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Thursday, May 25, 2006

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Volume 50 Number 51

Novi, Michigan

INSIDE



Green thumbs to work

Calvin (and Lillian) Niemi volunteered time to plant flowers last Wednesday at the Novi Senior Center's Planting Day.

—19A

Home & Garden 2

Homeowners get a chance to see some of the gardens on the LACASA Garden Tour get tips for making their home wheelchair accessible, and learn how to plant trees, in addition to tips for the home inside and out.

—Special Section

OBITUARY

Gordon D. Guyot, 51

—Page 8A

THIS WEEKEND

Holiday happenings

The city of Novi will celebrate Memorial Day with a parade on Monday. The details are on page 7A.

Novi High School's presentation of "The Heidi Chronicles" is Friday and Saturday.

—10A

INDEX

- Be Scene in Novi ...14A
Business ...5A
Calendar ...20A
Classifieds ...1C
Community ...6A
Education ...10A
Faith ...11A
Opinion ...16A
People ...12A
Public Safety ...13A
Regional Marketplace ...6B
Seniors ...19A
Sports ...11B

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You better be buckled up

Not using seat belt can lighten wallet by \$65

By Pam Fleming STAFF WRITER

Unless you have money to burn, you might want to make a concerted effort to wear your seat belt this week, as the state's "Click It or Tickle" program is in full swing.

The campaign started in Novi on Monday and runs through Sunday, June 4.

The Novi Police Department is joining more than 50 Michigan law enforcement agencies focusing on unbuckled motorists as part of the national seat belt awareness campaign.

Michigan's safety belt use rate currently stands at a record-high 93 percent. But, to save even more lives, police will be strictly enforcing the law to get even more motorists to buckle up.

The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning estimates that for every 1 percent increase in safety belt use, 10 lives are saved.

"Thousands of drivers are killed in traffic crashes every year,

Make sure you're buckled up in these Novi zones

Police officers will be on the lookout for motorists not wearing their seat belts at the following times and locations in Novi during the federally funded "Click It or Tickle" safety belt awareness program that began Monday.

- 2-6 p.m., Friday, May 26 — 10 Mile Road west of Meadowbrook Road;
noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, May 27 — Grand River Avenue from Tall Road to Back Road;
noon-5 p.m.; Sunday, May 28 — 12 Mile Road from Novi Road to Meadowbrook Road;
3-7 p.m., Tuesday, May 30 — West Park Drive at West Road;
3-7 p.m., Thursday, June 1 — 10 Mile Road from Meadowbrook Road to Haggerty Road;
3-7 p.m., Friday, June 2 — Novi Road from Nine Mile Road to 10 Mile Road;
noon-5 p.m.; Saturday, June 3 — Grand River Avenue from Novi Road to Tall Road;
noon-5 p.m., Sunday, June 4 — 13 Mile Road from Haggerty Road and Meadowbrook Road.

The fine for not wearing a seat belt is \$65.

Safety laws for children

The state's mandatory safety belt law requires the driver and front-seat passengers to be buckled up and children under age 4 to be in an approved child safety

seated and children under age 4 to be in an approved child safety

continued on page 3



Beaming with joy

Sr. Xavier Ballance, DC, past president of Providence Hospital and current chair of the Board of Trustees, had the vision as president and led the way to come to the Novi area in the 1970s to service the communities in the western suburbs. Here, she is signing her name to the beam — her "vision" from 30+ years ago, now in tangible form in front of her. For more photos from the May 16 event, turn to page 14A's Be Scene in Novi.

Photo by KARL FORD

Hoffa hunt close to home

By Amelia Sklimm STAFF WRITER

Could the key to unlocking a 31-year-old mystery really be in Milford?

The FBI seems to think so. Agents have been scouring Hidden Dreams Farm, located on E. Maple Road in the southeast corner of the township since May 17, looking for "the human remains of James Riddle Hoffa," according to a federal search warrant dated May 16.

Hoffa, a former Teamsters boss, was trying to wrestle control of the union away from the mob four years after leaving federal prison. Hoffa disappeared July 30, 1975. He had planned to meet two reputed Mafia leaders at the

continued on page 5

Building "launching pad" for Presbyterian ministry

Minister seeks to build church as base for future off-shoots

By Matt Doran STAFF WRITER

Using terms like "strategic," "beachhead," "launch pad," and "parachute drop," Brian Sleeth sounds like a man planning an invasion.

But what he's really got in mind is establishing the first Presbyterian Church in America ministry in the metro Detroit area, GracePointe Presbyterian Church. His goal is to see the church

become a "launch pad" for other PCA church plants, which will remain connected and share resources.

"Put me it's all about the call of God," Sleeth said. "You do everything in your power to find out, 'Is God in this?' There's something compelling about it."

Starting from "scratch"

GracePointe is a "scratch start," Sleeth said; meaning there is no parent church overseeing the operation, and there is no core group of people looking to build the church and call a pastor. Rather, Sleeth is here on a "parachute drop" from the regional presbytery of the PCA, looking to find a flock and get the church off the ground.

"This is the biggest metro area in the country that doesn't have a church of our denomination," Sleeth said. "It's very strategic for us."

"Scratch starts," typically take a year longer to start than a regular church, Sleeth said.

"It's a very bold way to do that," he said. "We live in kind of a fast-food, microwave culture. This is a very embryonic stage."

The process

The church's first informational meeting was held Sunday, and about 20 people showed up. Sleeth said things are still in the beginning stages, and the plan is to keep making contacts and



Photo by JERRY HENDERSON/Novi News

Pastor Brian Sleeth works from his current "office" in the Panera Bread restaurant. For information about his new church, contact Sleeth at (248) 497-3178.

continued on page 3

Drafta stays busy in retirement

Novi resident keeps active with hospital and theater

By Matt Doran STAFF WRITER

Retirement has been a busy time for Eugene Drafta of Novi. Drafta, 76, retired in 1995 after 25 years with Ford, where he worked for the pricing department in the controller's office. His wife, Mary Drafta, told him he needed something to keep him busy, and

he's been on the go ever since.

"I'm strictly volunteering," Drafta said.

Drafta has been a volunteer at Providence Hospital for 10 years. He started in the surgery department and later began working in the cancer center.

One day a week, he wheels patients out to their cars and acts as a

greeter; if he misses a week, people ask him where he's been when he returns, Drafta said.

"It's a great feeling just to help with these people," he said.

Drafta's other volunteer activities include involvement with the

homeless shelter run annually for a week by Holy Family Church, which he has attended for roughly 20 years. This summer, he is also planning to help out with the "Michigan 50's Festival" in Novi, which will include live entertainment.

"I'm also active with Novi Theatres, both as an usher and a performer."

"He's just the perfect usher-vo-

lunteer for around

10 years.

continued on page 3

Photo by MATT DORAN/Novi News

Volunteer usher Eugene Drafta of Novi gears up for Novi Theatres production of "The Wizard of Oz" last Thursday. Since retiring in 1995, Drafta has stayed busy with family and volunteering.

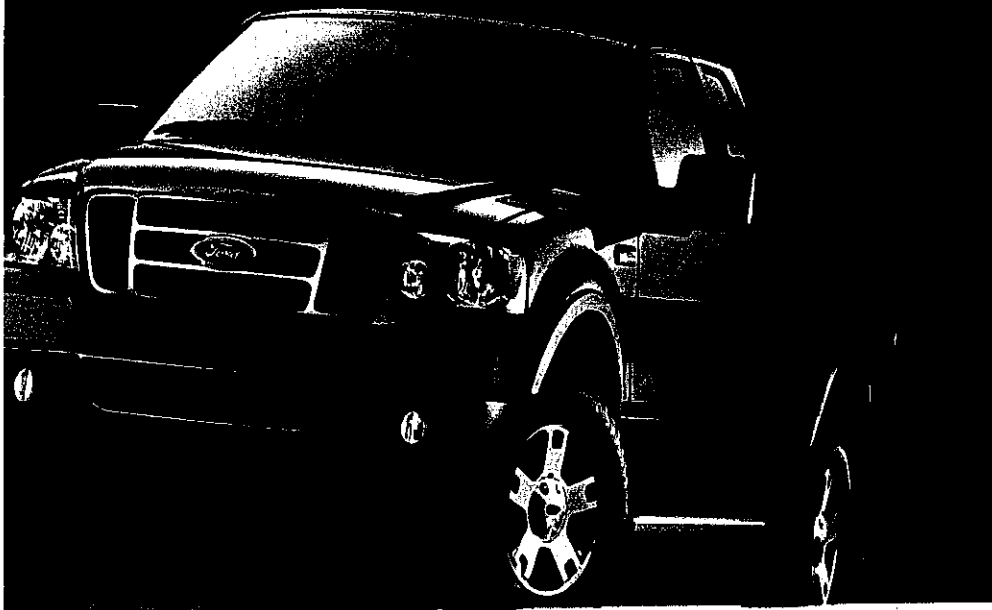


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Not buckling up can lighten wallet by \$65

continued from front page

It also requires passengers age 15 and under to be buckled up in front or rear seating positions. In addition, drivers or passengers who place a shoulder harness under their arm or behind their back can be ticketed for not buckling up properly.

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for those age 3-33. Teens and young adults constituted about 24 percent of all Michigan traffic fatalities in 2004. Safety belt use among young men is 10 percent below the statewide average.

About 37 percent of the people who died in traffic crashes in Michigan in 2005 were not wearing their safety belts, according to Michigan Traffic Crash Facts.

Federal traffic safety funds are supporting extra enforcement in more than 50 counties in Michigan, including Oakland County.

Officers will be conducting safety belt enforcement zones — strategically located enforcement marked by portable signs alerting motorists they are entering an enforcement area.

Lt. Keith Weonin, who heads up the Uniformed Patrol Division



Photo by JOHN HEIDEN/NOV NEWS

Novi Police officer Paul Stullgros talks with a motorist Monday along Novi Rd. as the department ramped up its "Click It or Ticker" effort, issuing warnings and tickets for motorists not wearing their seat belts.

at the Novi Police Department, said that since the "Click It or Ticker" provides federal funding, it will not affect the normal scheduling for the week.

He also said that whether a motorist receives a warning or a ticket is up to the discretion of the officer. The fine for not wearing a seat belt is \$65 at the 52-1 District Court in Novi.

Novi police issued more than 700 tickets to motorists not wearing their seat belt last year, according to Molloy. See the

times and locations of safety belt enforcement zones in Novi listed in the box.

For a list of other Michigan cities and locations of seat belt enforcement zones this month, visit the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning Web site, www.michigan.gov/ohsp.

Pat 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@gannett.com.

Novi resident keeps active with hospital and theater

continued from front page

of Novi, who said the best known Drafa for at least eight years. "He's so welcoming. He cares about people immediately and cares about making them feel at home."

The Entertainer

Drafa also enjoys performing in the theater's senior variety shows, which Sansom said regularly draw groups from throughout the area. He has been the "Tie Man in the Wizard of Oz" and once journeyed with the senior group to Mackinac Island, where they performed at the Grand Hotel.

"I really enjoyed that," Drafa said. "Being up there is great and to perform and be a part of it was enjoyable."

Sansom said one of her favorite memories of Drafa is the time he

performed in the senior group's presentation of "Abbott and Costello's classic baseball comedy routine 'Who's on First?'"

"He's a good sport," Sansom said. "He's always willing to go the extra mile."

The Family Man

Drafa and his wife will mark their 54th wedding anniversary this year. They were married in Seattle, where he was stationed during his Korean War service in the Coast Guard, from 1950-53.

The couple have five children, one of whom died of cancer in 1990. The other four all live reasonably nearby, Drafa said, and raising them was a good experience.

"We enjoyed it," he said. "I give my wife all the credit for that." Drafa is also proud of his eight grandchildren and enjoys spending time with them. One grandson, Rick Doe, is currently stationed in Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division.

"I really enjoyed that," Drafa said. "Being up there is great and to perform and be a part of it was enjoyable."

Eugene Drafa

Age: 76

How you know him:

Volunteers at Novi Theatres and Providence Hospital member of Holy Family Church

Family: He and his wife Mary will mark their 54th anniversary this year. He also has five children and eight grandchildren.

Cool fact: He served in the Coast Guard from 1950-53 and was stationed in Seattle.

Quote: "Ever since I retired, it's been strictly volunteering."

at the school, when Benjamin's father was out of town on business.

"I asked if he was sure he wanted to bring some old guy with him," Drafa joked.

Matt Dorman is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 109, or by e-mail at mdorman@gannett.com.

Minister seeks to build church as base for future off-shoots

continued from front page

spreading the word. He and his family moved to the area in February, and he has spent the time forming a vision for the ministry and getting things started.

The first task, Sleeth said, is forming a committed core group of members. Once that is in place, the church can begin building ministries, such as children's activities and small-group Bible studies. Informal worship services can then be held, and once the group is prepared, formal Sunday morning worship for the public can begin.

Sleeth would like to see GracePointe eventually function as a "launch point" for more PCA churches across the metro Detroit area. The plans for other area churches make it even more critical that GracePointe launch successfully, he said.

However, Sleeth emphasized that he is not "Superman" dropping in to save the day. Rather, the success of the church depends entirely on God, he said.

Church and community Sleeth said he spent time last summer cruising around the metro area, looking for good places to start a church.

"I just kept coming back to Novi," he said. "I felt gripped inside that Novi is the place to be. We love this community."

The goal, Sleeth said, is for the church to be a "visible partner with Novi, contributing to the community through service. He

also wants to incorporate the community's interest in the arts into the church, such as possibly including musical performances in the worship service.

The Weatherman

The ministry wasn't Sleeth's first occupation. Before feeling "called" by God to attend seminary in 1992, he was a TV weatherman for an ABC station.

"I had a lot of fun doing it," he said. "I was the 'personality guy.'" In seminary, Sleeth became involved in church planting in Mississippi. He then helped launch a church in Maryland and ended up staying for 10 years. A year ago, he said he felt God calling him to start planting churches again.

Matt Dorman is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 109, or by e-mail at mdorman@gannett.com.

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Hoffa hunt close to home

continued from front page

Machus Red Fox restaurant in Bloomfield Hills, about 15 miles east of the Milford dig site. That meeting never happened, and Hoffa has never been seen again.

