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INSIDE

City finances

City leaders announced Monday night that a history-making document, a fiscal analysis report of the city, recently was completed by the finance department and Plante Moran accounting and consulting firm in Southfield. This important document precedes the next round of budget sessions, scheduled for early next year.

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Sparkling

Caroline Giese, portraying Mae West, takes some time to visit with Santa during last week's Holiday Sparkles variety show at the Novi Senior Center.

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OBITUARY

Lawrence E. Maher, 91

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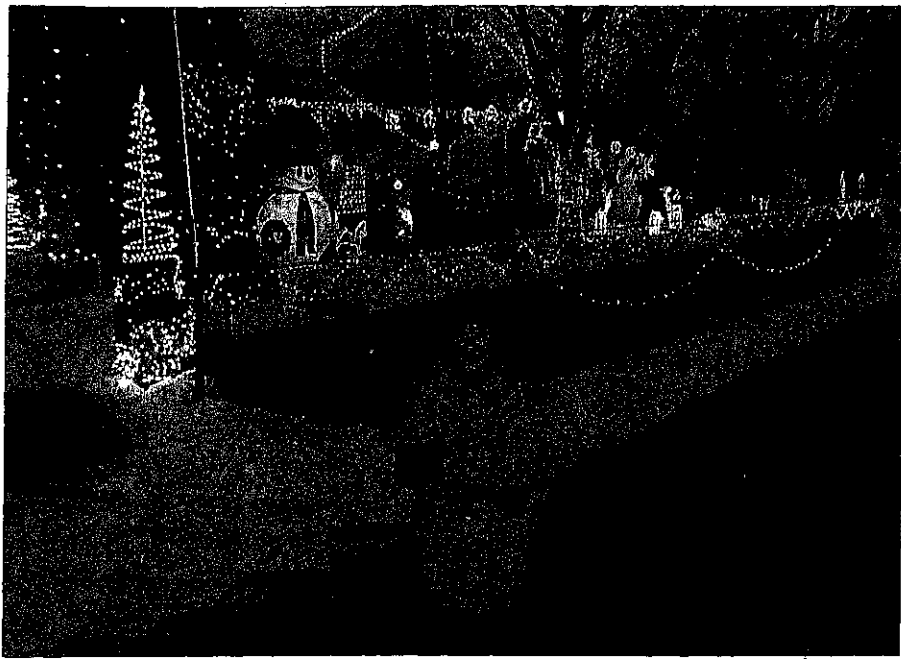


Photo by JOHN HEIDER/Northville Record

Novi resident Olden Jackson began to decorate his Penhill Street home near Walled Lake in late October with thousands of Christmas lights. He's been recognized by the City of Novi for his colorful display.

DECORATING DEVOTEE

Contest won by northwest Novi family

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Novi resident Olden Jackson knows a few tricks of the trade in outdoor decorating. Don't leave strands of lights up year-round in trees, for instance, or they can grow right into the bark. Jackson, who lives on Penhill Street in northwest Novi, learned Dec. 13 that he was the top prize winner of this year's Annual Holiday Decorating Contest, sponsored by the Novi Homeowners Council. He was honored for his efforts at Monday night's city council meeting and received a gift certificate from a local merchant.

Since he won second place in last year's contest, Jackson decided he'd better pick up the pace on the decorations this year. "I start in October. Every year I add a little something different. I've been working at it pretty hard," said the retired mechanic for Piedmont Concrete. He has five eight-foot figures in his yard, including a Santa, Christmas tree, toy soldier and reindeer, plus lights around the roof of the house and a lighted heart made from a rod. He said he spent a good two weeks on the project. "My wife don't like it, but everybody else does. She thinks it's too much. But her daughters keep buying me more stuff to put out every year," Jackson said. He had the house built on Penhill, where he's lived for almost 30 years, and is used to seeing people slow down when they drive by his yard.

"We were looking for a lot of lights, a lot of motion and something that would appeal to kids."

Ron Baron
Novi Homeowners Council

"Iceicle lights are still really popular. I have those around the house and the garage," Jackson said. "I think it's exciting just to do all this stuff," he said. "You only get to do it once a year, and it only stays up a month. It takes me about two days to take it down. You have to pack them up right, too. If you leave them outside, they'll actually grow into the trees." Ron Baron, president of the

Novi Homeowners Council, said six crews of judges circulated the entire city during the weekend of Dec. 10-12. He then asked for their first, second and third choices. "Any one of the top three could have won," Baron said. "We were looking for a lot of lights, a lot of motion and something that would appeal to kids." Only the top three finalists

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Final rush

Shoppers keep patient and tap last-minute gifts

By Kim Kovelie
STAFF WRITER

Along with her mother-in-law and three young daughters, Chrissy Curvin made some final holiday shopping stops last weekend.

"I still do have a few more things to go," said Curvin. "My husband notoriously is out Christmas shopping on Christmas Eve."

With about 48 hours to go, odds are high many procrastinators will join him. Go out with patience and a plan.

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Photo by JOHN HEIDER

A busy shopper heads out of the Novi Town Center's TJ Maxx with a bag full of goodies last Thursday afternoon. Area merchants are seeing a surge of last-minute shoppers as the clock ticks down to Christmas Day.



Courtesy photo

Laurie Johnson of Novi donated more than 500 toys this Christmas to the HAVEN (Help Against Violent Encounters Now) shelter in Pontiac. The local resident works year-round to obtain items and cash for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

CHARITY: It's not just for Christmas

Novi resident believes in year-round giving

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Laurie Johnson of Novi has her own philosophy on giving. She believes donating to local charities shouldn't be an undertaking just for the month of

December. Instead, it should be a year-round deal. Staff at HAVEN (Help Against Violent Encounters Now) - Oakland County's domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse counseling center in Pontiac - recently contacted the Novi News to brag about Johnson, who donated more than 500 toys to the center this year. She is active throughout the whole year, raising money in the

continued on page 4

City settles lawsuit with senior apartment owners

Fire hydrants at complex will use city water

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

City council approved a settlement Monday night in a recent lawsuit the city filed against the owners of a Novi senior citizen apartment complex for failure to

upgrade fire protection systems. The City of Novi will lend \$58,000 to the owners of Grand Court senior apartments at 45182 West Park Drive near Pontiac Trail so the facility's owners can hook its fire hydrants up to city water. City water became available for the hydrants at the apartment complex following the recent installation of a water main on the east side of West Park Drive. Grand Court residents will not have city water in the building.

The apartment residents receive water from a community well. The city water will be used only if there is a fire at the apartment complex. Grand Court is owned by West Oak Associates, a Michigan co-partnership, and is managed by Brookdale Living Communities-CC, LLC, a Delaware firm. West Oak Associates has five years to pay back the loan, according to Clay Pearson, assistant city manager.

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Seven to interview for super's job

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

The Novi Community School District School Board of Education chose seven candidates on Dec. 15, from a pool of 31 to be interviewed for the job of superintendent. The district is looking to replace longtime superintendent Emmett Lippe, who plans to retire at the end of the current school year. He has been with Novi 13 years, and his current salary (base plus additional compensation) is \$208,171. Those seven candidates were recommended to the board by Dr. Mike Wilmot, Michigan Leadership Institute regional

president for southeast Michigan, who was hired by the district to conduct the search. The candidates, all superintendents from Michigan school districts, include: Daniel Danosky, Harper Woods School District; Peter Dion, Grosse Ile Township School District; Milli Haug, Crawford AuSable School District; Tom Hosler, Huron School District; Virginia Kyro, Oxford Area Community School District; Dr. John Sturock, Charlevoix Public School District; Sandra Standel, current assistant superintendent for Royal Oak Public Schools.

SCHEDULE
The public superintendent interviews are scheduled at the Novi's Educational Services Building located at 25345 Taft Rd.:
Tuesday, Jan. 11 - Hosler at 6 p.m. and Sturock at 8 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 12 - Haug at 6 p.m. and Dion at 8 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 13 - Danosky at 6 p.m. and Kyro at 8 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 14 - Standel at 6 p.m.
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Shoppers keep patient and tap last-minute gifts

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Handling the onslaught

If you're headed into the fray, accept it's a jungle out there. "Keep your sense of humor, that's probably No. 1," said Tom Scott, spokesman, Michigan Retailers Association. "It does get frantic, especially this year with Christmas being on a Saturday. Lunch hours and after work and in between, people will be really jammed for time."

Make a list of possibilities ahead of time, as well as backups. "Retailers are keeping leaner inventories. If there's a very popular item, there is a chance it could be gone," Scott said. "You might want to check first or think of a couple places."

Keep in mind that stores may be jammed, too, so be patient with customer services, cashiers and fellow shoppers.

Last minute ideas

If you're still at square one, local "conventional" wisdom points to gift certificates. They're available everywhere from Twelve Oaks Mall, open until 5 p.m. Christmas Eve, to

downtown Northville's chamber of commerce, when closes tomorrow at 4:30 p.m.

Many stores also are hosting pre-Christmas sales. When all else fails, "big box" and chain stores, from Meijer to CVS, are open for the race with Santa.

Best Buy in Novi, open today until 11 p.m. and tomorrow from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., offers their gift certificates in a variety of shapes, from stockings to gingerbread houses.

"They're incredibly popular," said Don Stump, general manager. "We have a line specifically to ring gift cards. None of our gift cards have any expiration dates."

Try hitting stores when people aren't on lunch breaks or during extended hours that aren't widely advertised. Stump said. Finally, keep your budget in mind.

"It's always important to think before you shop," Scott said. "If you can go out with a plan... you can just orderly go down your list rather than go into a panic."

Kim Kovelie can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107, or at kovelie@luhome.com.net.

LOWER THE STRESS

Keep cool on last minute shopping trips:

- Make a plan the night before; know exactly what gifts you need and stick to the list.

- Factor extra time to find parking, wait for service and stand in lines.

- Be flexible on choices like color and model.

- Watch your caffeine intake, from coffee to sweets.

- Plan a healthy, light lunch.

