

INSIDE

Rock the Catwalk

Katie Kozlowski, 18, will model at the Rock the Catwalk event at the Royal Oak Theater tomorrow night.

— Page 8A

More Main St. changes

Kitchens by Design, Mesquite Creek and The Bluegreen Vacation Club have moved, are moving or are planning a name change.

— 10A



Holiday Special

Shopping tips, picking out a real Christmas tree, last-minute gift ideas, recipes for the pros and lots of funny thoughts from Novi's elementary students!

— Section B

REGIONAL MARKET

Fine Chinese dining

Jasmine's, a fine Chinese dining establishment in Northville, offers customers a unique dining experience with an upscale atmosphere. It may be off the beaten path of Main Street on Mary Alexander court, downtown, but worth the effort to find.

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75 years in the making

Wixom's downtown gets underway

By Kim Kovel
STAFF WRITER

Surrounded by acres of mud, Lynda Schemanske stood under the white plastic tent at Chambers Road and Pontiac Trail last Wednesday.

With husband Jim and scores of others, the 30-year Wixom resident was awaiting the ground-

breaking of "Tribute," a 75-acre project that'll bring a central downtown to the city for the first time since 1929.

"I never thought I'd see this in my lifetime," Schemanske said. "I'm so excited to think we might have a downtown like Northville or Plymouth. I feel we got lost between Novi and Milford."

Schemanske's pride was shared by residents and officials alike, who kicked off the nearly \$250 million endeavor that ultimately will boast 75,000 square feet of retail and 579 various style homes.

City Manager J. Michael

"I never thought I'd see this in my lifetime."

Lynda Schemanske
Wixom resident

Dornan commended the joint venture between Cohen Associates and Robertson Brothers.

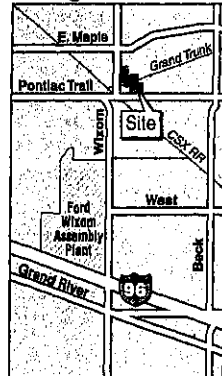
"Today, the entire community takes a front row seat to see their efforts put into action," Dornan said. "I am confident you will be impressed."

Desire, need to rebuild

Since fire claimed Wixom's original agricultural downtown district 75 years ago, reconstruction has been patchy.

continued on page 2

Tribute at Wixom Village Center



SOURCE: Covington Properties



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

A holiday classic

Members of the Novi Sports Club's ballet studio are preparing for their Dec. 18 presentation of the Nutcracker Suite at Novi High School. The performance will benefit Novi Youth Assistance. Showtimes are 3 and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$7 for adults, free for children 2 and under. Call the Sports Club at (248) 477-3830 for more information. From left are Kathleen Perry, Katherine Miller, Stephanie Curran, Christine Curran, Angela Schmidt, Jay Kim, Joine Smith, and Jessie Linton. For more details, see story on page 8.

MEAP may go

Governor's OK needed for change

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Though it won't be official until Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm provides her stamp of approval, it seems as though high school students throughout Michigan won't have to worry about taking the MEAP test anymore. That's because Senate Bills 1153-1157 contain provisions that will change the test to the Michigan Merit Exam.

The change has passed both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill has now been sent to the governor for a signature.

According to Novi Community School District Superintendent Emmett Lippe, if the bill is approved by the federal government, the MEAP will be given to most students in the 2005-06 school year, with a sample of them taking the Michigan Merit Exam.

In the 2006-07 school year however, the new test will be given to all students. Also in that year, students will be able to qualify for a merit scholarship by meeting a certain test score. In addition, their results will factor into whether or not students will qualify to receive other scholarships.

The new exam will assess English

continued on page 12

Bonnie and Clyde wannabes strike seven salons

Shelby Twp. couple arrested in Canton hotel

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

A Bonnie-and-Clyde-style team from Shelby Township was arraigned last Friday in 52-1 District Court in Novi for stealing more than \$5,000 from

seven Novi beauty salons.

Robert Ryan Brenner, 28, and Holly Marie Brenner, 29, were

arraigned on a seven-count warrant for uttering and publishing, known in layman's terms as passing bad checks.



R. Brenner



H. Brenner

The husband-and-wife crime team was arrested by Novi police Dec. 10 at the Extended Stay hotel in Canton.

"They would enter local beauty salons, select various pieces of merchandise and write a fraudulent check for

over the amount of the purchase to receive cash back," described Det. Kevin Rhea, Novi Police Department.

The seven salons in Novi were hit from Nov. 5 through Nov. 23, with surrounding communities still investigating their salons and other retail establishments, according to Rhea.

"They were targeting salons," Rhea said. "Evidently, they had passed a bad check at a salon or salons in the past and believed that they were an easy target."

Salon owners told Novi police that it's not unusual for spas or beauty salons to allow customers to receive cash back so that they can tip their stylists or other staff members.

The two are currently lodged in the Oakland County Jail on a \$25,000 bond. Their preliminary exam conference was scheduled Dec. 15 at the 52-1 District Court.

The couple was able to fraud-

continued on page 5

State finds \$370 million gap in expected revenues

Schools dodge bullet; Novi district ready for cuts

By Cal Stone
EDITOR

With the transfer of \$99.5 million from the state's general fund to the school aid fund late last week, school districts across the state heaved a sigh of relief — for now.

The Legislature's money move came after a special revenue estimating conference Dec. 3 revealed a \$370 million difference between actual and expected revenues for the fiscal year, which began in October.

"In the immediate future, at least, funds for this year are protected probably until they have the next confer-



E. Lippe

continued on page 5

Governor and legislators faced with difficult decisions

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

State legislators who serve Novi say zero-based budgeting is the only way the state can deal with the current state deficit, estimated at somewhere between \$380 million and \$460 million, depending on whom one asks.

Zero-based budgeting means departments don't start where they left off last year but from scratch.

"They have to justify every expenditure and how it fits in to what citizens want and expect. It must reflect



N. Cassis

continued on page 4

City officials take bare bones approach to budget

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Novi is in better shape than many Michigan communities when it comes to budget concerns. But, that doesn't mean that some hard decisions won't have to be made when budget talks take place next year.

A goal-setting session is planned for 6 p.m., Monday,

GOAL-SETTING

A goal-setting session for the City of Novi will take place at 6 p.m., Monday, Jan. 31, in council chambers. The meeting is open to the public and will be shown on the local government access cable television channel, Channel 13.

continued on page 4

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City of Wixom's new downtown gets underway

continued from front page

"The desire and need to rebuild Wixom's Downtown, boy, it goes back many years," Assistant City Manager Tony Nowacki said. About 10 years ago, he said, the city started purchasing 41 acres in the area for the project. After community brainstorming began in 1998, a December 2000 Village Center Ordinance, was approved. The resulting downtown zoning district covers the city's central pocket, stemming from Pontiac Trail and Wixom Road. An interviewing process started in 2002.

"Our goal was to find developers that shared the city's vision," Nowacki said. They found it in Cohen of West Bloomfield. Robertson of Bloomfield Hills, who joined forces at the city's request. Keith Rogers of Covington Properties is president of the result. "CPS/Robertson Acquisition, Wixom, LLC. It's a collective plan to reinvent Pontiac Trail as Main Street," Rogers said. "It's centrally located to the expressway, in between people's homes and how they get to work."

Rogers said there's high interest from local and regional retailers, and he anticipates 90-95 percent will be leased by spring. Buildings will have varied facades to give the impression of building over time, he said.

Local businesses and cafes will be staples, Nowacki said. "It's not to compete to the malls, the huge shopping centers,"

Nowacki said. "Wixom still is a small town. The people in this community interact and volunteer and work together." The first phase also will include 215 townhomes and stacked ranch condos. A second phase will include 120 single family homes.

Looking forward

Last week, several buildings on the mostly vacant land were demolished and work was underway to fill in lowland.

The downtown will include pedestrian-friendly walkways and a plaza and perhaps a handshell, as well as street parking on Pontiac Trail.

"We always try to make sure we develop a sense of community," Paul Robertson of Robertson Brothers said. "We had everything that you needed to be able to start a town."

With 1:30 minutes away, the police station, city offices and the new Vidare Italian restaurant are across the street. "You don't necessarily have to get in your car and drive to dinner," said Larry Cohen, president, Cohen Associates.

The first round of homes should be finished early next summer. In an evening event also held last Wednesday, 63 signed a priority list open to Wixom residents for homes.

"Wixom's always been on the path to progress," Mayor Michael McDonald said. "Nothing good is ever accomplished without taking a risk."

THE COST

Tribute, Wixom's new downtown now in the works, won't cost taxpayers any extra.

Assistant City Manager Tony Nowacki said the city's Downtown Development Authority will help capture funds for public space amenities and nearby pond reconstruction.

"Property value increases" as people move in, Nowacki said, with that, property tax amounts also incrementally increase.

