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Thursday, May 12, 2005

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Volume 49 Number 50

Novi, Michigan

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Mike Hart left some big shoes to fill when he graduated last year. Now his brother, junior Steve Hart, has to decide if he wants to fill them.  
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## City dodges lawsuit with re-vote

### Novi council approves rezoning for Uptown Park

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

The city of Novi may have avoided another costly lawsuit Monday when city council voted 4-3 to rezone property, allowing Singh Development to build a 201-unit condominium complex.

Council members Lynne Paul, Toni Nagy and Laura Lorenzo voted to deny the request. David Landry, Mayor Lou Csordas, Bob Gatt and Kim Capello voted to approve.

In February 2004, council denied the Farmington Hills-based developer's request for Uptown Park.

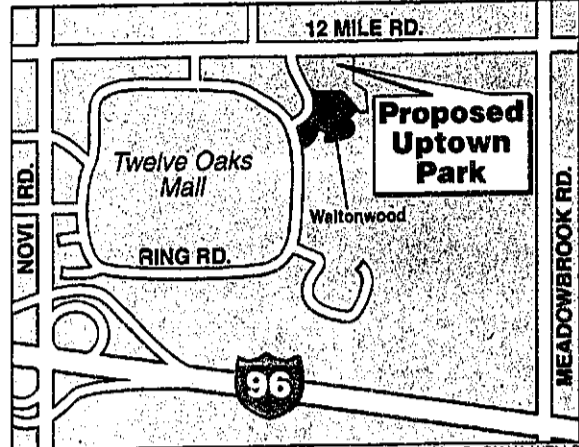
In a rare move, city attorney Tom Schultz placed the request from Singh back on the council agenda Monday to prevent a potential lawsuit involving the developer and the city.

The property is about 39 acres south of 12 Mile Road and west of Meadowbrook Road

near Twelve Oaks Mall. Schultz said that Singh planned to address the zoning board of appeals in the near future since council denied the rezoning request last year. If the board denied the request, the next step would be for Singh to seek approval through the court system.

Singh won approval to rezone the property from office service technology and low-density, low-rise multiple family to high-density, mid-rise, multiple family use.

The developer said it has



continued on 7

SOURCE: Singh Development LLC. Map by DIANA WELLS

### The dog days of day care



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

A Gone with the Dogs day care participant greets a visitor to the Heslip Drive business, which will host a pet adoption day on Sunday, May 22. See more on page 3.

## School board denies library proposal

### Land swap nixed; next option to expand current site

By Ramez Khuri  
STAFF WRITER

A proposal by the Novi Public Library's board to trade property with the Novi Community School District was denied 6-1 by the Board of Education last Thursday.

The proposal included a land trade of the current library property at Ten Mile and Taft roads, for a section of property which is owned by

the school district at Eleven Mile and Beck roads. Had it been granted, the library would have built a new facility there.

The library's plan B calls for expanding and renovating its current facility.

"That's how we plan to proceed now and we've already started our architect on more detailed work for that site," said Rick Smith, library board of trustees president. "We're real happy that the school board clearly showed their support for our mission for an improved library in general, even though the land swap is not going to work out."

At the time of the proposal, the school board said it needed some questions answered before making a decision, which included how the

district could use the current library land.

"We thought there was a good chance we could use the land for alternative education, but the high school and administration said that was not a good use for it," said John Streit, school board president. "It's not a good idea that the two programs were so close together."

Also, administration said it would have had to redo much of the building's mechanics, heating and cooling.

"We felt that was not a good use of funds at this time," Streit added.

The proposal was originally made April 7 because the library board said its current facility, located right next to Novi High School, is too small for the growing communi-

ty. Also it said that it is becoming increasingly dangerous to access the library parking lot in the morning when school starts and in the afternoon when it lets out.

Smith said that the library will continue to explore other community partnerships in order to provide a library facility appropriate to the growing needs of Novi.

"We're happy to be moving forward," Smith said. "I think it would have been nice if something worked out with the school board, but only if it was a win-win. And it wasn't going to work out that way."

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.

## Budget approved

### Council OKs \$27 million

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

With much praise for the ease of the process and little fanfare Monday, members of Novi City Council unanimously approved a \$27 million budget for fiscal year 2005-2006.

Following a brief public hearing on the proposed budget, City Manager Rick Helwig outlined the highlights. A copy of the budget is available for public inspection at the Novi Civic Center, Office of the City Clerk, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road.

A fiscal pledge to the taxpayers was adopted amending the city's budget policies and procedures.

The pledge says that the administration and city council will strive to not go over approved budget expenditures for the fiscal year and will limit nonapproved budget expenses to the following:

- Emergencies, including critical capital purchases
- Cash flow
- Uncontrollable budget shortfalls
- Union contract obligations
- Judgment trust obligations
- Grant matches
- Unfunded retiree health care accrued liability

continued on page 3

## Resident supports a free Lebanon

### McCotter presents Assaf resolution to Congress

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

A Novi resident was one of more than 500 who traveled to Washington, D.C., to lend their support to a resolution presented by Congressman Thaddeus McCotter (R-Livonia) supporting a free Lebanon.

Michael Abi-Assaf of Novi attended one of McCotter's constituent meetings on Feb. 9, 2004, and talked about the current situation in Lebanon.

More than a year later, McCotter is presenting a resolution to Congress urging the United States government to

continued on page 8

## Glorious Oliver!

### Musical opens tomorrow night

By Kim Kovelte  
STAFF WRITER

Similar to the hungry orphan boy, members of Novi Theatres wanted extra helpings of talent in their production of the musical Oliver.

But unlike the character Oliver Twist — who finds trouble when boldly asking a parish officer for more gruel — the troupe got hearty portions.

Opening tomorrow, the two-weekend show teems with roughians, orphans, pickpockets and undertakers played by a cast of 79.

There's healthy variety to whet appetites. Lionel Bart's 1962 script is updated with sound effects and a few scary "Lemmony

Snickert" style costumes, co-director Linda Wickert said.

Also, some kids' roles are double- or triple-cast, giving different youths a chance in the spotlight in six performances.

"This is a huge children's show," said Wickert, who's working with Laura Uter. "It just helps spread the wealth. These kids really deserved the roles."

Based on Charles Dickens' novel, the darker-toned musical tells the tale of orphaned Oliver Twist (Doug Oliver).

After he infamously utters, "Please, sir, I want some more," Twist is sold to undertakers before falling in with young bandits led by master thief Fagin.

Unwittingly, he ends up with his grandfather, a man whose wallet Twist tries to steal.

continued on page 5



Courtesy photo

Holding the face of orphan Matt Thimm and singing to a band of pickpocket orphans, Linda Demmer plays "Nancy" in the Novi Theatres' musical Oliver, which opens tomorrow. The play will have six total performances.

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## City council OKs \$27 million budget

Member Lyric Paul applauded Mayor Lou Cordas for conducting civilized, professionally run budget sessions, leading the council to a rapid budget approval. This was Cordas' last time to lead the council through the budget approval process, as he will not be seeking reelection.

The city's millage rate of 10.5416, which has been maintained for the last six years, will remain the same. And, the rainy day reserve funds, compared to the state's 0 percent will remain at 14 percent.

No new personnel costs have been added to the budget. The Novi Fire Department and Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department will receive funding for improvements.

Also, the city's information technology network will receive funding for an update.

An enhanced neighborhood road program will be funded, which will include improvements to Nine Mile Road from Novi Road to Meadowbrook Road, which will begin after Meadowbrook Bridge is replaced between Nine Mile and 10 Mile roads.

Beck Road will be redone to the southern city limits, and work on Novi's sidewalks, including off Eleven Mile Road west of Beck Road, has been seen as a priority.

Water and sanitary sewer improvements are to be done, and the city will purchase \$170,000 street sweeper as well as a Patchmobile to aid city streets.

In presenting the budget for council approval, Helwig said, "It's a very significant document and one city council is very proud of."

He thanked council members for their cooperation in the April budget sessions, which were completed a week early.

## Budget amendments help seniors, fire dept.

The following is a summary of changes to the proposed 2005-2006 budget adopted on May 9, 2005:

- An eight-passenger van for seniors will be purchased at a cost of \$37,000.
- Remove a \$50,000 equipment expenditure from the general fund, switching the funding source to the drain fund and water and sewer fund.
- The fire department will receive black top seal at Stations 2, 3, for a cost of \$6,500. An Opticom sensing device that turns red signal lights to green when a fire truck approaches will be added to two locations at a cost of \$16,000.
- Fire pagers will be replaced at a cost of \$30,000. Fire and emergency medical training materials will be provided at a cost of \$4,500.
- Continued space rescue training will receive \$4,000 from the city. A Knox Box System will cost \$7,000.
- Irrigation of Power Park ballfields will be deferred at a savings of \$62,000.
- The Revere Health Care Fund will receive \$268,000.
- The contingency fund will total \$35,000.
- Construction on Beck Road was added at a cost of \$285,000.
- In the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Fund budget, the Novi Youth Baseball Association donation will add \$10,000. A total of \$6,300 will be reduced in American Disabilities Act projects. The estimated amount for the 2004-2005 budget will be adjusted from the \$15,700 unused proceeds for fencing at Lakeshore Park.



