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Thursday, February 6, 2003

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INSIDE



It's a Big challenge

By 2010 Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America wants to expand to reach 1 million children with its mentoring programs. In Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties that means taking an organization that serves the needs of 1,000 children and growing it one that serves 15,000.

"I love a challenge," said Raquel Villarruel, who recently took over as president and chief executive Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit.

— Page 4A



New faces in the chamber

Lou Martin, the Novi Chamber of Commerce's new chairman, presented his vision for the organization at a recent luncheon.

The Novi News serves up a Profile of the chamber's newest board of directors.

— Page 5A

SPORTS

Tops in the conference

Swab the deck with those Pirates, mate!

The Novi Wildcats basketball team did just that as they put on a defensive clinic on the expense of the Pinckney Pirates January 31, routing the top-ranked squad 55-26 on their way to securing first place in the Kensington Valley Conference.

— Page 1B

INDEX

- Business7A
- Classifieds3D
- Engagement10A
- Entertainment4B
- In the Service10A
- Novi City Briefs9A
- Obituary10A
- Opinion / Letters .14 / 15A
- Police Report2A
- Regional Marketplace .17A
- Schools11A
- Sports1B

Kratz mourned by many

By Ramez Khuri
 STAFF WRITER



Jerry Kratz

A very important part of the Novi Community School District's history was lost when Dr. Jerry Kratz passed away Jan. 28. Kratz was the district's superintendent from July 1972 through June 1980. According to Executive Director of Human Resources Bob Schram, Kratz is responsible for putting the school district on the map in terms of high academic standards and

quality. "He did a wonderful job," Schram said. "I knew him during that time because I moved into the community in 1976. In 1973 my wife and I moved into Farmington because the perception was that Novi didn't have very good schools. In 1976 we

moved into Novi because the perception was that Novi had very good schools. "Jerry Kratz played an important role in taking a sleepy community school district and making it into a very good school district," Schram added. "I got elected to the school board in 1978. I was on the school board for about two years and it only got stronger in that time."

Kratz came aboard at a critical time - when the city of Novi was emerging. "He was a very strong

leader," Schram said. "He was responsible for hiring Dr. Rita Traynor and he hired Bill Barr, who used to be our assistant superintendent. It was a critical time which required critical, strong people to take charge - and he did. He surrounded himself with those kinds of people."

Kratz worked for Southfield Public Schools before coming to Novi. From Novi, he went on to the Jackson County Intermediate

continued on page 16

Detour ahead

■ Signage for maneuvering around Grand River during construction announced

By Victoria Sadlocha
 STAFF WRITER

With the closing of the Grand River Avenue bridge throughfare comes questions from residents asking how they will navigate through the highly traveled city roadways.

The \$6.1 million City of Novi and Road Commission for Oakland County project will close both ends of the bridge over the CSX railroad tracks for most of the year preventing the avenue from being a transportation route from Novi to Beck Road.

The city-approved, signed detour route recommends area travelers utilize 12 Mile Road from Novi to Beck Road as an alternate route.

An unsigned route suggested by the city utilizes Meadowbrook Avenue to 10 Mile Road to Beck Road.

City officials acknowledge the detour routes may not be ideal, but are the best options available.

City of Novi Community Relations Manager Sheryl Walsh said the main reason the signed 12 Mile Road detour route is suggested is because of weight restrictions on surrounding roadways.

For example, Beck Road south to 10 Mile is weight restricted for commercial trucks. Walsh said of course residential vehicles may choose whatever alternate route they chose, but trucks must use the signed 12 Mile Road detour route.

"Traffic is undoubtedly one of the primary concerns of our community," said Douglas Shaeffer, City of Novi Police

continued on page 3

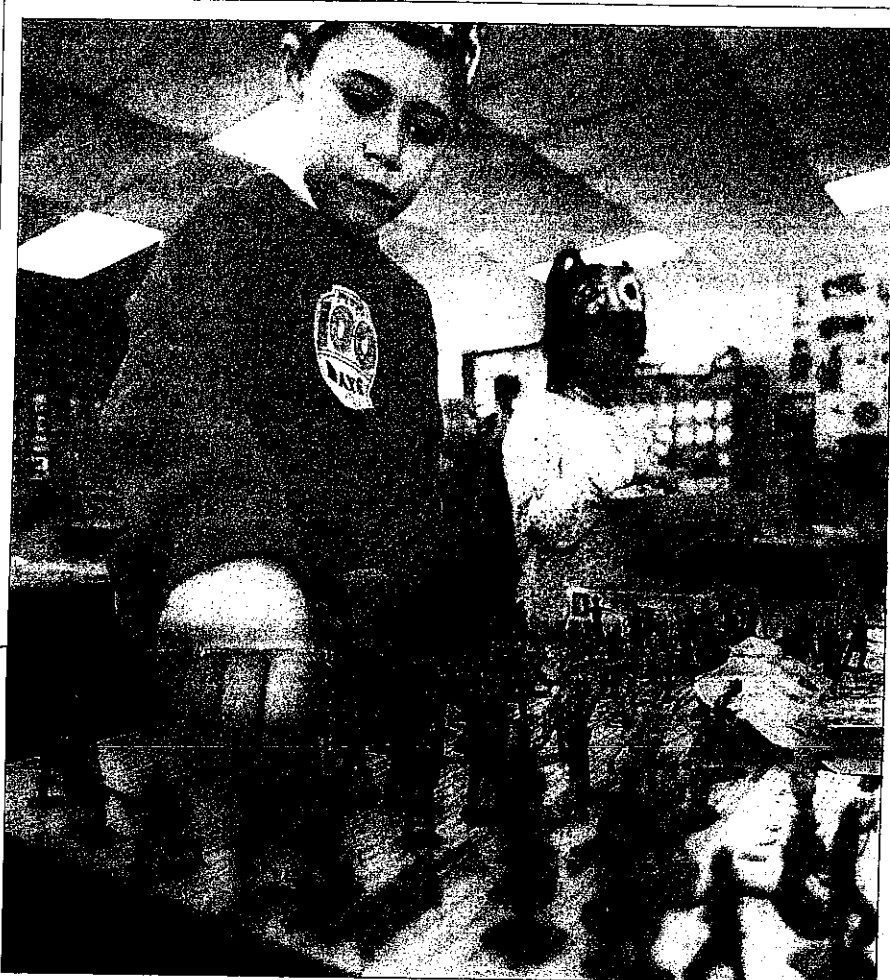


Photo by John Heider

A force of 100

Orchard Hills student Ian Techlenburg counts his 100 plastic soldiers on the school's 100 Days-day. Students were encouraged to bring in 100 of their favorite objects. For more photos and the story, please go to page 11.

Second quarter shows city's progress

By Victoria Sadlocha
 STAFF WRITER

The status of many major city projects is one of the highlights of Novi's second quarter performance report.

The fiscal year 2002-2003 summary offers a snapshot of the city as of Dec. 31, 2002. Novi's second quarter end date, including a progress report of major reports primarily for members of the city council.

"It is a nice overview for the city council to take a look and see the status of issues that may interest them," said Sheryl Walsh, City of Novi Community Relations Manager. "That is how the report really came about, but it is also in keeping with open communication."

Walsh said the quarterly document is available for community members via the city's Website and is also available in hard copy form at city hall.

Movement by category in many of the city's projects during the second quarter include:

Sandstone Litigation Settlement

According to documents issued by the city, during the second quarter significant progress was made increasing sanitary sewer capacity along 12 Mile Road. The target completion date for the increase is the city's fourth quarter. Progress also continues with remediating transferred acreage

of North Novi Park and removal of soil contaminated by arsenic. As of Dec. 13, 2002, four rounds of excavation and sampling were completed. Officials said about 70,000 cubic yards of soils were removed from the property along with debris and old buildings. Since the middle of December, the fifth, sixth and seventh rounds of excavation have been completed. Clearing deed restrictions continues on as the city's challenge with the settlement agreement.

Public Safety

City officials confirmed laptops in the city's police department patrol vehicles were replaced and significant progress was made toward providing security fencing

for the grounds of Novi's Public Works garage. The Novi Police Department is also on track with hiring three new police officers.