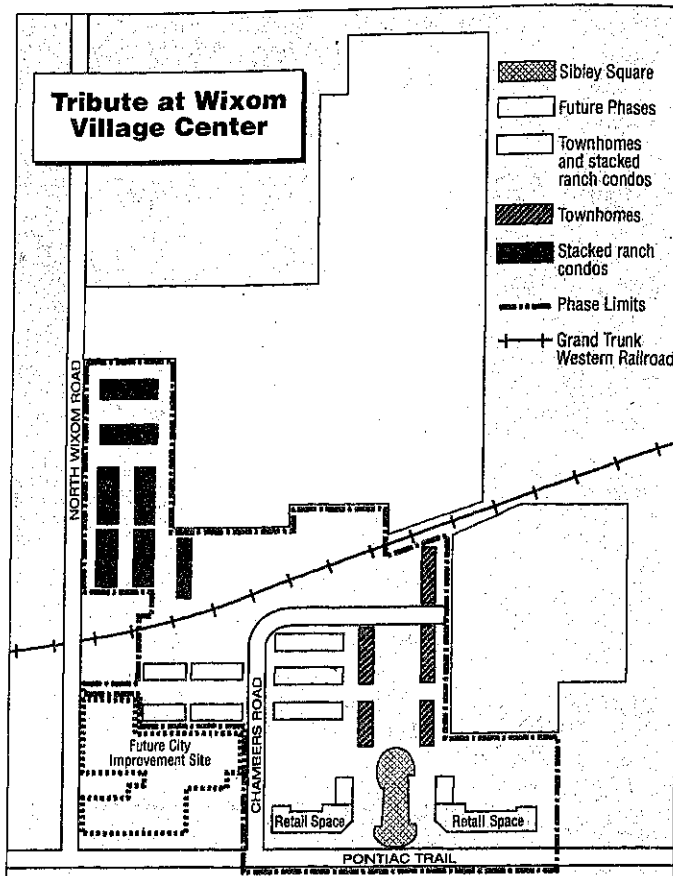
"That difference between the vacant land now and the developed land, that goes to the DDA," Nowacki said. "The DDA goes out, borrows money from private investors. That money, they pay it back through the incremental tax increase."

Schools in the city's Village Center Area are exempt.

Wixom's Downtown Development Authority provides for 25 years to pay back the improvement costs, with interest, Nowacki said.

Based on the dedication and early numbers, many seem willing to take the chance.

Kim Kowalek is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107 or via e-mail at kowalek@homedown.com.



SOURCE: Covington Properties

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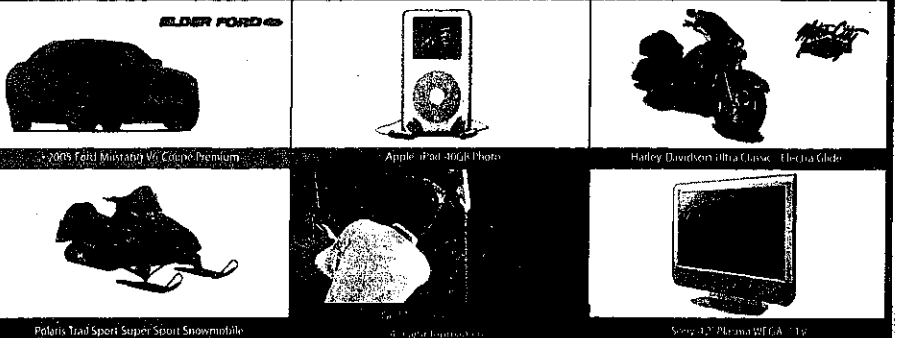
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City officials take bare bones approach to budget

Jan. 31, 2005, in council chambers, when city council will begin to start setting spending priorities for the city. The session is open to the public and will also be shown on Channel 13.

Gov. and legislators facing difficult decisions

trying to stimulate," she said. "Cassidy says the loss of jobs in manufacturing is the main culprit in Michigan's slow economic recovery."

Schools dodge budget bullet; Novi district ready for future cuts

continued from frontpage Oakland County. Half of them decided to do that, half of them didn't."

City to watch spending

Budget talks will begin in April 2005, but no dates have been set yet. Those meetings are also open to the public and will be televised on cable Channel 13.

Gov. and legislators facing difficult decisions

increasing revenues. Once you fund priorities with existing revenues, you draw a line. After that point, it becomes a question as to whether taxpayers are willing to increase taxes for services outside the revenue limit."

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FAITH

Rampz Khuri, staff writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 110 rkhuri@ht.hometown.com

Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross has moved to 30709 W. Ten Mile Rd. (between Meadowbrook and Haggerty roads). Phone: (248) 427-1175 or visit www.churchoftheholycross.com. Services are Sundays at 7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist is Sundays at 10 a.m. with music, Sunday school and nursery care. The second and fourth Sundays of each month at 7 p.m. is a contemporary worship service. The Rev. Karen Henry is pastor and priest-in-charge.

Crosspointe Meadows Church of Novis presents an Alpha Course, "Exploring the Christian Faith," on Sundays at 6 p.m. There are over 28,000 Alpha courses running all over the world. Check out the Alpha Course Website at www.alpha.com. Program includes workbook and light supper. There is no fee. CMC offices are located at 395.80 Grand Rover Ave., Ste. B1-C, West of Haggerty. Phone: (248) 427-2700; Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Faith Community Presbyterian Church invites you to worship at either the 9 a.m. or

10:30 a.m. service. Sunday school is offered at both services for children pre-kindergarten to 12th grade. Faith Community Presbyterian Church houses the Novi Emergency Food Bank, which accepts all canned goods and non-perishable items as donations. The food bank is available to qualified persons in Novi, Walled Lake and New Hudson. Communion will be served at Sunday's service at both the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services. Faith Community Presbyterian is located at 4447 W. Ten Mile Rd. in Novi.

Church of the Holy Cross offers a worship service every Wednesday from 12:10-12:50 p.m. Complete your lunch hour with God at a worship service that includes scripture and Holy Communion. The church invites all to worship Sundays at 7:45 and 10 a.m. Nursery care is available at 10 a.m. worship service. The nursery is coordinated by a registered pediatric nurse. Adult Bible Study is on Sunday at 9 a.m. Worship Center for children ages 3-7, and Sunday School is at 10 a.m. The Rev. Karen Henry is pastor and priest-in-charge. The Rev. John W. Henry II is assistant priest.

Worship Service of Complete is held at 8:30 p.m. Rite 13 (ages 11-14) and Rite 12A (ages 14 and up) groups meet at 5 p.m. for their program and dinner, 7 p.m. Youth Worship Service is held the second and fourth Sunday of every month, all are welcome. Church of the Holy Cross is located at 46200 W. Ten Mile Rd. (between Beck and Fall roads), Novi. Call (248) 349-1175 or visit www.churchoftheholycross.com.

St. James Catholic Church - Children's Play, Saturday, Dec. 18 at 1 p.m. - Christmas Concert featuring Pierre Fracalanza, Sunday, Dec. 18 at 6:30 p.m. - Reconciliation, Individual Penance, Dec. 18 at 3 p.m. - Communal Penance, Dec. 21 at 7 p.m.

The Church of the Holy Family offers a Spanish-speaking Mass since a month beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Saturdays. The church is located at 24505 Meadowbrook Rd., between Ten Mile Road and Grand River Avenue. Call (248) 349-8847.

Christmas Liturgies, Christmas Eve, Friday, Dec. 24. Children's Christmas Liturgy at 4 p.m.; Young adult Christmas Liturgy at 6 p.m.; Choir and Christmas Liturgy at 9 p.m. - Christmas day, Saturday, Dec. 25, 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Christmas Liturgy; Sunday, Dec. 26, 8 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - New Year's Day, Saturday, Jan. 1, 10 a.m. Mass - St. James Catholic is located at 46225 Ten Mile Rd., Novi. Call (248) 347-7776.



Courtesy photo

HAVEN donation
On Sunday, members of Novi's Crosspointe Meadows Church loaded their vans with over 1,200 items to donate to the HAVEN, a non-profit organization which offers assistance to victims and families experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse in Oakland County. The items were collected at the church's annual Ladies Christmas Tea, held Dec. 1 at the Novi Civic Center. Pictured (l to r) are Don Holder, Jessica Holder, Renee Langley, Sue Pherson, Vada Lippel and Rev. Danny Langley.

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Christmas Day - no service
- Holy Family Catholic**
21505 Meadowbrook Rd.
(248) 349-8847
Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., midnight
Christmas Day - 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
- Faith Community United Presbyterian**
44400 W. Ten Mile Rd.
(248) 349-2345
Christmas Eve - 5 p.m., 8 p.m., 11 p.m.
Christmas Day - No service
- First Baptist of Novi**
15301 E. Seven Mile Rd.
(248) 349-3647
Christmas Eve - 7 p.m. in Japanese
Christmas Day - No service
- Good Shepherd Lutheran**
11415 W. Nine Mile Rd.
- ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN MISSOURI SYNOUD**
12000 E. Seven Mile Rd.
10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.
Christmas Eve - 5 p.m., 8 p.m., 11 p.m.
Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
- BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**
10000 E. Seven Mile Rd.
10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.
Christmas Eve - 5 p.m., 8 p.m., 11 p.m.
Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
- FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**
28000 E. Seven Mile Rd.
10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.
Christmas Eve - 5 p.m., 8 p.m., 11 p.m.
Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
- MEADOWBROOK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**
21505 Meadowbrook Rd.
(248) 349-8847
Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., midnight
Christmas Day - 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
- CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS EPISCOPAL (Anglican)**
30709 W. Ten Mile Rd.
7:45 a.m., 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., midnight
Christmas Day - 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
- FAITH COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
44400 W. Ten Mile Rd.
(248) 349-2345
Christmas Eve - 5 p.m., 8 p.m., 11 p.m.
Christmas Day - No service
- ST. JAMES ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**
46225 Ten Mile Rd.
(248) 347-7776
Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 9 p.m.
Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
- CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY**
24505 Meadowbrook Rd., Novi, MI 48245
7:45 a.m., 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., midnight
Christmas Day - 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
- HARVEST FELLOWSHIP**
49329 Portage Trail
10:30 a.m., 7 p.m.
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Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
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Sarah Sargent Interim
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Contemporary Service - 10:30 A.M.
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crosspointemeadows.org
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SENIORS

Kim Kovelle, staff writer (248) 348-1700, ext. 107 kkovelle@ht.hometown.com

Needlers lend a helping hand

Novi senior quilters share talents, laughter

By Kim Kovelle
STAFF WRITER

Shipping and stitching fabric, 13 seniors are united in a quilt-making quest. And for Marianne Schmid, quilts with patched hearts are a specialty. From apples and tomato patterns to cottages and fleeces, fabrics come together — as do laughter and memories — when these women volunteer their time and talents to craft quilts.