- Pre-set spending limits; don't be tempted by items not on your list.

- Remain alert and keep valuables out of sight.

- Have cash, checkbook, credit cards and identification cards ready when you're checking out, to speed things up.

- Be pleasant with store staff.

Source: Rick Allen, stress reduction workshop specialist and certified hypnotist. ©2004. www.wellnesspsychologist.com

Return to sender: Gifts gone wrong

Remedy white elephants with returns, alternatives

By Kim Kovelie  
STAFF WRITER

After the bow's plucked and the wrapping paper ripped, there it is: the unexpected, unwanted Christmas gift.

What do you do? Force a grin? Blurt a candid, honest response?

Chris Van Dam, owner of Van Dam's in Northville, recalled her peculiar present: "My husband bought me one year some really frilly lingerie," she said. "We had, at the time, a small child. It just was not my lifestyle. But, I didn't want to discourage him from the attempt. He was very proud."

The possibility's two days away, but there's a chance you'll also grapple with an outlandish surprise.

It may depend on who's doing the giving. Close family members or friends could be more approachable.

"That's probably more on a case-

by-case basis," said Dan Jones, general manager, Twelve Oaks Mall. "I don't think there's anybody who says the sooner the better."

Grin and bear it

If a tacky turtleneck's here to stay, the reaction boils down to etiquette.

"In the present, it's important to act graciously," said Gail Majcher, clinic psychologist in Northville. "We're talking about the people's feelings. At the moment, they're excited they've given you something."

What if it's a big ticket item, and the giver wants to know if you'll truly use it?

"Then they need to be honest in a very grateful way," Majcher said. "It's OK to address that a day or two later. Again, graciously."

If it's from a boss, though, she recommends letting it go, regardless of cost.

Consider denoting the item to a charity, or, if possible, passing along the Christmas turkey.

"Someone else's junk is another man's treasure," local writer Robin Franks said. She said she's passed items along for gag gifts and parties.

"I'll let them know," Franks said. "I'll say, 'Someone gave me this and I can't use it. Can you use it?'"

Happy returns

If you're one of the lucky ones with a gift receipt, the main trick is figuring out return policies.

Rules on time frame and eve tags vary widely. Kohl's, which has a Novi locale, leans toward flexibility.

"In most cases, if we sell the item, we take it back," District Manager Chris Wilkerson said. "We don't have any time frame. If you don't have a receipt, then we give our merchandise credits."

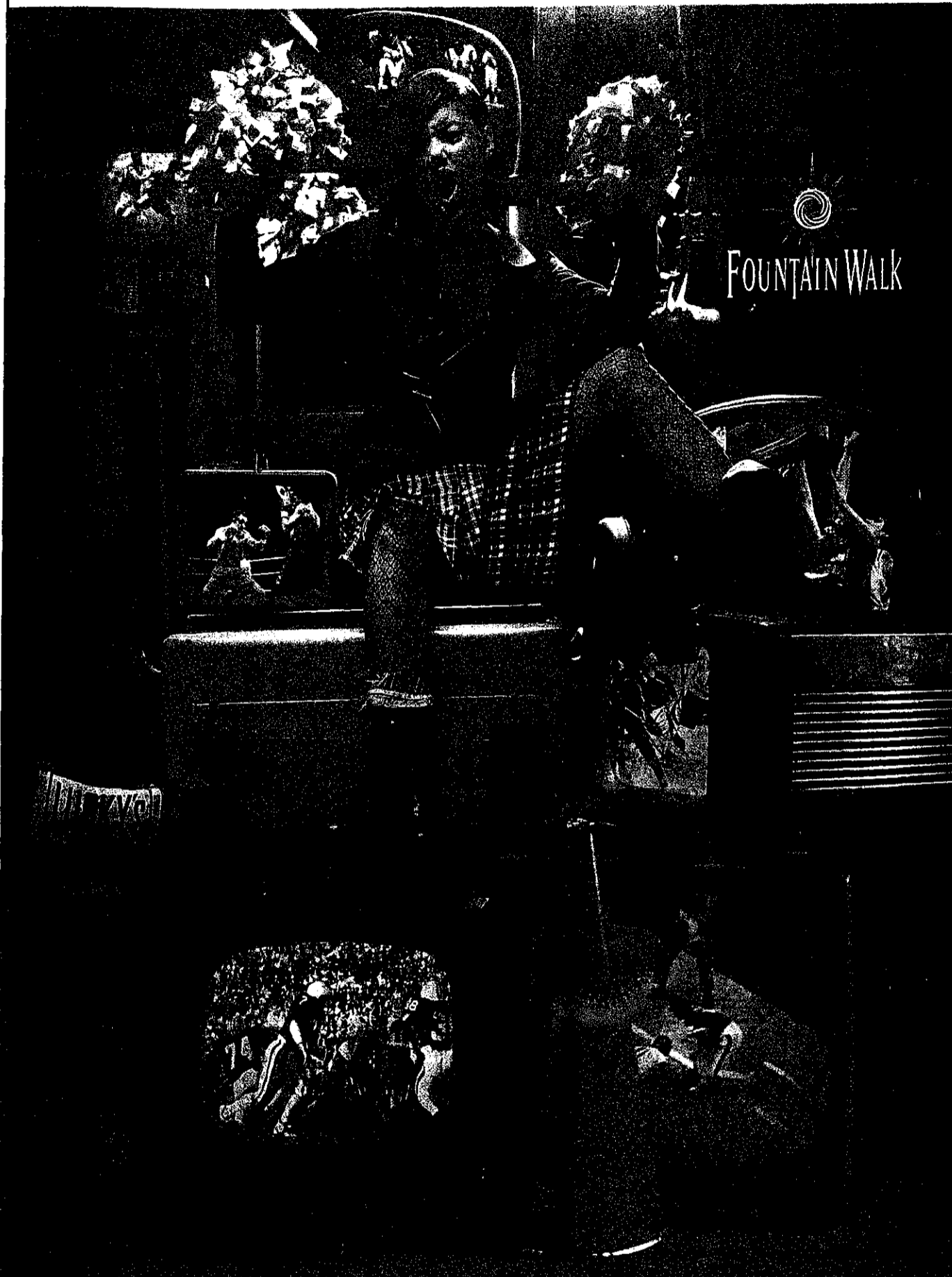
Although return lines are typically longer one to two weeks post-Christmas, the lack of a deadline leaves the luxury of waiting.

Walk boutiques or smaller shops, though, options might be limited.

Van Dam's, for instance, offers cash-back for 10 days. In malls, the spectrum ranges from returns and exchanges to store credit or final sales. Chain stores might also have longer lines to battle.

"We generally say make sure you ask and understand the individual store policy," Jones said. "I would

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### Novi resident believes in year-round giving

continued from front page

summer months to buy items for the women and children housed at the HAVEN's shelter.

"I've been doing this for a while, at least two or three years," Johnson said.

Her co-workers at Consulting Physicians and members of her tennis club help support the facility. She also runs a tennis invitation for members at Walnut Creek Country Club in Lyon Township in the summer and receives donations from them, too.

Her goal is to collect 1,000 toys for the children at the HAVEN shelter for Christmas 2005.

"I've got to start earlier," she said. Johnson learned about HAVEN through friends and decided to give the place for herself.

"The first time I visited the shelter, I took my kids there to show them that they really have it made," she said.

She believes children need to get involved at a young age as far as

contributing to their community.

"There are a lot of things you can do," she said.

In January, Johnson will take even more toys to the shelter she's collected during the holiday season. In the spring, she plans to take some essentials for the moms, such as shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothbrushes and other items.

"You can make contributions all year round. It's not just at Christmas that they need stuff. Abuse happens every day," Johnson said.

Those who work at the HAVEN shelter are overwhelmed by the number of toys and other items she donates.

"It's not a corporation. It's just her," a spokesperson said.

"She comes in by herself and brings in armfuls of toys. We're touched by what a thoughtful person she is. We think it's cool that she does this."

For more information about HAVEN, visit [www.haven-novistownship.org](http://www.haven-novistownship.org). To make a donation, call (248) 334-1284.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at [pfleming@hi.homecomm.net](mailto:pfleming@hi.homecomm.net).

"The first time I visited the shelter, I took my kids there to show them that they really have it made."

Laurie Johnson  
HAVEN supporter

"The first time I visited the shelter, I took my kids there to show them that they really have it made."

Laurie Johnson  
HAVEN supporter

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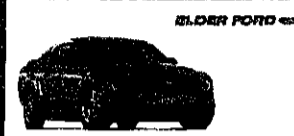
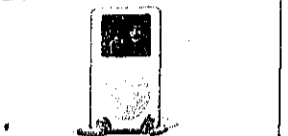
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### Contest won by northwest Novi family

The Novi Homeowners Council announced the winners of the Annual Holiday Decorating Contest for 2004.

**First Place**  
Olden Jackson Family  
116 Penhill

**Second Place**  
McHugh Family  
41223 Coventry

**Third Place**  
Seelenbinder Family  
24023 Elizabeth Lane

**Honorable Mention**  
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40571 Rockhill  
25887 Trestle  
48253 Andover Drive  
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12:00 12:30 1:00 1:30 2:00 2:30 3:00 3:30 4:00 4:30 5:00 5:30 6:00 6:30 7:00 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 9:30 10:00 10:30 11:00 11:30

**THEY (LIVONIA) 12/24**  
12:00 12:30 1:00 1:30 2:00 2:30 3:00 3:30 4:00 4:30 5:00 5:30 6:00 6:30 7:00 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 9:30 10:00 10:30 11:00 11:30

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**THEY (LIVONIA) 12/24**  
12:00 12:30 1:00 1:30 2:00 2:30 3:00 3:30 4:00 4:30 5:00 5:30 6:00 6:30 7:00 7:30 8:00 8:30 9:00 9:30 10:00 10:30 11:00 11:30

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continued from front page

Jackson said he has a lot of time to devote to holiday decorating since he's retired. He also noted that retirement took a little getting used to, but now he's made the transition.