## Want to pick a pet?

**Gone to the Dogs brings people, pets together in Novi**

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Owning a pet can be one of the most rewarding aspects of life. For those considering adopting a pet, a relatively new business in Novi, Gone to the Dogs, will have its Second Annual Pet Adoption Day from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday, May 22, at the facility at 22497 Hesper Drive.

Gone to the Dogs occupies a portion of the third building on the left on Hesper, which is just north of Nine Mile Road and east of Novi Road.

The privately owned business is actually three businesses in one—a day care center, grooming facility, and obedience training and agility training center.

The three owners, Amber Koeller and Teri Brennan, both of Livonia, and Tracey Olecki, of Wilson, met in their former pet-related careers.

Koeller and Brennan worked together at a local animal training facility, and Olecki was formerly a veterinarian technician. The trio combined forces to create Novi's first and only canine recreational facility. The business will be open a year in December.

The three said the crateless doggie day care area with indoor pony run and agility equipment has become extremely popular with owners and their dogs. There are 7-foot-by-4-foot runs where they can take a nap, and dogs can lie in the sunshine in one spot of the enclosed area. Owners can even watch their dogs via a Web camera from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

"One lady just brings her dog in when she cuts her hair and her neighbor's grass," Koeller said.

Due to the unpredictable turnover of rescue animals, the facility cannot guarantee that any particular dog, cat or breed will be available on the May 22 adoption day.

Cost of the animals varies with the different rescue organizations, but the average cost is \$100 for a cat and \$150 for a dog. Some organizations will do same-day adoptions, where others make home visits before allowing a pet to be adopted.

"They just don't want people to act on impulse," Koeller said.

The facility estimates there will be about 50-75 animals to choose from on adoption day.

"We're also always looking for foster homes for animals," Koeller said.

- WHO WILL BE THERE**
- Representatives from the following animal rescue organizations will attend the May 22 Pet Adoption Day at Gone to the Dogs, 22497 Hesper, in Novi:
- Animal Rescue Connection
  - Backdoor Friends
  - Purabred Cat Rescue
  - Mutt's n' Mutts Rescue
  - Home Fur Ever
  - Guardian Angel Animal Rescue
  - Great Lakes Border Collie Rescue
- For more information, call (248) 347-9081.

Novi Gone to the Dogs workers greet some of their canine charges. From left are Amber Koeller, Teri Brennan, and Tracey Olecki. Gone to the Dogs, a doggie daycare, training and grooming spa, is located off Hesper Drive.

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# Prom promises to be paradise

Annual school dance scheduled for Saturday night

By Courtney Ratkowiak  
SPECIAL WRITER

Megan BuWalda thought it was strange when the tennis ball didn't bounce. Hidden inside the ball, she found an invitation to the prom. The invitation, coupled with a dozen, long-stemmed red roses, turned BuWalda's seemingly normal tennis date into a wonderful start to Prom 2005.

The Novi High School junior/senior prom, themed "Prom Paradise," is this Saturday night at Liveat's Barton Manor. The junior class, traditionally in charge of prom preparation, learned that it takes months of planning to achieve true paradise. The 16 junior Student Council representatives began planning for this year's prom in January. At weekly class meetings, students divided into committees to set goals, brainstorm ideas, and delegate activities. Representatives addressed issues such as the cost of tickets, centerpiece gifts, music, food, and theme.

"Choosing a theme is a lot harder than you might think," said Katie Colacino, junior class president. "It can't be corny, cheesy, or cheap. There were some worries with 'Paradise' being our theme, but we worked hard to make sure that it won't be a really typical event."

Although the ticket prices are higher this year than in years past, it has not stopped approximately 600 students from buying tickets. BuWalda confessed that she had an undefined budget for prom expenses, and spent almost three months trying to find her ideal dress.

"It had to be the 'wow' dress," BuWalda said. "When I tried it on, I couldn't just think, 'This is nice.' I had to think, 'This is perfect.'"

BuWalda and her closest friends have known since their freshman year that they would attend the prom together and have already finalized salon appointments, a limousine rental, and plans for before and after parties.

On the other hand, senior Daniel Church says that he likes

## Adults urged to not serve teens alcohol

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

With Novi High School's prom this Saturday night, parents and other adults should be forewarned that Novi will be enforcing the law when it comes to serving alcohol to minors.

Both Belter, executive director of the Novi Community that Cares Coalition, appeared before city council May 9, urging Novi parents and other citizens to sign a "Parents Who Host Lose the Most" proclamation. The proclamation is on an easel in the atrium of the Novi Civic Center supporting safe and healthy prom and graduation parties.

"Volunteers supporting teen health are reminding adults to abandon prom and graduation drinking parties with the phrase, 'Don't be a party to teenage drinking. It's against the law.'"

"Even though the campaign runs through May and June due to proms and graduations, it is an important message to remember throughout the year," Belter said.

"The big message is that some parents are providing alcohol to teens at home because they feel they'll be safer. However, it is illegal, and parents can be prosecuted."

This campaign is sponsored by the Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities and the Oakland County Health Division Office of Substance Abuse Services.

The message is that underage drinking parties are a health and safety problem with serious

legal ramifications. Adults need to keep in mind that:

- It is illegal to host or allow teen drinking parties in your home
- It is unhealthy and illegal for anyone under age 21 to drink
- It is unsafe and illegal for teens to drink and drive
- Parents can be prosecuted under the law
- Everything associated with a violation, such as personal property, can be confiscated.

Adults who break the law can face a minimum sentence of three months in jail and/or a \$500 fine. Others can sue those who give alcohol to anyone under age 21, and, in turn, hurt someone, themselves or damage property. Police can also take any alcohol, money or property used in committing the offense.

This message comes on the heels of a new survey that finds many teens are pressured to engage in unsafe activities on prom and graduation nights, like drinking and driving and driving carelessly, such as speeding.

The survey, released May 10 by Chrysler Group's Road Ready Teens program and partner MADD, was conducted as part of an innovative online public education effort to reach teens with critical messages about teen driving safety and underage drinking prevention.

"Prom and graduation nights should be times teens remember for the rest of their lives, yet

these celebratory times also combine some of the deadliest factors for motor vehicle crashes: drinking and driving, driving late at night and driving with multiple passengers," said Luis Morais, senior manager, Safety Planning, Chrysler Group.

"Traffic crashes are the No. 1 killer of teens. As we move into the most deadly time of the year for teen drivers, we want to remind parents and teens that prom and graduation season is no time to ignore safe driving habits."

The survey revealed that 46 percent of teens plan to drive to prom and graduation night activities; of those, 53 percent plan to drive a group of teens.

Also 86 percent of teens surveyed said they would be staying out past midnight; half said they plan to stay out past 2 a.m. Research shows that 50 percent of fatalities that occur with a teen behind the wheel happen after dark.

Other study findings include:

- 74 percent of teens surveyed report pressure to drink
- 57 percent of teens report pressure to drive carelessly
- 49 percent of teens report pressure to use drugs
- 48 percent of teens expect less than half of their peers will buckle up on prom and graduation night.

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@lt.homcom.net.



Photos by SAM EGGLESTON

Above, Novi High School senior Julia Lyskawa smiles for the crowd at the Novi Prom Fashion Show. Below, classmate Sarah Schmitt gives Colin Cody a kiss on the cheek.



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nervous even thinking about asking someone, let alone actually doing it."

Forgoing the traditional limousine, Church and his date plan to ride to prom in his Expedition.

"I'll spend more time washing my car than I will getting myself ready," he said. "If it's the same for most guys...if you drive around on (prom day), you'll see all these guys cleaning their cars, getting them ready. Girls have to worry about hair, nails, the dress...I'm glad I can just take a shower and put on a tux."

Despite the planning, money, and fear of rejection involved, BuWalda and Church agree that prom is a necessary rite of passage.

"It's like an unwritten rule that you have to go to prom as a senior, whether you have a date or not," Church said.

"When I think of prom, I think of good-byes, last times," BuWalda added. "It's one of the last times that the senior class will be together. It's going to be fantastic."

Courtney Ratkowiak is a junior at Novi High School.

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# Novi Theatres present Oliver tomorrow

Show times will be May 13-15, 20-22

continued from front

Peppered are classic songs like "Consider Yourself" and "Fagin, Glorious Fagin." There's also some violence and a death in the rough streets of 1800s England.

"It's typical Dickens," Wickert said. "It's very heavy. There's happy moments."

With players ranging from age 7-91, this version offers another season; in certain shows, parents will act alongside their children.

While Linda Denner plays nurturing Nancy, daughter Melanie trails her — literally.

"I follow her onstage most of the time," said Melanie, 14 who shares her role of Bet with two others, "Normally, we don't."

Practicing their tunes together in the car on the way to rehearsals is more common.

"We actually perform a song together, which is just a total thrill," Linda said. "This is the very first opportunity. She is tremendously creative."

Melanie discovered mom's talents from the audience, when Linda appeared as leading lady Aldonza in Man of La Mancha.

"She was good," Melanie said. "I was just taken aback. I didn't know she could do that."

Father and son become partners in crime as Bruce Markham plays Bill Sykes. Nancy's cruel thief of a boyfriend, alongside Tim, 13, who picks pockets as the Artful Dodger orphan.

