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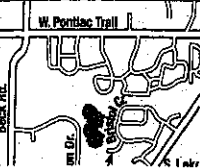
Novi, Michigan

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INSIDE



Two Residents Concerned over alleged violations

Two Novi residents living in the city's west end are concerned with what they say is illegal tree cutting and wetland fill activity behind their Balfour home.

Local business becomes a victim of arson



Mesquite Creek, a popular steak house in Novi's Main Street development, had to close its doors for repairs after an arson damaged the property.

SPORTS

Qualified individual

Novi's Jen Mehl already earned her qualifying marks for the Regional Meet in girls' track and field this season. The Wildcats, under the guidance of first-year coach Marsha Reid, started the year off on the right foot with a win over cross-town rival Northville on April 1.

INDEX

- Business 9A
- Classifieds 1D
- Novi City Briefs 4A
- Births 17A
- Opinion / Letters 14 / 15A
- Police Report 3A / 17A
- Regional Marketplace 6B
- Schools 10A
- Sports 1B

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Council approves revisions

By Phil Foley
 STAFF WRITER

Unanimous Novi City Council decision to revise ordinance gives Detroit CC 10 years to replant trees

They may not be paving paradise to put up a parking lot, but Catholic Central High School will have a lot longer to replace the more than 2,000 trees it plans on removing from its Novi property than any other builder in town thanks to the Novi City Commission. The commission voted 6-0,

with Mayor Richard Clark absent to amend the city's Woodlands Protection Ordinance allowing the city's planning commission or woodlands review board to let developers faced with replanting more than 2,000 trees have up to a decade to complete the task.

"They're opening a can of worms," complained Planning Commissioner David Ruyle. "Every developer in the world is going to want the same thing. Everybody and his brother is going to claim hardship."

Citing woodland areas as an "essential component of the

general welfare of the city," Novi's Woodlands Protection Ordinance requires developers replace every tree eight inches in diameter they cut down with one that's at least 2 1/2 inches in diameter. The ordinance calls for the replacement of trees 11 to 20 inches in diameter at a two

to one ratio and calls for a three to one replacement ratio for trees larger than 20 inches.

Supporters of Catholic Central, which plans on building a new school for 1,100 students on a 60 acre site on Wixom Road south of Grand River Avenue, have argued that the nearly 3,000 trees the ordinance would make the school

Continued on page 3A



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

April showers bring out — snow plows?

A minivan moves south along a snowy, slushy Novi Road Monday morning. The Northville and Novi area received about five inches of the white stuff Monday in an early spring snowstorm that found made for interesting driving conditions as well as shut down numerous spring sporting events in the area.

Two new tenants expected

Companies lease nearly a third of Vic's

By Phil Foley
 STAFF WRITER

Luna Entertainment, owners of what used to be Vic's World Class Market in the troubled Main Street development, is expected to announce it leased nearly a third of the building to two entertainment-oriented businesses.

Vic's, which had served as the anchor store for the 66,800 square foot building, closed its doors 14 months ago laying off 40 people after nearly eight years in business. At the time, the store's owner, Vic Ventimiglia, blamed his woes on Main Street developer James Chen, who was embroiled in a lawsuit with nine tenants in nearby buildings. That suit remains unresolved.

After Vic's closed its doors, Fatoosh, a Middle Eastern restaurant that had overlooked the store's sales floor gave up, its owners saying that without Vic's as a draw, they couldn't make it.

That left Luna Entertainment and Lifestyle Spa as the building's only tenants.

Linda Pierce, Luna's office manager said the two new tenants would occupy about 19,000 square feet of the building.

"We think things are really good now. We're hoping make this more of an entertainment area," she said, adding "We have not closed the door to anything."

Although Pierce declined to say who the two new tenants were until the official announcement slated for a private reception this afternoon, earlier this year the popular Detroit watering hole, The Post Bar, had expressed interest in the building.

Pierce did say that renovations for the two new businesses have already begun and they expect to be in operation by this summer. That will leave nearly half the building to still be leased.

"We're entertaining several possible tenants, but nothing's come to fruition yet," she said.

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

There's still time to lend a helping hand

By Phil Foley
 STAFF WRITER

There are still tickets available for Saturday's 11th annual Novi Chamber of Commerce Charity Auction.

Chamber president Nora Champion said that while there has been a fall-off in companies buying tables of tickets this year, individual ticket sales have pushed attendance to more than 300. That's about where ticket sales were at this time last year, "so we're doing pretty good," said Champion.

Since the Novi Hilton's ballroom can hold 500 people, there's still a chance to pick up a ticket for the event at the Novi Chamber office in the Novi Expo Center, The Novi News' office at 104 W. Main Northville or at Republic Bank at Eight Mile and Haggerty roads.

Tickets are also available from auction committee members or by calling Pearce at (248) 219-9114 or Christy Seaberg at (248) 735-0776.

Proceeds from the auction will help support the Assarian Cancer Center's Healing Arts program, which offers cancer patients a wide variety of programs that augment the traditional methods of treating cancer, but generates no revenue for the hospital.

A new feature of this year's auction and dinner is entertainment. Along with fine food and fine art, the chamber is bringing local DJ Lou Perotta, who bills himself as "Beat Crazy," to the Novi Hilton. "We encourage people to shamelessly spend money and dance 'till their heads fall off," chamber chairman Lou Martin joked.

"Bring lots of cash," said event chairman Nikki Pearce. She said along with silent and live auctions, there will be drawings and a 50-50 raffle. Last year's event raised \$15,000 for area charity's and auction organizers would like to top that.

Pearce said tickets for the April 12 event are \$75 a person

and include the choice of a salmon or filet mignon dinner. The event kicks off with cocktails and item viewing at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m. and bidding at 9 p.m. Fox 2 News Detroit's Charles Pugh is slated to serve as emcee.

Among the items up for auction this year, Champion said, are a signed, framed photograph of the Red Wings' famed Russian Five; a trip to Mexico donated by Cindy Ackerman; and a Buell Blaster motorcycle donated by Motor city Harley-Davidson.

Champion added a three-story furnished dollhouse valued at \$3,000 and a dozen tickets to a Detroit Fury/Buffalo Destroyers arena football matchup. One of the more unusual offerings, she said, is \$1,500 worth of orthodontic work.

For those who love fine jewelry, there'll be a tricolor bracelet from Larsen's Jewelers and a custom-made 14-karat gold version of the event's logo from Weinstein



NOVI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
 11TH ANNUAL CHARITY AUCTION

Jewelers.

Among the more poignant items in the auction said Martin, will be the works of patients at the Assarian Cancer Center. "They have a lot of depth and meaning," he said.

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

Anticipated interchange project delayed until 2007

By Victoria Sadlocha
 STAFF WRITER

The heavily anticipated single-point urban interchange project, now has new word in its title - deferred.

The Michigan Department of Transportation announced late last week, the new interchange slated for Interstate 96 and Beck road will be delayed for at least

four years.

"We're looking at deferring the building of the project until 2007," said Rob Morosi, Michigan Department of Transportation regional communications representative. "The project itself was tied in with Wixom Road, which has also been deferred, and was going to cost \$50 to \$60 million."

Morosi said the reason behind

the decision is an initiative generated by the new state administration titled "Preserve First."

The initiative places the focus of future funding on existing roadways, while pushing back projects categorized as expansion endeavors.

Both I-96 interchanges were classified as expansion projects by the state's definition. Morosi said that is not to say

MDOT will discontinue all needed new roadwork, but instead what "Preserve First" does mean is the state is placing emphasis on repairing existing infrastructures.

"It is better to maintain the existing transportation network to make our roadways more easily traveled and safe for our families," Morosi said. MDOT had earmarked \$80

million for the duel intersection project.

The Beck Road interchange alone was scheduled to cost \$30 million.

In early March, Novi City Manager Richard Helwig announced contract letting of the project would be pushed back to May.

Continued on page 3A

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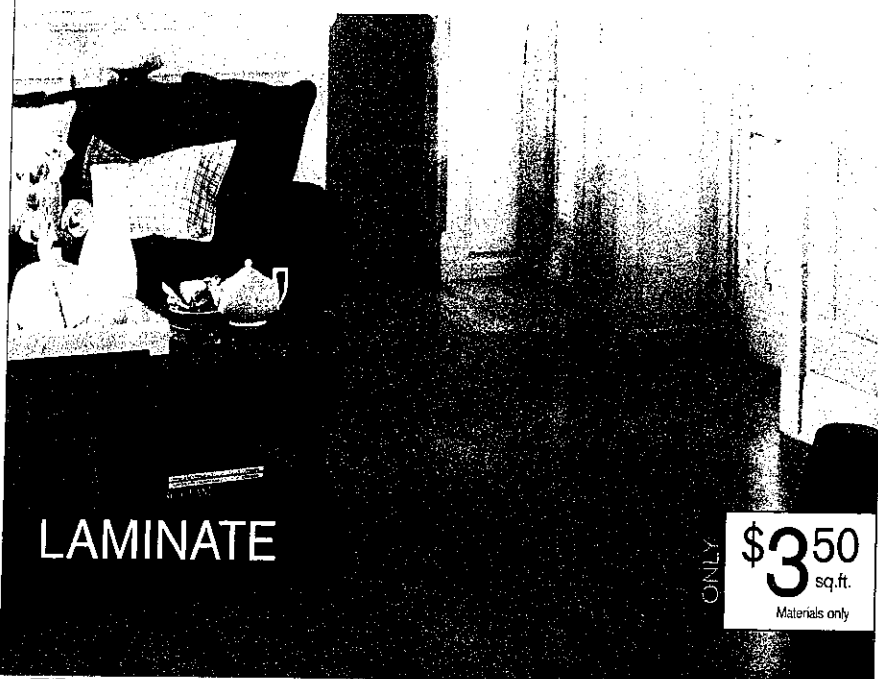
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Council gives approval to tree ordinance

Continued from front

plant or pay for would create an undue hardship on the private school.

Planning Commission Chairman called the council vote a "win-win for the city, its taxpayers and Catholic Central." She noted that ash trees are dying all over the city and the city has no money in its tree fund to replace them.

Kim Wagner, who had reminded the council that her church, Holy Family, had been required to plant extra trees when it wanted to expand its parking lot, said she was happy with the ordinance. "We got our trees," she said. Wagner said she was happy Catholic Central's president, Father Richard Elmer had "agreed to do the right thing," and replace the trees that will be removed during school construction.

Lynne Kocan, who is both a

member of the city's planning commission and woodland review board, said the amended ordinance would "require a new level of monitoring."

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

Project delayed until year 2007

Continued from front

At the time of the letting delay, MDOT and city officials were still optimistic construction would possibly start this year as originally planned.

The new connector to I-96 was highly anticipated by many in the city.

The main reason being the design of the single-point urban interchange would allow traffic to enter the expressway in an eastbound direction.

The current interchange only allows Beck Road drivers to access I-96 traveling west.

The new design also plays an integral role in handling traffic associated with the new Novi Expo Center scheduled for Taft Road and Grand River Avenue.

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.

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 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.
- During Novi City Council's March 3 meeting, it was announced the letting of the contract for both connectors would be pushed back to May instead of the original contract awarding date of March.
- The entire project has now been postponed until at least 2007.

POLICE BRIEF

Speeding and drinking don't mix

A Walled Lake man was arrested for drinking and driving after Novi police caught him traveling 20 mph over the posted speed limit. A Novi officer was patrolling eastbound on I-475 near M-5 on March 30 at about 11:30 p.m., when his radar detected a 2000 black Honda travel by at 65 mph in a 45 mph zone. The officer immediately pulled the vehicle off the road. As the officer approached the 39-year-old driver, he observed his speech was slurred, his eyes were bloodshot and he had an odor of intoxicants coming from his body. The Walled Lake man, said he was coming from the MGM Casino in Detroit and had only drank one Budweiser. The man also said he didn't realize he was traveling that much over the speed limit. After a poor performance on field sobriety tasks, he blew a .12 and was arrested by police.

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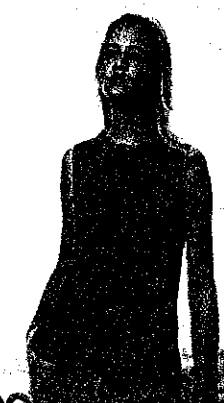
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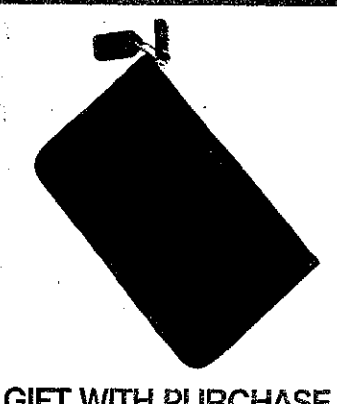
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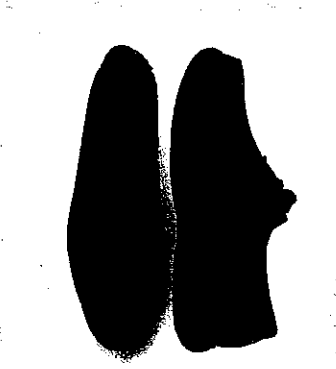
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Ford plant throws strikes for Olympians



Employees, management and vendors from the Ford Wixom Assembly Plant gathered at Novi Bowl March 26 to raise money for Special Olympics. The bowlers raised nearly \$125,000 for the program.

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Livingston County's Special Olympics program will be a little more special this year thanks to the efforts of employees, management and vendors at Ford Motor Company's Wixom Assembly plant.

Despite losing an entire shift due to corporate reorganization, bowlers from the plant increased their support of Special Olympics by nearly 56 percent over last year.

Plant spokesman Chuck Grimmer said the plant's ninth annual Bowl-A-Thon, raised nearly \$125,000 for the charity. Last year's event brought in \$80,000.

Grimmer noted that even before the Bowl-A-Thon employees and managers at the plant raised \$7,200 through hot dog sales and a fish fries that were held daily on the assembly plant floor in various departments in

"I had a great time, and not to brag, but those pins didn't have a chance while I was there."

Christopher Leppel
Plant Manufacturing Planning Manager

the weeks running up to the event.

"This is one of two annual events here at Wixom that both the hourly and salary workforce come together for a good cause," said Christopher Leppel, the plant's manufacturing planning manager.

