

# NOVI PUBLIC LIBRARY Novi News

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Your hometown newspaper celebrating its 50th year serving Novi and the Lakes area

Thursday, May 26, 2005

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50¢

Volume 49 Number 52

Novi, Michigan



**Celebrating a half century**  
The Novi News is 50 years old today, and we've put together a special section that takes a look at the Novi area from 1955 to present.

— Section AA

**INSIDE**

**Home & Garden 2**

This section features tips on spring cleaning, curing for power equipment, adding a spiritual element, maintenance that shouldn't be ignored and much, much more.

— Special Section



**Safety first**

What's Lou Csordas, Novi's mayor, doing? Two things: He's having fun riding around on his new Harley, and he's practicing motorcycle safety.

— Page 8A

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## 8 Mile/Haggerty needs fixing

### Traffic backups blamed on timing of lights

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Don't be in a hurry if you're trying to drive west on Eight Mile Road off of I-275.

Council Member Lynne Paul told city council members Monday night that due to the timing of signals at Eight Mile and

Haggerty roads, which is currently being tweaked by the Road Commission for Oakland County, she recently waited through three or four lights — at 1:30 p.m.

The situation is only going to become worse once the Novi Road Exit 162 closes on June 1 off westbound I-96 for a widening and rehabilitation project.

With Beck Road already closed for the major I-96 interchange being rebuilt, this means that I-275 will collect much of the southbound traffic off I-96. Meadowbrook Road, another major north-south road in Novi, is

also closed between Nine Mile and 10 Mile roads.

City Manager Rick Helwig informed council that the timing of the signals at Eight Mile and Haggerty is currently under review, and RCOC hopes to complete the project in 30 days.

"We feel your pain and everyone's pain, but these matters are totally out of our control," Helwig said.

"We have their attention, however, and we're checking with them on a daily basis."

Paul contacted Oakland County Commissioner Hugh Crawford

**The westbound I-96 off ramp at Novi Road will soon be closed. Get all the details on page 5A.**

about the Eight Mile and Haggerty traffic backups. She fears if something is not done soon that the area could become the site of future motor vehicle accidents.

"Everyone's trying to minimize the disruptions during all of these road closures. We need

everyone's support to get through the month of June, and then it will be smooth sailing," Helwig said.

"We're looking at the signal operation at Eight Mile and Haggerty now to try to alleviate the backups between that intersection and the ramp off I-275," said Dylan Foukes, traffic engineer, RCOC.

*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

Thomas Wilkins, resident conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra since 1999, sits down to make a few notes at his piano in his Novi condo.

## Passion wielded with a wand

### For Wilkins, conducting is a lifelong love

By Kim Kovellev  
STAFF WRITER

A third-grade class trip set the course of Thomas Wilkins' life in an instant he calls magical. Perched in a Virginia orchestra hall, the 8-year-old was captivat-

ed by the Norfolk Symphony's classical strains — and its conductor.

"This man seemed to be reveling in this incredible sound," Wilkins said. "He could make a gesture and it could affect how the sound could change or develop."

"I decided that day what I wanted to do."

Forty years later, the Novi resident is resident conductor for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Wielding his baton, he shares a

lifelong music love affair. Though his roots stem to a poor childhood, Wilkins said he never doubted his place on the podium.

"It wasn't difficult at all because I was pursuing a dream," he said. "It's all I ever wanted to do."

### Music from the projects

Today versed with the cello and tuba, Wilkins' first instrument was a much tinier black

melody flute. He soon filled his elementary school and housing project home with class-taught tunes and radio jingles picked up by ear.

"I was really attracted to that thing. That was sort of my first experience," Wilkins said.

As he absorbed vocal music and violins, his single mother taught lessons in dignity — and good behavior.

Clothes were crisply ironed.

continued on page 2

## Code of conduct debate resumes

### Parents voice opinions on athletic code, random drug testing

By Ramez Khuri  
STAFF WRITER

Parents of student athletes filled the Novi Community School District's Educational Services Building on Monday and Tuesday nights this week to voice their opinions on the proposed athletic code of conduct that district athletic director Curt Ellis submitted to the board of education for review.

The public hearings, which were held by the Novi Board of Education, were designed to allow parents the opportunity to voice their concerns. The board did not comment at the hearings, but is expected to take into consideration what was said before it approves a new code. Discussion focused on the following:

- the code that Ellis and his athletics code of conduct review committee team came up with;
- a second proposed code that a group of four parents and Superintendent Dr. Emmett Lippe crafted; and
- the notion of reinserting a random drug testing policy into the code.

The second code is a revamped version of the first, with many modifications that the parents feel are necessary changes.

Amol Huprikar, a senior at Novi High School, is an All American cross country runner and is on the school's varsity track and cross country teams. After reviewing both proposals and attending Monday night's hearing, he's more in favor of the second code.

"I like Dr. Lippe's policy," Huprikar said. "It addresses all of the current issues that have been brought up without giving such harsh penalties. I've ran at many levels, even at the NCAA level, and nowhere is drug testing required. I've ran at national meets for cross country and they don't ask you to pee in a cup."