Jeremy Stempin was introduced to the community last month and two more officers will be introduced shortly. The Novi Police Department has also made substantial progress with enhancing the city's emergency preparedness. Officials said a "mock disaster" was conducted on Nov. 19, 2002 at the Novi

Civic Center. The scenario was the Novi Civic Center was heavily damaged by a tornado and would not be operational for six months. The exercise was a surprise to the majority of those

continued on page 2

War clouds concern family

By Phil Foley
 STAFF WRITER

More than most, Al Schmitz, a retired General Motors Corp engineer from Novi, has a clear idea of what may be going through the minds of men on both sides of the border between Kuwait and Iraq.

As a 16-year-old boy, Schmitz faced the onslaught of the U.S. Army as a member of a German defense force made of the very young and the very old, during his father's native country's last gasp in World War II. "I was hit by

American shrapnel right here," he said pointing to his upper lip just below his nose.

Last month Schmitz' son-in-law, Sean Byrne, was promoted to brigadier general at the U.S. Army Personnel Command in Alexandria, Va., and he now awaits an uncertain future in the deserts of Kuwait.

Ever since Byrne shipped out for Kuwait last month, Schmitz and his wife Julie have called their daughter Christine at the Byrne's home in Springfield, Va., at least three times a day. "There's

been a little bit of crying. It's hard," said Schmitz.

But it's not the first time Byrne has been in harm's way during his three decade career in the army. As a young lieutenant was stationed at Fulda, Germany, where NATO commanders believed Soviet armor would strike first if the Cold War ever went hot. Later as a colonel, he served in the Eighth Army's personnel command in South Korea.

In between he served as a mili-

continued on page 4



Photo by John Heider

Novi resident Al Schmitz's son-in-law is Sean Byrne, a Brigadier General in the U.S. Army, and may be involved in the military action against Iraq



Police Report

Suspect spin out

A Farmington Hills man ended up with more than just your average spin-out accident after Novi police smelled alcohol on his breath. The officer was exiting Interstate 96 onto the northbound M-5 entrance ramp on Feb. 1 at about 2 a.m. when he noticed a blue BMW spin out about 25 feet into the field to the west of the road. The officer approached the 28-year-old driver and questioned him on the accident. As the driver explained the slid off the road because of the snow, the officer smelled intoxicants on his breath. He also noticed his speech was

slurred. After being questioned by police, the man admitted he had just left 5th Avenue Billiards where he started drinking at about 7 p.m. After asking the driver to count from 91 to 69, the man counted 91, 99, 89, 87, 86 and down to 69. The man blew a .11 and was arrested.

Cut off kid

Last week, a Livonia resident learned cutting off a police officer may not be such a good idea. The 23-year-old man was leaving the parking lot of JW's Sport's Club on Feb. 1 at about midnight when he pulled directly in front of an oncoming patrol car, causing the officer to slam on his breaks to avoid a collision. As the officer followed the Ford Ranger, he noticed it traveling on the roadway's double yellow

lines so he initiated a traffic stop. The driver said he had two beers at JW's since 10 p.m. and he was drinking in Walled Lake before going to the Novi bar. According to the report, the Livonia man apologized for cutting the officer off and while doing so, the officer smelled a strong odor of intoxicants. After falling field sobriety tasks, the man blew a .11 and was arrested.

Pretty bad speller

A Novi resident called the Novi Police Department late last week to report a bad speller vandalized her car with lipstick. A police officer responded to the call in the city's Beachwalk Apartments near 14 Mile and Novi roads on Feb. 2 to meet with the 23-year-old complainant. The woman told police

some time between 8 p.m. Feb. 1 and 11 a.m. Feb. 2, an unknown person(s) wrote "Park somewhere else aSS" with red lipstick on the driver side window while her car was parked in a legal spot in the complex. According to the report, the woman told police the vandal responsible doesn't even know how to spell "else." The woman told police she had already wiped the lipstick off and no damage to the vehicle was found by police. The woman said the complex does not

have assigned parking and she filed a report with building management. **More Beachwalk**
Days before the bad speller wrote on a resident's vehicle in the city's Beachwalk Apartments, another resident allegedly had his truck stolen from the very same place. Sometime between Jan. 28 at 10 p.m. and Jan. 29 at 3 a.m., a 40-year-old Novi male told police someone had taken his truck. The man said he parked his

1990 Silverado extended-cab pickup truck outside of his building at 10 p.m. According to the report, the man said his brother came home at about 5 a.m. and parked in the same spot, "thus his truck was gone." The red truck was locked, the vehicle was paid for and was not impounded or towed by apartment complex management. The resident also had possession of his keys. The truck was valued between \$2,000 and \$3,000, and police found no evidence at the scene.

Detour ahead

Signage for maneuvering around Grand River during construction announced

continued from front page

Chief. "We have the opportunity to make a significant improvement in our community. It is wise to take advantage of it."

Shaeffer said all of the Grand River Avenue improvements will result in a safer and vastly improved traffic flow. "It will cause some inconveniences, but everyone I know of associated with the project are doing their best and have pledged to overcome as many problems as possible to minimize the disruptions," Shaeffer said. "The Police Department will be on site and throughout the area to help motorists, residents, businesses, and contractors to make these projects happen as smoothly as possible."

Waltz said the city anticipates the bridge will come down by the end of the month.

Right now city officials are waiting for the final approval before the excavating company hired by the city for the project and CSX Railroad.

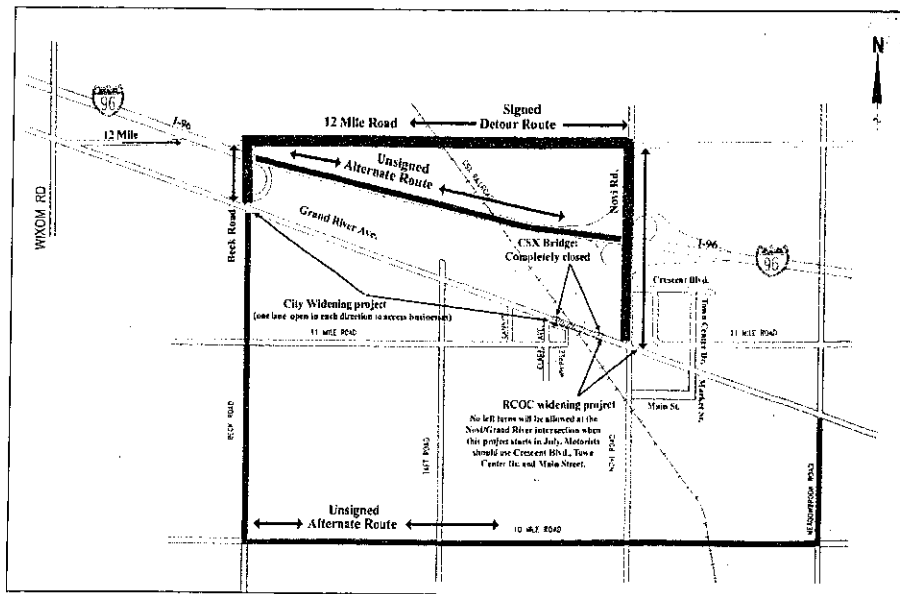
A new, wider bridge with sidewalks on both sides will be the end result, officials said.

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- Cindy Uglov, Neighborhood Services Coordinator
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- Sheryl Waltz, Community Relations Manager
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swaltz@ci.novi.mi.us

Further, the city will widen Grand River Avenue to five lanes and build sidewalks from Beck



Road to the bridge and from the bridge to Novi Road.

Widening the avenue from Beck Road to the bridge is tentatively scheduled to begin in March and end in November.

City officials said there will be temporary lane closures, including west of Beck Road, but one lane in each direction will remain open at all project times.

The widening project from the bridge to Novi Road is anticipated to commence in July and last five months.

Officials said Grand River Avenue at the east side of the Novi Road intersection will be temporarily closed.

