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SPECIAL SECTION



INSIDE

Scam alert!

The Novi Police Department warns all Novi businesses a scam is going around town involving unknown suspects bilking employees out of money.

— Page 4A

Deadly plane crash

The bodies of pilot William "Barry" Bitzer, 60, of White Lake and passenger Ken Campbell, 54, of Commerce Township were discovered in the wreckage of Bitzer's single-engine plane Monday afternoon by searchers in a wooded area of Cheboygan County.

— Page 6A

SPORTS



Flyin' high

Wild/Stang Rachel Deneau performs on the beam during last Saturday's regional gymnastics competition at Plymouth High School.

— Page 1B

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Clark St. decision revisited

■ Council waits until March 17 meeting for its recommendation

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

A decision recommending the permanent closure of Clark Street while turning Lanny's Lane into a one-way street will be revisited during Novi's March 17 council meeting.

The resolution by members of city council to recommend the roadway changes to the Road Commission for Oakland County hit a speed bump after residents in the area of both Grand River

Avenue sidestreets called, e-mailed and spoke in front of council members, voicing both objections and approvals for the plan.

Novi City Councilman Louis Csordas said in seven years he has never received as many telephone calls to his home, e-mails and residents wanting to speak with council than what he experienced with the Clark Street closing proposal.

In fact last Saturday's special city council meeting agenda dedicated to goal-setting was set aside after the auditorium filled with residents wanting to discuss the possibility of closing Clark Street.

"A lot of good ideas and suggestions were shared," Pearson said. "The city council let everybody know the matter for Lanny's had already been set to come back

to the city council for further discussion on March 17 with the traffic consultant report."

Pearson said the city's traffic consultant is reviewing making Lanny's a one-way road and upon completion the city will be putting together a mailing for households around Grand River Avenue and 11 Mile Road scheduled to go out this week.

Members of council did vote in favor of recommending to the commission the permanent closure of Clark and making Lanny's a one-way, southbound street during council's March 3 meeting, but will revisit the decision after all reports are received.

"Whatever the professionals recommend, I'm sure council will do. We are not traffic engineers, and we just want the decision to be safe," Csordas said. "It was

never even an issue until the petition was received."

A petition with 89 signatures was submitted to the city council during the Feb. 24 meeting asking for the permanent closure of Clark.

"We (city administration) brought the matter to city council on March 3 for direction," Pearson said.

The assistant city manager said reports from the city's traffic consultant and police and fire departments recommending the permanent closure were included in the March 3 meeting information.

Pearson said the meeting information also described some of the potential effects on surrounding streets the permanent closure would cause - including Lanny's.

Please see CLARK ST. page 2



The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis (above) will play at Novi High School Auditorium June 18.

Rotarians taking a "swing" at polio

■ Novi club bringing LCJO, jazz trumpeter Marsalis in for June concerts

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Novi Rotarians are taking a "swing" at polio, and they're hoping one of the biggest names in jazz - Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis - will help them throw the knockout punch with a pair of benefit concerts Wednesday, June 18 (7:30 and 9:30 p.m.) that they're anticipating will generate over \$25,000.

Members of the 44-year-old club aren't worried about their new venture into show business.

"I think we'll sell out easy," said Keith Tappan, the service group's publicity chairman. "Everybody likes jazz."

Club president Joe Carrier noted that Marsalis' group is booked into a larger venue, East Lansing's Wharton Center, on April 4 and that concert is already sold out.

With only 1,024 seats in the Novi High School auditorium, committee members said they are offering a more intimate experience than most local concert venues with ticket prices that are comparable to Meadowbrook or Pine Knob.

Tickets range from \$35 for balcony seats to \$100 for front row, which includes an after-glow party at Local Color. "We're offering real value," said committee member Tony Musu.

Musu said the idea for the concert came from new member Cal Stone, who edits this newspaper. Last spring while participating in Leadership Livingstone he headed an effort

Please see MARSALIS page 3

Smoke detectors credited

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

Smoke detectors were credited by the Novi Fire Department for successfully removing a family from their burning home after a blaze erupted in the middle of the night.

"The main point here is the smoke detectors worked and everyone got out of the house," said chief Arthur Lenaghan, of the City of Novi Fire Department.

Lenaghan said no one was hurt as a result of the fire that began about 3:20 a.m. last Friday while the residents were sleeping.

The house, located at 40471 Franklin Mill Road, west of Haggerty and south of 10 Mile roads, belonged to Novi Public Schools Board of Education treasurer George Kortlandt.

Fire officials said the department received the call right after the fire started and arrived on the scene at about 3:28 a.m. When firefighters arrived, the Kortlandt family was already out of the home.

Lenaghan said the fire apparently started in the furnace and spread into the walls of the home.

The chief said the flames then went through the floor in one area of the house igniting a fire in the kitchen-dining room area.

Fire officials said the fire was under control in about 15 minutes, but firefighters remained on the scene until about 5:20 a.m. checking the house and the surrounding area.

"There was smoke throughout the house, of course, and a lot of heat damage," Lenaghan said.

Most of the damage, estimated at about \$50,000, was confined to the kitchen-dining area and the lower level of the house.

Lenaghan said the damage was too extensive for the family to remain in the home.

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



Photo by John Heider

S'no'w cares in the world

Cousins Tori Ottinger and Ali Ambrose, top, zoom down the snow-covered hill at Novi's Lakeshore Park last Wednesday afternoon. An overnight snowstorm closed Novi schools for the day. To find out how the district makes that decision, turn to page 15.

Beck, I-96 contract letting rescheduled by MDOT

■ Interchange job may not be awarded until May

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

An announcement issued last week by Novi's city manager indicated the contract for the new interchange scheduled for Beck Road and Interstate 96 will be delayed.

The verbal report made by Richard Helwig during the March 3 Novi City Council meeting stated the letting of the contract for the single-point urban interchange by the Michigan Department of Transportation will be pushed back to May.

City officials had originally anticipated the contract would be

let this month.

Robert Morosi, MDOT regional communications representative, confirmed the decision to award the contract for the project has been rescheduled.

"The main reason is the governor and director continue to contemplate expansion projects," Morosi said.

He explained because the project is viewed as an expansion project opposed to new construction, it falls into the category of MDOT projects under investigation by Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

Morosi said construction could still very well begin this year.

State Senator Nancy Cassis (R-Nowi) said she is keeping a very close eye on the project and is waiting to hear details about the contract letting.

Cassis said it is her understanding the right-of-way needed for the project is in place and so is the funding, at least up to when the right-of-way was secured.

Cassis has played an integral role in bringing the project to Novi and promises to relay the official word to the city as soon as it is available.

"I'm keeping a very close watch over the budget and working closely with the Michigan Department of Transportation," Cassis said. "I'm really hounding the issue."

The Senator said she is working behind the scenes, in front of the scenes and around the scenes to make sure her pet project proceeds as planned.

Construction of both the Beck and Wixom roads single-point interchanges was scheduled to begin this year.

Awarding the contract is an integral part of keeping the targeted construction date on track.

MDOT earmarked \$80 million for the project which includes the Beck and Wixom roads at I-96

Please see MDOT page 3

NOVI'S HISTORY WITH SINGLE-POINT INTERCHANGE

A public information open house was held October 2001 before making the decision to go with the single-point urban interchange design for the Beck and Wixom roads and Interstate 96 connectors.

The newness of the design to Michigan prompted members of the Novi City Council to proceed with caution before giving their approvals.

Some members of council were concerned the design would be too confusing to motorists, especially in the snow.

Although used in 26 states including Arizona, Colorado and Ohio, the interchange was a new concept to council members as it was new to the state.

The Michigan Department of Transportation project was budgeted as a package deal with Beck and Wixom roads and proposed as a five-year project with construction beginning this year.

Funding in the amount of \$6 million is coming from Novi residents in the form of the city's road bond and land contributions from both Novi developers and the city.

Leveraged funding for the project equals about \$24 million.

Approval for the single-point urban interchange was requested by MDOT in September 2001 and issued by council in mid November of the same year requested.

POLICE REPORT

Another hit
The Speedway gas station on Haggerty Road was hit again by another pump and run. An employee of the gas station called police on March 5 at about 5 p.m. to report the crime.

Dude
A Novi police officer was on routine patrol on March 5 at about 11:30 p.m. when he noticed a 1994 red Ford pickup truck traveling northbound on Beck Road with a snow-covered, non-illuminated license plate.