"A lot of people worked

behind the scene to make the Bowl-A-Thon a success. I'd like to thank all the people who had worked behind the scene. Rob Colyer, the Vice President of UAW Local 36 and Chairperson of the Committee benefiting Special Olympics, the many employees who sold hot dogs and fried fish sandwiches right on the plant floor. The Bowl-A-Thon was a culmination of efforts of so many that the list would be endless. I had a great time, and not to brag, but those pins didn't have a chance while I was there."

Members of UAW Local 36 and plant management will come together again May 3 to help renovate an elderly woman's home as part of the Christmas in April program.

Phil Foley is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext 108 or pf Foley@home.com.net

CITY BRIEFS

DeRoche Breakfast Club

State Rep. Craig DeRoche's next breakfast meeting will take place tomorrow, April 11, at the Novi Expo Center. The topic of discussion will be the war in Iraq and will feature guest speaker U.S. Congressman Thaddeus McCotter (R-Livonia). The intent of the "DeRoche Breakfast Club" is for the former councilman to meet with leaders in the community to have a dialog on timely, important topics. The one-hour, 7:30 a.m. program is free to the public. A coffee-and-conversation session will take place before the program at 7 a.m. The event will take place in the McKenzie Room inside the center at 43700 Expo Center Drive. For more information, please call Sianna Wycoff at (517) 373-0827.

City offices closed

All Novi city offices, the recycling center and the Novi Public Library will be closed April 18 in observance of Good Friday. The Novi Public Library will also close on Sunday, April 20 for Easter.

Easter Egg-streme

The City of Novi invites all families to take part in Easter Eggstravaganza Saturday, April 12. The fun-filled day will include games, prizes and crafts along with special holiday cheer. More information will be coming soon, but remember to keep the date open.

Memorial Day Parade

The Novi Theatre's Performance Plus, Children's Annex and Little People Players is

calling all groups and businesses interested in being part of the City of Novi 2003 Memorial Day Parade. The annual event will serve as a special opportunity to bring recognition to those who have served our country. Entry forms are available at the Novi Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department or by visiting the city's Web site at www.ci.novi.mi.us. The parade will take place 10 a.m. Monday, May 26. Completed forms must be returned by Friday, May 2. Confirmation and instructions will be provided by mail. For more information, call Tracie Rangle at (248) 347-0400.

Novi Ice Arena

The Novi Ice Arena offers open skating Monday through Friday from noon to 1:50 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 3 to 4:50 p.m. The charge for the Monday through Friday sessions is \$2. Open skate on Saturday is \$4 for residents and \$5 for non-residents. Skate rental is \$2. The Novi Ice Arena is located at 42400 Novia Drive, east of Novi Road between Nine and 10 Mile roads. For more information, call (248) 347-1010 or visit www.noviarb.com.

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 Veterans Recognition Day event. This event will honor veterans of the Cold War, Grenada, Panama, Desert Storm, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Somalia and Kosovo. Additionally, we recognize that many men and women in our area have been called to active duty from the Reserves or National Guard Units and, while they may not be able to attend, we would ask that their families join us so we can honor them. Contact the City of Novi Community Relations Office, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 or (248) 735-5628 for a registration form for this event.

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County prepares for terrorist threat

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Just as the attack on Pearl Harbor brought home the brutal reality that the rest of the world is not as distant a place as generations of Americans had grown to believe, the events of 9-11 put this generation of Americans on notice that home is not nearly as safe as we had grown accustomed to believing.

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and other county officials gathered at the county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Pontiac March 27 to detail the county's steps to meet the Patterson's goal of "100 percent of the time for 100 percent of our citizens."

With images of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, National Security Service maps and video captured from one of the county's 169 traffic surveillance cameras dancing on the wall, county officials recounted the steps they've taken to make the county ready to respond to anything from terrorist attacks to natural disasters.

"We used to take safety for granted," offered Patterson. "Now we

operate under the assumption that there's going to be another strike."

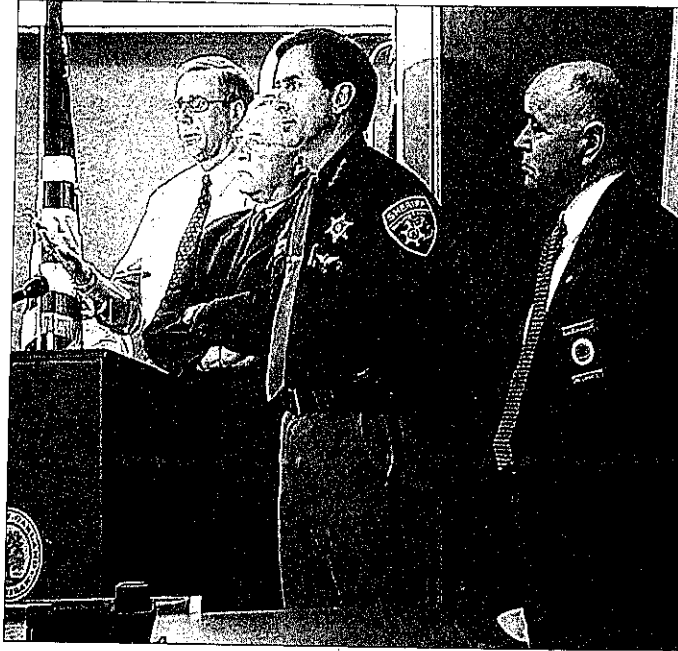
This fall, he said, the county's EOC will join with the Army's Chem Bio Support Team and the county's five mutual aid groups for a county-wide test of Oakland's ability to respond to two simulate terrorist attacks at once.

So far, said Patterson, the county has spent \$1.7 million to beef up its Emergency Response and Preparedness Divisions.

The spending spree has included: \$1.1 million for three HAZ MAT/WMD response vehicles equipped with bio-terrorism equipment; \$250,000 for a decontamination trailer equipped with walk-through showers and four decontamination tents;

\$200,000 to train 120 county firefighters at HAZ MAT technicians; \$200,000 for biochemical suits, masks and self-contained breathing apparatus for first responder agencies.

Patterson said the county plans to purchase a fourth HAZ MAT/WMD response vehicle as soon as federal funds arrive. Sheriff Michael



Oakland County officials gathered at the county's Emergency Response and Preparedness (ERP) offices in Pontiac last Thursday to assure residents that Oakland County is better prepared than most to deal with any emergency. On hand were ERP Administrator Michael Strum (left) County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, Sheriff Michael Bouchard, Director of Human Services Thomas Gordon and CLEMIS manager Joe Sullivan.



Oakland County Health Department technician Sean Nalepka shows off the equipment at his disposal to react to everything from natural disasters to acts of terrorism.

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Taking the time to tend to the farm

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Wixom Road has changed dramatically in the nearly three decades since Margaret Schmidt and her family moved to their five-acre farm from Oak Park.

The road's been straightened and paved. The horse barns have all disappeared. The ground between the woods behind their house has been transformed into an "all sports lake."

And while many farmers would sneer that five acres is little more than a garden, the Maplewoods Homesite services as the last farm in Novi.

"When we first moved on here, we had a simplistic lifestyle," recalled Schmidt. "We lived off land. We grew our own food and we heated with wood."

Schmidt, who had grown up on a farm in New Baltimore, was working as a physical education teacher for the Lakeside School District in St. Clair Shores and her husband was working for Ford Corp., a filter manufacturer in Ann Arbor, when they first found what was to become Maplewoods Homesite.

"I always wanted to have a farm," she recalled.

At first, the Schmidts were simply back to the land types, growing their own produce and occasionally grazing their sheep in nearby fields where luxury houses now stand.

"It was kind of nice to sit down to dinner and say, 'Wow we raised this and this and this,'" she said.

The farm, she said, slowly became something other than a subsistence operation when her daughter, who's now 23, entered preschool at the Presbyterian School in Novi. Schmidt began bringing animals in as a sort of show-and-tell thing, but being a teacher, it evolved into a program.

Eventually, people started calling her "The Farm Lady," word spread and people began asking her to bring her animals to their school or library.

When she started out in 1983, Schmidt charged \$100, but today fees for her 45-minute programs range from \$60 to \$125. Still, she said, for the amount of work that goes into caring for the animals, "it's a bargain."

"I'm not feeding these babies, so I have to get up every day at 3 a.m. At any given time there are 20 to 25 animals, including poultry, on the Maplewoods Homesite," said Schmidt, adding, "Sometimes it seems like we're feeding half the staffings in



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Margaret Schmidt "The Farm Lady" feeds a lamb of hers during a visit to Novi's Deerfield Elementary School.

Margaret Schmidt passes on her farm experiences

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Armed with farming tools and a live lamb, Margaret Schmidt, who owns the last farm in Novi, visited Deerfield Elementary School last Wednesday to teach farming techniques to the students.

Schmidt first showed a slide show with pictures of her family working on the farm. She then talked about the different animals that she had and still has.

"What I want the kids to take away from this is just to know a little bit about farming," Schmidt said. "Most of these kids don't have too much contact with farms. I also want them to see the lamb. We have lived here for 27 years, so we have seen a lot of changes on the road. When we moved here there was a farm house with a couple barns right across the street, but that's gone now."

Schmidt used a couple students as models to show how one would drain sap out of a tree to make maple syrup. The kids were told to stand with their arms out and act like a tree while she showed

how she would drill a hole in the trunk and attach a bucket to catch all the sap.

"This is a farm spring program and I have a live lamb," Schmidt said. "What I talked about is just the things we do on our farm and what we have done on our farm for the last 20 some years. We have the last farm house on Wixom Road. I talked to the kids about making maple syrup and showed them how it's done by using the students modeling as trees."

For the finale of her presentation, Schmidt took the lamb out of its cage and set it on the ground. She demonstrated how it would follow her anywhere she went by walking around in a circle.

"We talked about wool and they all got a piece of wool, and then I talked about the lamb," Schmidt said. "I brought up the nursery rhyme, 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' and the lamb followed her because it was a bottle fed lamb."

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.

OTC pupils provide computers for elementary students

By Anna Troppens
HOMETOWN NEWSWRITER

The eyes of five children shone as they saw the computers they were about to receive, along with a bag of software for each already installed on the machines.

Sharon Jennings, an instructional technician at Oakland Technical Center Southwest, explained the OTC student project to its beneficiaries—five elementary school children from Walled Lake.

"They have been working all year long on these computers so you can have one," she said.

The OTC students, including four teens from South Lyon High School, worked hard on the project, gaining real life experience as they progressed. Marketing students used cold calling techniques to solicit donations, while technology pupils assembled the computers and installed software. Visual imaging and culinary arts students assisted with the party at which the children received their computers.

"This project came about because the students in this class wanted to do something for the community they live in," said Bill Dungan, marketing teacher

at the technical center. "Lots of students do not have the benefit of having a computer in their home."

Patty Spain and her daughter, Mariah Spain, attended the party. Mariah, a fifth-grader, was one of the five children to receive a computer.

Patty said her daughter was one of only a few students at her school who turned in hand-written reports.

"The other kids would just print it out," she said.

Mariah said the computer is "cool," and she will do her school work and play games on it.

Paula Harris's son Cameron, a first-grader, said he will learn and play with his computer.

His mother was surprised when she learned the boy would be given one.

"I was totally shocked," Paula said.

South Lyon High School students Tina Groelich, Jason Higgins, Tiffany Bury and Morgan Buenello were among the business management, marketing and technology pupils who worked on the project.

Groelich telephoned businesses to ask whether they had computers, computer parts or software

which they could donate.

"If she made one call, she probably made 10,000 calls," Jennings said.

Groelich also planned the party at which the children received their computers. She and other technical center students sold candy to the classmate for money as a fund-raiser to buy additional items they needed that were not donated.

"I'm extremely proud of her," said Tina's father, Mike Groelich. "She worked as hard as she could possibly work. She put a tremendous amount of effort in it, and she did a fine job."

Higgins said some young people only take on the communication.

"It felt really good to give something back," he said.

Using their own time and vehicles, OTC students picked up the donations. Students assembled the computers and installed the software, checked to make sure everything worked correctly.

Novi High School senior Jimmy Wadroppe helped assemble the computers and install software. "It was interesting," Wadroppe said. "It's like actually being a service technician."

"You got to see what all the

companies hang onto, because a lot of it is kind of old. We took the best of it and gave it to the kids."

They made arrangements to install the computers in the homes of the five elementary students who received them. In addition, OTC pupils will provide technical support to the families who received the machines.

Moses Lukwago, OTC computer repair and networking technology instructor, said his students began by donating one computer two-and-a-half years ago. Later, pupils provided 10 computers to senior citizens.

The project keeps growing, because it provides educational opportunities for the technical center students.

"It gives them a real feeling of how the job feels," Lukwago said. "It teaches them to reach out to people who might need their help. That's what makes it a very unique project."

"You see kids blossom when they work on this project."

Anna Troppens is a reporter for the South Lyon Herald. Reach her at (248) 437-2011 or e-mail her at atroppens@ht.homecomm.net



Photo by Hal Gould

Millford High School seniors Chris Lange (front) and Illr Furtth work on a computer they and other students prepared for elementary students to use for homework.

Temporary agreement for Wixom, building owner

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

The Oakland County treasurer's office had planned on holding an auction at the end of last month to sell off personal property belonging to the now-defunct Clover Technologies to recover \$289,000 in delinquent personal property taxes.

Extending the temporary restraining order leaves Riley Properties LLC in possession of the building's keys, but company owners can't remove anything from the building. Berkeley's clients are still actively marketing the building.

Wixom's attorneys say they're not concerned since they did a video inventory.

Riley's attorneys argued their client should be paid \$131,000 a month for the time the government seized their client's building.

Noting that the city and county have fairly broad powers to seize property for back taxes, the county's attorney, Keith Lermanius, said Riley Properties isn't entitled to rent from the city or the county since the building owners always had

access to the building. He said any rents due on the building are "payable out of the bankruptcy."

Wixom city attorney Jennifer Elowsky countered that argument, saying the city only had control of the property for four days before Clover Technologies was forced into Chapter 7 bankruptcy by creditors, which put a hold on everything.

Elowsky also maintained that at the time the city seized the building, it appeared that Riley was already storing the personal property for one of Clover's creditors — Greenfield Commercial Credit — at no charge.