It's the fourth time that Markhams have appeared

## OLIVER

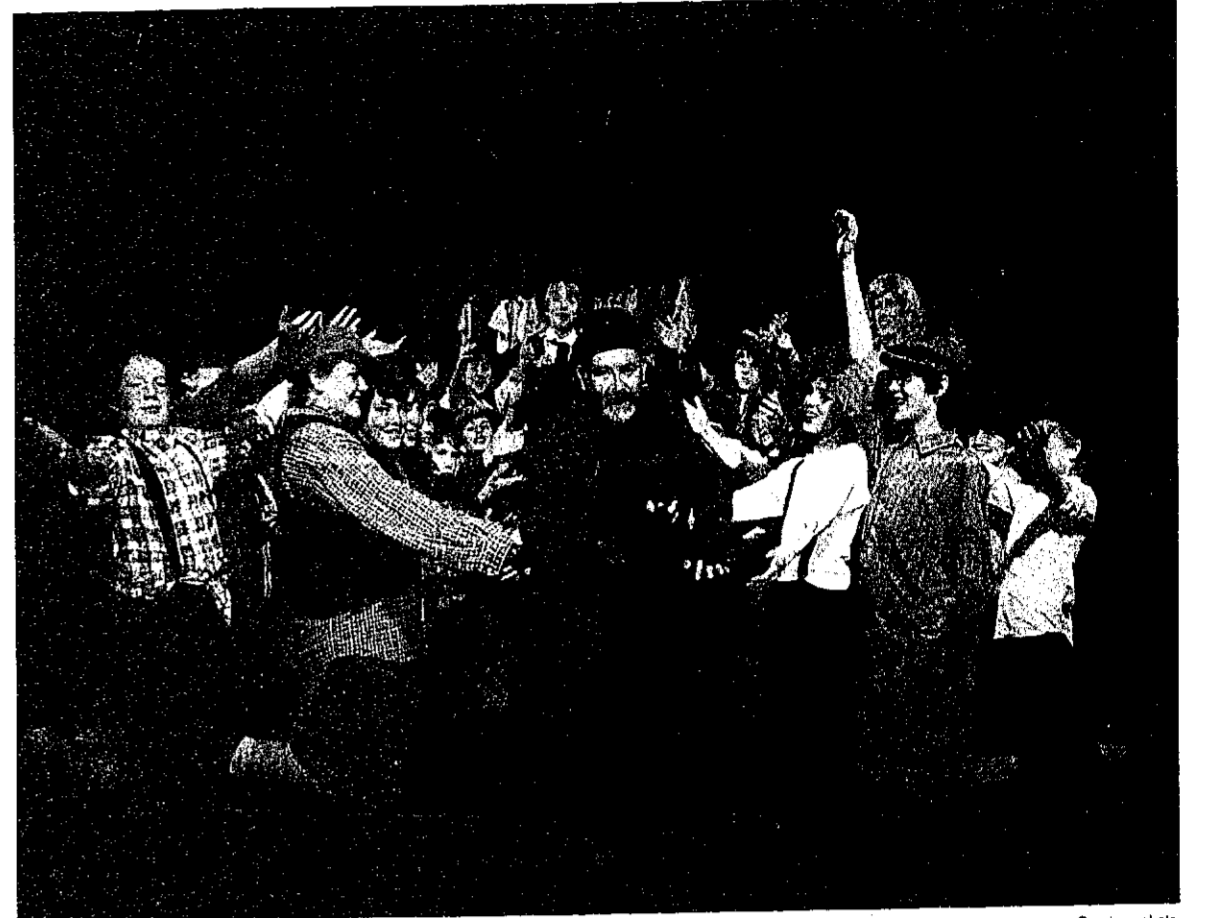
WHAT: Novi Theatres presents Lionel Bart's *Oliver*, the troupe's second musical this year

WHEN: 7:30 p.m., May 13 and 20; 2 p.m., May 14, 15, 21 and 22

WHERE: 45175 W. 10 Mile Road, just east of Taft Road

COST: \$17; all seats reserved

TICKETS: (248) 347-0400



Courtesy photo

As master thief "Fagin," Ron Dzwonkowski sings with his gang of pickpocket boys in the Novi Theatres' presentation of the musical *Oliver*, which opens tomorrow.

"When I saw my dad go up on stage and just sell it and sing, I thought it would be fine for me to do that, too. I just got up there, started singing my heart away."

Tim Markham  
"Dodger" in Novi Theatres' presentation of *Oliver*

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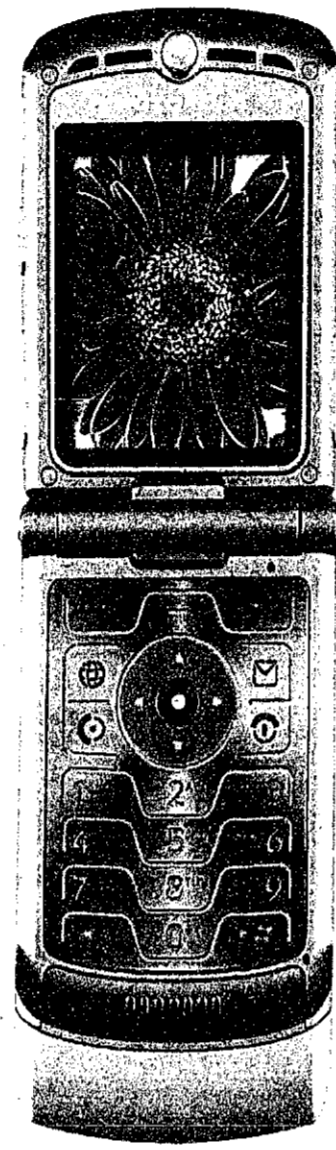
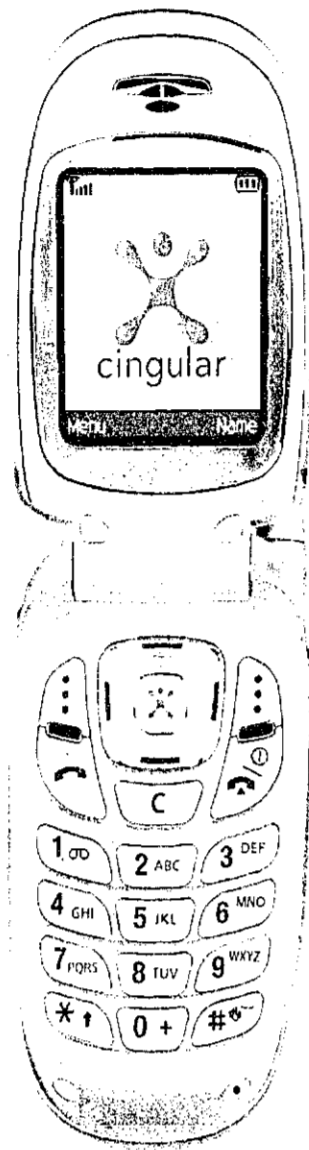
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# PUBLIC SAFETY

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

## Feds show Novi the money

■ First checks arrive from seizure of drug-related funds

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

How would you like to have more than \$1.3 million in your checking account?  
Well, the Novi Police Department does now.  
It's been a long time coming, but the first checks following one of the biggest drug money seizures in the state have now been deposited with the city's finance department and credited to the police department's forfeiture account.  
Rick Helwig, city manager, issued a memo to city council members last Thursday, stating that two checks from the U.S. Treasury made out to the Novi Police Department were deposited in an account.  
One check was for \$396,465, with the second check for \$935,944 for a total of \$1,332,410.  
The funds came to the department following an incident on March 18, 2004, when Novi police responded to a call that there was an upset female in the lobby at Studio Plus motel at

39640 Orchard Hill Place at Eight Mile and Haggerty roads.  
The officers who responded to the scene observed a hysterical female who led them to two motel rooms because she feared the occupants of the rooms may have been harmed.  
Officers checked the rooms and found no one inside. The female, who was one of those staying in the room, insisted that police check the luggage in the room.  
Upon inspection, the officers saw a duffel bag filled with large amounts of U.S. currency. The woman kept insisting that someone had been seriously injured in one of the rooms.  
Search warrants were obtained for the rooms, and police found even more cash. Information was also obtained that led investigators to a location in Northville at Eight Mile Road and Novi Street. Investigators then saw two subjects at that location leave the house and return to the Studio Plus motel.  
A search warrant was obtained for the Northville home at 861 Allen Street, with a search of that residence producing three additional duffel bags with bundles of U.S. currency.  
The total from the hotel rooms and home netted \$4,795,668. The Novi Police Department is expected to receive about \$3 million from the forfeiture funds, according to Doug

Shaeffer, chief of police.  
Expenditures are authorized and controlled the same way as all other city purchases and expenditures.  
Federally forfeited properties are authorized and expenditures are guided by federal statute which states that:  
• Expenditures are to be made in a two-year period;  
• Approved uses are very broad but restricted to law enforcement uses only, including any interest accrued;  
• Forfeited funds cannot be used to replace resources;  
• Forfeited funds can be used for additional personnel but are restricted to only paying the first-year salaries of new law enforcement staff.  
Permitted uses are:  
• activities to enhance future investigations,  
• law enforcement training,  
• law enforcement equipment and operations,  
• detention facilities,  
• law enforcement facilities and equipment,  
• drug education and awareness programs,  
• pro rata funding (meaning funds can be divided when distributed), and  
• asset accounting and tracking.