Last week, the Needlers met to share Christmas snacks and display some of the warm, comfy coverings they'll be donating this season.

Founded by Jo Bangs about 10 years ago, the group has made hundreds of tiny quilts for premature babies, full-sized works for abused women and lap blankets for wheelchair-bound veterans. "All you need to know is how to cut — iron and cut," Sharon Leimann said. Even then, with scores of years of experience among them, Needlers are happy to teach beginners.

They meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at Novi's Senior Center, cutting fabric and stitching with lightweight Singer sewing machines. But their mission never stops there.

"We finish a lot of them at home," Lietzau said. She estimates working 40-60 hours per month to complete her quilts.

Each quilt is embellished with a small patch bearing the phrase, "This quilt so new, our gift to you."

Schmid, who moved to the area from her native Switzerland eight years ago, also makes clothing for preemie babies. "I'm a very sloppy quilter," she said, grinning. "I didn't know anyone and I came here. I really enjoy working — I need to have a goal. I think it's nice if you all work towards something."

When previous senior center manager Kathy Crawford retired, they personalized a quilt with symbols of her native Novi. "There's one at the library in the children's section," Betty Brzezniak said. "It's hanging over the desk."

Admitted "fabri-hoics," they often make trips to Jo Ann Fabrics to keep the closet full. Once, a woman donated piles of fabric when her mother passed away. "It varies from organized to wondering what we're going to use," Leimann said. While they're working, these girls make time for plenty of jokes and fun, too.



Donna Kraska works on finishing up a quilt as Betty Brzezniak looks on. Both belong to a group that meets in the Meadowbrook Commons senior residential complex.

SENIOR CENTER CALENDAR

- Friday 12/17**
- 8:45 a.m. Pancera Bread
 - 9 a.m. Stretch and Strength
 - 10 a.m. Body Recall cancelled
 - noon Holiday Spikes (adv. ticket req.)
 - noon Clogging/12:30 p.m. Dupl. BRIDGE
 - 12:30 p.m. Bingo CANCELLED
- Monday 12/20**
- 9 a.m. Stretch & Strength
 - 9:30 a.m. Body Recall CANCELLED
 - noon Lunch
 - 12:30 p.m. Pinochle
 - 1 p.m.-3 p.m. Healing Touch
 - 6:30 p.m. Clogging*
- Tuesday 12/21**
- 9 a.m. Pancera Bread
 - 9:30 a.m. Line Dance
 - 10 a.m. Asian Pacific
- Wednesday 12/22**
- 9 a.m. Stretch & Strength cancelled
 - 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Massage
 - 10 a.m. Body Recall CANCELLED
 - 11 a.m. Quilting
 - 11 a.m. Blood Pressure
 - 11 a.m. JOPS Class
 - noon Lunch
 - 12:30 p.m. Clogging*
- Thursday 12/23**
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SPORTS

Sam Eggleston, Sports Writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 seggleston@hl.homecomm.net

Wrestling team starts season off with wins

By Sam Eggleston

SPORTS WRITER

New wrestling coach Brad Huss is sure bubbling over with pride right now — and why shouldn't he be?

Huss, along with his assistant coaches, have turned their team into some scrappers.

Last year, this was a team that was taking plenty of bumps along the road in search of success.

This season, it looks like the Wildcats are going to be the ones doing out some of those bumps.

"So far so good," Huss said. "I'm really happy with how these guys are wrestling right now."

And he should be. The Wildcats not only started their season with a second-place showing at the Adrian Team Duals tournament, they also crushed Northville and competed well at the Salem Invitational.

Justin Cameron, a senior, had the best showing at the Salem Invitational.

At 171-pounds, the scrappy grappler earned three victories to earn a trip to the final match.

There, unfortunately, he felt the wrath of Brad Barram of Catholic Central and left via pin.

Not that Cameron should bang his head. Already this season he's earned a mark of 9-1 against his opponents.

Senior Alex Baum and junior John Favarite took third in the tournament. Baum is a 140-pound wrestler and Favarite is 160.

In addition to the top three, Matt Crawford (185) lost his consolation finals match and finished in fourth place. He ended the day with a 2-2 record. Also picking up victories throughout the day were Al Vellethottam, Dan Matheny, Baret Saran, Adam Ballantyne, Riley Lokar, Mike Cash, Jeremy Young, Matt Perelli, Jamie Espinoza, Dan Sprys and Justin Towne.

The Baseline rivalry is alive and well and, just like in the fall, it looks like the Wildcats are going to prove

dominant this winter.

The wrestling team kicked things off with a shelling of their cross-town rivals.

"We had a pretty nice meet that day," said Huss. "The guys always get fired up for Northville."

After the first two matches, which found Al Vellethottam winning and Dan Matheny losing, the score was 6-3 — that was the closest it would get through the rest of the day.

Nick Lichorobiec, Baret Saran, Riley Lokar, and Jason Sierra all collected pins in the following matches and pushed the lead to 30-3.

Next up was Baum, who earned a 7-0 win over his foe from Northville before Crawford and Perelli registered pins to continue the domination.

Also earning wins on the day were Cameron, Sprys and Alex Calvert, who recorded his first varsity victory in the match.

Adrian Team Duals

The first wrestling moments of a season can be tense. Will a team perform or will it find itself with a lot of work to do?

The Wildcats put on quite a show in their first action of the season as they plowed through their opponents to take second in the Adrian Team Duals tournament.

It was a good way to start the season," Huss said. "It gave our guys a lot of confidence. They know they can win."

The day got started for the 'Cats with a victory over Jackson Northwest, 51-22. Picking up wins for Novi were Dan Matheny, Al Vellethottam, Nick Lichorobiec, Baret Saran, Riley Lokar, Alex Baum, Matt Perelli, Justin Cameron, Dan Sprys and freshman Justin Towne. Towne's victory was his first match of his varsity career.

The Wildcats then moved on to wrestle Wayne Memorial. Novi came out on top, 54-19, with some convincing victories. Picking up wins were Saran, Lokar, Jason Sierra, Baum, Matt Crawford,

Perelli, John Favarite, Cameron, Sprys and Towne.

Crawford proved in the following round that victory isn't always everything. Though he didn't earn a victory, he gathered over what seemed a 37-36 victory over Marroe Jefferson. Wildcats who did earn wins were Matheny, Adam Hite, Saran, Lokar, Mike Cash, Ulises Sanchez and Cameron.

The only loss the Wildcats took was against the Adrian Mapleles, 42-20. Notching wins were Vellethottam, Sierra, Baum, Perelli, Favarite and Cameron.

The final match of the day found Novi taking 30 points off Voids against an understaffed Flat Rock squad on their way to a 69-12 shelling of their foes. Wins came off the wrestling of Vellethottam, Brad Frey, Lichorobiec, Adam Ballantyne, Lokar, Cash, Jeremy Young, Jamie Espinoza, Sanchez, Cameron and Derek McClelland.

Sam Eggleston can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at seggleston@hl.homecomm.net.

Northville's Brian Basian seems to be in a tough position as Novi's Nick Lichorobiec, wrestling at the 112-pound category, has the upper hand in last week's match at Novi.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

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Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Northville's Justin Swanson, right, lifts Novi's John Favorite over his shoulders during last week's match at Novi High. Novi beat the Mustangs in a blow out, 60-13.

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Legace staying home

By Sam Eggleston

SPORTS WRITER

It was an average, run-of-the-mill signing experience for the Red Wing.

It does not mean that the Red Wing is not nearly as odd as some of them had been in the past.

"I guess it would have to be underdone," he said when asked what the strangest thing he ever was asked to sign was.

"That was back when I was in Long Beach. They had a pretty good following there."

Legace met fans of all ages and sizes. One fan even named her cat after him.

"We're going to be making a counter-offer Tuesday," Legace said, repeating himself to nearly every fan who came through the door at the autograph-signing session.

The event held to help announce the store's grand opening at the corner of Ten Mile Road and Novi Road.

"They'll be crazy to turn it down. Right now, we expect we'll be playing hockey by mid-January."

Legace said he's looking forward to it. Until now, he said, he's been basically sitting on the bench and watching television.

"There are only so many errands you can run," he said. "And there is only so much television one person can watch. I've been bored out of my mind."

So a break in the mundane was a welcome relief for the goalie, who signed numerous autographs throughout the evening. Most fans asked about the NHL lockout, which Legace said was a daily occurrence, and others just asked him to sign a couple of items.

Most were kids, which Legace was more than happy to oblige.

"The kids are the best," he said. "I love seeing their faces. It's funny because most of them are so shy they won't say anything, but then they get three feet away and they won't quit talking to their parents."

His autograph was inked on everything from photos of himself to packs to jerseys to hockey sticks.

With the remainder of this season and one other left on his contract, Legace said he hopes to get a four-year extension with the Wings. If he does, he said he plans on remaining in the Novi area.

"I love it here," he said. "It's close to everything. The highways are right there and I don't have to leave town to do anything."

Except, of course, to play hockey. Legace said there are no better fans across the nation than in the Detroit area, and he's thankful they know the meaning of privacy.

"No one bothers me around here," he said. "They know who I am and they say hi. I like that."

With the number of fans that showed up at the signing, it looked as though everyone was getting antsy for some hockey to be played.

"They want hockey," Legace said. "So do I. The sooner the better for all of us."



Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

Red Wing goalie and Novi resident Manny Legace poses with a signed goalie stick that was given away at Play It Again Sports' grand opening event.

Opening event a success

By Sam Eggleston

SPORTS WRITER

When the smoke cleared and the dust settled, Ian Somerville and Play It Again Sports were pretty satisfied with how well their grand opening event went.