Instead, Zafft said believes Hoffa was killed quickly, most likely by somebody he knew. According to Zafft's theory, because of Hoffa's notoriety, his body most likely remained in Michigan. But in Milford?

"Personally, I'm not terribly optimistic," Zafft said.

The FBI steps in

Others have more hope in the case. "There's been a lot of manpower, so this must be some good information," said Bloomfield Township Police Chief Donald Zimmerman. His department has been assisting the FBI in its investigation for about four months.

Not all local officials involved with the case have been included by the FBI, however. "At this point, I'm operating completely in the dark," Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorceyva said Friday.

"Three or four years ago, the FBI relinquished the case to state and local officials because the statute of limitations on any federal offense would have lapsed, he said.

With the current search the FBI made its move without contacting Gorceyva.

"I certainly hope this lead comes to fruition and something positive comes out of it," he said.

"I don't harbor any animosity, but I would expect that we would work in conjunction with one another, and not just when it's convenient."

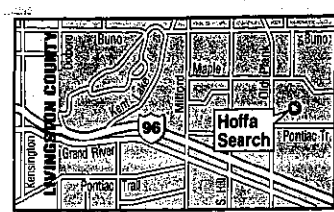
The route to Milford

What led the FBI to Milford apparently was a tip from 75-year-old Donovan Wells. Wells, who is currently serving a 10-year federal sentence for drug-trafficking, briefly lived on land owned by Roland McMaster, a Teamsters leader who, in the 1970s, also owned the land where the FBI is currently searching.

Wells is housed in a medical facility in Kentucky, Wells' former attorney, James Elksan, said. Wells tried to offer information to the FBI in 1976, in hopes of getting a reduced sentence for stealing steel coils. At the time Elksan said the FBI never followed up on the tip. More detailed information from Wells was presented to the FBI a few years ago, which sources said prompted the present search.

Detroit FBI Chief Daniel Roberts said agents converged in Milford based on "the best lead I've seen come across" in the Hoffa investigation since he's been in Detroit. Roberts declined to discuss any specifics in the case.

Mayer Morgenthau, attorney



Chief Wayne Walli. Green said he saw limited activity, including a backhoe and some probing on the site.

Green said the FBI requested local contractors to help with some of the work, such as disconnecting electricity in a barn, which is set for demolition. FBI officials plan to raise a 300-square-foot horse barn on the site to continue their search. A tent was set up as a temporary facility Monday afternoon.

The demolition will also most likely be handled by a local crew. Like the various other theories attempting to explain Hoffa's disappearance, Green said he heard rumors over the years that Hoffa's body was buried in Milford. Until recently, he dismissed the rumors, but now, he said, the odds are leaning toward the possibility that the Milford horse farm will hold the key.

"Based on historical check, there is a 70 percent chance that they will find his body there," Green said. "But if they do find him, where is the mystery and the legend? It will be gone."

Allyson Iotti and Aileen Wingfield and Gannett News Service contributed to this report. Aileen Iotti is a reporter for The Milford Times. She can be reached at (248) 685-1507 or by e-mail at aillotti@gannett.com.

Locals get involved

Milford Village Supervisor Don Green toured the farm on Monday, with Milford Police

Novi city leaders visit Portage in this year's Mayor's Exchange

Museum and trails included in day's tour

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Everybody likes a field trip. And, although they didn't need notes from their mothers, a few city council members and staff traveled to Portage May 17 for the annual Mayor's Exchange.

Several members of Portage's city staff and council are visiting Nov today.

In Portage, the day began with a presentation, including items of interest for the Novi participants. Next, they went on a tour of the Bicentennial Trail and the Celery Flats historic area.

The group then rode a chartered bus to Kalamazoo to see the Aviation History Museum and toured the West Lake Nature Preserve and Bishop's Bog.

After a tour of the Trade Center, the group had dinner at the Fieldstone Grill before heading back to Novi.

Clay Pearson, interim city manager, said Portage and Novi are both working toward quality, balanced growth.

"Novi has some different opportunities and strengths being a part of a large metropolitan area," Pearson said.

He added that Novi has a larger tax base — \$3.83 billion versus just over \$2 billion in Portage.

However, Portage planners have worked longer on roadway construction and connections.

Pearson said this was one reason he suggested Portage as a possible city for Novi leaders to visit.

Millage funds improvements

In its city charter, established in the 1960s, Portage city leaders instituted a two-mill levy as part of property tax revenue which is dedicated to capital improvements.

"Their elected leaders and staff noted how well that funding has served the community," Pearson said.

As part of its road programs, owners of properties fronting streets are charged a special assessment which funds neighborhood road improvements.

Rob Hayes, Novi city engineer, said Portage is similar to Novi. But, unlike Novi's more diverse commercial/industrial communi-

Historical buildings used a lot

Council Member Lynne Paul was impressed with Portage's group of historical buildings in the historic area known as Celery Flats.

The area got its name from the fact that celery used to be grown on farms in the area.

An old barn houses the Hayloft Theater that features many shows throughout the summer.

An amphitheater that seats 100 is used for weddings, plays and gatherings. Portage also has

several fountains and gazebos throughout the city that hook into its park system.

Area residents can rent the historic summer home of Sen. Charles Stewart, Michigan's second U.S. Senator, for small gatherings.

Paul believes Novi could find land on which to build a small amphitheater and would like to include this as one of the city's goals.

Portage's park system is intertwined with 60 miles of handicapped-accessible trails. Paul said. She added that the city is also blessed with seven

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COMMUNITY

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Musicians gear up for Civic Center concert

11 groups set for June 3 event

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Where can you hear 11 bands for only \$7?

At the Novi Civic Center on Saturday, June 3, at the "Out of the Basement and Into the Day" event. From noon-7 p.m., local bands will play for an admission price that will cost less than going to a movie.

Concert schedule

- noon Common Culprit
- 12:35 p.m. UnderEstimated
- 1:10 p.m. Explicit
- 1:45 p.m. Lions of Thunder
- 2:20 p.m. Diary of Legends
- 2:55 p.m. Deliverance
- 3:30 p.m. Soapbox Paradox
- 4:05 p.m. Halmut
- 4:40 p.m. The Establishment
- 5:15 p.m. Landry
- 5:50 p.m. Outlawed Expression
- 6:25 p.m. Ellipsis



Members of the Novi band Soapbox Paradox will play at the "Out of the Basement and Into the Day" all-day concert Saturday, June 3, at the Novi Civic Center. Pictured, from left, are Steve Alberty, vocals and guitar; Jason Kohring, drums; and Mike Alberty, bass.

Troy Ringle, event and marketing coordinator, Novi Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department, said the city has been organizing average hard concert series since January.

Each band will perform about a 30-minute set.

Ron Corte O'Brien, bass player for Common Culprit, and his band members hail from South Lyon High School. Other band members include O'Brien's stepbrother Brandon Bertano on guitar and vocals, George Brown on guitar and vocals, and Brett Fredrick on drums.

"We've been together for almost two years, but George just joined as a couple of months ago," O'Brien said.

He describes their music as a mix between hard rock and the punk-influenced Scraton. "We can't really describe ourselves as one genre," he said.

Common Culprit has produced two CDs so far, with the second one just released this month. CDs will be available at the June 3 event.

O'Brien and Bertano also play in UnderEstimated, with O'Brien writing a lot of that band's selections.

"We try to practice about twice a week," O'Brien said. "It's hard, because both bands practice in the same house, so we have to work that out." Common Culprit is booked to make a tour in northern Michigan this summer.

O'Brien said UnderEstimated's sound is similar to the former

Delroit band Suicide Machines. UnderEstimated also just recently produced a CD.

Outdoor activities planned

Outdoor activities will include a climbing wall, a tennis tournament and even T-shirts for sale — just like other music festivals.

"We're hoping the weather holds out, and we get a good turnout," Ringle said. "We're excited about it."

Most of the bands are from Novi or the surrounding area and are comprised of teenagers or recent high school graduates.

The concert will offer a professional sound system on the city's mobile stage.

This is the fourth in this year's basement band concert series.

Proceeds from the event will go toward paying for the sound system and for other in-venue costs in the future.

"It's a self-funded program," Ringle said.

A lot of city's offer basement band concerts, and city staff decided Novi teenagers needed more activities close to home.

"We're trying to hit that teen segment," Ringle said.

For more information, call the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department at (248) 347-0400.

Pam Fleming can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 105, or by e-mail at pfleming@gannett.com.

Belushi says new book offshoot of 'According to Jim' philosophy

About 300 see actor at Borders

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Comedian and actor Jim Belushi says being a man today isn't easy.

But, after three marriages and a successful sitcom about family life, he's learned a few pearls of wisdom.

Now, he's sharing these pearls with his fellow males in his new book, "Real Men Don't Apologize."

Belushi, the star of ABC's "According to Jim," (Tuesdays, 8 p.m.) came to Borders Books & Music in Novi May 18 to talk about his new book, sign copies and entertain a group of about 300 fans.

He said the book is a result of the dynamics presented on the family-friendly sitcom, currently in its fifth season.

The idea for the book came

from his agent, who thought that some of the attitudes presented on the hit comedy show could be expanded into a book.

"In the 120 episodes we've done, you won't see the character Jim as the only one," Belushi said.

He says in television, he's tired of men saying their sorry.

"I'm tired of the women being tough," he said. "In television sitcoms, the women are the men, and the men are the women. And, I think that's a really bad example to set for the kids."

He believes the guys in sitcoms need to man-up a little bit and the women need to be more feminine.

"I think the most masculine a guy is, the more feminine the woman is allowed to be," Belushi said.

"Women made wusses out of guys in the '70s, and now they want guys again," he joked.

Belushi said women say they want a man who is sensitive, vulnerable and shares his feelings.

"But that's not a good man, that's a good woman," he joked. "We play the organ and bring dragon steaks home at night," he said. "That's how men say 'I love you.' They share their kill."

Belushi believes his first two marriages failed because he wasn't a strong enough male.

"There's a difference between what a woman says she wants and what she needs," he said.

His book is about creating electricity between a man and a woman and how to keep it alive.

It's broken up in to three sections — "How to Be a Man," "Dating" and "Relationships."

Belushi feels one of men's jobs is to keep women motivated in the relationship.

"Always treat your wife like a girlfriend," he said. "Just because you live with her doesn't mean she doesn't deserve to be flirted with and teased. She deserves the same attention as the cute girl at the office."

He also believes women are attracted to men who are mysterious and powerful.

"Romance and intrigue are important," Belushi said.

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

Suburban wins bid for arena

It's not always about the money

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

Tom Anastos, owner of Suburban Sports Group, probably felt like he made a goal from the blue line after Monday's city council meeting.

Even though his Farmington Hills-based company wasn't the lowest bidder by a long shot, council approved Suburban's bid to continue managing the Novi Ice Arena.

Member Lynne Paul cast the only dissenting vote in the 5-1 decision; Member Andrew Mutch was absent.

Council awarded a three-year contract with a one-year renewal option, with first-year fees totaling about \$97,000.

Paul thought the city should have gone with the less expensive firm and save the approximately \$28,000 over a year. It will spend on Suburban's services. She also didn't support the council's recent decision to forgive an almost \$700,000 debt the arena owed.

The city requests bid or service proposals ever three to four years.

The ice arena contract with Suburban expires June 30.

Other proposals for management services included Advanced Arenas, a New York firm, and Rink Management Services in Virginia.

Advanced Arenas proposal was disqualified because the firm submitted a non-fixed fee. The Request for Proposal specified that at least 80 percent of the fee must be fixed.

Rink Management Services, which manages 20 ice arenas throughout the U.S., presented a proposal of \$68,500.

Randy Auler, director, Novi Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department, said that although Suburban's bid was higher, its staff members know the ice arena market and has established relationships with the Novi rink's customers.

Suburban has managed the Novi Ice Arena since August 1999.

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@gannett.com.

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Floors To Your Door

By: Mike Riley

Designing with Carpet

Flooring, especially carpet, can tie together many different decorating styles in your home and help make for an exciting personal statement.

That can be accomplished either with a neutral color, blending carpet with fabrics and other surfaces, or it can be accomplished by making carpet a vibrant focal point of the room, a bold fashion statement that reflects your lifestyle.

How do you make the smooth fashion transition from carpet to other floor covers? Consider carrying the same or similar colors from one space to adjoining rooms so a "flow" can be maintained, even as your choice of surface changes from room to room.

Seams play a big role in interrupting the flow of your living space. They can be avoided or minimized by discussing layout and location with your salesperson to see if seams can be placed in less-noticeable areas — prior to your installers' arrival.

Look for ways to "hide" potential soiling. Medium and darker colors, tweeds and textures disguise common soil in high-traffic areas. New, stain and soil technology make lighter color carpet easier to clean, allowing for far more decorating options throughout the house.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Memorial Day parade details

Novi's Memorial Day parade will be held at 10 a.m. Monday, May 29. The parade route is the same as last year, starting at Karim Boulevard and heading

west on 10 Mile Road to the Novi Civic Center. Karim is just west of Haggerty Road. Events at the civic center will include a memorial service with a flag folding, singing, "Taps" and a gun salute. Call (248) 347-0400 for more information.

Novi named Tree City USA

Steve Pritz, city forester, announced recently that The National Arbor Day Foundation has named Novi as a Tree City USA for 2005.

This is the 14th year Novi has received this national recognition.

Tree City USA recognizes communities that have shown their commitment to an effective, ongoing community forestry program.

"To become a Tree City USA, a community must meet four standards: a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program and an Arbor Day observance."

Novi's Arbor Day celebration took place Aug. 29 at Community Sports Park.

The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service.

This year is the 20th anniversary of Tree City USA. Since 1976, the program has grown to be the lead-

community forestry recognition program in the country.

Street tree inventory begins

Novi's street tree inventory, which is partially funded by a grant, began May 15.

The purpose of this project is to develop a comprehensive urban forest management program, including an inventory of Novi's approximately 18,000 street trees by certified arborists.

The project should be completed by Aug. 1.

So far, Panoramic Landscaping has installed about 1,000 street trees in several Novi subdivisions. The plantings should be done by the end of May, depending on the weather.

