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Novi News

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Thursday, March 16, 2006

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50¢

Volume 50 Number 41

Novi, Michigan

Wixom plant employees wait

Five programs now proposed for official buyout agreements

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Wixom Assembly Plant workers are waiting for Ford Motor

Company officials to formally inform them about separation packages.

Ford Motor Co. announced last week that the firm would offer early retirement packages and separation packages to hundreds of workers as part of its Way Forward restructuring plan.

Ford and officials from the United Auto Workers approved the buyouts recently, which are supposed to coincide with the end of production of the Lincoln LS at

The company plans to close the Wixom plant with 1,433 hourly workers and 134 salaried employees in the first quarter of 2007.

the plant in April. The company plans to close the Wixom plant with 1,433 hourly

workers and 134 salaried employees in the first quarter of 2007. Marcey Evans, Ford Motor Co.

spokeswoman, said UAW officials issued a bulletin to autoworkers at the end of last week, and employee meetings will be held this week at the plant.

"The informational meetings will let employees know that they can select a voluntary separation package if they choose," Evans said.

"We are not yet opening an official consideration window

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BREAKING NEWS

Wellinger pleads no contest

Crash killed Novi jeweler's wife, two sons

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Thomas Wellinger, the 49-year-old Farmington Hills man charged with murder of a Farmington Hills woman and her two sons last May, pleaded no contest Wednesday afternoon to three counts of second degree murder in Oakland County Circuit Court.

"That was the largest tragedy that we've ever experienced in Farmington Hills," said William Dwyer,

Farmington Hills Chief of Police.

Wellinger was charged with murder in the deaths of Judy Weinstein and her sons, Alex and Sam, when his 2005 GMC Denali crashed into the Weinstein's Honda near the intersection of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake roads on the afternoon of May 3.

"Mr. Weinstein wants closure," Dwyer said. "He's still in the healing process."

Police said speeding and alcohol were to blame for the crash. Wellinger's blood alcohol at the time of the accident was measured at .43 percent, more than five times the legal limit in Michigan, which is .08 percent. He was also traveling at more than 70 mph at the time of the accident.

Judith Weinstein, 49, was taking her sons, Alex, 12, and Sam, 9, to the dentist. Their Honda Accord was in a center turn lane on 12 Mile Road when it was hit by Wellinger's vehicle. A four-vehicle crash resulted near a medical center east of Orchard Lake Road.

Barry LaKritz, attorney for Gary Weinstein, who owns Weinstein Jewelers in Novi, said the judge imposed a sentence of 19-30 years in prison.

The formal plea will be given April 26 in circuit court in Judge Rudy Nichols' courtroom. The formal sentencing will be also be handed down that day.

"It's like a death sentence, because the man is almost 50 years old now," LaKritz said. Wellinger turns 50 on June 19, according to Farmington Hills Police.

"He can't get out until he's at least 70 years or older. It doesn't get much worse than second-degree murder."

LaKritz said any civil actions will be instituted following the formal sentencing.

MEAP scores show gains in every category

Novi students make biggest leap in social studies, from 39 to 89 percent

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

MEAP test score results show improvement across the board for Novi's third through eighth grade students.

Compared to 2004-05 scores, students have made gains in every category. This is the first year any

state test results have been collected for third graders.

In math, reading, and writing, the district's youngest students tested have set the bar high.

The MEAP scores, which were released to school districts last week, show math results in Novi staying consistently high as the grades increase, while statewide, many districts see a decline in math as the grade levels go up.

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A local Secretary of State office, finally

Residents won't need to drive far with new 'Plus' office

By Tracy Mishler
STAFF WRITER

Kristine Martin drove 10 miles out of her way to renew her vehicle registration in West Bloomfield.

The 36-year-old Novi resident said she tries to go to the Secretary of State's office first thing in the morning to avoid long lines.

"When you have things to do, it's a pain to drive way out of the way and stand in line for an hour," Martin said. "You can pretty much kiss your day good-bye if you have to go."

In the past, Novi residents had to drive to Farmington Hills, Livonia, West Bloomfield, or Brighton for a Secretary of State's office.

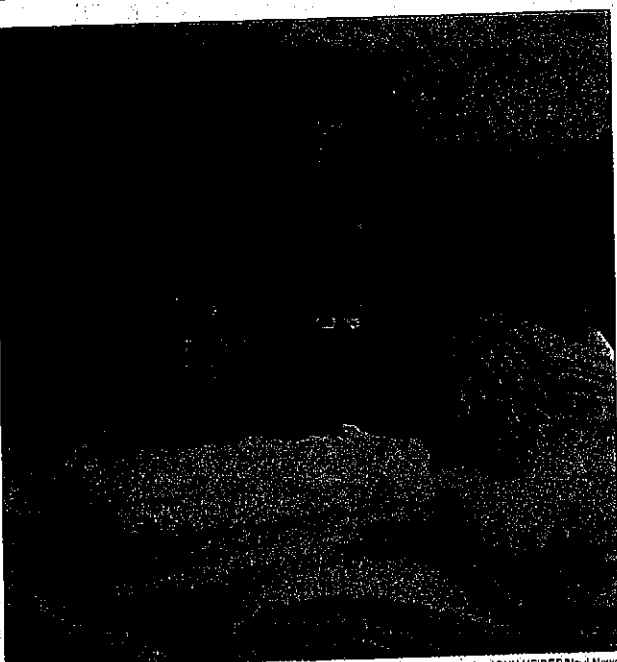
"But the drive won't be so painful anymore as the Southwest

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- Livonia Super Center**
17178 Farmington Road
(248) 476-4538
- West Bloomfield**
4301 Orchard Lake Road
(248) 476-4538
- Farmington Hills**
35572 Grand River Avenue
(248) 476-4538
- Brighton**
3964 E. Grand River Avenue
Commerce (610) 229-6333
- Warren**
236 W. Summit Street
(248) 685-7414

Oakland County Plus Office opened Monday at the Shoppes at the Trail plaza on Beck Road and Pontiac Trail in Novi.

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Novi resident Virginia Barnes launders and donates the gently-used towels of LifeTime Fitness to Holy Family Church's clothes closet.

Active in work, volunteering

Barnes helps less fortunate, one towel at a time

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Virginia Barnes may be throwing in the towel, but by no means is she quitting her job.

A 50-year resident of Novi, Barnes, 85, tries to stay as active as possible each and every day. When she's not working her job at LifeTime Fitness, she's busy helping less fortunate folks at the Holy Family Church clothes closet.

"The nicest thing about LifeTime is, the manager has allowed me to take the used towels," she said. "I bring them home, probably two or three times per week. I wash them in bleach, and I get them looking like brand new. Then I take them over and donate them to the clothes closet."

Barnes explained there are many less fortunate people who

take advantage of the towels and other items available. "I find it very rewarding," said Barnes. "I get out of it as much as I give. Carol Anne, who runs the clothes closet, got me started a year-and-a-half ago."

Barnes belongs to Holy Family. When her husband passed away almost two years ago, she wanted to get more involved in the community and was looking for different ways to do that. Having been in retail for many years, she thought the clothes closet would be something she would like to be a part of.

"I didn't start taking the towels home until I found out there was such a need for them," said Barnes. "When LifeTime Fitness gave me permission to do this, I just thought it was great (the towels) weren't going to be wasted."

The clothes closet receives donations from all over Novi and beyond. The Holy Family Church keeps items they feel

are acceptable and sends items they can't keep to other charitable organizations.