Dog gone wild
A Novi officer responded to a call reporting a missing dog which turned pretty weird after a woman claiming she lived in Detroit called the humane officer and said she had the pet.

Lights may help
A Novi man was arrested for drinking and driving after a police officer saw him driving without his car lights on.

Vandal scandal
On March 4 at about 7:30 a.m., The Novi Police Department received a phone call from Toll Brothers Management stating an unknown vandal had caused havoc at the business site.

Clark St. Closure
Residents from Lanny's strongly opposed the Clark Road closing, citing safety issues and saying if Clark was closed their street would be the only cut-through thoroughfare to Grand River Avenue.

Clark St. Closure (continued)
Residents from Lanny's strongly opposed the Clark Road closing, citing safety issues and saying if Clark was closed their street would be the only cut-through thoroughfare to Grand River Avenue.

Clark St. Closure (continued)
Residents from Lanny's strongly opposed the Clark Road closing, citing safety issues and saying if Clark was closed their street would be the only cut-through thoroughfare to Grand River Avenue.

CLARK ST.: Revisited

continued from front page

Reports were not available on turning Lanny's into a one-way street during the March 3 meeting because the suggestion was thrown out during discussion after residents of the quiet roadway heavily opposed the closing of Clark during the Monday meeting's audience participation session.

Clark St. Closure (continued)
Residents from Lanny's strongly opposed the Clark Road closing, citing safety issues and saying if Clark was closed their street would be the only cut-through thoroughfare to Grand River Avenue.

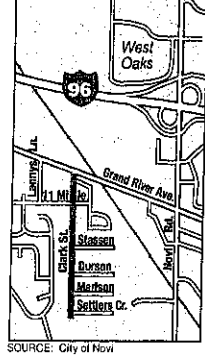
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Clark St. Closure



River Avenue Bridge over the CSX railroad tracks replacement project is underway. The project is expected to conclude in November.

Victoria Stadlocha is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700 ext. 108 or at vstadlocha@ht.homecomm.net.

Louis Gordas
Novi City Councilman

"We are not traffic engineers, and we just want the decision to be safe."

MARSALIS: Rotary fighting polio

continued from front

to fund a music scholarship that brought Marsalis and his septet to the Brighton Center for the Performing Arts. It was a sell-out success.

Marsalis is currently trying to recruit one company to be the title sponsor for the event. In exchange for a \$10,000 donation, that company will have its name listed as the presenting entity in all promotional materials.

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.

According to Tappan the motivator for the club's efforts is to help wipe polio from the face of the earth by the service organization's 100th anniversary in 2005.

Tappan noted that in 1988, 350,000 cases of polio were reported in 125 countries. In 2001, he added, that was down to 630 cases in just 10 countries, mainly in Africa and Southeast Asia.

Musa said there are also gold and silver sponsorships available.

For \$500, gold sponsors get four main floor tickets; the company name in the concert program and newspaper advertising; and the company's logo and a link on the concert Web site.

Novi Rotary meets at noon Thursdays at the United Methodist Church on 10 Mile Road, just west of Meadowbrook.

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.

MDOT: Contract rescheduled

continued from front

connectors. The Beck Road interchange alone is a \$30 million project.

The current interchange only allows travelers to access the interstate if they are traveling west.

Victoria Stadlocha is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700 ext. 105 or at vstadlocha@ht.homecomm.net.

Single-Point Urban Interchange
One benefit of the interchange is its design, allowing one set of traffic signals to control all of the traffic flow through the connector.
A traffic signal in the middle of the intersection and arrows at each of the four ramps control the entire process.

NOVI CITY BRIEFS

Calling all Veterans
On Sunday, June 22 at 1 p.m., the City of Novi will recognize the men and women of our community and the surrounding area serving in the armed forces from 1945 to 2003 at the Veteran's Recognition Day event.

DeRoche Breakfast Club
State Rep. Craig DeRoche's next breakfast meeting will take place tomorrow, March 14, at the Novi Expo Center.

Senior Holiday Luncheons
Tickets are now on sale for three upcoming holiday luncheons at the Novi Senior Center inside Meadowbrook Commons.

Man of La Mancha
The Novi Theatres is proud to present its upcoming production of "Man of La Mancha."

Activities Center located at 25075 Meadowbrook Road, between 10 Mile Road and Grand River Avenue.

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Lincoln Mercury advertisement featuring various car models like the 2003 Mercury Grand Marquis, Lincoln Town Car, and Lincoln Navigator, along with financing options and promotional text.

Citizens Insurance advertisement featuring the Dairy Ace mascot and text: "Hello, Citizens? When an accident damages your business, your Citizens agent comes to the rescue. We understand how unsettling disruptions to your daily life can be..."

Branch locations for Lincoln Mercury dealerships across various Michigan cities including Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Detroit, Farmington Hills, and Novi.

Novi residents big winners in state's instant lotto games

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Scarcely a month after they first went on sale, a Novi man beat the odds with the Michigan Lottery's \$1,000,000 Double Down instant game.

According to Jennifer Quimby, assistant director for public relations at the state Lottery Commission in Lansing, the odds of getting the winning ticket are one in 1.05 million and there's still one more million-dollar ticket out there.

The Novi man, identified only as a 48-year-old kindergarten teacher, was one of 180 big winners from Novi last month. Quimby said another Novi resident scratched their way to \$100,000 with a Casino Wild purchased at a Smokey's store in Allen Park.

The big winner bought his ticket at Snookers Express, 48029 W. Pontiac Trail Feb. 28, in Novi and went directly to Lottery headquarters in Lansing to claim his prize. Quimby said Double Down tickets first went on sale Jan. 23.

Quimby noted that only Mega Millions winners are required to reveal their identity. "Most people would prefer to keep their anonymity," she observed.

Novi's big winner told lottery officials, "I scratched off the ticket while I was still inside the store. I was stunned to see I had won! I asked the clerk to double check the ticket for me. When he said it was a \$1,000,000 top-prize winner, I went into a state of complete shock and excitement."

The man told lottery officials he plans to share part of his winnings with his family, pay bills and buy a new home.

However, the instant winner isn't Novi's biggest. That title goes to a Novi resident who bought a Mega Millions ticket at the Novi 7-11 store in 2001 and eventually took home \$7.78 million. The largest lotto winner before that in Novi won \$5.78 million on a ticket purchased at Willowbrook Market.

Quimby said the state Lottery Commission issues an average of 70 new scratch-off lotto games annually, at a rate of roughly five to six a month. She said individual retailers pick and choose which games they want to buy and how many books of tickets.

Phil Foley is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700 ext. 105 or at pfoley@lti.homecomm.net.

Novi employees beware

Novi Police Department warns all employees of a swindle

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

The Novi Police Department warns all Novi businesses a scam is going around town involving unknown suspects bilking employees out of money.

"We had a couple businesses where people are trying to scam employees out of money by having them meet down in Detroit to pay a toll bill allegedly for their boss being involved in an accident," said Detective Sgt. David E. Molloy of the Novi Police Department.

Molloy said a male caller is contacting Novi businesses and telling employees their bosses have been in an auto accident.

The caller then tells the employees to drive to Detroit and pay a cash fee for the towing of their boss's vehicles.

Molloy said some employees hit while others did not.

A 28-year-old manager of Boston Market in the Novi Town Center was one victim of the scam.

The manager received a call from an unknown person late in February advising him his boss was in an accident at Interstate 96 and Livernois.

He was told to bring \$600 to the BP Gas Station at I-96 and Outer Drive to pay for towing expenses.

Police said after the manager made several attempts to contact his boss with no success, he decided to drive to Detroit with the payment.

The Boston Market employee told police he gave a white male the cash.

While following the Chevrolet, the Boston Market manager spoke to his boss who was at home.

Police said the employee immediately stopped following the Jeep and returned to Novi entry.

Two hours before the call came into Boston Market, a similar call was made to Don's of Traverse City on Grand River Avenue east of Wynton Road.

The restaurant manager told police he received a call from an unknown man saying the vehicle of the owner of Don's was broken down on the freeway and he needed his help.

The manager was immediately able to contact the owner in Florida and called police to report the scam.

Molloy said the only description available of the potential suspect is what was relayed from the Boston Market manager.