Elowsky added that Riley is claiming that that cubicles and desks in the building are fixtures and not part of Clover's personal property inventory and that neither Clover nor Riley listed the items as either real or personal property. She said the city has asked the county to do an audit of the property to determine which party was responsible for the unpaid taxes on the

property for the past three years.

Lermanius said claims by Riley's attorneys on personal property in the Clover building are interesting since the county has no record of Riley paying taxes on the property.

Elowsky said Riley's attorneys offered to put the city in touch with a wholesale buyer for the building's contents in exchange for half the gross proceeds. She said that while finding a wholesale buyer would be ideal, giving up half the gross receipts would not.

All three sides agreed the next step is for them to tour the building with Clover's bankruptcy trustee and decide what, if any, property could be released to settle debts. No one had a date for that.

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.

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Maundy Thursday
April 17
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Please RSVP

Good Friday
April 18
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Easter
April 20
Sunrise Service, 7:00 AM
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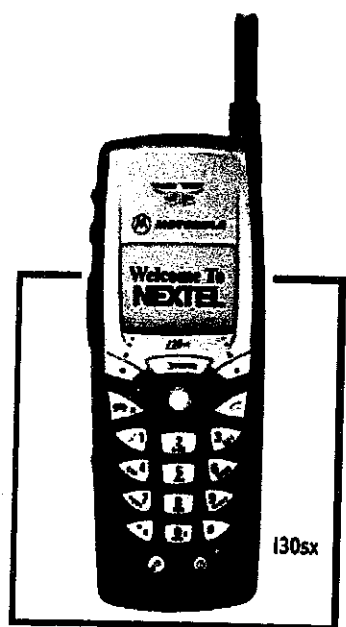
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BUSINESS

Phil Foley, business reporter (248) 349-1700, ext. 108 pfoley@ht.homecomm.net

Novi mortgage firm bought by Virginia-based corporation

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

The name over the door at Novi's Pioneer Mortgage is going to stay the same and Brian Brizard will still be found in the president's office of the firm he founded 11 years ago. That's just going to be one little change on the company letterhead.

Reston, Va.-based SLM Corporation (NYSE:SLM), commonly known as Sallie Mae, announced April 3 that it had completed the purchase of the Novi-based mortgage lending company for an undisclosed amount.

Novi resident Andrew Mutch, president for corporate communications, said Pioneer Mortgage became part of the company's SLM Financial Corporation subsidiary based in Marlton, N.J. Pioneer joins First Trust Financial (a mortgage banking company with operations in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire) which was purchased by Sallie Mae in December 2002.

"Our core business is and remains student loans," said Boyle. "We just want to be able to serve our customers by offering mortgages."

Sallie Mae manages more than \$78 billion in student loans for more than seven million borrowers. The company primarily provides federally guaranteed student loans originated under the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), and offers comprehensive information and resources to guide students, parents and guidance professionals through the financial aid process.

Pioneer's headquarters are in Chelsea, Ann Arbor and Highland as well as Phoenix, Ariz. He said the company originated \$1 billion in mortgages last year. He said his company placed 185th on INC 500, the financial magazine's list of fastest growing privately held companies in 1999 and 345th in 2002.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Top Cop

During his 14 years with the Walled Lake Police Department, Police Officer Scott Bosley has earned Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Madonna University and Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Detroit-Mercy. Since being promoted to Detective two years ago, he has worked hard to re-organize the investigative system within the department in order to better serve the community and to meet his changing needs due to personnel shifts. In naming him policeman of the year, Walled Lake Public Safety Director Jerry Walker said "Bosley is an outstanding example of the department's motto of 'Striving For Excellence'."

Let them eat quesadillas!

The Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce has decided to go casual for its 11th annual Employee Appreciation Day Luncheon. Lakes Area Chamber will be gathering at Olé Olé Southwestern Grille at 1103 East Lake Drive in Novi, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 23. "We've done this at country clubs in the past, but this is a more relaxed

atmosphere," said Lakes Area Chamber administrative assistant Jo Alley. She added the chamber is taking nominations for its first Lakes Area Outstanding Employee of the Year Award. Tickets for the luncheon are \$15 per person in advance and \$20 at the door. To make reservations, call (248) 624-2826.

Hot stuff

Kyle Murphy, a two-year veteran of the Walled Lake Fire Department, has been named that city's fire fighter of the year. Since joining the department, Murphy has completed his Fire Officer I and II classes and anticipates the completion of Fire Officer III late this year and is working on his certified fire service instructor certificate. He is a member of the Oakland County West Haz Mat Team and works as an advisor with the Walled Lake Fire Explorers, training local high school students who desire a career in the fire service. Walled Lake Public Safety Director Jerry Walker said "His exuberance and a willingness to go the 'extra mile' for the department and its members is one of the many reasons he has been chosen to receive the honor of Fire Fighter of the Year."

Much ado about something

Novi resident Andrew Mutch

Ed Heaphy
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STAR FAIRLANE	STAR GRATIOT	STAR GREAT LAKES CROSSING
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was recognized on Library Journal's Movers & Shakers 2003 list in the New York-based trade journal's March 15 edition. Mutch, who is a library systems technician for the Waterford Public Library and the Charter Township of Waterford, was honored as one of 55 innovative librarians working in the U.S. and Canada. Founded in 1876, Library Journal is read by more than 100,000 library professionals in the two countries.

Cancel the diet

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) will lift weight restrictions for commercial trucks on its non-weather roads at 6 a.m. Monday, April 7. Imposed March 17, the restrictions will have been in place for 21 days. Each spring as temperatures begin to rise and the ground begins to thaw, RCOC reduces the weight limits on these roads. As the road surface thaws, the road's ability to carry weight is reduced, meaning that a road under normal conditions, might now damage the road. These restrictions help to ensure that roads last as long as possible, with as few potholes as possible. The restrictions do not affect passenger vehicles, but are in place on 2,000 of 2,600 miles of road maintained by the commission. For questions regarding designation of a particular road, call (248) 838-4835. For information on the

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Japanese company's U.S. subsidiary based on estimated volumes. Anthony J. Martinico, Ichikoh's vice president sales/marketing, said the firm is currently producing \$60 million worth of mirrors annually at its Shelbyville, Ky., plant. He said by year the company will be selling \$90 million worth of mirrors and the new contract could boost sales to \$110 by 2006. Located on Meadowbrook near Walsh College, Ichikoh's Besides its new work for GM, Ichikoh presently supplies mirrors to GM's Oldsmobile Alero, Pontiac Grand Am, Chevrolet Malibu, Chevrolet Silverado, and GMC Sonoma truck.

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CLASS NOTES

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

Orchard Hills students want to save Maybury

■ Elementary school raises \$1000

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

After hearing about how Maybury Farm in Northville burned down almost two months ago, students at Orchard Hills Elementary School took action to help rebuild it. They all donated sympathy cards and raised \$1,000 for the cause.

"The fire happened on a weekend," Orchard Hills March Reading Month Coordinator Sue Burke said. "That Monday morning I came into the building to run some March Reading Month activities and heard of a lot of absent children. When I went into the classrooms to set up readers, I was hearing from the

teachers that the children were very upset. There were even children who didn't come into school that morning. The whole attitude was, everybody was very sad, hurt, shocked and upset. You could tell the kids wanted to do something."

Immediately, Burke and some of the teachers coordinated the donation of several sympathy cards to go to Maybury Farm, specifically Karen Goufay, the Park Interpreter, "Farmer Karen," as the students call her, is the one that the children remember going to the farm and meeting. She also visited the school to read to them before the fire.

"Karen was scheduled as a reader for March's Reading

Month," so there was a communication long before the fire," Burke said. "The sympathy cards and the donation that we started was a way to help kids work through the grief and feel like they could do something to help. As a part of March's Reading Month, when the kids would donate a card, they would also put a coin in the bucket to help rebuild the farm one board at a time. At the end of March we collected all the money and we donated it to the Community Foundation. It came up to \$1,000."

Shari Peters, President of the Northville Community Foundation, was touched by the donation.

"That's a lot of money, a lot of nickels, dimes and quarters," she said. "This means the world to us,

especially when the children do it. The farm means so much for the little ones and the bigger ones too. We have had all kinds of teachers call in from all over the place who want to help and God bless each and every one of them. We very much appreciate it and the kids will know where their \$1,000 is going."

Peters explained that the state had made a decision not to continue running Maybury Farm prior to it burning down.

"[State officials] had contacted

us prior to the fire and asked if the Foundation would consider running the farm because four years ago we were in negotiations with them to set up an endowment," she said. "They came to us again now asking if we would completely take it over. It went to our board of directors who approved it unanimously."

Persons interested in helping rebuild Maybury Farm can send a check or money order in U.S. funds payable to Northville

Community Foundation. It can be sent to Northville Community Foundation, 321 N. Center St., Suite 130, Northville, Mich. 48167. The foundation is state certified, which allows for an additional 50 percent tax credit. For more information, call (248) 374-0200.

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.

Two new scholarships offered to Novi High grads

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

The Novi Educational Foundation has announced two new scholarship opportunities for Novi High School graduates: The Marilyn Rence Carnegie Memorial Scholarship and the Providence Hospital Health Career Scholarship.

The family and friends of Marilyn Rence Carnegie will fund a new memorial scholarship honoring Marilyn Rence Carnegie's legacy as an extraordinary mother, wife and courageous person, as well as her academic and professional achievements. The purpose of the schol-

arship is to provide scholarships to selected students in pursuit of a four-year college degree. Guidelines for the scholarship and qualification criteria are as follows:

- One \$1,000 scholarship each to a male and female graduating senior student athlete.

- Student should have earned at least one varsity letter or higher.

- Submit an essay of up to 250 words (typed and double spaced) on "What does it mean to you to exhibit strength and courage when the odds are against you?"

The essay should first, briefly, speak to the student's own definition of being strong and courageous.

- Demonstrate financial need.
- Faculty recommendations may be included, but are not required.

- Complete an application form and return to the High School Counseling Office or the Educational Services Building by no later than 3 p.m. Monday, April 28. Application forms can be obtained from the High School Counseling Office.

- Providence Hospital will fund a new scholarship for students who plan to enter the health care profession. Details on the scholarship and qualification criteria are as follows:

- Five \$1,000 scholarships will be offered.
- Demonstrate a commitment to studies in the health care profession.

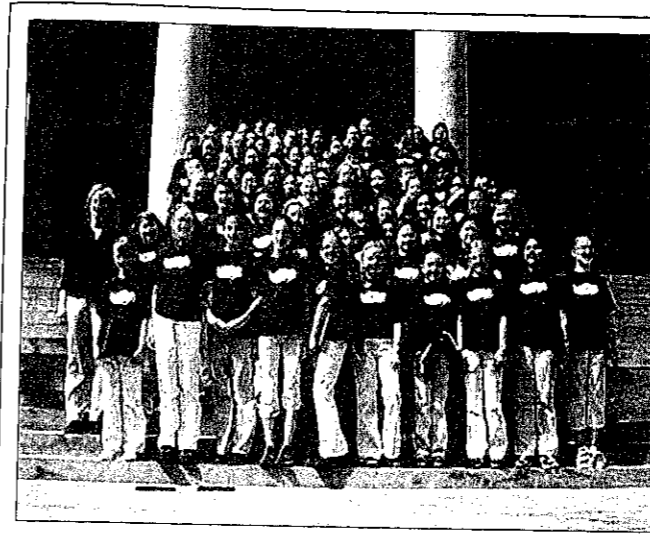
- Submit an essay of up to 250 words outlining career goals and reasons for wanting to pursue a career in health care.

- Demonstrate financial need.
- Submit two Novi High School faculty recommendations.

- Complete an application form and return to the High School Counseling Office or the Educational Services Building by no later than 3 p.m. Monday,

April 28. Application forms can be obtained from the High School Counseling Office.

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.



Courtesy photo

Capitol performance

Ninety-three fifth and sixth grade choir club members from Novi Meadows were bussed to the State Capitol on March 24 to participate in a spring music program. In the club's first year, it has already seen the preshow entertainment for the Rockettes Radio City Christmas Spectacular at the FOX Theater in December, and now has received this honor.


"Every year the Capitol invites choirs and bands from all over the state of Michigan to come and perform in their First Floor Grand Atrium," said Novi Meadows Choir Teacher Kristen Robb. "We filled out an application and they invited the Novi Meadows Choir Club to participate this year."

The club sang a variety of songs, some patriotic medleys and other chorales. "This is a brand new club," Robb said. "Following our performance, Lisa Posthumus spoke to the kids and gave them a short tour and talked with them."

The Choir Club meets once a week after school on Tuesdays and early in the morning for 45 minutes before school starts twice a week just to practice. "We have a lot of really dedicated kids who are doing great for a first year club," Robb said.

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Submitted photo by SUE BURKE

Students and faculty at Orchard Hills Elementary hold up a \$1,000 check to be presented to Maybury Farm. The students raised the money in hopes of helping the farm rebuild.

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Science Fair draws plenty of student scientists



More than 50 students in grades K-4 each created their own science projects for the Deerfield Science Fair last week. Participation in the fair was optional and the projects were created at home. The projects were not judged or graded.

The students created a wide range of science projects ranging from building an AM radio, to creating a model of how bridges work to a statistical study on whether house pets typically use the right paw or left paw.

Fourth grader Makena Bauss attempted to scientifically resolve the age-old question of, "How many licks does it take to get to the center of a Tootsie Roll lollipop?" Her hypothesis was that it would take 100 licks to get to the center.

Bauss recruited family and friends to participate in twelve trials. The procedure for each trial was to unwrap the lollipop and to lick only on the sides of it. No biting allowed. Each trial resulted in a different number of licks, with the average being 298 licks to get to the Tootsie roll center. Bauss' conclusion was that due to two main variables, there could be no single answer for how many licks were required.

The variables she discovered were that the tongue size of the person doing the licking made a difference, with the smaller the tongue, the more licks required. The second variable concerned the way the Tootsie Pop was made. In some Tootsie Pops, the chewy middle was perfectly centered in the lollipop. In other Tootsie Pops, the core was skewed to one side, making candy shell very thin on that side and easily penetrated.

Student Nick Oakley made an electromagnetic crane that recycled battery energy.

"My dad builds go-karts and they use electric current. I chose this project because I want to be just like my dad."