The company, which buys and sells new and used sports equipment, held a grand opening event last Saturday that included autograph signing by Red Wing goalie Manny Legace.

"I'm pretty happy with how it's going," said Somerville. "The fans love Manny and we're getting a pretty good turnout."

Somerville said he fell into the signing after meeting the owner of the China Cafe, which is in the same strip mall as Play It Again Sports, on the corner of Ten Mile Road and Novi Road.

Legace is known to frequent the Chinese restaurant.

"We're like a big family right here," Somerville said of the plaza. "After I talked to the owner of the Chinese restaurant and found out

Manny was friends with the owner we were able to have him come sign for us today."

And sign he did. Legace inked autographs for numerous fans at \$5 for two signatures. The normal cost is \$10 for the professional hockey player, but Play It Again Sports covered half the costs.

The store also held a giveaway which features a prototype goalie stick signed by Legace. The winner was 8-year-old Christopher Kennedy of Novi.

"He was really excited," Somerville said.

Joe Leahy, also of Novi, won signed Marcel Pronovost jersey while Stephanie Shively of Novi wore an old-time hockey sweater.

Sam Eggleston of Northville was drawn for a Red Wings hat while Robert Heigenthal of Commerce won an Easton Parka. Austin Harris of Livonia won an Easton wind-breaker and Paul Melchoe of Highland won an Easton hockey T-shirt.

"It's a lot of fun," said Somerville.

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Jenna Kuhn steps into leadership role for Novi

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Early in the season the question always hangs in the air as to which player is going to step up and take a leadership role.

In just a single game at the South Lyon Invitational Volleyball Tournament last Saturday that player became obvious — Novi junior Jenna Kuhn.

"Jenna has done an outstanding job for us today," said Novi coach Julie Fisetie. "Even though we've only played one team, she's really starting to stand out."

Kuhn continued to excel as the games continued. Murmurs in the stand included comments such as "Nice hit!" or "Great save!" in association with her.

Kuhn credits her play to her team and not just individual talents. She said Novi is much better than people give them credit for.

"Everyone always underestimates us," she said. "Last year they did the same thing and we won our district and made it to the regional. This year we want to do just as good, if not better."

Kuhn said the key will be Novi coming together as a team. So far they aren't as close as they were last year, she said, but they're getting there.

"Coach told us she wants us to

come together a little more," she said. "And then there is the freshman (Stephanie Cripps) that she wants us to get to know. She's getting there."

As the team continues to get to know one another and their play becomes smoother, the Wildcats will continue to depend on individual to step up. Kuhn said it's all about reaction.

"You don't have time to think things through," she said. "It's kind of like reaction times. You just go with the flow of the game."

Kuhn said she's happy to play a role in leading the Wildcats, but noted captains Sarah Schmitt and Nicole Barndt do a wonderful job themselves.

"There's a lot of team spirit," she said. "The captains are keeping us all up for our games and are bringing us close together. They know how to keep us in the game."

Which is important in volleyball. The game is both physical and mental — which requires players to be at the top of their form in both aspects at all times during a match.

"Volleyball is the one sport that if one person is doing bad they can bring down an entire team," she said. "That's the person you find on the other team. You serve at her and you hit at her. It's all mental."

One of the biggest factors in the game is support. It can come from teammates, or the coaches or even from the stands. Kuhn said her support system is amazing.

"Our team works off each other," she said. "We really care about each other and helping each other. We need that. It helps us become closer and better as a team."

And the cheers from the stands help too. Kuhn's mother, Cindy, and father, Keith, were at the South Lyon Invite cheering her on despite her younger brother, Brett, playing in a soccer tournament.

"I think they kind of skipped out on him to be here today," she said, smiling. "They come to everything. Even last year when I was sitting the bench."

That's something Kuhn probably won't have to worry about any more. If she continues to play this season the way she played at South Lyon, the bench will be a long-forgotten friend of Kuhn's.

"I hope so," she said. "I want to keep playing well. I want all of us to play well. We want to win and we're going to surprise a lot of people."



Novi's Jenna Kuhn, a junior, was one of the leaders on her team in their opening day at the South Lyon Invitational volleyball tourney.

Photo by SAM EGGLESTON



Wildcats split week

The whole purpose of the opening weeks of a sports season is to see what works for a team and what needs to be worked on.

The Novi Wildcats boys basketball team found out both.

The team found it had the right chemistry to play well and win with a great season opener against Walled Lake Western 60-50 before falling against Canton, 40-24.

"Canton is a very good team," said Novi coach Pat Schlatter. "I definitely wasn't happy with how we played. They had way too many easy points."

The Wildcats were in the game early, but Canton continued to make runs until they were well out of reach.

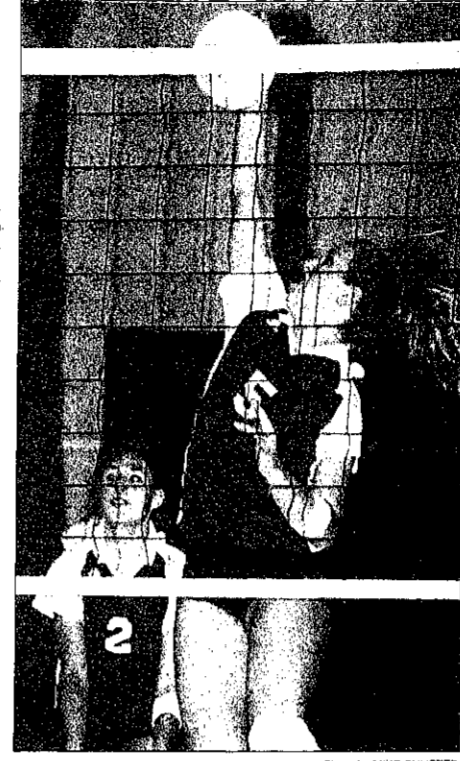
"Everything was working in their favor," Schlatter said. "They were the better team that night. They were bigger, faster and stronger."

Novi was led by senior Anthony Harbin, who scored 10 points in the losing effort.

Against Walled Lake, Novi had much more success. Harbin once again led the way for his squad, this time putting in 21 points while Sean White added 16 and Mark Moore notched 11 points and 10 rebounds in the winning effort.

"We just played a totally different game," Schlatter said. "Western had a different style of defense than Canton, and we had a lot more trouble on Friday night."

The Wildcats (1-1) are back in action when they play host to the undefeated Walled Lake Central Vikings (2-0). The Cats will then be off until January 4 when they visit Northville.



Novi's Nicole Barndt (5), a senior, goes up for a spike in the South Lyon Invitational Tournament last Saturday. Junior Jenna Kuhn (2) watches.

Photo by MIKE SHUSTER

'Cats skate to a tie

Sometimes a tie is as good as a win, but after leading by two goals and tying the Brighton Bulldogs in Kensington Valley Conference action, the Novi Wildcats hockey team may disagree.

When the dust settled Novi found themselves all knotted up, 3-3, with their rivals.

The Wildcats started the game off with a vengeance, scoring first on a shot from Mark Eberline with assists being credited to Ryan Fox and Greg Morissette. Following a scoreless second period of play, the Wildcats added their second goal on a shot from Brett Jassi for the 2-0 lead in the opening minutes of the third. Earning assists were Shaun Finimery and Morissette.

Brighton came back with a fast

and furious pace, scoring two goals just a half minute apart before adding a third tally to take the lead with time expiring in the third stanza. Eberline tied the game up with a shot that found the back of the net for the 3-3 final. Fox earned the assist.

Earning the tie was Novi goalie Brad Cline.

Novi (2-2-2) will play host to the Northville Mustangs in a classic battle of the Baseline. The game is slated for tomorrow at 6:25 p.m. The team is then off until Jan. 4 when they play host to Harland in KVC action.

Cheerful beginning

The Novi varsity cheerleading team, coached by Emily Parker, participated in the Competitive Cheer Coaches Association competition last Saturday to kick off their season.

Novi did well, scoring fourth out of the eight teams in participation. Taking first was Airport.

Volleyball starts strong

The Novi Wildcats volleyball

team started their season off on the right foot with a strong showing at the South Lyon Invitational last week.

The squad, coached by Julie Fisetie, notched a 5-1 record at the tournament.

"We lost to Harrison," said Fisetie. "Overall I was very happy with the way the girls played. We had some kinks to work out, but we did a nice job."

The squad, unfortunately, was also suffering from some injuries to a handful of very promising players that weren't able to play.

Novi persevered, however, and earned themselves a quick name among the top teams present at the tourney — including rivals Millford, Howell and South Lyon.

The squad lost only one game during its regular pool and power pool play during the tournament. Though they didn't win it, Fisetie said it gave them something to be happy about as a team.

"It's really proud of them," she said. "We really came together nicely. Having the mix of kids we do, that's definitely a good thing."

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Saint Nick comes to town
Santa stopped by Novi to start his shopping last week, including a stop at Andy Nofar's Pizza Marvelous. See where else he went, and be sure to see our list of great places for last-minute gifts.
— Page 2B



How the kids see it
If you couldn't spend any money, what would you give your parents for Christmas?
— Page 4B
How do you prepare the perfect holiday dinner?
— Page 8B

Recipes from local professionals
Roberto Caceres (left) and Ramzi Naber offered up Italian Epicure's recipe for Pumpkin Mousse. See what other restaurants suggest for holiday meals.
— Page 8B



HOLIDAY SPECIAL

B-1

NOVI NEWS

hometownlife.com

Thursday, December 16, 2004

Christmas Shopping 101

■ **Get timing right; handle the pandemonium**

By Kim Kovelle
STAFF WRITER

Sally Chestnut was perhaps the envy of some Christmas shoppers as she strolled in Downtown Northville last week: she was just browsing.