The discovery of a LifeTime

Before she started working at LifeTime Fitness, Barnes and her husband, Earl, had memberships at another health club establishment. Earl had to have a knee operation and went through physical therapy. He was never able to get on any machines after that, so he asked his wife if they should switch their memberships to LifeTime.

"I said yes, and we did," said Barnes. "I was interested in the swim aerobics, but it wasn't long after I was there that I decided to put my application in and see if I could get hired. I didn't know whether they'd hire anyone over 80. But they did, and it's a job I absolutely love."

continued on page 2

...advisory board proposed

Previous bill vetoed by Gov.

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Senate Bill 372 would establish a Water Accountability Advisory Board.

The board would be for each water or sewer system operating in Michigan that provides service to more than 20 percent of the state's population.

Currently, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department is the only such system, according to

the House Republican Policy Office.

The board would review and oversee the system as well as make recommendations.

The body would be comprised of seven members: one of Oakland County, one from Macomb County, one from Genesee County, three from the city of Detroit and one appointed by the five largest local units in Wayne County. These include Dearborn, Canton Township, Livonia, Taylor and Westland.

Board expenses would be paid by the system, and the state would

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Local Information
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Novi water bills to rise, ...

City hasn't been notified yet on rate hike

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

As soon as Detroit City Council members approved water rate increases to suburban customers, but not city residents, the big question became: Is this legal?

Novi's water rates were scheduled to increase 4.1 percent. But no sooner had the vote been taken on March 8 than the

legal wheels were in motion, questioning the validity of such a move. On March 10, the Detroit City Council passed a resolution to also raise Detroit water rates.

Legislation that would take away control of the Detroit water and sewer system from the city and create an oversight board with most of its members from outside Detroit, passed 61-44 in the Michigan House of Representatives March 9.

The legislation should appear on Gov. Jennifer Granholm's desk this week.

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Rate increases

Year	Rate Increase
2001-2002	2.30%
2002-2003	3.97%
2003-2004	3.57%
2004-2005	2.90%
2005-2006	4.10%
2006-2007	4.10%

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PEOPLE

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NAMES IN NEWS

Tower Automotive, Inc. announced Paul Radkoski has joined the company as senior vice president, global purchasing. Based at the corporate headquarters in Novi, he will be a member of the company's senior leadership team reporting directly to

Kathleen Ligocki, president and CEO of the company.

Radkoski, age 46, will be charged with further developing global purchasing and supply-base management strategies. He will also work closely with North American Operations to manage

supply logistics through the continued restructuring of the region's manufacturing operations. "As a seasoned automotive industry executive, Paul brings key expertise that will assist in fully integrating Tower's purchasing processes around the

globe," said Ligocki.

Since 2000, Radkoski has been with Visteon Corp. where he held senior positions in purchasing and materials management. Most recently, he was vice president, North American purchasing and supplier management. Prior to joining Visteon, Radkoski was with Lear Corp. where he was director of purchasing from 1997 to 2000. Earlier in his career, he

held manufacturing and logistics positions at BMW, as well as purchasing and logistics positions at Honda of North America.

Radkoski, a native of Columbus, Ohio, now resides with his family in Canton, Mich.

staff development for the firm's 20 engineers. Additionally, he is charged with ensuring quality control and leading the enterprise server and directory integration teams.

Ross has been with Macprofessionals for more than five years. He was previously senior technician. He resides in Canton, Mich.

ENGAGEMENT



Wallace-Leng

Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Wallace, Sr. of Novi announce the engagement of their daughter, Angela Joy Wallace to Chetan Leng, son of Saky Neov of Boston and the late Chen Chandren.

The bride-elect is a 1991 graduate of Mercy High School. She earned a bachelor of science degree in Engineering from Michigan State University in 1995 and a master of business administration degree in 2000 from the University of Michigan. She is currently employed as a Strategic Market Manager at Akra Industrial Motion, Quincy, Mass.

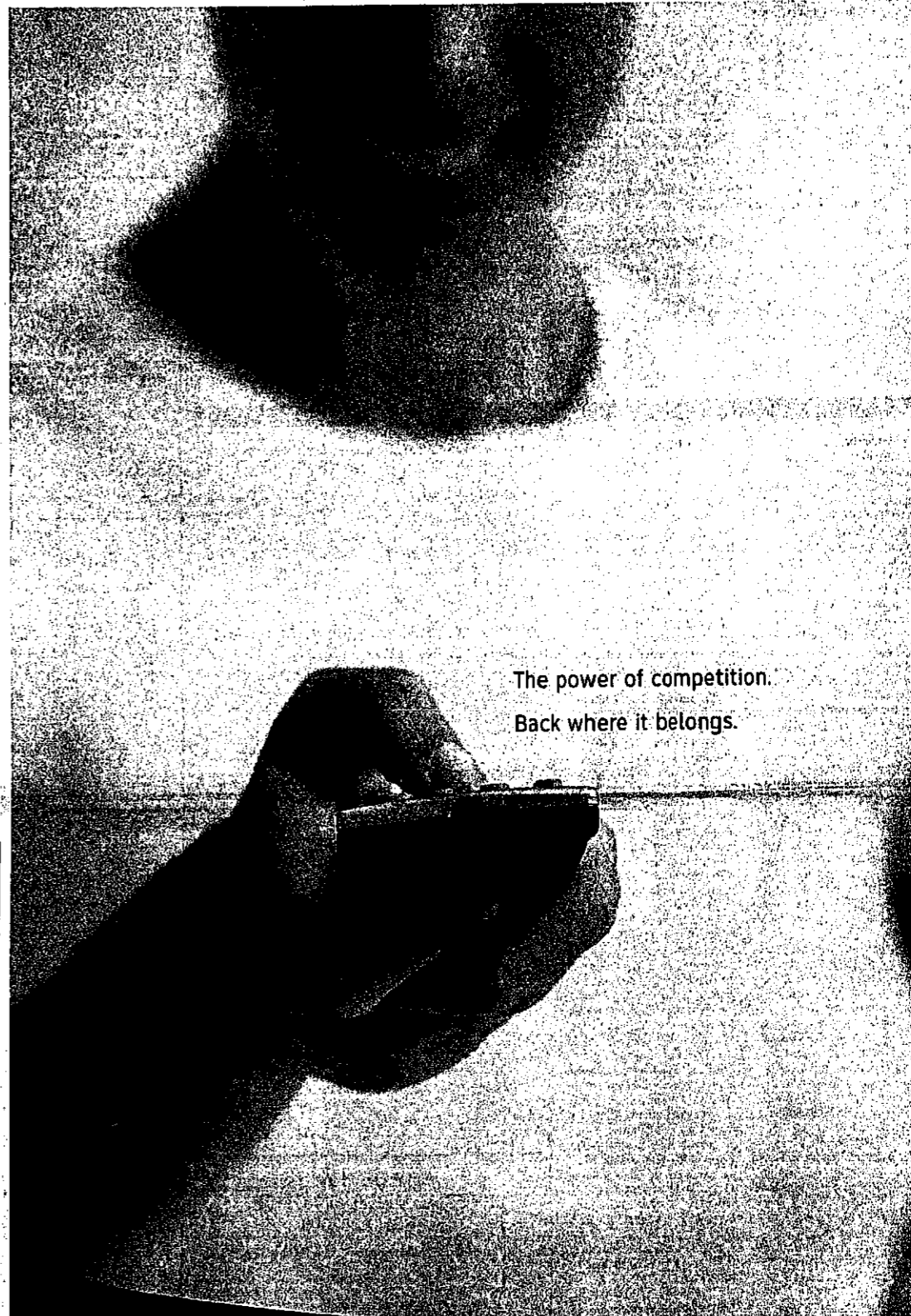
The groom-elect is a 1992 graduate of Revere High School, Boston and a 1997 graduate of the University of Massachusetts with a bachelor of science degree in Microbiology. He is currently employed as an Associate Scientist at Cytex Corporation, Marlborough, Mass.

