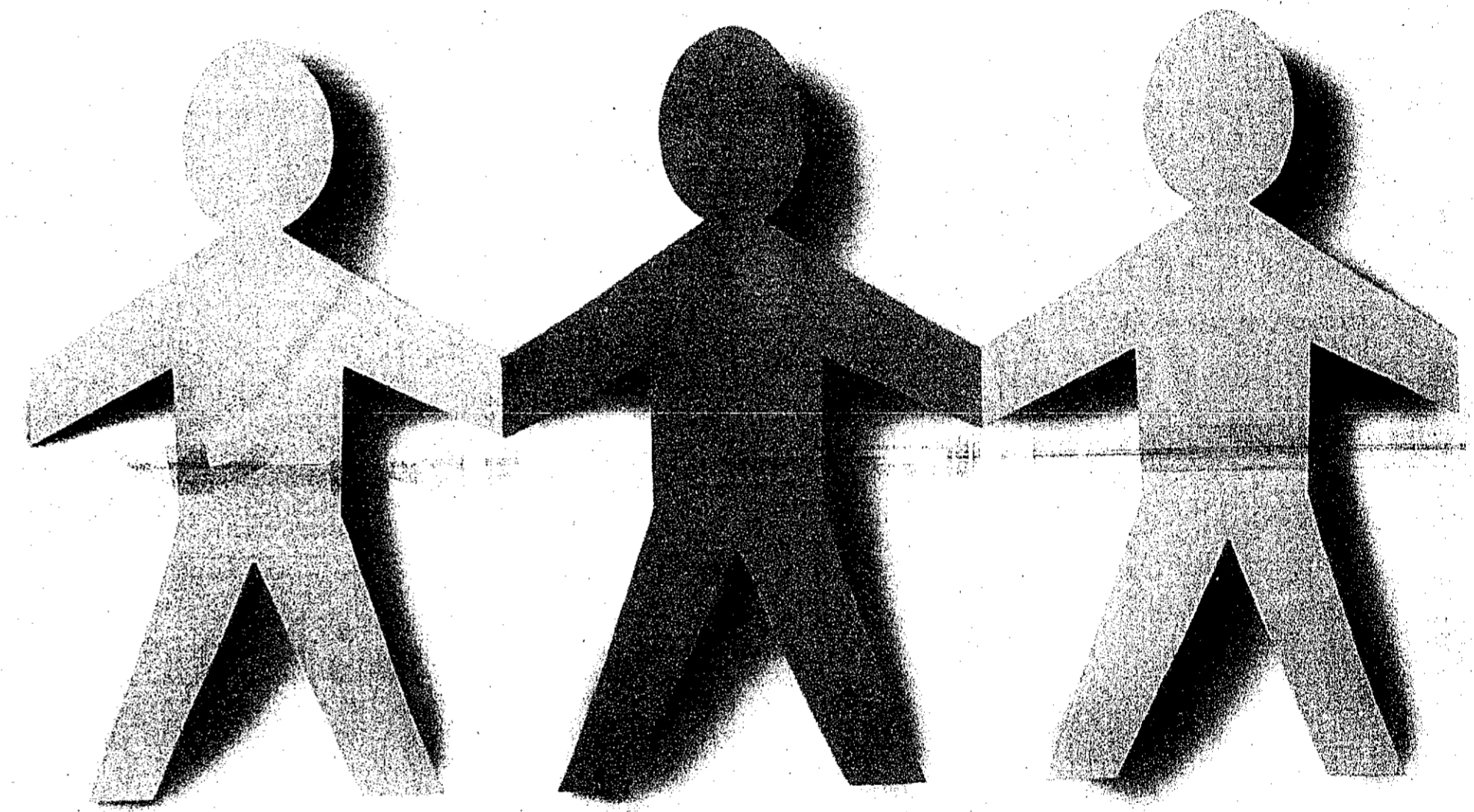
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Holiday Happenings

Novi Theatres The Nutcracker Play

Novi's Children's Amex as they present the holiday classic, The Nutcracker. The performance will be held December 8, 9, and 10 at the Novi Middle School. Showtimes for the December 8 and 9 are 7:30 p.m. and December 10 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. For more info call the Novi Parks & Recreation Office at (248) 347-0400.

Mini Society Sells Gifts For The Holidays

Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? Come and visit Fourth Grade's Millennium Mall. They have what you are looking for.

Parkview's Third Graders will be selling their products December 7 & 8. Money Maker's Millennium Mall store hours will be Thursday, Dec. 7 and Friday, Dec. 8 (Family Day) from 12:50-1:50 p.m.

Holiday Punk Show
On December 15, join local band *Smiles2go* on the Second and Recess Projects for their Holiday Sing-A-Long upstairs at Vic's World Class Market in Novi. Show starts from 9-12 and costs just \$3. Seating is limited.

For tickets, visit www.Smiles2go.com

Novi Parks & Recreation Holiday Kid's Bash
Back for their fourth year, this event is fun for the kids and gives them five hours of freedom for their parents. Enthusiastic Santa's helpers will assist your youngsters at various age appropriate stations where they will make crafts, play games, go on a Holiday Scavenger Hunt, and make yummy goodies. They'll even get to give their wish list to Jolly Old Saint Nick himself.

There will be treats to take home, a keepsake photo of your child and lots of fun for all. Kids should bring a bag lunch. Beverage and snacks will be provided.

The fun runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Novi Civic Center on Saturday, December 16. This

event, centered for ages 3-8, is limited to 40 participants. Cost is \$25 for residents and \$30 for non-residents. Package includes all materials, beverage and snack.

Novi Community Band Holiday Concert

The Novi Community Band will hold their Holiday Concert on Saturday, December 16, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. at the Novi Civic Center - 45175 W. Ten Mile. For further information contact Jack Kopnick at 248-932-9244.

"Give me one good reason to contribute to the Red Cross."

The American Red Cross helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. We unite families and loved ones separated by war and disaster. We're in your neighborhood every day, providing disaster preparedness information and teaching classes in first aid, lifesaving and water safety, to help keep families like yours safer. We're not a government agency, but an independent organization that depends on donations from people you to survive. Our volunteers give their time to help others.

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Professor Higbee's Stream Map of Michigan is the first and only highly detailed map of its kind. This new 4 foot by 4 foot color map shows virtually all of the 35,000 miles of Michigan streams & lakes.

LOST STREAM MAP FOUND AND RESTORED

The recently published STREAM MAP OF MICHIGAN resembles another map-known to Pennsylvania anglers as the "Lost Stream Map". The "Stream Map of Pennsylvania" was completed in 1965 after a thirty-year effort by Howard Higbee, a former Penn State Professor.

Professor Higbee succeeded in creating a map of the highest detail possible...a map that shows every stream and lake. He painstakingly plotted by hand, the location of 45,000 miles of streams onto a 3 x 5 foot map.

The map sold extremely well... until it was lost several years after it first appeared in print. Incredibly, the printer entrusted with the original drawing and printing plates, declared bankruptcy, then carelessly handed Higbee's 30 years of work to a landfill.

The few remaining long-copied copies became a prized fisherman's possession. Professor Higbee was offered \$400 for one of his lost maps. And state agencies were loathe to keep their expert's work and key.

Experts told Professor Higbee that reprints were impossible, because the maps were printed in non-photographic blue.

Then, in 1991, at the age of 91, Howard Higbee's dream came true. Computers made it possible to reprint the map. Holding an updated map, Howard said, "I never thought I'd live to see this day".

Then, by combining Professor Higbee's knowledge with computer technology—the STREAM MAP OF MICHIGAN was created.

RAVE REVIEWS

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Novi division court to get temporary judge

By RANDAL YAKAY Staff Writer

The judges at the 52nd 1st Division Court in Novi thought they were getting help when the Michigan State Supreme Court Administration recommended a new judge to be placed in Novi.

But new legislation on capital bill to bring a judge to Novi may not work out to their benefit. Under new legislation, a new judge will be elected to the court in 2002. To take the bench in 2003 and they will relinquish jurisdiction of Rose and White Lake Townships to the 62nd 2nd Division District Court in Clarkston.

The problem is, under the new proposal, they would lose Judge Michael Batchik's seat to Clarkston after Batchik's term ends on December 31, 2004. Which means Novi would only have the new judge for about two years.

Batchik said, "I don't understand how they came up with this but it doesn't make any sense."

Batchik said with the new judge coming after the 2002 election and his seat moving to Clarkston, he doesn't see how such a move would help alleviate the "enormous" workload in Novi.

According to Novi's 52nd 1st District Court administration, Novi is the busiest court in the state, behind only the 46th District Court in Detroit. Each judge at the Novi court has nearly 20,000 cases on their docket.

"White Lake is only ten percent of our docket," Batchik said. "That isn't going to help us much down the road."

"We're not gaining anything," Batchik continued. "We need a

fourth judge in Novi. And when we get a new judge in 2002, we'll lose a judge to Clarkston. That doesn't help Novi."

Michigan State Representative Nancy Cassis (R-Nowi) said that legislation is only a first step in adding more judges to Oakland County. Cassis said she and State Sen. Bill Bullard (R-Highland) will continue to work to help alleviate the Novi court docket.

Sen. Bullard, who is sponsoring the legislation, said that the reason there is not going to be an additional judge added to the Novi Court is money.

"The problem is that somebody has to pay for it," Bullard said. "And Patterson (L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive) doesn't want to pay for a new judge in Novi," Cassis agreed.

"In a perfect world, we'd like to have four judges at the Novi Court," she said. "But the board of commissioners won't support it."

Cassis said that the new legislation, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson says the realignment is the best possible alternative at this time.

"It's not perfect, but it'll balance out the workload," he said. Cassis said that the new bill, draft number seven, could be done in time for Christmas.

"It has to do with making sure that everything is still legal. Then we can put it under the governor's Christmas Tree for Christmas, I think he will sign it," Cassis said.

NOTICE — CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL VACANCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN of an anticipated vacancy on the City Council if you are interested in appointment for the term ending November 2001, an application may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road or at www.novimichigan.com or by calling (248) 347-0456 until December 18, 2000. Interviews will be held at a Special Hearing on Monday, December 18, 2000 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at City of Novi, Council Chambers, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, MARVIANNE CORNELIUS, CITY CLERK. (11-30 & 12-714-00 NR, NN 1015265)

CITY OF NOVI VACANCIES ON CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Novi City Council will be interviewing applicants on Monday, December 11, 2000 beginning at 7:30 p.m. for appointment to the Board of Review, Beautification Commission, Cable Access Committee, Housing & Community Development Committee, Historical Commission, Library Board, Novi Ice Arena Committee, Planning Commission, Stormwater Management and Watershed Stewardship Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

If you are interested in serving on a City based commission, applications are available in the office of the City Clerk, 45175 W. Ten Mile, or by calling 347-0456 to receive an application by mail or fax, or at www.novimichigan.com. Please submit your application by Thursday, December 7, 2000 to allow time for scheduling appointments. (11-30-00 NR 1013325) MARVIANNE CORNELIUS, CITY CLERK

NOTICE OF HEARING TO REVIEW SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ROLL AND MODIFIED PROJECT COST CITY OF NOVI COUNTY OF OAKLAND, MICHIGAN

TO THE OWNERS OF ALL THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY TO BE BENEFITED BY THE AUSTIN DRIVE WATER MAIN: The construction of approximately 1,650 feet of 8" WATER MAIN IN SECTION 10 beginning at Old Novi Road and the vacated Street (right-of-way) then proceeding west along the utility easement (in the vacated) St. Water Main to Austin Drive, then proceeding south along Austin Drive to Old Novi Road.

THE NOTICE that a special assessment roll has been prepared for the purpose of defraying the special assessment district share of the cost of the following described project improvement:

50-22-10-229-005 50-22-10-227-024 50-22-10-230-009 50-22-10-231-019
50-22-10-229-002 50-22-10-227-015 50-22-10-227-001 50-22-10-231-003
50-22-10-227-022 50-22-10-227-016 50-22-10-278-008 50-22-10-231-002
50-22-10-227-005 50-22-10-227-017 50-22-10-227-002 50-22-10-231-001
50-22-10-227-008 50-22-10-227-018 50-22-10-231-017 50-22-10-231-021
50-22-10-227-007 50-22-10-227-019 50-22-10-231-023 50-22-10-230-006
50-22-10-227-008 50-22-10-227-020 50-22-10-231-022 50-22-10-230-007
50-22-10-227-009 50-22-10-278-001 50-22-10-231-011 50-22-10-230-001
50-22-10-227-010 50-22-10-278-013 50-22-10-231-010 50-22-10-230-004
50-22-10-227-011 50-22-10-231-018 50-22-10-231-009 50-22-10-230-008
50-22-10-227-020 50-22-10-278-010 50-22-10-231-008 50-22-10-229-001

The said special assessment roll is on file for public examination in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Novi, and any objections to the special assessment roll, or to the amended project cost (formerly \$304,100.00, now proposed to be \$213,003.00) may be made in writing prior to the close of the hearing scheduled at the date, time, and place set forth below.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the City Council and the City Assessor will meet on December 18, 2000, at 7:30 o'clock a.m. in the Novi City Hall, in the Council Chambers, 45175 West Ten Mile Road, in the City of Novi for the purpose of reviewing and receiving objections to the modified project cost and modified special assessment roll.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that appearance and protest at the scheduled hearing is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the State Tax Tribunal, and that appearance and protest may be made either by an appearance at the hearing for such purpose, or by filing an appearance and protest in writing.