Bypass routes for the Novi Road and Grand River Avenue intersection will be the Town

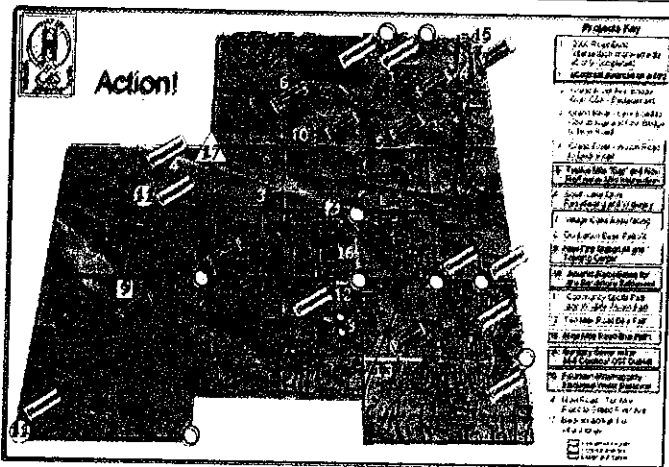
Center and Main Street.

At least one lane in each direction of Grand River Avenue between Novi Road and the bridge will remain open at all times, officials said.

Accesses to all businesses along Grand River Avenue between Beck and Novi roads will remain open during the bridge reconstruction project.

Businesses west of the bridge will be accessible from Beck Road, and businesses east of the bridge will be accessible from Novi Road.

Victoria Sadlocha is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105 or at vsadlocha@ht.homecom.net.



Second quarter shows city's progress

continued from front page

involved and it tested every aspect of the city's departments from rescue to record keeping.

Roads

Novi has accomplished many scheduled road projects including the 10 Mile bike path, the 2002 Neighborhood street repaving program, the widening of Grand River Avenue from the city limits east to Beck Road and improvements to the 10 Mile and Meadowbrook roads intersection. According to documents provided by the City of Novi, significant progress to additional projects was also made during the second quarter. Projects moving forward significantly during the second quarter include improvements to the intersection to the 10 Mile and Beck roads intersection, the construction of the Nine Mile Road bike path and the removal and replacement of the Grand River Avenue Bridge over the CSX railroad tracks. Novi road projects completed during the second quarter included widening and signal upgrade to the 10 Mile and Cranbrook roads intersection, Novi's maintenance/joint and crack sealing program and road and bike path repairs including asphalt overlays.

City Services

During Novi's second quarter, two civil engineers were hired to assist the city in its ongoing goal of autonomy. Benjamin Croy, PE was hired in November for the plan

review position in the engineering division and Brian Coburn - PE shifted to the roads and utilities position. Novi's engineering division is now fully staffed to the authorized level. Significant progress was also made controlling legal bills, controlling overtime incurred by city employees, constructing the M-5 Sanitary Sewer Extension for the city's OST district and with soliciting requests for proposals for engineering, environmental and architectural services.

Parks, Recreation & Forestry

Officials said during Novi's second quarter significant progress was made enhancing the city's Community Sports Park, Lakeshore Park's playground including the removal of the tennis and basketball courts and the Power Park playground. The department was allocated \$280,000 from the city's general fund and \$55,000 from Community Development Block Grant funds for park improvements in the current fiscal year budget. Significant progress was also made with the department's strategic master plan and the enhancement of community events. An example was the revamping of December's holiday festival. Completed during the second quarter was the Wildlife Woods' restroom, shelter and pathway capital project and the finalized recreation-facilities agreement with the Novi School District. Second-quarter work in

progress included park tree removals. Several dead and dying trees were removed at Lakeshore and Community Sports parks, Walled Lake and 13 Mile and the Ella Mae Power Park. Officials said the tree-removal program was initiated to reduce a number of the potential hazards in Novi's park system.

Environment

According to documents provided by the city, significant progress was made during the second quarter with Novi's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Initiative. The initiative was developed and approved by the MDQ. Officials said components of the initiative are currently being implemented on an ongoing basis. Work also continued with the city's Storm Water Management Ordinance. The ordinance is being reviewed by the city's engineering and environmental services staffs to evaluate its implementation.

Growth Management and Development

The city's open-space zoning test amendment was completed during the second quarter and significant progress was made to the city's office, service and technology area development, officials said.

Victoria Sadlocha is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105 or at vsadlocha@ht.homecom.net.



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RENTON Hines Park 40001 Ann Arbor Rd. at 225 (734) 453-2424 hinespark.com	ROCHESTER HILLS Crisman 1185 South Rochester Rd. between Pontiac & Ann Arbor (248) 652-4200 crisman.com	ROSELAND Bob Maxey 29000 Grand at 12 Mile Rd. (586) 552-4000 bobmaxey.com	SOUTHFIELD Stu 24350 West 12 Mile Rd. at Michigan (248) 334-4900 stuf.com	SOUTHGATE Southgate 16800 Fort Street at Michigan (734) 255-8800 southgatelincoln.com	STERLING HEIGHTS Crest 36200 Van Dyke at I-75 (586) 939-6000 crestlincoln.com	TROY Bob Borsini 1930 West Maple at West Maple (248) 642-6600 borsini.com	YPSILANTI Best 930 East Michigan at West of 275 (734) 492-7133 best.com

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Villarruel takes the helm for the Bigs

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

It's a goal so daunting that it would send many manufacturing and sales executives running for an industrial-size barrel of Miltex.

By 2010 Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America wants to expand to reach 1 million children with its mentoring programs. In Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties that means taking an organization that serves the needs of 1,000 children and growing it one that serves 15,000.

"I love a challenge," said Raquel Villarruel, who recently took over as president and chief executive of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit.



President of Metro Detroit Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Novis resident Raquel Villarruel meets in her Southfield office with Development Director David Lingholm.

Villarruel, who has lived in Novi since 1995, takes over an organization with an annual budget of more than \$1.4 million, a staff of 20 and more than 1,000 volunteers. The agency, which was formed in 1974 by the merger of five smaller groups, is the state's largest and the 12 largest of the nation's more than 500 Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

To reach her goal of matching 15,000 at-risk children, or "Littles" as the groups call them, with men-

War clouds concern family

continued from front page

itary aide to first Vice President and then President George Bush. "They kept him there four years," bragged Schmitz. "He was the longest serving military aide at the White House. He's one of a kind."

During his years at the White House, one of Byrne's duties was to carry "the football," the briefcase that contains the president's nuclear launch codes.

Schmitz is clearly proud of his son-in-law. He has stacks of photographs of him with the older Bushs and shaking hands with world leaders like the Pope. Schmitz notes that while at the War College, Byrne wrote a 14-page essay on urban warfare that's now required reading for all army officers.

He noted that Byrne has made all of his promotions a year ahead of schedule. "He's a fast-tracker," heamed Schmitz. After graduating from the ROTC program at the University of Detroit with a Bachelor of Science in Administrative Personnel Management, Byrne started his career as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne. "He was the only one in 60 to get a regular commission," recalled Schmitz.

During most of his military career, Byrne has been responsible for personnel issues. Now at 51, with two grown children, he could find himself up close and personal. If the shooting starts in the Middle East, "What you gonna do," asked Schmitz. "That's their job. He's a good son-in-law. He's a good husband." Schmitz said he is his son-in-law's "number one fan."

He noted, "It takes a special kind of person to be willing to give their life for our freedoms."

However, he added, "I try not to think about that a lot." Still, he admits to devouring everything from the latest issue of Army Times to newscasts on the most recently developments in Iraq. Schmitz, who once helped design experimental cars for GM, "I get nothing but time. I'm very interested."

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

PROFILE: Novi Chamber of Commerce takes aim at the future

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Instead of a fancy banquet, the Novi Chamber of Commerce kicked off the year with a modest lunch.

"We've always had an installation dinner," said incoming Chamber Chairman Lou Martin, "but I want to focus on service to members. We have to ask, 'If it does not serve the members, why are we doing it?'"

Martin pledged to create more events like the recent Novi/Livonia/Canton Chamber of Commerce Mixer to give chamber members more opportunities to create business contacts.

"This is a response to what our members have been telling us they want," he said. Networking opportunities are very impor-

tant, Martin said. "Who knows what kinds of opportunities are going to open up going into these things?"

Pointing to people like new board member Art Johnson, who "have all their risk and investment in Novi," Martin said the chamber needs to work harder to create more opportunity for its members.