"The first year it drove me crazy, but now I find things to do. I build dune buggies — one or two a year — and sell them. I get a kick out of it," he said.

He said the buggies sell in the spring and summer, and he and his family members travel to the sand dunes near Muskegon to ride the vehicles.

"We have a lot of fun," he said.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at [pfleming@hi.homecomm.net](mailto:pfleming@hi.homecomm.net).

### Fire hydrants at complex will use city water

When Grand Court was built in 1987, the intent was that fire hydrants would connect to city water once it became available, Pearson said.

Part of the city's complaint when the owners did not comply

involved concerns that a number of residents, because of physical disability, would not be able to evacuate the building on their own during an emergency.

When constructed, the building did not have special provisions for a large number of people to evacuate the building on their own.

In the agreement discussed at city council Dec. 20 between Brookdale and the city, Grand County Circuit Court against the owner — West Oak Associates — according to Pearson.

"Once we brought the situation

to their attention, we have received very good cooperation from the Brookdale representatives," he said.

The noncompliance situation was discovered during a routine Novi Fire Department inspection.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at [pfleming@hi.homecomm.net](mailto:pfleming@hi.homecomm.net).

received very good cooperation from the Brookdale representatives."

Clay Pearson  
City of Novi assistant manager

"Once we brought the situation to their attention, we have received very good cooperation from the Brookdale representatives."

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# PUBLIC SAFETY

Pam Fleming, staff writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 105 pfleming@hl.homecomm.net

## Two of Novi's finest promoted to sergeant rank

■ Wuotinen and Lauria total over 25 years combined service

By Pam Fleming  
 STAFF WRITER

A packed house of friends, family, city council members and city of Novi staff saw two members of Novi's finest promoted during a special ceremony



K. Wuotinen



V. Lauria

Monday afternoon at the Novi Police Department Training Center.

Det. Victor Lauria and Ofc. Keith Wuotinen rose to the rank of sergeant.

The promotions mean that the two detectives will make the transition into a supervisory and management positions in the department.

"They will see a significant change in the types of work that they've been used to doing but yet will still play a major role in activities of the Novi Police Department," said Chief of Police Doug Shaeffer.

"We're obviously brimming with pride that these two gentlemen have sought additional responsibility," said City Manager Rick Helwig.

Lauria has 17 years on the job and was the first K-9 officer employed at the department with his own money by the way.

"I think he spent \$7,000 to buy that dog, and he had to buy his

own dog food," Shaeffer said.

Lauria asked to be assigned undercover, where he worked for four years.

"He did some stuff that would make your head spin. You just can't imagine how successful he was," Shaeffer noted.

Next, he moved into investigations. One recent case he worked on was the \$1.2 million robbery at Jared Galleria of Jewelry at West Oaks Mall resulting in 15 felony charges, some receiving life sentences.

Lauria also investigated the case involving the murder of Anne Marie Shawley, a 2-year-old girl tortured to death by her stepmother at Old Dutch Farms mobile home park Labor Day Weekend 2003. The stepmother, Nikole Frederick, was convicted of first-degree murder and is serving a life sentence.

"He and Mike Warren were two of the key people involved in solving that case," Shaeffer said.

Wuotinen will celebrate nine years with the department in February. Shaeffer said he was only with the department for a couple of years before being selected as a field training officer.

At the same time, he decided to further his education, received his law degree and within months was admitted to the Michigan State Bar Association, Shaeffer noted.

"We've got some jewelry for them. We have sergeant chevrons for both of these guys," Shaeffer said.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@hl.homecomm.net.

## Novi retail fraud stats show slight decline

■ Incidents go from 300 in 2002 to 281 last year

By Pam Fleming  
 STAFF WRITER

"It's the season for retail fraud, and local establishments are picking up the pace in their loss prevention efforts.

Although retail fraud in Novi was actually down last year compared to 2002, it is still a year-long challenge for the Novi Police Department with several major shopping centers in the city.

In 2002, there were 300 retail fraud incidents in Novi. In 2003, there were 281, representing a decline of 6.33 percent.

Even so, the holiday shopping season, presents more opportunities for would-be thieves.

"Retail fraud does increase during the holiday season," said Det. Sgt. Matt Coquest, Novi Police Department. "Twelve Oaks security hire additional staff during this time, referring to it as seasonal help."

Loss prevention agents are trained to be more alert for retail type crimes during the holiday shopping period, he said.

Coquest said all of the major stores in Novi have good surveillance systems. "A good percentage of arrests do arise from surveillance cameras," he noted.

Most of the arrests occur in the malls on Novi Road, but that doesn't mean they don't happen at other stores.

Penalties for retail fraud range from fines, court costs and probation to a misdemeanor charge that can lead to up to 93 days in jail or even prison time for repeat offenders.

Dan Jones, general manager, Twelve Oaks Mall, said loss prevention is a part of every retailer's life.

"We're fortunate here at Twelve Oaks that it's not the

most prominent issue we deal with," Jones said.

"We get a lot of industry information. Our director of security talks with the individual department stores, and our security team advises the stores. He's been here 25 years, so he has a good feel for the history of the mall, and he's very familiar with the retailers and what's happened here historically," Jones said.

Retail fraud costs not only businesses but also consumers.

"If you look at the industry as a whole, we all ultimately pay more for products as a result of retail fraud. It's a business risk," Jones said.

Retail fraud is more than just stealing goods. It includes counterfeitering, bad checks and fraudulent or stolen credit cards.

Twelve Oaks' security department staff serves as a liaison between its retailers and the local police.

"If the stores need our help, we're always there," Jones said.

Retail fraud is not as prevalent at Fountain Walk shopping center.

"The difference for Fountain Walk is that we're more of an entertainment/restaurant venue, so we're not dealing with loss as you would with merchandise. So, retail fraud is not such a big issue for us," according to Linda Busse, director of marketing.

"We have very few tenants with merchandise. Still, we have an active security team on site who are trained on loss prevention," she said.

Busse said most security issues at Fountain Walk are due to the fact that businesses are open after regular hours.

"Since we have a lot of venues that are open late, we have a strong security force after 9 p.m., unlike typical shopping centers. We have late-night security issues."

"Fortunately, we haven't had a lot of problems," Busse said.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@hl.homecomm.net.

"If you look at the industry as a whole, we all ultimately pay more for products as a result of retail fraud."

Dan Jones  
 Twelve Oaks Mall

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# COMMUNITY

Pam Fleming, staff writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 105 pfleming@ht.homecomm.net

## South Lake Drive contractor to receive payment from Novi

City officials feared lawsuit if decision postponed

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

City council voted Monday night to approve final payment of \$87,000 to a contractor that the city owes for work completed on improvements to South Lake Drive in Novi.

Rick Helwig, city manager, told city council that his office has been working with staff from the department of public works and the contractor since May 2004 on this project. The city owes \$87,000 on a \$2.2 million project to Anderson-Pitca Construction of Metamora, Ohio.

Helwig said the amount has been due to the contractor for several months and expressed concern that the firm may initiate

legal action against the city soon if the matter was not resolved.

"It's time to settle what's due to the contractor and the engineer," Helwig said.

South Lake Drive residents have been plagued with drainage problems for months, with the DPW spending more than \$20,000 on repairs.

Benny McCusker, director, DPW, said that the drainage problems and sump pump work has been completed, and the department doesn't expect any more problems.

"It's a kind of a wait-and-see thing," McCusker said.

Council member Tom Nagy said that he did not want to involve the city in a lawsuit over \$87,000.

"This thing needs to come to an end. Let's just pay it and get it over with," Nagy said.

Those voting in favor of approving the final payment to the contractor included Rob Gatt, Kim Capello, Mayor Lou Cosard, Mayor Pro Tem David Landry, Tom Nagy, S.2 vote. Members voting in opposition were Lynn Paul and Laura Lorenzo.

not to approve the payment due to the fact that they needed more information before they could approve the amount.

Council voted, however, to postpone payment to Giffels-Webster Engineers for South Lake Drive reconstruction in the amount of \$32,420 until more information is available.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@ht.homecomm.net.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER  
**Mad scientist**  
Nicholas Cole, 8, shows off some 'slime' that he's concocted out of polyvinyl alcohol, sodium tetraborate and tempura paint at the "Wild Wizard Day of Spells and Potions" at the Novi Civic Center. The day of activities run by Mad Science, featured experiments with dry ice and dish soap that had a bubbly reaction, magnetism, and gave the campers a chance to build their own birdhouse.

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## Singh to request variance at its Legacy Parc subdivision

Developer wants to build clubhouse, recreation area

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

West Bloomfield-based Singh Development will have to wait until after the first of the year to see if they get to make some changes to a new subdivision, Legacy Parc, on the current site of Links of Novi Golf Course.

And, there's good news for area golfers.

Singh announced at Monday night's city council meeting that the 27-hole Novi course would remain open through the 2005 golf season. Construction on Legacy Parc lots won't start until 2006. The developer also plans to sponsor a golf tournament in 2005 benefiting the Novi Parks Foundation.

Mike Kahn, vice president, Singh Development, came before council requesting approval of a final residential unit development plan, modified agreement, preliminary site plan, wetland permit and storm water management plan.

The property is located south of Ten Mile Road and west of Wixom Road. Singh is proposing a 439-unit single family residential project on 325 acres in five parcels, including the Links of Novi and two parcels on each side of that property.

The plan city council reviewed a year ago did not include a clubhouse. The preliminary site plan now shows elimination of tennis courts and the addition of a clubhouse and associated recreation facilities, including a swimming pool and sport court, with no reduction in the total number of lots.

The sport court would feature a basketball court that could be frozen over for hockey or ice skating. The facility would be for Legacy Parc residents only.

The city's planning department shares members of the planning commission's concerns about possible traffic congestion around the clubhouse at one of the main entries to the development.

The planning department also has concerns about the possible need for a variance from the zoning board of appeals for the proximity of the recreation facilities close to property lines shared with homeowners.