Become a 'Home Front Hero'

Staff members at the American Red Cross Southeastern Michigan Blood Region invite area residents to become a "Home Front Hero" through this Memorial Day weekend.

Please call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or visit www.givelife.org to make an appointment to donate blood.

community blood drive to honor veterans with a blood donation.

Refresh with juice and cookies; receive a commemorative "Home Front Heroes" T-shirt and write a note of thanks to our troops know how much you care.

Postcard and delivery will be provided by the American Red Cross.

"Blood donation is a simple act and answers a vital need. Approximately 900 pints of blood are needed each day to help save lives in our community," said Diane Ward of the Southeastern Michigan Region.

To be eligible, donors must be in general good health, weigh at least 110 pounds and at least 17 years old. There is no maximum age limit.

The closest American Red Cross Blood Drive Center for Novi residents is at 31150 Haggerty Road just south of 14 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

Please call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or visit www.givelife.org to make an appointment to donate blood.

Compiled by Novi News staff

Flag etiquette

Novi Troop 407 Boy Scouts David Sparling, Parker Maynard and Matt Thimn practices proper U.S. flag etiquette at a recent troop meeting outside the Old Novi Township Hall. Learning how to properly display, raise and lower, and fold the American flag is one part of earning Tenderfoot, one of the first ranks. Novi's Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will be marching in Novi's Memorial Day parade on Monday.

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Landscape architect hired by city

By Pam Fleming
STAFF WRITER

David Beschke is ready to make Novi more beautiful. As the city's new landscape architect, he will help the grounds of Novi's new subdivisions and other developments to be more eye-appealing.

Beschke, who just started Monday in the Plan Review Center, replaces former landscape architect Lance Shipman, who left in January. Beschke, a registered landscape architect, was selected from dozens of candidates. A graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in landscape architecture, he has worked in both the public and private sectors in his 17-year career. Most recently, he was a senior landscape architect and project coordinator for Professional Engineering Associates in the Howell office.

Prior to that, he was co-owner and landscape architect for Equinox, a Brighton firm that specializes in landscape architecture and civil engineering.

Novi lad sports a \$100,000 tail

■ Boy wins \$100,000 on "America's Funniest Home Videos" for tail shaking

By Matt Doran
STAFF WRITER

Immocence may be priceless, but Luke Snell's was worth \$100,000.

Luke, now 7-years-old, was selected last December as a \$100,000 winner on the TV show "America's Funniest Home Videos," after being caught on tape in April 2005 playing with the tail of his alligator costume on stage at Novi Woods Elementary School's spring show. He had pulled the tail between his legs and up front because other children had been tugging on it when it was hanging behind him.

His mother, Karin Snell, was videotaping the show and

zoomed in when a friend pointed out what her son was doing.

"(He) was hitting it and shaking it," Snell said. "It looked kind of indecent. He was completely innocent. He didn't know why it was funny. I had to explain to him, 'Daddy, it looked like the alligator's private.'"

Luke was 6-years-old at the time and was on-stage with about 20 other children, all of whom were dressed as animals for the show. He had worn the alligator costume for Halloween the previous year.

California bound

Once Snell sent the tape in, it didn't take long for "America's Funniest Home Videos" to get back with her, she said. After getting releases from the parents of the other children in the video, as well as the school's music teacher, the Snells journeyed to California three times to film different episodes of the show. They won \$10,000 on the first show and \$100,000 on the second. They competed for a time-share from Disney on the

third episode, which aired earlier this month, but lost.

Snell said the clip of Luke shaking his tail has run four or five times on the show and was even selected to play on the grand finale episode of "America's Funniest Home Videos," recently, where the best clips from the show's history were played. She said the clip was the only one selected to represent the 16th season. "I still laugh when I see it," Snell said.

The life of a star

Before traveling to California, Snell said her four children, who range in age from 4 to 10, had never been on TV and had never stayed in a hotel or traveled in planes and limousines. "It's just old news now," she said.

Snell said Luke has gotten so used to seeing himself on TV that he was annoyed when she interrupted him playing video games to tell him his clip was airing again. "He's so non-chalant about

it," Snell said. "He's had lots of fun going to California. He's the big star (at school)."

Answered prayer

The day she heard from the show, Snell had submitted a written prayer request at a Bible study for financial help. She is a stay-at-home mother of four children, ranging in age from 4 to 10, and her husband had been laid off from his job. "We were pretty financially devastated," Snell said. "It's just a huge blessing. It's been unbelievable to just be able to exist financially and not worry."

Luke has now outgrown the alligator costume, Snell said, and at this year's spring show at Novi Woods Elementary, he dressed as a rabbit. "I'm sure he had a costume with a short tail," she joked.

Matt Doran is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 109, or by e-mail at mdoran@gannett.com.

OBITUARY

GORDON D. BUYOT

Age 51 of Northville, passed away May 15, 2006. Memorial Service was held Thursday, May 18th at Castleline Funeral Home, Inc. Memorials appreciated to Charity of Choice.

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BUSINESS

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Tower delayed

Judge Gropper extends deadline

By Tracy Mishler
STAFF WRITER

United States Bankruptcy Judge Allan Gropper wants to see talks continue between Tower Automotive officials and the company's labor unions.

Gropper delayed the ruling on Tower's request to drop its labor union contracts to May 26, after the Novi-based company agreed to continue settlement negotiations.

Tower declared bankruptcy in February 2005 and wants to cut pay and benefits by \$21.5 million a year.

"This was a routine extension encouraging both sides to continue discussions," said Tower spokesman Joe Kirik. "This situation hasn't changed and the judge doesn't want to order a solution from the bench." Kirik said Tower hopes to wrap up discussions soon.

"We want to complete reorganization as soon as possible and file it in order to move toward emergence from Chapter 11," he said.

When the request was introduced in February, labor unions threatened to strike if Gropper ruled in favor of Tower.

According to Tower officials, part of the bankruptcy process is

the option to reject labor contracts to be more cost efficient.

Tower's goal is to exit bankruptcy.

The company announced Wednesday the elimination of 250 jobs at its 38-year-old Bluffton, Ohio, plant within the next few months as part of its strategy to reduce excess manufacturing capacity and enhance operational efficiency.

Tower officials said they plan to keep about 15 jobs in Bluffton, which makes stampings and assemblies for Ford Motor Co. and DaimlerChrysler AG, for an undetermined amount of time.

Those workers will operate a production line that runs off frame rails for Ford Econoline vans.

"These actions are a necessary part of our ongoing strategy to improve Tower's operational efficiency, cost competitiveness and ability to respond effectively to changing market forces," said Bill Pumphrey, Tower's president of North American operations in a statement.

"These are difficult decisions, particularly because they affect our hardworking colleagues, and we must do what is right for Tower."

Kirik said Tower officials hope to complete legal issues and its emergence from bankruptcy soon.

Tracy Mishler can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107, or at tmishler@ganett.com.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

New bills for business

The Senate Economic Development, Small Business and Regulatory Reform Committee voted unanimously to recommend bills sponsored by Sen. Nancy Cassia (R-Nowi) that will protect and advance the professionalism, ethics and integrity of the residential building industry while giving consumers greater confidence and security in those they hire. Senate Bills 631 and 632, known as the Good Builders legislation, will provide several mechanisms to strengthen the industry.

The bills give the state the authority to go after unlicensed builders. The legislation also creates the Builder Enforcement Fund in the Michigan Department of Treasury. Each licensee will pay a \$30 one-time fee to this fund for the purpose of prosecuting unlicensed builder activity. After startup of the fund, civil fines collected from prosecuting unlicensed builders will continue to fund this program. The bills now move to the full Senate for consideration.

Cooper recalls

Cooper-Standard Holdings Inc., the parent of Cooper-Standard Automotive Inc., announced its first quarter 2006 financial results. Results for the period were impacted by the company's acquisition of FTV Industrial automotive Fluid Handling Systems (FHS) division, which was completed in the first quarter. The company reported sales of \$540.4 million and net income of \$5.5 million. The company manufactures body sealing, fluid handling, and noise, vibration, and harshness (NVH) control parts for the automotive industry.

Sales in the first quarter 2006 were 15 percent higher than the same period in 2005, mainly due to the FHS acquisition. FHS accounted for \$71.3 million in sales for the period of Feb. 7 through March 31, 2006. Net income was \$5.5 million, up \$6.0 million from 2005 which was attributable to a \$9.9 million favorable change in purchase accounting adjustments. First quarter 2006 net interest expense was \$20.3 million compared to 2005 net interest expense of \$16.1 million due to the incremental net debt associated with the acquisition and slightly higher interest rates.

Ice cream trucks will distribute free frozen treats and T-shirts throughout the Memorial Day weekend at locations all over Metro Detroit as part of Twelve Oaks Mall and the Fairlane Town Center's launch of a new "GO" marketing campaign.

'GO' to the mall

A direct response to shoppers' calls for something fun and different, the campaign features edgy one-liners printed on every-

thing from cup wraps at local coffee shops to dry cleaning bags, surprises on mall restroom mirrors and a Web site where visitors can win prizes for becoming part of the creative team.

The "GO" campaign also spotlights the new simplified shopping service at these Taubman Malls. Beginning Friday, the shopping center will gather sales information from hundreds of stores and create sales lists in eight retail categories. The sales lists, available throughout the mall, will be updated and printed every week.

Program roll out

Vector SCM of Novi has successfully rolled out its European Vehicle Visibility (EUVV) program for General Motors Europe (GME), providing comprehensive outbound logistics visibility and exception management of finished vehicles to all GME dealers across Europe covering all modes.

In directing a complex network of more than 70 outbound service providers moving some 1.7 million GM vehicles to 34 countries annually, Vector provides visibility to some 11 million shipments per year, supporting finished vehicle delivery for two GM brands.

DeMaria promotions

Kaie Higgins has been promoted from cost engineer to project engineer for the Health Care and University Groups at

DeMaria Building Company of Novi and Detroit. Higgins is a graduate of the Building Construction Management Program at Michigan State University and earned her bachelor's degree in 2005.

Vector chosen for design

Vector SCM of Novi has been selected by Diebold, Inc. to provide process design, consulting and project management services for a strategic supply chain re-engineering initiative to improve Diebold's "Order to Cash" cycle.

The project is expected to roll out in several phases. The first objective is to benchmark Diebold's current practices to understand as it processes at work, and the links across the order to cash cycle. In this phase Vector is mapping the current state of the processes to identify gaps and recommend steps for improvement. A joint team of Vector and Diebold personnel is participating in this investigative and improvement identification exercise. Concurrent with the process mapping activity will be other projects tackling logistics costs, inventory and logistics network design.

Vector also is supporting Diebold with implementation of a vendor-managed inventory (VMI) system for its manufacturing location in Lexington, North Carolina.

Compiled by Tracy Mishler

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BE SCENE IN NOVI

Cal Stone editor (248) 349-1700 ext 113 cstone@gannett.com www.novinews.com Fax: (248) 349-4572



Providence beam-signing: The first steel beams for the new St. John Providence Park Hospital arrived earlier this month and are being erected at the site. Guests were invited to sign a special white beam at a ceremony on May 16.

Left (l to r): Deputy Chief Tom Lindberg, Novi FD; Bob Gatt, Novi City Council; Rob Casalou, President, St. John Providence Hospital; Dave Landry, Novi Mayor; Terri Margolis, Novi City Council; Sheryl Welsh, Community Relations, City of Novi; Don Saven, Building Official, City of Novi; Clay Pearson, Acting City Manager, Novi; Lynne Paul, Novi City Council; Jeff Johnson, Acting Fire Chief, Novi.

Right (l to r) Elliot Joseph, CEO St. John Health; Sr. Xavier Balance, Chair of the Board, Providence; Rob Casalou, President, St. John Providence Park Hospital; State Senator Nancy Cassis; Terence Thomas, Senior VP, Advocacy, St. John Health.

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John Lewandowski, Providence Hospital; Joan Schroeder, National City

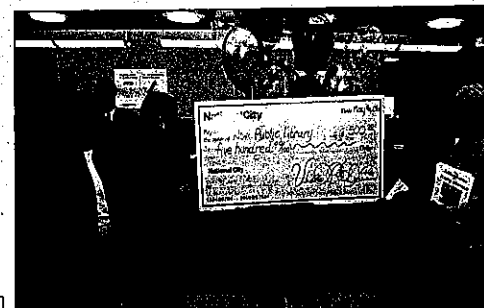


Cyndi Lewandowski, Brenda Allen and Jeannette Reid, the tellers at National City's new branch



Nora Chempion, Novi Chamber of Commerce; Art Johnson, Johnson's Printing Services

National City Bank grand opening: The new National City Bank branch on Grand River at 12 Mile held a grand opening May 16 as part of a week-long celebration. To show its commitment to community support, branch manager Valerie McDonald presented \$500 checks to both the Novi Rotary Club and the Novi Public Library.



Maryellen Mulcrone and Carol Bauer, Novi Public Library; Valerie McDonald, National City; Brenda Lusier, Novi Public Library



Bill Goodrich and Yony Rajah, Judson Center; Bill Goodrich, National City; Yony Rajah, Judson Center



Monica Myers, Danielle Herrmann and Lincoln Lewis, National City

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OPINION

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Novi News

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Our fundamental purposes are to enhance the lives of our readers, nurture the home towns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

WHERE WE STAND

Memorial Day: Time to reflect on our freedom

Ask any veteran if they believe they are heroes and they will tell you, quite simply, "no."

The heroes, they say, never came home. They gave their lives, what President Abraham Lincoln so eloquently called "the last full measure of devotion," in answer to the call for freedom. They died protecting all the rights and privileges of the free world.

America — the beautiful, the great, the proud — stands tall because of the blood of men and women who thought not of themselves but of the greater cause when the ultimate sacrifice was called for. The lives of these people were not given in vain. The entire process that our country has been built upon is owed to them. From our right to vote for representation to our freedom of speech and to bear arms.

Though we celebrate Memorial Day with parades, barbecues and a three-day weekend, it should be noted that this holiday is set aside for remembrance of those who have fallen. It is a somber day of thanks for those who have died in the name of freedom.