"I like to do it before December," Chestnut said. "I try to pick things that would suit anyone. Maybe I have a gift on hand for the unexpected."

With only two weeks left, last-minute shoppers plunged into the fray may not have the same luxury. However, getting organized and being aware of options can help — especially at the area's big shopping magnets.

Right place, right time

Half the buying battle is, arguably, beating the crowds. Early hours are best at Twelve Oaks Mall, Marketing Director Peggy Hayes said.

"Typically if people can get in early in the morning, particularly early in the week, you tend to find it's a little less crowded," Hayes said.

At Northville Township's Meijer at Eight Mile and Haggerty roads, Sharon Kidd, store director, said nighttime traffic can pile up at the 24-hour locale.

"During dinner hours, generally between the hours of 6 and 8, we have a little bit of a slow down," Kidd said. "A lot of the rooms especially like to come in...after they've put the kids to bed for the night." The post-lunch lull also affords some downtime.

Hayes also suggested allotting time to drop off purchases in a vehicle.

"Don't try to carry everything at once," Hayes said. "It's much better to make a couple trips to your car and lock everything in your trunk. Re-park."



All Santa photos by JOHN HEIDER

Santa Claus gets a jump on his shopping, starting off in downtown Novi.

Mind the minutia

Once you're in, the challenge is remembering the details. Having a list can jog the memory when it comes to stocking stuffers or wrapping paper.

"We have a cafeteria area," Kidd said. "We find a lot of people will come in and they have our ad papers. They'll go over there (and) get their list out."

"They'll ask team members for ideas, suggestions," Kidd said. "As part of the plan, be sure to take note of return policies — particularly in a mall, where retailers often differ — and take advantage

of gift receipts. "Most stores now will also issue a gift receipt which is a real handy thing," Hayes said. "The price isn't on there. You can give it without being embarrassed."

Gift certificates are available, too. Meijer and Twelve Oaks offer them in any amount; at the latter, they're mall-wide for more options.

At Meijer, a jeweler is available 24 hours to provide pointers. "We find a lot of male customers take advantage of that," Kidd said.

Also, don't discount the value of practical extras like scarves or hats (which are less size-dependent), a bottle of wine or a calendar.

Shop safely

No matter how intense your quest for the Holy Grail of gifts, keep eyes peeled.

"This is the time of year you have to be alert," Hayes said. "Some will sit down for a coffee and then walk off, leave a bag."

The mall's lockers help to that end. Leaving coats in the car is another option. "It's just one less thing to remember," said Hayes. "Obviously if it's freezing...you might not want to."

To keep tabs on purses, Kidd suggested using shopping carts' child safety straps.

"Just strap your purse right to it, weave right through the strap," Kidd said. "We also offer a new service which is called curbside service."

For free, Meijer personnel will help transport larger items to your car.

AVOID LONG LINES

Try these tips to avoid holiday pow-wows in mile-long lines:

1. Use catalogs and/or the Internet whenever possible
2. Get to stores at opening or near closing; avoid midday "shopping rush hours"
3. In general, park in the section of the lot that's as far as possible from most popular entrances
4. Make each trip multi-purpose, with several purchases planned
5. Reduce/eliminate purchases from stores that require standing in two or more lines for a single purchase
6. Favor stores that merge lines rather than those with parallel lines (this results in stressful "queue calculus": guessing which line will move fastest)
7. In a department store, assemble as many purchases as possible for one point of sale transaction
8. In a gift-wrap line, arrange to wrap all purchases at one time
9. Leave plenty of time to mail presents; avoid post office on Saturday mornings and lunch hours
10. Buy supplies early, including stamps, wrapping paper, tape, etc.

SOURCE: Researcher Dr. Richard C. Larson/Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences

Ultimately, although time's running thin, now's better than later.

"The last week of Christmas will be absolutely tremendous," Kidd said. "They day before Christmas Eve we will go right around the clock."

Both centers are closed Christmas Day.

Kim Kovelle can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107, or via e-mail kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net

Plucking the perfect tree

■ **If real's your deal, follow these handy tips**

By Kim Kovelle
STAFF WRITER

Cone-shaped, brilliant green trees are the envy of living rooms far and wide in Christmastime.

Compared to plucking a tree off a store shelf, hunting down the perfect tree can demand a bit more work.

With 3,000 Scotch, Austrian and White Pines on 21 acres, nearby Northville Tree Farm offers plenty of options — and advice, on behalf of owner Gary Lisowski.

First, make sure the needles are green and trunk straight.

"Tug on the needles and see if they fall off," Lisowski said. "If they readily fall out, you know the tree's already dried out."

At the tree farm, 24-30-inch bows are provided to slice through soft pine.

When transporting the tree, Lisowski recommends a three-ply twine to secure the tree to vehicles' roof racks at the front and back.

"We put the (tree) trunk to the front for wind resistance," Lisowski said. "Most trees are

difficult to get into the trunk. Easiest way is to bring a pick-up truck. A lot of places do netting to try to rescue the size of it."

Doug Polidori, nurseryman with Terra Bella Landscape Contractors in Novi, said unless temperatures exceed 60 degrees, trees on the lot are in a dormant state.

Once the tree's safe at home, it should be cut again before being placed in a heavy-duty, cast-iron stand.

"When you cut it, you just put a 30-degree angle on it, about two, three inches up," Polidori said. "When you set it into your pan full of water, it doesn't set flat on the bottom of the pan."

"You cut it just before you put it up in your house. (Sap) plugs up all the new pores. They start to heal over."

Both agree: never let the tree run out of water. It's usually a daily task. Even so, most trees will last 30-45 days after they're first cut.

"When the needles start falling, it's time to move it outside," Lisowski said. "Set it to the street."

The Northville Tree Farm is located at 9236 Hickory Ridge, off Seven Mile Road. Call (313) 909-7808 for more information.

Kim Kovelle is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107 or via e-mail at kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net

Hot toys come in all shapes, sizes

■ **Local shops weigh in on Christmas picks**

By Kim Kovelle
RECORD STAFF WRITER

By now you know: the red-furred, high-pitched Sesame Street monster is back, and he's singing.

But the rush for the latest Elmo toy — this time dubbed "E-L-M-O," which he sings to the tune of the Village People's "YMCA" — may not be as frantic as in years past.

"We've had the Elmo for, gosh, several months," Vicki Lynch, store director of Novi's Toys "R" Us, said. "For the people that shop here, most of them have already got one."

In the 16 days before Christmas, that could change. However, this season, toyshops around town listed many popular options for all ages, with no brand or gimmick leading the pack.

Getting technical

Electronic gizmos are making a strong showing.

Thus far, this year's sell-out at Toys "R" Us has been Viech's "V-Smile," an electronic learning system.

Hooking into a television set and operated by joystick, the device, which retails \$50-60, uses \$20 "Smarttridges" to give preschoolers lessons from music to math.

"It looks like a video game system...but it's actually educational," Lynch said. "It helps the development high-end coordination skills."



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Cooper Mills, 2, checks out a Brio toy train set up at Novi's Your Toy Box at Novi Town Center.

Mirroring a miniature laptop computer, the dual-screened, \$170 Nintendo DS game system is also hot, Lynch said, as is the orange, radio-controlled Terrain Twister by Tyco.

"It's a remote control vehicle that is a hard to find," Lynch said of the \$80, sleek-shaped toy. "It's one of those things that's taken off."

Old-fashioned fare

Some toys making a comeback have been around for years.

Thanks to televised celebrity poker, gambling games are one. Northville resident Lou LaChance, owner of online "Ultimate Toys and Gifts," said poker and craps sets, playing felts and even monogrammed chips are snapped up.

"The casino items are very pop-

ular," he said. "That now is not only at the upper end in terms of the age bracket."

Prices range from \$15 for a sleeve of chips to \$30 for a roulette wheel.

Craft kits, fetching \$13-20, top the list, he said; metal erector sets, such as working merry-go-rounds and oil barracks, also are in demand.

At Novi's Your Toy Box, owner Bruce Weiner said educational toys "with a twist" are en vogue, like board games "Labyrinth" and "Rumis."

"(Rumis) is a strategy game," Weiner said. "The object is to take over the board. Both the games...are award winners."

He added Darda Race Car sets and Madame Alexander dolls to the line-up.

"It seems that more and more

LOCAL TOY CONNECTIONS

- Toys "R" Us: 43460 West Oaks Dr., Novi; (248) 344-1300. Christmas hours are Monday-Sunday, 8 a.m.-midnight; Closes at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve.
- Ultimate Toys and Gifts: (248) 348-9077; www.ultimate-toysandgifts.com.
- Your Toy Box: 43283 Crescent Blvd., Novi Town Center; (248) 449-6000. Open Monday-Saturday, 1-8 p.m., and Sunday, noon-5 p.m.

people are saying, "You know what, I don't want to buy the same thing anybody else is buying," Weiner said.

The back-up plan

What to do if the toy of your child's dreams is sold out?

"Our staff can make great recommendations that the child would enjoy," Lynch said. "We don't want any child to be unhappy during Christmas."

There's a Magna Doodle to replace the popular Aqua Doodle, for instance, or Bratz for Dora the Explorer.

Making a Toys for Tots donation at the store instead might put a different slant on the frenzy.

Or try Weiner's suggestion: "Perhaps buy a board game. Make a game night so everybody spends time as a family. We don't really do that."

Kim Kovelle can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107, or at kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net

Ho, ho, ho!!

Santa comes to Novi to shop

There's only nine days of shopping left until Christmas. If you're looking for a last-minute gift, try these great Novi shops.