City council approved the original plan Monday night, explaining to Kahn that Singh will have to receive approval from the zoning board of appeals at its Jan. 4, meeting on the modifications near the clubhouse. City ordinance states that the clubhouse and recreation facilities must be at least 80 feet from nearby homeowners' property.

Singh also wants to increase the number of parking spaces by the clubhouse and recreation facilities from 25-50.

"I prefer the previous plan," said council member Kim Capello. The original plan included two tennis courts, a volleyball and basketball court.

Singh also plans to construct a \$1 million trail system and another \$1 million to create the clubhouse and associated amenities. The developer hopes Legacy Parc will be a signature subdivision in the city.

Council member Tom Nagy asked Kahn why the developer changed the name of the subdivision.

"It was more of an internal thing," Kahn said. "We have several developments with the name Quail in them, and it was creating some confusion."

### GOOD NEWS, GOLFERS

Mike Kahn, vice president, Singh Development, announced at Monday night's city council meeting that Links of Novi Golf Course will remain open through the 2005 season. The West Bloomfield-based developer will not begin construction of its Legacy Parc subdivision at the site until 2006.

## City finalizes first-ever fiscal analysis report

Document features improvements to 2013

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

City leaders announced Monday night that a history-making document, a fiscal analysis report of the city, was recently completed by the finance department and Planic Moran accounting and consulting firm in Southfield.

This important document precedes the next round of budget sessions, scheduled for early next year.

"This is a document we have wanted for some time," said Rick Helwig, city manager. He thanked the city council for approving funding for the endeavor and noted that the report includes an ambitious capital improvement program and set of projections to 2013.

Helwig said that the city has developed a budget request proposal in addition to finalizing the fiscal analysis.

"Reality is somewhere between the two," Helwig said.

"I think this is the first time the city has operated with a business plan," said Mayor Lou Cosard. "It's very eye-opening and fortunate to have done this in this time in the city's history."

Council member Laura Lorenzo expressed concern that the fiscal analysis was not able to be used by members of the planning commission when they developed the master plan.

Tom Schultz, city attorney, said that once the planning commission approves the master plan, it remains as is unless council decided it wants to be the controlling body.

City council recently voted to give the planning commission authority to approve the city's master plan, an outline of suggested land use, which must be updated every five years.

Council member Tom Nagy was also disappointed that the planning commission did not get to see the fiscal analysis before the updated master plan was created.

"Maybe they need to make amendments after reviewing this analysis," Nagy said. "I think it would have changed some of their planning when it comes to zoning. I don't know where the failure in communication was. I'd like for them to see a copy."

Mayor Lou Cosard said there was no failure to communicate to members of the planning commission, but that it was a timing issue.

Mayor Pro Tem David Landry said that even with the fiscal analysis that he didn't think the master plan needed to be amended.

"I don't think the master plan is lacking in any way, shape or form. I think our master plan is solid," Landry said.

### SESSION CHANGED

The city council's goal-setting session has been changed to 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 22, in council chambers. The meeting was originally scheduled for Monday, Jan. 31, but city council decided Saturday night would be better for a five-to-six-hour session.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@ht.homecomm.net.

**CITY OF NOVI VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO SERVE ON CITY BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**

Notice is given that the Novi City Council will be meeting to interview applicants for appointment to the Beautification Commission, Board of Review, Economic Development Corporation, Election Commission, Housing & Community Development Advisory Committee, Historical Commission, Library Board of Trustees, Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals.

If you are a qualified voter in the City of Novi and interested in volunteering to serve on the City board or commission, applications are available in the office of the City Clerk, 45175 W. Ten Mile, or by calling (248) 347-0456 to receive an application by mail or fax, or log onto the City Web Site at [www.cityofnovi.com](http://www.cityofnovi.com) to print out an application.

The deadline for filing an application is Friday, January 7, 2005 to allow time for scheduling interview appointments.

Council will be interviewing applicants on Monday, January 10, 2005, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers; interviews are scheduled for 10 minutes each and all City Council meetings are televised.

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# BUSINESS

Kim Kovelle, staff writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 107 kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net

## Novi woman says ABC stole her idea

**Lawsuit claims network producers pirated show**

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Like many writers, Novi resident Rubyann Clairday took steps to protect her idea when she pitched a television show to American Broadcasting Companies (ABC) in 2002. But she says ABC executives, after turning her idea down, stole her concept and produced the show anyway. A Los Angeles entertainment attorney has filed a lawsuit on her behalf against ABC on a contingency basis. Lawyers on both sides are still battling it out.

Clairday thought she had jumped through all the right hoops when she presented an idea to ABC, owned by the Walt Disney empire, for a show called "Foreign Exchange." The show was about young people from different backgrounds who trade lives for a while. She registered her idea with the National Creative Registry, and both she and her agent thought she

had a good shot at attracting some interest in the show.

When ABC producers turned her idea down, she was disappointed. She became angry, however, when she learned from friends that eight months later, the network produced their own shows, "Switched" and "Switched Up," which were similar to the idea she had pitched to them.

Clairday was born in New Jersey, but has lived in Michigan most of her life. A Michigan State University graduate with a degree in psychology, she, and her husband, Matt, have lived in Novi about six years.

She always loved writing, started writing fulltime about 10 years ago, and has had teen, romance and children's books published.

"I actually tried sending stories in to Readers Digest when I was 12," she said.

When she became interested in screenwriting and reality TV shows, she learned it was a different world.

"I'd been warned to be careful. It's not like publishing, which is very staid and old-fashioned. I was told to copyright all my work before I pitched it to a network to be safe."

Clairday said, "They said if I did that, I'd be fine."

Her agent pitched the idea to the parent company, ABC, to be aired on the ABC Family Channel.

"I'd been warned to be careful. It's not like publishing, which is very staid and old-fashioned. I was told to copyright all my work before I pitched it to a network to be safe."



Rubyann Clairday  
Novi writer suing ABC

## Ex-goalie owes Twelve Oaks Mall rent money

**Owners seek \$500,000 rent, lease payments**

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

The owners of Twelve Oaks Mall are suing former Detroit Red Wings hockey goalie Dominik Hasek, known as "The Dominator," for closing his clothing store and skipping out on the rent.

Hasek's Dominator Clothing company closed its doors at the Twelve Oaks Mall location Oct. 4 after missing three months of lease payments on the space.

The former goalie owed \$38,000 when he left in October.

But, mall owners are suing the goalie for \$495,660 in back rent and lease payments through 2008 under a contract Hasek signed in September 2003.

Twelve Oaks Mall is represented by the local law firm of Honigman, Miller, Schwarz & Cohen. Hasek is represented by William Cohen, an independent attorney from Birmingham.

Attorneys for both parties would not comment about the case.

Pam Fleming is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@ht.homecomm.net.

## Competition sparks new communications strategy

**Administrators try to get points across with mass mailings**

By Ramez Khuri  
STAFF WRITER

As a part of the Novi Community School District's new communications plan, Novi residents who have children in eighth and ninth grades can expect to hear from the district in the form of a mass mailing very soon.

The whole basis of the new plan, according to Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services Nancy Davis, is to remind the Novi school community of its outstanding school district, located right in their back yards.

The mass mailing is the second of its kind. The first, which was done recently, was to let folks know of upcoming information meetings that they can attend. The new one, which will happen in January, is to invite parents to upcoming open houses at Novi Middle School and Novi High School to answer questions regarding programs and offerings of extra-curricular activities.

"We've had a lot of great things happen in the last couple of years that we want to be able to promote and communicate throughout the community," Davis said. "We often get questions from people who are thinking about moving to Novi and they want to know more about the school district. I think this will give them specific information about all of our many programs and opportunities that our school system provides to families and students."

"Of course, a major reason why the district has adopted a new communications plan is because Catholic Central High School will be opening up its doors this fall in Novi."

"We want parents to know what we offer students so that they can really weigh the pros and cons if they're considering Catholic Central or any other public or private school in the area," Davis said. "This is a good time to update our communications materials and let people know that Novi is a great place to raise children and to have kids educated."

The Novi Community School District's state-of-the-art facilities are a major point that administrators want to promote.

"If you look at our high school, which is nearing completion, it's going to be a huge, beautiful gem within the boundaries of the community," Davis said.

Eventually, the high school will have a capacity of 2,400 students, but yet, the building has been designed to help keep a big school feel small so that students can feel connected. Davis said that a lot of new things have been happening with programs to make sure that is the case.

"We have outstanding athletic facilities, we have a competitive, athletic, Olympic size swimming pool in the high school and of course the other buildings have been renovated, and are all equipped with technology," Davis said. "We're still among the best of any school district in the state in terms of technology infrastructure for students and our staff to use and with the completion of our transportation facility, all the buildings will be in really great shape. We would like to continue to look for ways to improve the facilities as well as what's going on inside the buildings."

Novi Schools only accepts residents of Novi who reside within the Novi Community School District. The district does not open its doors to choice.

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



Novi High School's Jazz Band performed at the Winter Winds Concert on, Dec. 9, under the direction of Mark Hourigan.

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**PRESS ARGUS**

On Feb. 3, 2005, the Livingston County Daily Press & Argus will be launching a new special section entitled, "Oh Baby!" and your baby could be the main attraction.

This new section will feature photos of all babies born in 2004, along with editorial and advertising copy for new parents.

Each participant will receive a space similar to this:

Christina Louise Smith  
March 22, 2004  
Sara Joseph Mary Livingston  
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To publish your 2004 arrival in Oh Baby!, send a photo and \$20 to:  
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All entries must be received by Jan. 12, 2005.

Include a SASE if you want your photo returned. **PRESS ARGUS**

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40700 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi (between Meadowbrook & Haggerty)  
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The community is also invited to come to the Celebration of our new church home on Sunday, Jan. 2 at 3p.m.