Take the time to remember those who have given the ultimate gift of life. America is a country that should never forget.

As Old Glory flaps gently in a spring breeze this Monday, take a moment to reflect on an excerpt from a 1948 issue of The Ukrainian Weekly: "It has often been said that when we do visit the grave of a fallen soldier or sailor, it is not to add anything to the hallowed remains, but to become strengthened in the conviction that they died to make the world a better place to live in, that their cause has not yet been won, and that it is up to us, the living, to advance that cause a step further."

Improvement has its rewards

Last Thursday was a great Rotary Club luncheon. Each year, the Novi Rotary Club gives \$100 to Novi High Schools' 10 most improved 10th and 11th graders, as selected by counselors. The search begins at the end of the first semester and focuses on conduct, grades and attendance. Each of the schools' three counselors handles around 500 students. Those being considered must tell what they're most proud of; identify a goal; state a key motivator; and describe their post-high school plans. The students honored at last week's Rotary luncheon are Patsy Schultz, 10th grade; Tim Vandever, 10th; Morgan Constat, 11th; Ryan Lemieux, 11th; Nicole Hubbell, 11th; Becky Johnson, 11th; Cameron Brodrick, 10th; Aaron Haught, 10th; John Frank, 12th (chosen for his dramatic improvements during high school); and Fadi Farah, 11th. Congrats to all!

Want to meet some former college and pro players? Beginning at 10 a.m. on June 4, NFL alumni will give an autograph session at Rock Financial Showplace honoring many Michigan State University and NFL greats. Scheduled to appear are Joe DeLamelleure (Pro Football Hall of Fame member), George Farles, Sonny Grandlins, Dorne Dibble, Sherman Lewis, Gary Lowe, Jerry Rush, Sam Williams, Hand Bullough, Brad Van Felt, Norm Masters, Arch Matsos, John Panelli, John Shinsky and Walt Kowalczyk. Cost is \$5 per autograph (unless indicated) with proceeds going to support local high school scholarships and The City of Children Matamoros A.C. orphanage. For information concerning the autograph session, please contact Mark Lewis at (248) 444-2241 or at mlnews@yaho.com.

It's been nearly 30 years since I hopped on a motorcycle, but I'll be tempted to on Saturday, June 10 when Motor City Harley-Davidson presents the 6th Annual HOGs for Cats and Dogs to benefit the Michigan Humane Society. Help the animals of the Michigan Humane Society by adopting a pet and/or donating food and supplies at Motor City Harley-Davidson. An early bird breakfast will be held at 9 a.m. Breakfast and refreshments throughout the day provided by Gus O'Connor's Public House. An observation run departing from Motor City Harley-Davidson is open to all and starts at 10 a.m. The last bike is in by 3 p.m. For more information call the dealership at 248-473-7433. Registration \$10 or \$5 with donation of a wish list item. The dealership is at 34900 Grand River in Farmington Hills.

Cal Stone is the editor of the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 113 or by e-mail at cstone@gannett.com.



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Warming waters
A few swans swim on the waters of Walled Lake. Most residents with property along the lake have got their docks and boats in the water in anticipation of enjoying its waters - like these birds.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION: Together, we are truly better!

Leadership matters.

On May 31, more than 1,500 business, government, civic, and community leaders will gather for the 2006 Detroit Regional Chamber's annual Mackinac Policy Conference. This year more than ever before our leaders must focus their attention on what benefits our region and our state for our collective future.

While there are many challenges facing us, the scent of optimism in the air is as strong as the distinct smells of the Mackinac Island as people prepare for this year's conference.

Michigan, particularly the ten county region of Southeastern Michigan, has been severely impacted by the rapidly changing, disruptive information and technologically driven global economy.

Thomas L. Friedman, in his national best seller, tells us, "The World is Flat." Well, the world may be flat, but many in Michigan feel flattened and run over by the economic tsunami that has hit our shores. Yet, the leaders of the region are following the advice of my old football coach when he belted, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

Michigan put the world on wheels and with the right vision and leadership we are capable of putting the region and the state back in the economic driver's seat of the 21st century.

will lead to improved economic prosperity and quality of life for Southeastern Michigan.

Under the "get it done" leadership of Edsel Ford, I am confident that an action plan (with the emphasis on the word action) will emerge with the active input of business, labor, civic, and religious leaders, community members both young and old, and cities and suburbs across this region.

The Chamber is also scheduling community conversations across our region. The focus will be to listen to concerns, identify priorities and strategies and tap into new emerging leadership. These meetings will be across sectors, including business, nonprofit, and faith-based groups. This is the beginning of engaging the community — something that will be a common thread throughout Design Regional Detroit process.

As Clyde Prestowitz concludes in his must-read book, Three Billion New Capitalists: The Great Shift of Wealth and Power to the East: "Essentially, a true leader strives to discover facts, connect the dots, follow where they lead, and determine how best to face the problems they present, and then shape events and persuade people to embrace the results." This is what Design Regional Detroit is all about.

The 10-county region of Southeast Michigan is rich in natural beauty, is blessed with great public and private leaders and educational institutions, has an outstanding quality of life and a solid economic foundation on which to build. Our future lies in our ability to be creative, innovative and to imagine and invent.

Together we are truly better. We are capable of developing a shared vision and common agenda that will drive us forward.

Thank you Edsel Ford, Cindy Pasky, Dennis Archer and retiring Chamber Executive Dick Blouse for your leadership — it does matter.

400 adult residents of the 10 counties their thoughts on the region's assets, future, and need for regional collaboration. An overwhelming majority of respondents believe that stronger regional collaboration is necessary to enhance all residents' quality of life.

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Tom Watkins is a member of the Advisory Council for Design Regional Detroit. He is a business and education consultant. He served as Michigan Superintendent of Schools from 2001-2005 and president and CEO of the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Fla. 1996-2001. He can be reached at tdw@twatkins@aol.com.

Share your opinions: We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content. Generally, no more than one letter per month by the same author will be published. Letters must be received by noon, Tuesday to be printed in the Thursday edition. Mail: Letters to the Editor, Cal Stone, Novi News, 104 W. Main St., Northville, MI 48167 E-mail: cstone@gannett.com Fax to: (248) 349-9832

COMMENTARY

Cal Stone, editor (248) 349-1700, ext. 113 cstone@gannett.com

Groups focus on state's future

The really important things usually begin silently, almost invisibly. No thunderclap, just a faint stirring in the wind.

I'm coming to the conclusion that something truly important is happening in Michigan now. As the face the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, there are a few little groups here and there that are beginning to craft a serious, far-reaching policy agenda to help us face what will surely be a tough transition.

The toughness can't be avoided. But if these pioneers of Michigan's future succeed, they may lay the groundwork for the birth of a more prosperous state and society in the years ahead.

These groups have arisen separately, almost spontaneously, in reaction to our troubles. They don't all have identical agendas. But all of them are concerned that up to now, intelligent, mature responses to the state's political leadership has been sadly lacking.

Encouragingly, these groups are talking to each other to make sure they don't get their feet tangled up or wind up in draining turf battles. I attended a meeting last week, for example, in which three emerging groups working in southeastern Michigan agreed to share thinking and to collaborate.

• **Detroit Renaissance**, headed by Doug Rothwell, the highly respected former CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Rothwell has assembled a steering committee of the region's highest-powered leaders. They will be working to determine the area's economic strengths and weaknesses and identify some of the best practices in other regions, both domestic and global.

When they've done that, they will select a few primary target areas that differentiate the greater Detroit region from other communities — and see what they can do.

• **The Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce**, long a sane force within the business community, is launching a similar

program. This one, "Design Regional Detroit" is the brainchild of long-time chamber head Dick Blouse, and is being developed under the leadership of Edsel Ford. Design Regional Detroit is focusing on the 10 counties surrounding the city to "create and execute a regional plan that will lead to improved economic prosperity and quality of life in southeastern Michigan."

• **The United Way** had been a scattering of local chapters with a combined board membership of 150. Now, those have been consolidated into the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, with a manageable board of 30 community leaders.

Headed by CEO Michael Brennan, the United Way completed this spring a massive Community Call To Action Survey. Organizers felt it received a stunning response rate of more than 6,250 people, the highest response of any such survey in Michigan history.

After studying the responses, the United Way's goal: To focus on social services in a way similar to that of the development bank by Detroit Renaissance and the Detroit Chamber.

Other groups are taking up the issue as well:

• **One is Michigan Future, Inc.**, headed by Lou Glazer, one of the smartest, most persuasive policy gurus in the state. Michigan Future has been assembling data demonstrating that states that support what Glazer calls a "knowledge economy" — Massachusetts and California are primary examples — are those that prosper, regardless of tax rates. "Talent trumps everything," says Glazer, who argues that regions that attract and retain innovators, entrepreneurs and researchers are those that will prosper.

• Also based in Ann Arbor is an effort led by John Austin and former University of Michigan President Jim Duderstadt that is working on an economic strategy for the entire Great Lakes region.

Austin was the chief staffer for the Cherry

Commission, possibly Governor Granholm's most ambitious policy initiative. It produced a report in 2004 that concluded that Michigan needed to double the number of college graduates within a decade if the state hoped to compete successfully in a rapidly globalizing economy.

Supported by the Brookings Institution, the Austin-Duderstadt effort is aimed at providing a regional context into which more local strategic efforts can work.

• Also involved is **The Center for Michigan**, a think-and-do tank that I founded earlier this year. The Center's mission is to help create the kind of state in which our children and grandchildren can prosper and want to live. We aim to do that by setting forth far-reaching, broadly acceptable policy proposals for the economy and attacking what some have called the "structural sclerosis" of the political system, legislative term limits for example. The Center has just hired long-time journalist John Behow as executive director.

All these groups share things in common. They are all vitally interested in assisting fundamental change in Michigan.

Approvingly, they cite former General Motors CEO Roger Smith's comment that, "If we keep doing what we've always done, we'll keep getting what we've always got." And they all know that "what we've always got" doesn't work anymore. All these groups know better than to let the politicians try and manage the restructuring effort by themselves. As one participant at last week's meeting said to general approval, "the last thing we want to do is let the Lansing crowd grab this."

And all these groups recognize that unless we take serious action now, Michigan will be destined for a long, sad, and painful decline. Will anything substantial come out of all this so-far quiet stirring? You never know for sure, but my gut tells me that there's something biogenic in the wind. And though the journey may be many miles, these folks are taking those significant first steps.

Those interested in learning more about The Center for Michigan should visit the Web site at www.thecenterformichigan.net.

Phil Power is a longtime observer of political economics and education issues in Michigan. He would be pleased to hear from readers at ppower@hcmnet.com.



Phil Power

Could we soon be wireless Novi?

Could we soon be wireless Novi? Chances are pretty good, now that the Novi City Council has agreed to jump online with the Wireless Oakland plan.

According to city officials, Wireless Oakland has three goals: Provide free wireless Internet throughout the entire county; address the digital divide in allowing everyone to have access to the Internet; and to support investments and improved technology by local government.

Rob Petty said portability is key with Wireless Oakland. "People will be able to access the Internet all over the city," said Petty, director of information technology for the city of Novi.

"It's important from both a business and citizen standpoint."

As Clyde Prestowitz concludes in his must-read book, Three Billion New Capitalists: The Great Shift of Wealth and Power to the East: "Essentially, a true leader strives to discover facts, connect the dots, follow where they lead, and determine how best to face the problems they present, and then shape events and persuade people to embrace the results." This is what Design Regional Detroit is all about.

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Provided by Oakland County-based MichTel, Wireless Oakland will be free.

And price is important for those who cannot afford to hook-up with Internet providers like Bright House Networks, Wide Open West and Comcast.

Petty said there has been skepticism on how the county can provide free Internet.

He said there will be two levels of access available. "The first level will have an initial level set that everyone can connect to free of charge," Petty said. "The second level is by subscription and will be at a much higher speed."

Although speed has not yet been released, Petty agreed if Internet usage is limited, free is a good way to go. Currently, the county is anticipating the

seven city pilot program to begin June 30. Pilot cities include Wixom, Troy, Royal Oak, Pontiac, Oak Park, Madison Heights and Birmingham.

"We recently signed the inter-local agreement and now we're waiting on the roll out schedule from the county," Petty said.

"If Wireless Oakland is successful, what will happen to other Internet providers?" Petty believes Wireless Oakland won't dampen competition, but provide more.

"I see it as a benefit and it could possibly help drive down costs," he said.

New technology is always interesting and exciting. If Wireless Oakland works, could we soon be thinking about becoming Wireless Michigan? What will they think of next?

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.



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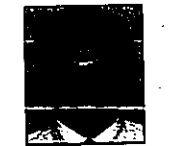
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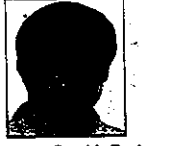
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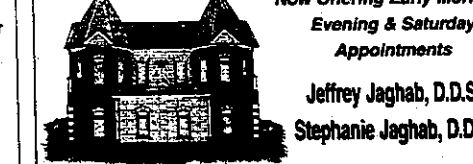
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You have many medication choices when battling the symptoms of allergic rhinitis, or hay fever. Over-the-counter options include antihistamines for relief of sneezing, runny nose, itching, and watery eyes; decongestants to clear nasal passages; and eye drops to relieve redness and itching. These medications can be used separately or in combination with each other, depending on your specific symptoms. Always talk to your doctor if you have other medical conditions that may be affected by these medications. If side effects (drowsiness or decreased coordination, for example) become an issue, talk to your allergist about possible prescription medications. Corticosteroids are effective in many cases, and cromolyn sodium helps relieve hay fever symptoms. Leukotriene modifiers and cromolyn sodium help relieve hay fever symptoms. Leukotriene modifiers also help many patients.