A May 2006 wedding is planned.

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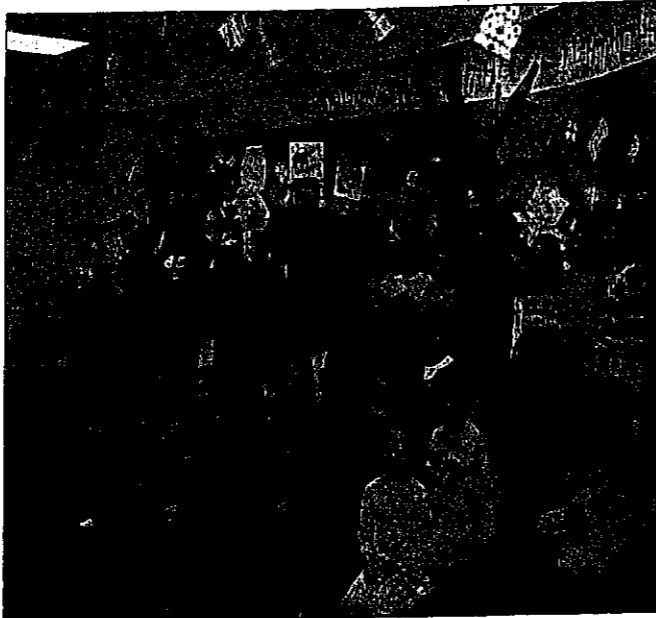
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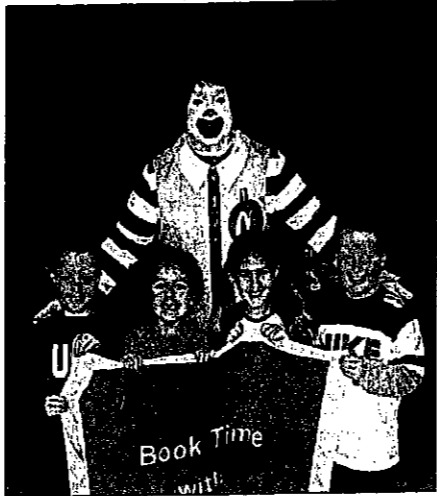
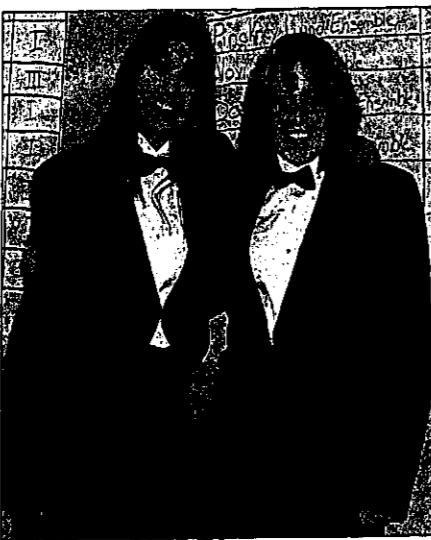


"Stranger" scoop

Right: Robert and Laura Sams, narrator's in the movie: Stranger in the Woods, came to visit Deerfield Elementary School recently. The movie was inspired by the book, "Stranger in the Woods" by Carl Sams II and Jean Stolck.
The two took students on a journey from the original ideas to the finished product. They emphasized how writing is a process that involves choices. The interactive program featured original music from Stranger in the Woods: The Movie. Students sang, danced, made animal noises, helped edit photographs and heard some of the authors' inside stories.



Rockin'
Above: Fifth grader at Novi Meadows Elementary School have been rock climbing during physical education. According to Colleen Wandel, fifth grade P.E. teacher, indoor rock climbing is one of the fastest growing activities today. It simultaneously develops coordination, strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. Additionally, important life skills like problem solving, goal setting, perseverance, inner confidence and patience are being learned in this unit. The school is using a traverse climbing wall to host many exciting activities. At its highest point, the wall measures 10 feet and is just over 30 feet long. Participants climb horizontally across the wall. The rock wall was provided by the school's 2004-05 Parent Teacher Organization. Pictured here from left to right are Kyle Lash, Dillon Andresen and Mark Xu.



Waiting for rating

Above: Alyssa Kochyan and Caitlin Herbert, members of the Novi High School wind ensemble, await the rating of the band's performance at South Lyon High School March 4. It was a great day for the Novi Band program, as all three performing ensembles received a 1 overall.

Striped
Above: The children in Kim Deinek's first grade class at Orchard Hills Elementary School performed a play called "How the Chipmunk Got Its Stripes." This story is a Native America legend and is part of the first grade genre study. Students performed for their parents and a New York first grade class over via satellite last Thursday, as part of "Read Across America." Here, Alena Duckworth and Mia Altholz play the role of chipmunks.

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Book Time

Above: Novi Woods students kicked off "March is Reading" month with a reading assembly starring Ronald McDonald. The assembly was sponsored by Claude and Teresa Murphy, owners of the McDonald's restaurant at 10 Milo and Grand River and long time Novi Woods supporters. Pictured from left to right are first graders Ryan Heffernan, Alexa Hatz, Joyce Cucksey and Jack Heffernan.

MY HOMETOWN
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PHOTO CONTEST

The Novi Historical Commission and the Novi News are looking for photographs that best represent Novi. Judges will select the top three who will win \$100, \$50 or \$25.



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SENIORS

Cal Stone editor (248) 349-1700 ext 113 cstone@gannett.com www.novinews.com fax (248) 349-9832

Searching for the right word

Seniors battle it out in fight to be best speller

By Tracy Mishler
STAFF WRITER

Jean McCreedy's word was rhotacism. The 80-year-old Redford resident, representing the Novi Senior Center, was among several seniors competing in the Senior Spelling Bee last Tuesday afternoon at the Northville Senior Center.

"I was a little nervous," McCreedy said. "I use to be a good speller and I'm glad I got as far as I did."

McCreedy said she studied a book a friend gave her from 1944, which contained more than 20,000 words.

"I went through the entire book," she said. "I figured after seeing the words in the book and then getting the words in the competition, if I could see the word written, I might be able to spell it."

More than 40 seniors from Milford, South Lyon, Highland Township, Northville and Novi competed to be the top senior speller.

Max Kirschte, of Milford, won with the word geisha.

"I was very disappointed in myself," said 70-year-old Agnes O'Brien. "I misspelled a word (medieval) that I had practiced many times."

O'Brien said she was knocked out of the competition close to the end.

"It was just the luck of the draw on whatever word you got," she said. "We all started out with the idea that we were going to do fine. It's a lot harder than you think."

Some of the words given during the spelling bee included, epithelium, hallucinogen, acrimonious, magnanimity, promiscuous and conscientious.

"There's no mercy shown here," said Rachel Zagoroli, senior services director for the Novi Senior Center. "There are some words that I can't even say."

Zagoroli said the Novi seniors had practiced spelling for over a month from a book of the most common misspelled words.



Photo by JOHN HEIDER/Novi News

Novi's Marlon Cowan attempts the word "brouhaha" during last week's Senior Spelling Bee at the Northville Senior Community Center.

"We have some awesome spellers," she said. "It's really competitive, a thought process."