He noted board member Peggy Hayes has taken charge of the chamber's marketing committee and revising the chamber's Web site with an aim toward "putting a face on the Novi Chamber."

Martin gave Chamber President Nora Champion a pat on the back. "Nora is a Champion at getting new members to sign up. She is amazing at getting people to say 'yes.'"

"I want our number one focus to be service to members this year," he declared. "We are volunteers. We are here for service."

He praised Board Member Jim Koster's service. "We finally know where we are financially and we know where we're going."

One of the places the chamber will be going is to a new home. Martin announced the formation of a building fund committee during the lunch meeting at Maisano's Jan. 21, but later renamed the committee the building location committee, saying he didn't want it to seem the chamber is committing to one option.

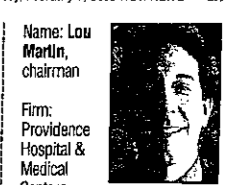
"Just about anything could happen," he said. "With the [Novi] Expo Center moving into its new home, we need to be thinking."

Another major challenge for the chamber this year, said Martin, will be revising the group's bylaws.

By-laws committee Chairman Frank Hickey acknowledged the size of the challenge by joking, "golf season is only 60 days away." He also promised to bring the chamber members a set of by-laws that are inclusive, guarantee that power is shared equally and that provides for checks and balances between the chamber's leadership and its members.

He quoted the late Robert F. Kennedy saying, "Some men see things as they are and say why? I dream things that never were and say 'Why not?'"

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



Name: Lou Martin, chairman
Firm: Providence Hospital & Medical Centers
How long with firm: Three years
How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: I have worked with the chamber since 1995, and became a member of the board of directors in 2000.
Previous chamber positions: Current marketing committee member. Also, since 1995 I have worked on a wide array of projects and issues with the chamber.

GETTING INVOLVED

To volunteer for a Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, call (248) 569-0600 weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit

- Oakland/Macomb Office
23077 Greenfield, Suite 455
Southfield, MI 48075
- Pontiac Office
50 Wayne Street
Pontiac, MI 48342
- Detroit/Wayne Office
2590 W. Grand Boulevard,
Suite 408
Detroit, MI 48202

tors, or "Bigs" as they are known, Villarruel will have to increase Big Brothers/Big Sisters' match rate by 20 percent a year. During 2001, the most current year for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit increased Big-Little matches by 8.4 percent.

It's a goal Villarruel said she believes is completely reachable because "our model works."

According to Villarruel "Littles" who need with "Bigs" on a regular basis are 46 percent less likely to become involved with drugs; 27 percent less likely to skip school; and 33 percent less likely to do anything.

Although many people think the need for mentoring services provided by groups like Big Brothers/Big Sisters urban issue, Villarruel said she sees across the board, inner city, suburbs, countryside. She noted that even if her agency meets its goal of matching 15,000 Littles annually by 2010, "that's only 10 percent of the kids who are in need."

To help meet that need, Villarruel said Big Brothers/Big Sisters has been expanding beyond its traditional model of one-on-one mentoring to site-based programs such as after school tutoring and Lunch Buddies, a program where area kids join employees at local companies for lunch.

Villarruel said the biggest difficulty in reaching her goal is simply getting the word out. For instance in the entire Novi, Northville, South Lyon and Milford area, there are less than 20 active volunteers.

Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit's staff is currently working on a public service announcement campaign to reach more potential volunteers.

To support those volunteers, Villarruel said her group will have to expand its budget and to do that, she needs to develop more strategic partnerships with area corporations.

Villarruel comes to Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit's staff as currently working on a public service announcement campaign to reach more potential volunteers.

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2003 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<p>Name: Gary C. Ankers Firm: Howard & Howard How long with firm: Three years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: Two years</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Focusing increased competition from other communities. Businesses have other choices where they would like to locate.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Continue to improve the budget process and financial analysis.</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: Co-Chair of Business Education Committee</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Managing growth of community's businesses and how that affects the city's infrastructure issues.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Contribute toward the goal of the chamber to become a customer focused business. This would mean that the needs of the current members are being exceeded while attracting new members.</p> <p>Name: Gina Blazo Firm: All Star Gymnastics How long with firm: Owner/ seven years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: 4 1/2 years</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: Always on the Marketing Committee, last few years as chairperson</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Traffic congestion; new development</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: create effective programs/events that enhance member's networking opportunities; enhance the Novi Chamber Web site (novichamber.com) and promote its use/benefits to our members</p> <p>Name: Art Johnson Firm: President Johnson's Printing Services How long with firm: 15 years in Business in Novi How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: Chamber member for three years</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: First year serving as a board member</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Growth of the infrastructure and tax base are future concerns for Novi and need to be planned for carefully.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: I'd like to encourage more businesses to join the Novi Chamber and get involved in programs to help Novi in becoming a leader for business and community, and to reach the future potential it truly has available.</p> <p>Name: James M. Koster Firm: Novi Community School District How long with firm: 10 years</p> <p>How long with Chamber: The district has been a member for numerous years</p> <p>Previous Chamber positions: none</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: 1) Maintaining your</p>	<p>business presence during the upcoming road construction. 2) Continue to improve the approval process at City Hall</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Increase the value to existing and potential members.</p> <p>Name: Gina Kozlowski Firm: Beyond Business Solutions How long with firm: One year How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: My firm has been with the chamber for six months now. My previous employers were members. I have been with the chamber (through different employees) for five years now. I have been a director for the past five years.</p> <p>Previous Chamber positions: I have served on many committees since joining the chamber. I chaired the Business Education Committee for three years, I served on the Auction committee and chaired the raffie portion of it in 2002. I have served on numerous other committees such as Corvette Raffie, Recognition awards and BI-Laws.</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: The national economic down turn has impacted Novi with stalled developments and vacant retail space. It is important for businesses to remain profitable, finish the half completed projects, keep retail space leased to a diversity of desirable businesses, and provide residents with an attractive, safe, and healthy business center.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: To continue to bring programs and opportunities to the members that they can benefit from.</p> <p>Name: Tony Musu Firm: Novi Community Credit Union How long with firm: 18 years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: Five years</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: Auction committee and Ambassador chairperson, member Ambassador committee</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Infrastructure of Novi roads and continued improvement, further development of downtown Novi and the construction and completion of the Novi Expo Center (it's our golden egg.)</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Have in place our chamber mentoring program, our chamber speakers' bureau and coupon page on Novi Chamber Web site for use of Novi Chamber members and non-members alike.</p> <p>Name: Nikki Pearce Firm: Forum Entertainment How long with firm: Eight years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: 1998</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: In 1999 I joined the auction committee</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: As is the case over the entire state of Michigan, there is no real long-term program on the state, county and city level that can properly coordinate and fund the maintenance and expansion needs of the roads in the city and surrounding area. The city has passed road bonds programs in the past. This is an area that the city has some control over. Funding from the county and state is more like a grab bag and very subject to the economy and political influence.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Help the chamber get more involved with other chambers in the Metropolitan area in order to promote the area as a great place to do business. Also to develop and improve programs, like the speakers bureau and mentoring program that provides direct benefit to our members.</p>	<p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: 1. In the current face of an economic downturn, one of the most significant issues currently facing the business community is to not only maintain a consumer base, but to aggressively pursue growth opportunities. The chamber's annual membership survey has shown that "networking opportunities" are a top priority - the need to connect with business partners and potential consumers in all areas.</p> <p>2. The City of Novi understands the need for a balanced tax base. This is another area of importance for both the business and residential community. The city has made real progress, especially in the OST area with Magna and Owens Corning, and continual progress in this area is very important for all of us - residential, commercial, industrial and high-tech.</p> <p>3. Novi has grown to become a great community for numerous reasons, and one of them is access. The benefit of access also creates many challenges, such as infrastructure maintenance and long term expansion. The various projects focused on the Grand River, 12 Mile and the future I-96 interchanges at Beck and Wixom roads are improvements that will enhance the overall business climate and quality of life in region. At the same time, these projects also create a large need for communication, both to and from businesses in the area so that the impact of construction is at best minimized. Communication with the governing authority (city, county or state) is vital. The business community if fortunate that Novi's Mayor, City Council and Administration have always been advocates for open government, increased communication and accessibility.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: There are several priorities that have been outlined by the chamber board of directors at our program of work retreat last November. As part of this list of priorities, and one of my main focuses as chairman is to create an ad hoc Building Fund Committee. This committee will establish priorities and explore all options for the relocation of the chamber's office at the time that the Novi Expo Center relocates.</p> <p>One of the Novi Chamber of Commerce's first orders of business when its executive board meets Feb. 11 will be selecting a replacement for Hedy Diamond.</p> <p>Diamond left Walsh College in mid-July, where she was director of Novi Campus and Retention Programs, to take over as university registrar at Southfield's Lawrence Technological University.</p> <p>"I just cannot commit the time with my new position," Diamond said. "I felt I would be letting the chamber down in not having the time available."</p> <p>Diamond had been an active volunteer with the chamber before being recruited to run for a two-year seat on the board last year. Diamond said that while she's resigned from the board, she still plans on attending chamber functions as often as possible.</p> <p>Anyone interested in serving on the Novi Chamber of Commerce's Board of Directors should contact Nora Champion at (248) 349-3743.</p>	<p>Name: Lou Martin, chairman Firm: Providence Hospital & Medical Centers How long with firm: Three years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: I have worked with the chamber since 1995, and became a member of the board of directors in 2000. Previous chamber positions: Current marketing committee member. Also, since 1995 I have worked on a wide array of projects and issues with the chamber.</p> <p>Name: Jane Thomas, past chair Firm: Music & Motor Fest How long with firm: Six years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: 12 years</p> <p>Previous chamber positions: Board member eight years. Treasurer, vice president, chairman-elect, chairperson, Marketing committee chairman, Convention and Visitors Bureau chairman</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Creating a happy medium between developers and residential interests. Creating a more business friendly environment for the developer.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Have a successful year with events and meet member needs as well work with the city.</p> <p>Name: Pat Webb Firm: Novi Family Dental Center How long with firm: 22 years How long with Novi Chamber of Commerce: 14 years - previous chamber positions: chairman of the Board, chaired the Golf Committee, Ambassadors committee, Auction Committee, Special Events Committee</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: Growth, infrastructure, and expansion of the city.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: I plan to help in whatever areas I am called upon to assist in any way that I can in helping to increase chamber membership by helping promote the chamber as a valuable asset to any Novi business person. To help market the chamber to not only new, but existing members, the city, and the community as a whole. The Novi Chamber has proved to be a valuable asset to me and the business I represent over the past 14 years.</p> <p>Name: Keith Wilson Firm: Bob Sellers Pontiac GMC How long with firm? 23 years How long with Novi Chamber: 10 years</p> <p>Previous Chamber positions: Director since January 2000</p> <p>Most significant business issue facing Novi: The down-turn in the economy and loss of businesses. The infrastructure is also a serious problem.</p> <p>What I hope to accomplish as a chamber board member this year: Listen closely to the membership, help to address their needs, help them to make their businesses stronger.</p>
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Engagement