Huprikar believes there is a problem with substance abuse at the high school, but he doesn't believe it can be solved by drug testing.

"I think the largest problem is drinking (among students)," he said. "That will not be solved by drug testing."

Scott Evans was one of the

continued on page 2

## For the fallen

### 50 entries expected for Memorial Day parade

By Ramez Khuri  
STAFF WRITER

A special touch has been added to Novi's Memorial Day parade this year, as the city's Parks and Recreation department has personally invited veterans of past wars who live in the area to be a part of the festivities.

According to Tracie Ringle, many have expressed interest.

continued on page 5

## Success echoes after 50 years

### Peterson family still runs Novi's ECCO Tool

By Kim Kovellev  
STAFF WRITER

As a kid, Floyd Peterson earned top wages at his dad's new tool-making business in Novi: two bottles of soda and a nickel.

"When you're 8 years old, that was fun," Peterson chuckled. "He used to bring us out here and teach us little things. I knew where all the wastepaper baskets were."

Today, Peterson, 53, owns ECCO Tool Company, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last month.

continued on page 3



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Floyd Peterson, owner of Novi's ECCO Tool, greets his son Jeff. Both have been involved with the custom tool manufacturing business since they were little. ECCO's letters stand for the business' first two co-owners, (Floyd's father) Elmer (his friend) Charlie and then the word Company.

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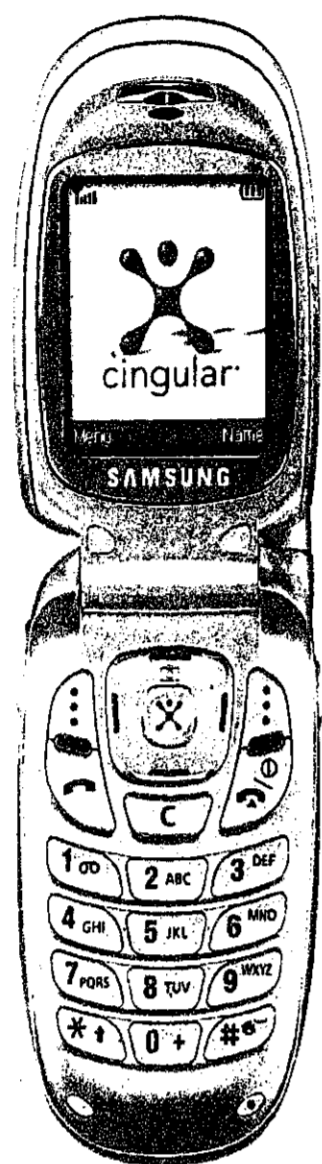
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ABOVE: TIE fighter pilot Dan Provost snaps a photo of his fellow Imperials.

BELOW: A royal guard's helmet.

BOTTOM: Princess Leia, who drives a Ford Focus, takes a break at Emagine.



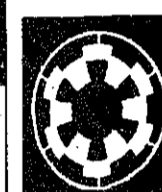
# IMPERIAL



ABOVE: Jon Leopold, dressed as a stormtrooper, tries to take a swig of pop while waiting inside Novi's Emagine Theater.

LEFT: Many members of the 501st Legion of Imperial Stormtroopers — a group dedicated to the art of screen-quality costumes — and other fans pose in front of Emagine Theater in Novi's Fountain Walk Mall.

BELOW: The insignia of the Imperial Navy.



## Dark side returns to Novi's Emagine

The Force was strong at Emagine Theater in Novi May 18. And the Dark Side was well represented as well. Stormtroopers, TIE fighter pilots and even a member of the Royal Guard were eagerly awaiting the opening of "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith." "Remember, you lose in this one," growled Dan Provost from beneath his TIE fighter pilot's helmet as he pointed his blaster at Josh Kaufman of Plymouth, who was dressed as a Jedi Knight.

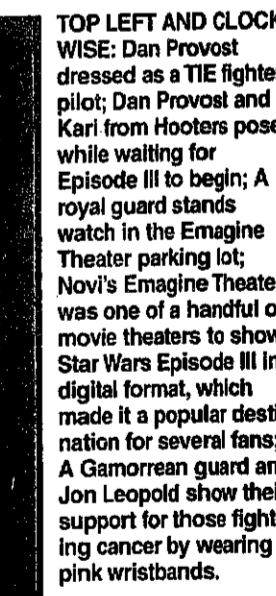
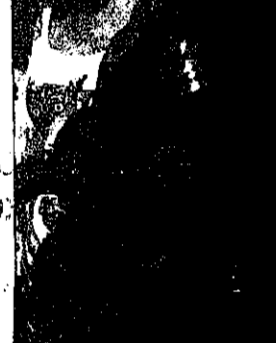
At 1 p.m., there were around a dozen Imperials, Rebels and Jedis waiting for the opening of the movie, which was scheduled for midnight. The crew, which was mostly represented by the 501st Legion of Imperial Stormtroopers, which consists of men and women who are dedicated to the art of screen-accurate Star Wars costumes. "The costumes can be pretty expensive," said Jay Shimko of St. Clair Shores. He was dressed as DenGar, a bounty hunter. "They can run from \$350 to \$2,500. It depends if it's an underground costume or screen accurate."