Marlon Cowan lost to the word brouhaha.

"I'd never even heard that word used in a sentence before," said the 80-year-old Northville Township resident. "I was writing everything down and got about 95 percent of the words right. Then I got to brouhaha, which knocked me out."

Cowan said she'd like to compete again, representing the Novi Senior Center, next year.

"I'm a worthy person," she said. "I

do a lot of crossword puzzles. I've always read a lot and seemed to know how to spell well."

No matter what word stumped the spellers, everyone left the competition with a certificate, and the top three spellers took home trophies.

"It was a lot of fun," McCreedy said. "I will definitely participate next year."

Tracy Mishler is a staff writer for the Novi News. She can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107, or at tmishler@gannett.com.

SENIOR CENTER CALENDAR

Friday 3/17	8:45 a.m. Patens Bread	12:45 p.m. Bingo
9 a.m. Stretch and Strength held at Novi Civic Center	2:30 p.m. Body Recall	Message
10 a.m. Body Recall cancelled	9 a.m. Stretch and Strength	Wednesday 3/22
12:30 p.m. Afternoon Day Luncheon (sole ticket req.)	10 a.m. Body Recall	9 a.m. Stretch and Strength
1:30 p.m. Bingo cancelled	10:30 a.m. Quilting	10 a.m. Body Recall
2:30 p.m. Massage	11 a.m. Blood Pressure	10:30 a.m. Quilting
Monday 3/20	11 a.m. Taking Oil Pounals Scrubby class	11 a.m. Blood Pressure
9 a.m. Stretch and Strength	noon Clogging*	11:30 p.m. Lunch
10 a.m. Body Recall	2:30 p.m. Massage	Thursday 3/23
noon Grodie Lady	Tuesday 3/21	9 a.m. Line Dance*
12:30 p.m. Lunch	8:30 a.m. Patens Bread	9 a.m. Medicare Part D Assistance by appointment
2:30 p.m. Massage by appointment	9 a.m. Line Dance*	10 a.m.-2 p.m. Income Taxes by appointment
6:30 p.m. Clogging*	10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. AARP Driver Safety Program	10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. AARP Driver Safety Program
Wednesday 3/22	noon Lunch	noon AARP Driver Safety Program
8:45 a.m. Patens Bread	12:15 p.m. Lunch	1:3 p.m. Computer Lab open
9 a.m. Line Dance*	1:3 p.m. Computer Lab open	2:30 p.m. Massage
10 a.m. Asian Pacific	2:30 p.m. Massage	* Activities will be held at the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road. Phone (248) 347-0414.
10:30-11:30 a.m. AARP Driver Safety Program	noon Lunch	
11:30 a.m. Bookmobile		

SENIOR BRIEFS

Senior Olympics changes

Fresh on the heels of the Winter Olympics comes news of another type of athletic event. These games are for active adults over 50. Myrle Miller, Michigan Senior Olympics chairperson, is excited to announce the games are moving to Oakland County for 2007 and 2008. This summer the games take place in Kalamazoo. "We expect a greater participation of athletes since Oakland County is so heavily populated with the 50+ generation," Miller said. "We expect about 1,000 athletes. Plus, we'll recruit 400 volunteers and have another several hundred in spectators." Miller believes moving the games will have a positive impact on Oakland County. "This is a chance for Oakland County businesses to get involved in something positive and support the seniors," she said. Michigan Senior Olympics is a non-profit organization that promotes healthy lifestyles by organizing state games, sports competitions plus health, fitness, nutrition and wellness programs for active persons ages 50 and over. Athletes compete in medal, ribbon and exhibition events, including swimming, volleyball, track and field, softball, cycling, racquetball, shuffleboard, bowling, golf, tennis and more. Many events are expected to take place near the Older Persons Commission facility in Rochester. The games will take place Aug 6-11, 2007 and August 4-9, 2008. Miller's goal is to raise \$70,000 to cover the cost of the games. To date, she has commitments from Oakland County Parks and Rochester Community Schools for in-kind services. "The social aspect is also very important. The athletes enjoy meeting people from around the state. The opening ceremonies include a dinner and a ball," she said. "The seniors usually spend a few days in the area. They don't just come for their competition and leave. We'd like to show them a good time." For more information or to receive a registration booklet for the 2006 games (July 8-15 in Kalamazoo), call 1-800-400-8161 or 248-608-0250 or visit www.michiganseiorolympics.org.

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CALENDAR

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EVENTS

Second City Comedy Club

TIME/DATE: Various times, Wednesday-Sunday.
LOCATION: 42795 Grand River Avenue, across from Novi Town Center.
DETAILS: "Hooble Hooble of State" is the theme for this month's show.
CONTACT: Visit www.wicket-master.com or call, (248) 645-6666

Novi Theaters present "Guys and Dolls"

TIME/DATE: 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 17-18; 2 p.m. Sunday, March 19
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 4515 W. 10 Mile Road
DETAILS: The Friday, March 17 performance will be a special student night. Tickets for all students from college level on down will cost \$10, instead of the regular price of \$18.
CONTACT: Tickets can be purchased at the Novi Parks desk or call the ticket hotline, (248) 347-0400

St. Baldrick's Day Celebration

DATE: Saturday
TIME: 2-6 p.m.
LOCATION: Walled Lake Fire Hall, 1499 E. West Maple Road, Walled Lake
DETAILS: St. Baldrick's Day was established to raise awareness and funds to fund research and treatment for "Conquer Kids' Cancer." Adult volunteers have their heads shaved to raise money for this cause. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to enjoy the activities and games planned just for them.
CONTACT: Visit www.St.Baldricks.org or call (888) 899-BALD

Taste of Northville Business Showcase

DATE: Saturday
TIME: noon-4 p.m.
LOCATION: Northville High School, 45700 Six Mile Road, Northville
DETAILS: This event will feature 130 exhibitors from retail, service and professional businesses. Restaurants and caterers will provide samples from their menus. There will also be free giveaways, raffles and promotional goods. Ticket is \$5 for adults; \$4 for seniors 65 and over; and \$4 for children under 12. Tickets may be purchased at the door.
CONTACT: Northville Chamber of Commerce, (248) 349-7640 or www.northville.org

Democrats of West Oakland County Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, March 21
TIME: 6 p.m. dinner; 7 p.m. meeting
LOCATION: Novi Southlawn Country Club, Novi Road at 14 Mile Road
DETAILS: James Cliff, Policy Director of the Michigan Environmental Council, will speak on "Hot Environmental Election Issues." The public is invited.
CONTACT: (248) 624-7238

Borders Bookstore and Music Events

LOCATION: 43075 Crescent Boulevard
CONTACT: (248) 347-0780
Author Book Signing
DATE: Friday, March 24
TIME: 7 p.m.
DETAILS: Author Timothy Zahn will be signing his book, "Star Wars: Outbound Flight."

Motor City Brass Band

DATE: Friday, March 24
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Sheraton Detroit Hotel Novi, 21111 Haggerty Road
DETAILS: Motor City Brass Band, directed by Craig Strain, will be featured as part of the American Music Therapy Association convention. The concert is open to the public. Herb Cocking and Ray Murphy, both of Novi, are members of the band.