Costello & Crownover
Roger and Chris Crownover of Novi announce the engagement of their son, Scott

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cstone@nl.homecomm.net
(We like to publish photos, too!)

In the Service



Seann M. Hogan

USMC LCpl Seann M. Hogan is currently serving his country with 9th Comm BN in Kuwait. Formerly stationed at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, CA specializing in electronic communications, he is a 2000 Novi High School graduate. He is the son of Chet and Maureen Olaszewski of Novi and Michael and Anette Hogan of Laguna Niguel, Calif.

Obituary



Katherine Drafta

Katherine Drafta of Novi, born Nov. 29, 1911, died January 27, 2003, at Charter House of Novi. She was the wife of the late Emil; mother of Eugene (Mary)

and the late infant son Stephen; nana of Robert (Terri) Drafta, Ronald (Eva) Drafta, Cynthia Drafta, the late Michelle (Richard) Dee and Susan (Philip) Nowak. She is also survived by eight great-grandchildren, PFC Rick Dee, U.S. Army; Kristin Dee, Billy and Rachel Drafta; Britney and Allison Nowak; Benjamin and Theresa Drafta. She was the sister of Sophie Shaver and the late Adam Holowatz.

Arrangements were made by O'Brien/Sullivan Funeral Home, 41555 Grand River Ave., Novi. Instate will be held Thursday, Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. at Holy Family Church, 24505 Meadowbrook with a 10:30 service. The cemetery will be Grandlawn in Detroit.

Memorials may be made to Holy Family Church, 24505 Meadowbrook, Novi, MI 48375.

100's Day

School children mark milestone with a wide variety of activities



Photo by John Heider

Orchard Hills first grade students of teacher Darlene Grabowski celebrate their hundredth day of school with their "100" hats and glasses.



Courtesy photo

To celebrate the 100th day of school at Deerfield, Mrs. Sherry Griesinger's and Mrs. Jennifer Semeyn's 1-2 classes collected 100 cans of soup to donate to the local food bank. (They actually collected 120 cans!)



Courtesy photo

Third grade students at Novi Woods put together 100 piece puzzles in groups to celebrate 100's day.



Courtesy photo

Students at Village Oaks break out the toys to celebrate 100's day.

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

The sound of students celebrating was heard throughout the whole Novi Community School District last week as 100's Day once again rolled around. Kids and teachers alike at Orchard Hills, Village Oaks, Novi Woods, Parkview and Deerfield Elementary schools put on their 100's Day glasses, hats and anything else they could think of.

"We celebrate because it's the 100th day of school," Orchard Hills Kindergarten Teacher Jean Walle said. "We start with our worn across the room and every day we put up a number. We keep track of it and we learn about 10's, we learn about 5's and it's just a way of counting. We have weighed 100 pieces of pop corn and 100 pieces of popped popcorn to see which weighs more. They have made structures out of 50 toothpicks and 50 marshmallows. They have been making a winter

counting book that shows 10 of a set and that adds up to 100. We have tape-recorded themselves counting to 100. They have done a 100 board and have written the word 100 100 times." In the words of Orchard Hills first grade teacher Darlene Grabowski, "Unlike adults, children love to watch the days pass by as they happily witness their own growth and change. With this kind of enthusiasm, they have been counting down the days since entering first grade and have eagerly anticipated 100's Day. They have been preparing all week for the "big drum roll" and are thrilled to have finally reached this long-awaited milestone.

"To mark the event, a variety of activities have been taking place in the kindergarten and first grade rooms. The children are sporting 100's Day hats, badges, stickers and glasses. They have been engaged in some of the following activities: Writing numbers to 100, singing

songs about 100, writing stories about spending \$100, predicting what they might look and act like when they are 100 years old, taking 100 steps in the hallway, sorting their 100's collections into groups of five, 10, 20, 25 and 50, and assembling 100 piece puzzles. They made a magic wall where they have been able to walk through the zeros in the number 100. They've counted 100 kernels of pop corn and watched to see what it all looks like once it's popped. Hundreds Day provides opportunities for high interest activities that stimulate all of the senses and provide a multitude of situations that encourage hands on learning."

And that's only at Orchard Hills! Take a look at the photos to see what kids in all the other schools did.

Ramez Khuri is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 110 or rkhuri@nl.homecomm.net.

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Courtesy photo
Kids at Parkview celebrated 100's day by pairing up with a partner and laying their items out on the floor next to each other's items.

"Unlike adults, children love to watch the days pass by as they happily witness their own growth and change."

Darlene Grabowski
First grade teacher, OH

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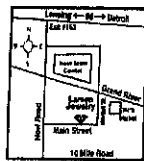
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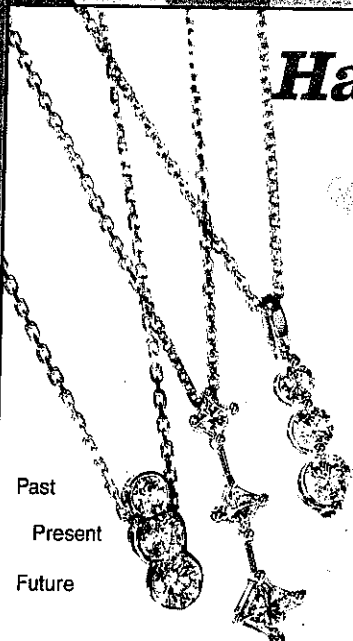
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Past
Present
Future



Kings of the KVC...for now

Novi swabs the deck with Pinckney for top spot

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Swab the deck with those Pirates, mate!