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# SENIORS

Kim Kovelle, staff writer (248) 349-1700, ext. 107. [kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net](mailto:kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net)

## Seniors make holiday spirits sparkle

### Friends bring holiday favorites to life

By Kim Kovelle  
574-FWITCH

Paper bags were packed with scarves, gloves and Santa hats, and the goodies were starting to circulate.

"Would you like a hepatic, sweetie?" someone asked as a bag of the red candy was passed.

Dressed in their best winter apparel, dozens of seniors hummed with chatter in the little meeting room at Novi's senior center.

There was some momentary concern when an announcement was made: jerseys, pom-poms and scarves were feared misplaced.

Luckily, they were found in time for Monday Night Football parties. "Are you ready for some Turkey?"

"We enjoy doing the show for the seniors," said Virginia Opaleski, chewing a licorice stick. "I've been in the show for seven years."

Held at the center for its second year, the 45-minute show played to sell-out crowds of 127 last Thursday and Friday at 1 p.m.

Through song and dance, seniors catwalked away from the recent "Oh Holy Night" to quirky but classic "The Chipmunk Song."

Along with Opaleski, Melba Alern, wearing tiny Christmas "lights" around her neck, was ready for her big appearance.

"I'll be sitting on my fancy singing," she laughed. "I like 'em all. I love Christmas."

Before the show, a few warmed up for their solos, but most relaxed and had plenty of holiday laughs.

Friends Eleanor Bullock and Dianne Brennan, both in the chorus, got to the center early to sing holiday-appropriate songs.

"There isn't any room here to practice," Bullock said, surveying the small conference room.

With a grin, Brennan said, "Even if there was I don't think we would!" She said she enjoys the camaraderie of the group.

"They're wonderful people and we understand each other."

Brennan added, "We bought the Santa hats at tremendous expense at the dollar store."

Glynda Herold of Livonia blackened her teeth to better deliver a festive rendition of "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth."

"It's like a black, polka," Herold said. "I've got a mirror. I got to do it behind the girls."

Caroline Glese stamped it up as "Mac Wesc" sitting on Pia "Santa" McCallion's lap.

Just before they went on stage, director Sherie Sansom gave some last-minute advice.

"Put your face up," Sansom said. "Show in the show how happy you are."

From tap dancing to some holiday humor from Kathy Crawford, the seniors took her words to heart.

But even before the show began, judging from the laughter, joking and holiday wishes shared, it seemed they'd already embraced the recommendation before it was made.

"They're all close to me," Herold said.

What kind of gathering was this? A Christmas pageant? Some sort of food-strolling pop rally? A little bit of both, actually. The 40 seniors were preparing for their "Holiday Sparkles" card revue.

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](mailto:kkovelle@ht.homecomm.net).



A musical number including football jersey-wearing cheerleaders and a cook with a Vikings helmet, crock pot and fake turkey leg entertains during last "Holiday Sparkles" variety show at the Novi Senior Center.

### Meadowbrook Congregational Church

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Nativity Pageant & Candlelighting

9 p.m. Service  
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Saturday, March 12, 2005

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The evening will include the art of local photographer Monte Nagler and wine art by Thomas Stiltz. A strolling dinner will be catered by Unique Restaurant Corporation. The highlight of the evening will be a VIP Reception where master sommelier Madeline Trifon and sommelier Rick Rubel of Unique Restaurant Corporation will lead a presentation on rare wines.

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# CALENDAR

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

## EVENTS

### Schoolcraft College Choral Union Auditions

DATE: Call for audition aprt.  
LOCATION: Schoolcraft College Forum Building, Room 310, 18600 Haggerty Rd., Livonia  
DETAILS: All voice parts welcome.  
CONTACT: choir president, Shari Cason at (248) 349-8175 or email to [dpcase@schoolcraft.edu](mailto:dpcase@schoolcraft.edu). Re: auditions

### Local Artists Exhibit & Open House

DATE: through Jan. 3  
TIME: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
LOCATION: Meadowbrook Art Center, 41300 Ten Mile Rd., Novi  
DETAILS: Presenting a local artist exhibit featuring originals and prints by Monte Nagler, Owen Torokow, Edie Jaggioli, Ken Waller, Marie Benzing, Richard Seaman, Dan Stuart, Jeri Fellwock and Christopher Golla. Also visit for a Holiday Open House, Dec. 11.  
CONTACT: (248) 477-6620

### Providence Center for the Healing Arts' Tuesdays at Assaring

DATE: Every Tuesday night  
TIME: 5-8 p.m.  
LOCATION: Assaring Cancer Center, 47601 Grand River Ave., Novi  
DETAILS: Variety of activities for the adult community to come and enjoy a unique mix of classes sponsored by the Providence Center for the Healing Arts. Some activities may include a supplies fee (no more than \$10).  
CONTACT: (248) 465-5483

### 14th Annual New Year's Eve Party, Dinner and Dance

TIME: doors open 8 p.m.  
LOCATION: Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, 27000 Sheraton Dr. (Novi Rd. at 196, use Exit 162)  
DETAILS: Everyone is welcome. Hosted by Metropolitan Single Professionals. Top 40 DJ, cash bar, many great door prizes.

### Support Groups

**Moms Club of Novi**  
Date: Jan. 6, meetings first Thursday of each month  
Time: 10 a.m.  
Location: Novi Civic Center  
Details: The MOMS Club (MOMS Offering Moms Support) is a non-profit support group, specifically aimed at meeting the needs of mothers who choose to stay at home with their children, including those who work out of their homes, as well as those who work part-time.  
Contact: Dana Talbani, membership VP or e-mail: [Dna@twm.net](mailto:Dna@twm.net)

**Women's Prayer Support**  
DATE: every Saturday  
TIME: 9-10:30 a.m.  
LOCATION: Harvest Fellowship Church, 49329 Pontiac Trail, Wixom (parking is behind the church).  
DETAILS: You are welcome to come for encouragement, help, hope and prayer as you face life's problems, twists and frustrations. Drop in for five minutes or longer.  
CONTACT: Nancy and Susan at (248) 926-8332 or by e-mail at [havestellowsip@comcast.net](mailto:havestellowsip@comcast.net).

### Kensington Valley Mothers of Multiples (MOMMS)

DATE: second Thursday of each month  
TIME: 7 p.m.  
LOCATION: Witch's Hat Depot, South Lyon.  
DETAILS: Kensington Valley Mothers of Multiples provides

### Oakland County Health Division Flu Shots

DATE: ongoing until supplies are depleted.  
LOCATION: Pontiac Office, 1200 N. Telegraph Rd. (north of Elizabeth Lake Rd.) in the Oakland

### Business

**Business Referrals**  
DATE: every Wednesday  
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45175 Ten Mile Rd.  
TIME: 7-8:30 a.m.  
DETAILS: Meeting of local professionals and business looking to increase word-of-mouth referral business. Various classifications 'open and eager to bring you qualified business leads.  
CONTACT: (734) 462-6460.

### Classes

**Providence Center for the Healing Arts' Tuesdays at Assaring**  
DATE: Every Tuesday night  
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"EXQUISITELY EVOCATIVE!"

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"OUTRAGEOUSLY FUNNY!"

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STAR GREAT LAKES CROSSING STAR JOHN R 14 MILE  
STAR ROCHESTER HILLS STAR SOUTHFIELD UA COMMERCE STADIUM 14

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Cost is \$55 in advance or \$65 at the door. Attire: holiday dressy-men must wear a coat and tie.  
CONTACT: NYE information at (248) 851-9919 or (248) 544-6445.

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DATE: ongoing until supplies are depleted.  
LOCATION: Pontiac Office, 1200 N. Telegraph Rd. (north of Elizabeth Lake Rd.) in the Oakland

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Send your calendar items to Cal Stone, editor Novi News, 104 W. Main, Northville, MI 48167; fax to (248) 349-9832; or e-mail to [cstone@ht.homecomm.net](mailto:cstone@ht.homecomm.net).

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# FAITH

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

## A CHURCH ON THE MOVE

### Holy Cross finds a new Novi home

Two years ago, the mission congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan was designated a Strategic Redevelopment Congregation, receiving aid from the diocese to grow the mission church in the Novi community. As a result, the Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross recently relocated to a new facility about two miles east on Ten Mile Road.

When Pastor Karen Henry first came to Holy Cross to serve as priest in charge and pastor, the mission congregation began plans to build on the facility at 46200 W. Ten Mile Rd. to expand the current space. But it was projected that expansion plans and financing would take seven-10 years to complete. The congregation has grown in the past two years, with over 50 new members joining in the first year.

"We outgrew our space," said Henry, "and it became apparent that if we were to continue to grow (which was and is a Strategic Redevelopment priority)

and welcome new members into our congregation, we simply could not wait to build the space we needed a year ago! As we prayed about our current need for more space, another church facility was discovered... with most of the features on our wish list: a sanctuary that can seat over 200, a larger parish hall, air-conditioning, additional parking and a wonderful child-friendly space."

For the past year, Henry and the congregation's leadership at Holy Cross have been working with the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan and the Southeast Lutheran Synod to purchase this facility, formerly known as Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church in Novi and home for years to "A Growing Place" day care. Several years ago, the Episcopal Church (USA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America entered a "Concordat Agreement" that meant these two branches of Christianity would work together as closely as possible in honoring each other's history, traditions and liturgies, and building and witnessing to their unity in the Body of Christ.

The Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, The Rt. Rev. Wendell Gibbs, Jr. and the



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Pastor Karen Henry and the congregation of Novi's Church of the Holy Cross have been busy moving into their new building at 40700 W. Ten Mile Road.

Southeast Lutheran Synod (ELCA) Bishop Rimo have been instrumental in the relocation for Holy Cross. Both bishop's will attend the celebration and dedication of the new Holy Cross Episcopal Church location on Jan. 2 at 3 p.m.

A recent national survey

showed that only 3 percent of churches, across denominational lines, actually relocate. As senior warden Larry Jansen said about this decision, "When you outgrow the space in your home, you are faced with two choices: build on and expand or find a larger home

and move. We decided we needed to relocate to a larger facility." The clergy and congregation invites everyone to come and see their new church for Christmas Eve worship services at 4 p.m., 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. Call (248) 427-1175 for more information.