The Detective Sgt. stressed building awareness and warning all Novi businesses of the scam is a key component of the department's plan to avoid any future swindles.

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

HomeTown Hero Award nominations being sought

THE CATEGORIES

In this ever-changing world, new heroes are emerging every day. Do you know someone who is a hero? A neighbor who volunteers at a local non-profit organization? A senior citizen who serves as a community leader or a student who has made a difference somewhere? The Observer & Economist, Mirror and HomeTown Newspapers, in conjunction with the United Way Volunteer Center of Oakland County, are looking for these people.

Nominees and awardees will be recognized at the Fourth Annual HomeTown Heroes Luncheon on Wednesday, June 4, 2003 at the Marriott at Centerpoint in Pontiac. The public is invited and encouraged to nominate.

Nominate your hero by completing an application and on a separate sheet, in 200 words or less, please tell why you have nominated this individual, group or business. Describe the nominee's major accomplishments, commitment, self-motivation, problem-solving skills, and measurable impact upon the community. Entries must be typewritten and the 200-word limit will be enforced. Do not staple pages. Include a photo (no larger than 5" x 7") of the nominated person or group, or for Business Champion nominees, include a photo of persons participating in the volunteer activity.

To get an application you can visit United Way of Oakland County's web site at www.uwoc.org or call (248) 874-1633. Entries must be received by Wednesday, April 16.

Other partners in the collaboration of the HomeTown Heroes Recognition program include Junior League of Birmingham, Inc., Habitat and Assistance League of Southeastern Michigan. The purpose of the program is to honor outstanding volunteers who have given selflessly of themselves to support non-profit organizations in Oakland County. United Way Volunteer Center of Oakland promotes volunteerism by



Kudos
Novi Fire Chief Arthur Lenaghan, right, and Assistant Chief Jeff Johnson, left, congratulate DMC Children's Hospital staff Michelle Wolcott and Patty Peel last Wednesday morning for their life saving efforts on Jan. 9, 2003 on a 16 month old female at their rehabilitation institute.

Don't miss the Novi Chamber of Commerce's annual charity auction Saturday, April 12 at Novi Hilton.

This year's event benefits the Assarian Cancer Center at Providence Hospital.

Call (248) 349-3743 for more information.

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LET'S TALK

WITH GARY S. WEINSTEIN
GEMOLOGIST

SEA AND SKY

The birthstone for March is NOVI, from chips to one or more carats, is a sapphire stone to emerald in the beryl family. For many, it is as beautiful and desirable as its famous green family member. This beautiful gemstone possesses a clear blue transparency that is breathtaking. Its name is why many wish to "see a sapphire." Indeed, see green was the preferred color for this gemstone during the nineteenth century. Today, popular interest has shifted to sky blue and dark blue. To emphasize these colors to the fullest extent, aquamarine is often cut with the table facet parallel to the length of the crystal. Large step cut aquamarine captures the attention of casual observers like few other gemstones.

Aquamarine, March's birthstone and other gemstones abound at WEINSTEIN JEWELERS OF

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City sign ordinance 'tweaked'

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Sometime in April, Novi's City Council will be asked to make its first major overhaul of the city's 29-year-old sign ordinance since 1998.

The city's planning commission approved four amendments to the city's sign ordinance at its Feb. 26 meeting.

Cindy Iglow, the city's Neighborhood Services coordinator, told commission members, "This is tweaking, really."

Commission members did some tweaking of their own. In addition to seeking a limit to the number of garage sale signs a home owner could place, city staff also wanted to limit their placement from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. the days of a sale. However, commission member Larry Papp noticed the city's construction ordinance allows work to be done from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For the sake of consistency, commission members voted to adopt similar hours for garage sale placement.

Noting that the city already removes truckloads of improperly placed real estate signs from city corners, Iglow said the push behind the changes in the sign ordinance is to "remove clutter."

The commission approved a measure to move the setback for signs from centerline of 12 Mile Road from 78 to 93 feet. Iglow said the change is needed as a result of the road's recent widening, adding that the change could put signs three feet away from the edge of the right-of-way. However, she added, there are no existing signs within the proposed setback.

Even commission member David Ryck, who owns a home business, had no objection to a provision prohibiting the placement of signs announcing the presence of a home business.

However, commission member Tim Slawer expressed discomfort making violations of the city's sign ordinance a misdemeanor, punishable by fines up to \$500 and 90 days in jail.

The proposed sign ordinance changes are expected to go before the city commission for final action April 7 or 21.

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.

Health care, taxes top competitiveness agenda

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Health care costs and the Single Business Tax (SBT) were the hot topics at the first in a series of joint state house and senate committee meetings on business competitiveness that kicked off at Novi's Expo Center March 10.

"This pretty much confirms what I already thought," said State Senator Nancy Cassis (R-Nowi). "We have to pay attention to the level of taxation."

Chuck Hadden, vice president of governmental affairs for the Lansing-based Michigan Manufacturers Association, told committee members that many of his organization's members are paying more for health care premiums than they are taxes.

He warned committee members that having one of the highest health care costs in the country as well as being third for business taxes is not a good combination. Hadden also urged committee members not to tinker with the state's tort and product liability laws which are "now a model for other states."

Bill Largent, a White Lake consultant, said members of the Small Business Association of Michigan are concerned about health care costs and globaliza-

tion. He cautioned that with \$135 billion in information technology jobs having already moved offshore, "the information technology train may have already left the station."

Mike Orseny, vice president for taxation at Troy-based Kelly Services, like many other speakers urged the legislators to eliminate the SBT sooner than it's planned 2010 phase-out. He noted that if it were a corporate income tax, it would be the nation's highest.

Two businesspeople, Ken Augustine from Ann Arbor's Veridian and W. Brent Shelton from Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn came pitching local projects. Shelton was seeking state support for expanding roads leading to the racing complex west of Jackson and expanding the 35-year-old facility.

Shelton told committee members that a similar project in Kansas City generated 3,300 new jobs and \$2.6 million in sales tax. Angasine called for state support for what he called quantum computing. He suggested the field is at the same stage that life science research was in the '80s and if there had been state support in that area then, Michigan wouldn't be playing catch up now.



The Joint Committee on Business Competitiveness met March 10 in Novi to make recommendations for maintaining and attracting new business investment and good paying jobs to Michigan. The committee will conduct seven hearings across the state and collect suggestions and opinions from community business leaders to report to the Legislature in September. Addressing the committee is L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County executive.

County Executive L. Brooks Patterson urged legislators not to do anything to cool the country's economic fires.

He suggested that polish Detroit's image is good for Oakland County. "Anything that enhances the image of Detroit takes down one less hurdle to attracting business here," he said.

The 10-member committee, headed by Sen. Alan Sanborn (R-Richmond) and Rep. Clark Bisbee

(R-Jackson) is headed next for Grand Rapids. The committee's final report on how to make Michigan business more competitive is due to the full legislature Sept. 1.

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.

CLASS NOTES

Ramez Khuri, school reporter (248) 349-1700, ext. 110. rkhuri@ht.homecomm.net

Coin Splash helps out Novi Youth Assistance program

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Anyone walking around the Novi Middle School cafeteria last week may have noticed large jars of water sitting on a table. These jars, which had smaller jars in their center, were part of a game called "Coin Splash" that students could participate in.

"This is to help the Novi Youth Assistance," parent volunteer Deacon Lloyd said. "The kids will bring their spare change, either their own or from home, and just try to get it in the small container in the bucket. Kids all love candy, so it's a good incentive for them. They helped the community every day last week but Wednesday, because school was canceled."

Parent volunteers were splashed with water at all the lunch hours each day as they manned the "Coin Splash" table. All the money raised for the Novi Youth Assistance was specifically donated from the Novi Middle School family.

"It's helping the community, and everyone can participate," Lloyd said. "It's very easy to do it during lunch hour, we're bringing it to them as opposed to them having to go to another location."

Parent volunteer Wendy Kozma explained the game. "The students just take their pocket change and depending on the value of the coin, they can earn different types of candy if they hit the little jar in the middle of the big one," she said. "The quarter is the largest and that would win a large candy bar. Once they splash the coin it has to hit the center of the small cup inside the jar. And if it's a dime, it's a smaller piece of candy and nickels and pennies are smaller than that. The kids always get something though, even if they don't hit the middle. They have a lot of fun with it."