The crew intended to have a tailgate party. Hot dogs, burgers and bratwurst were on the menu — until Fountain Walk Mall security showed up. Like their own crew of stormtroopers, the security team halted the festivities, citing Fountain Walk rules regarding tailgate parties. The fans obeyed, choosing instead to get permission from a business off the mall's property to do their grilling. "We thought we were going to have to fix that one," said Steve Nijon of Fenton. "I'm glad we were able to come up with other plans."

The group said stormtroopers were the most popular of the costumes. "The fans were happy to be geared up for the final installment of the Star Wars movies, though most had to take time off of work to do it. "We're not like basement-dwelling Trekkies," said Provost of Star Trek fans. "Most of us have jobs and have to take hard-earned vacation and personal days to be here."

The movie itself wasn't the only draw for the Star Wars fans. They had chatted through Web site forums and email about the event and said it was a great way to meet one another. Some were old friends from past events while others, like Brooke Jokinen of Eastpointe. "It's weird sometimes being the only woman," she said of her alter ego as a stormtrooper. "It's cool though, I'm really having a good time."

Emagine Theater was more than happy to be home to the event, which had people calling weeks in advance to find out when tickets would go on sale. The draw of the Novi Theater? It was one of the few places in Michigan showing the digital version of George Lucas' masterpiece — complete with seven extra minutes of footage. "We're very happy we're one of the only theaters showing digital," said supervisor Kourtnay Tolbert. "George Lucas wants people to see it that way so he threw in a bargaining chip with some extra minutes."



TOP LEFT AND CLOCKWISE: Dan Provost dressed as a TIE fighter pilot; Dan Provost and Keri from Hooters pose while waiting for Episode III to begin; A royal guard stands watch in the Emagine Theater parking lot; Novi's Emagine Theater was one of a handful of movie theaters to show Star Wars Episode III in digital format, which made it a popular destination for several fans; A Gamorrean guard and Jon Leopold show their support for those fighting cancer by wearing pink wristbands.



TOP: Hooters waitresses Tara, left, and Keri try on some stormtrooper gear; ABOVE: Brooke Jokinen of Eastpointe ponders the dark side; BELOW: R2-D2 is ready for his big day, black tie and all.



# MARCH

Photos and story by **SAM EGGLESTON**



















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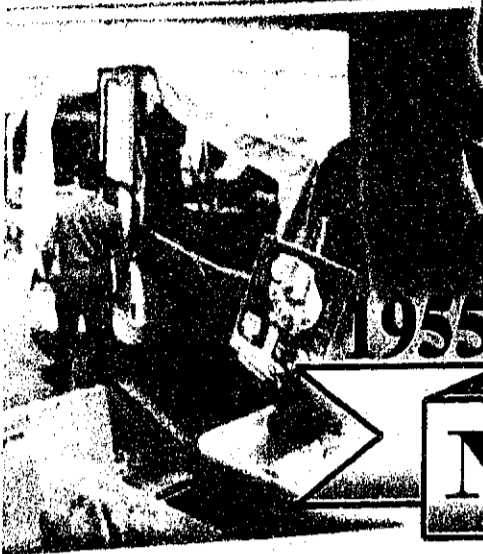
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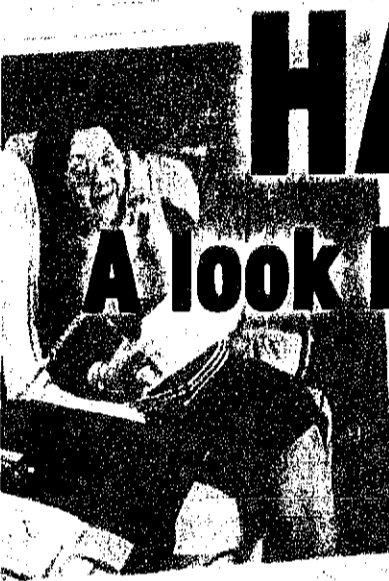
Opening of Novi Junior High Is Another Milestone

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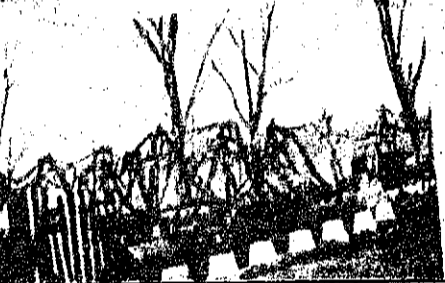
on lake restoration A look back at Novi and the Lakes Area over the past 50 years

Memorial service set for Clifford H. Smart



Center location

called Lake Casino



NOVI NEWS

A celebration of covering a great community

Fifty years. Some might say that's a long time. Others would call it a drop in the bucket. Either way, a lot has happened in this area over the last half century, and in some form or another, this newspaper has been there to cover it.