THIS NOTICE is given by order of the City Council of the City of Novi, Oakland County, Michigan. MARVIANNE CORNELIUS, CITY CLERK (12-7-00 NRNN 1016382)

NOTICE OF HEARING TO REVIEW SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ROLL AND MODIFIED PROJECT COST CITY OF NOVI COUNTY OF OAKLAND, MICHIGAN

TO THE OWNERS OF ALL THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY TO BE BENEFITED BY THE EUBANK STREET WATER MAIN: The construction of approximately 1,400 feet of 8" water main in Section 3, within the Idemere Park Subdivision, beginning at South Lake Drive then proceeding south along Eubank Street to a point approximately 230 feet south of Lakely Street, Lakely Street between Eubank and Maudlin, and Maudlin from Lakely to South Lake Drive.

TAKE NOTICE that a special assessment roll has been prepared for the purpose of defraying the special assessment district share of the cost of the following described project improvement:

50-22-03-379-005 50-22-03-379-011 50-22-03-380-006
50-22-03-379-006 50-22-03-380-005 50-22-03-381-015
50-22-03-379-012 50-22-03-381-006 50-22-03-379-009
50-22-03-381-007 50-22-03-381-008 50-22-03-381-013
50-22-03-381-014 50-22-03-381-003 50-22-03-381-004
50-22-03-381-005 50-22-03-451-007 50-22-03-380-007
50-22-03-381-011 50-22-03-451-008 50-22-03-451-013
50-22-03-451-011 50-22-03-451-010 50-22-03-451-012
50-22-03-451-009 50-22-03-451-006 50-22-03-451-005
50-22-03-453-008 50-22-03-453-006 50-22-03-453-007
50-22-03-453-010 50-22-03-453-009 50-22-03-453-010
50-22-03-453-011 50-22-03-453-003 50-22-03-453-014
50-22-03-453-015

The said special assessment roll is on file for public examination in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Novi, and any objections to the special assessment roll, or to the amended project cost (formerly \$180,000.00, now proposed to be \$116,002.80) may be made in writing prior to the close of the hearing scheduled at the date, time, and place set forth below.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the City Council and the City Assessor will meet on December 18, 2000, at 7:30 o'clock a.m. at the Novi City Hall, in the Council Chambers, 45175 West Ten Mile Road, in the City of Novi for the purpose of reviewing and receiving objections to the modified project cost and modified special assessment roll.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that appearance and protest at the scheduled hearing is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the State Tax Tribunal, and that appearance and protest may be made either by an appearance at the hearing for such purpose, or by filing an appearance and protest in writing.

THIS NOTICE is given by order of the City Council of the City of Novi, Oakland County, Michigan. MARVIANNE CORNELIUS, CITY CLERK (12-7-00 NRNN 1016389)

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Sat. December 23rd 9:30am
Sat. December 30th 9:30am

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Our fundamental purposes are to enhance the lives of our readers, nurture the home towns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

Grin and bear it; say yes to Expo tax abatement

The Novi News does not usually support tax abatements as a policy. We feel that large multi-million, or billion dollar corporations can afford to construct and finance their own facilities.

As Novi Mayor Richard Clark has said on so many occasions, no one should be given special privileges when it comes to abatements. Clark said that each tax abatement issue would be looked at individually.

We agree. And the tax abatement issue with the Novi Expo Center is truly an individual instance.

We take issue with private companies using tax payer dollars to subsidize football, baseball or any other entertainment venture and private companies should not black mail local governments with threats to leave a municipality if they do not provide them with a tax abatement.

Also, just because the city of Novi has a tax abatement policy, it should not be a signal to every

company looking for a subsidy to come knocking on Novi's front door. In this instance, we look it as the lesser of two evils. Do we really want to promote tax abatements? No. Do we want another Textron? No.

However, when it comes to the Novi Expo Center, a facility that has brought the city of Novi money, has a long standing relationship with the city and will continue to bring in money if the new center was built, we feel a tax abatement is necessary to

We take issue with private companies threatening to leave a municipality if they do not provide them with a tax abatement.

keep the center here in Novi where it belongs.

We are now in a global economy. A company may just as easily do business in Cologne, Germany as it can in Novi. We agree with Mayor Clark that Novi is in a strategic battle to get the best quality companies to locate or relocate to the city of Novi.

With that understanding, we will support a tax abatement for the Expo Center.

Starting earlier gives teens more options

Thanks to great programs like Oakland County's Teen Court and school administrators like Marie Piper backing them, Novi Middle School students received a worthwhile learning experience they'll never forget.

As part of the Prosecutor's Office Juvenile Division, Teen Court is a diversion program in which teens hear real cases as a "jury" for their peers who commit minor violations of the law and have no previous criminal record.

Students had the chance to serve as jury, defense and prosecuting attorney, as well as bailiff. While the advantage for the defendant is getting no permanent record, the advantage to students is even greater. They have the chance to learn about our court and legal systems, the seriousness of juvenile crimes, and the opportunity to become real adults.

As the students shared their experiences, they not only stressed the importance of playing a positive role in a peer's life, but that ultimately, the program was fun.

Although Prosecutor's Office has been a Teen Court volunteer program available for high school-aged teens for some time, this is the first time the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office worked with a group of middle school volunteers. Starting them learning earlier is beneficial for two reasons: one, the seriousness of juvenile crimes, and the opportunity to become real adults.

As the students shared their experiences, they not only stressed the importance of playing a positive role in a peer's life, but that ultimately, the program was fun.



Students from Deerfield Elementary sing holiday songs at Monday evening's fourth annual Candlelight Chorale at the Novi Town Center. Elementary children from around the county gathered to celebrate the holiday season.

LETTERS

Trust this: abatement will be good for city

Blair Bowman presented a very strong case for the first tax abatement this city might seriously consider. The Novi Expo Center is very underused for the big ticket programs they would like to get. Keep in mind, this center some 12 years ago was a distillery. Access is terrible, parking is limited, the low ceiling restricts certain events. They have to move to grow and prosper.

When an abatement? Well first, this is a win-win for the city. It's a known commodity - not an ice arena or golf course - it's a proven winner. Second, it brings millions of dollars into the community. If the data presented Monday night at council is close to correct, it represents nearly \$200 million a year. That's some 68,000 hotel rooms, shopping at the malls, and a lot of meals at our local restaurants. As the Novi school system advisor presented, the abatement offers no detriment to the tax base and support of schools.

The Expo Center is good for the city of Novi. We saw evidence of the many events and facilities that they have financed for non-profits in the city. The Expo Center should be applauded for the plan of moving their business to a part of the city which needs development, has been abandoned for years, and offers a better solution for movement of traffic in and out of the operation.

From another perspective: Can we trust this guy? Will he do what he says? Last summer as I drove my classic car around the center to park at the '50s Festival, I came across a sweaty dirty fellow cleaning up the parking lot with broom and wheelbarrow. Guess who? Blair Bowman. This guy is sincere, honest and owning of the abatement. We'll make it up four times over.

Frank Brennan
Novi

A big thanks for supporting Goodfellows

A big "thank you" to everyone who contributed and worked on the Novi Community Goodfellows newspaper drive on Nov. 18 and 25.

The Novi paid-on-call firefighters stood on street corners and solicited donations from passing motorists, handing out the special "Novi News Goodfellow Edition." The Novi News was very generous with their donation of the newspapers and Randall Yakey wrote a wonderful article about our group. A special thank you to Jim Stevens for providing a fantastic lunch for all the hungry volunteers.

Happy Holidays from the Novi Community Goodfellows Committee

Volunteers, sponsors make holiday walk a success

Despite the freezing temperatures, the fifth annual Main Street Holiday Walk was a huge success. But an event like this takes a lot of preparation from a very dedicated community.

On behalf of the Main Street Holiday Walk Committee, I would like to thank the following businesses and volunteers: JCK and Associates, city of Novi and Novi Chamber of Commerce, the Main Street merchants for their donations of the commemorative ornaments: B.D.'s Mongolian Barbecue, Coffee Trader, Dr. James Adie, DDS, Evergreen III, Kitchens by Design, Lazy Lizard, Cantina, Main Street Tennis, Novi Jewelers, Quizzo's Classic Subs, Bi-Bian Bab, Diversified Recruiters, Larson Jewelry Design, and Red Estate One.

The following restaurants donated food and beverages for the event: B.D.'s Mongolian Barbecue, Caribou Coffee, Coffee Trader, Gatsby's, Lazy Lizard Cantina, The Marcus Family, Quizzo's Classic Subs, TGI Friday's, Wendy's, DoubleTree Hotel, Local Color Brewery, Malsano's, Red Hot and Blue, and Steve and Rocky's.

The Novi Seniors, Novi High School Marching Band, and Novi Theaters' Nutcracker characters provided wonderful entertainment.

Also, a special thanks to the Novi DPW staff, Novi Parks and Recreation staff and McSweeney Electric for decorating Main Street and the holiday trees.

Time into Channel 13 for scenes from the Holiday Walk and you'll probably recognize a few faces. Hope to see you next year on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

Maureen Malone
Community Relations
Manager
city of Novi

Novi theatres needs to stop charging fee

My family has been active in community theater in Southeastern Michigan for more than 25 years. We have found it to be a rewarding and enriching experience for the entire family, something in which all ages can participate and enjoy.

When we moved to Novi, we were excited that we would have a group in our own community. But in all those years, and in all those communities, we had never had the experience of being required to pony up \$125 for the privilege of participating. We have found equally rewarding to travel outside our own city to participate in other theaters that have more modest membership requirements. I didn't realize the Novi Theaters were having trouble attracting people. I was under the impression they had hundreds of children lined up to pay \$125 for a walk-on or to be in the chorus.

Mark Barsamian
Novi

Guilty as charged

Yes Ms Thompson, I am one of the guilty ones who worked on the Citizens for Roads

committee. And we probably must bear part of the responsibility for raising your city taxes about one dollar per week. A total of four shiny new quarters each week or about 53 dollars per year. For this one dollar per week, you and each Novi resident and taxpayer will receive three to four dollars worth of road improvements in the city of Novi. Not too shabby of an investment deal for us, for our money and for our city.

Yes Ms. Thompson, I have been living in the subdivision of Village Oaks since it was created over 30 years ago. I have done a lot for my subdivision and for our city. And yes, Village Oaks subdivision may not receive any of the large-scale road interchange improvements - because they are needed in other parts of the city. But the Village Oaks subdivision residents will benefit when they drive around our city.

While I am proud to say, I live in Village Oaks and this is where my family and I have lived since the subdivision was created, I do consider my family to be residents of the community in the city of Novi. Not just subdivision residents, but city residents.

This is our city and we do not just live on islands called subdivisions. We live and dine in the city. We drive through and around the city. We drive north, south, east, and west in our city. And yet, we can elect to simply stay in our subdivision if that is what we choose to do.

My five children, who all attended grade school and high school in the Novi Community School system, are now adults working, dining, shopping, and traveling around the city of Novi. And my wife and I continue to live in Village Oaks paying our school taxes - even though we now have no children attending any Novi schools. Some people refer to that as "Community Support."

My record and reputation against the waste and misuse of Novi taxes is all a matter of public record. But I have always endorsed spending taxes wisely and for the community. I have taken strong vocal and reactive opposition to many money-munching schemes that came across the Novi City Council table.

Halfhearted schemes and ideas like the Municipal Golf course and Banquet Facility. Yet, I have supported taxes for this road bond proposal, and at times, tax increases for improvements for the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the community.

There was my very strong and well-known opposition to the construction of Park Barrel Avenue No. 6 - a city-financed public road built into private property. Still, I supported the city's bond proposal for purchasing park land for our future use.

But taxes are a necessary evil and the tool needed to control and fund some of the operations of the city. Several of your city taxes will be finished when this road bond tax is applied so you should see no overall tax increase because of it.

Joseph G. Toth
Member of Citizens for Roads

Share your opinions
We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content.

Mail:
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Feeling the fallout of elections

On Monday, they started recounting the votes in Michigan's Eighth Congressional District, where State Sen. Mike Rogers, R-Brighton, squeaked out a 160-vote victory over State Sen. Diane Byrum, D-Onondaga, in the November election. Does anybody expect a Florida-style recount, replete with chads dimpling, lawsuits and counter suits dueling and harsh accusations flying?

Nope. How come? It's partly because both candidates are sane, sensible people who both ran a vigorous but civilized campaign. Class shows, and both Rogers and Byrum are classy people. They both deserve a lot of credit for the way they conducted themselves after such a close election (a 160-vote margin out of 297,533 votes cast amounts to less than one-tenth of 1 percent).

It's also partly because a Michigan law is very clear on the subject of recounts and punch card ballots, which are used in 95 percent of the precincts in the Eighth District.

The law specifies that if the ballot is punched enough to produce a chad with two corners attached (a "swinging chad") or one corner attached (a "hanging chad"), the vote counts. But chads with three corners attached don't count, nor do "dimpled" or "pregnant" chads (i.e. those with an indentation showing but not punched out).

The law also specifies that if the ballot is punched enough to produce a chad with two corners attached (a "swinging chad") or one corner attached (a "hanging chad"), the vote counts. But chads with three corners attached don't count, nor do "dimpled" or "pregnant" chads (i.e. those with an indentation showing but not punched out).