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



Novi Middle School student Jodi Kozma tries her hand at the school's Coin Splash fund-raiser last Thursday during lunch hour. The Coin Splash is raising money for the Novi Youth Assistance.

SCHOOL BRIEFS

Book Drive

Novi Meadows is having a "New or Barely Used" Book Drive during the month of March. It will benefit students at Neinas Elementary in Detroit and the Ronald McDonald Houses in Detroit and Ann Arbor. Donation boxes are located in the common area in both houses. For more information call (248) 449-1270.

Family workshop

On Saturday, March 22nd, the annual FOCUS ON FAMILIES WORKSHOP will take place at Novi Middle School.

The keynote speaker, Bob Somson, will present "Raising Responsible Children." The workshop offers parents an incredible

opportunity for change and growth by teaching them what important limits parents can set to lay the foundation for responsible decision-making, and how to set limits without anger and resentment.

Other sessions offered will be: "Signs and Symptoms of Drug Abuse," presented by Dana Mink; "Advocating for your Child," presented by Richard Njiru; and "What Parents Need to Know About Immunization," presented by Pat White.

Many other resources on a variety of subjects will be provided for parents. Free child care is available for children ages 2 1/2 and older. The workshop is offered to community members by Novi Community Education in partnership with Providence Hospital Medical Center/St. John Health

and Brighton Hospital. For more information about the workshop, call (248) 449-1206.

DECA students

Novi High School sent 41 marketing students to Michigan DECA's 57th Annual State Career Development Conference at the Hyatt Regency, Dearborn, March 7-9. This event is the only opportunity in Michigan where high school marketing leaders can come together to prepare for their careers.

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| • Best place for subs | • Best collision shop | • Best children's wear |
| • Best place for French fries | • Best tire shop | • Best men's wear |
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NO ENTRANCE FEES

Barry enjoys the challenge of making learning interesting

Every month from now until June, *The Novi News* is honoring a local teacher for his or her excellence in the classroom. Our winner this month, Novi High School ninth, 11th and 12th grade history teacher Lynn Barry, Barry was nominated because of her ability to get through to her students and make a positive impact on their lives.

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

"There is not enough newspaper in the world to honor the fantastic teachers that I encountered during my time in the Novi school system," read the nomination form for Lynn Barry. "I moved to Novi in seventh grade from a horrible school district and my life was forever changed for the better. With only two exceptions, every teacher I had from seventh grade up was wonderful. One of my particular favorites is Lynn Barry. I had her as my teacher for two classes and she helped me study for and succeed on the A.P. U.S. History exam. Mrs. Barry also saw to it that I got a scholarship for a National Conference which I wished to attend. My attendance at the conference changed my life for the better and my whole experience with Mrs. Barry was wonderful."



LYNN BARRY

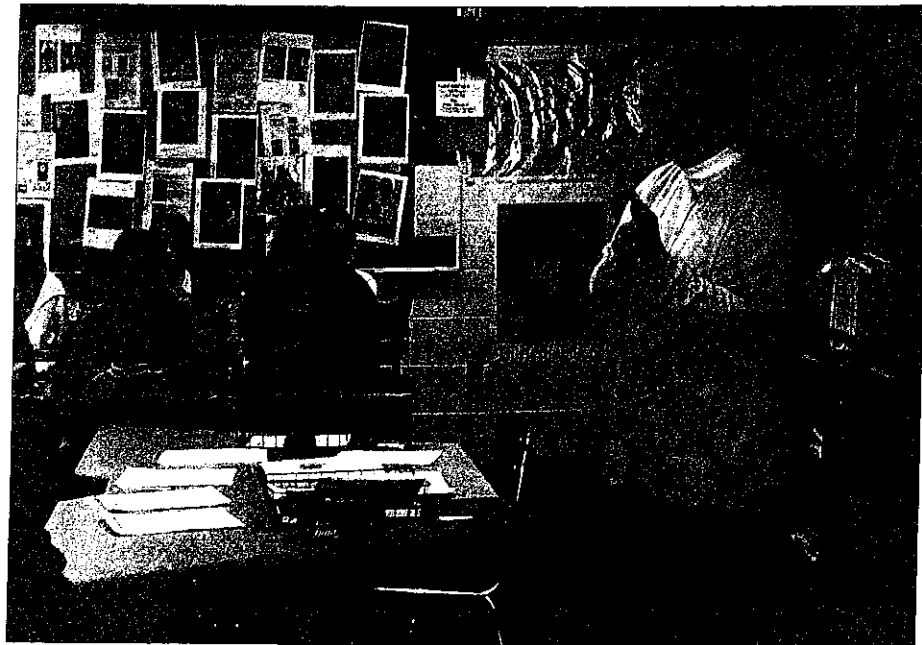
School: Novi High School
Grade: Ninth, 11th and 12th
Subject: U.S. History and A.P. U.S. History
Years teaching: 20 years at the high school
College: Eastern Illinois University
Children: Erin and Adam
Interests: Reading, travel, art exhibits, museums.

Barry was surprised, but thankful to receive her win. "Teaching is different every day," she said. "That's what I like about it. It's a constant challenge to make history interesting to the kids. I love school and I never wanted to leave school. That's why I started teaching."

Barry has always wanted to be a teacher ever since she could remember. She loves to hear from her former students every now and then. "I can't give you one memorable moment in teaching, but I think it's when former students come back and tell you how they are doing and thank you for having helped them," she said. "Also, when students who you didn't think you had an impact on at all come back and talk to you and tell you how you have helped them. It's always an appreciated surprise."

While she was in the process of earning her master's degree in Humanities, one of Barry's most memorable teachers was her art teacher. "He was just fascinating," she said. "He knew everything. He just brought the pictures and the slides to life. I will always remember the vivaciousness, the moving around, the trying to make it real, the trying to make it relate today. He brought everything to life the best he possibly could and it worked."

According to Barry, the hardest part of her job is occasionally disappointing kids. "Not getting them to reach their potential and not getting them to work hard enough is very disappointing some days," she said. "When the kids don't get the grades they wanted or when they don't understand the material or it just didn't work out for them in learning the history or that they didn't fall in love with the history



Lynn Barry has been teaching at Novi High School for the past 20 years.

Photo by Ramez Khuri

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MSU interns receive hands-on training at Deerfield

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

While walking around Deerfield Elementary on any given day throughout the school year, one may notice the abundance of teachers walking the hallways. Actually, probably about half are not teachers at all. They are interns from Michigan State University who do student teaching for a full school year, rather than the traditional semester-long training.

Deerfield has 11 interns in all this year, each one assigned to a teacher's classroom to help with daily activities. When Principal Richard Njus came to Deerfield he brought with him his partnership with MSU and the concept of having school-year-long interns. "When I came here and we were opening this building, we were looking at having a building that centered around the best practices of teaching and learning, and what a better place to bring teachers just coming into a career and helping them in that whole process of learning how to teach," Njus said. "Also to learn from master teachers is great. From the other end of the spectrum, it's great to have another adult teacher in the classroom to teach and to work with the students. We are able to have two adults working with a group of 25 kids, which enables us to meet the students' needs."

According to Njus, the bottom line is to make sure that the school meets the needs of the children first. "It's great that we can help the student teachers and it's great that our teachers can get support. But the bottom line is that we're helping our kids learn better. Having two teachers in a classroom is a huge plus for us, but on the other hand, it not only helps add challenges that interns that's coming in, it's challenging the teachers to be effective role models to assess their teaching strategies and their abilities."

Njus said that Michigan State has a fifth year program and he has had student teachers from other universities that only come for a semester. "They learn," he said, "but when you have an intern for a year, it's a dramatic difference in what they learn. When I had just student teachers, I would many times question, are they ready to



Courtesy photo

Student teachers from Michigan State University say they're enjoying their internships at Deerfield Elementary. Pictured (top to bottom, left to right) are Kristin Trest, Jennifer Mauch, Kelly Barenie, Becky Reed, Erin Goss, Laura Eschebach, Theresa Prince, Nicki Hodges, Tina McNeff, Christine Butske and Cortney Gregory.

be effective role models to assess their teaching strategies and their abilities."

"They learn," he said, "but when you have an intern for a year, it's a dramatic difference in what they learn. When I had just student teachers, I would many times question, are they ready to

step into a classroom? I think the majority of people who spend a year in an internship program are ready to walk into a classroom and take over because they have really had one year experience. They are really one up on those other kids who haven't had that longer experience."