If you would like further information about today's options, or require care for your allergy or asthma condition, contact the ALLERGY AND ASTHMA CENTER.



www.allergyinfo.org

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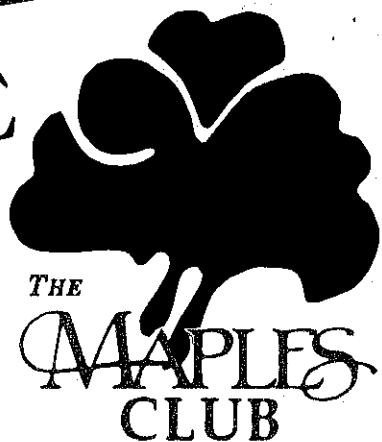
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SENIORS

Call Stone editor (248) 349-1700 ext. 113 cstone@gannett.com www.novnews.com



Photo by JOHN HEIDER/Novi News

Calvin and Lillian Niemi volunteered time to plant flowers last Wednesday at the City of Novi Senior Center. The Niemis planted salvia and snap dragons near the center's entrance along Meadowbrook.

Green thumbs go to work

Everything comes up rosey on Planting Day

By Tracy Mishler
STAFF WRITER

Calvin Niemi used to grow tomatoes, beans, peas and carrots. Now, the 79-year-old Meadowbrook Commons resident is happy to get outside and help plant flowers at the Novi Senior Center in order to rekindle his memories. Along with his wife, Lillian, Niemi took part in Planting Day May 17 to help the center bring color into the residents' and visitors' lives. "Gardening is a favorite of mine," Niemi said. "I love watching flowers grow because you can see them all summer." Instead of hiring a landscaping company to beautify the center, Cheryl Zagorski, community manager for Meadowbrook

Commons, thought it would be more personal to involve the residents and staff. "It's more than a beautification project," Zagorski said. "People take ownership when they can take part in something like this." Although resident turnout was small due to rain, more than 2,500 flowers were put into the ground. "We've gotten so much support and well-wishers on how much they appreciate what we've done," Zagorski said. "The flowers and personal touches make it feel more like home for staff, residents and visitors." Rachel Zagorski, senior services director for the Novi Senior Center, said it was nice to get outside for a change. "I love planting," she said. "It's such a stress reducer and just makes you feel so good." A blossoming future Jan McAlpine came to Planting Day armed with garden tools. "I use to pick weeds at my grandmother's house when I was little," said McAlpine, senior cen-

ter coordinator. "I wasn't too crazy about it then, but now I don't mind. I love gardening." Niemi said having a garden at the center is good for those who are capable. "It's really nice for the residents to see," he said. "When we're done, we'll keep an eye on them. But it's up to the watering system to give them a drink." Red, yellow, purple, pink and white snapdragons and mums now cover the center's front entryway, courtyard and building entry. Zagorski said she would like to continue to host Planting Day annually, but she hopes more people will chip in to tend their green thumbs. "The goal is to get the seniors living in the Commons and visiting to get out and doing what they love but might have had to forego," she said. "From that, you get that experience and wisdom."

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 5/26

9 a.m. Stretch and Strength
10 a.m. Body Recall
noon Lunch
12:30 p.m. Duple Bridge
1:45 p.m. Bingo
2:30 p.m. Massage by appointment

Monday 5/29

Senior Center/Civic Center/Lunch Services/Transportation/Management Office closed for Memorial Day Observance

Tuesday 5/30

8:30 a.m. Pattern Bread
9 a.m. Line Dance*
10 a.m. Asian Pacific
noon Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo
2:30 p.m. Massage by appointment

Wednesday 5/31

9 a.m. Stretch and Strength
9:15 a.m. Women's Golf
10 a.m. Body Recall
11 a.m. Blood Pressure
11 a.m. Taking Off Pounds Sensibly class
1:30 p.m. Chugging*
noon Lunch
2:30 p.m. Massage by appointment

Thursday 6/1

9 a.m. Line Dance
9 a.m. Mixed Golf League
noon Lunch
12:15 Compact Bridge
1:2 p.m. Line Dance
1:3 p.m. Computer Lab open
2:30 p.m. Massage

* Activities will be held at the Novi Civic Center 45175 W. 10 Mile Road. Phone (248) 347-0414.

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Blue Ribbon Winner!
Don't miss this lovely 2BR, 2BA Novi condo. It shows beautifully. Stunning oak flr in foyer, Amish oak with black walnut border in DR, 1st flr MBR, 9' ceilings on 1st flr, fab fin bsmt. \$229,900.

Novi Lakefront
Just listed! Wonderful 3BR brick ranch located on a fabulous 1.23 acre lot on Meadowbrook Lake. Fin bsmt. Custom-built home has exterior curb appeal and interior charm. \$474,900.

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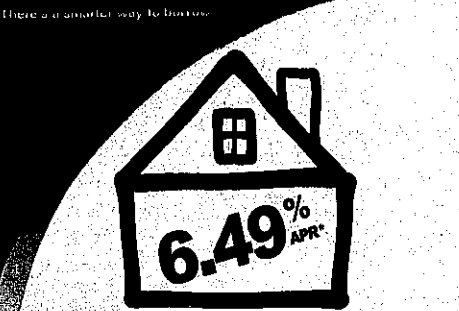
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CALENDAR

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

EVENTS

Second City Comedy Club
 TIME/DATE: 8 p.m.
 Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday, 8 and 10 p.m. Friday, 7 and 9 p.m. Saturday

LOCATION: 42795 Grand River Avenue, across from Novi Town Center
DETAILS: "Bobbie Heads of State" is the theme for this month's shows. Tickets are \$15 on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday and \$20 on Friday and Saturday.
CONTACT: Visit www.ticketmaster.com or call, (248) 645-6666

Northville Genealogical Society
 Individual Help
 TIME/DATE: 1-3 p.m.
 Monthly, ongoing and by appointment

DETAILS: Volunteers are available to offer individual help on genealogy.
CONTACT: Grace Wilfong, (248) 349-9079 or visit www.rootweb.com/~mings

Spring Perennial Exchange

DATE: Saturday
TIME: 9 a.m.-noon
LOCATION: Old Township Hall, 10 Mile Road west of Novi Library
DETAILS: Bring plants to trade and exchange.
CONTACT: (248) 347-0400

Novi Memorial Day Parade

DATE: Monday
TIME: 10 a.m.
DETAILS: The parade will begin at Karlin Brookwood and proceed west on 10 Mile Road to the Novi Civic Center for a Veteran's Memorial Service.

Walled Lake Memorial Day Parade

DATE: Monday
TIME: 11 a.m.
DETAILS: Community groups and organizations are welcome to participate.
CONTACT: (248) 624-4847

Spring Plant Sale

DATE: Saturday, June 3
TIME: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
LOCATION: Michigan State University Tollgate Education Center, 28115 Meadowbrook Road
DETAILS: Master gardeners will be available to answer questions. Plants, perennials, herbs and ornamental grasses will be for sale.
CONTACT: (248) 347-3860, ext. 212

Michigan Humane Society Benefit

DATE: Saturday, June 10
TIME: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
LOCATION: Motor City Harley-Davidson, 34908 Grand River Avenue, Farmington Hills
DETAILS: Motor City Harley-Davidson is sponsoring this run to benefit for the Michigan Humane Society. Registration is \$10.
CONTACT: (248) 473-7433

Farmers Market

DATE: Thursday through Oct. 26
TIME: 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
LOCATION: Northville Downs parking lot, corner of Seven Mile and Sheldon Road, Northville
DETAILS: There are 100 stalls of fresh produce, plants, flowers, baked goods, garden art, crafts and home accessories available.
CONTACT: (734) 953-6018 or visit www.angelahospice.org

Novi Rotary 21st Annual Charity Golf Outing

of Northville Hills Golf Club.
CONTACT: (248) 349-7640

SCHOOL/GOVERNMENT

Wixom City Council

DATE: Tuesday, June 13
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Wixom City Hall, 49045 Pontiac Trail
CONTACT: (248) 624-4557

Novi City Council Meeting

DATE: Monday, June 5
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road
CONTACT: (248) 344-0470

Novi School Board Meeting

DATE: Thursday, June 1
TIME: 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Educational Services Building, 25345 Taft Road
CONTACT: (248) 449-1200

Novi Youth Assistance General Citizens Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, June 6
TIME: 7 p.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road
CONTACT: (248) 347-0410

Novi Schools

Last day for Novi High School seniors
DATE: Wednesday, June 7
Novi High School graduation
DATE: Saturday, June 10
LOCATION: Compuware Arena, Beck Road, Plymouth
Last day of school
DATE: Thursday, June 15
First day of 2006-2007 school year
DATE: Monday, Aug. 28
Closed for Memorial Day
DATE: Friday, May 26 and Monday, May 29

Novi City Offices closed for Memorial Day Observance

DATE: Monday, May 29

BUSINESS

Females in the Family Business Affinity Group

TIME/DATE: 9-9:30 a.m.
Third Thursday of every month
LOCATION: Walsh College, Troy Campus
DETAILS: Walsh Business Leadership Institute invites women who own, are partners in, or work for family businesses. Items discussed will be common issues and share solutions in a non-threatening, non-competitive, non-sales roundtable. Registration is required.
CONTACT: Jan Hubbard, email jhubbard@walshcollege.edu

GOLF OUTINGS

Angela Hospice Golf Outing

DATE: Monday, June 5
TIME: 10 a.m. shotgun start
LOCATION: Wixom Golf and Country Club, 14600 Kinloch Road, Redford
DETAILS: This fund-raiser will benefit programs for terminally ill patients and their families. It will include 18 holes of golf with carts, box lunches, dinner, dessert, and a silent auction.
CONTACT: (734) 953-6018 or visit www.angelahospice.org

Farmers Market

DATE: Thursday through Oct. 26
TIME: 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
LOCATION: Northville Downs parking lot, corner of Seven Mile and Sheldon Road, Northville
DETAILS: There are 100 stalls of fresh produce, plants, flowers, baked goods, garden art, crafts and home accessories available.
CONTACT: (734) 953-6018 or visit www.angelahospice.org

Novi Rotary 21st Annual Charity Golf Outing

DATE: Thursday, June 15
TIME: 10 a.m. shotgun start
LOCATION: Oak Pointe Country Club, 4500 Club Drive, Brighton
DETAILS: The cost is \$140

per person and includes 18 holes of golf, cart, unlimited range balls, lunch and dinner. There will also be an auction, raffle, cash bar and prizes.
CONTACT: (248) 476-4977

Greater Novi Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing

DATE: July 12
LOCATION: Links of Novi, 50935 W. 10 Mile Road

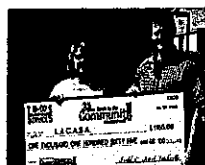
DETAILS: sponsorships available
CONTACT: (248) 347-4622

continued on page 21

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

COMMUNITY SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM LOCAL COMPANY'S GENEROSITY

Many local non-profit organizations are finding support from Todd's Services, Inc. (TSI) *Give Back to the Community Program*. TSI, the largest residential landscaping company in Michigan, is donating *One Million Dollars* to help support local non-profit organizations over the next couple years.



Through the *Give Back to the Community Program*, TSI has already donated over \$250,000 to local organizations.



Todd LaBalle, co-owner of TSI stated, "Local fund raising events and non-profit organizations are in need. We thought this would be the perfect way to thank our customers and reward their favorite local organization."

This is how their *Give Back to the Community Program* works: When Todd's Services, Inc. landscapes a project, they donate 3% of the job total (up to \$600 max.) to the local non-profit organization of the customer's choice. All local non-profit organizations qualify including: schools, churches, fund-raisers, sports teams, subdivisions, and many more.

Julie Salдино, a TSI *Give Back to the Community Program* administrator commented, "Organizations have been very appreciative and we've surprised that this program is so easy to generate money for their cause. In fact, several organizations think this program is a good to be true."

Gail Bowers of Special Olympics Livingston County said, "If there are unmet donation calls, we need the money and we will come in and pick up the checks."

Bern Binkley of Cooper & Binkley Jewelers in Brighton has been trying to raise money for the Brighton Bouncing Bulldogs jump rope team. Barb commented, "I signed up our team and within two weeks we received these donations to help with our travel expenses to the national competition."

TSI is finding that many of the well established and highly recognized organizations are being selected to receive donations. The U of M Comprehensive Cancer Center has received \$ 5,291.88 in just the last 8 weeks. "Not to worry," says Doug Murphy TSI's program administrator, "Every week there are 8 to 10 undirected donations that customers allow us to choose the receiving organization." This allows TSI the opportunity to help support some of the not so well established non-profits such as H.I.R.O., Hamburg Family Fun Festival. TSI has donated \$2,800.00 of these undirected donations to help the Hamburg Family Fun Festival make their new event a success. We are proud to help and it appears they are well on their way.

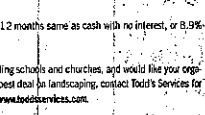
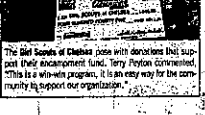
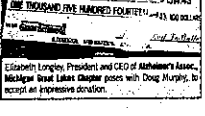
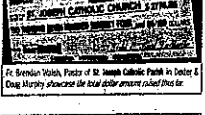
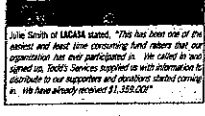
Sherly LaBulle-Birk, office manager stated, "We have developed several excellent ideas to help the participating organizations receive more donations, and it is definitely working. The organizations that are using our ideas are benefiting. Hornum Elementary School received ten donations just last week, and St. Joseph Catholic Parish in Dexter also received 10 donations in just 10 days."

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TSI offers various financing programs including up to 12 months same as cash with no interest, or 9.9% financing with a low monthly payment.

If you are involved with a non-profit organization, including schools and churches, and would like your organization to receive money, or if you want TSI to be your best deal on landscaping, contact Todd's Services for details: (810) 231-2776 or visit them on their website at www.toddservices.com



Julie Salдино of TSI stated, "This has been one of the easiest and best time consuming fund raisers that our organization has ever participated in. We called in and signed up. Todd's Services supplied us with information to distribute to our supporters and donations started coming in. We have already received \$1,359,000."