Student Samantha Macy demonstrated how electric circuits work. To do so, she built a free standing game with a series of questions about the state of Michigan. Using two electric wires, participants put one wire on the question and the second wire on the answer. A correct answer would turn on a light bulb, meaning the circuit was complete.

Activities were also presented by the Ann Arbor Hands On Museum. Museum staff brought 20 activities for students to try.

The focus was the biology of animals, the human body and plants. About 250 parents and students attended Deerfield's Science Fair.

Submitted Photo by ELAINE MAYLEN

Two Deerfield students are busy at work with their science fair project. More than 50 students participated.

Student Nick Oakley made an electromagnetic crane that recycled battery energy.

"My dad builds go-karts and they use electric current. I chose this project because I want to be just like my dad."

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Siarto makes learning fun by giving her students nicknames

By Ramez Khuri
 STAFF WRITER

"Kathy Siarto runs an incredibly efficient classroom and excites kids about school through creative teaching methods," read the nomination form for Siarto. "Here are some examples: She has a mouse theme for outstanding work. Papers that are exceptional get a mouse stamp and go on a bulletin board. She uses a puppet, Baxter T. Bear, to teach new lessons of importance. She has a crouch in her classroom and every day during circle time they draw names of three students that are crouch potatoes for the day. When students get a challenging question right, they are awarded with play money, which they keep in a wallet. On banking day they total their money and can visit a classroom store. In the first two months each kid gets a nickname. The kids really look forward to and get excited about each other getting their nickname. She plays HangFortune, a game she created, that combines Wheel of Fortune and Hangman. I know students at Novi High School that go back and visit her that claim she is still their favorite teacher. She is also a single mom, with a Down syndrome child and is very involved in Special Olympics."

According to Siarto, the special Olympics is almost like her second career.

"I am involved with it on many levels," she said. "I coach, I coordinate our Plymouth-Canton Group and I'm also on the Special Olympics Area 23, which is all of Wayne County, except Detroit. That's what I do almost every night of the week after school. I love it, it is just the most incredible organization."

As a matter of fact, the M&M's company has a promotion where, for every wrapper that has the Special Olympics logo on it that's turned in, it will donate 50 cents to the Special Olympics. Siarto has turned that into a class project.

After starting out going towards medical technology on her father's suggestion in college, Siarto didn't find her true calling until the summer time.

"In the summer I lifeguarded and taught swimming and I had some little kids who didn't know how to swim," she said. "One little girl, who I will never forget, was so frightened of swimming and I taught her how. She was so frightened that she actually got sick to her stomach in the pool, but at the end of two weeks, she went from being scared to death to swimming. To make a difference in a child's life like that is what it's all about. That was the turning point for me and I knew

from there that I wanted to teach."

Siarto explained that while she doesn't have just one memorable moment in her teaching career, she has so many that she can't even count them all.

"When students come back if they are in high school, or even out of high school, that's a great feeling," she said. "I have some of those now who have actually graduated high school and are in college. They come back and still remember me. One boy in particular, in the last couple years came back, who is now a junior at Michigan State. He wrote me a letter about an incident that happened when he was in first grade that molded him to what he is today. It was a typical moment of something that happened and actually he got in trouble, but the explanation I gave to him that turned things around, he said that was a significant turning point in his life. To hear something like that is just amazing to a teacher. Just to know I have made a difference in someone's life."

Three fourth-graders who are still attending Village Oaks had nothing but positive things to say about Siarto.

"When I was in Mrs. Siarto's class she gave all of us individual nicknames," Student Sarah Wicker said. "That was cool and she always made them funny and creative. My nickname was PBQ, which stood for Peanut Butter



FEATURE TEACHER
KATHY SIARTO
 School: Village Oaks Elementary
 Grade: First and Second combination
 Subjects: Everything but gym, art and music
 Years Teaching: 24
 Years in Local District: 24
 College: Albion for two years and graduated from Michigan State University
 Children: Kyle, 17 years old. Will graduate from Lovens Church Hill High School this year
 Interests: Involvement in Special Olympics

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 is Village Oaks Elementary first and second grade teacher Kathy Siarto. Kathy was nominated because of her ability to get through to her students and make a positive impact on their lives.

Queen, I got it because we were doing a project with peanut butter jars and I brought in 12. That was more than anyone else."

In the words of student Alex Baumgarten, Mrs. Siarto made learning fun, "instead of doing something really boring, like speeches."

Student Michelle Melved also enjoyed having nicknames.

"I liked the nicknames because we all had nicknames after something we did and I also liked how she was funny and she made learning fun. She made it a lot easier than a really strict teacher would."

Siarto said that growing up, she had some negative teachers which made a big impact on her. "I had some experiences with teachers who were less than positive with me and kind of tried to lead me into different paths and I learned what I didn't want to be and what I didn't want for kids from them," she said. "Those teachers had more of an impact on me than someone who tried to inspire me on. Probably the hardest part of my job is trying to meet everybody's needs to the best of my ability. We are very lucky in Novi to have small class sizes. I feel very blessed that I have only 22 kids in my class. There are usually about 25-27, but having a smaller number allows me to spread myself to everyone. I want to individualize as much as I can. Sometimes it's hard to do that, but I try."

Siarto's goal is that students leave her believing that school and learning is fun and it's a life long skill.

"I try very hard to make school fun and learning fun," she said. "We have a lot of fun in my class and when they are learning, they don't always know it. When they walk away I want them to believe in school and believe in learning and that education is what it's all about."

Siarto loves her job so much, she couldn't think of anything she would like to change about it. "I love my job and I love my kids," she said. "I call them 'Siartos' and tell them that they

will always be 'Siartos' even after they move on and out of my class. I think of them as my children when I have them in my room and forever more. I teach with a fantastic teacher and friend, Lynn Secord. I work in a school that I am very proud of. We have caring, hard working

and outstanding teachers at Village Oaks. I am proud to be a teacher in Novi."

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.homecom.net.

Photo by Ramez Khuri



Kathy Siarto, Novi teacher of the month, teaches at Village Oaks Elementary School.

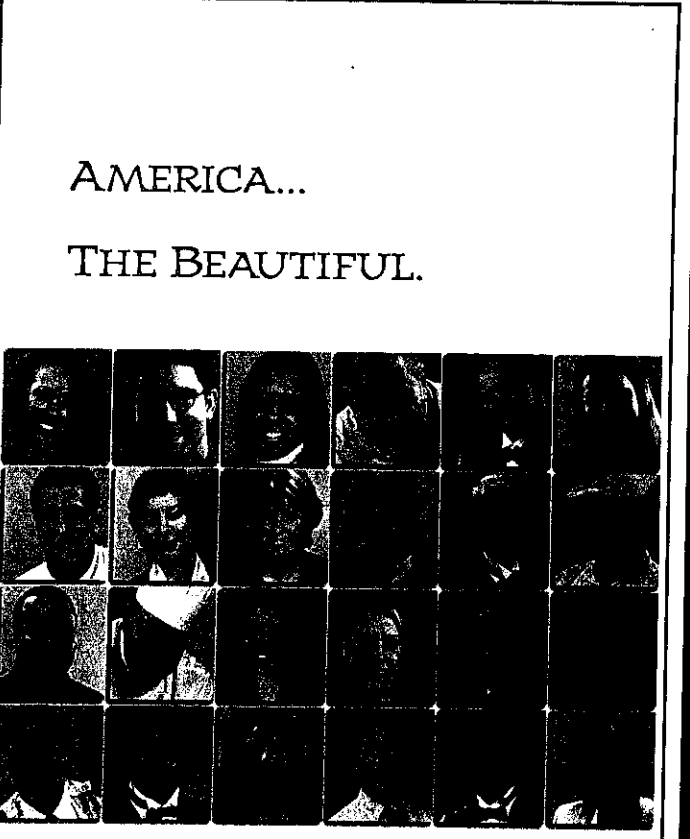
Drumline regains state title

By Patti and Charlie Hockett
 SPECIAL WRITERS

The Novi Drumline completed one of its goals for this season by regaining the state championship in Percussion World Open Class at the Michigan Color Guard Circuit State Championships last Saturday. Performing its program "Virus" in front of the crowd at Saginaw Valley State University, the line gave a solid visual and musical performance. The group's score of 86.4 with no penalties put it on top. The Drumline had won the state title for eight of its nine years of existence before last weekend's performance.

Also being honored were seniors Ben Rose, Kara Kohls, Jamie Hamilton, Kevin Lilly, and Alex Kazanis. They will be eligible to play in independent lines next year. Rose was also given the 100 Percent Award for his dedication to the Novi Drumline. Celise Roy, Rose's mother, was honored as the Novi Drumline Booster of the year.

Patti and Charlie Hockett are vice presidents of publicity for the Novi High School Band Boosters.



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

To delay work delays progress

It's been a very long time since Detroit was simply south of Eight Mile and east of Outer Drive. To be sure, the political schism exists, but Detroit is as much a region as a municipality.

That's why the governor's decision to put off rebuilding the Beck Road interchange on I-96 for another four years is ill-considered.

The city, county and state are in the midst of rebuilding Grand River Avenue into the main street Novi's always wanted. The Novi Expo Center, the only privately-funded exhibition hall in the region, is on the verge of building and moving to larger quarters. Providence Hospital and Medical Centers' Novi Campus is taking its first step to become a full service hospital to serve the burgeoning population of western Oakland County.

To put work on the Beck Road interchange on hold now, is sort of like issuing a land clearing permit, allowing the homeowner to dig a basement, put in a drainfield and dig a well, and then once the walls are up issuing a stop work order before the roof is on because you want to rethink the whole thing.

The Beck Road interchange was badly designed from the first. Even people who have lived in Novi for years find it confusing.

An expedient piece of construction at best, it may have served the needs of a sleepy farming community 40 years ago, but Novi is a city of 50,000 today and the hodge and buggy interchange simply does not meet the city's needs.

Without question, places like Detroit, Pontiac and Flint need to be rebuilt, but not at the expense of communities like Novi. If you're bleeding in one line, squeezing the other doesn't really help all that much.

Stopping needed road construction in Novi will not encourage people to move back to the older parts of Metro Detroit. Ask officials over in Wixom, even when there was a moratorium on water hook-ups in the 1980s, people still moved to the city.

Aside from the need to finish the project for health and safety reasons, there's the added issue of financing your commitments. The city sold \$6 million worth of bonds on the state's promise the project would be done. Providence donated 10 acres to the state, when it could have forced the state to buy the land, on the assurance the project would be done.

The state can reassess all the future projects it wants, but this one should be finished.

GOVERNMENT

Per reader request, we have compiled a list so you can get in touch with your local and regional senators and representatives. Their accessibility allows you as readers to voice your concerns directly and allows them to better represent their districts. If you feel we have missed anyone, contact us at (248) 349-1700, ext. 113.

United States Senate

Carl Levin (D-Detroit)
269 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510
(202) 224-6221
senator2@levin.senate.gov
Local office:
124 W. Allegan
Suite 1810
Lansing, MI 48933
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FAX: (517) 377-1506

Oakland County

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7th Commission

Christine Long
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8th Commission

Jeff Potter
1099 Stable Lane
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 437-7597
potterj@co.oakland.mi.us

9th Commission

Hugh D. Crawford
46275 11 Mile Road
Novi, MI 48374
(248) 349-5079
hughcrawford@msn.com

Townships

Novi
Raymond Schovers,
supervisor
PO Box 924
Northville, MI 48167
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Commerce - Charter

Thomas K. Zoner, supervisor
2840 Fisher Avenue
Commerce Twp., MI 48390
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State Senate

15th District
Nancy Cassis (R-Novi)
PO Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536
(517) 373-1755
nencassis@senate.michigan.gov

Cities

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39th District

Marc Shulman (R-West Bloomfield)
351 Capitol Building
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OPINION

hometownlife.com

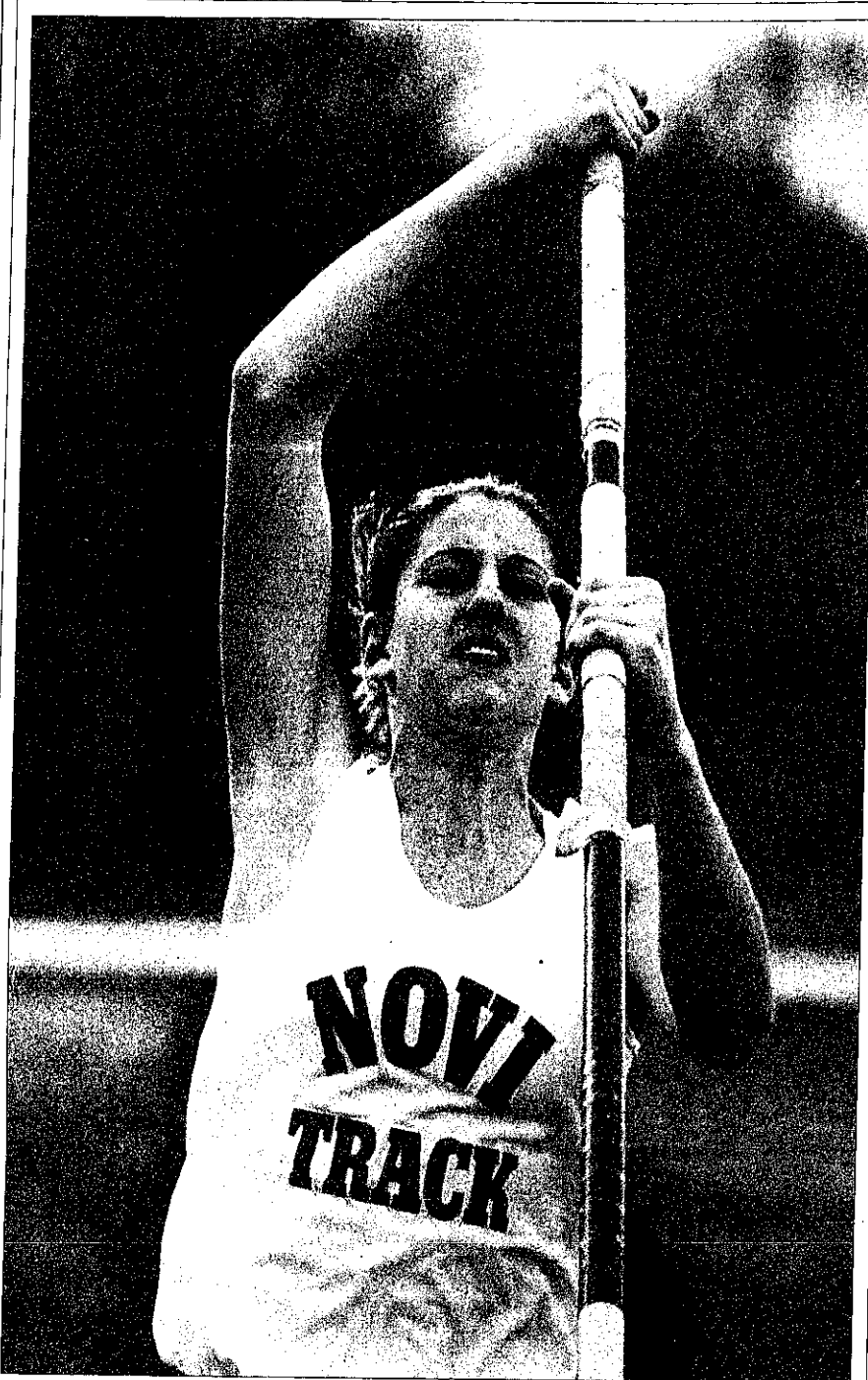


Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

Intensity
Novi junior Jen Mehl plants the pole in the pole vault, preparing to clear the nine-foot mark against the Northville Mustangs. Mehl's jump cleared her to compete in the MHSAA Regionals later this season.