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.

## POLICE BLOTTER

### Ex-girlfriend admits taking car

A firefighter temporarily living at his current girlfriend's home on Independence Street near Waverly and Canterbury told police April 6 that he thinks his former girlfriend may have taken his car between 11:30 p.m. April 5 and midnight April 6.  
The man told police that while he was dressing inside his girlfriend's house for a fire call he heard a car door slam outside the home.  
Peering out the window, he saw his former girlfriend driving off in his red 1997 Camaro.  
He believed that the former girlfriend was accompanied by a white male, possibly her brother-in-law.  
The car contained his school books, firefighting gear and other personal items. He indicated that the former girlfriend had a set of keys to the vehicle.  
Police left a message on the former girlfriend's phone. She called back, telling police she had taken the car and moved it a few streets over from the residence. The woman told police she would not turn her set of keys over to her ex-boyfriend until her name was removed from the loan papers on the car.

### Motorcycle stolen

Police were alerted at 1:50 a.m. April 12 that four male suspects

### Car stolen outside market

A Novi resident reported that his car had been stolen outside Lakewood Market on Old Novi Road at about 9:25 p.m. on April 18.  
The car contained his school books, firefighting gear and other personal items. He indicated that the former girlfriend had a set of keys to the vehicle.  
Police left a message on the former girlfriend's phone. She called back, telling police she had taken the car and moved it a few streets over from the residence. The woman told police she would not turn her set of keys over to her ex-boyfriend until her name was removed from the loan papers on the car.

### Cash, liquor stolen from Hoa Hoa Inn

The owner of the Hoa Hoa Inn at Novi and 14 Mile roads reported April 18 that the restaurant was robbed between 10:30 p.m. April 17 and 10:50 a.m. April 18.  
The owner told police that

were seen stealing a 1995 Suzuki from the cash register. The suspect or suspects also tried a safe loose from a wall in the office, and the safe was lying on the floor.  
The owner called police back later to report that 26 bottles of liquor had also been stolen.

### Wire fraud reported

A female resident on Villagewood Street may have been swindled out of thousands of dollars in a fraudulent scheme, police said.  
An employee of Knart Western Union in Farmington Hills notified police that a Novi resident had been sending large cash transactions to Costa Rica, Quebec, Canada and New Jersey and was concerned that the woman was a victim of fraud. The employee reported that the resident sent \$7,000 and that \$4,000 was sent to New Jersey but never accepted.  
When contacted, the resident told police she was buying real estate in Costa Rica and did not want police to intervene. Police told her not to send any more money, and that she was a victim of criminal fraud.  
Police called the Western Union employee who said she would ask Western Union to flag the woman's name to avoid her sending more money from other offices. She also said she would file a fraud report with the Western Union office.  
Compiled by Pam Fleming

## City avoids lawsuit by approving rezoning for Uptown

continued from front

owned the land at least three years. In January, Novi's planning commission denied approval of the plan, then called Uptown Place, in a 4-3 vote. The proposed building's height was primary issue.  
"I believe more and more density is basically a sin," Nagy said. "I feel we're being forced into a corner. How do we go against our own fiscal analysis?"  
Lorenzo said the decision against the rezoning last February should stand and asked why it was

even on the agenda.  
She said reconsideration, taking back the proposal or a new plan were the only three options that could again be brought to council.  
"What stops any other applicant from reappearing for a subsequent action?" Lorenzo asked. "This speaks to the process, and I'm very disappointed in our attorneys."  
Lorenzo said Singh has not shown that the property could not be used for office service technology. "We need more nonresidential property," she said.

Paul noted that there was a lot of anxiety over this project. She said the recent fiscal analysis shows Novi has a large amount of multiple family dwellings.  
But according to Singh's attorney, Robert Carson, there is no market to absorb office service technology.  
"We think you need to address this, or there's going to be a lawsuit," Schultz said. "We're of the legal opinion that you should do this."  
Capello said the city is trying to reduce the number of residential

properties in favor of office technology to increase its tax base.  
This is the first time Singh has said they were going to initiate a lawsuit with the city, according to Capello.  
"I don't know why we can't put this behind us, agree with the 201 owner-occupied units and move on," said Capello.  
Several council members cited the 1999 Sandstone lawsuit against the city as motivation to avoid legal action. In that case, in which Carson also represented the developers, the city was ordered

by courts to pay \$72 million in damages before a settlement was reached.  
"The word lawsuit is mentioned, and we're supposed to cave," Nagy said. "I just want to do the right thing, but I'm not about to do something out of trepidation."  
Lorenzo said that the Sandstone lawsuit was not a land use case, but a breach of contract case. "There's no breach of contract here," she said.  
City Manager Rick Helwig said, "Shame on Singh for putting

council in this position. It's just wrong, and there's no win-win now."  
Csordas, likewise, was not pleased with the lawsuit threat.  
"This is not a shrinking violet council," said the mayor. "It's unfortunate that Singh has tarnished its good reputation with this request," 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@ht.homecomm.net.

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# The highest of educational honors

## ■ Parkview's Scott Hill wins Teacher of the Year award

By Kristyn Zinner

Scott Hill has been a bit out of his comfort zone lately. The usually low-profile fourth grade teacher at Parkview Elementary School has been in the spotlight since last Wednesday afternoon, when members of the Novi Educational Foundation and representatives from the Suburban Collection ambushed his class-

room to present him with the 2005 Teacher of the Year Award.

Principal Jennifer Michos stopped his class half way through the day and brought in several special people, including Hill's family, to surprise him. She even brought a substitute teacher, one of his former students, to take over his class while he spent the afternoon at Suburban Honda choosing a new car that he will drive free for one year.

Hill is still a bit overwhelmed with the whole idea. "It's like being a kid in a candy store," he said.

The Suburban Collection greeted him at the dealership with a list of cars and gave him the task of picking one to take that would be his for the next year. Then, one by

one, they brought the cars of his choice over for him to look, sit in and test drive. He considered a Jeep Grand Cherokee and an Acura sedan, but with a bit of input from his sons, he drove away in a gold Honda Pilot.

Parkview Literacy Specialist Wendy Gould nominated Hill for this honor. His fellow fourth grade teacher at Parkview, Claudia Ballo, parent Laurie Hildreth and former student Kamal Yechour each wrote letters supporting the nomination.

"I have always admired the way he relates to students," Gould said.

In her nomination, she describes Hill's interaction with his students as "phenomenal." She explains that he is able to identify the strengths of all his students,

helping the most able learners excel, while helping the struggling student achieve and feel successful. Gould describes his classroom as a "warm, pleasant place to be."

"I'm honored that the people who nominated me are the people who I have the highest regard for."

Hill still keeps in touch with Yechour, but not as a teacher so much as a friend. The two play fantasy football together each season.

Staying in touch with students after they leave elementary school and getting to know who they are

outside of his classroom are two traits that Hill prides himself on. It's important to him to know which students play soccer, who is an ice skater and who is a ballerina. He forms bonds with each of them.

"When you do that, the students perform better in the classroom," he said.

He holds tight to the truth that every student has a set of gifts, and it is his job to amplify those talents.

"We are all very proud of him," Gould said.

Kristyn Zinner is Communications Publications Assistant for the Novi Community School District.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy Photo

Scott Hill, Novi's Teacher of the Year, behind the wheel of his new Honda Pilot.

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# Novi High students making a difference

## ■ Purple Bear Project teaches many lessons

By Ramez Khuri

In the spirit of National Autism Awareness Month (April), autistic students at Village Oaks Elementary School received a bear-sized surprise when students from Jodie Sikaitis' special education class at Novi High School passed out teddy bears.

The older students, along with their teacher, visited the Build-A-Bear Workshop at Twelve Oaks Mall on April 20 to make the teddy bears, as part of something called "The Purple Bear Project."

"We decided as a class to adopt this project and to ask the Novi High staff to donate money starting on April 6," Sikaitis said. "We wanted to build 25 bears to take to the elementary school."

Sikaitis got the idea from a flyer sent out by the autistic society. It said that anyone who goes to Build-A-Bear Workshop at Twelve Oaks Mall and purchases a purple bear in the month of April, would have proceeds go to the autistic society. She and her class decided to take it a step further.

Each bear costs \$18. In the two weeks before the group built the bears, their goal was to raise at least \$500. By day four, the donations totaled \$354.

"The staff was very receptive to it," Sikaitis said. "It's been awesome and we're very excited."

"We decided to make this a part of our math class, so we are learning how to keep track of all the money with a check ledger, we're learning how to add on our calculator and we're learning how to read the checks and find out what's on the checks," Sikaitis said.

The students also learned how to locate the store, the mall and how to build the bears.

The way the Build-A-Bear process works is: First, patrons choose a stuffed animal from many bins, which do not have any stuffing in them at the time. Next they take a heart, put it inside the bear and make a wish, and then stuff it. The company will sew the bear up when it's all stuffed and put a tag inside. Then patrons can wash their bear in a tub, pick out an outfit for it and create a birth certificate complete with gender, name, birth date and weight.

The high school students were thrilled to make the bears. "I'm excited to get out of school and help the kids," Colby Maxfield said, a sophomore at the school. "I learned how to keep track of the checks and balance our money and I learned how to budget money."