The squadrons of lawyers now arguing about voter intent in Florida wouldn't make

The bad consequences of all this for our democracy cannot be overstated, and both presidential candidates...fully deserve the contemptuous judgment of history that they surely will receive.

South and in northern big cities like Chicago. The late President Lyndon Johnson - who bore the nickname "Landslide Lyndon" after winning a recount election to the U.S. Senate in 1948 by 87 votes - once told me how they did it down in Texas. In those days, absentee voting was done on paper ballots, using ballot pens. If you wanted to spoil a ballot during the recount, you simply ran your thumb nail over the "X" mark on the ballot, smearing the ink outside the box and disqualifying the vote.

That's what's so sad about the current mess situation in Florida. The almost certain result will be to persuade many, many people that elections are intrinsically fraudulent and that the central act of our democracy - citizens freely casting their vote - will be rendered illegitimate.

The bad consequences of all this for our democracy cannot be overstated, and both presidential candidates, their advisors, their lawyers and the entire Florida political class fully deserve the contemptuous judgment of history that they surely will receive.

Phil Power is chairman of HomeTown Communications Network Inc., the company that owns this newspaper. He welcomes your comments, either by voice mail at (734) 953-2047, ext. 1880, or by e-mail at ppower@hometown.net.

'Other shoe' will drop on GOP soon

Marc Shulman is likely to win a choice position - chair of the powerful House Appropriations Committee - when assignments are handed out later this month by speaker-elect Rick Johnson.

State Rep. Shulman, R-West Bloomfield, won't confirm that he'll get that post, saying that it is up to Johnson, R-LeRoy, to make such announcements.

However, Shulman does admit he's "meeting with the House Fiscal Agency, already started meeting with people, and looking at budget issues."

Johnson is expected to announce committee assignments for the coming year shortly after the conclusion of the state Legislature's lame duck session, scheduled to wrap up Dec. 7.

But for now, it's the worst-kept secret in Lansing. Those committee assignments, when they come, will likely constitute the "dropping of the other shoe" in what had appeared to be a disappointing leadership election for southeast Michigan in the House Republican caucus last month. The GOP caucus had elected to leadership only a few lawmakers from the region, and none from Oakland or Livingston counties.

Wayne County's Rep. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, was picked for Majority Floor Leader; Rep. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, also from Wayne, was named Majority Caucus Chair; and Rep. Larry Julian, R-Lennon, won an Associate Speaker Pro Tem post.

Rep. Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, too believes the leadership line up will be good for the region. Cassis is expected to retain her current post as chair of the House Tax Policy Committee.

County, and now Livingston County too, as a "donor county." Lawmakers label Oakland as a "donor county" because it sends off to Lansing more in tax dollars than it receives back in services. And the amount of the donation has been growing each year. Until recently, Oakland was the only county in the state that fell into the donor category. In 1997, the latest year for which complete figures are available, Livingston County joined Oakland as a donor. The trend in taxation and spending will likely keep it in that category for the foreseeable future.

Staff and lawmakers alike believe the size of the region's donations have to do with the fact it typically has not done well in leadership elections.

While no one envisions the region will suddenly become a recipient of state tax money rather than a donor, they are hoping to pare back or slow the rate of donation.

"The proof will be in the pudding, whether we can get some dollars from the state to fulfill some of these unmet needs," Cassis said. "We'd like to be able to do more for the growing areas."

Mike Malott reports on the local implications of state and regional events. He can be reached by phone at (248) 634-8219 or by e-mail at mmalott@hometown.net.

'Please give me a map to get home'

Is the election over yet? Are the Lion's a lock for the playoffs? Is it Christmas yet?

These are perpetual questions that will never be solved. There is too much hype surrounding it all...

Inside the malls they were putting up Christmas decorations in October...b...Halloween of all things! Hype, hype, hype.

And I know I'm doomed. Doomed to that purgatory that will entrap me, that will force all the value from my wallet, spit me out into the dark cold night where I will wander for an hour wondering where I parked by car.

I hate the mall. Well, maybe that's a strong word. I don't mind it on those sweltering summer days when the place is almost empty and I wander around by myself, checking out the latest in television gadgetry.

Last year I went to Great Lakes Crossing. What a mess. I wandered around in a giant circle for nearly two hours and found only one gift. I went through the front door and it took me nearly a half an hour just to get out of Hudson's. I couldn't find anything I was looking for. A woman behind a counter asked me what I was looking for. "The door," I said. "I've got to get out of here."

People are pushing and shoving their way into line, out of line, and over racks of merchandise. I suffered less injuries playing high school football.

Then there are those people who say "shop on the Internet." Yeah, right.

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NOVI NEWS QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Then we can put it under the governor's Christmas tree for Christmas."

Rep. Nancy Cassis (R-Novi) on how she and Sen. Bill Bullock plan to have legislation to Gov. Engler on obtaining a temporary judge in Novi

"Give me one good reason to contribute to the Red Cross."

The American Red Cross helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. We unite families and loved ones separated by war and disaster.

We're in your neighborhood every day, providing disaster preparedness information and teaching classes in first aid, lifesaving and water safety, to help keep families like yours safer.

We're not a government agency, but an independent organization that depends on donations from people like you to survive.

Our volunteers give their time to help others. There are many reasons to contribute to the Red Cross. The again, one reason is all it takes.

American Red Cross
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http://www.redcross.org

Teen Court gives valuable experience to students

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE
Staff Writer



Photo by STEPHANIE FORDYCE

Thirty Novi Middle School students are becoming active participants in their community while learning about court procedures and careers in law enforcement as they participate in Oakland County's Teen Court.

As part of the Prosecutor's Office Juvenile Division, Teen Court is a diversion program in which teens hear real cases as a "jury" for their peers who commit minor violations of the law and have no previous criminal record.

"It was an unforgettable learning experience," said Kim Weidl, one of ten Novi Middle School students who recently partook in their first case. "It was a lot of fun and a great way to learn about courts and the law."

Students not only acted as the jury, but as defense and prosecuting attorneys, bailiff, and clerk.

The students are involved in sentencing only; the defendant has already admitted to guilt and has chosen to enter the diversion program. The job of the jury is to recommend an alternative disposition for juvenile offenders brought before the court.

As incentive, defendants will carry no criminal record with them if they complete their Teen Court sentence adequately.

In this way, the middle school volunteers have an impact on their community and establish a "peer pressure" message that crime is not acceptable.

Teen Court participants from left; (Top) Kim Weidl, Chris Britten, Peter Sophiea and Andrew Kozar. (Bottom) Kelli Herrick, Moha Arun, Nidhi Maley, and Kevin O'Keefe.

Although there has been a Teen Court volunteer program available for high school-aged teens for some time, this is the first time the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office has worked with a group of middle school volunteers.

Eighth grader Chris Britten said his participation in Teen Court helped establish his dream of becoming a defense lawyer.

"Ever since I was eight years old I've wanted to be an attorney, so I really got a lot out of it," he said. "I'd definitely like to participate in it again."

As the defense attorney, Britten had the chance to plead his defendant's case and even conduct closing arguments.

The students said they took an oath of confidentiality and could not discuss any details of the case, except that it involved trespassing.

To prepare, the middle school students have attended three mandatory training sessions during the fall to learn about the criminal justice system and proactive court proceedings by hearing imaginary cases.

According to Teen Court Coordinator Amy Allen, the Novi students have proven to be very serious about what they are doing.

Other Novi Middle School students who have or will participate in Teen Court are: Meera Arghal, Brett Buccilli, Bryan Dechart, Tanya Cripps, Suzanne DeMarois, Kathryn Kohls, Adrienne Hoving, Schott Hokett, Laura Letson, Natalie Kuczajda, Heather Lui, Megan Lilly Tiffany Lin, Allison Lloyd, Ryan Nussbaum, Caitlin O'Rourke, Danielle O'Grady, Lauren Preston, Emily Rice, Meagan Snively, and Kevin Shannon.

State could override local rule on 'living wages'

By MIKE MALOTT
HomeTown News Service
mmalott@homecomm.net

Although voters rejected a proposed constitutional amendment last month that would have made it tougher for state lawmakers to overrule local government, Proposal 2, many saw it as a shot across the Legislature's bow, warning it to be more sensitive to issues of local control and home rule.

Not the state House. Representatives voted last week for legislation to overrule local governments that set so-called "living wage" ordinances.

"Voters have spoken and they rejected it (Proposal 2) by a margin of three to one," Rep. Robert Gosselin, R-Troy, said.

Whether lawmakers need to be more sensitive to questions of local control "all depends on the issue. Zoning, police and fire protection, trash pick up and issues like that all come from local government. Minimum wage does not," he said.

Gosselin's Employment Relations Committee had recommended passage of House Bill 4766, sponsored by Rep. Andrew Richner, R-Grosse Pointe Park, on Wednesday, Nov. 29. The full House voted the bill out by the slimmest of margins, 55-46, the following day.

"Living wage ordinances would have created a Bosnia effect, a patchwork of minimum wage laws and local wage regulations throughout the state," Gosselin said. The representative says such ordinances would damage the state's economic growth.

Municipalities that had adopted living wage ordinances included Madison Heights, Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, Ann Arbor, Warren and Kalamazoo. Detroit also had adopted a similar law. The Oakland County Board of Commissioner recently rejected such a proposal.

Living wage ordinances require that companies which contract with the city pay wages at 125 percent of the poverty level. Pay rates in Detroit would have been \$8.23 if the company provided benefits, \$10.29 per hour if it did not.

The current minimum wage in Michigan is \$5.15 per hour.

Despite the Legislature's quick move to override local government on the issue, Don Stypula, of the Michigan Municipal League and a primary mover behind Proposal 2 was neither surprised nor upset by the vote. He said he'd expected action on the issue by the Legislature regardless of the outcome of Proposal 2. He said living wage ordinances are an issue only in a few communities, so the ques-

tion "had not reached a critical mass within our membership." "Was this another attack on local control? Yes," Stypula said. "Was the language in the Proposal 2 the right language? No. But should the Legislature sit up and start paying attention to issues of local control? Absolutely."

Gosselin on the other hand countered that the entire living wage issue is a backdoor attempt by the AFL-CIO to get wage increases that it has not been able to win at the bargaining table.

"It's the union's way of furthering its agenda in the larger cities," he said.

The bill was sent to the state Senate for consideration.

Reps. Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, Andrew Raczkowski, R-Farmington Hills, and Laura Toy, R-Livonia, voted yes.

Reps. Bob Brown, D-Deerborn Heights, Eileen DeHart, D-Westland, and Tom Kelly, D-Wayne, voted no.

Reps. Nancy Cassis, R-Novi, Paul DeWeese, R-Williamston, Ruth Johnson, R-Holly, Mike Kowall, R-White Lake, Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, and Judie Scranton, R-Brighton, voted yes.

Reps. Ruth Ann Jamnick, D-Ypsilanti, and Patricia Lockwood, D-Fenton, voted no.

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Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Hitting the hills at the start of their season were Novi cross country co-captains Eric Walle, Tim Moore, Mark Avenius, Chris Toloff and Stephen Szwasz, from left.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Girls cross country runner Margo Wolowiec was named to the All-Area first team.

Three Wildcats named All-Area

Brian Blyk

Northville senior

He led his team to its first-ever Western Lakes Activities Association championship this year, finishing fourth at the league meet in 17:03 at Kensington.

He was 56th overall at the state finals, finishing in a time of 16:17. Stacked up against the Kensington Valley Conference's best, he finished seventh at the Midland regional. In all, he was a two-time all Western Lakes first teamer, all-division once and was an academic all-state selection twice.

Chris Toloff

Novi senior

Leaving no doubt that he's the best runner ever to cross a finish line in a Wildcat uniform, Toloff cruised to a runnerup finish at the state finals to medal for the third-consecutive year.

Toloff shattered course records at Kensington Metropark, Willis Park and at Lakeland High School, each time bettering the record in impressive fashion. His time of 15:05 at Michigan International Speedway was among the top-five times ever in Division I (Class A). He won the regional title, along with the league and Oakland County championships. He was also first at the Gabriel Richard and DCC.

Shamrock invites. Because of his feats, he is ranked in the top 25, nationally.

"He developed an awesome kick to go with his tremendous leg speed during the race," his coach, Bob Smith said. "He has become one of the most feared cross country athletes in the country."

The Novi senior co-captain was a part of two-straight state team titles (1998-1999), as well as a runnerup finish this year. He finished 29th at the state meet as a sophomore before taking seventh last season.

He's signed a letter of intent to attend Michigan State University next fall.

Tim Moore

Novi junior

Novi faced a lot of pressure to three-peat this season after two-straight team titles. Next season, Moore will have to deal with that pressure as an individual.

The junior placed third at the state finals for the second-consecutive year and was the only underclassmen to finish in the top 12 in the championship race. He'll undoubtedly be the No. 1-ranked runner next season.

He made tremendous strides over the last few weeks of the season, continually closing the gap between himself and the top two.

Continued on 2

Wolowiec, Kono, Schmitt named to All-Area team

Heather Moeble

Northville sophomore

This runner got better on sheer determination alone. She was a good athlete coming into the season, but she improved through her hard work and dedication to the sport.