### HOLY CROSS HISTORY

The Church of the Holy Cross in Novi has been in its current location for 38 years. It began as a church in the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Dean and Orlo and Betty Johns in 1957. It was organized as a Parochial Mission of Trinity Church in Farmington in 1957. Worship services were held in various locations and the mission was made a Parochial Mission of St. Andrew's in Livonia from 1959-1963. By January 25, 1963, the mission was about to be closed. The Rev. Joseph Tonia took on the duties as vicar; the mission grew and then began to decline.

In 1965, land was purchased for the building on Ten Mile Road. The Rev. Jack Fricke, assistant at St. Paul's Memorial, in Detroit, under the direction of the rector, the Rev. C.B.W. Maddock, took on the task of seeing that the building was erected. The first service was held at Holy Cross Church on Christmas Eve, 1965.

A parish hall and additional classroom and office space were added to the building in 1972. In 1969, the Rev. Leslie Harding was called as vicar to Holy Cross. His long tenure at Holy Cross and involvement in the Novi community lasted until he retired in 2001. In October 2002, the Rev. Karen Henry was called to serve as priest in charge and strategically redevelop Holy Cross. In January 2004, the Rev. John W. Henry II was hired as part-time assistant priest.

# SPORTS

novi@news.com

Thursday, December 23, 2004

## Wildcats earn win over Northville

### Baseline rivalry goes to Novi

The Novi Wildcats hockey team knew going into their game with the Northville Mustangs a victory wasn't going to be easy — they just didn't know it would take until the final moments of the game to decide a victor.

In the end, it was the Wildcats who skated off with the win, notching a 3-2 win over their Baseline rivals. The win came just days after the 'Cats lost to Kensington Valley Conference rival South Lyon, 5-4.

Against the Mustangs of Northville, Novi's Mark Eberline notched a tally with just 10 seconds remaining in the game to seal the victory.

Northville found themselves in the lead on a power play goal with three minutes remaining in the first period but the Wildcats were quick to knot things up as Tom Ciaverilla put one past Jimmy Gates for the 1-1 game.

The second period was all Novi as the 'Cats added their second tally off the stick of Chris Zarem for the 2-1 lead. With time expiring in the third period, the Mustang were able to tie the game with one minute left on the clock before Eberline finished them off.

Against the Lions, the Wildcats found themselves all tied up at 4-4 in the final stanza before their foes were able to notch a final tally on the night during a short-handed special teams exchange.

The 'Cats earned the tie off a shot by Ryan Fox in the final period to make the score 4-4 following a quick goal by the Lions in the opening minutes of the period. The game, which was a KVC contest, found the two squads playing back and forth throughout the night.

Novi was the first to get on the board off the stick of R.J. Makoski, who earned an early goal for his squad before the Lions were able to bounce back with two back-to-back goals for the 2-1 lead. Fox added his first score of the game to tie things up before Jon Hamblin put his squad in the lead just a few minutes later for the 3-2 difference. South Lyon tied the game at 3-3 before the end of the second period.

Novi is off until Jan. 4 when they play the Hartland Eagles in a Kensington Valley Conference contest.

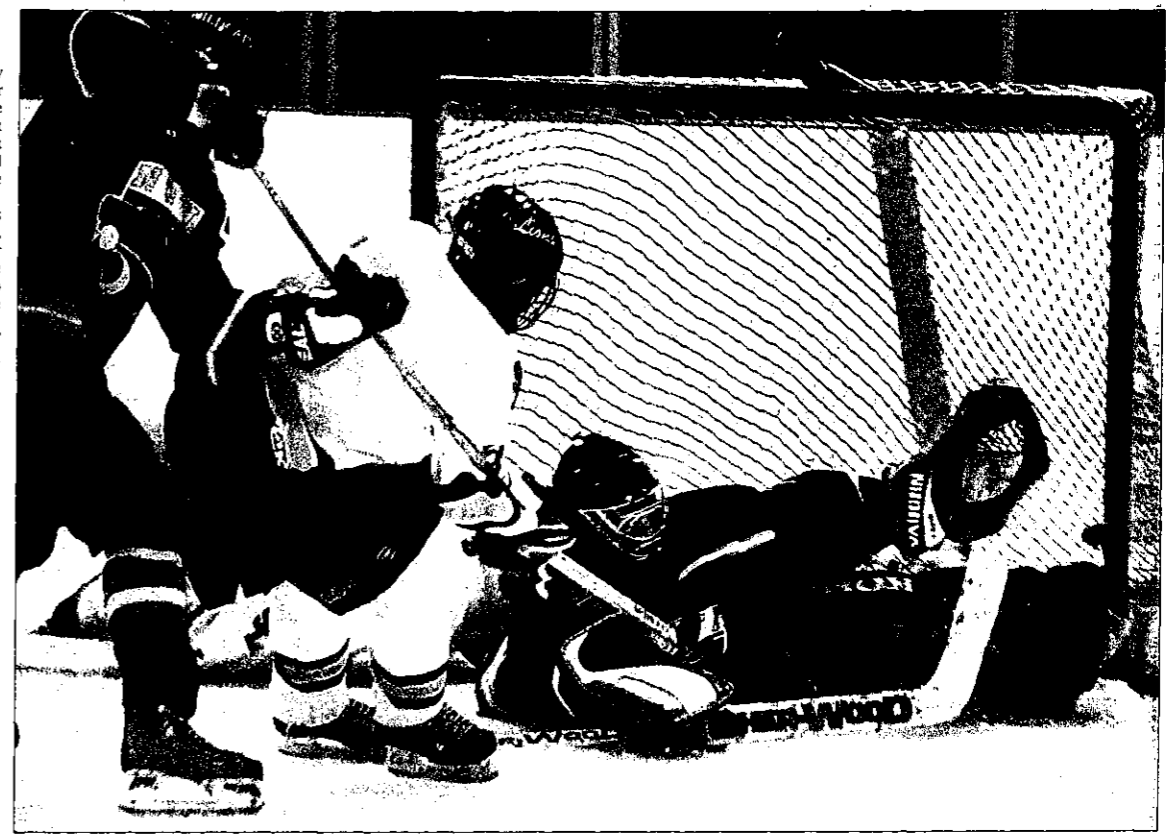


Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Wildcat goalie Justin Ruccolo goes low and wide to make a save on a shot by a South Lyon Lion during last week's matchup at the Kensington Valley Ice Arena.

### Oh so close!

The Novi Wildcats swimming and diving team made their meet against Walled Lake Central as close as they could. Unfortunately, in the end, Novi was on the wrong end of the final score, losing 95-91 in their opening meet.

"It was a close, exciting meet," Novi coach Larry Leafart noted.

The Wildcats earned three first places in the meet and relied on quite a few second and third places to keep them in contention with the Vikings.

Taking first place was Matt Swift in the 100 freestyle with a time of 53.10 seconds. Sean Bugbee also had a first, his grunting time of 5:23.29.

Hornacek had a nice swim in the 500 free, finishing in

5:41.14 for third place. Taking second in the 200 free relay was the team of LaDuke, Bugbee, Deighton and Meister while the team of Colin Woods, Arun Kirrali, Ryan Adams and Greg Laskowski took third. The teams finished 1:47.47 and 1:54.34, respectively.

The 100 backstroke found O'Branovic taking second in 1:05.07 while Hornacek took third in 1:08.91. LaDuke had a third-place showing in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:14.26.

The meet rounded out with Novi taking second in the 400 free with the team of O'Branovic, Bugbee, Hornacek and Swift finishing in 3:45.03. Taking third for Novi was Shirvanian, Kirrali, Adams and Babak Sohrizod with a finish in 4:12.79.

The Novi volleyball team had a long night last week when they hosted the Pinckney Pirates.

The squad, coached by Julie Fisetite, earned a victory in five games. They won the first two, 25-17 and 26-24, before falling in the next two, 27-25 and 26-24. In the final game, Novi came through with a big victory, notching the 15-11 decision.

"It was an incredible night," said Fisetite. "Every year (the Pinckney coach) says they are bad and every year they are good."

Fisetite credited Amanda Toftoli and Nicole Barndt with having impressive passing days while junior Jenna Kuhn led the team with 22 kills.

Megan Miller collected 11 solo blocks on the day and seven kills.

"The girls played hard and played together. It was a close battle, but the girls did a great job."

The Wildcats won't be taking too much time to relax during their Christmas break, which won't find them playing again until Jan. 6 when they host Howell.

"We'll be practicing three days next week and the three days we're back in school before we play," said Fisetite.

Novi is currently 6-1 on the year and 1-0 in the Kensington Valley Conference.

### Gagers notch two straight wins

The Novi basketball team felt the bite of an embarrassing loss in just their second game of the year when they fell to the Western Lakes Activities Association's Canton. Their comeback found two teams from the WLAA reeling from the intensity.

Novi captured a 54-43 victory over a tough Walled Lake Central squad after dominating the John Glenn Rockets, 56-47.

Against the Vikings, the Wildcats followed the lead of senior Anthony Harbin as he netted 20 points and two assists. Junior Todd Jamer and senior Mark Moore notched 11 points each in the victory while A.W. Stanek collected nine points, three steals and six assists in the winning effort.

The victory, which found Novi climbing to 3-1 on the season, marked Novi's last game until Jan. 4 when they visit the Northville Mustangs (2-1) in a Baseline rivalry game.

The game never got closer than three points in the second quarter as the Vikings struggled to keep pace with a high-powered Novi offense. The defense,

led by Stanek, kept the Vikings below coach Pat Schluter's ideal opponents' score of 45 points.

Against John Glenn, the Wildcats once again looked to Harbin to lead the way. The senior scored a season-high 24 points to help his team to victory. Fellow captain Moore chipped in 10 points but, more importantly, bailed down 13 rebounds in the impressive display in the paint.

### Ballantyne does best

One of the things any team looks for from players on their squad is for someone to step up and lead the team.