Michael Renkiewicz is a ninth grader at Novi High. He also learned a lot about how checks and money work. "It makes me feel good because I'm helping out little kids who are so happy to see us come," he said.

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@lt.homecomm.net.



Courtesy photo

Students in Jodie Sikaitis' special education class at Novi High School built 500 purple bears to deliver to autistic children at Village Oaks Elementary School. The high school students are pictured here along with Sikaitis and the bears: (Back row left to right) Chris Konti, Michael Renkiewicz, Colby Maxfield, Jodi Kozma. (Front row left to right) Sikaitis, (back row) Danielle Heverly, Liz Parsell, Erica Benham and Adam Caslake.

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**Family fun with Ronald!**  
Novi Woods Elementary School held its annual Family Picnic on May 6. Admission was a voluntary donation to the Ronald McDonald House in Ann Arbor. Pictured behind the students is Pam Quilquist, principal, presenting Pat Holt and Ronald McDonald a "thank you" for all that McDonald's owners Claude and Teresa Murphy do for Novi Woods throughout the year.

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

## Easing away aches of aging

By Kim Kovelle  
STAFF WRITER

Fingers and thumbs pressed together, Ana Zradi swept her hands across Blanche Robinson's bare back last week. The light, circular motion — called effleurage — was just what the 86-year-old Novi patient needed.

"That feels wonderful," Robinson said, her face nestled in a massage face pillow. "Oh, I can go to sleep right now."

She was one of five who made the Wednesday trek to the Novi Senior Center's massage room.

In the span of 25 minutes, Zradi had eased the tension from Robinson's upper body muscles for a \$16 fee.

"It helps take the pain out of my shoulders," said Robinson, who recently underwent back surgery. "It loosens up your muscles so that you can do more activity."

A protégé of the center's previous massage therapist, Jill Cunningham, Zradi has been working her magic on seniors' aching joints for about two months.

Such therapy has been offered at the center for years, staff said.

With 16 years of experience, Zradi is no stranger to kneading out sore spots — and the arts of reflexology and energy-based healing touch.

"I like the slow, meditative, deep tissue massage," Zradi said. "You want something that's slow. It doesn't feel relaxing if you do things fast."

Offering services from about 1-3 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, Zradi soothes trigger points and golgi tendon organs alike with Biotone massage cream and nimble hands.

The therapist, trained at the Kripala Center in Lenox, Mass., said her focus with seniors is comfort.

A beige-toned room dotted with illustrations of dragonflies and birds provides an intimate setting set off by soft music.

Aroma therapy is available for those who choose it. Conversation is optional, as is partially disrobing for back

work.

"They're always covered," Zradi said. A long, light blue towel was draped on Robinson during her session.

As Zradi passes on exercise tips to seniors — even if it's simply stretching for 10 minutes a day — she said she's learned a few lessons herself.

"I'm thinking I have to go real easy on some people," she said. "I'm surprised."

### SENIOR MESSAGES

■ **What:** Massage therapist Ana Zradi offers massages, healing touch energy work and reflexology for senior citizens

■ **Where:** Novi Senior Center, 25075 Meadowbrook Road between 10 Mile Road and Grand River Avenue

■ **When:** 1-3 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays

■ **Cost:** \$16 for a 25 minute session

■ **Make an appointment:** (248) 347-0414



Photo by KIM KOVELLE

Massage therapist Ana Zradi soothes out the neck muscles of Blanche Robinson, 86, at the Novi Senior Center last week.

Novi resident Jim McLean, who started attending the sessions with his wife, is among them.

Find of yard work, the 70-year-old prefers a tougher massage to smooth muscles.

"Ana can really get in deep," McLean said. "It's wonderful. You just kind of zone out."

Zradi, who also manages the Tollgate Farm's conference center in Novi, said her interest in massage was sparked by her own

aching back.

She also offers reflexology, wherein certain parts of the hands and feet are rubbed to stimulate different organs.

That can help circulation, relieving symptoms like cold hands and feet that sometimes affect older adults.

"I do whatever they want," Zradi said.

As she waited in the lobby area for her appointment, Sue Gilbert,

59, already knew her wish.

"I have a lot of stress in my neck," said the Novi resident, who visits Zradi every two weeks. "It's a nagging pain. It comes and goes."

"I can't wait to get in there,"

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@hthomecomm.net.

### SENIOR CENTER CALENDAR

Day	Time	Activity
Friday 5/13	8:15 a.m.	Patner Bread
	9 a.m.	Stretch and Strength
	10 a.m.	Body Recall
Monday 5/16	8:15 a.m.	Men's Golf
	9 a.m.	Stretch and Strength
	10 a.m.	Body Recall
Tuesday 5/17	9 a.m.	Patner Bread
	9 a.m.	Line Dance
	10 a.m.	Asian Pacific Class
Wednesday 5/18	9 a.m.	Stretch and Strength
	9 a.m.	Women's Golf
	10 a.m.	Body Recall
Thursday 5/19	9 a.m.	Line Dance*
	9 a.m.	Mixed golf
	9:30 a.m.	Travel meeting

\*Activities will be held at the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road. Phone (248) 347-0414.

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## Moving homes made more manageable

By Kim Kovelle  
RECORD STAFF WRITER

After relocating to seven different houses, the Kings know a few things about uprooting.

"We're a moving family," said Deneen King, who settled in Northville Township last August. "Sometimes I don't jump."

When husband Dan was assigned general manager of Dearborn's Hyatt Regency Hotel, they brought along two daughters, a tabby cat and more than 100 boxes.

"I've been married 20 years," King said. "I have a lot of stuff. It took me at least a week to get to least comfortable."

Whether hiring professionals — like the Kings — or doing it yourself, heading for a new home can be a hassle-packed move.

In the midst of National Moving Month, local experts stress careful preparation from packing and paperwork to trucking and tipping.

**Step by step**

Taking the process in steps is key, said Bob Allwine, real estate agent with Northville-based REMAX 100.

"Don't wait until the last minute, which too often people will do," Allwine said. "Three or four weeks before, start notifying your change of addresses to places where you owe your

bills."

Compile a list. After visiting the post office, check details on medical and dental records, bills, utilities, waste pickup, telephone and Internet service and other essentials.

School start dates, voter registration, driver's licenses and club fees are vital, too. Secure travelers' checks — and find out how to transport the family pet or garden plants.

Travel light, said René Saenz, president of Novi's Two Men and a Truck moving company.

"Clean out any items you don't think you'd ever want to keep," he said. "Have garage sales."

**Load 'er up**

About two weeks before the move, start packing.

To package items from a three-bedroom, 2,000-square-foot house, Saenz said it takes about 180 boxes of various sizes, from dish packs to wardrobe containers.

On average, he said, boxes run \$2 each, and unused containers can be bought back.

"They can purchase as many boxes as they think they need," Saenz said. If opting for free containers, he added, "Avoid using produce boxes. There could be critters in there."

Specialty boxes hold fragile wares. Whether it's delicate dishes or a computer, Saenz recommends plenty of bubble wrap

— and labeling.

"Put the room that it's from and the room that it's going to," he said. "Where it's from gives them a reminder where the item was in their old house."

### Moving out

On the big day, Allwine said having an "open first" box with hygiene, medical and maintenance items is wise — as is keeping important possessions nearby.

"Make sure you've got your valuables not just in a whole bunch of different areas," Allwine said. "If you have a safe, put them in there."

When deciding whether to hire a mover or grab friends, Saenz said, consider all angles.

"It's cheaper to do the move yourself," he said. "Professional movers are going to move a lot faster. You don't have the risk of your father-in-law hurting his back and being off work."

Gas costs and possible property damages are factors, too. With three movers, the average move costs \$500 — plus optional tip.

"Average tip about \$20 per mover," Saenz said. "It is not required; it's not suggested."

Regardless, check the mover's credentials — and avoid scheduling to move on the day the home sale closes.

"If the closing doesn't happen, then we're both kind of stuck," Saenz said.



Photo by JOHN HEDDER

The King family, including Deneen and Kim, 11, right, have moved quite a bit in their life, most recently from Connecticut to Northville in August of 2004.

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## Driver who killed 3 had drinking history

By Paul R. Pace  
SPECIAL WRITER

Police say Thomas Wellinger, 48, appeared intoxicated at his Livonia workplace as early as the morning of May 3. That afternoon, he crashed his sports utility vehicle into a sedan, killing a mother and her two sons in Farmington Hills. Wellinger, a Farmington Hills resident, was charged last week with three counts of second-degree murder in the deaths of Judy Weinstein, 49, and her sons, Alex, 12, and Sam, 9. All three died from the impact, said police. Surviving husband and father, Gary Weinstein, owns Weinstein Jewelers of Novi.

While no prior drinking and driving convictions are on Wellinger's record, an investigation is showing he may have had a drinking problem before the accident, said Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer. "We interviewed his supervisor," Dwyer said. "He confirmed that (Wellinger) came to his job at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday and then met with the supervisor again at 11 a.m." Wellinger worked as a sales director for Unified Graphics Solutions in Livonia, a producer of transportation industry design software. In a statement, the company said Wellinger left work to attend a scheduled doctor's appointment. The supervisor told police Wellinger appeared to have been drinking by the second visit.