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continued from page 20

Novi Lions Club Golf Outing

DATE: Thursday, July 13
TIME: 9 a.m. shotgun start
LOCATION: Links of Novi, 50935 W. 10 Mile Road
DETAILS: Individuals and businesses are needed to participate as sponsors, golfers or to provide gifts or gift certificates as prizes to the attendees, or donate items for the "Silent Auction." All proceeds will be given to local charities.
CONTACT: Jerry Coates, (248) 344-0531 or Terri D. Taylor, (248) 755-2384

Novi High School Band Golf Outing

DATE: Sunday, July 30
TIME: noon, noon-5 p.m.
LOCATION: Tanglewood Golf Course, 5300 10 Mile Road, Lyon Township
DETAILS: The cost is \$100 per golfer (includes dinner) and \$35 for dinner only. There will be prizes and a raffle. Golfers and donations are needed.
CONTACT: Dina Kochyan, (248) 348-5135

Novi Chamber of Commerce

CONTACT: (248) 349-3743
19th Annual Tycoon Tee-Off Golf Outing
DATE: Wednesday, August 9
LOCATION: Moose Ridge Golf Course, 11801 Doane Road, South Lyon
DETAILS: This outing will include sponsorship opportunities, prizes, networking and championship golf ball.

Novi Chamber of Commerce

CONTACT: (248) 349-3743
19th Annual Tycoon Tee-Off Golf Outing
DATE: Wednesday, August 9
LOCATION: Moose Ridge Golf Course, 11801 Doane Road, South Lyon
DETAILS: This outing will include sponsorship opportunities, prizes, networking and championship golf ball.

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Art Workshops
TIME/DATE: 9 a.m.-noon
 Wednesday, "Flower Making"
CONTACT: Sue Tracz, (248) 350-0998

Friendship Circle

DATE: second Thursday of each month
TIME: 1 p.m.
LOCATION: St. James Catholic Church, 46325 10 Mile Road, between Taft and Beck roads.
DETAILS: Social group for all widows and widowers.
CONTACT: Norbert Monson, (248) 851-6730, Florence Vaught, (248) 477-8332 or Joy Iovall, (248) 348-9136, joyovall@earthlink.net

MOMS Club of Novi

DATE: first Thursday of each month
TIME: 10 a.m.
LOCATION: Novi Civic Center
DETAILS: The Moms Offering Moms Support (MOMS) is a non-profit support group for mothers who choose to stay at home with their children, work part-time, or work part-time.
CONTACT: dimalan@shc-global.net

Novi Public Library Hours

LOCATION: 45745 W. 10 Mile Road
HOURS: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
 Monday-Thursday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Friday and Saturday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sunday (closed during the summer)
DETAILS: Unless noted below, all programs take place at the library.
CONTACT: (248) 349-0720

Memorial Day Weekend Hours

The library will be open regular hours Saturday. The library will be closed Sunday and Monday.

Teen Volunteer Orientation

DATE: Wednesday and Thursday, June 7-8
TIME: 4:30-5 p.m.
DETAILS: All teens who signed up to help with the 2006 Summer Reading Program, must attend one of these sessions.

Providence Center for the Healing Arts

LOCATION: Assarian Cancer Center, 47601 Grand River Avenue, Novi
CONTACT: (248) 465-5455
Cotton Pencil Workshop
TIME/DATE: 1-3 p.m., second Tuesday of every month
DETAILS: This is a free class for children in residence.
TIME/DATE: 10:11-30 a.m. first and third Thursday of every month
DETAILS: Join Artists-in-Residence May Our Teens and experiment with drawing, pastels, watercolor, Chinese brush painting, mixed media and collage. Beginners are welcome, there is a \$5 materials fee.
Ceramics Class
TIME/DATE: 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1-5 p.m., Wednesday
DETAILS: There is a \$10 materials fee.
The Chi Class
TIME/DATE: 12:15-1 p.m., Thursday
DETAILS: This is an ancient Chinese exercise used to improve flexibility, balance and strength. No experience is necessary. The cost is \$5.
Voga Class
TIME/DATE: Various times, Monday, Wednesday and Friday
DETAILS: The cost is \$10 for walk-in, \$80 for 10 class card and

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Ceramics Class
TIME/DATE: 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1-5 p.m., Wednesday
DETAILS: There is a \$10 materials fee.
The Chi Class
TIME/DATE: 12:15-1 p.m., Thursday
DETAILS: This is an ancient Chinese exercise used to improve flexibility, balance and strength. No experience is necessary. The cost is \$5.
Voga Class
TIME/DATE: Various times, Monday, Wednesday and Friday
DETAILS: The cost is \$10 for walk-in, \$80 for 10 class card and

Providence Center for the Healing Arts

LOCATION: Assarian Cancer Center, 47601 Grand River Avenue, Novi
CONTACT: (248) 465-5455
Cotton Pencil Workshop
TIME/DATE: 1-3 p.m., second Tuesday of every month
DETAILS: This is a free class for children in residence.
TIME/DATE: 10:11-30 a.m. first and third Thursday of every month
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Novi gets piece of league pie page 4B; photos on 5B

■ CATHOLIC CENTRAL:
Tennis team advances to state finals page 4B

SPORTS

AIM HIGH

Novi seniors Chris Machisak and Dan Coleman compete for pole vault record



LEFT: Chris Machisak has his eye on the pole vault record, which he held this season for a week.



RIGHT: Wildcat pole vaulter Dan Coleman is the current pole vault record holder at Novi High School.

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Chris Machisak had it for a week before Dan Coleman took it, adding an inch to it and then another half inch. Now Machisak wants it back.

Now the question is who will be the one who ends up with it and just how tall will it be when they're done?

Since both pole vaulters made the state finals they'll both be shooting to break the high school's event record once again.

"It's a really friendly rivalry," said Machisak, who set the record at 13-feet-3-inches before Coleman broke it. "We're good friends and we're happy to see each other do well."

Novi has benefited from the friendly competition all year, with both vaulters putting points on the board in nearly every meet. The two Wildcats will join Brandon Coles as Novi's representatives at the finals June 3 in Grand Rapids.

But there's a week of competition for the Wildcats before the state finals and Machisak said anything could happen.

"We have a couple more chances at it," he said. "If one of us is having a good day, it could end up getting broke again."

Machisak said he was happy for Coleman when he set the record. But he's ready to take it back. It's currently at 13-6.5.

Machisak has been working with heavier-weight poles to assist in his vaults through the remainder of the season.

He said he's confident that Coleman will be the first one to

State finals qualifiers

The Novi Wildcats boys track and field team, under the guidance of coach Robert Smith, will be sending three athletes to the state finals June 3 in Grand Rapids. Brandon Coles won the regional tournament in the 400 dash to remain undefeated in the event.

Chris Machisak took second in the pole vault to qualify for states while Dan Coleman cleared enough feet in the pole vault to also make the finals this year.

congratulate him if he ends up securing the record last.

"If one of us is doing better than the other one we don't mind," Machisak said. "Even if one of us keeps going and the other is out early we stay and support each other. We don't just walk away."

Having a friendly rivalry means the competition never gets nasty, but it's still competition. The two Wildcats use each other as driving forces in their vaults. They practice against each other, workout with each other and even compete during indoor meets against each other during the off-season.

"In practice every day we push each other to go higher and higher," Coleman said. "We talk to each other about the small things we can fix in our vaults and that could help us go just another inch higher."

When one of them is hurt, the other is always there to help them get back on track. In fact, injuries have plagued the record-breaking season for the two vaulters.

Machisak had just come back from a pulled groin muscle when he and Coleman found themselves as the last vaulters standing at a meet. When he asked Coleman what height they should put the bar at for their final attempts he suggested the record, which stood since 1998.

Both vaulters tried unsuccessfully twice before Coleman bowed out with a third failed attempt. Machisak cleared his third try. Since then, it's been going higher by two inches but Coleman is now running a tweaked hamstring that could potentially hamper his performance.

"I'm working with the physical trainer right now and trying to get back into sprint shape," Coleman said. "Once I do that I can get back on the pole. I broke the record with and then I can fling myself high enough to try for it again."

After high school, the two seniors are hoping to continue their pole vaulting careers. Coleman is heading to Albion College where he will definitely compete for the Britons. Machisak will attend Michigan State University and is planning on trying to walk on with their program.

"Right now the goal is to just keep improving," Machisak said. "The record isn't what's important. It's nice to have, but as long as there's progress being made then there's nothing else that matters."

Quick Hits

Smart 'Cats
Congratulations to the Novi Wildcats girls basketball team. For the fourth year in a row, the girls finished in the top-10 in the state for Academic All-State teams. This year the Wildcats were seventh overall with a grade-point average over 3.7. Well done!

Rachele Folino was also named to the All-State academic team with her 4.0 grade-point average.

Undeleted
With a regional championship run in the 400 meter dash in just 50.9 seconds, Brandon Coles has remained undefeated so far this season.

Coles, a blazing sprinter, will compete in the state finals June 3 in Grand Rapids.

Headed to Eastern Michigan University
Stephanie Janssens found out not long after her article ran in last week's Novi News that she'll definitely be headed to Eastern Michigan University to play soccer.

The junior has verbally committed to a four-year scholarship with the Eagles.

Headed to Eastern, part II
Chris Alberty, the two-time All-State diver from Novi High School, has announced he will be diving with Eastern Michigan University next year.

Eastern is a Division I school and a perennial Mid-American Conference power in swimming and diving.

Alberty will receive a partial scholarship.

Who's it going to be?
The question about who is going to end up with the pole vaulting record at Novi High School may not get answered until the state finals.

Dan Coleman, the current record holder at 13-feet-7-inches, will try and hold off his friend and fellow Wildcat, Chris Machisak, when the two compete this week in the KVC championship and June 3 at the state finals.

It's a toss up as to who will get it. Machisak originally broke the record this year, only to have it snapped by one inch the following week by Coleman, who has since added another inch to the lofty bar.

Speaking of records
Don't look now, but there could be a state record holder in the making.

Junior Stephanie Crawford is currently on pace to set the all-time career goals record for the state of Michigan. Currently it's held by two people: Novi's own Kristi Arrington and Jennifer Swales of St. Clair Shores.

South Lake with 148 goals.

Crawford scored 23 goals her freshman year, followed by 33 last year. As of Monday she had 39 goals this year, giving her a whopping 95 total in her career. That means she only has 54 more to go with the potential of nine more games this year and 20-plus next year.

'CATS ROAR!

Novi boys win regional tourney, prepare for Division I state finals

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

The Novi Wildcats lost home-court advantage during last week's regional tournament, but they weren't about to lose their focus.

The Wildcats' tennis team, coached by Jim Hanson, was forced to move the regional tournament site to Farmington due to rainy weather but it didn't deter them as they marched to a championship and a berth in the state finals June 3 in Midland.

Novi picked up 28 points to secure first place in the tournament while neighbor Catholic Central High School finished second with 25 points. Livonia Stevenson was third with 17 points, just one point



Photo by JOHN HEDDER/NOVI NEWS

Novi's Roshan Ramchandran prepares to smash a backhand return during Friday district tournament play in Farmington.

continued on 2B



Photo by JOHN HEDER/NOV NEWS

Novi Wildcat golf captains Brenna Quinley, left, and Abby Greulich have led their team to some huge victories this year.

DIFFERENT STROKES

Their paths weren't the same, but golf captains' goals are

By Courtney Ratkowiak
SPORTS WRITER

Brenna Quinley has played for years. Abby Greulich has played since last year.

The two captains have had different paths to the top of the Novi High School varsity golf team, but share athletic talent, a sense of humor, and a desire to have fun as leaders of a steadily improving program.

At the age of five, Quinley learned to play golf from her father, becoming a member of the Novi varsity team as a freshman.

In the eleventh grade, after a knee injury ended Greulich's basketball and volleyball careers, former basketball teammate and then-varsity golf captain Jessica Westfall convinced Greulich to try out for the golf team.

"I tried out because I knew (Westfall), I didn't know anyone else," Greulich said, remembering her first day of varsity golf tryouts. "It was a bunch of people that I'd never met before, but everyone was really nice. We all got along really well."

Quinley, a junior, knew as an underclassman that she would continue to play golf throughout high school.

"I've played basketball, volleyball, and soccer. With all those sports, you have a coach who's with you all the time and telling you what to do," Quinley said. "With golf, when you're doing bad at it, it's up to you to bring yourself up."

"I love it because it's a game against yourself. It's not a game where you can say something like, 'Oh, the refs were horrible.' It's an independent game, and you have to compete for yourself to do your best."

As captains, Greulich and Quinley have focused on improving team chemistry while making friends with teammates. Quinley said that a common team goal at tournaments and meets is to simply

enjoy the experience.

"The friendships are just so much fun," Quinley said. "At tournaments, if someone's doing poorly, we usually look over on the other fairway or other green, see our teammate, and just laugh. By laughing it off, you do better because you feel so much better. That's what I really like about this season—we can have fun and play well at the same time."

"Brenna and I, we're not overbearing leaders. People come to us with their problems," Greulich added. "In golf, it really stands out when something goes wrong or when people are not getting along because we practice together every day. We play for nine holes and we talk to people constantly, so we get to know each other really well."

This season, Greulich's approximate average for a nine-hole match is 46 with a low score of 45 for nine holes and 59 for 18 holes. She was the team medalist at the Pinnacle Invitational, earning Novi's lowest score at the 18-hole tournament.

Courtney Ratkowiak is a sports writer for the Novi News. Comments can be directed to the sports department at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.



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Tennis headed to state final

continued from 1B

The Wildcats notched their first flight championship in third singles when Kyle Goodman ripped through his opponents to take the points and the championship.

Novi met up with Livonia Stevenson at fourth singles after top-seeded Wildcat Mani Mahadevan beat players from Dearborn Fordson and Northville to advance to the finals. There, he topped Stevenson's Ryan King, 6-4, 6-4.

In the first doubles flight, the Wildcats and the Shamrocks once again met up as Novi's Ryan Helfman and Ryan Bell fought through Northville and Fordson teams for a crack at the finals. There, they fell to Catholic Central's Chris Atallah and Joseph Trupiano, 5-2, 6-4.

At second doubles, the Wildcats had more success, with the duo of Kevin Lal and Ryan Goodman beating Livonia Stevenson's Chris Stojanov and Manish Potluri, Novi earned the victory, 6-2, 6-2.

Novi and CC met once again in the third doubles flight after the Wildcats team of Eric McQueen and Adam Dexter beat Northville and Stevenson. They fell in three sets to Shamrocks Ryan Bontilly and Kevin Hager in the final, 5-3, 1-6, 6-4.