In 1976, Philip Power acquired Slinger Home Newspapers, which became part of his Suburban Communications Corporation - later changed to HomeTown Communications Network, which was sold earlier this year to Gannett.

1965-74; myself, 1975-84; Ramez Khuri, 1985-94; and Sam Eggleston, 1995-current. Our task was to come up with several key events for each year: find one photo that represented our decade; pick one unique advertisement; and pull out a unique quote.

Wizinski, Blair Bowman, May Sanghvi, Kathy & Hugh Crawford and Lauree Bell. We thank them for their help. Narrowing down our quotes to just one per decade was challenging. I stumbled across a great one in Jack W. Hoffman's column from 1978.

Novi News

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Thursday, May 19, 2005

EN SHEET classifieds



Cracking the code

School code of conduct to be looked at tonight

By Ramez Khuri

MORE TO COME

The Novi Community School District will hold two public hearings regarding the code of conduct at 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 23 and Tuesday, May 24, in the Educational Services

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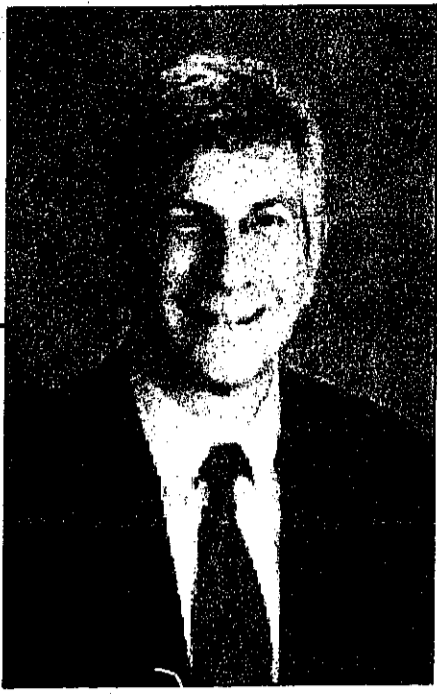












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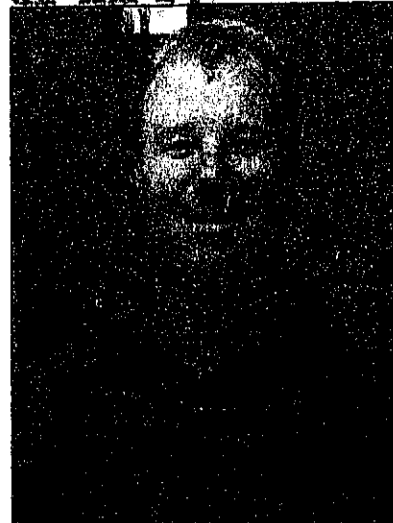
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**Fore!**  
It's all about golf in this area when the weather gets nice. Check out what our reviewer had to say about the challenging Downing Farms.  
— Page 2B



**Tennis advances**  
The Novi tennis team earned a trip to the state finals with a second-place showing in the regional tournament last week. The team also earned the KVC championship over the Brighton Bulldogs.  
— Page 3B



**Regional Marketplace**  
Partners Jim Faydenko and Gary Hess of Remodeling Remedies in South Lyon have over 40 years of combined experience in the field of remodeling and renovations, specializing in all aspects of remodeling including kitchens, bathrooms, basements and laundry rooms.  
— Page 4B

# SPORTS

Thursday, May 26, 2005

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B1 Novi News

## Quick Hits

### Holy cow!

The Novi Wildcats soccer team sure knows how to rack up some points. The team, coached by Brian O'Leary, has outscored opponents, 98-6, so far this year. Four of those goals came against defending Division I state champions Northville in a 4-4 tie earlier this year.

### Well done

If there is any doubt as to why Emily Esbrook, a sophomore soccer forward at Novi, is going to be a star, then all one had to do was watch her play against South Lyon two weeks ago. Esbrook took a corner kick, headed it to the ground, watched it bounce about a foot off the turf and then kicked—with her left leg, mind you—a goal into the upper left corner past the South Lyon goalie. It was, to say the least, impressive. Imagine what she'll be able to do as a senior.

### Party time!

The Novi News is officially 50 years old today. Some of the people who work here are actually that old, though none who are in the sports department. The years have been kind to the community newspaper, which has won several awards throughout the years, including a first-place finish in the sports coverage category of the Michigan Press Association. Of course, none of that would be possible if it weren't for the city of Novi and the high school as well. From the Novi News sports department to the community and the many athletes who have come and gone through the years, we'd like to say thank you. We can't wait to see what the next 50 years will bring to our pages and to your history.