The Novi Wildcats basketball team did just that as they put on a defensive clinic on the expense of the Pinckney Pirates January 31, routing the top-ranked squad 55-26 on their way to securing first place in the Kensington Valley Conference. If that weren't enough, the 'Cats put on a scoring clinic the next day as they slammed Hamtramck 89-39 with a solid drubbing.

Against the Pirates, the Wildcats knew they would have to play at the top of their game while taking the Pinckney squad out of theirs if they hoped to earn a victory. Lucky for them, they did just that. The victory pulled the 'Cats (12-1 overall, 6-1 KVC) a game ahead of the Pinckney cagers as well as the Lakeland Eagles and the Milford Mavericks (all are 5-2 in the KVC) and found them sitting solitary at the top of the food chain in the conference.

The Wildcats came out strong, but held only a seven-point advantage at the half, leading 27-20 as they headed into the locker room. The second half of the contest found the Novi squad making some adjustments and closing the Pirates down for good.

"We switched up to zone defense," Novi senior Matt Emmenecker said. "Basically, we just helped out inside because that's

WHO'S NEXT FOR NOVI?

Date	Foe	Time	Place
07	Howell	5:30	A
11	Lakeland	5:30	H
14	Brighton	5:30	A

Howell is currently last in the KVC with a 1-6 record (1-9 overall), while Brighton is in the middle of the conference pack with a 4-3 KVC record (8-2 overall). The Lakeland Eagles, the only team to beat Novi this year, are 5-2 in the KVC — which ties them for second with Milford and Pinckney. Novi is currently 6-1 in the KVC (12-1 overall).

where they were hurting us."

And hurting them the Pirates were. The inside game, which consisted mainly of forward Danny Lezotte as he scored all 19 of his points in the first half. Though he was able to lead his squad in point totals on the night, Lezotte's second-half experience was a mirror image of his first.

"They took the inside game away," Lezotte told the Livingston County Daily Press and Argus. "We started relying on the jumper. You live by it, you die by it and tonight we died by it."

Novi's head coach, Pat Schluter, has always preached that the best offense is a good defense. His philosophy is that if you can keep a

team from scoring 45 points, you have a great chance at winning the ball game. It's apparent that his squad listens. They held the Pirates to 10-of-55 from the field, as well as keeping them from scoring in the third quarter and only allowing a single three-pointer from the floor in the fourth.

"I think that was our best game of the year," Schluter said. "Pinckney is a very good team. You hold Brandon Thompson to eight points and you are doing something well. It's a tribute to our kids."

The Wildcats knew when they hit the floor for the opening tip that they were going to have to stick to their game plan. This time around, it was keeping the Pirates off balance and forcing them to go into a game that they are not very comfortable with.

"It just seemed like once we got the lead, they got really frustrated and that was our game plan to take them out," Schluter said. "We're a tough team once we get a lead. We want to spread the floor out and make them guard, so that's kind of how we play."

Emmenecker led all scorers for the contest, sinking a remarkable 21 points as he lit the fire for his squad. Junior Brad Simpson, the team's defensive specialist, added 10 points, including two threes, in the winning effort. Chris Lewis and Mike Hart both collected eight points with their offensive efforts.

The 'Cats will no doubt be looking to have a repeat performance over the next three games — especially when they host the Lakeland

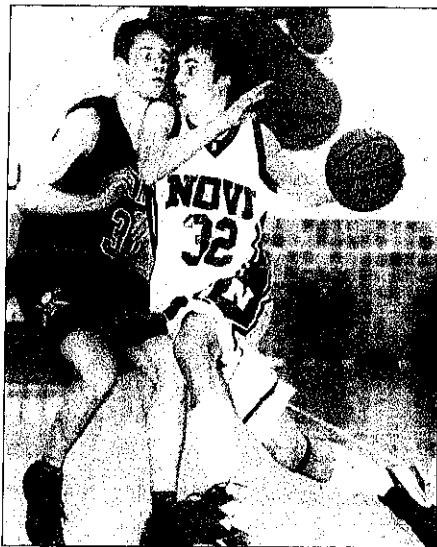


Photo by John Heider

Novi's Brad Chandler moves around his Pinckney defender in last Friday's home victory against Pinckney.

Eagles February 11. The Eagles are currently in second place in the conference and are the only team to beat the Wildcats this season. The Novi cagers also have Howell tomorrow night.

Against Hamtramck, the Wildcats invited their guests into their gym before putting on a scor-

ing clinic that found their opponents getting on the bus while wondering just what it was that happened. The 'Cats blasted Hamtramck 83-39 in a game that found Emmenecker scoring 15 points to add to his totals, while Chase Chandler added 14 and Lewis notched 13.

'Cats to get KVC crown?

Holy smokes, this team is impressive.

Not only have they stepped up to every challenge that has been given to them this year with the exception of one unfortunate loss, the Novi Wildcats boys' basketball team has done everything that they need to do to



Sam Eggleston

repeat their performance from last year — with a nice little addition. I have a sneaking feeling, and I may end up crucified for this one by the end if the 'Cats can't prove me right, that these guys just might end up sitting on top of the Kensington Valley Conference by the end of the season.

Quick play, top-shelf shooting and great coaching has helped this squad float to the top in a season that they really didn't know what to expect from. Now, all of that is just peachy, but the big thing that has proved to be the kicker this year has been the defense.

Offense gets the glory, but defense wins the game. In the case of this team, it's everyone doing everything. Brad Simpson, a junior, sparked his team to victory just the other day against the Milford Mavericks and has been one of the sturdiest defenders on the squad. Seniors Chase Chandler, Chris Lewis and Matt Emmenecker haven't been pushovers on either side of the ball either.

Though I go about mentioning these guys quite a bit, pointing out the seniors and such, I am going to step forward right now and say that I haven't give credit where credit is due. It's the whole team that's winning games. Not only the guys who hit the hardwood to help out from the bench, but also those who haven't had multiple opportunities to get off the bench itself. They cheer their squad on and route for them game in and game out.

Then, there are the fans. I can't tell you the number of comments I have received from friends, fans and parents of this basketball team as they brim over with joy and excitement of a great season. One fan even told me that the other night against Pinckney was one of the largest crowds they had ever seen at a Novi basketball game. You have to admire that kind of drawing power.

The 'Cats are no doubt going to have their hands full for the remainder of the season. Now instead of being a team that is looking to the top and what they have to do to be there, they are a team that the other teams are setting the bar against. They are now using these Wildcats as a measuring stick to what it is they have to be to sit at the top of their conference and look down at the others they play against. They are looking at these Novi cagers to know what it is to be defending District champs.

I have no doubt these Wildcats are going to live up to my expectations, and possibly even more. I just wanted to let everyone else to know what it was that I feel about these guys and all they have accomplished thus far as well as what they are going to accomplish by the time it is all said and done.

'Cats make splash at county

Tie Novi record, too

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi Wildcats swim team probably had no clue in the beginning of the season that in a year that would find them minus a home pool, they would be the third-best team in Oakland County.

The Wildcat tankers collected 209 points, good for third place, as they tied the all-time best finish in the meet in school history as they finished behind a dominating Birmingham Brother Rice squad, which had 471 team points, and Birmingham Groves, which notched 209 points. Bloomfield Hills Lahser collected 193.5 and North Farmington notched 186 to round out the top-five teams in the meet.

The Wildcats collected four individual first-place finishes from their field of determined tankers. Ian Robertson continued his ever-impressive performances as he won the 100 butterfly in 53.54 seconds as well as carving a victory in the 200 medley with a time of 2:00.24. Jack Tyler went 4:55.55 in the 500 freestyle event to take a first-place victory from his opponents, while stellar diver Dan Bassett continued performing to the top of his game for a victory with an impressive 376.85 points.