It doesn't have to be a junior or a senior — just someone who is willing to fill the role of leader by example. In the Oakland Country wrestling tournament last week, that leader was sophomore Adam Ballantyne.

The grappler took second place in the 125-pound wrestling division as he took on some of the best competition the state of Michigan offers.

Novi finished 11th overall in the tournament with 130 points, which marked the highest finish out of the Kensington Valley Conference schools competing — including Lakeland, South Lyon and the 12th-place Milford Mavericks.

Ballantyne held his own throughout the two-day tourney, finishing with a 5-1 record with his only defeat coming with a 7-6 loss against Roger Blanton of Madison. He made the trip to the final after earning an 8-4 victory in the semifinals.

Other Wildcats who stood out on the day were seniors Jason Sierra and Alex Baum. Both Novi wrestlers finished in fifth-place in their weight classes. Sierra earned a win over Ferradale's Kyle Squire, 3-1, for fifth place after losing to Squire earlier in the day.

Baum finished the tournament with a 5-4 win over Clarkston's Bryant Craft. Clarkston is ranked in the top-10 in the state in Division I.

Junior John Favorite also medaled for the Wildcats as he notched a sixth-place finish on the day. He finished his day with a loss against Dean Decker of a 119-pound wrestler.

Novi is off until after the Christmas break.

— Compiled by sports writer Sam Eggleston

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## Wildcats go up for a block during the South Lyon Invitational volleyball tournament two weeks ago. The Cats finished the tournament with a 5-1 record and then defeated Pinckney two days later in five games.

Photo by MIKE SHUSTER

Two Novi Wildcats go up for a block during the South Lyon Invitational volleyball tournament two weeks ago. The Cats finished the tournament with a 5-1 record and then defeated Pinckney two days later in five games.

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

## Presbyterians present Biblical Monologues

Children who attend sermons at the Faith Community Presbyterian Church this Sunday will be treated to a Biblical monologue by congregation member Gary McAleer. He will be playing the part of the Virgin Mary's husband, Joseph, as he talks about what it was like to find out that his betrothed was pregnant. He will also speak about his reaction when he found out that it was God's child, how he went about protecting her and the baby and what his life was like as a carpenter.



Courtesy photo  
**Gary McAleer and Ellen Smith will play Joseph and the Virgin Mary as part of Faith Community Presbyterian Church's service this Sunday.**

Congregation member Ellen Smith kicked off the program last Sunday, portraying the Virgin Mary. She spoke about how she felt when she found out she was pregnant with Jesus. She also spoke about talking to her family about it and her travels to Bethlehem.

"This is something new that we're going to be doing periodically over the year for the children's sermons," Jane Martin said, director of family ministry for the church. "Different members in the congregation have offered to dress up as different Biblical characters and they're going to do a monologue on who

their character was." No other dates have been set up yet for more monologues, but Martin has six volunteers who are all excited about being able to perform.

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

**BRIGHTMOOR CHRISTIAN**  
40600 13 Mile Rd.  
(248) 668-7000

(248) 349-0555  
Christmas Eve - 7 p.m.  
Christmas Day - 10 a.m.

**MEADOWBROOK CONGREGATIONAL**  
21355 Meadowbrook Rd.  
(248) 348-7757

Christmas Eve - 7 p.m.  
Christmas Day - No service

**HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC**  
24505 Meadowbrook Rd.  
(248) 349-8847

Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., midnight

**FAITH COMMUNITY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN**  
44400 W. Ten Mile Rd.  
(248) 349-2345

Christmas Day - 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.

**ORCHARD HILLS BAPTIST**  
23455 Novi Rd.  
(248) 5665

Christmas Eve - 6 p.m., 11 p.m.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NOVI**  
45301 Eleven Mile Rd.  
(248) 349-3647

Christmas Day - No service

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN**  
1415 W. Nine Mile Rd.  
(248) 349-3647

Christmas Eve - 7 p.m. in Japanese

**ST. JAMES CATHOLIC**  
46325 Ten Mile Rd.  
(248) 347-7778

Christmas Eve - 4 p.m., 6 p.m., 9 p.m.

**NOVI UNITED METHODIST**  
41671 W. Ten Mile Rd.  
(248) 349-2652

Christmas Day - 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

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## CHURCH CALENDAR

• **The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross** offers a worship service every Wednesday from 12:10-12:50 p.m. Come and share 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 Communion** is held at 8:30 p.m. Rite 13 (ages 11-14) and J2A (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.  
• **Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross** has moved to 40700 W. Ten Mile between Meadowbrook and Haggerty roads, Novi. Phone (248) 427-1175 or visit www.churchofthe-holycross.com

• **Crosspointe Meadows Church of Novi** 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 Web site at www.alpha.com. Program includes workbook and light supper. There is no fee.  
• **CMC office** is located at 3930 Grand River Ave., Ste. B1-C (west of Haggerty). Phone (248) 427-2700, Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-2 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-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, Westland and New Hudson. Communion will be served at Sunday's service at both the 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services.

• **Reconciliation, Individual Penance, Dec. 18 at 3 p.m.**  
• **Communal Penance, Dec. 21 at 7 p.m.**  
• **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 46325 Ten Mile Rd., Novi. Call (248) 347-7778.  
• **The Novi United Methodist Church** is holding a special Christmas Eve event which includes a family service with traditional readings and singing of carols by candlelight at 7 p.m. There will also be a communion service, seasonal readings, carol singing and special music by soloists and small ensembles at 11 p.m. Sunday worship is at 9:45 a.m. with Reverend Jackie Holdsworth. The church is located at 41671 W. Ten Mile Road, Call (248) 349-2652 for more information.  
• **Hope Lutheran Church** is located at 21355 Meadowbrook Rd., between Eight and Nine Mile roads.  
• **Meadowbrook Church** is located at 21355 Meadowbrook Rd., between Eight and Nine Mile roads.  
• **First United Methodist Church of Northville** is located at 777 W. Eight Mile Road, Northville. Phone (248) 349-1144.

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## New Year's Eve

Friday, December 31, 2004

at

Featuring Mark Randoi and "The Sounds of Sinatra"  
Fall Dinner Menu  
Complimentary Champagne at Midnight  
Party Favors

Extensive Wine List  
Simple, Traditional, Classic Italian Food

Call for Reservations Today!  
Space is Limited  
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**DEC. 28TH & 30TH**  
FOR TICKETS CALL 734-453-8400

**PLYMOUTH WHALERS**  
BRANTON BATTALION 2PM DECEMBER 28TH  
SARINA STING 7:30PM DECEMBER 30TH

TUES. DEC. 28TH 2:00PM KIDS DAY  
THUR. DEC. 30TH 7:30PM NEW YEAR'S PRE-PARTY  
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## Holiday Bonus Cash is Back!

GET up to **\$500** Holiday Bonus Cash

### ON SELECTED 2005 FORD CARS AND TRUCKS (1)

**THE NEW FORD FIVE HUNDRED**

Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Ford Five Hundred SEL

**\$236** per month  
Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$1,000 renewal cash and \$500 employee bonus cash.

**THE NEW FORD FIVE HUNDRED**

Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Ford Five Hundred SUV

**\$171** per month  
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Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Freestyle Limited

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**THE NEW FREESTYLE**

Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Freestyle SE

**\$138** per month  
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Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Escape XLT

**\$209** per month  
Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$500 renewal cash, \$1,500 RCL cash, \$1,750 Ford Credit Cash, \$500 employee bonus cash, and \$500 Holiday Bonus Cash.

**THE NEW ESCAPE**

Current Ford Employee Lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Escape XLS

**\$179** per month  
Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$4,000 RCL cash, \$1,000 Ford Credit bonus cash, and \$500 employee bonus cash.

**PLUS...\$500-\$1000 HOLIDAY BONUS CASH ON SELECTED 2004 MODELS TOO!**  
see dealer for details

**SUBURBAN FORD DEALERS OPEN SATURDAYS**

(1) For special \$500 Holiday Bonus Cash on selected 2005 models, take new vehicle retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/3/05. Restrictions apply. See dealer for complete details. \*Some payments higher, some lower. Not all Lessees will qualify for lowest payment. For social issue items, RCL Cash, Ford Credit Bonus Cash (\$500 Employee bonus cash on 2004-5-30/31/4), use new retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/3/05. RCL Cash may be taken in cash, but is used towards down payment in examples shown. Lessee renewal cash only available to customers terminating their Ford Division Ford Credit Lease and re-lease by 24 months by 1/3/05. Lessee terminated early qualify if terminated within program dates. Supplies are limited, not all dealers will have all featured models. Residency restrictions apply. See dealer for complete details. All payment examples are for Current Ford Employee and eligible family member Lessees.

## HINES PARK FORD

1-96 at Milford Rd. 248-437-6700

**OPEN SATURDAYS**

# REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

Page 22A

Novi News

Thursday, December 23, 2004

## Who has been naughty?

With the Christmas season in full swing, holiday shoppers are in a mad rush to find just the right thing for that special someone on their gift list. For those who are ready to wrap the big gifts, how about a new armoire for the family television — originally priced at \$425, now available for only \$295. The natural oak cabinet has two doors and adjustable shelves to make room for the family DVD and VCR players.

Or if you're looking to give something more practical, why not a nice pair of black, "pucker-moe" Oxford shoes with soft, full-grain leather upper and thick, cushioned wedge outsole, reduced half-price to just \$8.

Unless you're shopping on behalf of federal agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security or the Pentagon, don't expect to get your hands on these bargains. They are just some of the items available at a clearance sale going on now at Unico, also known as Federal Prison Industries (FPI), a corporation that is wholly owned by the federal government.

Created 70 years ago to help rehabilitate inmates, FPI has taken full advantage of cheap prison labor and protected status to become a huge operation that enjoys an unfair advantage over our nation's small businesses. In 2002, this monopoly ran 111 factories that benefited from the work of more than 20,000 prisoners who were paid a sub-minimum wage (\$1.23 per hour or less). Over 300 products and services were produced by federal prisoners, totaling nearly \$680 million in sales to the federal government in 2002.