Moeble quickly emerged as Northville's best runner and only got better. She was fourth at the Western Lakes Activities Association meet in a shade over 20 minutes (at Kensington). She was 17th at the Midland regional, finishing two spots away from qualifying from the state meet. Her best time of the season came against Churchill, where she finished first in a time of 19:54.

"She believes in what she does," her coach Rob Watson said. "She gives 100 percent. She knows that if she doesn't give her all, she won't be at her best."

Margo Wolowiec

Novi sophomore

When fellow sophomore Nina Schmitt went down to injuries and sickness, Wolowiec stepped it up and made tremendous strides in just her second year running.

Wolowiec was 19th at the KVC meet, 21st at the Oakland County meet, 12th at the

"She gives 100 percent. She knows that if she doesn't give her all, she won't be at her best."

Rob Watson

Northville girls cross country coach

Shamrock invite and ninth at the Walled Lake Western Invite. She ran her best race at the regional meet, where she finished 15th (19:52) and qualified for the state meet as an individual. She was off her race in Brooklyn, where she finished 193rd in 21:14.

Nina Schmitt

Novi sophomore

If her season were reversed, she would have been the most-improved runner in the area. Instead, leg injuries hindered her late in the season and she missed out on the league meet.

She finished 31st at the regional and 35th at the county meet, but her early-season feats earned her a spot on the all-area squad. She won the Shamrock and University of Detroit invitations, both of which ran at

Cass Benton. She was second at the Walled Lake Western Invite, 10-seconds behind Lisa Canty of Milford. She won dual meets with South Lyon, Northville and was second in the Lakeland meet (to Kristyn Kern).

Tae Kono

Novi sophomore

Schmitt was hot early and Wolowiec peaked near the end. Kono may have been the most consistent runner Novi had en route to its third-place finish in the league.

The sophomore was 12th at the KVC meet, earning second-team honors. She finished 26th at the regional meet and 46th at Oakland County. She was 14th at the Shamrock Invite and took eighth at the Walled Lake Western Invitational.

HONORABLE MENTION

Northville: Alyson Flohr, Allison Loeffler

Novi: Bethany Kittle, Brittany Albright, Vidya Mahadevan



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Chris Toloff congratulates a tired teammate after a KVC meet.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Novi's Brad Zarem takes the puck away from a defending South Lyon player.

Icers win two at home

By KELLI COOLEY

Copy Editor

The aggressive matchup proved to be a cinch for the Wildcats as they iced South Lyon 6-2 Nov. 29.

Although the first period skated off to a slow start with Novi leading 1-0, courtesy of a goal from Brian Jausi just under the two minute mark, the game quickly progressed as the Wildcats scored two more goals in the second from Kyle Major and Fred Napler while the Lions scored a goal off of Jeremy Goodman to bring the lead to 3-1.

"It helps if we are more aggressive out of the gate. We started off slow," Novi hockey coach Dan Phelps said.

The simmering became a boil in the last period as Novi scored three more goals, while South Lyon fired one past the 'Cats to end it 6-2.

Goals for the Wildcats in the third came from Jared Genso, Jared Perras and Brad Zarem while assisting honors went to Brian Jausi with three.

"South Lyon is always a big rival for Novi no matter what it is," Phelps said. "They are a solid hockey team. They are rebuilding. Some members are young, where we have 14 returning players, but they always come ready to play. In years to come, they will be a contender in the KVC."

Genso and Jausi were both aggressive players that helped with the win, Phelps said.

"Brian Jausi is a sophomore and an assertive player. He got the bounces and worked hard," he said. "Jared Genso is a top defenseman and not usually a big scorer. He's a threat to any team."

"South Lyon is always a big rival for Novi no matter what it is. They are a solid hockey team and always come ready to play."

Dan Phelps

Novi hockey coach

The Wildcats tore up the ice again Monday in a 6-3 win to give the team an unblemished 3-0 record.

Jausi had two goals while Napler, Zarem, Major and Robbie Harrell each had one.

"We came out flat again. In terms of speed, we need to be more assertive in the beginning," Phelps said. "Instead of playing with them, we need to play above them. Walled Lake Central is a good squad and their goal tender played very good."

Phelps credited Central's coach for preparing his team for the game.

"Their coach Jim Hogan does a good job with a fairly young squad and a tough schedule," Phelps said.

Novi's matchup with Hartland on Dec. 6 was after the Novi News's deadline. The Wildcats will face Lakeland on Dec. 9 at 11:20 a.m. at Lakeland Ice Arena.

Kelli Cooley is the copy editor for the Novi News/Northville Record. Her e-mail address is kcooley@ht.homecomm.net

WALLED LAKE CENTRAL 3, NOVI 6

2000 ALL-AREA BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

First Team		
Name	School	Grade
Chris Toloff	Novi	Senior
Tim Moore	Novi	Junior
Mark Aventus	Novi	Senior
Nick Koczyski	Millford	Junior
Adam Kowalczyk	Millford	Senior
Pat Klein	Lakeland	Senior
Brian Theut	Lakeland	Junior
Brian Blyth	Northville	Senior

Second Team		
Name	School	Grade
Brian Lee	South Lyon	Junior
Pat Miller	Millford	Sophomore
Dan DeFusha	Millford	Freshman
Tim Kava	Novi	Sophomore
Eric Walle	Novi	Senior
Todd Foren	Novi	Senior
Mich Erickson	Novi	Junior

Honorable mention

South Lyon - Andrew Lapham, Nick Pearce, Nate Pedersen
 Millford - Tyler VanAcker, Dan Hurst, Casey Barnes
 Novi - Eric Sauer, Dan Stevens, Steve Swast
 Northville - Bill Dalton, Ben Flood, Clark Paciorek
 Lakeland - C.J. Hadding, Chris Welch

2000 ALL-AREA GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

First Team		
Name	School	Grade
Kristin Kern	Lakeland	Senior
Katie Kramer	Millford	Sophomore
Lisa Carly	Millford	Freshman
Tiffany Kald	Millford	Freshman
Aileen Johnson	Millford	Junior
Zoby Shepherd	Millford	Senior
Kristin Granroth	Millford	Freshman

Second Team		
Name	School	Grade
Margo Walgowiec	Novi	Sophomore
Nina Schmitt	Novi	Sophomore
Tae Kora	Novi	Sophomore
Stephanie Morrison	Millford	Senior
Martha Smith	Millford	Senior
Katie Martilla	Millford	Senior
Tiffany Wiess	Millford	Senior
Heather Moerle	Northville	Sophomore

Honorable mention

South Lyon - Kiersen Isgrigg, Trisa Cannon
 Millford - Bethany Coggins
 Novi - Bethany Kille, Brittany Albright, Vidya Mahadevan
 Northville - Alyson Fiori, Allison Loeffler
 Lakeland - Kate Maxwell

Four named to CC second team

Continued from 1
 Runners in the state. Dathan Ritzenhein of Rockford and Moore's teammate, Chris Toloff. Moore was second to Ritzenhein at the Foot Locker Regional race in Kenosha, Wis. and will compete at the National race (top 32 runners in the country) this Saturday in Orlando.
 Moore had a stellar regular season, finishing runnerup to Toloff at the regional, county, conference, and state meets. He broke 16 minutes at five big meets this past season, and his time of 15:58 was just three seconds off the former Kensington Metropark (Pomson Hollow) record (15:55).
 Like Toloff, he too is a three-time state medalist and was the third-ranked runner in the entire state. "He has re-dedicated his training, he's very focused," Smith said. "He is also ranked among the top 25 nationally."
Todd Foren
 Novi Junior
 Foren was a steady force for Novi the entire year, securing a starting spot on one of the state's best teams.
 The junior stepped it up at the league meet, where he took second-team honors after placing 13th overall. He came back to finish 18th at the Midland regional a week later. He finished 86th at the state meet at MIS.
 He'll be one of the keys to Novi's success next season.
 "Todd has the capability to be an all-stater next year," his coach said. "I believe he will take that next step with his training. He has already given me his word that he will triple his summer mileage. If he does, he will be running with [Tim] Moore next year in practices and meets."
Mitch Erickson
 Novi Junior
 He competed at the state meet for the second-straight season, joining Tim Moore as the only Wildcat underclassman to do so.
 He ran well when it counted most, earning second-team all-KVC honors by finishing 14th overall (17:07). He was a regional medalist as well, crossing the line in the 13th position. Taking out just the KVC runners in that race, Erickson was 10th among those athletes, bettering his KVC finish by four positions.
 "Mitch is a student of the sport. He will do everything possible to improve his performance running CC," Smith said. "He makes sacrifices on his diet, social life and other activities in order to run his absolute best."
Mark Aventus
 Novi senior
 His times improved drastically from last year, in which he was an all-state runner (17th). The reason?
 He was healthy.
 Aventus battled injuries as a junior, but reaped the rewards of good health this year. He was third at the Oakland County meet and fourth overall at the KVC, regional (15:52) and Gabriel Richard Invationals. He took fifth at the Shamrock Invite. At the state meet, Aventus ran a 15:53 to take 22nd overall, his second-straight all-state performance.
 Four times this year, Aventus finished under 16 minutes.
 "He's a big-meet runner for us," Smith said. "The bigger the meet, the better he does. He understands running and training. Any other team would have Mark as their number-one runner."
SECONd TEAM
Tim Kava
 Novi sophomore
 Novi produced some great runners over the past three seasons, and Kava fits into that mold. He's on par to be mentioned among Novi's best, as was witnessed this season.
 He finished 48th at the state meet after taking 10th at the Midland regional. Among four Novi runners vying for a spot on the state final roster, he won the junior varsity league meet and would have finished among the top-20 in the varsity race with his time of 17:24.
 "Like [Tim] Moore, he is also a big meet runner," his coach Bob

A run back at Novi High's fall sports



Novi High cross country runners train on school grounds in the late summer. After taking two consecutive State titles, the varsity team came in second place to this year's champion: Rockford High School in November's meet at Michigan International Speedway.

WRESTLING PREVIEWS 2000-2001

Title now rests on junior members' shoulders

BY CHRIS C. DAVIS
 Editor

There really wasn't that much missing from Novi High School's 1999-2000 wrestling season. Winning the Kensington Valley Conference, a championship at the Oakland County meet, victories in district and regional meets and two individual state championships by Ryan Churella and Nick Sloan.

But no team state championship. Second place, yes — but not the big prize.

That, said head coach Brad Huss, was the last piece of the puzzle, and what he had in mind for his team as the 2000-2001 season got underway.

"We had a great season last year," Huss said. "All in all, other than winning that state championship, there really isn't much else we could have done."

Far Huss's team, the burden of getting over that championship hump now rests in the hands of a team filled with juniors who spent much of their early years on the team wrestling behind a lot of top-notch upperclassmen. Now, Huss said, it's their turn to lead the team.

"No one knows the names of a lot of these kids, but by the end of the season, they'll start to be recognized," Huss said. "We're going to have a team that's similar to last year's. In that we've got a lot of talent. It's all a matter of developing it in practice and at meets."

Particular lineups hadn't yet been totally ironed out, but Huss said he was beginning to establish

a pecking order for the various weight classes on the team:

• Craig Hixon (103, sophomore) — "He's a good one," Huss said. "He didn't get to see a lot of action last year, but he's ready to take the next step."

• Josh Churella (103 / 112, sophomore) — Huss said the younger brother of senior standout Ryan Churella could toggle between either weight class, depending on the need of the moment.

• Cory Nobach (119, senior) — A returning regional meet qualifier, Huss said Nobach would be a team captain. "He's a real leader at practice and at meets," he said. "Cory's been a big help for us."

• Brian Ong (125, junior) — "He's another one of those kids who had to wrestle behind some of the older guys, but we think he'll be a really important part of our team this year," Huss said.

• Dan Cash (130, junior) — Saw some varsity action last season, Huss described Cash as "tough, both physically and mentally."

• Chris Stallard and Matt Harsha-Strong (135, juniors) — The duo both looked like able candidates for the 135-pound weight class, Huss said.

• Brian Nitty (140, freshman) — One of the youngest standouts on the team, Huss said Nitty would need work to refine his talent, but held great potential. "He's going to be a whole lot better by the end of the season," Huss said.

• Mike Crawford (145, junior); Ryan Churella and Eric Cook

(145, seniors) — Of Crawford, Huss said the junior had "a ton of potential, but didn't know much about wrestling yet." As for Cook, Huss said he "knows the program and is a good wrestler on his own. He can be very good for us if he sticks with the program."

• Andrew Becker (152, junior) — "He just a great worker," Huss said. "Andrew works every day for us."

• Vince Slovan (160, junior) — A speedy one, Huss said Slovan's quickness on the mat was his greatest asset. "He's one of the ones we're really counting on this season," Huss said. "There's no limit to what he can do if he stays focused."

• Scott Kortlandt (171, junior) — Would have been a force at last year's district meet, but an injury kept him out of action. Huss said Kortlandt "could have been a state qualifier," were it not for the injury.

• Stephen Raudzus (171 / 189, junior) — A wrestler who Huss said could swing between weight classes, Raudzus suffered a knee injury last season that kept him at bay. "[Raudzus is] very strong and physical out there," Huss said. "He'll really be something."

• Nick Sloan (215, senior) — Sloan placed second at the individual state meet last year, but Huss said he wanted to push the senior into that elusive No. 1 position this year.