LETTERS

CC must replace trees

I learned that Catholic Central high school wants to cut down a lot of trees to build their new school here. I think they should replant new trees because trees help us breathe, and if we don't have enough trees we cannot breathe and we will die.

If the school doesn't have enough money to buy new trees, then they should save up until they have the money to plant the same number of trees they're cutting down. If I want to buy something, I have to save up my own money. If a grown-up wants a new house, they have to save up their money. You have to save up your money before you can get it.

Also, trees are homes for animals: birds, owls, squirrels and bats. Those animals will need homes to replace the homes they are taking away, or the animals might also die. Trees are also pretty to look at and fun to climb on. Catholic Central, please replace the trees you take away.

Joshua Bowne
Novi

by the outrageous behavior of the Catholic Central Shamrocks (or should they be renamed the "Catholic Central Chain Saws?"). The very idea of these Central-Division catchphrases invading our community, and leaving cords of wood behind them, inflames the senses. The fact that we are expending precious community resources debating this issue is just as shocking. I say, send them back to Redford with a "thanks but no thanks" — item, of course, offer a sweet-heart deal to the Warriors of Brother Rice High School, instead.

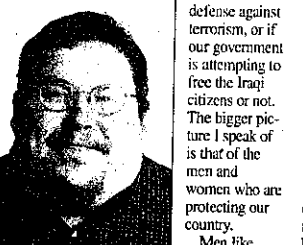
James J. Harrington, III
Brother Rice High School Class of 1994

Send CC Away

Despite the pending war, our troops in harm's way with casualties mounting daily, it is comforting to note that our collective community passions continue to be stirred

Be proud of what they are willing to be for us

Let's set all of that aside for now, OK? Just take our individual opinions about if we should, or shouldn't, be in Iraq right now and look at the bigger picture. No, I don't mean the United States' defense against terrorism, or if our government is attempting to free the Iraqi citizens or not. The bigger picture I speak of is that of the men and women who are protecting our country.



Sam Eggleston
friend of mine from high school named Ashley

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

Mail: Letters to the Editor, Cal Stone, Novi News, 104 W. Main St., Northville, MI 48167
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OTHER OPINIONS

Cal Stone, editor (248) 349-1700, ext. 113 cstone@ht.homecomm.net

'No more war' got her blood boiling

"Wars can be prevented just as surely as they can be provoked, and we who fail to prevent them must share in the guilt for the deed."
— General Omar Bradley

World War II commander Omar Bradley, for whom the now much-used Bradley Fighting Vehicle was named, said this after his experiences in Europe. It still rings true today for pacifist, politician, warrior, citizen all.

The current war in Iraq has stirred people all over the world and here in the U.S., and has its vociferous opponents and proponents.

I gradually supported the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and feel that as armed conflicts go it was put together skillfully and admirably for the right reason (to force the aggressor Iraq out of Kuwait and ultimately destroy Baghdad's capacity to wage war on its neighbors).

The war, diplomatically, finished by President George H.W. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, included a huge multinational coalition and utilized a host of middle eastern nations who shared the same social zip code as Saddam. And it worked.

I was driving south on Sheldon Road and set to turn left on Six Mile when I noticed a driver of a minivan behind me sticking her head out her window yelling something. I thought she may have been upset that traffic wasn't moving through the intersection fast enough.

She followed me in a Honda minivan, closely tailing my car with a worrying scowl on her face.

I thought her miffed at something but wasn't sure.

At the Northville Road and Six Mile light she again stuck her head out her window and this time (rolling down mine to hear her concerns) I heard "Why don't you move to Iraq?"



John Heider

Not a classy move for two adults. I turned around and headed back to the church to confront this driver and in doing so my plan of yelling at her and bringing more animosity to this conflict quickly evaporated. Instead I thought of inviting her to join me at Tim Horton's for a coffee and exchange of ideas.

I should have done that, but didn't. Instead as I left the church parking lot, seeing this woman exit her minivan and head into the east entrance of the church yelled to her "Have a nice day" which I genuinely hoped she would.

My father, a man who would not hesitate to identify himself as a Republican and supporter of George W. Bush (and the current war with Iraq), instilled many values in the Heider children and more than once repeated the philosopher Voltaire's quotation: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Let's hope now more than ever that when our nation is at war abroad and in conflict on its own political homefront — that those on both sides of the issue can agree to at least that much.

John Heider is the staff photographer for the Northville Record and Novi News. You may reach him by e-mail at jheider@ht.homecomm.net or by calling (248) 349-1700 ext. 106.

City needs to provide level playing field

I do not believe that I would care very much to be Fr. Richard Elmer the next time he has to venture into city council chambers to face the nine men and woman of the Novi Planning Commission.

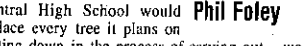
You can pretty much bet your boots that this august body will make the good padre squirm like a worm on a hot summer sidewalk. They are, in a word, not happy campers.

Any who can blame them? When last Fr. Elmer appeared before the planning commission, he solemnly told them that he would abide by the city's planning ordinances. In particular, that Catholic Central High School would replace every tree it plans on cutting down in the process of carving out its new home in Novi.

I told commission members that since his 1,000 students each have to complete 10 hours of community service before graduation, there would be no trouble in planting the 3,000 trees the school would need to replace. He went on at length about how Catholic Central works to instill in its students the lessons of duty, honor and responsibility.

Fr. Elmer left the commission members dreaming of squads of Catholic Central students fanning out across the city leaving behind leafy, tree-lined avenues for the generations.

Of course, no sooner had the promises faded into the walls than Fr. Elmer and his advisors hid themselves to the city council where they more or less asked to be exempted from the city's tree ordinance because it would cost too much and they're a non-profit and all.



Phil Foley

The problem, I believe, is that the padre listened to his lawyers instead of his boss. And when it comes to a question of right and wrong, the last person you want to talk to is a lawyer.

Don't get me wrong, lawyers provide a useful and necessary service in our society. Telling right from wrong just isn't it.

A lawyer will tell you if something is legal, and that is most certainly not the same thing as whether something is right or moral.

Any lawyer, even one from the bottom of the class of the worst law school in the country, will tell you that abortion is legal. But is it right or moral? Ask your clergyman.

What Catholic Central did was certainly legal. After all, the planning commission is merely a creature of city council. Its members serve at the pleasure of the elected officials and it is their job to administer the ordinances the city council has created.

Still, what Catholic Central did smells like week-old fish. And yes, I think we have a right to expect more from folks like Catholic Central than the average real estate developer.

The average real estate developer does not present himself to the public wrapped in the mantle of moral authority. He's simply here to make a buck and there's nothing wrong with that. He just has to follow the rules that the city has decided are in the best interests of its residents.

The phrase that leaps to mind is Caesar's wife. As "Caesar's wife must be above suspicion."

There is just something distasteful about an organization whose mission is to shape the next generation of leaders trying to weasel around the rules.

It's just about as distasteful as the city crafting a charter to the tree ordinance that clearly only benefits one entity. It smacks of the old days in the state legislature when the Detroit delegation pushed through legislation that only applied to cities with a population of more than a million people.

It's just a good argument can be made that non-profit institutions benefit communities that for-profit ventures don't. You can make an even stronger argument that non-profits who make their home here have a greater commitment to the long-term well being of the community than an out-of-town development group that builds, sells and leaves.

Clearly there isn't a elected or public official in the city who doesn't desperately want Catholic Central to come to Novi, but someone please tell me how they are any more deserving than smaller non-profits. If you're going to cut them some slack, then you should do the same for every non-nominal church, synagogue, Rotary Club and Garden Club that wants to build a permanent home in Novi.

One set of rules for the big folks and another for the little folks is just plain wrong.

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

Scholarship should be left alone

The Governor and lawmakers are currently crafting a new budget, deciding which programs are worth protecting or eliminating.



Craig DeRoche
State Representative

Gov. Jennifer Granholm requested the Michigan Merit Award Scholarships be decreased per person from \$2,500 to \$500.

Last week I voted for, and the state House approved, a budget bill to reinstate the Michigan Merit Award Scholarships.

While we are working cooperatively with the Governor, we will have some different priorities — and will readjust Michigan's \$38 billion dollar budget to keep scholarships coming to students who earn them.

Merit scholarships were created to reward students who demonstrate academic proficiency by passing the MEAP test.

The scholarships are paid from funds from the tobacco settlement.

Last November, voters rejected a high-finance ballot referendum that would have taken tobacco funds from education programs and shifted them to Medicaid and other health programs.

The voters spoke loudly on this issue and we should listen when we craft this year's budget.

Parents and students in our local school districts benefited directly from the scholarships, including: Novi High School with 269 scholarships, Northville school districts with 256 scholarships, Walled Lake school district with 435 scholarships and South Lyon schools with 203 scholarships.

As an example of the importance of funding these scholarships, within the Novi school district in 2002, 269 students were awarded \$2,500 merit scholarships. This amounted to \$672,500 for local students.

GUEST COLUMN

Novi High School senior Valdis Lensis is exactly the kind of student who would be adversely affected by the Merit scholarship reduction.

Having earned a 4.0 grade point average, Lensis is bound for the University of Michigan next year and is applying for several scholarships to pay for college.

"It is a very competitive atmosphere to get college scholarships," Lensis said. "We earn those Merit scholarships through academic performance and I think the state should continue program."

If scholarships were cut, as Gov. Granholm has requested, to only \$500 per student, the total for the school districts within the 38th District (Novi, Walled Lake, South Lyon, and Northville) would have dropped to \$581,500 — a cut of more than \$2.3 million.

That is a very large difference that will be felt by numerous families throughout the area.

We need to do everything possible to ensure scholarships are available to deserving students like Valdis, and I will continue to do so.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact my office at (517) 373-0827.

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April 18, Noon - 3:00 p.m. - Sanctuary
Child Care through age 4

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Walled Lake DDA plans market

By Phil Foley
STAFF WRITER

Officials at Walled Lake's Downtown Development Authority are wondering how they'll keep their downtown on the farm once they're seen city hall.

The DDA is planning to hold a Farmer's Market on Walled Lake City Hall Field every Wednesday from May 7 through the end of October, and already they have six farmers signed up. "They're very excited about this and they plan on telling neighboring farmers," said DDA Managing Director Charlene Long.

Long said she's "been thinking about something like this

for the last couple of years," and she thinks it will be a great way to draw people to downtown Walled Lake. "I have only heard positive things so far," she said, noting that even existing merchants in the area are excited about the market.

Long said the DDA is taking vendor applications for space at the Farmers Market. She said a 12-by-12-foot space can be rented for \$10 a day or \$200 for the entire season. Applications are available at the DDA office at 500 N. Pontiac Trail, Suite C, in Walled Lake or by calling (248) 926-9904 or by visiting the DDA website at www.walledlake.com.

The DDA has recruited local veterinarian Dr. Steve Burns and Marian Clifton to serve as Market Masters to ensure there is a good mix of vendors at the Farmers Market, which will be open from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Wednesday.

"We're not looking to do anything permanent at the site," said Long, noting it was originally bought to build a new city hall. Currently the field is used for a wide variety of purposes, so vendors will have the option to sell from the back of their trucks or from temporary stalls. Walled Lake City Hall Field is located on East West Maple Road between Decker Road and Pontiac Trail.

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Mesquite Creek falls victim to arsonist

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

Arson was determined the cause of a fire closing down a popular downtown eatery, police said.

Novi Police Chief Douglas Shaeffer said a Novi resident and former Marine Captain was arrested last week for allegedly starting a fire in Mesquite Creek Steakhouse on Main Street.

No one was injured in the blaze that was set early Saturday, April 5.



"There was quite a bit of damage there," said Novi Fire Chief Arthur Lenaghan. "We're probably looking at about \$40,000. Last report shows the restaurant will be closed for at least a couple of weeks."

Lenaghan said the call came in at 4:08 a.m. as a water/fall alarm.

The fire chief said when the fire fighters arrived, they noticed the east-side window of the restaurant had been broken out.

"With the window broken out and the time of day, we called Oakland County Arson investigators and Novi police," Lenaghan said. "They were able to determine it was a customer that was there the previous day."

Shaeffer confirmed an investigation by the department's detectives revealed the suspect had been in the restaurant April 4.

Restaurant employees said the Novi man had too much to drink and was asked to leave Friday night.

Shaeffer said the suspect is being accused of returning to the restaurant, throwing a drain cover through the window and pouring gasoline inside the establishment before starting the fire.

Lenaghan said Mesquite's sprinkler system ignited, "doing exactly what it is supposed to do," and extinguished the flames.

The Novi police chief said the department's first lead was a checkbook belonging to the suspect found where detectives believed the cover was thrown from.

Also, a man matching the same description as the resident asked to leave was seen earlier in the night throwing a boulder at the window which bounced off.

Shaeffer said police responded to the address listed on the checks and were met by a man matching the consistent description.

A search of the man's Fountain Park apartment revealed training grenades, officials said.