"It's been nine or 10 years since we've finished this high at the county meet," Novi coach Larry Tehan said. "Hopefully, today was just a stepping stone for us. We need to carry this momentum into the last part of our season and into the state meet."

The Wildcats at least had a great chance to measure themselves against some of the best swimmers in the state if nothing else.

All-Americans David Lessard and Steve Schoenhals were big factors in Brother Rice's victory. Dan Priestley, of Birmingham Seaholm, is also an All-American and was a victory in a handful of events. Groves also sports one of the top swimmers around in Alex Nienberg, who continued his streak of victories with a win in the 100 breaststroke.

If fans are wondering just how Novi and teams similar in structure fair against a powerhouse like Brother Rice, just take this stat into consideration: This was Brother Rice's third straight county title and the ninth in the last 10 years.



Photo by John Heider

Novi diver Dan Bassett warms up before a meet at Plymouth Salem in mid-January.

GAME OF THE WEEK

Novi
Wildcats

BASKETBALL

Sports Shorts

Mid-Winter Baseball/Softball Camp
Baseball's Softball/Baseball Camp will feature professional instruction from Aaron Knieper (Montreal Expos), Lee Bjerke (Michigan High School Coaches Hall of Fame) and Jessie Milesek (Bowling Green University Softball).

Baseball Coaches Clinic
Total Baseball will be sponsoring the Ultimate Baseball Coaches Clinic. Featured speakers will be Vin Juskia, a Toronto Blue Jays hitting instructor, Stephen Jaksic, the Central Michigan University Head Coach, and Lee Bjerke, Michigan Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame.

Coaching positions open
Walled Lake School recently announced the following openings: Walled Lake Central Girl's Track Assistant Coach, Walled Lake Western Head Boy's Tennis Coach, Walled Lake Western Head Girl's Tennis Coach.

Novi Underclassmen Scores
JV VOLLEYBALL
Undeated this season
The Novi Junior Varsity volleyball team remained undefeated last week with two solid KVC victories over Howell and Hartland.

Novi Underclassmen Scores

JV VOLLEYBALL
Undeated this season
The Novi Junior Varsity volleyball team remained undefeated last week with two solid KVC victories over Howell and Hartland.

JV BASKETBALL

Overall: 7-8, KVC: 3-4
The Novi Junior Varsity basketball team continued its winning ways with a 71-32 non-league thrashing of Hamtramck last Saturday.

WHALERS HOCKEY THIS WEEKEND!
FRIDAY @ 7:30 WHALERS vs. OWEN SOUND
SATURDAY @ 7:30 WHALERS vs. OSHAWA
FRIDAY NIGHT IS FAMILY VALUE NIGHT! 4 Tickets, 4 Hot Dogs, 4 Pepsi's & 2 Programs for only \$39!

Oh, how sweet it is!

By Michael Zerkich
SPECIAL WRITER



The Novi freshman cheer squad hoists into a lift at a recent competition.

Total baseball will be hosting an intense seven-week training program for baseball pitchers 13 years old and above.
Players will learn the proper techniques of arm strengthening, pitching mechanics and pitching philosophy from Aaron Knieper, former Montreal Expos/JSA Jr. Olympic Team pitcher.

All tied up and nowhere to go

Entering the second period of play, the Wildcats found themselves trying to dig out of a hole.
It's never easy skating to a tie, especially when it's your fifth of the season.

'HYSTERICAL! A COMIC KUNG FU COLOSSUS!'
CHAM WILSON
'SMOOTH AND SHARP... SILENT CHOREOGRAPHED.'
SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
STARTS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7
NOW PLAYING
AMC LAUREL PARK, AMC LIVONIA 20, AMC WOODLAND, REAGAN EAST

Novi looking sharp

By Michael Zerkich
SPECIAL WRITER

The former owner of Major League Baseball's Chicago White Sox team, Bill Veck, once said that "I do not think that winning is the most important thing, I think winning is the only thing."
Novi volleyball coach Julie Fisetie had a past week that would probably echo Veck's point of view.

Novi beat Hartland 15-9 and 15-11 January 30. In there is a turning point in the season it may be the second game. Down 11-1, the Wildcats did the impossible with Novi scoring 14 unanswered points.
"Coach Amy Denys was delighted at the post-Kensington Valley Conference meet results held this weekend hosted at Hartland High School.

Wild 'Stangs have good showing against 'Dogs

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Though the Novi-Northville Wild 'Stangs aren't looking to blow anyone out of the water this season, they are still looking to win.

Solid performances, increasing scores and overall determination by these gymnasts yielded steady improvements and a promising future.
Against Brighton January 23, the Wild 'Stangs had another good showing but fell 138.90-137.55. The squad also had a nice showing at the Farmington Invitational two days later.

'A REAL JOLTER. NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART!'
IT WILL SCARE THE PANTS OFF YOU... BRING AN EXTRA PAIR.
SMOOTH AND SHARP... SILENT CHOREOGRAPHED.
SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
NOW PLAYING
AMC LAUREL PARK, AMC LIVONIA 20, AMC WOODLAND, REAGAN EAST



The Novi Wildcats volleyball team poses with their trophy after an impressive performance at the 30th-annual Schoolcraft College Volleyball Tournament.

when we do play a great team they (the Wildcats) tend to step up to the plate and tend to perform through their great belief and confidence in one another."
Individual highlights from the Schoolcraft Tournament. Senior Gabi Frask had a whopping 16 service points with five of them ace against Bishop Foley.

Whalers back on track after dropping two tough games

The Plymouth Whalers fell 2-1 against Toronto St. Michael's at Compuware Sports Arena in front of a sold-out crowd.
The Whalers' first of the season to tie the game in the third, but Toronto's Tim Brent scored the go ahead goal a couple minutes later.

The Whalers' felt behind early in the second period as Toronto's Fransick Lukas beat goalie Paul Drew at 3:29.
Despite some great opportunities the Whalers could not find a way to put one past Toronto's goalie Andy Chiodo and even the score going into the third period.

'THE ULTIMATE CHICK-FLICK FOR GUYS.'
Unpredictably romantic, delightfully funny and fun all the way.
'HUDSON & MCCONAUGHEY LIGHT UP THE SCREEN'
'SIMPLY DELIGHTFUL. DELICIOUSLY WITTY.'
Kate Hudson is adorable. Matthew McConaughey is charming. Just a great movie!
'BEARHOUS!'
Kate Hudson Matthew McConaughey
How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days

Shanghai Knights worth it

Like many buddy flicks, this one touches on cheesy, but pulls audiences along well enough with laughs to make it work

By Sam Eggleston
ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

It's the kind of movie that you just hate to like.

Cheesy coincidences of history and characters, stupid one-liners and tiring and over-acted kung-fu scenes all fill "Shanghai Knights." Yet, you find yourself laughing and nodding because you know exactly where they are coming from in the film. That's why you just can't say it's bad, or good for that matter.

"Shanghai Knights" finds the duo of Chong Wang, played by Jackie Chan, and Roy O'Bannon,

played by Owen Wilson, teaming up in the sequel to their surprisingly popular and very funny buddy-flick "Shanghai Noon." Instead of taking on baddies in the wild, wild West, the two-some head overseas in search of the murderers of Wang's father. Their quest brings them to London, England where they track down Wang's sister, Lin, before they find out that the murderer is none other than the 10th in line for the throne in the form of a rather dastardly duke.

Fight scenes abound in this movie, starting in New York City where Roy has found himself

working as a waiter/gigolo instead of living high on the hog on the gold the duo recovered in the first movie. Soon, they are running from the cops and hitchhiking aboard an England-bound ship, which is also known as being stowaways.

Soon, Roy is pickpocketed by a young orphan, while Wang must find a way to free his sister from Scotland Yard as well as get revenge for his father's murder. Another fight scene finds the duo being escorted to the Yard by none other than Inspector Doyle, who has found a new way of investigating called deductive reasoning.

Needless to say, Roy and Wang find themselves getting into plenty of trouble throughout the show, with Wang and his sister getting them out of the majority of it. Roy, being his old self, just manages to crank out the funniest lines throughout the show.