• Tim Stefansson (heavyweight, senior) — Not a terribly experienced heavy, Huss said Stefansson

has had to wait his turn behind older team members in years past.

"He's had the chance to learn from a lot of good heavyweights," Huss said. "He's got the skills to be a good heavyweight himself."

In terms of marquis matchups this season, Huss said the team was keeping the Oakland County meet circled in red. In addition to dual meets against Walled Lake Western and Troy. Within the KVC, Huss said Hartland was positioning itself to make a run for the conference.

"That team is just loaded," Huss said. "They've got a great program over there. We'll have to be conditioned if we want to stay up with them."

Closer to home but out of conference were the Mustangs of Northville — a team Huss said the Wildcats were gunning for. The Mustangs and Novi typically faced each other in district competition, but it appeared as though the only time the orange and black would face the green and white was at the Dec. 14 meet in Northville.

"The kids always look forward to that one," Huss said. "It's a great rivalry in any sport. Football is obviously the biggest, but it carries over into other sports, and certainly wrestling, too."

The varsity wrestling team will host the Novi Round Robin tournament this Saturday at 9:30 a.m., while the junior varsity wrestlers hit the road to Belleville High School.

Melissa Roemer was an all-area second team First Singles notable after the fall 2000 season.



Wildcat goalie Nick Sloan, left, and his varsity soccer teammates won the KVC regular season championship and made it into the playoffs.



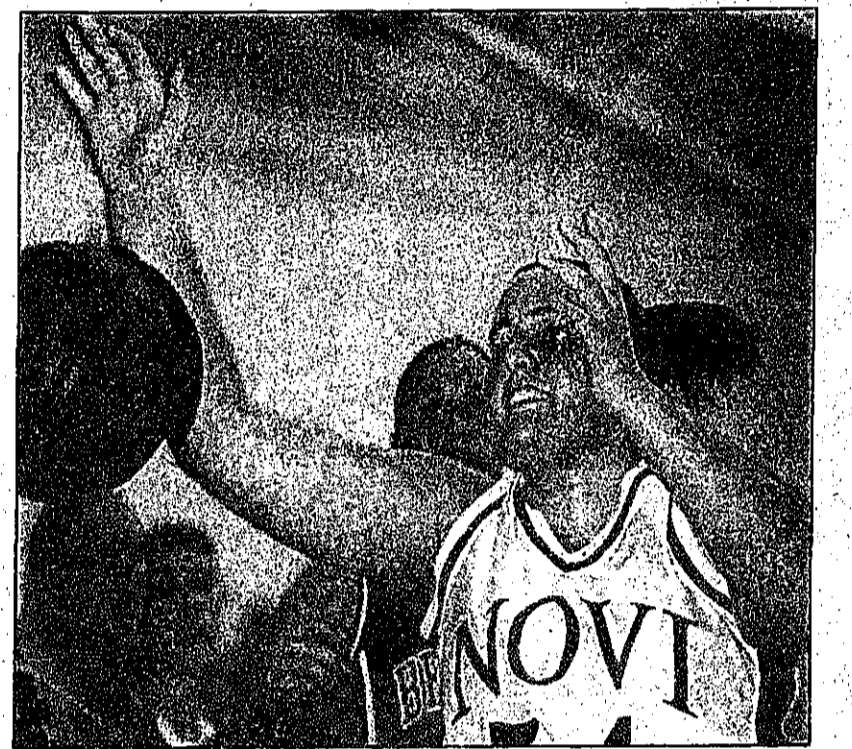
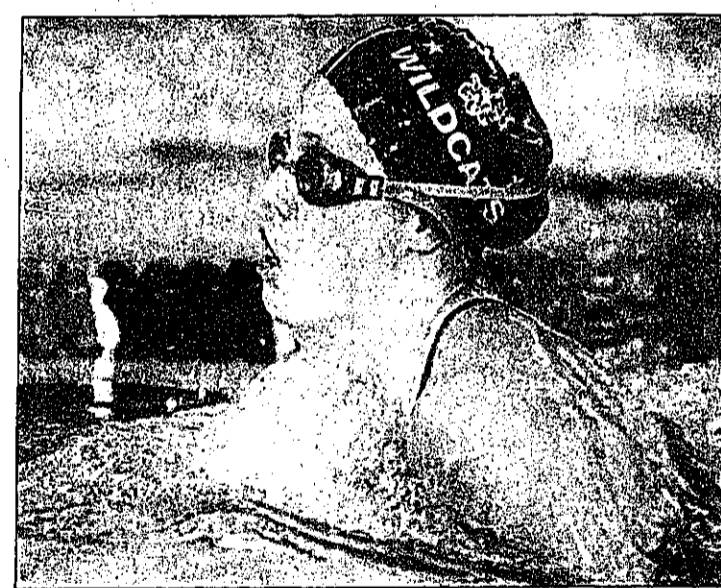
Freshman Ashley Glover became the varsity tennis team's number one singles player this past fall.



Tab Kellepourey took his Wildcat football team to the playoffs in his first year as head coach.



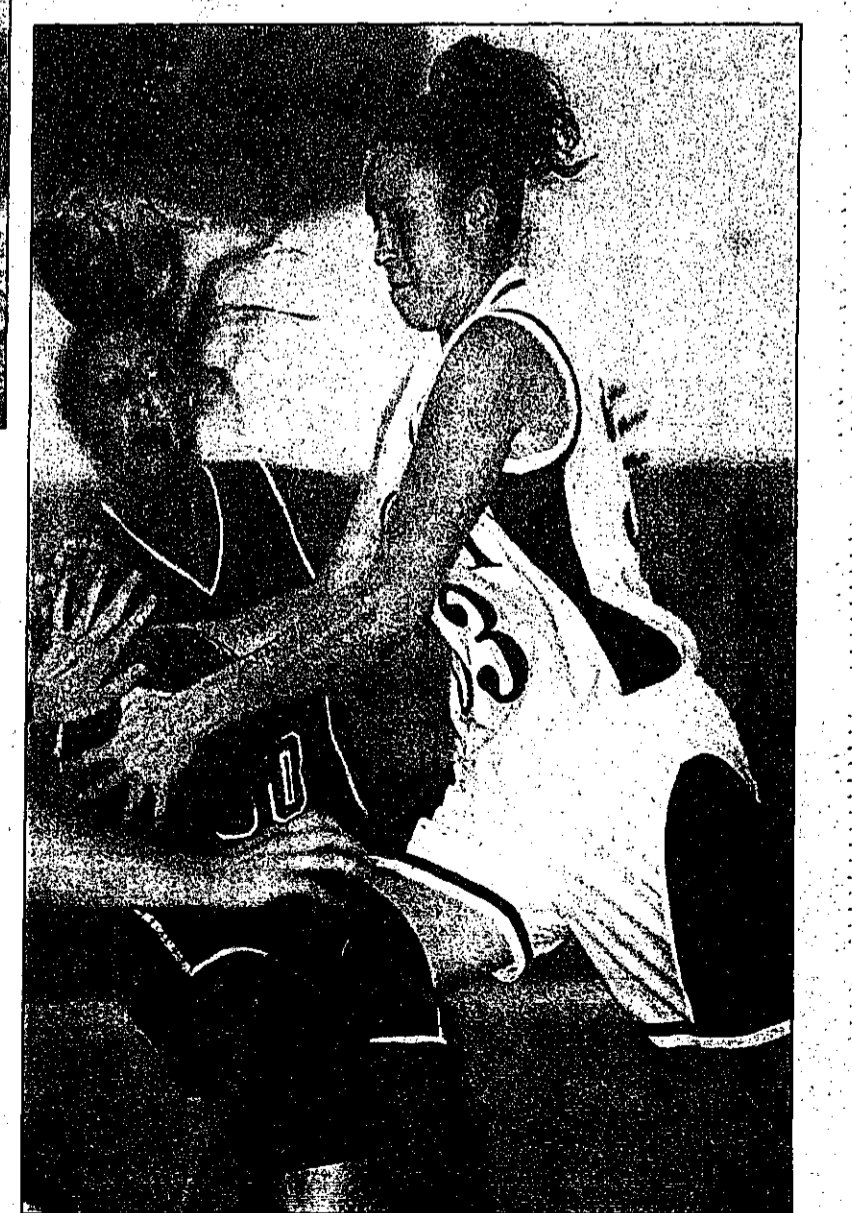
Novi's Christina Thompson performs a reverse dive in a meet at Northville High.



Senior Megan Colligan looks to snag a loose rebound during an early-season Novi High School varsity basketball game.



Wildcat option quarterback Matt Gorman lead his team in both passing and rushing yardage.



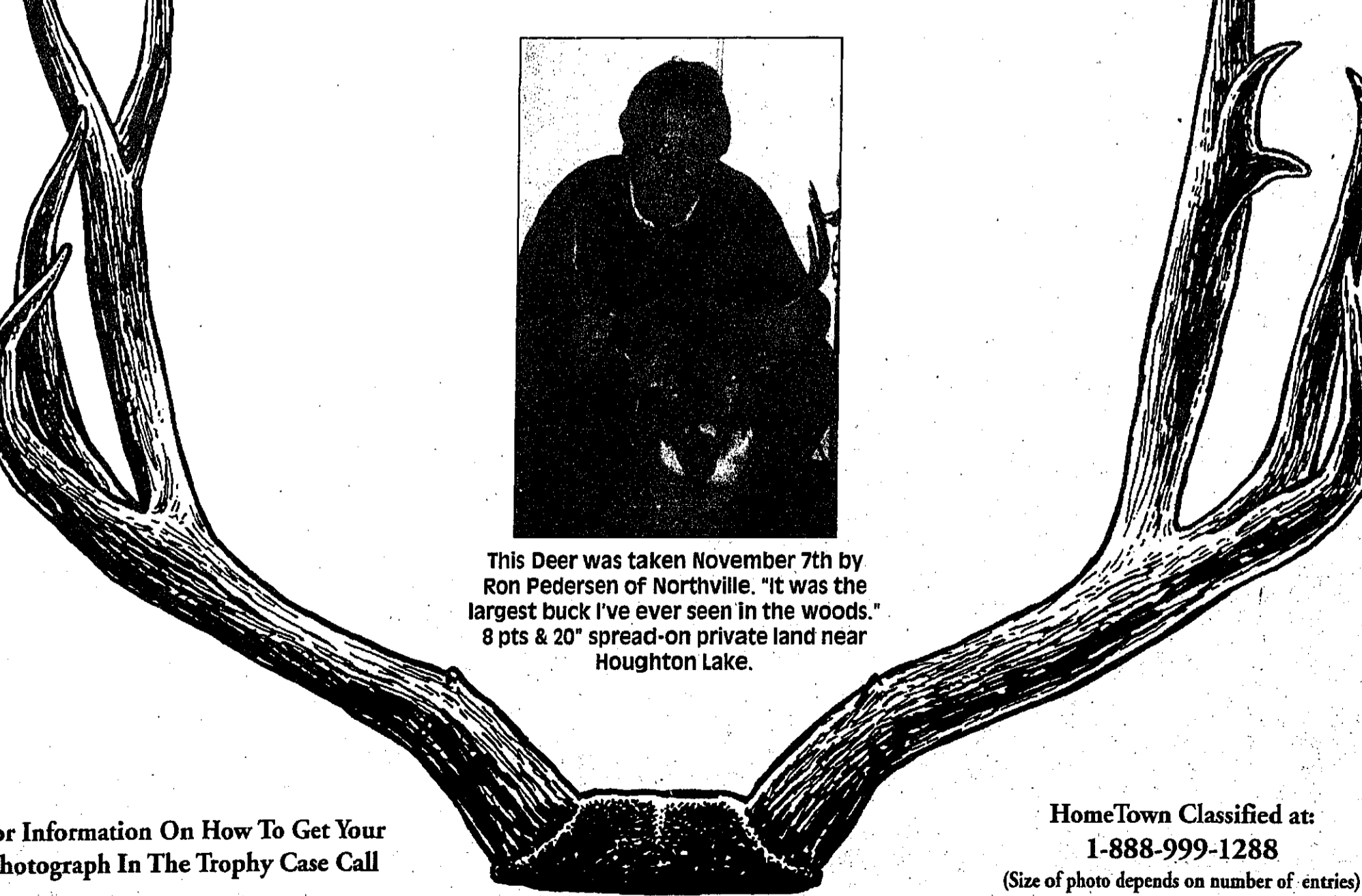
Above: Swimmer Blair Tyler moves through the water by breaststroke during a medley relay race at Northville High School.

At left: Novi girls cross country runners head out at a fast clip during a dual meet at Cass Benton Park.

Right: Junior Jaime Jo Sabol drives the lane in a Novi High School varsity basketball home game against Brighton.

Photos by
 John Heider

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This Deer was taken November 7th by Ron Pedersen of Northville. "It was the largest buck I've ever seen in the woods." 8 pts & 20" spread on private land near Houghton Lake.

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BASKETBALL PREVIEWS 2000-2001



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Novi varsity boys head coach Pat Schluter, left, works with his team during a practice late last week.

Novi will take 'blue collar approach'

By STEPHEN BELL
Sports

Novi's hoops squad only has one experienced player back. And he missed half of last season.

But considering that veteran is junior Brandon Davis, generally considered the best point guard in the KVC, and the team's newcomers are from the league champion junior varsity team, Wildcats coach Pat Schluter is guardedly optimistic.