Shaeffer said all residents of the apartment building were evacuated while determining the grenades were duds.

As part of the investigation, members of the department additionally searched the suspect's car.

"We ran a search warrant on the car and it reeked of gasoline," Shaeffer said.

Officers said as they approached the car, gas cans were visible inside.

After matching surveillance video from Speedway Gas Station showing the same man purchasing the gas, the suspect confessed to it all, Shaeffer said.

After the arrest, Mesquite employees found napkins in the trash the suspect had been writing on.

Patrons enter and exit Mesquite Creek restaurant. The restaurant was recently victim to arson.

Shaeffer said the napkins contained writings of how much the man hated police.

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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HomeTown Heroes OF OAKLAND COUNTY

Do You Want to Honor a HomeTown Hero?

Your Observer & Eccentric, Mirror and HomeTown Newspapers, in conjunction with the United Way Volunteer Center of Oakland, are calling for nominations for the HomeTown Heroes™ Awards, which recognizes, encourages and rewards outstanding volunteers who have given selflessly of themselves to support non-profit organizations in Oakland County. Nominees and awardees will be recognized at the Fourth Annual HomeTown Heroes™ Luncheon that will take place on June 4, 2003 at Marriott Pontiac at Centerpoint in Pontiac, Michigan. For a complete description of the nominating categories, please visit www.unitedwayoakland.org.

NAME OF NOMINATOR: _____ IF GROUP, CONTACT PERSON: _____
ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP: _____
DAYTIME PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____
NOMINATING CATEGORY: DIRECT SERVICE SENIOR YOUTH
 GOVERNANCE FAITH-BASED BUSINESS
NAME OF NOMINEE: _____ AGE: _____
(Must volunteer for an Oakland County non-profit organization)
ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP: _____
DAYTIME PHONE: _____ FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____
SCHOOL ATTENDING (if appropriate): _____
PLACE OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE: _____
YEARS OF SERVICE: _____ AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKS PER MONTH: _____
TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED: _____

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.

Entries must be received by Wednesday, April 16, 2003.
Mail or fax forms to: HomeTown Heroes™ Awards • c/o United Way Volunteer Center
50 Wayne Street • Pontiac, MI 48342 • Fax: 248-456-8809
For questions, further information, or more applications go to www.unitedwayoakland.org or call 248-874-1633.

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BIRTH

David and Linda VanGoethem of Novi announce the birth of their son, Andrew "Drew" Michael VanGoethem. Drew was born February 15, 2003 at Providence Hospital, Southfield. He weighed 6 lbs., 5 ounces and was 20 1/4 inches long.

His grandparents are Michael and Elaine Pacher of Livonia and Michael and Helen VanGoethem of Linden. Great-grandparents are Bernice Pacher of Lapeer and Margaret VanGoethem of Roseville.

Andrew Michael VanGoethem

BRIEF

Construction slows traffic on Eight Mile

Driving east from Novi and Northville on Eight Mile will become somewhat problematical starting April 14 as the Road Commission for Oakland County as the city of Farmington Hills replaces a watermain on the north side of the road.

RCOC officials said the \$2.6 million project will be complete by Sept. 1 and at least one lane in each direction will remain open at all times. Road Commission officials also plan to close the north side of the Eight Mile/Middlebelt intersection from April 21 through May 12 and the south side of the intersection from May 12 through May 30 to reconstruct the intersection in concrete.

Motorists, residents or businesses with any questions about the project should call RCOC's Department of Citizen Services toll free at (877) 858-4804.

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CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 16, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **MILLENNIUM TECHNOLOGY SP. BLDG. LOCATED BETWEEN HAGGERTY ROAD AND CABOT DRIVE AND SOUTH OF THIRTEEN MILE ROAD AND NORTH OF LEWIS DRIVE. SEEKING PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN AND WETLANDS PERMIT APPROVAL. THE APPLICANT IS PROPOSING A TWO-STORY, 81,200 SQUARE FOOT OFFICE BUILDING.**

LOCATION MAP
NOT TO SCALE

All interested persons are invited to attend. Verbal comments will be heard at the public hearing and any written comments must be received by the Planning Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2003.

(4-10-03 NN 49103) NOVI PLANNING COMMISSION LYNN KOCAN, SECRETARY

POLICE BRIEFS

Paint ball gone mad

A Novi woman called police after learning strange noises against the outside of her home were paintballs. The Novi resident living in the 23000 block of Cranbrooke near 10 Mile Road called police on March 29 at about 11:15 p.m., reporting she heard something hitting her house. After conducting her own investigation, she found unknown suspect(s) had shot five paintballs at her house. According to the police report, three of the balls hit the woman's windows causing less than \$100 worth of damage to the screens. Two of the balls hit the garage door, resulting in zero damage.

Edward Scissorhands

A Novi man called police after his bushes received an unauthorized trim. A resident living on Rathbone between Galway and Byrne called police on April 1 at about 6 p.m. to report unknown suspect(s) had maliciously destructed his bushes in front of his home. The 46-year-old man said some time the week before, the suspect(s) entered onto his property and cut about 8 inches of his shrubs. Police noted it appeared some type of clippers were used to cut branches off the shrubs. The resident said he has had several problems with his neighbors and suspects one of them. He told police he believes his neighbors are trying to harass him. After questioning neighbors and finding no evidence at the scene, the case was closed.

Quick-change scam

Novi police closed the case on a quick-change scam at Quinzio's Sub's on 14 Mile Road after no suspects were located. On March 2, between 3 and 4 p.m., an employee of the sandwich place said, an unknown man quick-changed

him out of \$270. The employee said a sharp dressed, black male about 6 feet tall wearing a mink coat confused him out of the money. The Wixom worker said the man ordered a bowl of soup and handed him a \$50. As the employee was making change, the man started asking multiple questions about the food and the business. While allegedly distracting the employee, the man

asked for 10 10-dollar bills, five twenty-five-dollar bills and several ones. The employee said the man was with an "unkempt, skanky" woman dressed in sweatpants. She was described as a black female around 35 years old and 5-foot-eight-inches tall. The restaurant's security camera was not on during the crime.

CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 16, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **VENTURE DRIVE SPEC. BUILDING B SP 99-53, LOCATED ON VENTURE DRIVE NORTH OF NINE MILE ROAD BETWEEN MEADOWBROOK AND NOVI ROADS. SEEKING PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN, FINAL SITE PLAN AND SPECIAL LAND USE APPROVALS.**

LOCATION MAP

All interested persons are invited to attend. Verbal comments will be heard at the public hearing and any written comments must be received by the Planning Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2003.

(4-10-03 NN 49110) NOVI PLANNING COMMISSION LYNN KOCAN, SECRETARY

CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 16, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **CHARNEK FEN. SITE PLAN NUMBER 0245, ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF 12 1/2 MILE RD. WEST OF NOVI ROAD. FOR APPROVAL OF A WOODLAND PERMIT AND A RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL WITH A PD-1 PLANNED DEVELOPMENT RESIDENTIAL OPTION AND A WETLAND PERMIT. THE DEVELOPER IS PROPOSING RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM BUILDINGS.**

LOCATION MAP
SCALE: 1" = 200'

All interested persons are invited to attend. Verbal comments will be heard at the public hearing and any written comments must be received by the Planning Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2003.

(4-10-03 NN 49105) NOVI PLANNING COMMISSION LYNN KOCAN, SECRETARY

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Concern with alleged ordinance violations

By Victoria Sadlocha
STAFF WRITER

Two Novi residents concerned with the quality of woodlands and wetlands behind their home, hired an attorney to end what they say is a violation to the city's code of ordinances.

Scott and Kellie Hallaron retained the Traverse City law services of Olson & Bzdok because of what they say is illegal tree cutting and wetland fill activity behind their Balfour Drive home.

Attorney Scott Howard, who also represented The Friends of Novi Parks in a lawsuit against the city pertaining to the Sandstone settlement agreement, said the parcel in question is property designated as a woodland area by the city's woodland map.

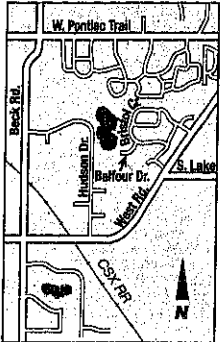
Howard says along with concern caused by the environmental violations, his clients are upset because they said nothing is being done to take care of the matter by the city.

The Traverse City attorney said it was suggested to his clients the Right to Farm Act prohibits the city from enforcing its ordinances in this instance, because the landowner is "purportedly" engaging in farming on the property.

Howard says, "nothing could be further from the truth."

Howard said the landowner doing the clearing and filling has justified his actions by claiming he is exempt from regulation

Woodlands & Wetlands



SOURCE: City of Novi

lished farming operation on the property at the center of discussion.

"The city and our attorneys reviewed all the material and concluded that the extent of trees and the farming is being properly enforced," Pearson said. "The property is zoned light industrial and has been; agricultural use is a lawful non-conforming use 'grandfathered' in Beck North Phase II."

The wooded area behind the Hallaron's street is the location for the proposed second phase of the Beck North Corporate Park owned by Dembs.

"As part of the farming operation, 2 acre of apparently regulated wetlands were disrupted and under regulations can be mitigated on site just as with other projects," Pearson said. "The Beck North property was owned by Northern Equities sold last year, we understand, to Amson Dembs. Beck North is divided into two phases. The southern Phase 1 is about 2/3 developed with office, warehouse, and light assembly uses. The second phase to the north is intended to develop in the same pattern on land that has been farmed for a decade."

Howard said the city's ordinance requires that no cutting activity may be undertaken in a designated woodland area without a woodlands permit and no filling of a wetland may occur without a wetland permit on the property.

Howard said an exception is

carved out for certain farming activities within a designated woodland area, but even the farming exception does not include cutting down trees.

In the letter, Howard states, "While this provision allows certain farming activities to be undertaken within a woodland without a permit, it does not give a landowner carte blanche to cut down trees within the regulated

woodland. A person must obtain a permit to do so, just like any other landowner in the city."

"The importance of the woodlands and wetlands ordinances cannot be overstated," Howard stated. "Given the fast pace of development in the city, preserving these critical natural areas needs to be of a paramount importance."

"Citizens like the Hallarons

rely on these ordinances to protect their quality of life and property values. The city has a responsibility to live up to its promises contained in the ordinances by fully and fairly enforcing them."

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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Wildcats edge Mustangs

First girls' meet finds 'Cats taking firsts while qualifying junior Jen Mehl for the Regional meet

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Not a bad way to start off the season, that's for sure.

The Novi Wildcats girls' track and field team knew what it was going to take to beat a very tough and very competitive cross-town rival squad in the Northville Mustangs, and they did just that as they pulled out the 74-63 win. "I was completely expecting it to be as close as it was,"

Novi coach Marsha Reid said of the contest.

"Several of our top runners were out performing at the Prom Fashion show."

But that wasn't the only reason. Though a first-year head coach, Reid was well aware of one simple fact.

"It's always close against Northville," she added.

The Wildcats had some nice performances across the board, including from junior Jen Mehl, who took first as she cleared 9-foot-6 in the pole vault as well as placing in the long jump and high jump to score points in Novi's winning effort. The effort in the pole vault qualified Mehl for the Regional meet at the end of the season.

The weather this year has hampered some of the Wildcats and what they are capable of doing, but Mehl noted that the first meet of the year is a good way to get the blood flowing.

"We haven't had much practice time, with the cold weather and all," Mehl said. "It helps when we have competition though. It keeps you focused when you're neck-in-neck with someone else."

And, of course, it doesn't hurt to have an athlete like Mehl, who is committed to trying her hardest in the events she participates in.

"I always just try and work my hardest," she said. "Usually, good things come of it."

The Wildcats also had first-place finishes from Hope Morris, who took the 100 dash with her impressive speed, and Julian Bridges, who had a personal best throw of 79-feet, 11-inches for first place in the discus.

Christina Lis, who was a staple in the high jump for Novi last season, already marked her personal best and a first-place wit a 5-foot-2 leap.

The 4-by-100 team of Bella Feldbaum, Morris, senior Amanda Smith and Anise Hayes took first, as did the same team in the 4-by-200.

Becky Thompson made her mark on the meet, taking first in the 200 dash, while Feldbaum earned a mark in the long jump with her first place finish in that field event.

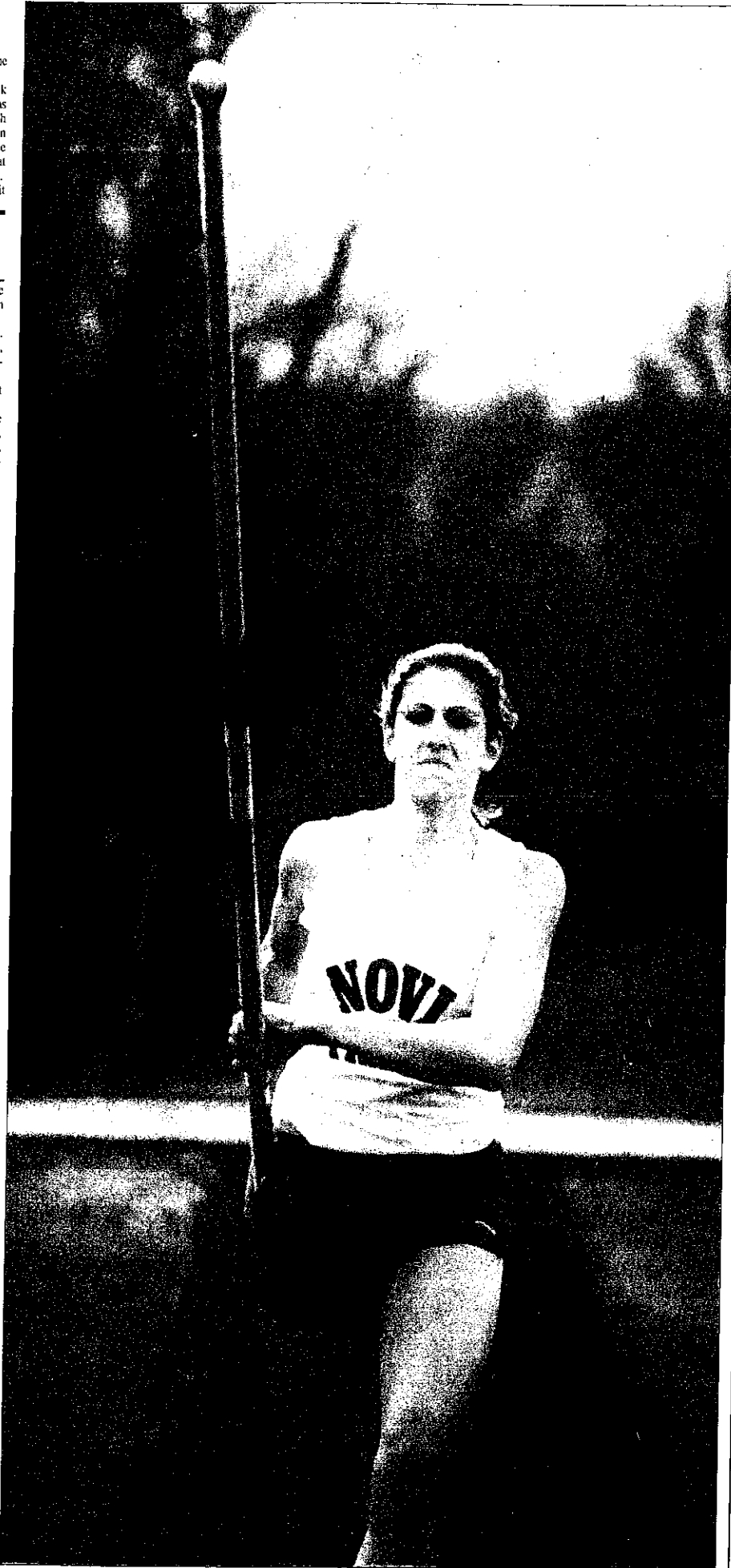
"I am very encouraged with what they have showed me," Reid said. "We are definitely going to be able to compete and be competitive."