MSU interns Jennifer Mauch and Erin Goss have been at Deerfield since the beginning of the school year.

"The internship is a lot longer than a normal internship and it helps," Mauch said. "It's excellent because a lot of people do student teaching only half a semester, so they either come in at the beginning and don't see the end of the year, or they come in the middle and miss out on the whole beginning. We come when it starts and we go all the way to the end and a

lot of us, when we are done, are going to start subbing for our teachers when they are absent."

Mauch believes that her internship is much more involved than more traditional one. "I have friends who go to Western and Central and I feel like I have learned so much more," she said. "I'm nervous about getting a job, but I think it will help me a lot just having that whole year experience. I think that's a big plus and I have heard from different principals and superintendents that they tend to hire more Michigan State interns because they have more experience. It's a great program, it's a lot of work, but it's been a great experience for me."

Goss agreed. "I think that the full-year internship definitely will help me because it's nice to be able to see how a full year starts

and ends with the same group of children," she said. "I have done other programs like this before in other elementary schools, but it was never for this long of a time, so it's nice to see how all the kids have developed during that time just to get an idea of how things change over a year for a six year old. People here are extremely open minded and I think that this will help me in the future because I will be able to speak more clearly about what I know about children as well as just having those extra experiences. I think it will definitely give me an edge over someone who hasn't had that."

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

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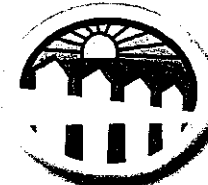
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NMS students read with schools across America

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Novi Middle School students dawned Dr. Seuss hats and came together with kids in three other states on Thursday during the "Read Across America" month assembly which took place in the school's media center. The event was supposed to take place on Wednesday, but school was canceled due to heavy snow. "We connected with school districts in Kansas, Missouri and Wisconsin using our video conferencing equipment," Novi Middle School Media Specialist Cindy White said. "We spoke to seven different classes and the other students read to our children as well." One class from the Middle School read short stories that they wrote to the other schools.

but most of the students read Dr. Seuss books. Each presentation lasted about a half hour and each school had 15 minutes to read back and forth. "We are primarily reading with third through fifth graders," White said. "Last year we dressed up as the Cat in the Hat. The purpose is for classes to read to each other and it was in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday, which was on March 1. March is always known as reading month, and I think this is just a new twist on it." One school put together a game show and another school put together a video and sent it to the Middle School.

Ramez Khuri is staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 110 or by e-mail at rkhuri@ht.hometown.net.

Workshop Announcement

This year's Novi Community School District Focus on Families Workshop offers an opportunity for change and growth-to learn to "Raise Responsible Children." It will take place Saturday, March 22 at Novi Middle School. Bob Somson is the keynote speaker of the event. He is the author and founder of the Early Learning Foundation. The schedule of the event will be: • check-in and continental breakfast from 8-8:30 a.m.; • breakout sessions from 8:30-9:30 a.m.; • resource tables and break from 9:30-10 a.m.; and • the keynote speaker from 10 a.m. to noon. A wide variety of parenting information and family resources will be available to parents before 8:30 a.m. and at 9:30 a.m. Anyone attending is asked to choose one Breakout Session, which include: Signs and Symptoms of Drug Abuse; Advocating for Your Child and What Parents Need to Know About Immunization. For more information, call (248) 449-1206.

Novi Meadows Elementary students rolling in fun

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

One normally wouldn't expect a bowling alley to be jumping at 9



a.m., but Novi Bowl was every day last week. Novi Meadows students in each day for a couple hours to learn about bowling and math skills at the same time. "The three P.E. teachers at the school - myself, Colleen Wamdel and Brian Felcher - all do a two-week unit, bowling and gym class," Novi Meadows Physical Education Teacher Pat Schluter said. "We bring them here as a field trip and we don't use electronic score keeping; we use the old way of keeping score." Schluter explained that he tries to incorporate math in physical education, and what better way than to have the kids keep their own score while bowling. "We teach them the four-step approach to bowling, the three-step approach and a little bit of the history of the game," he said. "They get to come here for two hours and bowl. It's kind of like a fun thing to do, and the kids love it."

According to Schluter, this field trip started six or seven years ago because the physical education department didn't have a field trip at the time. "The parents get to come, and watch and if they want, they get to bowl too," Schluter said. "At first the kids asked why they can't use electronic score keeping, but we tell them they have to incorporate math. It helps with their math skills and it's also fun for them." Novi Meadows sixth graders Kelsey Hart, Heather Donohue and Bridget Welsh all enjoyed themselves during their day of bowling. "We are here because in gym class we are practicing bowling, so we got to bowl for a field trip. I like it, it's fun," Hart said. Donohue said, "We're learning how to keep score and they turned off the machines so we can keep score by ourselves. It's pretty hard." Welsh agreed. "Keeping score is hard at first, but since we did it last year it's getting easier. If you go just this one line when you're bowling, it's a foul and your score doesn't count. And if you have a strike, that counts for the next two bowls."

Bowl-A-Thon has successful turnout

The 21st Youth Assistance Bowl-A-Thon, which took place on March 8 at Novi Bowl, was a big success according to Bob Steeh, Vice President of Novi Youth Assistance. About 120 bowlers showed up, netting over \$1,200 for the NYA's Teen Center, which is a summer program. Providence Hospital and Brighton Hospital sponsored the event. "The hospitals really helped us out," Steeh said. "That jumped started us to a successful Bowl-A-Thon. We used 27 lanes and we had many sponsors. It went well. People showed up and they all got some sort of goody bag, so everybody walked away with something." Two student teams from Novi Meadows participated in the Novi Youth Assistance Bowl-A-Thon on March 8. There was a fifth grade team and one sixth grade team. Both teams were sponsored by a monetary pledge from the PTO.

Amy Glubzinski, Stephan Dottermusch, Victoria Kelsey and Kaitlyn Gardner are listening to Emily Sen read if I Ran The Circus to students at Uttox Valley Elementary.

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On a separate sheet, in 200 words or less, tell why you have nominated this individual, group or business. Describe the nominee's major accomplishments, commitment, self-motivation, problem-solving skills, and measurable impact upon the community. Entries must be typewritten. Do not staple pages. Include a photo (no larger than 5" x 7") of the nominated person or group, or for Business nominees, include a photo of persons participating in the volunteer activity.
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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. We are located at 45245 W. 10 Mile Road, just east of Taft. For more information, call (248) 349-0720.

Story Time notes

Spring Story Times begin March 17. Please call the library for information on the day and time of your child's session.

Saturday Story Time special

Children ages 12-24 months and their caregivers are invited to join us for 30 minutes of stories, songs, fingerplays, and more on Saturday, March 15, at 11 a.m. No registration is necessary for the half-hour program. Space is limited, so toddlers and caregivers only, please.

AARP Tax Workshop

An AARP Tax Workshop will be held at the library on Thursday, March 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please register in advance in person or by calling the library. (Note: You cannot prepare small business or rental property taxes at this workshop.)

Story Time, Jackie Puritan

Radio personality Jackie Puritan, of WOMC's "Purtan's People," reads favorite stories to children on Monday, March 24, at 5:30 p.m. For all ages; no registration necessary.

Ancestors online

Learn how to begin searching the Internet for information on your ancestors on Thursday, March 13,

from 7-9 p.m. In addition to providing a general background on genealogy, the class covers key genealogy web sites and effective search techniques for locating genealogy information. Please register in advance for all Internet classes in person or by calling the library.

Advanced Internet searching

Experienced Internet users are invited to explore the advanced features of the Google search engine and learn additional search skills using keywords, Boolean searching, and nested queries on Thursday, March 20, from 7-9 p.m. You are welcome to bring specific research questions to the class for discussion. Hands-on practice is included.

E-mail for seniors

E-mail is a great way to stay in touch with friends and family, wherever they are! Come and learn the basics of sending and receiving e-mail, and sign up for a free e-mail account on Wednesday, March 26, from 1-3 p.m. This class includes interactive discussion and hands-on practice. Suggested prerequisite: "Mastering the Mouse for Seniors."

Internet lab for seniors

Practice makes perfect! Join us for an opportunity to practice any of the skills you've learned in our Internet classes on Thursday, March 27, from 1-3 p.m. During this two-hour session, you may choose to work on any Internet skills you wish, with librarians to assist you and answer any computer-related questions. Note: There is no set agenda for this class; you may come and go as you please during the two-hour session.