The final flight found Novi's Jason Hsu and Goutham Kondapi taking home the fourth doubles crown after beating Stevenson and Dearborn to advance to the finals. There they upended Shamrocks Andrew Flezar and Steve Styrchak for the title in three sets, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Wildcats win KVC

As expected, the Novi Wildcats were able to capture yet another Kensington Valley Conference title this year after staying undefeated in dual meets and taking first in the KVC championships.

Novi earned 22 points in the league tournament, followed by Brighton's 18 and Hartland's 5.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

Open registration for Learn to Skate is available. The Learn to Skate Program is very popular so call the Novi Ice Arena at (248) 347-1010 or visit www.novoicearena.com today to inquire about the proper class for your skater.

Summer Sports Camps at Catholic Central
Detroit Catholic Central High School in Novi will offer the following Summer Sports Camps for young men who will be in grades 5-8 beginning in the Fall of 2006:

Westside Football Camp
June 19-June 22
Basketball Camp
June 26-30
July 10-14
Shamrock Soccer Camp
July 17-21

All camps are held at Detroit Catholic Central High School, 27225 Wixom Road, Novi. Please call (248) 396-9129 for more information, or go to www.catholiccentral.net.

Future basketball players, grades K-2nd, are invited to learn basketball skills and build confidence. Emphasis will be placed on dribbling, pivoting, passing, lay-ups and shooting. Gym clothes and shoes are required.

Cost for the camp, which will be run by Novi varsity boys basketball coach Pat Schluter, is \$70. It will run from July 24-28 and will be held at the Novi High School Field House.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

Girls and boys basketball camp
Future basketball players, grades K-2nd, are invited to learn basketball skills and build confidence. Emphasis will be placed on dribbling, pivoting,

passing, lay-ups and shooting. Gym clothes and shoes are required. The camp will run July 24-28.

Cost for the camp, which will be run by Novi varsity boys basketball coach Pat Schluter, is \$70. It will be run at Novi Meadows 5 gym.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

LTC camp hosts NCAA Division I coaches
Lacrosse Training Centers brings some of the top East Coast lacrosse coaches (and staff) during their June 23-25 lacrosse camp in Brighton.

Tom Marino enters his tenth season as the head men's lacrosse coach at Sacred Heart University.

Marino has helped the Pioneers evolve into a solid and competitive program as they enter their fourth season as members of the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA), arguably one of the top lacrosse conferences in the country.

Currently in his eighth season as head coach, Tim McIntee has been at the forefront of the successful turnaround of the Manhattan men's lacrosse program. McIntee joined Manhattan after a stellar playing and coaching career on the collegiate, professional and international level.

Darryl Della is a certified US Lacrosse Progression Instructor, as well as a co-director of Run and Shoot Lacrosse Camps. Della coaches at Fairfield University where his duties include serving as Offensive Coordinator as well as Recruiting Director for the Stars.

Register online at www.LacrosseTC.com or give (248) 788-7020.

SPORTS SHORTS

Football camps offered

Northville High School will offer several football camps and a golf outing this summer:

• Football Camps
There will be three camps offered this summer:
• Youth Camp (Grades 1-8) - June 5-6, 7
• Freshman Camp (Grade 9) - June 12, 13
• JV/Varsity Camp (Grades 10-12) - June 19-22

Prices vary depending on the camp you choose. Brochure and camp information is available at www.northvillemustangs.com

• Golf Outing
The sixth annual golf outing will be held on Monday, July 17th at Northville Hills Golf Club. The brochure is available on the Web at www.northvillemustangs.com.

Girls basketball camp

Registration is underway for the Lady Wildcats basketball camp for girls in grades 2nd-9th.

The camp, which costs \$126 per player, will run June 19-23 at the Novi High School field house. It will focus on all game phases, including dribbling, shooting, pivoting, faking, rebounding, team play, sportsmanship and an introduction to the Lady Wildcat offensive and defensive schemes.

Camp Director will be Bill Kelp, the girls varsity basketball coach at Novi High School. Gym clothes and shoes are required. All participants will receive a T-shirt and an outdoor basketball.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

Boys basketball camp

Registration is currently underway for the Novi Wildcats boys basketball camp for boys in grades 2nd-9th.

The camp, which costs \$125 per player, will run June 19-23 at the Novi Middle School gym. It will focus on all game phases, including dribbling, shooting, pivoting, faking, rebounding, team play, sportsmanship and an introduction to the Wildcats offensive and defensive schemes.

Camp Director will be Pat Schluter, the boys varsity basketball coach at Novi High School. Gym clothes and shoes are required. All participants will receive a T-shirt and an outdoor basketball.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

Girls and boys shooting camps

A shooting camp for boys and girls grades 2nd-9th is currently taking registrations through Novi Community Education. The camp will be packed with instruction, techniques and drills a player needs to shoot the basketball well. Emphasis will be placed on three-point shooting, free throws, shooting off the dribble and spot shooting.

Awards will be given to shooting contest winners. Gym clothes and shoes are required.

Cost for the camp, which will be run by Novi varsity boys basketball coach Pat Schluter, is \$70. It will run from July 24-28 and will be held at the Novi High School Field House.

For more information or to register, please contact Novi Community Education at (248) 449-1206.

Girls and boys basketball camp
Future basketball players, grades K-2nd, are invited to learn basketball skills and build confidence. Emphasis will be placed on dribbling, pivoting,

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Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

Novi junior Jessica Barndt heads the ball against Milford last week.

BARNDT BURNER

Junior Jessica Barndt is a tough defender and future college player

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Jessica Barndt dribbled the ball up in front of the net and fired a shot over the goal.

"I just want to work with kids who are in sports and get them back in good condition," she said.

Barndt laughed as she headed back to her position, giving herself a playful slap to the forehead as her teammates began ribbing her.

"The Novi Wildcats junior defender continued to smile even as she took the ball from a Milford player and kicked it into the offensive zone where it eventually found its way into the goal for a 10-0 victory.

"Jessica Barndt is the type of player that every coach loves to have on the team," said Novi coach Brian O'Leary. "She is like a coach on the field. She knows what our game plan is, how it changes for every game and she makes sure all of our defenders are in the right place all the time in every situation."

For Barndt, she's not doing anything special. She's just playing the game the way she knows best. That's one of the reasons she recently committed to a scholarship to James Madison University, a Division I program.

Despite having several Big 10 programs and Mid-American Conference universities interested in having her play for them, Barndt said

James Madison was the school for her.

"As soon as I went there I knew it was the right fit," Barndt said. "It's a nice school with great academics, which is everything I want. The team and the coaches are just really great. I really liked it there."

While in college, Barndt said she's planning on studying to become either a physical therapist or a physician's assistant—an interest that stems from injuries she has taken during her high school athletic career.

"I just want to work with kids who are in sports and get them back in good condition," she said.

James Madison University's soccer program will most likely use Barndt as defensive center. Barndt plays for both the Novi Wildcats varsity team and the Michigan Hawks club team.

Though Barndt said she's looking forward to the high-level of competition after she graduates next year, she also knows it's not going to be easy.

"I think it's going to be a lot tougher," she said. "It's going to be a lot more physical. I'm hoping to do a pretty good job. It's going to be tough on my body, but I think I'll be able to handle it if I work hard."

Barndt is all about working hard. After injuring her ACL at the beginning of her sophomore year in basketball she went through six months

of recovery and therapy. She came back even more determined and, she said, even better.

"It taught me to work a lot harder and to get myself in really good shape," she said.

Barndt's specialty is playing at a high level at all times. She's quick, physical and isn't afraid to challenge for the ball.

O'Leary said having her on the field means he doesn't have to ever worry about the job getting done.

"She is very consistent and always gives us a high level of performance, regardless of the situation," he said. "She anchors our defense, which only gave up seven goals last season and has only given up five this season."

Playing soccer is Barndt's favorite past time, though she also plays varsity volleyball for the Wildcats and played basketball in the past. It's the same route her older sister, Nicole, took through high school and the same her freshman sister, Rachel, is taking.

With one state title under her belt with her older sister, Barndt could possibly get together with the younger.

"There's a little pressure (to repeat)," she said. "The whole team just tries to keep focused. We worry about one game at a time. We have to go game by game and just keep winning."

Sam Eggleston can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at eggleston@gannett.com.

The trek to the state finals begins

It's a whole new ball game for the Novi Wildcats soccer team.

The squad won a state championship in 2005 after beating the Northville Mustangs in the district after losing to the eventual state champion Mustangs in the 2004 district.

This year, there aren't any Mustangs in sight.

"I've seen things that people have said about Northville and Novi plotting this," Northville coach Ron Meyer said of the change in districts. "I haven't complained at all. Yeah, it's been crazy the last two years, but that's the way it was set up."

The only way for the Mustangs and Wildcats to meet this year is for both teams to advance to the state finals. Crumbling on the Internet, Web sites such as www.mlive.com, have said Northville and Novi are destined to meet in the state finals and that's why the Michigan High School Athletic Association made the change.

That's far from being set in stone.

"We aren't focusing on winning another state championship or even making it to the state championship game," Novi coach Brian O'Leary said. "We play one game at a time."

Meyer agreed. He said there's a reason the games are played instead of just going by what the newspapers and Internet have to say.

"There is an awful lot of good teams this year," Meyer said.

Portage, Rockshelter, Grosse Pointe South and Brighton. There are a lot of them and to get to the state finals you have to beat those teams.

"To go to the state finals you have to win seven games in the playoffs. Every year several hundred teams try it and only one State School Athletic Association made the change.

That's far from being set in stone.

It would be as big of a moment as winning a state title.

The Mustangs will begin their trek at 7 p.m. May 30 at Livonia Franklin when they visit the Patriots. The winner of the game will face the winner of the Garden City/Plymouth game and the championship will be 3 p.m. June 3 at Northville High School.

For us it was a very good draw," Meyer said. "These are teams we handled earlier in the season."

On the other side of Northville's bracket, Plymouth Salem visits Livonia Stevenson at 7 p.m. May 30 with the winner playing Livonia Churchill.

Novi starts out with a 7:30 p.m. game again at Farmington at Walled Lake Central May 30.

The winner advances to play the winner of the West Bloomfield/Walled Lake Northern game. The championships will be 6 p.m. June 3 at Walled Lake Central High School.

"They are a very experienced team with almost their entire team returning from last season when they did very well in Division II," O'Leary said.

"Lindsay Evans is a great player that has been starting on varsity for four years, and it will be a game that we have to be careful with."

The other side of the bracket

"I'll both teams get knocked out in their district these are going to be a lot of people (at the MHSAA), scratching their heads," Meyer said.

Sam Eggleston can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104 or at eggleston@gannett.com.

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Ground Zerio

■ Freshman Erin Zerio steps into role of goalie for varsity Wildcats

By Sam Eggleston
SPORTS WRITER

Someone forgot to tell freshman Erin Zerio the rules. As a freshman on varsity, she's supposed to sit the bench, get moderate playing time and have minimal impact.

Consider those rules out the window.

"Erin has done an amazing job this year, stepping in for All-State goalie Kim Heibts (who graduated)," said Novi coach Brian O'Leary. "Many people have said to me 'Anyone can play goal for Novi, they don't have to do any work.' What they don't realize is that Erin has done what some players would never be able to do: She has won the respect of her teammates through her play and in practice."

When Zerio headed into tryouts earlier this year, she knew the only position the varsity squad was in need of a replacement for was goalie. Though she was playing defense for her Vardar club due to three top goalies already on the team, she decided to take a shot at it.

Just five goals allowed and 11 shutouts later, Zerio has proven herself to be the right choice.

"I'm really happy with how I've performed," she said. "My teammates are great. They are out there doing their job every night and playing their best. I'm glad to be able to do mine when the time comes."

In her first year, Zerio has already helped her team earn a piece of the Kensington Valley Conference championship and is preparing her-

self for a playoff run. Districts begin May 30.

She said she is expecting her job to get tougher with each step the Wildcats take into the post-season. "The teams are going to keep getting tougher," she said. "I just have to stay focused and try not to get sidetracked by the fans or anything else. I just try to get prepared the best I can and stay 100 percent focused on the game."

Having an All-Star team to shell shots at her during practice has helped Zerio hone her game. Forwards Stephanie Crawford and Stephanie Janssens are both Division I college recruits, as is midfielder Emily Esbrook.

Though Zerio has double-digit shutouts in competitions, shutting out her own team in practice isn't an easy chore.

"That doesn't stop her from trying. She works incredibly hard," O'Leary said. "We have a goalie coach, Mike McShane, that works with her every day. She also trains an additional day every week with her own goalie coach. She just can't get enough and is always striving to get better."

The most shutouts ever during a season in Michigan girls soccer is 20. The most career shutouts is 61.

Zerio isn't quite at that level yet, but she's well on her way with three more years to go.

At times, O'Leary said he has to remind himself Zerio is just a rookie.

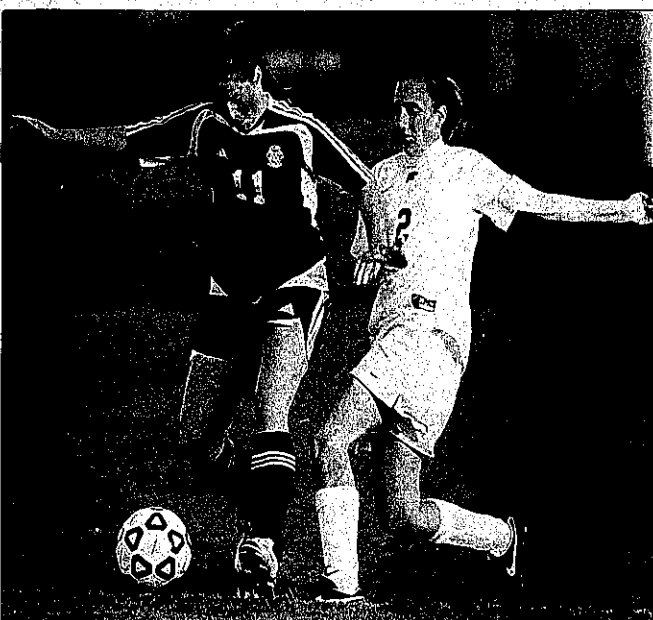
"She has made some incredible saves during practice that leave me shaking my head to think that she is only a freshman," he said.