Blush Boutique
4190 Grand River Ave.
(248) 489-0689
Christmas Eve, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Designer handbags. \$15-\$180.
Gift certificates. Yes

Diners
2481 Dincer Drive
(248) 490-1321
Christmas Eve, 8 a.m.-noon
Gift suggestions/price. Winter Rose. Brunch. \$2.99.
Gift certificates. Yes

Diamond Castle Jewelers
8095 Grand River Ave.
(248) 312-2340
www.diamondcastlejewelers.com
Christmas Eve, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Three stone diamond pendant starting at \$9999.
Gift certificates. Yes

Gina Agosta
8931 Grand River Ave.
(248) 477-2266
Christmas Eve, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Gift and packages. \$6.5-\$12.
Gift certificates. Yes

Glenda's Garden Center
10575 Grand River Ave.
(248) 471-4374
Christmas Eve, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Table arrangement. \$20-\$49.
Gift certificates. Yes

Healthy Jones
1417 Cassin Blvd.
(248) 895-8080
Christmas Eve, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Custom gift baskets. \$75 and up.
Gift certificates. Yes

Larson Jewelry Design
43155 Main St., Suite 403
(248) 317-4958
Christmas Eve, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. Diamond earrings, brooch and bling. \$265-\$5000.
Gift certificates. Yes

Motor City Gift Warehouse
42875 Grand River Ave.
(248) 468-0191
Christmas Eve, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Gift suggestions/price. New Page 62 Woods. \$29.
Gift certificates. Yes



Ian Sommerville gives Santa a hand in picking out a pair of skis at the new Play It Again Sports. Come Dec. 26, it's time to park the sled and hit that North Pole powder.



It takes a lot of energy (i.e. food) to make it to every child's house in one night. Santa has found that the pizza at Andy Nofar's Pizza Marvelous is just the ticket, and the reindeer dig the crust, too.



It's not easy keeping all that white hair and beard looking good, but the staff at Maria Cisar Salon & Spa have been Santa's go-to crew for quite awhile. That's Maria right behind Santa.



It would be a long, cold winter for old Saint Nick if he forgot Mrs. Claus. Erica Nadjarian helps Santa select a fine ring at Novi Jewelers.



Making toys for every boy and girl is an expensive undertaking, but who better to help Santa manage his finances than Mark Whitfield at Edward Jones?

Happy Holidays!
At the Holiday Season, our thoughts from Maria Cisar salon & spa. Turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible. Thank you & Warmest Wishes For the Holiday Season!

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Investment Representative

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ANEW THERAPEUTICS MASSAGE 696 N. Mill St. Plymouth (734) 459-3399	ANIMAL GLAMOUR 43287 Seven Mile Rd. Northville (248)305-9805	CHURCH OF CHRIST 10 am Sunday School 11 am Praise & Worship 21860 Pontiac Trail South Lyon (248)437-3585	D'S COLONIAL CAFE 1415 South Milford Highland (248)887-0370	FAMILY DENTISTRY OF NOVI 47601 Grand River, Ste B125 Novi (248)380-2800
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Preparing the perfect Christmas dinner?

It's a piece of cake, say elementary students

VILLAGE OAKS

Kindergarten
Mrs. Smith
Mrs. Nanas

Bree - We have fun playing with our toys and then one and Cole, my brother, set the table nicely while Mom and Dad cook the yummy dinner, then we eat. Yum!

Emmy - Well, first my Dad makes a really good smell (on the stove with oranges and cinnamon). For dinner, I would like spaghetti and hot chocolate myself because they're warm, but my family prefers turkey and lots of other stuff. After dinner, we bake cookies and get milk for Santa Claus.

Luke - Chicken legs make the perfect Christmas dinner. All you have to do is put the turkey inside the boiling pot of oil. Then you take it out, pull the legs off and voila! you have chicken legs.

Mattea - Catch the turkey and fry it. Get brown potatoes with the dots on them and mash them. Cut up sweet potatoes into pieces, and put them on the stove. Put peanut butter in bowl, herby kisses in another bowl. Bake them.

Emily - I set the table. I help put up the decorations. I help dust the furniture. The end!

Josephina - Add cake and milk. Cake is for dessert and milk it to drink. I would eat a hotdog.

Shirleya - You need to make an apple pie with Santa sprinkles and a Santa birthday cake. Make sure to put the Santa candles on the cake.

Shunki - Turkey, Christmas cake.

Dominic - You prepare turkey, cranberry sauce, ham, green beans, cornbread, yams, potato salad, dressing and egg nog.

Benjamin - Get some cake and frosting and put it on a plate. Put bread on top of it and the

bottom. Buy some cookies and get some water from the sink.

Makyla - First we invite Santa Claus and Mrs. Smith (my teacher) to dinner. Then we cook angel hair pasta and mashed potatoes, put in red food coloring to make them red for Christmas. For dessert, we serve red sugar cookies that Nana and I made.

Rachel - Hersheys and marshmallows with a campfire. Having hot chocolate, popcorn fish and pizza rolls under a mistletoe. Having candles in the middle of the dinner table.

Carson - I would make a cake, and invite all my friends and family. I would have decorations, and the best part, lots and lots of Christmas presents.

Ryoya - I want to have cookies for Santa. I want to have ice cream.

Scott - You cook turkey on the stove. You cook green beans and green jelly. Now you eat everything.

Tony - Tony and his sister will help their father in the kitchen on Christmas day with getting the food ready. We will have spaghetti and meatballs, artichoke casserole, brussels (stuffed beef rolls) and special salad. For dessert we will have spumoni ice cream and cannolis.

Joseph - First you set the table up. Then, when the food is cooking, you wait. And then when the food is done, you say "Grace". Then, you eat ham, mashed potatoes and cake or pie for dessert.

Orchard Hills

Kindergarten
Mrs. Wolfe

Mayuni - Cake, sushi, soup, meat.

Eva - Family and friends.

Benjamin - Get some cake and frosting and put it on a plate. Put bread on top of it and the

bottom. Buy some cookies and get some water from the sink.

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Christmas dinner, I would have frosted sugar cookies shaped like stars, Christmas trees, and Santa hats. I would make a birthday cake for Jesus and serve it with cherry 7-up and regular 7-up (red and green). I would invite my friends to my perfect Christmas dinner.

Shawn - We prepare Christmas music. We prepare some flowers and candles. We prepare whole chicken.

Zachary - I think you eat tuna fish. You put the tuna on the sandwich and put it in the oven. You put some bacon in it and bake it for fifteen minutes. You take it out and see if it's hot and you share it with your family.

Jonathan - Make something to eat. Set up Christmas lights and candles in the house.

Nathan - I would bake Chicken in the oven and invite Santa over to eat it with me.

Ariana - My Grandma makes lamb, roast potatoes and spinach

pie. She also makes the best cookies that look like Christmas trees and bells.

Mitchell - I'd invite all of my friends over to eat chicken and french fries with candy cane forks.

Claire - With sugar and chocolate cookies with vanilla in it. Then add some flour and water and some cinnamon. Finally add some watermelon, strawberries, oranges and sugar.

Adam - I would like some candy canes and milk and some berries. Milk is in a jug, berries are in a bowl, candy canes are in a pretty dish.

Zachary - Buy a chicken at Meijers. Cook the chicken in the oven. Put Christmas decorations on the table. Set four cups on the table, four plates, four knives, four spoons, and four forks. We need milk and straws. Say grace. Then eat Christmas dinner. Have ice cream cones for dessert.

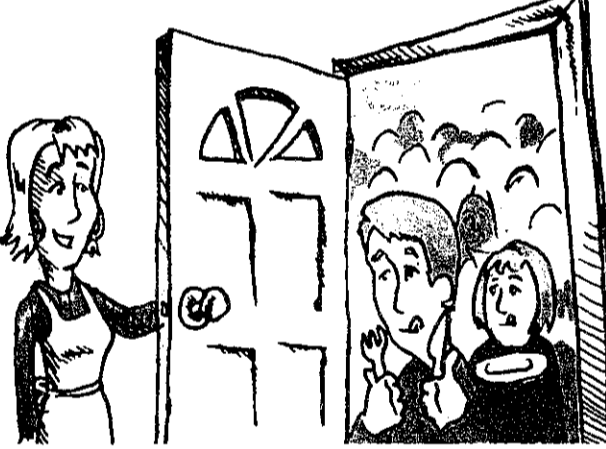
Brenden - Make a wonderful meal. Have over lots of friends and family. Share lots of love and memories.

Kyle - Invite a lot of friends and family. Share all the wonderful favorites for dinner.

Natalie - I would bake a turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, cranberry sauce, grapes and eggs the night before Christmas.

Kaito - Meat loaf, fried chicken, salad, chocolate cake, baked cheese potato.

Laura - We cook a goose in the oven and serve it with red cabbage, dumplings and gravy. For dessert we eat vanilla ice cream with raspberries.



main course

Chicken Marsala

INGREDIENTS:
4 oz. boneless skinless chicken breast
1/2 lb. heavy cream
1/4 bottle sweet marsala wine
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 tbsp. fresh garlic (minced)
1 red onion
1/2 lb. chicken base
1 tbsp. corn starch

DIRECTIONS:
1. Chopped chicken and onion and put in pot.
2. Add 2 tbsp. olive oil and garlic and cook until onions are caramelized; add black pepper.
3. Add wine; bring 1/2 cup of wine to a boil.
4. Reduce wine down to 1/3 then add cream, chicken and beef base.
5. Let come to a simmer then make a slurry with the corn starch and flour; wine, add to sauce.

Chicken:
1. Cook chicken breasts in sauté pan, brown on one side and turn over.
2. Add sliced red onions and mushrooms.
3. Cook until chicken is cooked.
4. Add sauce and heat until warm.