Police are investigating what followed that meeting. The crash occurred at 3:30 p.m. "We're getting other information that he had a drinking problem, so this is not a first-time occurrence," Dwyer said. Dwyer said Wellinger is a recent divorcee with two teenage children. Police also discovered data from a diagnostic computer inside Wellinger's vehicle, which shows he was driving at 70 mph when he plowed his GMC Denali into a Honda Accord on 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills. Facts from that "black box" were key in bringing forth murder charges, Dwyer said.

A blood draw showed that Wellinger's blood alcohol content was 0.43, nearly five times the legal definition of drunk driving. The limit in Michigan is 0.08. Wellinger was arraigned at William Beaumont Hospital May 5. He is recovering from a broken neck from the accident. He is also charged with three counts of driving while under the influence of alcohol causing death. If convicted of all charges, Wellinger faces up to life in prison. He has been denied bond, and his preliminary exam was set for 1:30 p.m. yesterday in 47th District Court.



Shawnna Small, 14, sets a flower in a memorial by the 12 Mile Road crashsite where her friends were killed May 3.

## In final services, hundreds celebrate Weinsteins' lives, say good-bye

By Paul R. Pace  
SPECIAL WRITER

Gary Weinstein has been telling family and friends not to offer him condolences in the loss of his wife and only two children in a tragic Farmington Hills accident. Instead, the Novi jeweler told them that he wants to hear the stories, memories and about the photographs in their minds of the wonderful lives his family led while they were here.

More than 1,000 people filled Dorfan Chapel in Farmington Hills last Friday to say good-bye to Judy Weinstein and her sons, Alex, 12, and Sam, 9. The three were killed May 3 while in their car on 12 Mile Road just east of Orchard Lake Road. Driver Thomas Wellinger, 48, of Farmington Hills, allegedly caused the accident while highly intoxicated. Many held flowers during the hour-long service. Hundreds were school-age children. Students who knew the boys wrote well wishes and good-byes on large paper posters, which were taped to the chapel's walls. One read, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Young and old, family, friends and acquaintances paid respects. Rabbi Tamara Kolton of Birmingham Temple, where the Weinsteins were members, shared her own stories. She said the boys woke up every day and looked at life like one big party, "and the party was always in their honor." David Weinstein, Gary's brother, said he marveled at the boys' brightness and courage. "They never looked at the adults as adults," he said. "They looked at them like you're one of us." Micha Mathews, 13, went to school with Alex. "He was the happiest kid," Mathews said of her friend. "It's so sad he's gone. He was like this light that came into a room."

Denise Swope of Westland said she met Judy Weinstein 10 years ago when Judy was the motivational speaker in one of her Landmark Education classes. "She was an outstanding individual," Swope said. "She lived life to the fullest and made each moment count. It's a definite loss."

Paul R. Pace is a staff writer for the Farmington Observer. He can be reached at (734) 953-2128 or ppace@oc.homecomm.net.

## Floors To Your Door

When it's time to select a new floor, it's important to keep several factors in mind during the color selection process. Certainly, existing furniture, wallcoverings and window treatments, traffic patterns and decorating styles are all deciding factors when choosing the color of your new floor. But there are also some practical considerations, too. Lighter colors make a room appear larger, while darker colors make it seem cozier. New stain- and soil-resistant technology makes today's higher-color carpets much easier to clean, providing many more decorating options. Medium and darker colors, tweeds and textures help disguise soil in the home's high-traffic areas.

What distinguishes hard surfaces such as laminates, tile, wood and vinyl from carpet are their extensive design and color options. And, like carpet, their color will have an effect on the room appearance, only in different ways. For instance, dark-colored tile and wood show scratches in high traffic areas and at "pivot points," such as in front of the stove, sink and refrigerator. Larger tiles create a spare look, actually making a small area appear larger. Ask an experienced retailer for design tips like these.

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TSI is known for giving back to the community, numerous times in the past they have donated landscaping etc... to various entities. TSI has now expanded on this concept to include subdivisions, churches, schools and any other type of organization that could benefit from a reward program. When homeowners or members of organizations hire TSI for any of their services, TSI will donate three (3%) percent of the total project back to the association or organization. They have a choice, they can receive it in services or in the form of a check to use as they see fit. "We feel strongly that the community has supported us and we want to return the favor" says Kurt. "This could add up very quickly" says Todd, "for example, if an organization does \$100,000 in total sales with TSI, that's \$3,000 in services or cash back to the organization. A frequently asked question" says Todd, "is 'doesn't TSI just add the 3% onto the total price of the job?' The answer, absolutely not!!! The 3% comes out of our profit. In fact, one thing that will not change is TSI's competitive pricing, we guarantee to beat our competitors bid, even when we are giving a donation back". TSI will be the best deal for your subdivision association or organizations landscaping needs hands down, not only in services, but also in price. Call for details and to get your organization signed up to receive 3% back.

### Landscaping Renovation is the latest trend

There is a growing trend in our area, many homeowners are choosing to stay in their homes and make major updates

### A tradition in landscaping now into a second generation

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### Todd's builder program is off to a fast start

The latest major trend is what TSI refers to as their "BUILDER PROGRAM". The inclusion of the lawn and sprinkler system in the base price of the home is becoming increasingly popular. TSI offers builders the opportunity to sell more homes and control the quality look of their developments by including the lawn and system in the base price of the home. TSI will even install the entire landscape package on builder's spec homes. The best part about this program is the builder does not have to pay for the services until the closing takes place. This is a great selling feature, the builder receives special pricing from TSI, not to be undersold by their competitors and not received by the general public. The builder's clients also receive a free "Turf Establishment Program" (four fertilizing applications) and a free full color landscape design rendering from a TSI design professional. By meeting with TSI early it also allows the customer

Todd's Services Incorporated is now in their 27th year of business. Todd and Kurt LaButte attribute their success and longevity to the wonderful community, family and employees that have surrounded and supported them in their endeavor over the years. "For this, we are forever grateful. Thank you."

Last year TSI set another record in sales volume. This is incredibly amazing considering that the economy had not been the most robust. TSI does think, however, that in any economy, people appreciate the impeccable quality and customer service that TSI consistently offers.

### Todd's offers programs to help consumers

TSI offers tools that are unique to the industry, including various financing programs, one which allows customers to receive up to 12 months same as cash with no interest or 7.9% for 48 months. TSI also offers a "MEET or BEAT" and

## Todd's Services Guaranteed

*We're putting our money where our mouth is! We promise not to be undersold... just obtain a bid from a competitor and we will meet or beat it 100% of the time for like type services guaranteed". - If we can't...we'll give you 10% of our bid in cash for you to use with our competitor.*

"BEST DEAL PROGRAM". TSI has a reputation of being the best landscaping company in the community, however they also are considered a little expensive. With the introduction of these programs, the consumer has been given an opportunity to put aside that misconception. "It always amazes our customers when they actually compare the services from our competition and then from us. We beat our competitors 100% of the time; we guarantee that TSI will beat their quote. We find that we are your best deal by far, when comparing apples for apples, but what we find when a competitor beats our prices it is apples for oranges" says Todd. Lets face it, if TSI wasn't giving the public the best deal, they would not have set a record sales volume in 2004, which was probably the worst economy since TSI was established in 1979. If TSI can't beat their competitor's deal they will give you 10% of the TSI bid in cash. If that is not putting your money where your mouth is, I don't know what is.

TSI still offers all of the services as in the past, including full color landscape designs, lawn installation, sodding, hydro-seeding, sprinkler systems, retaining walls, trees and shrubs, ponds, decks, brick pavers, stamped concrete, seawalls, water features, and a whole host of other services too numerous to mention. "If you can dream it, we can design and install it" says Kurt.

**Up to 12 Months Same AS Cash**  
0% to 7.9% interest  
for 48 months  
Limited Time Offer

### Todd's employees truly do make the difference

"TSI is fortunate again this year. We have been able to retain all of the terrific employees that have been with us for many seasons" says Todd. "We've expanded our professional sales design staff to handle the volume we have come to expect in a growing community, especially in light of the fact that we have a 24 to 48 hour turn around policy to service our customer's needs."

TSI is consistently successful; they were selected by the community to receive the "PEOPLES CHOICE AWARD" for best landscaping company again this past year. In fact TSI has won every year the public has voted on it. "We really appreciate the level of confidence that the community puts in us" says Kurt.

## We'll Meet or Beat any offer

to include their landscape into their mortgage if they choose. Why would a homeowner want to shell out cash after the closing for something that is absolutely required? You wouldn't pay for your electrical or plumbing before the closing, it would be in the base price of the home. It's part of the process, just like the lawn and sprinkler system should be. When these services are built into the mortgage, the typical lawn and sprinkler system increases the payment by about \$19.00 per month. Builders and Realtors, call TSI to find out more information about this program.

Potential homeowners looking to purchase a home can call TSI for a list of builders that include the lawn and sprinkler system installed by Todd's Services in the base price of the home.

and renovations instead of relocating. "Considering the fact that TSI has been in business 27 years, we are finding that a lot of our previous customers are ready to redesign and redo their original landscape project" says Todd. "We are just the company for that. We will redesign your existing landscape at no cost to you, even if you did not hire us on its original installation. Our promise not to be undersold still applies. Obtain a bid from a competitor and TSI will meet or beat it 100% of the time. If we can't beat our competition, yes you guessed it? We will give 10% of our bid to you in cash. It's that simple".