"We have some great kids," Schluter said. "We're scrappy. I really like the blue collar approach. We just don't have experience."

It all starts with Davis. Last season began with him sidelined with an injury. The Wildcats started 0-5. Enter Davis. The result, a nine-game win streak.

Running point, Brandon is everything a coach could desire.

"He's really fast, can shoot and penetrate," Schluter said. "He's just a solid all-around player."

Joining Davis in the backcourt is Chase Chandler, one of two sophomore starters.

"He's young, but pretty solid," Schluter said. "He can defend and shoot."

The other sophomore, also on the wing, is Matt Emmenecker. He's a good shooter who is explosive going to the hole. The one question mark is defense, which should come with time.

Rounding out the team will be Jim Caren, a 6'3" senior. Schluter said Caren's a good shooter who will benefit from being in his system for four years.

In the pivot, Novi must replace

Dan Nawrot, an All-KVC selection last season. In his stead will be 6'6" Erick Messink, a senior who didn't play a lot last year but has really improved, and Jamie Scheur, the starting center off the J.V. squad.

"He's strong and tough," Schluter said.

Junior Trey Simpson will be the first guard off the bench. Despite what one might infer from his name, Trey's greatest contributions come at the other end of the floor.

"He's a great defender," Schluter said. "He goes in and hustles, gets steals."

Another outstanding defender is Brian Swill, a junior forward.

The third sophomore to make the varsity is Sean Dicken, a good-shooting guard.

Looking to crack the rotation are junior Kirk Safford, a fine shooter, Jeremy Szpalckier, a senior forward in his first varsity season, and Mike Souran, an exchange student from Germany.

"On paper, it looks like we should be in the middle to bottom of the KVC," Schluter said. "But I think we can surprise some people."

The Wildcats will have that chance early. Of their first five games, four are on the road, including Walled Lake Western and Lakeland this week. The home game is against Brighton, which may be the most-talented team in the KVC.

Stephen Bell is the sports editor for the Milford Times/South Lyon Herald. His e-mail address is sbell@ht.homecomm.net

Northville counts on being strong in WLAA

BY STEPHEN BELL
Sports

If they played with a pencil rather than a ball, the Northville Mustangs would be set. Because on paper, this is one of the best teams in the Western Lakes.

Northville has 11 players returning from last year, among them nine seniors, last year's leading scorer, last year's leading rebounder and a 7'0" center.

The only position where there isn't a returning starter is point guard. Here, Northville can go in two different directions. If coach Scott Baldwin wants quickness and explosiveness, he can go with senior Brandon Langston. If he wants a traditional playmaker, he has junior Andrew Herpich.

Joining either Baldwin or Langston at guard will be junior

Tim Ferng. This is his third year on the varsity. Baldwin calls him an outstanding shooter and a fine defender.

At the small forward is Aaron Redden, who led the Mustangs in scoring last year and is a team captain. He can get you every which way.

"He's a very strong kid," Baldwin said. "He can go inside and post you up or he can go outside where's he's a really improved shooter."

At power forward is 6'6" senior David Gregor, the other team captain and one of the best players in the WLAA.

"He's our top rebounder and our emotional leader," Baldwin said. "He's an incredible competitor."

If Gregor is relatively tall for a high school player, then what

would that make junior center Thomas Knapp... Baldwin said the seven-footer is twice as good as he was last year.

"He'll really help our offense," Baldwin said. "He'll be a primary option this year. Last year, he was a secondary option. He still has a lot of development left, but he's only a junior. He has a great work ethic, which is rare among kids that big."

There are two seniors backing up Gregor and Knapp - 6'6" Ben Jacobs and 6'5" Kale Lefwich, who is in his first season on the Northville varsity.

Giving depth on the wings are seniors Joe Rohoff and Steve Shackelford and junior Robbie Harmer, who is currently injured.

The reserve guards are both seniors, Justin Messer and Tim

Kelleher. Given the depth and range of talent on the roster, Northville can give opponents a number of looks.

"When Gregor and Knapp are on the floor, we'll be a halfcourt team, looking to dump the ball into the post," Baldwin said. "When they're not out there we can use our speed and play a more uptempo game. We can adapt our style to the competition."

Baldwin said this team could realistically finish in the top third of the Western Lakes. Right now, he said Walled Lake Central looks like the favorite - on paper.

Stephen Bell is the sports editor for the Milford Times/South Lyon Herald. His e-mail address is sbell@ht.homecomm.net

WRESTLING PREVIEWS CONT.

Team will gain respect on mats, coach says

By CHRIS C. DAVIS
Editor

Santa had better have a steel-lined sack this year, because Garnett Potter is asking for a heavyweight wrestler.

"I could really use a heavy," said Potter, Northville High School's wrestling coach. "That's one of the holes we've got to fill."

Potter said inexperience and youth were the toughest elements the Mustangs were going to face during the 2000-2001 campaign - never mind a schedule that pitted Northville against Novi early in the season.

Before that key matchup, however, Potter said he was counting on his team laden with junior and sophomore talent - as well as plenty of freshman faces - to get mentally prepared for what was shaping up to be a challenging season on the mats.

"We're inexperienced, but these kids can do well for us," Potter said. "I can almost guarantee that by the end of the season, you'll be looking at a completely different team. Over time, we'll build a program that succeeds."

Success hasn't been that much of a problem for Northville for the last four years. Seniors on this year's team saw the 'Stangs advance to the state final four on

two occasions. Three wrestlers from last year's team made it to state competition as individuals, giving Northville a tough reputation.

But reputation won't be enough to see that kind of success this year, Potter said. Victories would need to be earned one by one, and without much senior leadership to speak of.

Potter said his lower weight class wrestlers represented the core of the talent to this year's team, including:

- Ravi Saran (junior, 103) - Finished with more than 30 wins as a sophomore, and should have placed at the state meet, Potter said. "He's tough. He came from a family of 13 brothers and sisters. They're a family of wrestlers."

- Mike Carter (sophomore, 112) and Josh Danna (sophomore, 119) - Both inexperienced wrestlers, Potter said, but have the potential to develop. "I'm confident they can become producers for us quickly," he said.

- Jason Danna (senior, 119) - A returning varsity wrestler, Potter said Danna performed well as a junior. "He's obviously much stronger and faster than he was a year ago. He's worked hard in the off-season," Potter said.

- Matt Doyle (junior, 125) - Also

wrestled in the 125 weight class as a sophomore. Potter said Doyle was probably the most improved member of the team.

- Luke Pokorny (junior, 130) - A solid member of the team, Potter said. Pokorny did the right things during the off-season to stay within his weight class.

And Potter was quick not to forget 189-pound-classer Joe Rumbley, whose skills got him one match away from state competition.

Potter said he'd have better knowledge of his team's direction once he got over the Christmas holiday season. Between fattening foods at the dinner table and temptations not to stay in shape during the down time, Potter said getting past New Year's Day was a major mental hurdle to overcome.

"You may have a kid who starts out 1-4 and decides he's had enough. Holiday break is the time when it's easier for those negative attitudes to come up," Potter said. "I think we've got a group of kids who have been with the system long enough to know it's their program and their problem now. They're the ones responsible for its success."

Success may come to Northville, but it won't come easy. Early meets include an invitational with the

likes of Holt, Lake Orion and Belleville High Schools, and conference matchups against Canton and Walled Lake Western. Potter said Northville's long-standing reputation as one of the top wrestling programs in the Western Lakes Conference was making the Mustangs a target for opponents.

"It's nice being on top of the mountain," Potter said. "We've got some tough tournaments, sure, but I believe we can win every match."

Winning every match means preparing the right way. Potter said a good number of his wrestlers did their part by attending sports camps and continuing conditioning throughout the year.

"Wrestling isn't the most glamorous sport in the world," he said. "Kids are either going to do it or they aren't. A lot of them made a conscious effort in the off-season to improve. If you like wrestling, it gets addicting and you do everything you can to improve."

The team will be in action Saturday at 10 a.m. for the Garden City Invitational.

Chris C. Davis is the editor of the Northville Record. He can be reached at cdavis@ht.homecomm.net.

When is Shy Too Shy?

Answer the following questions based on the last 2 weeks or more.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| YES | NO | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. I feel embarrassed or nervous when beginning conversations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I don't enjoy social events or being part of a group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I get anxious when giving a report or talking to a supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I blush, perspire, my heart races in certain social settings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. It feels like "severe shyness" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I feel nervous when I'm the center of attention |

If you answered "yes" to 3 or more statements, you may be suffering from social anxiety, a serious condition affecting 20 million Americans. The Institute For Health Studies is currently looking for individuals experiencing the above symptoms to participate in a research study of investigational medication for social anxiety. If you are selected, all research related care and study medication are provided at no cost. Get answers and information about social anxiety.

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Town of Novi
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Craig Wroblewski, top, and Cindy Van de Sande head up to a roof to properly clean a chimney in Plymouth Township.

SWEEPING UP

Routine chimney cleanings key to avoiding fires

Cold winter nights easily transform into warm, fuzzy memories - or hellish nightmares - because of fireplaces.

You can rest assured knowing you will have nothing but fuzzy memories, though, if a little preventative maintenance is performed before and during the winter season.

Bill Zhmendak, Northville Township Fire Department chief, said there are two key steps to having a healthy hearth - inspection and cleaning.

"With more people using fireplaces now as a common heat source and with the size of some of these houses, the chimney is one of the most important things to inspect and maintain," he said.

Owning and operating a safe fireplace goes well-beyond making sure the fire is out when you go to sleep, Zhmendak said.

For example, Zhmendak said he recommends having short, hot fires rather than long, smoldering

fires. The hotter the fire, the longer it will take for creosote to build up. Creosote, a tar-like substance that coats the inner chimney over time due to smoke and fire, eventually will build up. Zhmendak said there is only one way to clean it out - have it done professionally. "I've seen pellets advertised that are supposed to eliminate any build up but they don't work," he said. "I think it's just somebody trying to make some money."

According to Plymouth-based Alpha and Omega Chimney Sweeps, the soot lining the chimney flue is saturated with creosote, which is highly flammable. Creosote easily catches fire and can be ignited by something as simple as a lit piece of newspaper.

In a matter of seconds the fire spreads up through the flue creating a draft that helps the fire burn. As the fire builds and the heat intensifies, the mortar between the brick melts and the red-hot mortar drops into the chimney but is shot out the top of the chimney by the strong draft created by the fire.

"People will know when their chimney catches on fire because it will sound like a locomotive in your house," Zhmendak said. Then the chimney will either collapse and/or the house will catch on fire from the fireballs or fallen chimney. The best thing to do if your chimney catches on fire is shut the damper and shut the glass doors or screen if possible, Zhmendak said.

A professionally cleaned and inspected chimney will not only prevent such fires from happening in the first place, but also will find any cracks in the chimney. Cracks can be escape routes for deadly carbon monoxide poisons or fire. Zhmendak said one of the worst fires he saw started by a fireplace was when the fire was trapped between the firebox and wall and spread up into the attic.

Rick Starling, chief building inspector in the city of Northville, said problems may exist not visible to the "naked eye."

"Visual inspection of the chimney passageway is very limited," he said. "We recommend that a

SAFETY TIPS

Fireplaces, furnaces, and space heaters are sources of comfort during cold winter months, but also could be the sources of tragedy.

Here are some tips on how to keep warm - and safe.

Furnace safety

- Have your furnace checked and cleaned regularly by a qualified repair person.
- Be sure all furnace automatic controls and emergency shutoffs are in good condition.
- Leave furnace work to the experts.

- Have a repair person check the wall and ceiling near the furnace and flue. If they are hot, additional insulation or clearance may be needed.

- Check to ensure the flue pipes are well supported, free of holes and clean.

- Make sure the chimney is solid with no cracks or loose bricks. All unused flue openings should be sealed with solid masonry.

- Keep trash and combustible storage away from the heating system.

Fireplace safety

- Have your chimney inspected annually for damage and obstructions.

- Clean the chimney regularly to avoid buildup, or creosote, that could ignite your roof.

- Be sure to use a screen in front of your fireplace large enough to catch rolling logs or sparks.

- Don't use flammable liquids to start the fire.

- Don't use excessive amounts of paper to build a fire. It's possible to ignite soot in the chimney by over-building the fire.

- Never burn charcoal in your fireplace. Burning charcoal gives off deadly amounts of carbon monoxide.

- Be sure no flammable materials hang down from or decorate your mantel. A spark could ignite them.

- Never close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace. A closed damper can help hot ashes build up heat, causing the fire to flare up and ignite the room.

- Store cool ashes in a tightly sealed metal container.

Electric space heaters

- The heater should be listed by UL (underwriter's laboratory). It should be equipped with a safety light, loud alarm, a switch that automatically shuts the heat off if it tips and a cut-off device in case of overheating.

- Space heaters must have space. Keep all objects, pets, and people at least three feet away from the heater at all times.

- Don't use space heaters in your bathrooms. Don't touch a space heater if you are wet.

- Never try to repair the heater yourself.

Source: American Red Cross

(Above) Alpha and Omega Chimney Sweeps employee Cindy Van de Sande stands atop a chimney in Plymouth.

(Left) Craig Wroblewski prepares to sweep the chimney of a Plymouth Township residence.