Chef Ivan Bunjik

Maisano's Italian Restaurant

Address: 26139 Novi Road, Novi
Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 4-10 p.m.; Friday & Saturday 4-11 p.m.; Sunday 4-9 p.m.
Phone: (248) 348-1647
Reservations: Recommended
Cost: Dinner entrees from \$9.95; Appetizers from \$4.95; Homemade Cannoli \$2.50
Credit cards: All major accepted
Liquor: Full bar, extensive wine list
Smoking: No
Holiday Hours: Christmas Eve 3-9 p.m.; Closed Christmas; New Year's Eve 3 p.m.-1 a.m.; New Year's Day 4-10 p.m.

main course

Guinness Stew

INGREDIENTS:
3 lb. slow meat; diced 1 inch
1 1/2 lb. onion
3/4 lb. celery
3/4 lb. carrot
3/4 lb. turnip
1 1/4 lb. potato
1 lb. butter
1 bay leaf
1 lb. black pepper
1 kg granulated garlic
1 lb. salt
1 quart Guinness
1 gallon very rich beef stock

DIRECTIONS:
Soak beef until well browned.
Add all vegetables and butter.
Sauté until tender.
Add Guinness.
Add stock.
Simmer 2-4 1/2 hours.
Form up with cornstarch as necessary.
Serves 6-8

Chef Michael Kuis

Gus O'Connor's Public House

Address: 42875 Grand River Avenue, Novi
Hours: Monday-Saturday 11-2 a.m.; Sunday noon-2 a.m.
Phone: (248) 465-9670
Web: www.gusocconnors.com
Reservations: Recommended for large parties
Cost: Entrees \$9.99-15.99; Appetizers \$3.99-9.99
Credit cards: All major accepted
Liquor: Full bar
Smoking: Yes
Holiday Hours: Christmas Eve 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Closed Christmas; New Year's Eve 11 a.m.-2 a.m.; New Year's Day 5 p.m.-2 a.m.

Karen - I make a fruit salad with grapes and apples for Santa.

Juliana - I would cook spaghetti and gnocci because those are my favorite Italian foods.

Evan - with lots of soul.

Noah - We prepare a turkey, corn, rice and cake. We need some candles.

Elizabeth - My Mom and I start by choosing recipes that are family favorites. Next, we spend hours cooking and baking the dinner. Then we enjoy the delicious feast with family and friends.

Christopher - Toss out the turkey, then put it in the oven, put it on the table. Everybody will come so they can eat. If anybody wants more, there's more left. Then everybody will go home.

Jack - You set the table with flowers and little Christmas trees on each side. Then you get the drinks, milk and water for the kids and wine and water for the grown-ups. The last thing is the yummy food like a cake shaped like a pig.

Kenta - All family and others and eat Christmas cake.

William - You prepare the perfect Christmas dinner with lots of love, joy and happiness. Just being with my family makes it a perfect dinner.

Ryan - Bake omelet hens in oven, cook green beans and yams with marshmallows and omelet pumpkin cheese cake.

Jonathan - You buy the turkey and cook it in a pan in the oven at 30 degrees for 50 seconds. You eat the turkey with rolls, broccoli, cranberry sauce and drink chocolate milk. You eat pumpkin pie and chocolate frosting cake for dessert.

Kakeru - Sushi and Christmas cake.

Paul - First, we must have a Christmas tree and invite everyone to the Christmas dinner. Second, we will have Christmas birthday party and then we will have a birthday cake after dinner.

Maitlyn - Put the turkey in the sink and you'll see it floating in water. Cut bread up into four pieces. Let it dry all up.

Darius - We prepare for our Christmas dinner by cooking a juicy turkey and sharing it with our family while we celebrate being together.

Jacob - I would have cookies and cake for dessert, and sandwiches for dinner.

Danielle - I would set the table with napkins, candy canes and cups. We would have chicken strips and fries. Vanilla ice cream for dessert.

Nick - You get ham on the Great Ham Adventure. Then you cook it on the day you want to eat it. You can eat turkey too.

Elizabeth - Shagheti is the perfect dinner. You put it in the oven until it is done, then you put in on top of the stove.

NOVI WOODS

Kindergarten
Mrs. Walro

Anna - The perfect Christmas dinner is when we have our whole family together.

Drew - Green beans, rice and spaghetti. Mom, Dad and Sam all would be there. We would sing Christmas carols.

Maggie - Bake the crust off of the bread and break it into small pieces and cook it in the oven with the turkey. Go to the store and buy green jelly to eat with the turkey.

Thomas - Cook a really, really good turkey. Have lots of ice cream. Don't forget the Christmas crackers.

Emily - Helping to set the table and putting a pretty decoration on the table.

Brendshaw - The perfect Christmas dinner is prepared with good food, good family and friends and good holiday stories.

Katie - Decorate the house nice and clean our rooms, then you wait till the guests come. Set the table and put the salt and pepper mill out. Put the turkey in the oven for an hour and then put the food on the plates.

Clare - You have to stay at home because McDonald's is closed. Besides they don't have blueberry pie and potatoes.

Nadia - You have people over and you eat good healthy food.

Alexis - We will have pudding, cookies, coffee and turkey. First we cook it, then we eat it.

Alexa - Family, chicken, prayer, dessert.



Sarema - Pick out a pretty dress to wear. Eat breakfast. Put noodles and soup in a big bowl to eat for dinner.

NOVI WOODS

Kindergarten
Mrs. Bein

Shirley - Everybody stays home. Big fish, fresh oranges and rice cakes are my favorites. Finally, waiting for Santa to come.

Jason - You will need 8 spoons of sugar then, stir it up for about 7 minutes. You need to cook it for 20 hours and then you have a Santa Cookie Cutter Dinner.

Cindy - We make dumplings.

Sara - You decorate the house. Make a turkey, fruit, veggies, and don't forget the salad. Then you go sledding down hills screaming with joy.

Mark - Roast beef, potatoes and gravy, broccoli, soup, ice cream.

Kyle - Invite everyone in the whole neighborhood. My Mom could make everything because she always cooks.

Ryan - The perfect Christmas dinner would be just pumpkin pie! First, smush the pumpkins and add 2,000 scoops of sugar. Then, put it in a pan and put it in the oven for 2 hours. Eat it...yum!

Anthony - We go to Grandma's for dinner so Mom does not burn dinner.



All illustrations by Cameron Lewis 12th Grade Novi High School

main course

Pennette Mari Monti (Land and Sea)

INGREDIENTS:
1 lb. rock shrimp
One Italian sausage cut into ten pieces
One half-pound of garlic
1/4 cup of crushed red peppers
1/4 cup of Portobello mushrooms
1/4 cup of crushed tomatoes
1 cup of white wine
1 pinch of fresh basil

DIRECTIONS:
In a medium sauce pan melt butter and add a splash of olive oil.
When hot then add shrimp, mushrooms, crushed red peppers, garlic, and sausage.
Let simmer for about five minutes, then add one ounce of white wine and one ounce of crushed tomatoes.
Simmer for another five minutes then toss with Pennette pasta and a sprinkle of parmesan cheese.
Top with a pinch of fresh basil.

Chef Frankie Grippi

Tirami Su

Address: 146 Centre Street, Northville
Hours: Monday-Thursday 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Saturday 3-11 p.m.; Sunday 9-10 p.m.
Phone: (248) 735-0101
Reservations: Recommended for parties over 10 and on Friday and Saturday
Credit cards: All major credit cards
Liquor: Full bar and extensive wine list
Holiday Hours: Christmas Eve 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; open New Year's Eve (call for hours); Closed New Year's Day

dessert

Pumpkin Mousse

INGREDIENTS:
3 eggs
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup honey
1 can milk
2 cups pumpkin pie
4 lbs. sugar
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground cloves
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp. ground ginger

DIRECTIONS:
1. Pour the water into a small bowl and mix with gelatin until soft.
2. Separate the eggs, placing the whites in an electric mixing bowl and the yolks in a food processor that holds at least 2 cups.
3. Combine the milk, honey and spices in a heavy bottomed saucepan and heat until the honey dissolves, and the mixture is steaming hot. Add the softened gelatin which is liquid, and stir until it is completely dissolved.
4. Pour most of the hot milk mixture into the egg yolk, whisking constantly; then pour the mixture back into the hot milk, continuing to whisk with it thicker and almost boils. Stir in the pumpkin and keep stirring until there are no big bubbles when you stop stirring for a few seconds. Remove from the heat and whisk in the vanilla.
5. Beat the egg whites until frothy, then start adding the sugar gradually beating until stiff peaks have formed. Fold a big spoonful of the whites into the pumpkin custard, then fold in the remaining egg whites. Turn the mousse into a 6-cup metal mold that has been rinsed with cold water. Chill mousse overnight. To unmold dip the mold in hot water for about 30 seconds then invert onto a serving platter.
Makes 8 servings.

Executive Chef Roberto Caceres (left) and Ramzi Naber, director of operations

Italian Epicure Steak House

Address: 42050 Grand River, Novi
Hours: Monday-Thursday 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Saturday 4-11 p.m.; Closed Sunday for private functions
Phone: (248) 349-7770
Web: www.italian-epicure.com
Reservations: Recommended
Cost: Entrees \$12-24; Appetizers \$6-11; Desserts \$4-6
Credit Cards: All major accepted
Liquor: Full bar, extensive wine list
Smoking: Yes
Holiday Hours: Christmas Eve 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; closed Christmas; New Year's Eve 11 a.m.-2 a.m.; closed New Year's Day

REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

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Novi News

Thursday, December 16, 2004

Don't be a Scrooge, but tip wisely

While you're shopping for your loved ones this holiday season, don't forget to say thanks to the people that provide you and your family exceptional service throughout the year. I know one

person to whom I'll be expressing my appreciation — my dog sitter. She's trustworthy, knowledgeable and generous with her time. What's more, my persnickety pups adore her.