Besides those athletes who took first in their events, Reid said that she recognized Patty Ramos' performance in the distance events as well as she gave an all-out effort against some of the best distance runners at Northville — including defending Regional champion Heather Moehle.

The 3200-relay team of Moehle, Lisa Bowen, Katie Miller and Devon Rupley clocked an impressive 10:19 for the blow-out victory for the Mustangs, while Katy McClymont took first in the mile with a 5:43 and Miller was third with a 5:53. The 1,600 relay team of Rupley, Julia Williams, Laren Rocco and Andrea Watts won in 4:29.

Watts, who was competing in the hurdles for the first time since her freshman year, took first in the 300 with a 51.3 and second in the 110 with an 18.4. She also took second in the high jump with a leap of 4-foot-10.

Rupley also took first in the 400 with a time of 1:02, with Bowen nipping at her heels in second just two seconds behind her. The Mustangs also took the top three spots in the 800 as Rupley took first with a time of 2:34, while Bowen took second in 2:42. The third threat, and an impressive performance at that,



Novi junior pole-vaulter Jen Mehl is in full-stride as she sprints towards the pit. Mehl, who qualified for the state meet last season, cleared the 9-foot mark against Northville, qualifying her for the Regional meet.

Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

was turned in by freshman Megan Keiffer, who took third in 2:43.

The Wildcats were slated to take on Howell Tuesday (after the Novi News went to print), but the bad weather looked to possibly shut that down — but Reid was hoping the show would go on.

"I was bummed that we were

canceled today," she said of practice. "I'd like to get us out there against Howell, and then Lakeland. Both of them are respectable teams in the Kensington Valley Conference, and they'll be a test for us."

With this marking the first year of Reid's control of the helm, the Wildcats are experi-

encing a little change in the way the program is running — all the way down to the practices.

"It's a little different," Mehl said. "We have split practices and things have just been different. We're getting through it, and Coach Reid is doing a good job for us. I think we have a lot of potential, and

she has encouraged us to do our best."

And the best is something the Wildcats will have to muster — this week, they are slated to take on the Brighton Bulldogs in a meet that will no doubt help see who is going to rise to the top of the Kensington Valley Conference this season.

This one could be a fight to the finish

Last season, the only Kensington Valley Conference squad that even seemed to be a challenge for the Novi Wildcats was Milford.

This season, your guess is as good as mine to who is going to be the better team in the long run, but both teams

are preparing to duke it out to give us a slight indication.

The Wildcats, under the coaching guidance of Rick Green, will be looking to secure a quick foothold on the conference with a win over the Mavericks. Their youth and inexperience compared to the last couple of seasons doesn't bode well in the hunt, but everyone who knows anything about Novi sports knows that these kids are hardly going to let that stand in their way.

Though, in my opinion, sports is 20 percent experience, 20 percent coaching and 20 percent talent — it's also 40 percent heart. One thing that every Novi athlete I have ever met or written about has is heart, and they aren't going to let that go to waste in any contest.

Their bats will be ready to swing, their pitchers ready to hurl and their coaches ready to lead them to victory — but there's only one problem. Milford's not going to just roll over and give up.

The Mavericks are coming back with some tough talent this season, and will be looking to get a little vengeance for being left in the dust last season as the 'Cats strolled off with the KVC crown. With some stellar pitching, which will no doubt be employed, and some swatters looking to get the best part of the ball, the Mavericks aren't coming in to this game expecting to lose.

Though this is one of those games that you'd hate to see anyone get an "L" for, it's bound to happen. Either team could come away with the win because, as in any sport, every dog, cat or maverick has its day.

I expect that this game is going to be one of the best early-season match-ups in the area, with neither squad being the clear-cut favorite until all the innings have been played and the dirt finally settles.

Novi is planning on coming out strong and playing some of their best baseball and, well, Milford is no doubt planning the same. When you have two squads that are itching to get at it, there's never a for-sure outcome.

Novi and Milford are going to turn this game into a true contest, with strategy and mistakes being key for both sides. I expect that the squad that comes away with the win will be the squad that has the most from the mound — and that's tough at times this early in the season. Now is when the bats are usually lit up and homers can be found flying all over the ballpark, but I have a feeling that this one is going to come down to the mound masters and what they can accomplish.

I, as always, am going with my green and white prediction. Novi has home-field advantage, and enthusiasm that screams for some major baseball action. Though I hardly think this game is going to be a blowout of any sort, I do believe that our Wildcats are going to walk away with the win.

NOVI 3, MILFORD 2.

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@nt.homecomm.net.



Sam Eggleston

GAME OF THE WEEK



Novi
Wildcats
Baseball
vs Milford

Tuesday, April 15, 4:00 p.m.
at Novi

Not the start Novi wanted

Two weeks in, lacrosse still looking for first win

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Once you're at the bottom of the bucket, the only way to get up.

The Novi Wildcats lacrosse team hasn't had the start to the season that they would have liked, but with every loss comes experience.

The Wildcats took the brunt of a 10-2 loss against De LaSalle April 2 after losing to Brother Rice 15-1 and St. Mary's 9-6. Against De LaSalle, the Wildcats weren't able to top the Pilots as they jetted off to a 2-0 lead in the first quarter. In response, the Wildcats turned to the defensive corps, led by goalie Corey Simone and kept their fingers crossed in hopes of making a comeback against their Division I lacrosse rivals.

It seemed that the hoping wasn't in vain as Bobby Watts added a score in the second quarter to pull the 'Cats within one goal before Mike Ward knotted the game 2-2 before the half with some impressive shooting — but that's all that was going to happen on the offensive end for Novi.

In the second half, the Pilots torched on the afterburners, torching the 'Cats with five third-quarter goals before adding three more in the final period.

The loss, which dropped Novi to 0-4 on the season, put the Wildcats into a tough position as they prepare to take on Detroit Country Day today at 7 p.m. at Novi. The Novi lacrosse squad will also host Troy Athens April 15 at 7 p.m.

Though the 'Cats haven't been able to muster the offensive production to earn a victory in the



Novi lacrosse in action against Birmingham Brother Rice. Rice ran away with the victory over the young Novi squad.

very tough schedule they have slanted for themselves, they are no doubt going to be looking for their first win on their home field and in front of their fans in the final four games of their home stretch this season, which finds them taking on Ann Arbor Pioneer April 29, and Troy High School May 1. Both games are scheduled for 7 p.m. start times.

Brother Rice 15, Novi 1
In Novi's home opener, the final mood wasn't a light one for the 'Cats. Taking a beating from

Brother Rice, the Wildcats watched as their opponents scored on nearly every opportunity before Ward, who is sprouting as a star for the 'Cats, netted the only Novi goal of the game late in the first quarter.

St. Mary's 9, Novi 6
In their best offensive production of the season, the Wildcats found themselves on the road and on unfriendly ground as they were edged by a tough St. Mary's squad.

The Wildcats, who graduated the majority of their squad from last year, will most likely look to use the loss as a measuring stick to what they need to improve on immediately and what they can work on as the season progresses.

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.com.com.

Defense wins games

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Well, technically, they are the best team in the state right now. The Northville-Noti Knights Rugby Football topped defending state-champion Brighton and perennial powerhouse Grand Rapids Catholic Central 3-0 in both games.

Against Grand Rapids Catholic Central, the team that knocked Northville-Noti out of the playoffs for the first three years of the Knights' existence, the rugby club finally got some pay back. As the first half was winding down to an end, the ruggerers of Catholic Central gave a major push towards the try-zone, a push that was shut down by some serious tackling and strong rucking by the Knights. Just as the minutes expired, the Knights forced a strong push back, keeping the ball from touching down for the second and snapping the determination of Grand Rapids in the process.

The second half found the Knights driving close, and putting up their three points off a kick — something that the team hadn't really had much of an opportunity to go over yet.

Against Brighton, the Knight's defense held strong and kept the

Bulldogs out of the try-zone while managing a three-point kick of their own to sneak away with the victory. The 'Dogs, who are defending state champions, could find their way past the tough defensive push and suffered a loss thanks to their spurring offense.

Against Grand Rapids Catholic Central, the team that knocked Northville-Noti out of the playoffs for the first three years of the Knights' existence, the rugby club finally got some pay back. As the first half was winding down to an end, the ruggerers of Catholic Central gave a major push towards the try-zone, a push that was shut down by some serious tackling and strong rucking by the Knights. Just as the minutes expired, the Knights forced a strong push back, keeping the ball from touching down for the second and snapping the determination of Grand Rapids in the process.

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Against Brighton, the Knight's defense held strong and kept the

Novi splits versus Walled Lake schools

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi girls' golf team started the season out on the right note, splitting their opening match between Walled Lake Western and Walled Lake Central.

The 'Cats led by coach Deb Harris, fell to Walled Lake Western 199-205, but beat Central 214-214 with the tie-breaker.

"I was very pleased," Harris said. "We had 10 different kids in the match. I think the girls are headed in the right direction, and some of them had the best scores ever in competition."

Against Central, the Wildcats found Jennifer McKenna scoring a 47, Jessica Chudy notching a 53, Audrey Ohl collecting a 56, Jessica Weston earning a 58 and Jenna Kuhn, who was the tie-breaker, earning a 61. Bocca Hughes shot a 63 against Central as well.

The best performance from central came from Sam Sinclair, who collected a 46 in the losing effort.

"Some of them said that they could see where they were now and where they could have some strokes," Harris said of her girls. "Some of them definitely have the potential to go four or five strokes lower than what they shot."

Against Western, the Wildcats didn't come out with the win, but they had some nice performances any way.

McKenna collected a 47 as the best shooter for the Mustangs, while Chudy earned a 53. Sara Goodman, one of the seniors on the squad, recorded a 53, while Laura Vaughn shot a 54. Also playing the right direction, and some of them had the best scores ever in competition."

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Wildcats take early loss to rival Mustangs

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

It's always best to hit the bumps in the road early in the season. That way, a team can learn from them, build upon them and avoid them in the future.

That was the case for the Novi Wildcats as they hit a quick speed bump in their first dual meet of the season, falling to a tough Northville Mustangs team 82-55 April 1 at Northville.

"They are a tough team to beat," Smith said of the Mustangs. "I think they are going to have a really strong team this year."

Novi was far from being shut out of the running though, as seniors Chase Chandler and Matt Emmenecker brought their leadership to the track along with Dan Thelen.

Chandler, who was head-to-head with Northville's Matt Cornelius, managed to eke out a close race in the 100 dash, but took first place against his Northville rival, Emmenecker, on the other hand, didn't have too much competition in

the high jump with Northville's top jumper out of the running and the Novi senior cruised to a victory. Thelen, who was a major factor in the pole vault last season for Novi, continued his excellence in the field event as he took first over all competition.

The Wildcats also had a nice performance for sophomore Mark Moore who took on some stiff Mustang competition in the longest event of the day and walked away with a two-mile victory to boost the Wildcats.

"Mark even had a couple of strikes against him," Smith said. "He had just flown home from Switzerland less than a day before after watching his brother (Tim) compete in the world meet. With jet lag and everything else, he had a bit of a cold too. Not that it's an excuse, he still ran well and should be able to go under 10 minutes almost on command."

The Mustangs had much of the same success and more so as the final tale of the score tell. Cornelius threw the shot — for the first time — and won the event with 39-foot-8 inches, while taking home the long jump with a

leap of 21-2. Finishing the 100-meter dash in 11.7 seconds also found him finishing second in that event and he was also on the winning 4-by-100 relay team.

Pat Kelleher had a nice showing in the mile against some tough competition, winning the event in 4:38. Ryan Lions took home the 200 meter dash victory, finishing the sprint in 24 flat.

The Mustangs also went on to win the 4-by-100 and 4-by-100 relay events. "We knew it was going to be a dog fight," Smith said. "We had some falls, a disqualification in the 4-by-100 and some odd little nuances."

No doubt, that if it weren't for a couple of events that found the Wildcats trailing where they normally wouldn't have, the meet may have turned out a little differently.



Northville junior Amanda Crawford, left, listens as Novi junior Jen Mehl, who qualified for the state finals meet in 2002, explains some finer points to the pole vault.

A little help from your friends

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

One of the best things that someone might expect to see is a Novi Wildcats giving pointers to a Northville Mustangs in a competition that pits one against the other. Yet, that was the scene at the pole vault pit April 1 — and it wasn't an April Fools joke either.

Junior Jen Mehl, of Novi, was easily the best pole vaulter at the meet, clearing nine feet while her closest Northville competitor struggled to get over the six-foot-six mark. She could have easily ignored the situation, choosing the let the Northville vaulter go about her business, but instead she decided to lend a helping hand.