Library board changes with new appointments

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

Two names were missing from the mayor's appointments to the city's library board - the now former president and vice-president. Mayor Richard Clark's decision to exclude Novi Library board president John Chambers and vice-president Kathy Mutch from the names he put forth during the March 3 meeting put an end to their board involvement, but did not dampen their love for the library.

"I have a great love for the library," Chambers said. "My father said, 'Always give back to the community.'"

Some accomplishments Chamber cited as occurring during his involvement with the board included moving into the second half of the newly constructed civic center with limited resources of \$40,000.

Chambers said during that time, by using a committee of staff, board and citizens, the library received honor role mention from the American Library Association for the professional handling of intellectual freedom issues.

The library's assistant director also received the Allie Beth Martin in 1998, a national award from the Public Library Association of the American Library Association for her ability to share information and knowledge.

Chambers said this year, the library director received the Paul Harris award from the Novi Rotary. Chambers is a member of the Oakland County Library Board, president of the Oakland County Library Foundation, board member of the Public Library Trustee Association of Oakland County, a presenter at the Michigan Library Association and a guest speaker at M.L.S. Class - Wayne State

University. "It has been an honor and pleasure to serve on the library over the past 17 years," he said.

Some of Mutch's involvement with the City of Novi includes serving on the library board since 1991, a member of The Friends of the Novi Public Library, chair of the Historic Fuerst Farmstead Task Force, an appointed member of the Oakland County Historical Commission and Novi Historical Commission, a member of the board of the Michigan Oral History Association and three other state organizations including the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

Professionally, Mutch works within the Archival Administration program of the Wayne State University College of Library and Information Sciences, coordinated an annual

conference on local history sponsored by the W.S.U. College of Urban, Labor and Metropolitan Affairs and worked as an independent researcher at the Walter P. Reuther Library.

"It's the mayor's prerogative to nominate whomever he wants, and the council members have the opportunity to agree with his selection," Mutch said.

The former vice-president said she has always been a supporter of the library in many capacities and has always wanted to help whether as a voter, donor, member of the friends group or board member.

"I will continue to work in any way I can and continue to contribute to the library's success," she said.

Clark did not return messages by the Novi News for comment.

Clark, with council's approval, nominated Novi residents Terry Margolis, Nipa Shah and Thomas Swope to the board.

Margolis is a current board member, appointed to the library board in July 2002, and Swope is a current member of the Novi Historical Commission.

Shah did not interview with Margolis and Swope during the February interviews for open board and commission positions.

Novi's charter stipulates the mayor appoints all members to the library board with the advice and consent of the Novi City Council.

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

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Thursday, March 13, 2003

CHURELLA!

Novi's iron man wins third state title



Senior Josh Churella (in green), looks to the official after dominating yet another opponent at the Individual Wrestling State Finals. Between Josh and his brother Ryan, the Churellas won five state titles at Novi — three were Josh's.

Photo by HAL GOULD

And so a legacy comes to an end.

With the graduation of senior Josh Churella from Novi High School this year, the Wildcats will lose more than just a wrestler.

The Churellas have become a name that is widely recognized in the sport. Josh's father, Mark, was a three-time NCAA champion with the University of Michigan, and his older brother, Mark Jr., wrestled for Novi and U of M as well. But it's not so much his father or his oldest brother that struck fear into the hearts of Novi opponents.

Instead, it was Josh and Ryan. During his career at Novi, Ryan won two state titles and now grapples for U of M as a redshirt freshman. Josh, on the other hand, secured his third-straight state title and has his eyes set on Michigan as well.

"I kept my eyes open, but I was always leaning towards Michigan," Churella said of college choices. "My brother is there and it's close to home. It will be kind of cool to wrestle with my brother in the line-up."

Churella was a shoe-in for the blue and gold, especially after losing only one match his sophomore year and none his junior year. This year, Churella was also undefeated and capped it off with a technical fall over Reese Cox of John Glenn, 17-2 in the MHSAA Individual Wrestling Finals held at The Palace of Auburn Hills March 7-8.

Churella and Cox also squared off at the District and Regional title matches.

"The first time, I teched him," Churella said. "The second time I

beat him by 12 and this time I tried to open it up as much as I could. I wanted to stay on the attack like I do during all the matches."

When asked if he were unstoppable, Churella just shrugged the comment off.

"Well, it's obvious I can be beaten, because I lost in my sophomore season," he said.

"I never go into a match thinking I am going to lose, but I also know that whatever happens, happens."

During his freshman year, Churella wasn't the stud he is now — though he was hardly a hack. He collected a 44-11 record before earning a much improved 50-1 record the following year along with a title. In his junior and senior years, Churella managed to stay undefeated.

For the Novi Wildcats, it's the end of an era — Josh Churella

was the youngest of the crew.

The question, it seems, is if the Novi grapplers will be able to survive without a Churella to look to for guidance.

"They still have good direction," Churella said. "I think they will probably play on bringing in some younger guys, probably some former wrestlers (to help with the team). I think they'll keep the tradition alive and keep going strong."

With the loss of Churella to graduation, the 'Cats are also losing his father, who has helped with the program and the training of the grapplers.

"This was his last year, too," Churella noted.

In the years to come, Churella is hoping to line-up at either the 133 or 141-pound weight class, and he'll have his older brother, Ryan, to guide him with the experience that recently let him

take third in the Big 10.

Ryan Churella beat Michigan State's Karl Nadolsky 1-0 to qualify for the national tournament to be held March 20 in Kansas City.

"We'll work out together, and with some other guys from Michigan," Churella said. "I want to get stronger and hit the weights. I'll wrestle whatever is a good spot for me, either 141 or 133. I should be able to make both of them."

Also wrestling in the Individual Finals for Novi was senior Matt Jezior. Jezior lost his first match to Eric Critter of Grandville 16-12 and then lost his second match to Wes Graham of Waterford Mott in a fall.

Jezior finished the season with a 29-14 record in the 189-pound weight class and will be one of many Novi grapplers being lost to graduation this year.

State Champion

Two titles in a row for Wildcats

'Cats oust Northville in overtime for District crown

By Michael Zerkich and Sam Eggleston
HOMETOWN NEWSPAPERS

It may sound like too much like a sports cliché but Novi coach Pat Schuller hit the nail on the proverbial head in one quote after the game.

"No one deserved the loss," Schuller said following the close contest.

In a defensive struggle that had to be seen to be believed Novi edged Northville for the District Championship 33-31 in overtime.

Every pass, dribble and shot was defended as perfectly as any high school coach could have ever drawn it up practice.

This was in-your-face basketball.

The match up was Godzilla versus King Kong in the movies or Ali versus Frazier in boxing.

Novi the highly ranked opponent favorite versus cross-town rival underdog Northville.

No one gave an inch. And, as a fan said in the hallway leaving the gym, "That was some basketball game."

Northville came out with a game plan to beat the mighty giant and it almost worked. Coach Darrel Schumacher outlined his chess-like match-up.

"We knew we were up against a great team tonight," he said. "In order to win we felt that we wanted to play hard, out-defend,

keep the score close and try to win it at the buzzer.

"The key for us was to dominate the tempo by denying opportunities both down low and contest every shot. I thought we did all of that tonight and it went down to the final shot just as we wanted it to. Sometimes it's the bounce of the ball that determines the winner."

The first quarter set the tone for the entire game. Each team drove to their basket only to have lay-ups blocked. Northville senior guard Adam Konst and Novi senior guard Chris Lewis each had 5 points. The quarter ended with a Novi leading 8-7.

Northville was right on the coach=E2=80=99s game plan to keep the game tight and put themselves in the lead during the second quarter. Konst hit two 3-pointers and with 5:00 left pulled to a 15-10 lead. A minute later Novi answered with three baskets by three different players to retake the lead at 16-15.

Northville junior guard Tim Singleton closed out the scoring by making a lay-up and was fouled with 2:13 in the half.

After making the free throw the half ended with Northville on top 18-16.

Northville led throughout the third quarter and out-scored the Wildcats by a 10-8 score. With a four point lead going into the fourth quarter 28-24, the Mustangs seemed to be headed

towards a victory with such a low scoring game.