Novi Chamber of Commerce

CONTACT: (248) 349-3743
Networking Event
DATE: Wednesday
TIME: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

SCHOOL/GOVERNMENT

Wisom City Council
DATE: Tuesday
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Wisom City Hall, 49045 Pontiac Trail
CONTACT: (248) 624-4557

Novi City Council Meeting

DATE: Monday
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road
CONTACT: (248) 344-0470

Novi School Board Meeting

DATE: Monday, April 6
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi High School, 24882 Tubb Road
CONTACT: (248) 449-1200

BUSINESS

Novi Chamber of Commerce
CONTACT: (248) 349-3743
Networking Event
DATE: Wednesday
TIME: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Herniated Disc Technology

Discovered by NASA Scientists

Ann Arbor - A new free report has recently been released that reveals how breakthrough medical technology is offering new hope for sciatica sufferers. Discover how research has proven non-surgical decompression 86% successful in treating debilitating back pain. Find out how NASA's accidental discovery led to the most promising treatment today. For your free report entitled, "How Space Age Technology is Solving Back Pain Without Drugs or Surgery," call 1-800-469-3618. For the full free recorded message, supplies are limited - call now. If phone lines are busy, visit: www.milchecmiation.com

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CONTACT: (248) 788-6618 or mchc.org

Heart Healthy Seminars

DATE: Saturday, March 25
TIME: 1 p.m. Heart-Smart supplements, 2-4 p.m. Micro Biologic cooking and antioxidants, 1-5 p.m. free heart-smart samples in store.
LOCATION: Better Health, 42875 Grand River Avenue, Novi
CONTACT: For more information, (248) 735-8100

Skating Club of Novi Ice Revue

TIME/DATE: 7 p.m. Friday, April 7; 1 and 6 p.m. Saturday, April 8
LOCATION: Novi Ice Arena, 42400 Arena Drive
DETAILS: Tickets for the 8th Annual Ice Show go on sale March 20. Admission is \$7 per person; children under 4 are free.
CONTACT: Skating Director Macki Freier, (248) 347-1010

Dance Performance

DATE: Saturday, April 8
TIME: 1:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Northville High School Auditorium, 45700 Six Mile Road, Northville
DETAILS: Center Stage Dance Company will perform the ballet, "The Wizard of Oz." Tickets are \$8 per person.
CONTACT: (248) 380-1666 or email estc@5678@sigetball.net

Flower Sale

DATE: Saturday and Sunday, May 6, 13, 20 and 27
TIME: 9 a.m.-noon
LOCATION: Oakland Schools Technical Campus "Southwest," 1000 Beck Road, Wixom
DETAILS: This sale includes annuals and perennials and is sponsored by the Agriscience Greenhouse/Landscape Class.
CONTACT: (248) 668-5673

Novi Hold 'Em Casino Night

DATE: Saturday, May 20
TIME: 6-10 p.m.
LOCATION: Lucky's Lucky Strike, Fountain Walk
DETAILS: This is a fund-raiser for the Novi Chamber of Commerce. A variety of sponsorships are available, including an unlimited complimentary open bar and food.

Novi Youth Assistance

General Citizens Meeting
DATE: Tuesday, April 4
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road
CONTACT: (248) 347-0410

SCHOOL/GOVERNMENT

Wisom City Council
DATE: Tuesday
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Wisom City Hall, 49045 Pontiac Trail
CONTACT: (248) 624-4557

Novi City Council Meeting

DATE: Monday
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road
CONTACT: (248) 344-0470

Novi School Board Meeting

DATE: Monday, April 6
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi High School, 24882 Tubb Road
CONTACT: (248) 449-1200

BUSINESS

Novi Chamber of Commerce
CONTACT: (248) 349-3743
Networking Event
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CONTACT: (248) 335-9600

Walled Lake Community Education Seminar

DATE: Monday and Wednesday, March 27, 29, April 3 and 5
TIME: 6-10 p.m.
LOCATION: Walled Lake Middle School, 46720 W. Postiac Trail, Walled Lake
DETAILS: The seminar costs \$199 plus \$20 for textbook and materials. Pre-registration with payment is required no later than Thursday, March 23, to Walled Lake Community Education, (248) 956-8000, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. This 16-hour seminar will give you information to help you pass the Michigan state builder's license examination. The course is for those who want to subcontract the construction of their own homes, real estate investors and developers and building trades people who want to work legally in Michigan.

Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce Events

CONTACT: (248) 624-2826
2006 Heart of the Lakes 2006
DATE: Saturday
TIME: 6 p.m.-12 a.m.
LOCATION: Shenandoah Country Club, West Bloomfield
DETAILS: "Hollywood Nights" will be the theme. The cost is \$50 per person. Sponsors and donations are welcome for the silent auction. Reservations are required.

Women's Empowerment Weekend

TIME/DATE: 7:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. Friday, April 28, and 9 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Saturday, April 29
LOCATION: This seminar is sponsored by Sunle Enterprises LLC, Marilyn Suttle. The cost is \$150; \$127 if paid before Feb. 28. Class is limited to 20 women. Marilyn Suttle is a communication professional specializing in bringing life into balance with practical, usable skills that improve relationships in every arena of your life.
CONTACT: To register, call Marilyn Suttle, (248) 348-1023 or visit the Web site: www.ChangelimitingBeliefs.com/suttle_workshop.htm

Yoga Class

TIME/DATE: Various times, Monday, Wednesday and Friday
DETAILS: The cost is \$10 for walk-in; \$90 for 10-class card and \$70 for 7-week evening session.

Line Dancing

DATE: every Monday and Friday
TIME: 6:30-7:30 p.m., beginners; 7:30-9:30 p.m., intermediate
LOCATION: Novi Ice Arena, 42400 Arena Drive
DETAILS: No partner needed for lessons in this pay-as-you-go program. Cost is \$5 for Novi residents and for those ages 55 and up; \$6 for non-residents.
CONTACT: (248) 348-9116

Novi Public Library Hours

LOCATION: 45245 W. 10 Mile Road
HOURS: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday
DETAILS: Unless noted below, all programs take place at the library.
CONTACT: (248) 349-0720

Snack Tables

DATE: Monday
TIME: 7-7:45 p.m.
DETAILS: This storyline is for students in kindergarten-third grade. Refreshments are included. Registration is required.
CONTACT: (248) 349-0720

Story Time

DATE: Tuesday, March 14
TIME: 7-7:30 p.m.
DETAILS: Preschoolers and their families are invited to enjoy bedtime stories. No registration required.

Battle of the Books

DATE: Saturday, March 25
TIME: 1 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45135 W. 10 Mile Road
DETAILS: The chess is invited to attend and cheer for the fifth and sixth grade teams.

School Readiness Program

DATE: Monday, March 27
TIME: 7 p.m.
DETAILS: A speaker from Oakland Schools will discuss a ready-for-school checklist including what to expect from children 3-5 years of age and the ten hallmarks of children who succeed in school, as well as ways to boost your child's confidence before the bus comes. No registration required.

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DATE: Wednesday, March 29
TIME: 11:30 a.m. lunch, 12:30 p.m. lecture
LOCATION: Rock Financial Showplace, 46100 Grand River Avenue
DETAILS: This event features filmmakers Laura and Rob Sumn. This brother and sister team has

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greatlakesderm@aol.com

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Some rates based on credit score. Rates and terms vary by property type, loan amount and LTV ratio. Offer subject to change without notice. Not available for home equity loans or second mortgages. Pre-approval required. Flood insurance may be required. Credit review may be required. Third-party fees ranging from \$85 to \$175 apply for properties held in trust. All accounts are subject to individual credit review. Advance in full is required for completed loan applications submitted at branch or by phone, and limited hours apply. See a banker for details. © Equal Housing Lender, Member FDIC.