Now, there are some very funny moments throughout this movie, but there also some of those great things that make an audience member groan. One of those things is the soundtrack. I've never been a big fan of modern music in movies based well before our time. This show manages to bring on that music and bring it extra thick. Another thing is the "coincidences" of characters. Roy and Wang not only rub elbows with Inspector Arty Doyle, who is knighted to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by the time things are all said and done. Another character is the young Charlie Chaplin, as well as the origin of Sherlock Holmes' character name.

The positives are some gut-busting laughing moments, some good fight scenes and a very good feeling when you leave the theater knowing that for eight bucks you can still get a laugh.

Though this movie isn't going to be winning any Oscars, it's good enough to bring your family to if they are wanting to see some well-choreographed fight scenes that are enough to make you shake your head with a chuckle at time, and are just plain ridiculous at other times. The acting, as it always is the Jackie Chan, is palatable with Wilson doing a good job to pick up the slack.

Overall, I'd say this movie is a good one to catch, especially if you liked the first "Shanghai"



Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson are back in this sequel to the surprisingly big hit "Shanghai Noon."

movie or just enjoy buddy-flicks,

and the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at seggleston@ht.homecomm.net.



Just take a look at these guys and you know they are looking for trouble. They find plenty in "Shanghai Knights."

Courtesy Photo

Courtesy Photo

Screen Beat

By Brian Renner
THE MOVIE INSIDER

Coming to theaters this weekend is the romantic comedy "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days." The film follows Andie Anderson (Kate Hudson),

Composure Magazine's 'How-To' columnist, who has an unusual assignment and a quick deadline. She has to write a first-hand account of all the things women do to drive away men, she has to find a guy, make him fall in love with her, then get dumped... all in 10 days. But little does she know that her target, ad agency executive Benjamin Barry (Matthew McConaughey), has just made a high-stakes bet with his boss that he can make any girl fall in love with him in 10 days. "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" is a Paramount Pictures release and rated PG-13 for some sex-related material.

After taming the Wild West in the comedy "Shanghai Noon", Chon Wang (Jackie Chan) and Roy O'Bannon (Owen Wilson) are back in "Shanghai Knights." When a Chinese rebel murders Chon's estranged father and escapes England, Chon and Roy make their way to London with revenge on their minds. Chon's sister, Lin, has the same idea, and uncovers a worldwide conspiracy to murder the royal family, but no one will believe her. Chon gives Victorian Britain a kick in the pants as he attempts to avenge his father's death and keep the romance-minded Roy away from his sister. "Shanghai Knights" is a Touchstone Pictures release and rated PG-13 for action violence and sexual content.

Contemporary romantic comedy "Deliver Us from Eva" centers on a group of men who plot to rid themselves of their mates' gorgeous but meddling sister Eva (Gabrielle Union). The plan to pay a man (LL Cool J) to romance and distract Eva goes awry, leading to surprising consequences and unexpected complications. "Deliver Us from Eva" is a Focus Features release and rated R for sex-related dialogue.

Check out Brian Renner and his gang at The Movie Insider via their Web site at www.themovieinsider.com for all of your up-to-date movie needs.

Next week

Martial-arts adventure "Daredevil" (PG-13), sequel to the 1967 Disney adaptation "Jungle Book 2" (G), French romantic thriller "He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not" (NR) and comedy-drama "It Runs in the Family" (PG-13).

On Video and DVD shelves

"Formula 51" (R), drama "Ighy Goes Down" (R), family drama "Little Secrets" (PG) and romantic comedy "Sweet Home Alabama" (PG-13).

Premiering on DVD

"All in the Family: The Complete Second Season" (3-DVD Set) (NR), "Blue's Clues: Blue's Big Band" (NR), "The Complete Musketeers" (2-DVD Set) (PG), "Dora the Explorer: Dora's Map Adventures" (NR), "Good Times: The Complete First Season" (2-DVD Set) (NR), "Jane Doe" (NR), "Joey" (PG), "Larger Than Life" (PG), "Married with Children Vol. 1: The Most Outrageous Episodes" (NR), "The Money Pit" (PG-13), "Predator 2" (R), "Sanford and Son: The Second Season" (3-DVD Set) (NR), "Six Feet Under" (First Season) (NR), "Straight to Hell: The Alex Cox Collection" (4-DVD Set) (NR), "Ultimate X" (PG) and "The Wiggles Magical Adventure! A Wiggly Movie" (NR).

Food For Thought

We are fortunate to live in a country where the accessibility of portable water is readily available. In most third world countries people rarely have more than one quart of water per day for all their needs. This includes cooking, personal hygiene, drinking and laundry. One quart. A mere pittance to us, gold to them. Bread may be the staff of life but water is life itself. Our bodies are a bundle of cells chock full of this marvelous liquid that transports minerals, vitamins and toxins to and fro.

In addition to the obvious functions water performs it also may be the single most important catalyst in losing weight and keeping it in check. In this day of a zillion diets all claiming to be the answer for weight loss, consider these facts.

When the body gets the water it needs to function properly several miracles happen. Most important, to the dieter it suppresses the appetite and assists the body in metabolizing fat. Our kidney's, a natural filter, removes impurities as they flow through them. If the kidneys go "thirsty" part of their workload

is transferred to the liver whose main job is to metabolize stored fat into useable energy. If it works overtime less fat is metabolized, more is stored and weight gain results. A good point to bear in mind is that the overweight person has a larger metabolic load and requires more water to assimilate fat. Also, remember that drinking water fills your stomach, which sends an "I'm full" message to the brain.

While it doesn't seem to make sense, drinking an optimum amount of water also helps your body to eliminate stored fluids. If bloating is a problem load up on nature's purest nectar. Water flows through the kidneys taking excess sodium with it. When inflow is not adequate our brain signals our cells to shut down the out-flow and thus we suffer from swollen feet, hands and tummies. The more salt you eat, the more water you need. Too much water is never an issue.

Other functions of water include maintaining muscle tone and riding the body of waste. Many times with weight loss, skin becomes saggy and dull. Water assists muscles in

HOW 8 GLASSES A DAY KEEPS THE FAT AWAY

Ingredients:

Water

Morning:

1 quart consumed over a 30 minute period.

Noon:

1 quart consumed over a 30 minute period

Evening:

1 quart consumed between 5 and 6 p.m.

Bon appetite!

retaining their ability to contract and remain firm. Skin looks healthy rather than drab. Your complexion will benefit too! Loosing those excess pounds creates another monster - waste.

So, how much water is enough? For the average person eight, eight-ounce portions a day should do just fine. If

you're overweight add an additional glass for each 25 pounds. Remember that heavy exercise and hot weather increases perspiration and fluid loss so drink some extra. Cold water is absorbed into the system more quickly than warm and studies have shown that it actually helps burn more calories. Remember that thirst is a late warning sign of not drinking enough water.

Drinking the ideal amount of water synchronizes your bodily functions perfectly. Fat is burned, fluid retention eliminated, stored water flushed, wastes and toxins are washed away, and a loss of hunger is experienced. Try the following "recipe" borrowed from "The Snowbird Diet" by Donald Robertson, MD and Carolyn Robertson.

Mary Brady is a certified executive chef and co-owner of Diamond Jim Brady's Bistro in the Novi Town Center. If you have culinary questions or comments for chef Mary Brady, you can contact her via e-mail at djbistro@aol.com.



Just Chilling

Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Actor and filmmaker Jeff Daniels prepares to meet yet more media during a premiere of his new film Super Sucker on the night of January 23rd at Novi's E-magine theater.

Dont' miss...

Want to hear some music live?

Novi's very own 9 Miles 2 Go is bringing their music right to Novi tomorrow night at the Novi Civic Center along with bands Desktop Heros, Paperbag Lunchbox and One Too Many.

The live music, coming via the "Mid-Winter Mayhem" Fest will start at 6 p.m. February 7. 9 Miles 2 Go will also be playing Saturday around 9:30 p.m. at the Northville American Legion Post.

They are also scheduled to play live at the store Music Go Round at the Novi Town Center February 22.

The band is scheduled, though a date has not yet been decided on, to play at Vans Skate Park in Novi's Fountain Walk Mall.

Check out their website at www.9miles2go.com for play dates and band information. Their CD can be purchased there as well.