CHECK OUT THESE SITES

The Chimney Safety Institute of America and Chimneys.com have both put together Web sites explaining how chimneys and fireplaces work and when to clean them. Check out the sites at www.csa.org/ and www.chimneys.com. www.inspectorusa.com/html/links.html and www.runford.com/code/code.html have Websites that explain building codes and standards for national fireplace and chimney models for those of you building your own fireplaces.

Christmas

HomeTown Authors

By **Isabella Guida**
Christmas is the time of year. That you should be filled with joy and cheer, Oh the fun and celebration! Let it spread throughout the nation! Chanukah or Kwanzaa you may do. But you will have fun and celebrate, too. As the day dawns upon us, Being happy is a MUST. Put up the star, string the lights, Then wrap up for cold winter nights. The day has finally come! It's sure to be fun! It is time to give your gifts.



Isabella Guida

For all the clothes make sure it fits! We have waited for this day And it's sad, in a way, Because it won't come again for one more year, And that's a true statement I do fear!

Isabella Guida is a fifth grader at Moraine Elementary in Northville.

Want to be a HomeTown Author?

We're looking for kids ages 8-18 who want to become HomeTown Authors. Prospective authors need to follow these steps:

- 1.) Write. Your entry can be a story or an opinion or an article about what's going on in your classroom. You pick the topic; afterward, it's your work.
- 2.) Stories should be typed, if possible. If the story can't be typed, then it should be neatly printed on every other line of the paper.
- 3.) Stories should be between 300 and 500 words long (about one or two pages typed and three and five pages written by hand).
- 4.) Every piece submitted must have this form stapled to the front.
- 5.) We also need your photo to accompany your story. A school photo is perfect.
- 6.) We'd also like a parent or guardian to sign your form.
- 7.) Mail your story, signed form and photo to:

HomeTown Authors
c/o Kelli Cooley
104 W. Main St.
Northville, MI 48167

Author's name: _____ Age or Grade _____
Title of story: _____
Parent or guardian: _____
Parent or guardian signature: _____
Address (includes street, city and zip code): _____
Telephone number: _____
School: _____
Teacher: _____

Photos by
John Heider
Story by
Andrew Dietherich

Novi Highlights

Novi Camera Club
Novi Camera meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Novi Civic Center and is open to anyone interested in photography.

Novi Seniors

The Novi Senior Center is open to everyone age 50 and over. There is no membership fee or dues required. Many services and programs are provided without a fee.

On Campus

Jessica Doinidis of Northville, a senior at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor is attending her fall semester classes in Moscow, Russia.

is sponsored by Novi Parks and Recreation and was formed in 1988. They provide entertainment for clubs throughout the Novi area, such as the former Michigan '50s Festival and the Festival of Trees at Cobo Hall.

Weddings

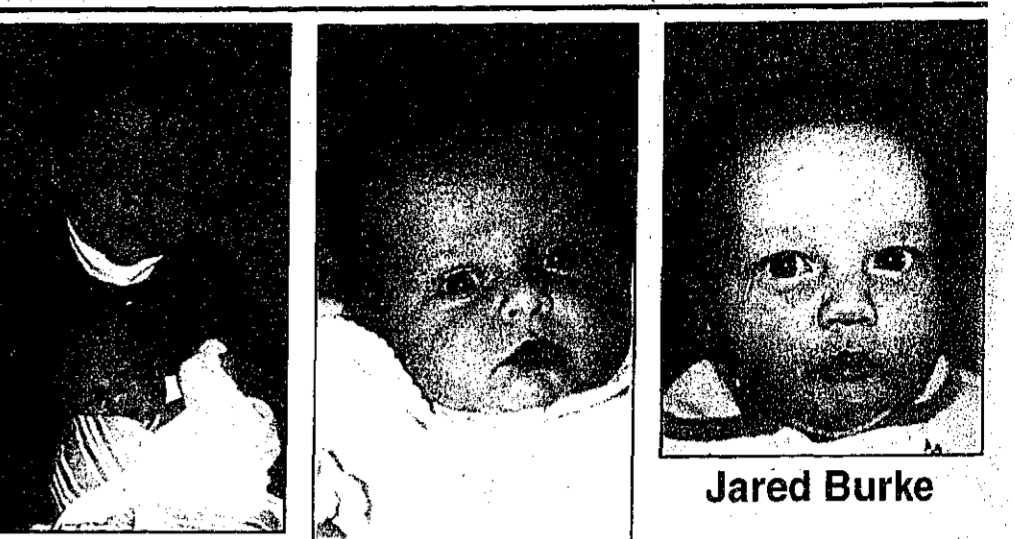


Megan Christine Gilberg and Richard Eric Lopez were united in marriage Oct. 21 at Holy Family Catholic Church in Novi. The bride was given in marriage by her parents.

Engagement

Daniel and Marilyn Wegienka of Northville announce the engagement of their son, Craig Allan, to Karly Lynn Kopinski, daughter of Barbara and Scott Stacey of Canton.

Births



Larry and Kristen Schlagheck of Northville announce the birth of their daughter, Emma Jane, born July 25 at 3:50 p.m. in Providence Hospital, Southfield.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Table with 2 columns listing various churches and their addresses, including Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, First Baptist Church, and St. James Roman Catholic Church.

Hunters' Trophy Case advertisement featuring an image of a deer's head in a trophy case and text about online photo processing.

Advertisement for HomeTown On-Line with the headline 'He's smiling because His first month online is free!' and details about internet access.

Advertisement for 'IT'S BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS' featuring photos of children and text about a special feature in the Livingston County Daily Press & Argus.

Advertisement for HomeTown Newspapers/Hunters featuring a photo of a child and text about a special offer for online photo processing.

Advertisement for HomeTown On-Line featuring a photo of a smiling family and text about internet access and online services.

Community Events

CHRISTMAS CANTATA

The Novi United Methodist Church, located on Ten Mile Road west of Meadowbrook Road, will be presenting its annual Christmas Cantata, "The Majesty of Christmas," written and arranged by David Clydesdale. This Cantata and pageant captures the beauty and power of some of our most beloved traditional carols, woven together with some inspiring original music. Christmas carols such as "O Holy Night," "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly," "What Child Is This," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and "Silent Night" are presented in such a way that they will be sure to brighten your Christmas spirit. Come and join the Chancel Choir, the Bell Choir, the children, the youth, and many church members as we celebrate the birth of our Lord on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary of the church.

ART VAN FURNITURE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Art Van Furniture store in Novi, 2775 Novi Road, is offering the following activities:

- Holiday Food Drive** - Now through Sunday, Dec. 17, residents are asked to help the hungry by bringing in non-perishable food items, boxed and canned meats, canned vegetables, canned fruits, powdered milk, canned soup, and boxed cereal. All donations will go to local food banks in the community of each store location. All Art Van stores are participating.
- Santa Claus Visits** - Santa Claus will be visiting Art Van's Kids Castle to greet children and pass out special treats at the Novi location Dec. 23, from 2-4 p.m. Parents are invited to bring

their cameras.

"First Home Together" Bridal Show
Art Van Furniture introduced a "First Home Together" Wedding Registry program in 1999. The program was introduced to assist couples with their new furniture purchases. It is a gift certificate-based program that offers friends and family members the opportunity to help couples receive the home furnishings they have selected by presenting them with a special gift certificate. For more information, visit their booth at the Novi Expo Center during the bridal show at noon, Jan. 13 and 14, 2001. For more information, please call Art Van Furniture at (248) 348-8922.

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

The youth of Faith Community Presbyterian Church, 44400 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi are presenting the Christmas musical, "Waiting for a Miracle," for one showing only, Sunday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. This musical/drama is a charming story about children who learn the true meaning of Christmas while getting ready for a Christmas pageant. All ages will enjoy and learn from the message given in this Christmas presentation. Refreshments will be served following the presentation. For more information, call the church office at (248) 349-5666.

HELP OUT POLICE OFFICERS
The Novi Police Officers Association is now conducting phone solicitations for their fund raising basketball game between Novi Police Officers and Detroit Lions players. The game will be played Feb. 22, 2001, at 7:30 p.m.

at the Novi High School gym. The association has hired Community Events to handle the solicitation.

If you wish to inquire about tickets and prices, please call 347-3430. If you have any problems, contact officer Diane MacGregor or Det. John Nelson.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Novi Chorales and the Talacoda Handbell Quartet will present "Tis the Season" Christmas concert at three different locations:

- Dec. 1, Farmington Methodist Church, 33112 Grand River at 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 2, Faith Presbyterian, 44400 W. Ten Mile Road at 7:30 p.m.
- Dec. 3, Holy Family Church, 24505 Meadowbrook, Novi at 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$7; \$6 for seniors and children under 13. They can be purchased at the door. Local Novi charities will share in the proceeds from this fund-raising event.

ART LECTURE SERIES

The Northville Arts Commission presents the 2000-2001 Art Lecture Series featuring Michael Farrell; all lectures will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Hillside Middle School Forum, formerly Northville High School.

- Dec. 7, St. Petersburg; Jan. 18, 2001, Paris of the 1900s; Feb. 15, Vienna of the 1900s; March 13, Barcelona; Raphael, April 5, and Bruegel, May 24.

For more information, please call the Northville Arts Commission at (248) 449-9945, ext. 9950.

PLYMOUTH COMMUNITY

Target and local banks. Fridays: Farmer Jack/Hiller's or Shopping Center Market/Busch's (alternating Fridays.) Bus begins pickup at 9:30 a.m. from your home. Cost is \$2. Call the Senior Center for reservations 24 hours in advance.

• Bus Service for Movies, Lunch and Shopping at the Mall Twice a Month
The senior bus goes to AMC 20 and Laurel Park Mall for an afternoon (noon to 4 p.m.) of movies. Fridays: Farmer Jack/Hiller's or Shopping Center Market/Busch's (alternating Fridays.) Bus begins pickup at 9:30 a.m. from your home. Cost is \$2. Call the Senior Center for reservations 24 hours in advance.

• Jan. 26-Feb. 5, Fort Myers Beach. Cost is \$999 per person, double occupancy.

• Jan. 15-25, Marco Island. Cost is \$969 per person, double occupancy.

• Jan. 30, Greentown Casino. Cost: \$16 for residents.

• March 18-23, Spring Training with "The Tigers." Cost is \$929 per person, double occupancy.

CHORUS ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

The Plymouth Community Chorus is raising funds by selling the Entertainment Ultimate Book. Each book contains hundreds of two-for-one and 50 percent discounts on dining, travel, shopping, movies, special events, sports, and more. The books are just \$40, with a portion of the proceeds going to help fund its charitable and educational activities.

To order, contact Stan Kovachek at (734) 459-6829. Books are available through Jan. 5, 2001 and can be delivered to your home.

HONOR A LOVED ONE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Arbor Hospice is offering members of the community a unique opportunity to honor or remember a loved one this holiday season through the "Tree of Remembrance" program. By supporting the program, you receive a hand-crafted heart-shaped ornament and help Arbor Hospice ensure that no person in our community faces the end of life alone.

For more information about the "Tree of Remembrance" program, call Arbor Hospice at (734) 662-5599 or visit their Website at www.arborhospice.org.

NORTHVILLE CHOIR TO PERFORM AT ART VAN

Guests are invited to visit Novi's Art Van Furniture store to enjoy holiday caroling performed by the Northville High School choir on Sunday, Dec. 10, from 1-3 p.m. For information, call the Novi location at (248) 348-8922.

MARQUIS ACTORS TO PERFORM PINOCCHIO

There will be a Snowman Sing-

a-Long on Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 4:15 p.m. at the Great Harvest Bread Co. 136 E. Main, Northville. For more information, call (248) 349-9934.

Also, a Snowman Sing-a-Long will be held Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 1 p.m. at Baby Baby Resale, 153 E. Main, Northville. Tickets to all performances are \$7.50.

For special school dates and times, birthdays, group rates and reservations, call the Marquis Theater at (248) 949-8110. Please, no children under the age of 3.

ROCKY'S OF NORTHVILLE TO OFFER ENTERTAINMENT

Larry Nozoro, renowned as one of the finest mainstream jazz alto saxophonists, along with the musicianship of pianist Terry Louw, bassist Ray Tini, and drummer Jim Ryan will be performing at Rocky's of Northville the following Fridays and Saturdays from 8:30 p.m. until 12:30 a.m.:

Fridays, Dec. 15, 22, and 29, Saturdays, Dec. 16, 23, and 30.

Larry Nozoro has performed, toured and recorded with many of the major names in jazz and pop music, including Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Sergio Mendez, Stan Kenton, and Henry Mancini. He has recorded several albums, including "Sphere," "Time Island," "Fever," "Grand Hotel," "Kaleidoscope," "Street of Dreams," and "Warm."

Nozoro received special recognition for his outstanding quality and entertaining musical performances when he was inducted into the Legends of Jazz International Hall of Fame. He has also received the "Spirit of Detroit Award" in recognition of exceptional achievements, outstanding leadership, and dedication to improving the quality of life.

The remaining dates of "Pinocchio" at Northville's Marquis Theater are: Saturdays, Dec. 9, 16, 23, 30, Jan. 6 and 13 at 2:30 p.m.; Sundays, Dec. 10, 17, 31, Jan. 7 and 14 at 2:30 p.m.; and Tuesday through Friday, Dec. 26, 27, 28 and 29, also at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets to all performances are \$7.50.