Mary Davis

In general, determining whether and how much to tip depends on the quality and frequency of the service, according to the Emily Post Institute. Other things to consider are your relationship with the service provider, where you live and your budget.

Whom should you tip?

Start with the people to whom you entrust your most valuable things — namely, your nanny or baby sitter, day care provider and housekeeper. And don't forget the people who regularly provide service to you like your hairdresser, personal trainer and yard or garden worker. Though, if you've regularly tipped these folks at the time of service, you may cut back on the amount, or forgo the holiday tip entirely. You may also opt to give a small gift.

How much?

Deciding how much to tip is a personal decision and should reflect the benefits you derive from that professional relationship. In other words, you'll want to give the most to the people whose services you value the most. In some instances a cash tip is not appropriate. For example, you don't want to give your child's teacher cash. Also, some companies prohibit their employees from receiving cash gifts. If you're unsure, check the company's policies, or provide a small gift as a gesture.

If you're considering giving your boss a gift, you may wish to rethink this gesture. A recent article in Parenting Magazine suggests that gifts should only be given down the corporate structure, rather than up the ladder. In other words, no gift for the boss, only employees. Gifts for employees should be in the range of \$10 to \$25.

The Emily Post Institute has placed some tipping guidelines on their Web site at www.emilypost.com. Here's a sampling:

Baby sitter: one evening's pay plus a small gift from your child.

Barber: the cost of one haircut plus possibly a small gift.

Beauty salon staff: \$10-\$60, giving most to those who give you the most, plus possibly a small gift.

Day care providers: \$25-\$75 each plus a small gift from your child. If there are only one or two providers, you may wish to consider a larger amount.

Letter carriers: The U.S. Government permits carriers to accept gifts worth up to \$20 each.

Nanny: One week's to one month's salary depending on their tenure and customs in your area, plus a small gift from your child.

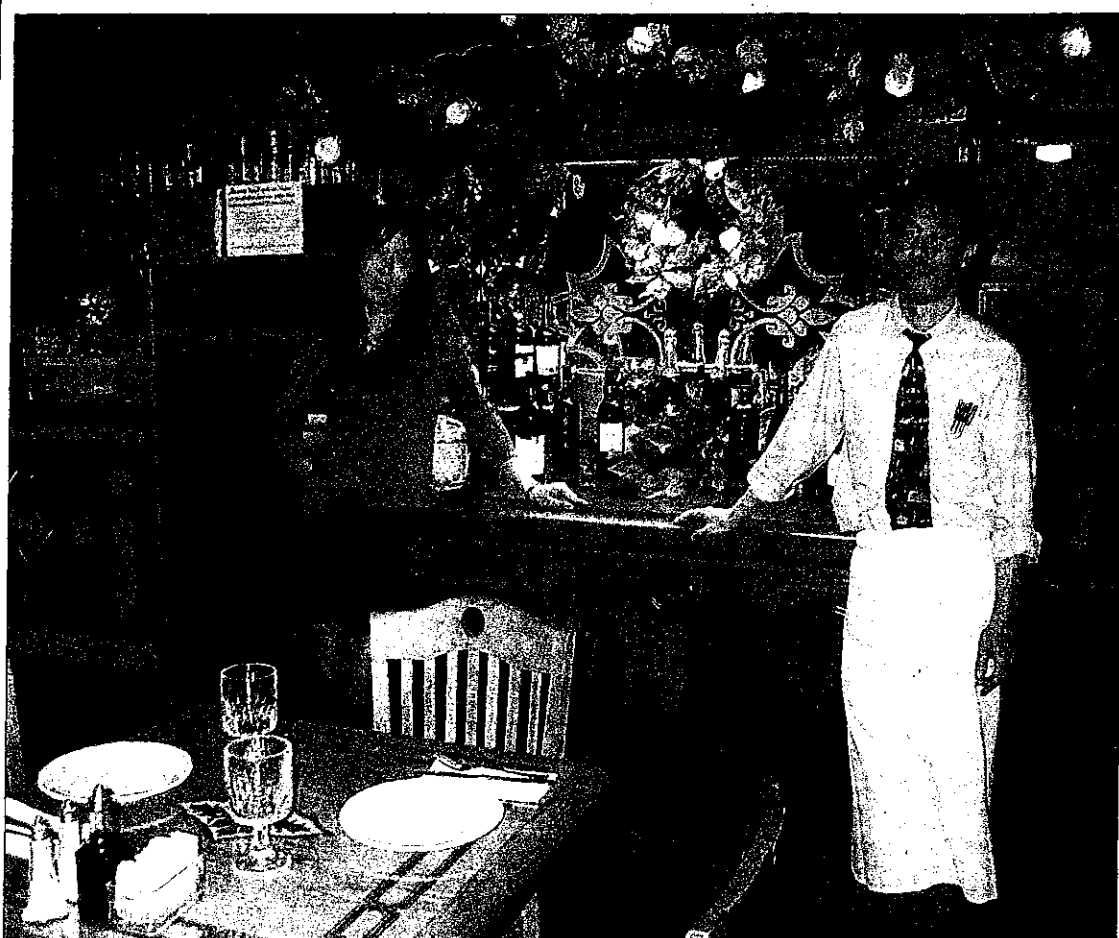
Trash collector: \$10-\$20. If you're unable to meet the truck, place the money in an envelope with a bow and tape it to the garbage can.

Yard worker: \$20-\$50.

If for financial reasons you can't be as generous as you would like this holiday season, even a small gesture — a personal, handwritten note, movie tickets or a bottle of wine — will go a long way in expressing your thanks to the people who make your life easier and more enjoyable.

Mary Davis manages public affairs for the Michigan Credit Union League, a statewide trade association representing Michigan credit unions. Send your financial questions to "Your Money Matters" c/o the Michigan Credit Union League, P.O. Box 8054, Plymouth, MI 48170-8054, or stop by our Web site (www.mcul.org) to learn more about smart money management. Comments about this column may be e-mailed to mcd@mcul.org.

Advertorial



Photos by DUANE RAMSEY

The wife-and-husband team of Fang Tan and Dave Chou are pictured in front of the wine bar at Jasmine's in downtown Northville.

Jasmine's offers fine Chinese dining

Traditional dishes served with flair by Chef Chou

By Duane Ramsey
SPECIAL WRITER

Jasmine's, a fine Chinese dining establishment in Northville, offers customers a unique dining experience with an upscale

atmosphere. It may be off the beaten path of Main Street on Mary Alexander court downtown, but worth the effort to find it and sample the oriental cuisine.

The husband and wife team of Dave Chou and Fang Tan have owned and operated Jasmine's restaurant for the past three years at the Northville location. The couple works hard to provide a fine dining experience for all their customers.

"We serve unique regional Chinese food with a high-end menu and an ambiance for intimate dining," said Fang Tan, who helps her husband manage the business.

Dave Chou is a professionally trained chef who apprenticed with a well-known chef in New York City. After coming to the United States from Taiwan in 1987, he worked in the Szechuan West restaurant in Ann Arbor, owned and operated by his parents, before Chou and Tan decided to open their own place.

Using many unique recipes acquired from his experience and family, Dave prepares all of the delicious food served at Jasmine's. He describes his culinary offerings as "common Chinese fare prepared with unique sauces."

Specializing in Hunan and Szechuan regional cuisine, Jasmine's offers a large selection of diners featuring beef, pork, poultry, seafood, and vegetarian dishes for an average price of \$10. The house specialties cost about \$13 and include Dave's Basil Chicken, Honey Walnut Shrimp, Salt & Pepper Soft-Shell Crab, and Red Snapper.

"My specialty is my creative presentation of the final product," said Dave, who can modify the dishes to individual tastes upon request. The color contrast of how every dish appears on the plate is considered. The quality of the ingredients and fresh presentation makes their dishes not only pleasing to the eyes but also satisfying to the most sophisticated palate.

Besides serving many of the usual items found in most Chinese restaurants, they also offer an extensive list of appetizers. Lettuce Chicken is the all-time favorite appetizer at Jasmine's, while its Red Sauced Wonton and Seafood Roll Sticks are also popular.

Jasmine's also features a distinctive wine bar that serves as the centerpiece of the intimate dining room. With about 30 different varieties sold by the bottle or glass, the wine list includes champagne and oriental wines such as sake and plum wine.

They also serve alcoholic drinks, soft drinks and a variety of fresh juices, Fang said. "We emphasize the quality of our food and restaurant so people want to come back," she said.

CHINESE CUISINE

Jasmine's
146 Mary Alexander Court
in downtown Northville
(248) 465-9393

HOURLS:
Monday: Closed
Tuesday-Thursday: 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Friday-Saturday: 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Sunday: noon to 8 p.m.

"Our retention rate is very high. About 80 to 90 percent of our customers are regulars."

Jasmine's features an upscale atmosphere and contemporary décor with an oriental touch, according to Fang. The restaurant seats from 60 to 70 people for dinner and they take reservations throughout the week.

Jasmine's is open for lunch and dinner Tuesday through Saturday and closed on Monday. On Sunday, they serve dinner all day with no lunch menu.

They also accept carry-out orders for both lunch or dinner and offer catering of their Chinese cuisine.

With their location on Mary Alexander Court behind Main Street, parking in front is limited but free parking is available in back, off of Cady Street, with a rear entrance to Jasmine's for their customers' convenience.

In addition to running a successful restaurant, the couple is raising three children who attend school during the day. Fang said she stays home with the children in the evening while Dave cooks and runs the restaurant.



The interior décor at Jasmine's features a contemporary design with an oriental touch.

JASMINE'S

Fine Chinese Dining
at an affordable price

146 Mary Alexander Court
1 block south of Main Street in downtown Northville

248-465-9393

30% OFF