The Northville athlete just happened to be junior Amanda Crawford, a close friend of Mehl's and a teammate on the combined Northville-Noti Wild Stangs gymnastics team.

Outfielder Brandon, a junior, unloaded his second straight two hit performance while senior Darren Guffey and junior Chris Scott contributed single base hits.

Next steps for the team are double hitters at Hartland April 11 at 4 p.m., the 12th at Plymouth Canton at noon, and Tuesday a single game the 15th at pre-season favorite Milford at 4 p.m.

Michael Zerlich is a special writer for the Novi News. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.

without much guidance. "We don't have a coach, and I really don't know much about where to hold the pole," Crawford said. "Jen knows some good techniques and after asking her some questions and watching her, I was holding the pole right. She also helped me out with my steps, which actually did help."

It could be argued that because Mehl and Crawford were part of the same gymnastics team, that their friendship carried over the thought of the Northville-Noti rivalry. But, then again, don't the football players who work so hard to beat one another start out on the Colts together?

It proves to be an interesting situation, especially where the rivalry is concerned. But, Mehl and Crawford really don't see that rivalry.

"I don't understand it," Crawford admitted. "Maybe it's because I've worked with girls from Novi over the past two years, but I just don't understand it. I honestly have no idea, and I've never felt that rivalry before."

Mehl agrees, saying that she feels there are definitely bigger rivals out there than Northville. "I think that when it comes to rivalry and who we want to beat, our biggest rival would be Brighton," Mehl said of Novi. "I've been on a

team with Northville kids, so I guess that might be the difference. It's kind of funny though, when you walk into Northville wearing your letter-jacket. A lot of the Northville kids just sort of stare."

For members of Northville and Novi athletic squads like Crawford and Mehl, it just doesn't seem that there's any need for so much intensity between the teams.

Mehl said that she doesn't mind giving a helping hand, and Crawford is appreciative of her efforts and time.

"Sometimes, you just need someone else to help you," Mehl said. "Without a coach, it's tough to compete in the pole vault. I'm happy that I could at least help a little."

Crawford, who is hoping to break her school record of 7-foot-6 sometime in the next two years goes, said that it's always nice to get a little help.

"Watching Jen definitely makes me want to work harder, and because I know her, it makes me want to someday be as good as her," she said. "I'm very thankful for her help, and I really think it's awesome to see us go beyond being opponents and having her help me out when I need it."

SPORTS SHORTS

Colts Football and Cheerleading Registration

Open registration for the 2003 Northville-Noti Colts football and cheerleading squads will take place from April 1 through May 3. Registration forms are available at the Novi Civic Center and a birth certificate must be included with the form.

A public lottery will be held at the Novi Civic Center May 3 at 10 a.m. to determine the team rosters. Forms will be pulled randomly and given a number in the event a waiting list is necessary. It is not necessary to arrive early or to be present.

The squads will consist of freshmen (ages 8-9), junior varsity (10-11) and varsity (12-13). Children must be above the ages by August 1, 2003 for both football and cheerleading and certain weight restrictions may apply.

For more details, call Bill or Renee Ince at (248) 349-6734.

Softball tryouts

There will be tryouts for a 10-and-under travel softball team in Northville soon. Those looking to participate can be 10 years old at any time this year (including those who turned 11 after Jan. 1, 2003).

Tryouts will be held at the Rec Center of Hillsdale Middle School, which is located at 700 W. Baseline Road at the corner of Center and 8 Mile roads in Northville.

April 12 from 6:30-8 p.m.
April 13 from 4:30-6 p.m.
If you have any questions, please call Scott at (248) 347-8914.

Umpire Clinic

Northville's Umpires Association (NUA) is currently looking for people (at least 14 years of age) interested in becoming umpires. Umpiring allows individuals to stay involved with the game, practice leadership skills and earn some great money as well.

Scheduling is very flexible. NUA will be holding its annual Umpire Clinic at Northville Township Hall/Henningsen Park May 3 from 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and May 4 from noon-4 p.m. Clinic attendance is mandatory.

Questions should be directed to Bob Boshoven, umpire director, at (248) 347-5915.

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JACK FARRIS

Old Man Winter may be slowly disappearing into the promise of spring, but the chill of unsettled economic and political events continues to send shivers rippling through the American small-business sector.

With expectations for the economy showing significant deterioration, the optimism that normally abounds on Main Street declined more than three points in February, according to research by NFIB. Worries over war in the Middle East caused a sharp hike in the number of entrepreneurs who said political conditions were affecting their views about whether or not to expand now.

Yet they aren't giving up. "Help Wanted" signs can still be seen in their storefronts and shop windows. February was only the second positive month for employment in more than two years.

Long known for their "can do" attitudes, millions of small-business owners are constantly in search of opportunities and solutions. They continually tinker with their businesses in a never-ending effort to improve efficiency and maximize the bottom line.

There may seem to be a dearth of fixes to our current economic situation, but the small-business community has a clear opportunity at this very moment to help the national economy gain traction. That opportunity is as close as the telephone and as simple as a call to members of Congress who serve on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Very soon, the committee will be considering legislation to cut taxes. Some members of the committee are acutely aware of the economic significance of the nation's 22 million small businesses.

Unfortunately, there are those in Congress who don't understand that letting entrepreneurs keep more of the money they make is a good thing for the economy.

President Bush has sent his economic stimulus plan to Capitol Hill for action by Congress. The plan contains important elements designed to lower taxes on small business and by doing so, free up money that can be used to hire people, restock inventories and boost expansion.

The legislation includes three items that are vital to the small-business sector. First, it would raise the expensing limit from \$25,000 to \$75,000 and index it for inflation. Next, the president wants Congress to speed up tax-rate cuts that were enacted in 2001, thereby providing an average tax reduction of a little over \$2,000 for those who own small firms. And finally, the plan would put a halt to the unfair practice of taxing dividends twice. That alone would inject some \$20 billion into the economy, spurring investment and growth, in addition to giving the stock market a much-needed boost.

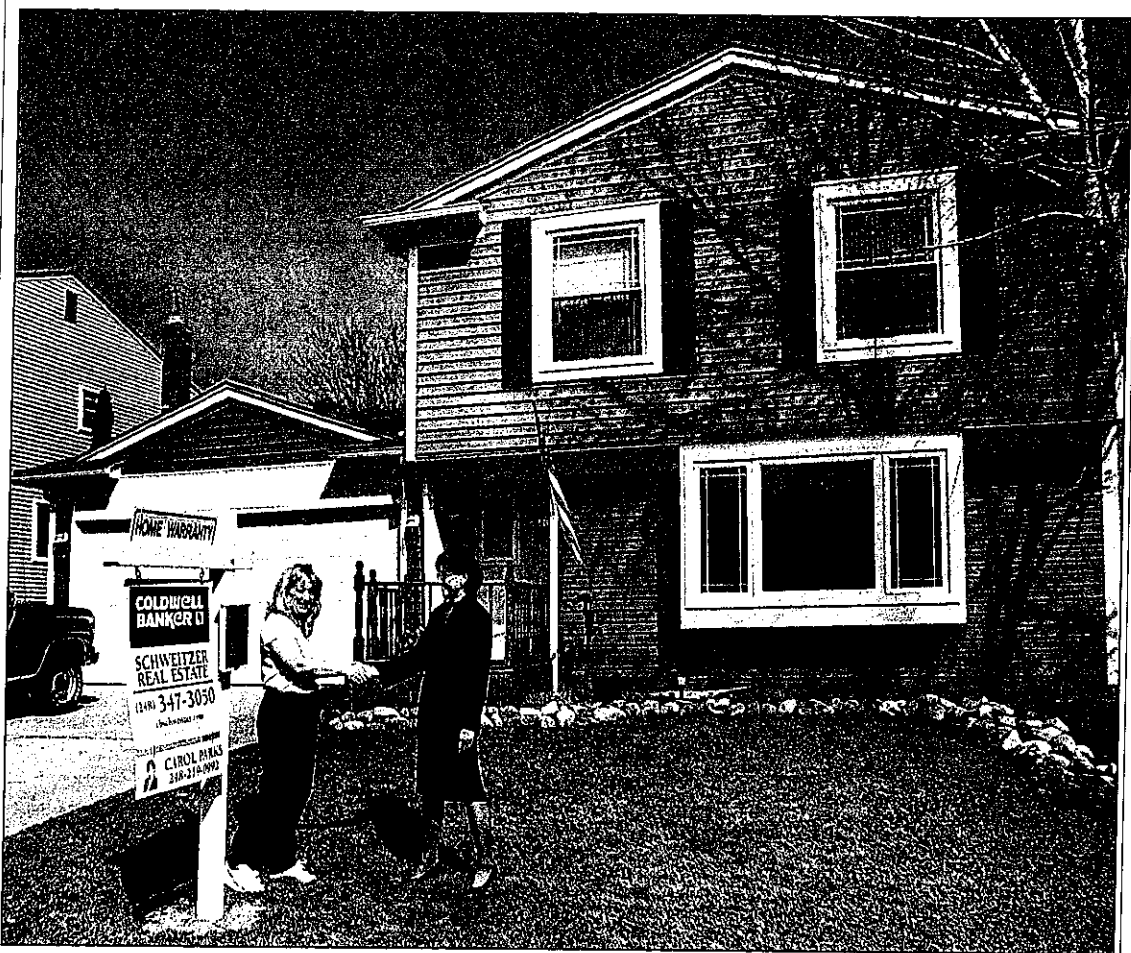
One phone call doesn't seem like much. But one phone call to a member of Congress from each small business owner in the country, urging support for the president's proposal, could have a major impact on the final vote count. More importantly, it could serve to fan the flames of small-business activity that have been flickering through a long, hard winter and re-ignite our nation's economic growth.

Jack Farris is president of NFIB (the National Federation of Independent Business), the nation's largest small-business advocacy group. A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB represents the consensus views of its 600,000 members in Washington, D.C., and all 50 state capitals. More information is available on-line at www.nfib.com.

CORRECTION

The names of persons identified in a photograph of the April 3 Regional Marketplace advertorial were inadvertently reversed.

ADVERTORIAL



Real estate agent Carol Parks, right, takes care of business with a South Lyon client.

photo by HAL GOULD

Parks is passionate about real estate

By Elizabeth Heer
SPECIAL WRITER

Carol Parks, Realtor, wants to be your realtor for life. She provides exceptional service and gets results based on her experience and passion for the business. Parks is affiliated with Coldwell Banker Schweitzer Real Estate, (248) 347-3050. She may be reached by calling: (248) 219-0992 or by email at sold@castlesby-carol.com.

Carol Parks website, www.castlesbycarol.com, provides more information and listings.

Carol Parks knows what qualities make a good realtor. She can speak to personal experience, having made a total of 12 moves over the past 25 years - five of which ranged across the country.

"I know the experience up close and personal," she said, "and I know what people appreciate in a real estate agent, both on the buyers side and the sellers as well."

What she learned was that communication is perhaps the most critical component of a realtor-client relationship. In fact, Parks feels so strongly about it she presents a four-point communication agreement to every one of her cus-

tomers in which she pledges to provide an update every two weeks, call anytime there is a change in market conditions and advises how that change can impact the sale, make sure her customers have copies of all advertising and information used to market their home, and finally, to be 100 percent honest and straightforward with her customers.

"I think staying in touch with your buyers and sellers is critically important, but especially with sellers. They want to know their agent is working for them. It can be stressful when they don't hear from their agent for months," she said.

Parks has taken her first-hand experience one step further and recently became a certified relocation specialist by completing the necessary course work, passing the certification exam, and closing on the required number of transactions. "I know what it's like to be relocated, so I love helping with relocations. It's such an exciting time," Parks said.

Real estate is such a personal touch business, according to Parks, that she rolls out the red carpet for customers in order to make them feel special. "I want everyone to know I'm totally with them and working for them. I take that

communication agreement with each of my clients very seriously, and even if I don't have anything new to tell them, my people hear from me. It's one of my hot buttons that I am passionate about because I've experienced the bad side of it." In fact, a bad experience with an agent in relocating to Michigan is what motivated Parks to get into real estate in the first place. "It made me say, 'I could do this job and do it a whole lot better,'" she recalled.

Parks has also earned the Accredited Buyer Representative certification, bringing even more expertise to her clients. "I think having this certification is important because it helps me be a better agent for my buyers, and helps them know that the details of their transactions won't fall through the cracks," she said.

As a master of marketing, Parks has created a home sellers success package she presents to every new customer detailing her plan of action for leveraging the sale of his or her home. Her 12-point plan includes listing every property on the Western Wayne, Oakland Association of Realtors Computerized Multiple Listing Service and on web sites, including Realtor.com, the Coldwell



photo by HAL GOULD

Carol Parks, left, spends some time speaking with one of her South Lyon clients.

Banker Schweitzer web site, and her own site, www.castlesbycarol.com.

Recognizing that 80 percent of all sales are made by just 20 percent of real estate agents, Parks constantly exposes her listings to the top 50 agents in the market. Parks is never content to sit in her office, but rather she actively pursues buyers by cold calling into apartment complexes and move-up home markets, looking for those who might be ready to move up into a house.

"I also look at migration patterns. I've learned, for instance, that South Lyon buyers tend to come from Livonia, Redford, and Canton, and I'll call agents in those areas to mention my listings," she said. "I spend quite a bit of time on the phone for each seller."

Buyers also get the advantage of Parks' commitment to detail. She has prepared a guide for them as well, which lays out the procedures for home buying so there are no

unnecessary surprises. She has found that many first-time buyers appreciate the packet.

Those marketing skills were honed during the years she owned and operated a piano studio in three different states she lived in. "The thing that I loved the best about my business was the marketing part of it. I loved telling people why they should do business with me, and I tried to network and do strategic marketing. I got tons of referrals, and worked hard at it," Parks said.

Now Parks is building her real estate business referral by referral, and she anchors it all on her honesty and professionalism. She recognizes that honesty is the touchstone of her business and makes it her personal commitment to gain her client's trust.

"My goal is to always provide exceptional service in a trustworthy way," she said. "I want to be my customer's family real estate agent for life."



Carol Parks

*Accredited Buyer Representative *Certified Relocation

Serving All Your Residential Real Estate Needs in: Western Wayne, Southern Oakland and Livingston Counties.



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