Erin Zerio scoops up one of the few shots Milford fired on net last week.

Photo by SAM EGGLESTON

KVC CHAMPS



Junior Megan Stec tries to poke the ball away from Milford sophomore Emily Brown.



Stephanie Crawford winds up and fires a shot at the Milford goalie midway through the first half. Novi won the game, 10-0.

Photos by
SAM EGGLESTON

Wildcats at the top of their game, win

The Novi Wildcats soccer team made short work of their KVC foe Milford last week during Senior Night, merrily besting the Mustangs, 10-0.

The Wildcats had goals from Jenna Carosio (2), Stephanie Janssens (2), Stephanie Crawford (2), Veronica Salens, Megan Burns, Katie Walker and Katie Chaklos. Earning assists were Kellie Walker (3), Katie Walker (2), Burns, Salens, Emily Esbrook, Janssens and Carosio.

Erin Zerio earned her 11th shutout with five saves and 11. The Wildcats play Brighton today in a cross-over game, but no matter the outcome they are guaranteed a share of the Kensington Valley Conference title.

took eighth out of a field of 15 teams at last week's regional tournament, the best-ever finish. Ashtabula scored a 92, Natalie Krack had a 97, Abby Gesech shot a 99, Brenna Quinley had a 112 and Megan Wend shot a 116.

Wildcats roll Bulldogs

In the final regular season game of the season, the Novi Wildcats lacrosse team crushed the Brighton Bulldogs, 7-3. Scoring for Novi was Travis Blackledge, Bobby Watts, John Fawcett, Mike Kollis, Scott Moran and Jimmy McCusker.

The Wildcats may have lost Moran, who left for Huron Valley Hospital after injuring his ankle.

Golf team doing well

The Novi Wildcats golf team

Baseball logs Eagles

The Novi Wildcats split their

Monday doubleheader with Lakeland, winning the first game 10-0 and dropping the second, 10-3.

Novi split against South Lyon, winning the first game and a run. Trevor Bostick scored a double. Phil Celinski had his first hit of the year while Tyler Scott, the game's winning pitcher, had an RBI offensively. The big hitter was Pat Schlenke with a 2-for-3 performance and three RBIs.

Novi took two losses against Lake Orion last week after leading in the second game, 7-3, in the bottom of the fifth. They lost 11-1 and 11-7. Highlights from the double-

header include: Derek Smith 2-for-4, Ryan Figurski 2-3 and an RBI and run scored, Simpson 2-for-2 with a run scored, and Glover's 2-for-2, performing well at base.

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Novi lost two to Brighton, 11-1 and 8-3. Mike Slack was 1-for-2 with two runs scored in the nightcap. Glover added a two-run homer in the winning effort.

CATHOLIC CENTRAL SPORTS

Baseball				
Varsity	Home	Canton	11 a.m.	
5/27	Home	State Pre-District	TBA	
5/30	Home	Autumn	5 p.m.	
5/31	Home	Autumn	5 p.m.	
JV				
5/27	Home	Canton	11 a.m.	
Freshman				
5/25	Home	Saline	4 p.m.	
5/27	Home	Canton	11 a.m.	
Tennis				
6/2	Away	MHSAA Championships	8 a.m.	
Lacrosse				
5/24	Away	State Regional	TBA	
Track				
5/26	Away	Oakland County	3 p.m.	
5/27	Away	Oakland County Freshmen	10 a.m.	
5/30	Home	CHSL vs. PSL	5 p.m.	



Great job, Sturgeons!

The Sports Club of Novi's Sturgeons Swim Team have been making a big splash all over the country. This March, the U.S. Michigan State Championships were held. First, the 12 and under championships at Lake Orion High School, and the 13 and over championships at Jensen High School in Holland. In addition two Sturgeon Swimmers Megan Fox and Haley Mitchell qualified and competed at Junior Nationals in Orlando, Florida. Both were placing in the top 50 and 100 in the country. At the Michigan U.S. State Swim Championships the Novi Sturgeons placed 5th out of 50 teams in the 12 and under division. Sturgeon swimmer Rachel Green placed 1st in every event in the 10 and under division. Females 10 and under, 200 Free Relay placed 2nd. Relay swimmers were Emily Meles, Madeline Longwell, Lisa G. Charles and Rachel Green. Additional top 10 Sturgeon finishers were Parker, Belmont, Becca Berman, Charles Ing, Austin Davidson, Travis Vincent, Colin Brinkman, Simon Sherks, Kacie Vanbuskirk, Angela Handron, and Amber Cathay. In the 13 and over division Sturgeon swimmers placing in the top ten were Anthony Adamowicz, Meredith Cote, Megan Gagesky, Benjamin Jylkka, Matt Lederer, Meg Noble, Abby Pavaliko, Ben Schoenek and Tyler Vincent. Meg Noble shined with a 2nd place in the 50 Free Stroke.

STATE FINALS BOUND

By Aditya "A1" Athavale
SPORTS WRITER

The Catholic Central tennis team placed second out of 10 teams at this year's regional competition where they were considered underdogs behind the fourth-ranked team in Michigan, Novi. Their finish gives the Shamrocks a berth to the state finals in Midland.



Lacrosse sets sights on regionals

As the Catholic Central lacrosse team winds down its season they hope to finish strong going into regionals. The team played Ann Arbor Huron where they pounded them 16-6. Junior captain Pat Nemes had four goals and seven assists, leading the team in scoring. Other key performers included junior Jake Marmol and junior Connor Bush who had three goals each and junior Nick Gary who helped the team with his wonderful saves in goal.

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Senior Lauren Troher boots the ball into the offensive zone.



Junior Emily Esbrook almost has the ball poked away by a Milford defender.



LEFT: Stephanie Janssens, who recently verbally committed to Eastern Michigan University, moves the ball in the offensive zone.

ABOVE: Defender Lauren Marchionni advances the ball through Milford's midfield. Novi won the game with a mercy, 10-0.

RIGHT: Katie Chaklosse prepares to throw the ball in against Milford.



COLUMN: NFIB

Know your customers? Nine things they will never tell you

Make a serious mistake, and your customer will let you know about it — fast. Payment errors, quality defects and other obvious problems will motivate your customer to call you quickly.

But what happens when your customer perceives a less obvious, intangible problem involving your communication style, temperament or behavior? Will your customer call you? Not likely. In fact, if your customer perceives the problem as serious enough, he or she might even fail to buy from you in the future — and never tell you why. Worse, even if your customers generally like the way you do business, they might happen upon an alternative supplier who offers something they don't and quickly change their buying habits.

Here, then, are nine things customers will probably never tell you. If any apply to you and your business, consider taking the lesson that follows to heart:

You patronize me. I don't like the over-simplistic way you describe your product. I feel as if you're talking down to me. Lesson: Always ask your customer whether he or she wants more or less detail.

You don't keep up with trends. I want to be able to send questions and product queries by e-mail, but I've discovered you're not "web-enabled." That makes me think you might not be up on other things as well. You also always seem a step behind the latest product developments. Lesson: Each year, identify three of the top business and technological trends in your field and develop a plan to stay current. Equally important, let your customers know you're staying current.

I'd be more if you asked me. I have so many needs, but you don't seem to recognize them. Maybe you offer products that would make my life easier, but I have no way of knowing. Lesson: Instead of simply describing your products to your customers, ask how you can help satisfy their needs.

I don't like your manners. I don't like the way you try to do two things at once while you're talking to me, how you interrupt me or your failure to use formal titles when addressing me. Lesson: Mind your manners.

Your style upsets me. I don't like the salty language you use in my presence. Things always seem so disparaging in my office or shop that I can't help but wonder if you're all that organized. I'm bothered by what I see as a lack of professionalism in your habits. And your procedures appear overly bureaucratic for how formal enough. The list could go on and on. Lesson: Watch your customers' interpersonal and professional demeanor. Respect it by watching your demeanor.

You're inconsistent. 90 percent of the time I know you don't mean what you promise. But it's the other 10 percent that I'm never sure about. Lesson: Aim for 100 percent consistency. If you're not going to be able to meet the customer's terms, let them know you don't intend to realize there might be a problem.

You don't respect my time. I have to wait on the telephone or in person when I want to talk with you. When I leave a message, you don't call back promptly, and this inconvenience was. Lesson: Save your customers' time before you save your own.

You were rude to my assistant. All she wanted was some simple delivery information. She didn't deserve the run-around you gave her. Lesson: Treat customers' secretaries and administrative assistants just as you'd treat your customers.

I'm talking to the competition all the time. Even if it's a dog-eat-dog world out there, I want to save money and time and get the best deal I can, so it's only natural that I keep looking for other suppliers of goods and services. Lesson: Ask your customers to provide regular feedback to you.

The bottom line? Listen to anything your customers tell you. But equally important, stay attuned to what they don't tell you. The result? You gain valuable clues that can keep those all-important customer relationships intact for a long time.

For more information, visit the National Federation of Independent Business online at www.NFIB.com.

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Center Stage's in-house ballet company's annual presentation, (this year it was The Wizard of Oz), at Northville High School is just one of many performance opportunities available to students.

Center Stage: focused on fun

Northville dance studio emphasizes passion, fun

By Duane Ramsey
SPECIAL WRITER

Hundreds of people of all ages have the opportunity to express their love and passion for dance at Center Stage Dance Company in Northville where the focus is on fun.

"We are a non-competitive studio dedicated to teaching the art of dance for the purpose of physical, emotional and mental development, and for the sheer joy of movement to music," said Lisa Shapiro, director of Center Stage Dance.

About 350 students are enrolled in dance classes at Center Stage where its faculty and staff share their passion for dance with people of all ages and skills. The studio is celebrating 18 years of dance instruction and 14 years in Northville.

Center Stage offers programs in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, lyrical and pointe for children ages six and older. The pre-school and kinderdance program is a combination of ballet and tap for beginning students from age three to six.

The primary season runs from September through June. The fall 2006 schedule was just announced, but there is still time to register for summer dance camps.

The summer program includes week-long sessions for students ages 6-18 and mini-day camps, half-days Tuesday-Thursday for ages 4-8 in July and August. Summer classes include ballet, jazz and hip-hop for ages five to seven and 8-11, pre-school for ages 3-6, and adult classes in ballet, tap and jazz/funk.

Campers create scenery, view

CENTER STAGE DANCE CO.

Location: 43334 West Seven Mile Road, Suite 250 in Northville Research Center
Phone: (248) 380-1666
E-mail: CSDC5978@abc-global.net
Web: www.dancingcenterstage.com

syllabus-related videos, participate in technique-oriented games and other supervised group activities. A showcase is presented every Friday evening for families and friends to see what the dancers have achieved.

All of the counselors for the summer programs are alumni of Center Stage and 75 percent are dance majors in college. In fact, the entire faculty and staff "grew up dancing at the studio," said Shapiro.

"My tapping abilities that I acquired through excellent instruction at Center Stage assisted in my acceptance to the top dancing group at the University of Michigan," said Shauna Wallace, a current member of the studio's faculty. "The leadership skills I learned by watching amazing role models at the studio and becoming a teacher there myself were integral to my success as director of the UM tap group for one year."

One of the favorite performances is the fairy tale ballet with full costumes and staging produced each spring by the in-house ballet company at Center Stage. This year, The Wizard of Oz, performed April 8 at Northville High School, was co-directed by Erin (Hesse) Goldsworthy and Samantha Drouillard, both alumni of Northville High School and the dance studio.

"We offer many opportunities to share our joy of dance through our annual recitals, seasonal tours and special events," said Shapiro. "We provide as many performance opportunities for students as possible because it helps them to build confidence and self-esteem."

In addition to the annual ballet and dance recitals in June, Center Stage conducts spring and Christmas holiday tours with performances at area nursing homes, senior residence facilities and children's facilities such as The Methodist Home for Children.

As a community partner with the Northville Parks and Recreation Department, dance classes and programs for adults and children are offered seasonally at Center Stage. It includes 10-12 week sessions in the fall and winter, eight weeks in the spring and open classes in July and August.

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Alumni Erin (Hesse) Goldsworthy, left, and Samantha Drouillard co-direct the in-house ballet company at Center Stage.

"It's a great program," said students involved in the program and we get excellent exposure in being a community partner in it's the community." "It's a win-win situation. They get

Center Stage alumni enjoy career, lifelong benefits

Numerous alumni of the dance programs at Center Stage have benefited from their experience and instruction there. Several have used those experiences in their careers in dance, music and teaching.

"In college, dance was a fantastic outlet for me. Creatively, physically, and socially, dance classes and choreography really helped balance my academic schedule," said Holly Titton, who graduated from Alma College with a business degree.

"After college, dance influenced my management style from solving problems creatively to teaching people to understand how each situation may require a different approach, dance helped establish and develop these core competencies," Titton said.

"The best thing dance ever taught me was education, which lives on in every aspect of my life. Lisa and the studio also taught me confidence and belief in myself," said Camille Valdes, who is studying musical theater at Columbia College in Chicago.

Having the opportunity to apprentice and teach classes at Center Stage gave former studio faculty member Melissa Holmes the direction she wanted to go with her career. She knew she wanted to work with

children and pursued early childhood development studies at Michigan State.

"By learning attention coaching techniques as a high school student through taking and teaching dance classes, I find that my teaching abilities are more honed like those of a well-seasoned teacher than of a second year newbie," said Kristen Maczynski, now a high school teacher in Chicago.

"It definitely had an influence on the profession I chose," said Maggie McGlinchey, now a kindergarten teacher in Arizona. "When I began teaching the younger children, it helped me realize the love I had for teaching before I even knew it."

"The dance skills and teaching abilities I learned at Center Stage helped me find my niche after I graduated from college," said Tracy Winter, who now lives in Central Illinois.

Winter helped the local tap teacher choreograph a community theater production of "Annie." Her choreography and teaching skills impressed the directors so much they offered her the opportunity to choreograph not one but two of four upcoming shows.

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