## CURB Appeal Sells!

**CURB APPEAL SELLS!**  
(888) 7-APPEAL  
(888) 727-7325  
www.curbappealsells.com

Curb Appeal Sells LLC, the innovative way that homeowners prepare their homes prior to being listed for sale without any cash outlay, continues to evolve, not only throughout Michigan where entrepreneurs Todd and Kurt introduced the concept and started the company, but also in other geographical areas of the USA. "Homeowners and realtors are grasping on to this concept and using it continuously since it was introduced in 2002" says Todd, "no longer are homeowners taking a low ball offer on their home sale, instead they 'spiff' it up prior to the sale to receive top dollar and pay for those improvements at the closing". For the person with desire to own his or her own business, franchising is coming soon.

**Order TSI and Split \$100 Dollars!**  
In Todd's We Trust  
This is how it works: Have your name or organization, address with zip code and phone number below and give the voucher to someone who may need TSI landscaping services. Tell the person you referred to simply present the voucher to the TSI salesperson after their job has been quoted. This way, they are assured they are receiving a \$100.00 discount. Upon receipt of their signed contract and deposit, TSI will send you or your group \$50.00 and will add \$50.00 off the contract price of the job. TSI will give the best deal and match any competitor's quote. If the contract match the competitor's quote TSI will still send you, or your group the \$50.00. This voucher is valid for 12 months. It cannot be used for TSI's services to you towards their landscaping project with the other company. TSI's Services include: Lawn Care, Sodding, Hydro-Seeding, Stamped Concrete, Seawalls, Water Features, Ponds, Decks, Brick Pavers, Retaining Walls, Trees and Shrubs, and more. Call today, you have nothing to lose!

Name of Referring Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Customer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

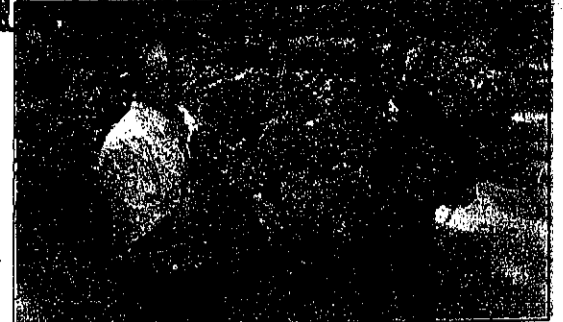
# Todd's Services



**A familiar face**  
Novi soccer standout Stephanie Crawford has been around the sport for a long time — and it hasn't always been while she was on the pitch playing.  
— Page 3B



**Scoreboard**  
The Novi Wildcats sports teams have been very busy lately, winning plenty of games as they build for post-season play. Check out the scores in this week's scoreboard.  
— Page 2B



**Regional Marketplace**  
Warm spring days and flowers just naturally seem to go hand in hand. Gardeners need not look further than Colasanti's Plants and Produce in Highland for colorful blooms to beautify their yards. Visit their garden center for literally thousands of hanging baskets and patio pots to brighten your landscape.  
— Page 6B

# SPORTS

Thursday, May 12, 2005

www.hometownlife.com

B1 Novi News

# HART TO HART

## Steve Hart building a career in brother's shadow

By Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITER

For Steve Hart, trying to outshine the shadow of his brother, Mike, cast before graduating last year isn't something he's willing to try.

Instead, he just wants to be the best athlete he can be.

Steve, who is a junior this year, watched from the sidelines in 2004 when his older brother led the Novi Wildcats football team to the state semi-finals and an eventual loss to Brother Rice. He watched as Mike earned a scholarship to Eastern Michigan University as a baseball pitcher after carving a name for himself on the diamond. Steve could only watch as his brother inked autographs for fans, signed a letter of intent and walked out of Novi High School and straight to nearly-mythical status in the halls.

"He's like my idol," Steve said of Mike. "I just want to work hard and maybe I might be as good as he was."

### I want to be like Mike

But being Mike is out of the question. Steve said there is no comparison when it comes to him and his older sibling.

"Mike's a great athlete," he said. "I just want to be a good athlete."

Mike's not so sure that there is that much difference between himself and his younger brother — who he affectionately calls "Beave" after the star of the old sitcom "Leave It To Beaver." The nickname came from their mother when Steve was young. Mike said he sees a lot of similarities from where he was in his junior year and where Steve is right now.

"I haven't seen him during practices, but watching him on the field I'd say he's going to do just fine," Mike said. "I think he's right where I was, if not



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Novi Wildcat Steve Hart isn't about to try and live up to the career of brother Mike, right, a Novi graduate and current EMU Eagle.

better." Mike's junior year wasn't something a writer would pen for a history book. He couldn't seem to find receivers in the football season and he and his team fell short of their expected goals on the baseball diamond. He did, however, excel in basketball that year.

Steve, on the other hand, helped lead Novi's football team to a very surprising leap deep into the playoffs last year before being bounced by South Lyon and he's currently earning his stripes on the baseball diamond as an infielder.

"He's got a lot of potential," said Mike. "I think if he commits himself to it, he'll be able to play ball in college too."

### Going to the next level

That's something Steve said he'd enjoy. Though playing baseball at the collegiate level is

a big dream of his, he said he isn't planning on building his future around it. Instead, he's focusing on his academics.

"That's going to be the future," he said. "Baseball is my second choice. I want a college that I'll be able to do well at and where I can get a marketing or business degree."

Mike, on the other hand, wasn't as concerned with academics in high school as his younger brother. School, he once said, wasn't for him. He wanted to play sports in college and he earned his place with the Eastern Michigan Eagles. It just happens he's doing well in school too, while collecting a 1-1 record from the mound so far this year.

"Beave's a lot smarter than I was," said Mike. "He's really focused on school and that's going to help him when he decides where he wants to go to college."

But a Division I school? A scholarship? Those are things Steve isn't worrying himself with — no matter how often people compare him to his brother.

"The fans do it now and then," said Steve. "They say I'm not as good as he was. I just ignore it though. I don't want to be Mike. I want to help my team as best I can and I want to work hard and try to be a good athlete. No matter what people say, I'm not going to be as good as he was."

But he'll get his chance most likely. The Wildcats are expected to adjust their offense, once again, to a passing format — much like they did when Mike took over the quarterback position. Steve isn't fretting though. He's planning plenty of training sessions, weight lifting and meetings with head coach Tab Kelleporey between now and opening day.

"It's going to be a lot of fun," he said.

### No comparison?

There are three people who never put Mike and Steve side by side for comparison's sake — their parents, Kathy and Mike, and their sister, Kelsey.

"They're great parents," said Mike. "They're equally supportive of both of us. They aren't like that with just Beave and me either. They're like that with Kelsey too."

Both Mike and Steve are big supporters of each other's athletics. Steve said he's only made it to one of Mike's college games so far, but was able to watch him pitch. Mike, on the other hand, was spotted at several of Steve's contests this year.

"Having your older brother come out and watch you is great," said Steve. "That kind of

support from him has meant a lot to me."

And it will continue to mean a lot. Mike said he plans on attending games next year and will be a steady guide during the summer if Steve needs a few words of advice, which Steve said he's more than happy to take from his older sibling.

"I try and listen to everything he says," Steve said. "He's telling me to lift weights this summer and I plan on doing that. I really appreciate all of the help he's given me."

And the shoes Mike left for Steve to fill?

"I don't mind," he said. "Mike was a great athlete. He was just amazing to watch when he was in high school. I just loved his style. I can only hope to be as good as he was."

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

# Yes! Tied for first in KVC is sweet for 'Cats

By Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITER

Four years ago when the Novi Wildcats golf team was struggling against most of the teams they played, Novi coach Deb Harris found ways to put a positive spin on every meet.

This year, she doesn't have to. The Wildcats golf team is currently tied for first place in the Kensington Valley Conference after beating South Lyon and tying Hartland last week. The team also set a new school record for a team-low score with 172 against South Lyon.

"The girls golf team raised the bar and lowered their scores," said Harris. "They set a new school record for a

low team score in a dual match. The old record was 185 and this year's team broke that record by 13 strokes."

Leading the way was Jessica Westfall — who currently holds the school record for nine and 18 hole matches for low score. She shot a 40 in the victory over South Lyon while Audrey Oh shot a 42 and Abby Greulich shot a 44. Ashley Simms rounded the scoring out with 46 for the team's 172. Also playing but not having their scores counted were Jackie Chudy, who shot a 47, and Brenna Quinley shot a 48.

Novi wasn't finished just because they set a record though. A few days later they took on Hartland in a battle for first place.

"Hartland came in undefeated and we had one loss," said Harris.

Novi beat Hartland despite a tied score of 198-198. The tie breaker went back to the fifth score of 51 for Novi and 57 for Hartland.

Scoring for the Wildcats were Asako Akamatsu and Simms, who shot a 46, while Chudy recorded a 50 and Westfall, Greulich and Oh shot a 51.

"It was amazing," said Westfall. "We were so excited. This has just been a great season."

Novi knows if they want to make a run for the league title they'll have to continue playing strong.

"This win puts us in a tie for first place with two dual matches and two tournaments left in KVC competition,"

said Harris.