### Special thanks

It's not every day a three-year-old attends a photoshoot. Novi News sports writer Sam Eggleston found himself in a bit of a pickle when he needed a shot taken but no photographer times were available. So, he did the next best thing—he brought his daughter, Shaylyn, along and snapped the photo himself. The Novi girls soccer defense joked with her, commented on her hair style and laughed when she picked on her daddy. It was a special moment for Shaylyn, who said she intends to play soccer when she grows up. Maybe the 'Cats can give her some pointers?

### Swinging for the fences

Is it that time of year again already? In the latter half of June, the Novi News will help kick off the summer by co-hosting senior All-Star baseball and softball games. The East teams are comprised of players from Novi, Northville, South Lyon, Lakeland and Milford while the West team boasts talent from Howell, Hartland, Brighton, Fowlerville, and Pinckney. The game is expected to be played at Milford this year and will have a host of talent from this area playing in it. Don't miss out. Stay tuned to the Novi News for upcoming details.

# DEFENSE!



Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

The Novi Wildcats soccer team's defense has only allowed six goals this year. From left to right: Kaite Chaklos, Kristine Chaklos, Kelly Hebert, Kim Herbst, Jessica Barndt, Shannon Cody and Lauren Marchioni.

## Novi has allowed just six goals so far

By Sam Eggleston  
SPORTS WRITER

Offense gets the glory, but defense wins championships. That's the credo the Novi Wildcats soccer team's defensive corps is willing to live by. The six defenders and goalie don't mind not seeing their names in the newspapers or hearing themselves mentioned in casual conversation about how good the soccer team is this year. Usually, if a defender is being mentioned, it's because they're not doing their job.

Novi's defense knows what they're doing. The squad is undefeated and has 14 shutouts and one tie.

"I love playing defense," said sophomore Jessica Barndt. "My mom told me when I was younger and I decided to play defense instead of midfield that there wasn't much glory. Offense gets all the glory; the forwards get all the goals. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

The Wildcats' defenders all thought alike with none of them offering up a trade from their current positions to the offensive end of the field.

Sure, they like seeing goals scored, but they'll leave that to the likes of Kristi Timar, Emily Esbrook and Stephanie Crawford.

The defensive crew is quite satisfied right where they're at.

"There's nothing like being able to stop someone from scoring," said senior Kelly Hebert. "It's a great feeling."

The Novi Wildcats have no problem with finding players willing to take to the defense either. Coach Brian O'Leary said he has six girls he can count on to be solid performers while out on the pitch.

In Novi's strategy, they employ four defenders on the field at a time but O'Leary said he has six that get equal playing time in Barndt, Hebert, Lauren Marchioni, Kristine Chaklos, Katie Chaklos and Shannon Cody. The first four are the team's starters.

"As a group they are very organized and feed off each others' strengths," O'Leary said. "Each game may call for one to play more than another and no one complains."

### District tournament time

The Novi Wildcats will have the long road to the district finals this year. They start things off with a game against Farmington Mercy at 7 p.m. May 31 at Novi. Also playing May 31 will be Walled Lake Northern and Walled Lake Central.

The winners of the two games will play at Livonia Stevenson at 4 p.m. June 2. Following that game, Northville and Stevenson, both who had first-round byes, square off at 7 p.m.

The championship game will be played at Stevenson High School at 7 p.m. June 3. The winner advances to the regional tournament.

Novi is currently ranked No. 1 in Division I while Northville is No. 2 and Stevenson is No. 9. Northville is the defending state champions.

That's because the Wildcats have "specialized" defenders. O'Leary said if a game finds a ball in the air a lot more than average, he sends in Hebert and Cody, while Barndt and Kristine Chaklos are employed if Novi's opponents are doing complex offensive strategies. If the Wildcats need to attack with their defense, Marchioni and Katie Chaklos are the two defenders O'Leary calls into action.

So far this year, Novi has only given up six total goals—four of which came against defending state champion Northville, who the Wildcats tied. Their offense, on the other hand, has scored 98 goals.

"I wouldn't say we get bored," said Marchioni. "The offense is outstanding, there's no doubt about that. We've got some of the best forwards around. It's great to know if we can keep possession of the ball, they're probably going to do something with it."

The last line of defense for the Wildcats is the sure-handed goalie, Kim Herbst. The senior netminder may not have a lot of work to

do on some nights, but she's solid when she needs to be.

"We are not an easy team to play goal for because we are so organized and efficient the other team barely gets any shots," said O'Leary. "But when they do, it's usually an excellent scoring attempt. Kim is a big part of our equations. Her game has improved so much during her high school career."

The Wildcats defense heads into every game with one goal in mind—stop the other team from getting a shot on the net. They've come close to it on several occasions, even holding the Kensington Valley Conference's No. 2 team, South Lyon, to just one shot on goal in a 6-0 stomping two weeks ago.

That goal won't be as easy come district tournament time next week. Novi will take on Farmington Mercy in the first game of the tournament. The Mercy Marlins finished second in the Catholic League this year.

"Coach O'Leary has made sure we understand we have to take it one game at a time," said Barndt. "Mercy has played a few games and Coach told us to watch them play. That way we know how they play, what they do and who does it. We have to take it game by game and we can't think about any other team besides Mercy."