In the fourth quarter it was Novi's turn to dial up to some super defense of its own. Not that they didn't play great defense before but now it was do-or-die with the entire season swinging in the final 8 minutes of the quarter.

It was in the fourth quarter that there was a total of eight shots for both teams combined. Each team had 4 shots apiece, with Novi getting both of their buckets from junior forward Mike Hart. Northville missed on all four their attempts, including two dunks that were heavily contested down low in the paint. Northville fans wanted fouls but the referees saw no infractions. Thus, the quarter and regulation game time ended in a 28 tie.

Now for a four minute overtime. Konst got fouled while shooting and came away with one free throw made to show for it. With 2:20 left in the game a break away lay-up by senior Novi guard Chase Chandler put Novi on top by a slim 30 to 29 score.

Perhaps the shot of the night — the white-knuckle, every-one-in-the-gym-watching, bomb-from-thirty-something-feet-float-through-the-net shot — was delivered by Novi guard Lewis



Novi's Chase Chandler, left, and Matt Emmenecker both go for a rebound in front of Livonia Churchill's Tristen Thomas during last Monday night's game at South Lyon.

continued on 2

WINDUP FILM COPY

Let the players decide it

Let's just start off with this: I'm 200-percent against anyone blaming a loss on a referee or complaining about the job they did during the game.

They are out there calling these games for pennies compared to what their time is actually worth, and they do it because they love the games and want to add to the experience for the players, the coaches and the fans.



Sam Eggleston

Yeah, they make mistakes. So do I, so do you and so does every other human on this planet. To err is human as the old saying goes. I support referees and their decisions completely, as should everyone who goes to high school sporting events.

Now, let's slide all of that to the back of the table for a moment and let me clarify — in no way am I tearing on officials or what they do in a game, I'm simply making some observations.

Recently, at the Frozen Four semi-finals game between Davison and our Novi Wildcats hockey team, there was a bit of a strange occurrence. You see, one of the officials on the ice probably shouldn't have been there.

Without naming names, a particular official that was making calls during the game is an assistant coach with the Lakeland Eagles. As many of you know, Lakeland is in Novi's conference and though the two teams probably have no ill feelings towards one another, it's the idea of familiarity that should be the issue.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association should have been aware of this when they were scribbling down which officials team would work what game.

The idea of the possibilities is what should be looked at. Say Lakeland did have a grudge against Novi. Heck, the Wildcats escaped from the regional while Lakeland had to go stay home, right? Now, who would be the wiser if the official decided to make a few questionable calls that ended up costing the 'Cats the game?

Now, let's look at the other side of the coin. What if the official really liked the 'Cats and wanted to see a Kensington Valley Conference team go to the state finals? All it would have taken was a few calls in Novi's favor and maybe a penalty shot would have come from it. The hockey team could have then easily skated off with the win.

When all is said and done, it should be the kids who decide a game of this magnitude. The MHSAA and the officials should know better than to put themselves in this situation. For all I know, the official in question raised his hand right away and said that he had a conflict of interest in that particular game. What would it have taken to switch it around from there? Not much. If indeed he chose not to step up and point the problem out to the MHSAA, then he should have. The players deserve a level playing field for this kind of game. For an official to be on the ice, court or field and have such a level of familiarity is not right. They should be 100-percent unbiased. Their job is to not care which team wins, and worry only about making sure both squads play a clean game.

I truly hope the MHSAA rectifies this situation in future tournaments. I'd hate to see a quality team go home because an official really liked their opponents, or really hated them for that matter. It wouldn't be hard to sniff out such conflicts. A brief look at their resume should let the MHSAA know if there is a conflict.

I have faith that the MHSAA just overlooked this matter, and that next year there will be a much more careful process in selecting those who officiate the different tournaments — no matter what the sport is.

GAME OF THE WEEK

Novi
Wildcats

LEVEL PLAYING ARENAS

Wildcat hockey frozen again

For the third-straight year Novi stopped in Frozen Four

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Maybe it's time for the Novi Wildcats to break the tradition.

For the past three years, the Wildcats hockey team, under the guidance of Dan Phelps, have scratched and clawed their way to the Frozen Four semi-finals, only to be ousted in that round. This year, their defeat came in the form of a 4-3 loss to the Davison Cardinals March 6 at Compuware Arena.

"They were a team that played hard," Phelps said of Davison. "You can scout, score board compare, network about teams, put it down on paper and compare the lines, but the bottom line is in athletics anything can happen on any given day."

The Cardinals would not doubt agree with that statement. Undersized compared to the muscular 'Cats, the Davison skaters fell behind 1-0 but managed to score two consecutive goals to take a 2-1 advantage in the first period and then kept the momentum flowing their way.

The Wildcats weren't able to do much to stop the momentum either, finding themselves in the penalty box nine times for 34 minutes (thanks to two 10-minute

misconducts. The first was called against Chaz Bulbuk at 4:08 in the third and the second was against Justin Collins at 13:38 in the same period.

"At this point we're not going to try to pinpoint something that we should have or shouldn't have done, or what we didn't do properly," Phelps said. "We thought we were ready this year and it was one of our better years to make the advance. But that's why it's called sports. You go out and compete and sometimes you end up not coming out on the top side of it."

The Wildcats were the first to score in the contest, collecting a goal as Garret Malkot slapped the puck home with John Murray and Robert Vulaj earning the assists at 7:18 in the first.

The Cardinals were quick to recover though, using their speed to their advantage. After a particularly hard Novi shot bounced off the Davison goalie and skittered back across the blue line, William Hodgeson picked it up and passed to Curtis Christensen, who quickly found a speeding Albert Mitchell ahead of the defense. The shot hit Wildcat goalie Trent Sisson's leg and then rolled behind him for the score at 9:14.

Davison didn't let the momentum sway either, and 30 seconds later an errant Novi pass snaggged up on the back of the Wildcat goal where Andrew Sweers grabbed it for Davison and found Joshua Husted for the one-timer over Sisson's right arm for the score and the 2-1 lead at 9:47.

"They made the best of a couple of great opportunities," Phelps said. "They played a good game against us."

But Novi was proving to be stubborn and refused to just fall on the ice in defeat. Bulbuk used his size to lay out three Davison players in a row during a scrum for the puck along the boards before Eric Cunningham slid a nice pass to Murray, who then found Vulaj coming in hard for the score at 4:12.

For minutes later, Jordan Collins was in the right place at the right time as the Davison goalie stopped a nice shot from the corner that hit him and fluttered behind the net. A Cardinal tried to clear the puck, but Collins knocked it down and lined it up for the right side for an unassisted, short-handed goal at 8:10 for a 3-2 Novi advantage.

"We were really clawing and fighting in that second period," Phelps said. "I'm really proud of



Photo by John Heider

Novi's John Murray is hooked down to the ice by a Davison player during last Tuesday's state semi-final game at Compuware Arena.

the way the guys fought back and got themselves back into the game."

But once again, the Cardinals were on the hunt. With the help of four Novi penalties in the second period and not a single call against Davison up to that point, the Cardinals looked to Christensen to score a powerplay goal at 10:56 to knot the game.

A minute and a half later, the Cardinals were at it again, scoring as Rocky Ybarra left the puck to a trailing Sweers who nailed it

home for the 4-3 lead and the win.

"We started this year with a number of younger players that went out there and played," Phelps said. "We watched their development and looked at their development at the end. It was a gauge for our success, and I'm very proud of this team and what we were able to accomplish this year."

Sisson stopped 21-of-25 shots on goal, while Dan Morrison, who came in with just over a

minute left in the game, stopping 1-of-1 while between the posts. Davison's goalie, Corey Hall, stopped 25-of-28 in the win.

Davison ended the game with two penalties, both in the scoreless third period, for four minutes.

Sam Eggleston is the sports writer for the Northville Record and the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at seggleston@ht.homecomm.net.

Gymnastics takes seventh at MHSAA finals

Sara Wilchowski takes 8th in bars and beam for Division I; Rebecca Mills fourth on beam in Division II

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

In a year that looked to be one of rebuilding and teaching, the Wild 'Stangs gymnastics team managed to make it into much, much more.

A second-place finish in the conference and a Regional championship were added to with a seventh-place finish in the state of Michigan March 7 as the combined Northville-Novi squad strutted their stuff in front of some of the most critical judges in the game.