Boost Camp Day

TIME/DATE: 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Friday, April 7 and May 5
LOCATION: Providence Medical Building, 47601 Grand River Avenue
CONTACT: (248) 465-5455
Colored Pencil Workshop
TIME/DATE: 1-3 p.m., second Tuesday of every month
DETAILS: This is a free class.
Artist in Residence
TIME/DATE: 10-11:30 a.m. first and third Thursday of every month
DETAILS: John Artist-in-Residence May Our Teveses and experiment with drawing, pastels, watercolor, Chinese brush painting, mixed media and collage. Beginners are welcome, there is a \$5 materials fee.
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TIME/DATE: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; 1-5 p.m. Wednesday
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DATE: Monday, March 20
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DETAILS: AARP volunteers will be at the library to assist individuals with middle and low incomes in preparing their tax returns. Special attention will be given to participants age 55 and older. Please note that the volunteers help in the preparation of simple tax returns only. Appointments are required. Call the library to register.

March into the Library

DATE: Tuesday, March 21
TIME: 7 p.m.
DETAILS: Kids of all ages are invited to a family story time featuring guest readers sharing their favorite stories. Sponsored by Community Financial Credit Union in honor of National Library Week. No registration required.

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Call for Appointment 248-324-2222. Evening appointments available.
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Some rates based on credit score. Rates and terms vary by property type, loan amount and LTV ratio. Offer subject to change without notice. Not available for home equity loans or second mortgages. Pre-approval required. Flood insurance may be required. Credit review may be required. Third-party fees ranging from \$85 to \$175 apply for properties held in trust. All accounts are subject to individual credit review. Advance in full is required for completed loan applications submitted at branch or by phone, and limited hours apply. See a banker for details. © Equal Housing Lender, Member FDIC.

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Places to Go... Things to Do

Upcoming Events in Livingston County

Friday March 17th

Pluckney's St. Patrick's Day Parade & Celebration - Parade at Noon; Event until 8:00 p.m.; Downtown Pluckney Village Square. Events for the whole family throughout the day; Irish Story in Park; Irish vendors. Please call 784-079-5205

Saturday March 18th

Green spaghetti dinner - Mid Fish Spaghetti Dinner at Harland United Methodist Church, 10300 Maple Ave., Harland. Singing and "Tullam" will lead folk songs from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. \$8 seniors; \$20 family. Call 810-832-7412 or 810-433-3334 for reservations.

Tuesday March 21st

8th Annual "In Our Own Backyard Agency Fair" - 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Citizens Insurance, 606 N. Highland Way, Howell, MI. Event Hosted by Livingston County United Way, The Livingston County Department of Human Services and Citizens Insurance Company. No cost for admission. Door prizes given throughout the day. For sign up call Deborah Frazer, LCOHS - 317-449-9217 or Tracy Dudarski, LCUW - 810-994-3600

Thursday March 23rd

Brigitte Open House - 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. - 2100 Grand River Rd. West of Brighton, across from The Michigan Group. Participating businesses include: Aquatic Adventures, Monarch Clubs, The Brown Salon and Family Chiropractic. Refreshments, giveaways, demonstrations by Monarch Club and massages from Family Chiropractic. Meet with fellow Chamber businesses as you learn about what's happening in the vibrant Grand River Area! Please RSVP to the Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce at 810-227-5088

Thursday March 30th

Benefit for the Whitmore Lake/Northfield Township Food Bank - 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. - "Glasgow's Fine Home Cooking" by Jennings, Whitmore Lake (call 734-442-1511 for directions). Gloria Ruelle, active member of the Whitmore Lake Chamber of Commerce, will be cooking, baked and buttered chicken; crutch of 2 potatoes; corn, coleslaw, etc. for this benefit. Cost is \$8.00. Non-perishable food and monetary donations will be accepted. To-go orders will be available. Please bring your families and support this worthy cause. No reservations necessary. For more information please call the Chamber at 810-227-5088

Saturday April 1st

Friends of the Cromaine District Library Book Sale - 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - 3688 N. Harland Road, 810-832-5200. FILL A BROWN BAG SALE! All day Saturday!

Tuesday April 4th

Adult Book Discussion Group - 7:00 p.m. - Cromaine Library OPEN HOUSE by Elizabeth Berg. If you like to read and share thoughts about books, feel free to join the group. For information, call 810-832-5200. www.cromaine.org

Tuesday April 11th

Fourth Annual Poetry Slam - 7:00 p.m. - Cromaine Library. Poets need to register. Adults and teens read their own original poems. Awards will be given. Refreshments will be served. For information, call 810-832-5200. www.cromaine.org

Wednesday April 12th

Livingston Regional Job Fair - 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Crystal Garden's Banquet Conference & Entertainment Center, 5788 E. Grand River, Howell. For more information, please call Patti Mooney at the Chamber 810-227-5088

Coming in May

May - October

Fowlerville Farmer's Market

Saturday May 6th

Bullseye Chili Blast

Farmer's Market Opening Day - 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Downtown Brighton Cedar Street Lot at the Mill Pond. The Brighton Farmers Market runs from May 6th to October 28th, 2006. Area farmers and vendors display their wares in a community market. For more information, please call the Chamber at 810-227-5088.

Sundays May 7th - October 29

Howell Farmers Market - Hosted by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce

Saturday & Sunday May 20 & 21

Howell History Days - Hosted by Howell DDA

Brighton Bowl

Open 7 Days a Week at 11 AM
1871 E. Grand River, Brighton
810-227-3341
www.brightonbowl.com

St. Patrick's Night Bowling

Friday March 17th,
10:00 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.

\$30.00 per lane

Includes: Bowling, pizza, pop,
50/50 raffle ticket for bowling ball
(Shoes not included)

If we beat the house and you throw a strike,
you will have tickets towards the next drawing at Midnight.
Tickets will also be sold separately for \$1.00 per ticket!
Each game will get (1) pizza and (1) pitcher of pop.

Shamrock Lounge

St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Friday March 17th

Nutty Irishman

Shots

Music

Green Beer

- Corned Beef 'n Cabbage Dinner
- Corned Beef sandwiches
- Irish Stew
- Corned Beef Rubeens
- Turkey Rubeens
- Beer Specials

Live Music - Thursday, Friday, Saturday
Karaoke - Sundays & Wednesdays - Keno - Pull Tabs

9859 E. Grand River, Brighton
810-227-8265
Hours: Mon-Sat 7am-2am; Sun. noon-10pm

BUFFALO WILD WINGS

St. Patty's Day Party

Starts at 7am

GREEN BEER

as low as **25¢** glass til 7:30am

Killian on Draft **\$3.00 All Day**

Smithwick's Irish Beer (bottle) **\$3.50 All Day**

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Live Band Entertainment

BUFFALO WILD WINGS
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Howell (517) 545-2100

Things to Do... Places to Go...

Places to Go... Things to Do

SPORTS



(248) 349-1700 www.novinews.com fax (248) 349-9832

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Novi News B1



Detroit Red Wing Henrik Zetterberg takes the puck up the ice. He joined four other Red Wings on the Swedish Olympic team to help win gold.

Photo courtesy of the Detroit Red Wings

Wild 'Stangs finish 12th; program's future uncertain

At the state finals, any little slip can make the difference.

The Northville-Novu gymnastics team found that out the hard way last weekend when they took 12th in the state finals. There were some falls that cost the team points, but coach Erin McWatt said she's not upset over the results.

"Overall, I'm happy with how states went for the girls," she said. "We had a few problems here and there on Friday that you just can't afford if you want to grab those top places."

"But the girls fought for every tenth."

The Wild 'Stangs scored 137.2 points. Their final tally wasn't too far off from third-time state champion Tri-Farmington's 146.2.