Novi knows the sting of a district loss. Last year they met up with Northville in the final and fell in a close game. The Mustangs went on to win the state title.

This year, Novi hopes to have the honor of playing in the district title game again, though they have the long road. After playing Mercy, the winner will move on to the winner of a Walled Lake Central vs. Walled Lake Northern contest. On the other side of the bracket, Northville and Livonia Stevenson both earned byes in the first round and will play each other in the semifinal. The winner will move on to the title game.

"Our district is so brutal I could see any of five teams coming out of it," said O'Leary. "You could put any one of those five teams in about 12 of the districts in Michigan and they would be the favorite."

Most notable besides Novi are Northville and Stevenson. The Wildcats are currently ranked No. 1 in Michigan, but Northville is



Photo by JOHN HEIDER

Wildcat Senior Kelly Hebert throws the ball in from the sidelines during last week's home victory against the South Lyon Lions. Hebert was capable of throwing the ball almost to the middle of the field to reach her teammates.

No. 2 and Stevenson is No. 9. Walled Lake Central is tough too, having beat Stevenson earlier this year.

"It's not going to be easy," said Hebert. "It's a shame that at least one of the top 10 teams in the state will be eliminated before they even make it to the state tournament."

But Novi is sticking to their guns. They want the district title and whatever is beyond. They have the tools necessary to do it, said Marchioni.

"I think we can definitely do it," she said. "We've got one of the best teams in the state. We just have to stay focused and play our game. If we do that, we can beat anybody."

## By the numbers

23

Total runs scored in Novi baseball's doubleheader against South Lyon.

3

Strokes senior golfer Jessica Westfall missed going to the state finals by.

2

The number of flights Novi tennis had regional champions in—second and third doubles.

.35

Goals-against average for the Novi soccer team this year. They have 14 shutouts.

0

Games lost in the KVC by doubles duo Richie Feters and Eric McQueen this year.

28-9

Novi lacrosse's total score over the past two games.

10th

Novi's lacrosse's current ranking in Division I.



# REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

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Thursday, May 25, 2005

## Hiring a competent, reliable contractor

If your plans include hiring a contractor, consider these tips from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Not all contractors are reputable. Here are some signs that you could be dealing with someone who is operating outside the law. An unscrupulous contractor may:

- Offer you discounts for finding other customers
- Happen to have materials left over from a previous job
- Accept only cash payments
- Offer exceptionally long guarantees
- Suggest you borrow money from a lender the contractor knows

First things first. Ask friends, relatives and coworkers for recommendations, while allowing yourself written estimates from at least three different contractors. If the project is large, consider tripling the number of bids to nine. The estimates should all be based on the same job specifications, quality of materials, labor and time needed to complete the project. Be certain you understand any price differences between the contractors. And don't automatically choose the lowest bid.

### Proof is in the pudding

Ask for a list of previous clients for reference and call the clients to inquire about the quality of work. If possible, visit and inspect the contractor's completed work. Don't forget to contact your local Better Business Bureau (bbb.com) to examine the contractor's business history and any complaints filed against him. If you find out your contractor indeed has a clean record, remember that just because there are no complaints on file doesn't mean the contractor doesn't have a history of consumer problems. It may be that the problems haven't been reported yet, or that the contractor is doing business under several different names.

### Check credentials

Verify the contractor licensed and insured for workers' compensation, property and personal liability. If in doubt, ask to see his insurance certificate. If he's not insured and an accident happens, you'll need to file a claim on your homeowner's insurance. Does he belong to any trade and professional associations like the National Association of the Remodeling Industry, the National Association of Home Builders Remodelers Council, or other trade associations in the remodeling industry? While membership in these organizations isn't crucial, the fact that he belongs to one or more of these associations shows professionalism and commitment to the trade. Associations also offer certification and management training and keep their members up to date on the latest products and techniques.

### Get a written contract

Once you've settled on a contractor, get a written contract that contains the following points:

- Contractor's name, address, phone and license number, if required. Make sure the contract covers the description of the project, timetable and payment schedule.
- A payment schedule for the contractors, subcontractors and suppliers.
- An estimated start and completion date.
- An explanation of how change orders will be handled. (A change order is written authorization to the contractor to make a change or addition to a project. A contractor will often require payment before the work begins.)
- Total project cost with a breakdown of labor and material charges.
- Warranties covering materials and workmanship.
- A "broom clause" which makes the contractor responsible for all clean up work.
- A clause that states your right to cancel within three business days if you sign it in your home or at a location other than the contractor's permanent place of business.
- Keep all paperwork for future reference. This includes copies of the contract, change orders and correspondence.

For the FTC's guide to hiring a reputable contractor, copy and paste <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pub/s/services/homeimpv.pdf> into your Web browser.

Mary Davis manages public affairs for the Michigan Credit Union League (MCUL).