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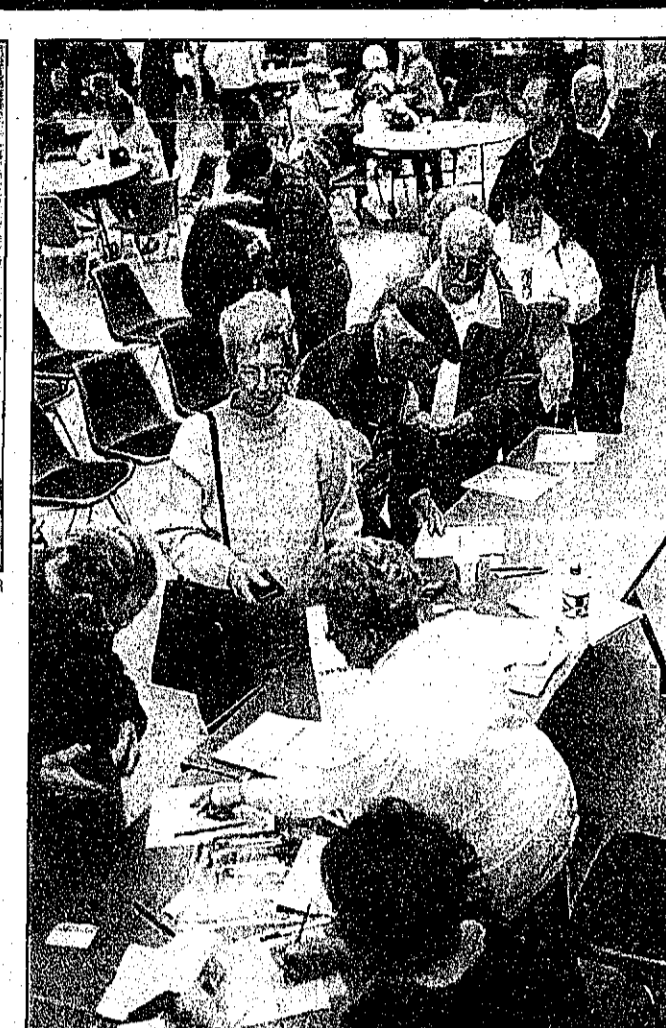
COMMUNITY FOCUS

Page 54A

Thursday, December 7, 2000



Registered Nurse Diana Hohnacki with the Oakland County Health Department dispenses a flu vaccination to Lee Majors last week at the Novi Civic Center.



Area residents line up to register for flu shots last week at the Novi Civic Center. There were hundreds of area residents in line before the vaccinations started. In the first hour it was estimated that more than 650 shots were given.

Hit me with your best shot

Flu vaccine arrives as citizens take numbers to receive shot

By STEPHANIE FORDYCE Staff Writer

Novi City Hall experienced a flood of seniors at last Wednesday's influenza (flu) shot vaccinations with 777 participants compared to last year's 317.

More than doubling, it seems the rumor that there would be a shortage of the vaccine, I think a lot of seniors were afraid they wouldn't be able to get the shot," said Julie Nickels of the Novi Parks & Recreation Department.

Nickels said seniors were lined up at the door before city hall even opened.

While the Oakland County Health Division did experience a delay in providing the vaccine to the public, the Center for Disease Control have indicated that flu shot supplies were distributed in similar quantities as last year.

Rosemarie Rowney, Manager/Health Officer of the Oakland County Health Division said there was only a delay, not a

shortage.

"Because of the glitch producing the vaccine, I think a lot of seniors were afraid they wouldn't be able to get the shot," said Julie Nickels of the Novi Parks & Recreation Department.

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Just me and my Dad



Paul Lewis went hunting up north and took his son, Cameron, with him this year. On opening day, Paul shot a 13 point buck. Cameron was proud of his dad who was told at a checkpoint it was the largest buck so far in the lower peninsula.

Snow Angel



This photo taken by Kristen Chu of Novi of Emma Chu was one of the final pictures chosen in the second Great Lakes Crossing Grin and Win photo contest. The photo is displayed in the crossing food court.

Northville Seniors

The staff at the Northville Senior Center at 215 W. Cady Street coordinates the following services and activities for seniors age 50 and older. For more information or to register for an activity, call (248) 349-4140.

SERVICES

• Senior Services Directory
The Northville Senior Center has created a directory of services available to senior citizens. The directory includes information on support programs.

health and medical services, available housing, organizations providing financial assistance and much more. Please stop by the Senior Center to pick up your free copy today. (Funding for this directory was provided by the Oakland County Community Development Block Grant Program.)

TRANSPORTATION

• Bus Service for Local Shopping Trips
The senior bus goes to AMC 20 and Laurel Park Mall for an afternoon (noon to 4 p.m.) of movies. Fridays: Farmer Jack/Hiller's or Shopping Center Market/Busch's (alternating Fridays.) Bus begins pickup at 9:30 a.m. from your home. Cost is \$2. Call the Senior Center for reservations 24 hours in advance.

• Bus Service for Movies, Lunch and Shopping at the Mall Twice a Month

The senior bus goes to AMC 20 and Laurel Park Mall for an afternoon (noon to 4 p.m.) of movies. Fridays: Farmer Jack/Hiller's or Shopping Center Market/Busch's (alternating Fridays.) Bus begins pickup at 9:30 a.m. from your home. Cost is \$2. Call the Senior Center for reservations 24 hours in advance.

• Jan. 26-Feb. 5, Fort Myers Beach.

Cost is \$999 per person, double occupancy.

• Jan. 15-25, Marco Island.

Cost is \$969 per person, double occupancy.

• Jan. 30, Greentown Casino.

Cost: \$16 for residents.

• March 18-23, Spring Training with "The Tigers."

Cost is \$929 per person, double occupancy.

HOLIDAY RAFFLE

Ticket sales will fund educational enrichment programs

Thanks to the following Huron Valley School District merchants for generously donating gift certificates for our Holiday Raffle. The raffle winners will be drawn and announced December 17th at Milford High School's Performing Arts Center during the Rita Coolidge performance. The Irish Rover concert is scheduled for February 28th at the MHS Performing Arts Center. Any questions regarding the raffle should be directed to the Huron Valley Educational Foundation telephone (248) 685-0143.

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Dinner Package
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- 3rd Prize**
Gift Certificate
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MOVIES

Karl Kling, Editor 248-685-1507

Thursday, December 7, 2000

Been there, done that

The Family Man takes a regrettable trip to an all too familiar destination

By David M. Aguilar
STAFF WRITER

No need to send a hand-written reminder about what you really want for Christmas.

Santa already knows. He knows full-well that your ultimate wish is to have a cinematic holiday lullaby delivered beneath your meticulously adorned Christmas tree. And while such a treat is certainly not beyond the bounds of Santa's annual Yuletide splendor, it is nonetheless, like so many gifts of childhood fantasy, one whose box proves more inspiring than the ill-chosen gift which lay inside.

Case in point: *The Family Man*, this season's holiday heartstrings dramedy starring Nicolas Cage and Tea Leoni.

In what can only be described as yet another recorded case of cinematic cloning, *The Family Man* endeavors to cross-pollinate itself with every possible movie suitor that fancies a quick romp in the cinematic hay. What results is more BrundleFly than timeless classic, more seasonal fruitcake than well-chosen diamond.

Certainly more thud than stud.

The Family Man is a decent

enough little movie, a small dog on a short leash, aspiring never to become more than what its limited script and contrived vignettes allow it to be. It is unquestionably the child of many fathers, the contrived notion that has been sired by no less than *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Groundhog Day*, *Sliding Doors* and *Me, Myself and I*.

What makes this movie most sad, however, is not the tale of womanizing Jack Campbell, an empty-souled, though supposedly endearing enough Wall Street merger monger who after a brush with a Christmas angel carrying a .38 caliber snubnose handgun and a sudden shower of magic snow, is transformed — perhaps again by magic? — into his alter ego, the him that decades prior he could have become had he only chosen a path inclusive of his college sweetheart.

No, what makes this movie most sad are the many cliched missteps along a misshapen storyline.

Must we labor the painfully monotone, albeit dulcet song stylings of an ill-equipped Cage who proceeds with what can only be described to police as an operatic driveby shooting of

Le Donne Mobile (Women are Fickle)? Are we bettered by the glimmering, albeit slush-covered glimpses of a silver-overlaid Ferrari speeding recklessly through New York City streets?

Truly, Hollywood relishes its eye candy. And yet there is Jack Campbell, gritting his teeth with each passing day, begrudgingly entrenched within his suddenly mundane domesticated existence. Each day he wishes, to the point of nuisance, that his suddenly transformed life is nothing more than the shadow of a bad dream.

The audience is left with similar inclinations.

Pity Tea Leoni. She does her level best to portray Cage's wife, Kate Campbell, a non-profit lawyer who is the antithesis of the call-girl-esque sexual conquests that Jack Campbell is accustomed to adding to his diversified portfolio. Kate Campbell, to Leoni's credit, is the lone pillar capable of standing on her own. She is concrete and tangible, but her depth is unfortunately wasted when set beside the hollow shell of all that surrounds her.

Nothing unfortunately can salvage the carelessly-written scripting adventures that stumble clumsily through a cliched sketch of modern suburbia. And nothing proves more insulting than Jack Campbell's insistent condescension for those who dare work ordinary jobs.

This proves to be the script's — and the movie's — ultimate failing.

The Family Man never truly evolves, neither as a movie nor as an idea.

It is perpetually lost to the notion that a true Family Man, regardless of his wealth or social station, makes choices big and small every day, choices that ultimately determine the course of those who depend most on his labor and his love. Rarely, as is the case in this embarrassing hybrid of a movie, are choices so clear cut, so Ferrari vs. mini van, so penthouse vs. two-story colonial.

Sadly, not even the reddest bow in Santa's workshop can hide from public view *The Family Man*'s true identity. Nor can its well-meaning intentions save it from a predictable unveiling as a holiday feel-good

elixir that, like most holiday drinking, should either be done to the point of forgetfulness — or not at all.

Friends don't let friends pay to see *The Family Man*.

Perhaps the most telling excerpt comes early in the movie, a piece of sage advice given to Cage by his then Wall Street boss: "Old flames are like old tax returns. Put them in the file cabinet for three years, and then cut them loose."

Good advice that applies to holiday-frenzied movie-goers who, desperate to see anything that tugs on a heartstring, will pay far too much for a movie that provides far too little.

David Aguilar is a reporter for the *Milford Times*. He can be reached at (248) 685-1507 or by e-mail at daguilar@homecomm.net.

READER MOVIE REVIEWS

"A TOP-DRAWER ADVENTURE THRILLER!"
Jeffrey Lyons, WNBC-TV

"A POWERHOUSE. One of those rare films where you don't want the ride to end." Mike Sargent, WBAI/FM RADIO

"Crowe makes for a SHARP-EDGED, complex hero." Leah Rosen, PEOPLE

"Russell Crowe is DYNAMITE! Awesome action, gripping drama, edge-of-your-seat suspense!" Steve Iannino, LAUNCH

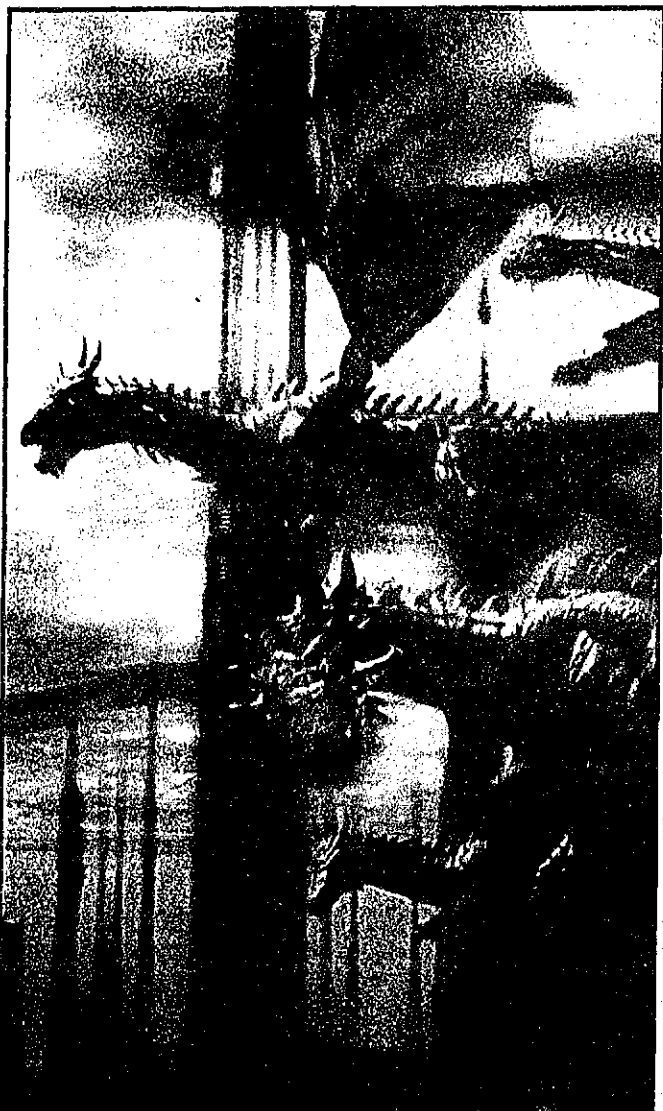
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