The Northville-Novu team finished their season with a 5-3 mark, taking third at the regional and fourth at their conference meet.

But the state finals are a different story. The best of the state's best are there. The slips and the falls counted against the squad.

Not to mention the injuries. With only 14 gymnasts on the team, one injury makes a huge difference. More than that can be a decision maker.

"It's nice to work with a smaller group of girls so you can give each more individual attention, but we were also coping with more than a handful of injuries this year," McWatt said. "When you have a small pool of competitors to pull from, that can sometimes be stressful. But this team has a lot of depth."

One of the most unfortunate injuries, from a scoring standpoint, was the loss of Julie Foucher to a broken foot.

As a top all-around scorer, Foucher's points helped make a lot of difference in the final total. Her loss impacted the entire team.

"It was hard to lose her," said McWatt. "She's amazingly talented, and I know it was heartbreaking for her to sit out the second half of the season."

The Wild 'Stangs graduate six seniors and will return eight. But the future is uncertain for the team, made of athletes from both Novi and Northville high schools.

An unwise decision by the Michigan High School Athletic Association could find all cooperative teams being disbanded.

The results could be devastating for the Wild 'Stangs as Novi may not be able to host a team and the Northville squad would struggle to field enough participants.

"It's definitely a shame and certainly won't benefit our girls," McWatt said. "It would be devastating for our juniors from Novi if they didn't get a chance to compete in gymnastics their senior year if the teams are separated."

McWatt said she believes there will still be a team at Northville High School, especially with the support of Bryan Masi, the district's athletics director.

To supplement the team at Northville — or the combined team if the appeal the Wild 'Stangs filed is approved by the MHSAA — the gymnasts will showcase their sport to incoming freshmen.

"In April, we have a high school athletic fair which attracts many incoming freshmen," McWatt said. "The girls also post fliers throughout both high schools at the beginning of the school year reminding girls to check out the gymnastics team in October."

But no matter if there is a team next year or not, McWatt said this year's squad will still have plenty to remember.

"Improved skill levels, top-seven finish in each invitational team attended and the fourth highest regional score in the state are all things to reflect on. It was a lot of fun," McWatt said.

No doubt she and the returning girls want to do it again. Hopefully the MHSAA lets them.



Sam Eggleston

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HOW SWEDE IT IS

Red Wings Kronwall and Zetterberg reflect on winning gold in Olympics

By Ramez Khuri
STAFF WRITER

Novi resident Niklas Kronwall feels like he just woke up from a two-week long dream.

But instead of getting a pair of ruby slippers, like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, the defenseman has a shiny Olympic gold medal to prove it really happened.

Kronwall is one of five Detroit Red Wings who helped make Sweden the best in the world in the sport of hockey — a feat that wasn't easy to accomplish by any means.

"I don't think it really hit me yet that we won gold," said Kronwall. "Everything happened so fast, and now we're back to reality again."

Kronwall said it was a great feeling to have himself and four of his Detroit teammates make the same team.

"That doesn't happen too often," he said. "It also says a lot about the Red Wings and how good this organization is. Not only with the Swedes, but we had about 10 guys from this team who made the Olympics. That says a lot."

Henrik Zetterberg, a left winger with the Red Wings, was also on the team. He said his greatest thrill came in the final game when he scored a hat trick and all four of his Wings teammates scored goals.

"It was a nice feeling," he said. "It's something that can never be taken away from you."



Niklas Kronwall, a Detroit Red Wing and Novi resident, played a major role in Sweden's gold medal run during the Olympics.

Hey Hey Hockeytown!

Zetterberg and Kronwall both couldn't be more appreciative of playing for an organization that has millions of fans throughout North America and the world. In fact, Kronwall believes it's the fans who make Detroit "Hockeytown."

"I haven't been here that long, but I just get the feeling that if you talk about one sport in this town, hockey is the one you're talking about," said Kronwall. "You see Red Wings signs all over the place on cars and in windows. And whenever we play on the road it's almost like we're playing at home because half the crowd is wearing Red Wings jerseys. It's just amazing."

Zetterberg described the Red Wings organization as top-notch. From the ownership all the way down to the fans, he had nothing but good things to say.

"They take good care of the players here," he said. "That's why a lot of players want to come here. I think my first thought of the Red Wings, while watching my first game here, was everything happens so fast on the ice. I saw a game against the Avalanche in the playoffs, and it was so fast. I never thought I would be able to play in a game like that, but when I came over the guys, they took good care of me, and I think I fit into the team nicely."

Chasing first place

Only being a point ahead, the Carolina Hurricanes, the Red Wings have a very good chance of winning the NHL's President's Trophy this year as having the best regular season record. The accolade would guarantee home ice advantage throughout the playoffs. But, not surprisingly, the trophy isn't foremost on Zetterberg's mind.

"I personally don't think about that too much," he said. "It would be nice to win the President's Trophy, but the most important thing is to win the Stanley Cup. Of course, it's nice to have home ice advantage, but if we don't get it we'll still have a good chance of winning anyway."

Kronwall had a slightly different perspective on that, saying the President's Trophy would be a big deal and a good accomplishment for the team.

"I think it's always good to win," he said. "Some people say if you win the President's Trophy you go into the playoffs with everyone thinking you're the best team and there's more pressure. But you want to win every game you can."

For now, Kronwall is just happy living in Novi and working in Detroit.

"I think the people who live in Novi are very nice and down to earth," he said. "The atmosphere is like at home in Sweden, very friendly. You have restaurants, Twelve Oaks Mall, coffee shops and bars. You have everything you need right around the corner. It's a good area."

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Red hot Wings

Both Kronwall and Zetterberg hope their Olympic success can spill over into their National Hockey League season. Their Red Wings are currently in first place overall.

The Wings' philosophy has always been to be a puck-possession team, meaning to be careful with the puck, make good passes, set up plays, and to always go hard to the net in search of rebounds — something the team is capitalizing on this season.

"We're not a big team, but there are a lot of good puck movers and a lot of talent for sure," said Kronwall. "We have a very good opportunity this year to go far in the playoffs. The team we have now looks good, and adding Cory Cross to the defense gets some size back there, which only helps."

Cross, a 6-foot-5 defenseman, was recently acquired from the Pittsburgh Penguins and will be paired up with Kronwall during games. He should at least fill part of the void created when Red Wings defenseman Jim Fisher was forced to depart the team due to heart conditions.

"It was really tough to lose Jim," said Kronwall. "If we had him in the lineup I think we would have had a complete team. A guy of his caliber, you just don't replace him very easily. Jim's done a great job over the last couple years, and it's a shame he can't play. We just have to try to deal with the situation."

Another season almost lost

After a collective bargaining agreement dispute between players and owners canceled all of last season, there was fear within the hockey world that this season might be lost as well. Fortunately, however, an agreement was reached, and the Wings were back on the ice.

Zetterberg said it was nice to go back to his hometown and play for a year. But, the longer he was away from Detroit, the more he missed it.

"That was a great experience for me to get back and see my family and friends and play with my old teammates," he said. "But I missed this atmosphere in the locker room and just playing for the Red Wings."

Kronwall explained the time off was particularly tough because of all the people the lockout affected.

"It was bad, not only for us players, but for all the fans, media and sponsors," he said. "There are so many people involved. I think it's a great thing to get a deal done, and it was about time hockey was played again."

Individual results

The Northville-Novu Wild 'Stangs gymnastics team didn't have the best state finals finish as a team with a 12th-place showing, but their individual performances were strong.