ADVERTORIAL

## Remodeling Remedies

By Annette Jaworski  
SPECIAL WRITER

For most families home remodeling is a major expense. Do you wonder if you're getting a good return on your investment?

When it comes to remodeling quite simply, just compare the cost of construction with the added value you'd receive when selling your home.

Partners Jim Faydenko and Gary Hess of Remodeling Remedies in South Lyon have over 40 years of combined experience in the field of remodeling and renovations, specializing in all aspects of remodeling including kitchens, bathrooms, basements and laundry rooms.

What projects give you the most bang for your buck?

"The greatest return at resale, I would say hands down, would be number one, kitchen remodels and number two, bathroom remodels," according to Faydenko.

Realtor Magazine Online agrees in their yearly national report of cost versus value citing the top three areas generating the highest percentage of return to be kitchens, siding and bathroom remodels.

### Kitchens

As technology and demographics change, one thing remains constant, the kitchen and bathroom typically are deciding factors in a home sale. Today's consumers are looking for kitchens that are open and bright. If you have a kitchen that is small dark and old, a remodel can transform that look.

According to lists compiled by real estate professionals across the country, you can expect to recoup a national average of 92.9 percent of the cost involved in a minor kitchen remodel. For example, by spending \$15,273, you regain a resale value of \$14,915 as well as enjoying the improvements. A major remodel recoups approximately 80.5 percent of the cost.

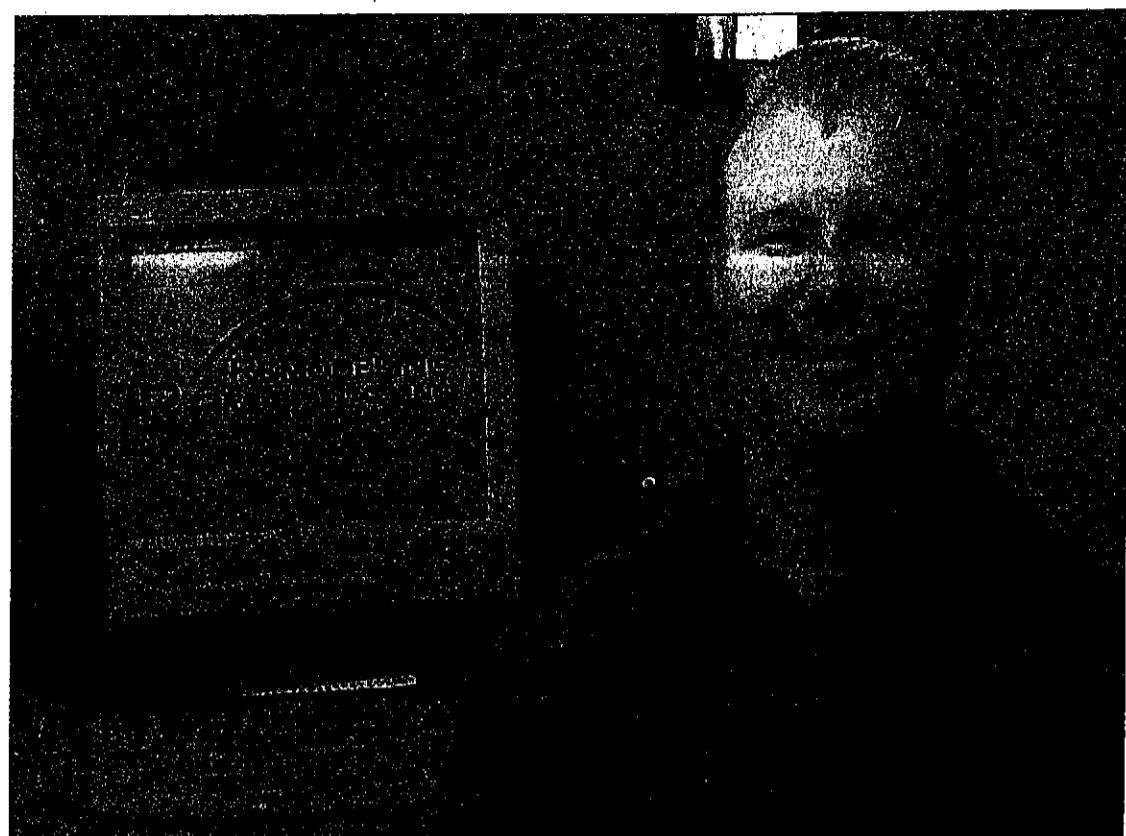
### Bathroom

Experts at Remodeling Remedies know bathrooms can often make or break real estate deals. House hunters can love everything about the house until they see the bathroom. After years of living there, it may not be obvious to current residents that it's out of date to say the least. Perhaps the décor, colors of tub, flooring and sink are a thing of the past, or the walls around the tub, sink and backsplash have been caulked and re-caulked.

In a typical 25-year-old home, with a 5X9 foot bathroom, you might replace the fixtures including the toilet, replace the standard size tub with ceramic tile surround, and add a double sink vanity with a solid surface counter. Then you might consider upgrading a mirror or adding a recessed medicine cabinet and complete the remodel with ceramic tile flooring.