Collecting 140.05 points, the Wild 'Stangs made their mark on one of the toughest finals that they have had the pleasure of visiting. Rochester Adams continued their hot streak, winning the state title with a final tally of 149.225. Grand

Ledge was second with 148.975 and the Tri-Farmington squad took third with 144.225. That's where things got close. Portage took fourth with a 141.850, Brighton was fifth with 140.725 and Troy Athens was sixth with 140.725.

Livonia finished eighth on the day and Hartland was ninth, Holland 10th, Canton 11th and Troy finished out the top teams in 12th.

Though the girls didn't have the point totals to bring home the state title this year, they gained valuable experience and had a great showing.

Competing in Division I was stellar gymnast Sara Wilchowski. Her performance notched her an 8.75 on the bars, a 9.2 in the floor exercise and an impressive 9.275 on the beam — which seems to have proven to be her specialty this

season. Wilchowski's performance on the beam and on the bars during the Individual Finals earned her eighth-place finishes in the state for both events with a 9.15 on the beam and a 9.35 on the bars.

In Division II, Marcie Fink collected an 8.0 on the bars and an 8.6 on the vault while Sarah Ilkhani-Pour notched an 8.5 on the bars, an 9.6 on the beam and an 8.65 with her floor routine.

The Wild 'Stangs benefited from an excellent performance by Rachel Deneau, who collected an 8.9 on the beam as well as in the floor exercise. Jessica Glancy also notched an 8.9, hers coming on the vault which proved to be a team-high score in the event.

Across the board, Rebecca Mills, a sophomore this season, really stepped up and gave it her

all. She collected an 8.45 on the bars, an 8.6 on the vault, an 8.8 with her floor routine and an applause-gathering 9.0 on the beam.

Mills' performance on the beam during the Individual Finals made her the fourth-best performer in the state in that event for Division II. Her final score for the beam was an 8.9.

The Wild 'Stangs couldn't have made it this far without being a solid team, and that showed with their support of one another throughout the meet. Jennifer Mehl's 7.95 on the bars was greeted with an enthusiastic cheer from the group, as was Amanda Crawford's 8.525. The urging and the support from the team also encouraged the members of the group as they competed. Trish

Brownfield collected an 8.775 on the beam while Janna Ramsey notched an 8.75.

Come next season, the Wild 'Stangs will be just as strong, if not stronger, than they were this year. Such a thought bodes well for the squad, as they have proven each and every time they hit the floor to compete that you can't keep a good gymnastics team down. Under the guidance of coach Lindsay Schultz, the Wild 'Stangs look to be a stronger contender for the state title in the 2003-04 season.

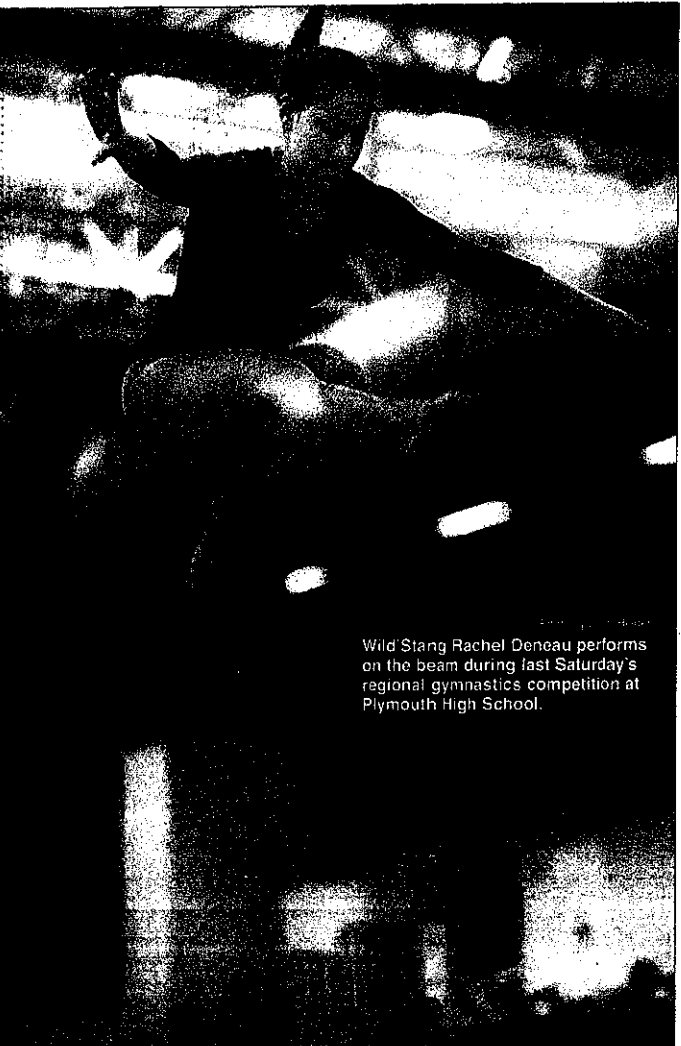
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GREAT IN THE STATE

The Northville-Novi Wild 'Stangs gymnastics team took an impressive seventh-place in the state finals March 7.

The following day, in the Individual Finals, junior Sara Wilchowski took eighth-place out of all the competitors in Division I in both the beams and the bars. On the beam, she collected a 9.15 and on bars she notched a 9.35.

In Division II, Rebecca Mills, a sophomore, notched an 8.9 on the beam, which was good for fourth place.



Wild Stang Rachel Deneau performs on the beam during last Saturday's regional gymnastics competition at Plymouth High School.

'Cats have great final performance

Ian Robertson gets All-State nod

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

The Northville Mustangs and the Novi Wildcats headed to Eastern Michigan University, to compete in the MHSAA swim finals with just one hope in mind — qualifying for the second day of competition.

Both squads did more than that, not only qualifying for the second day but making their mark while they were there as well.

The Novi Wildcats tankers had the most impressive day, taking 19th out of 43 teams while tankers Ian Robertson, Jack Tyler, Dan Bassett, Scott Rettmann and the 400 and 200 freestyle relay teams competed and placed.

The Northville Mustangs had a good showing of their own finishing 23rd in the state and finding stellar swimmer Joe Lunn earning notice as did diver Jason Albosta.

The Wildcats had a great performance from Robertson, who took fourth in the 200 Individual Medley with a time of 1:57.42 — a mark that qualified him for the All-State team. He also collected a 12th-place tie in the 100 butterfly with a time of 53.70 seconds.

Tyler was no slouch in his performance either. The Novi senior took 10th place in the 100 butterfly with a time of 53.49 — just .05 seconds behind the ninth-place finisher.

NOT BAD AT ALL!

Both Northville and Novi had nice showings in the MHSAA swimming and diving finals March 7-8.

In a year that found both squads swimming to the best of their abilities while forging a bright future for the underclassmen, they capped it off with good performances when it really counted.

The Novi Wildcats also took 17th in the 400 free relay and 18th in the 200 free relay.

| Athlete | School | Event | Time | Place |
|----------------|------------|----------|---------|-------|
| Jan Robertson | Novi | 200 IM | 1:57.42 | 4th |
| Joe Lunn | Northville | 500 free | 4:50.32 | 8th |
| Jack Tyler | Novi | 100 fly | 0:53.49 | 10th |
| Ian Robertson | Novi | 100 fly | 0:53.70 | 12th |
| Joe Lunn | Northville | 200 free | 1:46.40 | 13th |
| Dan Bassett | Novi | Diving | 340.20 | 9th |
| Jason Albosta | Northville | Diving | 325.55 | 11th |
| Scott Rettmann | Novi | Diving | 325.00 | 12th |

Bassett and Rettmann were impressive in the diving. Collecting 340.20 points, Bassett was able to take home a ninth-place finish while Rettmann took 12th with 325.0 points.

Novi also showed it's spunk in the relays as Robertson, Tyler, Taehwan Yoo and Nick Wright collected a 17th-place finish in the 400 freestyle relay. The combination of Robertson, Tyler, Dan Thelen and Chris Pieprzak took 18th-place in the 200 freestyle in a fine showing.

The Mustangs looked to the stellar diving of Albosta once again to lead the way in that

event. His 325.55 points were good for 11th in the state.

Lunn, who was easily one of the best swimmers in the Western Lakes Activities Association this year, took eighth in the 200 freestyle event with an impressive time of 1:46.40. His 500 freestyle relay time of 4:50.32 was good enough for 13th as well.

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