DIVISION 1

Amy Reynolds: Bars: 9.05 (16th place); Beam: 8.625 (25th)

DIVISION 2

Rachel Deacon: Bars: 9.4 (2nd); Floor: 8.9 (9th); Vault: 8.7 (33rd); Bars: 7.85 (38th); All-Around: 34.85 (11th)

Sarah Ilkhanli-Pour: Bars: 8.8 (13th); Beam: 8.575 (28th); Floor: 8.4 (35th); Vault: 8.4 (39th); All-Around: 33.975 (21st)

Emma Platt: Vault: 8.85 (21st); Bars: 7.85 (38th); Floor: 8.65 (23rd)

Jacqueline Gazette: Beam: 9.05 (12th); Bars: 8.525 (17th)

Lauren Duda: Vault: 8.75 (30th)

REGIONAL MARKETPLACE

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North News

Thursday, March 16, 2006

ADVERTISEMENT

MOLD: A GROWING PROBLEM ALLSTATE OFFERS TIPS FOR PROTECTING YOUR HOME

Wixom, Mich., March 16, 2006 - Mold claims cost homeowners more than \$3 billion last year, with average claims ranging from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per homeowner, according to the Insurance Information Institute. So when protecting your home against water damage and freezing temperatures, it is also important to protect your home against mold growth. Allstate Agent Louis Kirby offers the following winter safety tips:

- Look around your home for water leaks and cut off the source of the leak as soon as possible. Check plumbing fixtures, roof gutters and air conditioners regularly, as well as appliances like refrigerators, dishwashers and washer and dryers.

- Be aware of potential signs of future water leaks, like moisture on your windows and damp, musty smells.
- Open windows and use fans for good ventilation in your home, particularly humid areas such as the laundry room, kitchen and bathrooms.

- When you go on vacation, turn off the water source to your home and set the thermostat above 50 degrees if it's cold outside. This can help prevent undetected water damage from leaky appliances or pipes.

- Mold can also settle on the decaying leaves of houseplants, so plants should be pruned regularly.

"Your home's humidity level is key in keeping mold at bay," said Allstate Agent Louis Kirby. "Set your humidistat between 35 percent to 40 percent during the winter months. If your windows begin to develop water condensation, lower your humidity level."

Louis Kirby also suggests the following tips:

- If you must use a room humidifier or vaporizer, keep it clean and change the water often, to avoid contamination by mold and bacteria.

- If there is mold, clean the area as quickly as possible to prevent mold from spreading.

- If you're ever unsure if a water leak may be occurring or see gray or black water leaks, call a professional to take a look.

For more information on this and other safety topics, contact Allstate Agent Louis Kirby, located at 49357 Pontiac Trail, Suite 103 in Wixom. Louis can be reached at 248-669-0755.

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Photo by HAL GOULD/GANNETT NEWS SERVICES

Chris Meredith uses friendly customer service and unique interior design ideas to make "Your Nesting Place" feel like home.

At home, with Your Nesting Place

Unique Milford store offers friendly service, fresh design ideas

By Annette Jaworski
SPECIAL WRITER

Chris Meredith follows only one hard and fast rule when it comes to design — and that's to expect the unexpected.

"We like to keep them guessing," explains the owner of Your Nesting Place in Milford. "I like to push the edge of what's in."

Come see what robin's egg blue looks like on a wall, or a leopard print crown moulding — maybe even dare to try it at home.

"We just came out of a period where everything was earth tones. Now we're moving back to some exciting bright colors," she explained.

As a designer, Chris Meredith refuses to be pigeon-holed into a safe category, and has developed a faithful following who've discovered her fun and refreshing approach to design.

Now clients can enjoy more of a good thing with double the space at their new location in the center of downtown on Main Street in Milford.

"It's bigger, it's brighter and it's easier to display stuff," she explained.

That sign with the overstuffed chair is symbolic of the store — laid back, comfy and inviting. Those comfortable seats are one of the first things customers notice in Your Nesting Place. There are sofas, love seats, overstuffed chairs and ottomans in tapestry, leather, olive green and even plum. There are thousands of fabric selections so clients can find that perfect match.

"Because of their recently



YOUR NESTING PLACE

Location: 332 North Main St., in downtown Milford.
Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday; 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday and Friday; and Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Phone: (248) 685-7314.

Photo by HAL GOULD/GANNETT NEWS SERVICES

Mercury glass fixtures are among the many unique offerings at Your Nesting Place, located in downtown Milford.

"I'd like to think the attitude is something like Cheers ... we remember what you bought last time, and we'll remember your name."

Chris Meredith
Owner, Your Nesting Place

expanded facilities, they can feature an even larger display of Flexsteel merchandise, which is the backbone of their merchandise.

Much of the charm of Your Nesting Place lies in its relaxed ambience. Customers might come in to a dish of chocolates or a beverage. Meredith's dog, Sarah, might offer a friendly welcome. They even open doors between their neighbors, "Some Gals," so that customers can pass back and forth between both stores. They would love nothing better than for customers to have a little fun and break out of their comfort zone while they're at it.

"I'd like to think the attitude is something like Cheers ... we remember what you bought last time, and we'll remember your name," said Meredith.

True to her free spirit, she wants that her sales are at a whim. "So if you see it advertised, it's a big deal. When we have one, you better show up."

There are also bi-annual Flexsteel sales, a product she feels is an exceptional value, and of

course Milford Memories and Sidewalk Sale time.

Meredith uses the same approach to her merchandise, where she focuses mainly on one-of-a-kind pieces.

"If you see it, you better buy it, because it might be gone, and I don't know if I will get more of that item in stock," said Meredith. On the flip side, she promises there's new stuff every day, so there's always something fresh and new to inspire.

"It's a good show place. People can come in and get ideas," she added. The creative crew makes it easy for customers, because items are placed in groupings, so they can imagine how it looks when it's all put together.

"I want people to look at this and say, 'I can do this,'" said Meredith. "My new mantra is 'get inspired, be creative.' I've been following that a lot more."

Indeed, many clients make regular visits to see what's new and for a little design inspiration.

Another fun way they encourage a client's sense of style is by tag-

ging certain merchandise as "favorite things." It's their equivalent of the Oprah picks, some of Chris Meredith's favorite items including rugs, tables, and more.

As a service to her clientele she also keeps a "wish list," where they can request a certain type of merchandise.

"We'll look for something to see if maybe we can get it for them," she added. Another great way to take advantage of their creative genius includes their design services. A member of the design crew, Jeanne Imboden, said, "We're here to please."

Searching for new and innovative merchandise is literally a seven-day-a-week "job" for Meredith. It comes from a variety of sources — exactly where is part of the mystique that keeps customers coming back. Some items are from vendors and purchasing trips, or hunted down at antique runs and estate sales. Part of the fun is combining the old with the new, just like any home.

Although it was a challenge to meet their opening date, they met

their goals with flying colors. She credits builders, Tim and Paul Brandt and decorative painter, Dolores Carlton. But most of all, she appreciates her partners in design, who contribute their own dimension of style and make the store what it is today. That includes Jeanne Imboden, Saadi Hinzmann, Nancy Hinzmann and Holly Brandt.

"I wouldn't have believed it's possible. But I knew I had to move if I wanted to grow the business I had to do something."

Meredith notes that she believes in dealing honestly with her customers, and won't mark up merchandise in lieu of "big savings" later. "We're fair in our pricing," she said.

Your Nesting Place's new location is at 332 North Main St. in downtown Milford. To go along with the newly expanded facilities are expanded business hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. or call (248) 685-7314.

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