This could run approximately \$9,800, according to the 2004 cost vs. value national report. However, the value of the project is about \$8900 or recouped cost of 90.1 percent.

Finally if there's only one bathroom, consider adding a second if possible. Buyers are looking for a master bath plus an additional bath. Adding a bathroom can cost an average of \$16,000 in the Detroit metro area and can add \$9,000 or more to resale, recouping a value of 56 percent. Meanwhile it adds convenience and opens the door to more customers at resale.



Partners Jim Faydenko (shown above and below) and Gary Hess of Remodeling Remedies in South Lyon have over 40 years of combined experience in the field of remodeling and renovations, specializing in all aspects of remodeling including kitchens, bathrooms, basements and laundry rooms.

### Basements

Although not at the top of cost-to-value remodeling projects, many opt to finish their lower level for recreation, entertainment or additional living space. More living space or a playroom/recreation area often suits young families. Spare bedrooms and second kitchens are also popular additions.

"We don't even call them basements anymore; they're known to us as lower levels," says builder, Jim Faydenko. He offers a creative imagination, years of experience and innovative ideas, and can guide clients through all the stages of their basement-remodeling project.

A basement remodel ranked 17th nationally for 2004, with a 76.1 percent return of original cost. The average cost was \$47,888 and a resale of \$36,457. For that price, you can expect to finish your lower level with a 20 by 30 foot entertaining area with wet bar, as well as a 5X8 foot full bath and 12 X 12 foot additional finished room that can be used as a bedroom, study exercise room or a playroom.

The main room could include 15 recessed light fixtures in an acoustical drop ceiling and wall to wall carpeting, 10 linear feet of raised panel oak cabinet with laminate countertops that highlight the bar area. Add a stainless steel sink, single lever bar faucet, small refrigerator under the counter and vinyl flooring.

The bathroom would feature standard white plumbing fixtures, a vanity with solid surface counter, fiberglass shower unit, vanity light fixture and a light/fan combination in the shower area.

For your home improvement ideas contact Gary Hess and Jim Faydenko at Remodeling Remedies (248) 486-7494 or toll free (866) 226-9080.

### How to finance

Financing these value-added changes can be more affordable than you think and pay off dividends in the future. There are many creative financing options available to the consumer.

Cara Sommerfield at Main

### ADVICE TO THE WISE FROM REMODELING REMEDIES' GARY HESS

#### Bathroom

"First, regardless of whether you plan to sell your home or staying put, design your new bathroom with retirement in mind. Widen the door and replace the tub with a large stand up shower." As people live longer and are able to stay in their home in later stages of life, it's nice to have the adjustments ready and available when needed.

"Secondly, if the room is smaller in size, keep in mind color schemes that make the room feel bright and airy," he adds.

#### Kitchen

"Clients should consider appliances and fixtures that coincide with the value of the rest of the home," said Hess. In other words, if you have a nine hundred square foot home, you don't want to overspend by putting in a gourmet kitchen. You'll have a hard time recouping the cost.

Faydenko adds, "If you stick with the existing configuration of the kitchen you can keep the cost of remodeling project lower." Lastly keep in mind that a kitchen is more valuable if it designed for the largest spectrum of consumers/homeowners.

Street Bank in Northville says that for smaller projects, such as the laundry room or bathroom update, tap the existing equity in your home. This equity is easily converted into cash through a home equity line of credit. Once the line of credit is established, you can withdraw money by writing a check or making a withdrawal at the bank. You can also pay towards the principal in order to reduce the balance, and then withdraw that amount again in the future, if needed.

Alexis Loesser, the Home Equity Specialist at Main Street Bank in downtown Northville pointed out, "This is a cost-effective way to update your siding today, slowly pay back that amount over time and update your

bathroom in the future. All with the use of one loan."

These loans (home equity) are typically interest only, and the rate adjusts with the Wall Street Journal prime rate. Loesser also noted, "In this rising rate market, you may want to explore your fixed rate options. A fixed rate program will allow you to withdraw funds the same way as a line of credit, only this program will give you the security of a fixed rate."

For larger remodeling projects including additions and extensive kitchen and bath updates, you may want to explore a remodeling construction loan. Cara Sommerfield, Main Street Bank's construction manager explains the benefits.

"The greatest value to these types of programs is they allow

you to use the future value of your home, after improvements in order to determine the amount of equity that you are able to convert into cash."

With this type of loan, you pay off your first mortgage and make interest only payments during construction. Then, you can convert your construction loan into any end mortgage that best fits your needs.

Creative financing options and flexible lending program can make renovating your home very affordable. For more information on Main Street Bank's financing programs, contact Cara Sommerfield at (248) 319-0662 or [csommerfield@mainstreetbank.net](mailto:csommerfield@mainstreetbank.net)

Or visit them at 201 East Main Street in Northville.

### THINKING ABOUT REMODELING? REMEMBER OUR REMEDIES

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