With cheap labor and exempt from many mandates small businesses must comply with every day, FPI provides clothing and textiles — including custom-made draperies and curtains — vehicle repair, industrial products, office furniture, recycling and a variety of services such as printing.

Surely among the millions of small businesses in America, the government could find a few that meet its requirements to produce these goods and provide these services. Instead, denied the ability to fairly compete, small businesses have found the walls of government contracting too high to scale. Since FPI was given preferential status in the government procurement process, federal agencies have been locked into buying only from Unico even if a small-business owner could provide the service or product cheaper, faster, and of better quality — a disservice to small business and to taxpayers forced to pay more money for goods and services.

Dayton, Ohio, businesswoman and NFIB member Bobbie Gentile, in testimony before Congress, confirmed that the bidding process for government contracts excluded small firms. Her firm, Q-Mark Inc., a manufacturer's representative company offering the services of 15 small businesses, was automatically shut out of the bidding process even though the price she offered was lower than FPI's. She told lawmakers, "In all cases, my price was lower than the price offered by FPI."

Congress, however, has been paying attention. They may not have wrapped it in pretty paper, but in early December, lawmakers passed and the president signed a bill that bans FPI from locking out small businesses from federal government contracts. For American small-business owners, it's one of the most sought after gifts on their wish lists: the ability to compete for business that for too long has automatically been awarded to those who have been naughty rather than nice.

Jack Faris is president of the National Federation of Independent Business, the nation's largest small-business advocacy group. More information is available on-line at [www.NFIB.com](http://www.NFIB.com).

## Story idea?

Our readers have great ideas and we want to hear them. Send us your ideas.

Send it to:

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Advertorial

## Restaurant offers taste of Southwest

You don't have to travel to sunny Mexico or even to downtown Detroit for the genuine flavor of the Southwest. Just come to La Casa del Rio Grande located on Grand River Avenue in new Hudson for authentic Mexican cuisine. You won't find the traditional cookie cutter food served by the chains at this local restaurant.

"There's nowhere else in the area to get this type of food," explains owner Dawn Salvati, who's proud of their authentic cuisine. "It's downtown Mexican food, not Americanized."

The festive atmosphere at La Casa del Rio Grande sets the tone for fun and casual dining. Colorful blankets and sombreros are part of the cheerful décor. It's a friendly atmosphere, so go ahead and use your fingers, invites the menu.

"It's family dining that's fun and casual. You can dress up if you want, but you can come as you are and bring the whole family," Salvati said.

Everyone is invited to come home for the holidays to the "house on Grand River," that's La Casa del Rio Grande in Spanish. The restaurant is open on Christmas eve and New Year's eve but closed on Christmas and New Year's Day.

Patrons don't need to brush up on their high school Spanish either as the menu explains everything in English. Salvati or her staff will be happy to guide folks through the menu and the first basket of tortilla chips with salsa is on the house.

### Come for delicious lunch or dinner

La Casa del Rio Grande offers something for everyone in the family serving lunch and dinner six days a week with a variety of Mexican appetizers, lunch and dinner specials, desserts and a full-service bar for their patrons.

Why not try one of its favorite lunch specials offered Monday through Friday, such as Mexican Pizza. It's made with two fried flour tortillas with your favorite meat inside and topped with cheese and vegetables.

"The food is not overly spicy or hot but we'll make it hotter upon your request," Salvati said. "For those who don't have much time for lunch, our service is extremely fast and you don't have to wait long."

Better yet, call ahead and your order will be waiting for you when you arrive, she added. Carry-out and pre-orders are encouraged for customers with little time for lunch.

Try starting with one of their many appetizers, such as the customer favorite, Mexican Flaming Cheese without the fire. They recently introduced the new Chicken Tortilla soup, a consume with black beans and vegetables.



The sun always shines at La Casa del Rio Grande with the popular decoration hanging on the wall at the authentic Mexican restaurant.

Photos by DUANE RAMSEY

The selection of entrees features chimichanga platters, fajitas, enchiladas and burritos with all dinners including beans and rice. "We have the best fajitas in town," said Salvati.

Pedro's stacked sandwich. It starts with three flour tortillas layered with rice, refried beans and your choice of tender diced pork, shredded beef or chicken, and topped with melted muenster cheese and jalapeños on request.

Can't decide which to have? Why not try the Don Pedro sampler that comes with a ground beef taco, enchilada, shredded beef flauta, ground beef tostada, beans and rice. Or the Rio Grand sampler includes a chicken taco, pork beef enchilada, small pork chimichanga, beans and rice.

Another favorite is the seafood salad, a fresh garden salad topped with shrimp, crab meat, avocados, tomatoes, onions, olives and muenster cheese. On Mondays, they offer all tacos you can eat at \$7.25 for corn and \$8.25 for fried flour tacos.

The chef's take great pride in preparing unique dinner specials created Monday through Saturday with a different special each night. Early bird specials are available from 3 to 5 p.m. when patrons buy one dinner and

receive the second at half price. Affordable prices make it a great place to bring the family. Adult dinners average about \$7.50 and kids' meals are \$3.50 including beverage. Tuesdays and Saturdays are kid's days when meals are just \$2.99 including the meal with a drink and ice cream for dessert.

La Casa del Rio Grande is happy to accommodate special needs and requests, she added. Most items are easily adaptable to a low carbohydrate diet, so just request it from your server.

"Mexican food is great for low carb diets. You just have to cut down on the beans, rice and tortillas," Salvati said.

The restaurant recently introduced "smoke free nights" in the dining room on Friday and Saturday. On those nights, patrons are allowed to smoke at the bar or on the patio with weather permits.

"Be sure to save room for dessert because our desserts are awesome," said Salvati. "We recently added three new desserts to the menu."

Turtle Ice Cream Cake includes vanilla ice cream rippled with caramel, praline pecans on a dark chocolate cookie crust. Chocolate Peanut Butter Cake surrounds chocolate cake with peanut butter mousse icing, dripping with ganache and heaped with crushed Reese's peanut butter cups.

Xango features cheesecake inside flour tortillas, deep fried to golden brown and served with ice cream, cinnamon and sugar topping and whipped cream.

### Special events and promotions

Families pack the place on clown night held once a month when local clown, Jannie Annie entertains patrons from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday nights. Mark your calendars for upcoming clown dates on Jan. 15, Feb. 19 and March 19 and Salvati suggests calling ahead for reservations.

"We have a regular crowd on clown night and Jannie Annie knows everyone," said Salvati.

For those looking for a night out, they have a full-service bar with a large selection of both American and Mexican beer. Happy hour prices are available on beer and alcoholic drinks from 3 to 7 p.m. daily.

Monthly beer specials offer special prices on domestic and imported beer, available only in bottles. In December, MGD, Miller and Miller Lite are on special for \$2 per bottle. The January special features Dos Equis Amber and Special Lager imported from Mexico for \$2.25 per bottle.

They also offer liquor promotions and drink specials. In January, the special will be Willamette Coffee, a blend of vodka, hazelnut liqueur, kahlua, Irish cream and coffee.

Wednesdays and Sundays are "Margarita Days" when all house margaritas are available at happy hour prices. The house specialty, a margarita called the Spyder, is Dawn's special recipe made with citrus tequila.

"We have the best margaritas in town," she insists.

Check out La Casa del Rio Grande's web site at [www.riogrande-restaurant.com](http://www.riogrande-restaurant.com) for the dates of special promotions. Patrons are encouraged to sign up for the Email Club on the web site or at the restaurant to receive coupons and updates on promotions.

"The closing of Putters Restaurant (a nearby competitor at Grand River and Milford Road) actually hurt our business. Their traffic helped us when they were open," said Salvati.

They want to attract more people going to stores and restaurants at Lyon Town Center at Milford Road and I-96. Just follow Lyon Center Drive across Milford Road and around to La Casa del Rio Grande where the drive ends on Grand River.

"More people are coming from Detroit since Don Pedro's

### AT A GLANCE

■ La Casa del Rio Grande is located at 57721 Grand River Avenue in New Hudson. Just west of Milford Road on Grand River or follow the loop Lyon Center Drive from Wal-Mart across Milford Road and around to Grand River.  
Call (248) 446-7700 or Fax (248) 446-7701  
[www.riogrande-restaurant.com](http://www.riogrande-restaurant.com)

■ Hours are Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Friday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
Saturday, 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Sunday, noon to 9 p.m.

■ Celebrate the holidays  
Christmas Eve: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
Christmas Day: Closed  
New Year's Eve: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.  
New Year's Day: Closed

■ Reservations accepted. Party and catering menus available.  
All major credit cards accepted.

closed there," Salvati said of the former Mexican restaurant owned by her ex-husband Tom. "It's easy for people to find since we're right off I-96 at Milford Road and a quarter mile west on Grand River."

La Casa del Rio Grande is not just a restaurant to owner Dawn Salvati who grew up in the family's former home on that property. That's why the name of the restaurant, "the house of Grande River," is so appropriate.

"It's a small-town family atmosphere where my aunt, mother, and two children, Samantha and Carmen, all work," Salvati said.



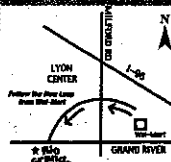
Come home for the holidays to La Casa del Rio Grande conveniently located on Grand River Avenue just west of Milford Road off I-96 in New Hudson.



**Early Bird Special**  
2-5 pm

Buy one dinner, get the second **50% OFF**  
Equal or Lesser Value  
Ask your Server

**Wed & Sun Margarita Special**  
Happy Hour  
Prices All Day



Authentic Mexican Cuisine

248-446-7700 Call in or Carry Out Welcome  
call for hours

Buy One Dinner Entree get the Second Dinner Entree 1/2 price with purchase of 2 drinks.

Equal or lesser value entree. Not Valid on Fri. or Sat after 5 pm. Not to be combined with any other specials.

Expires 1-31-05