The junior varsity teams also played well. Against South Lyon they won 200-276 with Akamatsu scoring a 46, Dana Czekaj shooting a 51, Lindsey Haslett carding a 51, Erica Takeda shooting a 52, Yoo-Jin Kim recording a 54 and Missy Broadwell shooting a 55.

Against Hartland the JV also won, taking the match 216-242. Scoring for Novi were Brenna Quinley with a 48, Haslett's 55, Broadwell's 55, Czekaj's 58, Kelsey Brendenihl's 61 and Kim's 62.

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

### Record-setting Wildcats

The Novi Wildcats were at the top of their game when they pounded out a win over South Lyon last week.

The team score happens to be a school record. The old record of 185 was shattered by the squad by 13 strokes.

PLAYER	SCORE
Jessica Westfall	40
Audrey Oh	42
Abby Greulich	44
Ashley Simms	46
Team total	172

### By the numbers

24-0

Novi soccer's combined score over three games.

172

New Novi High School record for a golf team low score.

15

First place finishes boys track took against South Lyon last week.

17

Number of total events in a high school track meet.

9

Number of RBIs by senior Kevin Dislo in Novi's win over Pinckney.

20-4

Novi tennis' score over three KVC dual meets last week.

13

Strike outs thrown by senior hurler Alyssa Wagner against Canton.





# REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

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Thursday, May 12, 2005

## Take time when planning web presence

Did you place as much emphasis on planning out the design and creation of your Web site as you did designing the TV or magazine advertisement for your company? Was your Web site an after-thought or something you created just because others have one and you think you may need one?

A Web site can be the best, most cost-effective and the most global reaching marketing brochure that your company could have. It should be meticulously planned out along with a clear understanding of your objectives for its existence. What are you trying to accomplish with the Web site? Is it for informational purposes only? Is it to sell products online? Or, are you trying to enhance your corporate image? What is the end goal of the Web site?

A properly planned Web site will enable you to meet your objectives. If you fail to thoroughly plan your Web site from the beginning you will spend a lot of time and money trying to make changes. A properly planned Web site should be a component of your marketing and your business plan.

### You've grown apart

There are many Web sites out there that have made no changes to their content or to their "look and feel" for years. Although the business may have evolved, companies tend to keep their site "static." Also, due to the administrative cost associated with making small changes, there is a tendency to "bundle" changes, thus resulting in poorly maintained sites or sites that look the same, year after year after year.

When looking for a Web solutions company, look for one that provides you with an easy administration tool that will allow you to make content changes readily.

Also, design your site using technology that refreshes the look of the site every time a new user comes to your site. That technology may cost more upfront but will reduce the overhead associated with making "design" changes at regular intervals.

### No one knows you exist

"Build it and they will come." No more! The Internet is a very competitive environment and requires a company to have a strategic plan to get an edge over the competition. Companies must ask themselves why a customer would visit their site versus the site of their competitor. Companies should also know how many Web sites exist in their industry and what is making customers come to their site and what is turning them off.

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is a very important marketing strategy that most company Web sites don't have. SEO is necessary to get people to come to your Web site. Once the people come, having a site that is aesthetically pleasing and that provides interactivity makes the difference between making a sale or losing a customer permanently. We will look at SEO next time.

Yes, you can get a Web site for free from your neighbor's son, or for \$500 to \$1,000 from your sister's boyfriend's brother. Saving money upfront may result in spending more at a later time. And sometimes, you do get what you pay for. My advice is "no Web site" is better than a "bad Web site."

Nipa Shah is a local e-commerce solutions provider who specializes in providing affordable solutions for small and medium sized companies. She can be reached via e-mail at [nshah@nweb-sites.com](mailto:nshah@nweb-sites.com) or via phone (248) 470-6299.

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ADVERTORIAL



Photos by HAL GOULD

Kelly Colasanti and Robert Lawson stand in the colorful greenhouse at Colasanti's Plants and Produce, located at 468 S. Milford Road in Highland. The family business offers thousands of choices that will bring spring colors to your home and gardens.

## Bring color to your life and table

Beautiful blooms, fresh produce, gourmet foods, wine: Colasanti's Plants and Produce makes every visit special

By Annette Jaworski  
SPECIAL WRITER

Warm spring days and flowers just naturally seem to go hand in hand. Gardeners need not look further than Colasanti's Plants and Produce in Highland for colorful blooms to beautify their yards. Visit their garden center for literally thousands of hanging baskets and patio pots to brighten your landscape. The hardest part will be deciding which basket or flower you want most.

### Pots and pansies

Inside the garden center you'll find geraniums in a rainbow of colors from salmon to fuchsia, bright New Guinea Impatiens, lush begonias in sunny yellow, pink and red. You're sure to find your favorites as well as something new among the hundreds of rows of hanging baskets and flats. Add instant punch to a patio by choosing from thousands of easy care patio pots in a variety of plants and combinations.

"They're ready now - they're an instant garden," notes owner Kelly Colasanti.

Don't forget the popular pansy, which is hardy enough for cooler temperatures.

"We've got lots of pansies, in oval containers, patio pots, hanging baskets," manager Phil Hall pointed out.

Colasanti's also carries a huge selection of perennials. This year, they'll offer 50 new varieties for those who appreciate the exotic and unique. Don't forget the floral shop with fresh cut floral and other gifts.

### Go gourmet or everyday

Colasanti's is the perfect place to start your meal planning for the gourmet or everyday cook. There's no better source in the area for specialty foods and produce. For starters, shopping at Colasanti's for plants and produce is like visiting a European market. Not only does the ambiance make it an enjoyable experience with its colorful walls, music and outdoor mini zoo - the variety, selection and freshness of plants and produce is second to none. A big reason for the high quality of their merchandise is that Colasanti's have their roots in farming.

"We know our vegetables. We've been farming all our life and we're still farmers," Kelly Colasanti said.

Nowadays very high tech coolers keep the produce fresh and tasty.

"You always get a fresh apple at Colasanti's," he added. No surprise, they carry 15 varieties of apples, and seven varieties of pears.

Even if you shop Colasanti's for quality and freshness, you'll discover it's the best local source for unique and unusual fruits and vegetables. How about trying a lychee nut, horned melon or maradol papaya? Experiment with something new like a chernoy, which is like a perfectly ripened pear.

"There's no boring salads at Colasanti's," explains Hall.

Or, visit the deli counter and bring a delicious dinner home in a hurry, like eggplant Monticello, chicken capital or garlic linguini. Too busy to make dinner? Let Mother Colasanti do the cooking with her homemade

recipes, including four to five kinds of lasagna.

### Wonderful world of wine

Why not top off dinner with that special bottle of wine. Pay a visit to their wine shoppe, featuring Lee Hershey. For those who enjoy wine, but would like to expand their palette, Hershey can guide you in the right direction.

"We get every soul in here from those who are buying for someone else to those who are looking for something really special," he said.

"Someone may come in who likes a cabernet, we'll show them that, but we'll ask, why don't you consider this and give it a whirl. You might enjoy it. There's a world of wines out there from France, Germany and Italy," said Hershey as he flips through a ten-page inventory of just one area. "There are hundreds of incredible wines here."

Colasanti's wines are being featured at the 11th Annual Wine Tasting Evening sponsored by The Rotary Club of Milford in cooperation with Baker's of Milford on Thursday, May 12, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Along with wine goes gourmet cheeses from around the world, including Spain, Italy, France, Germany and Ireland to name a few. There's a full display case including rich creamy French double cream brie, gouda from Holland and cheddar from Canada. Snook's Meat Market inside the store makes it convenient to pick up main dish meats.

Colasanti's has reworked the beer section out of the wine area for easier access and increased



Kelly Colasanti pours a taste of wine for Lee Hershey at Colasanti's Plants and Produce. The shop offers a wide variety of wines and nearly 100 different beers from around the world.

the selection. "We've added 97 varieties of beer," said Phil Hall. "We've got the largest selection of beer around at reasonable prices."

Colasanti's is currently running a special where they offer 20 percent off beer regardless of quantity.

### Make lunch special

Those who think of Colasanti's for mainly produce and plants are pleasantly surprised at the great selection of deli case items and gourmet ready to serve foods, as well as hot and cold sandwiches. The hot grilled sandwiches are a favorite of Phil and Kelly. Try a Highlander barbecue chicken sandwich with apple wood bacon and coleslaw served on a Ciabatta Roll. Other delicious choices include a pulled pork barbecue sandwich, a turkey Rueben, or an Italian meatball sandwich.

Pick up a bowl of hot soup of the day like chicken and dumplings or Italian wedding soup.

Don't forget Colasanti's deli trays for your graduation or summer parties.

Just in time for spring, they're now offering Hershey's soft serve ice cream.

"It's thicker and richer," says Hall. And to make it even sweeter, they are offering a free cone to children 10 and under during the month of May. Or try one of their great hot dogs in the ice cream hut.

Colasanti's is located at 468 South Milford Road in Highland. Stop in and relax in the park-like ambiance out front, with benches and beautiful birds and animals for children of all ages to enjoy. Call (248) 887-0012. Visit its Web site at [www.colasantis.com](http://www.colasantis.com) Spring hours are Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.


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## Get growing With Colasanti's

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Enjoy a Hershey's Soft Serve Ice Cream Cone while walking the grounds  
**FREE Cones for the Kids!**  
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