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Thursday, January 4, 2007

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Volume 51 Number 32

Novi, Michigan

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### GROWTH



**Bullish on Novi**  
One Novi developer is looking past the tough Michigan economy. See why! Page 7A.

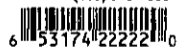
### INDEX

Business Briefs.....	8A
Classifieds.....	3D
Faith.....	13A
Letters to the Editor.....	12A
Library Lines.....	11A
Opinion & Letters.....	12A
On Campus.....	5A
Regional Marketplace.....	15-16A
Rock Financial.....	13A
Sports.....	14A
What's Going On?.....	11A
What's Your Story?.....	12A
Youth Council.....	6A

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### PHIL POWER: CONSOLIDATION IS THE ANSWER FOR MICHIGAN'S SCARCE PUBLIC RESOURCES

## Police chaplains to take on larger roles

**■ Group helps Novi officers deal with stressful jobs**

By Greg Migliore  
STAFF WRITER

The Novi Police Department is expanding its chaplain program in January. The group, called the Lakes Area Chaplain Corps, serves

Novi, Wixom, Walled Lake and Wolverine Lake police officers. It's adding two new members and will take on a larger role working with the four departments.

The group is made up of five veteran ministers from the area. It's led by senior chaplain Gary Elfner, pastor of First Baptist Church of Novi. The extra members will allow the departments to better coordinate chaplain services which could save money.

Newcomers Jon Hix of Orchard Hills Baptist Church in

"There's just a satisfaction of helping people through a very difficult period in their life."

Gary Elfner  
Lakes Area Chaplain Corps

continued on Page A

## In the spirit of DIVERSITY

### Unity in the Community

**IN FUSION**  
What: Diversity program  
When: 5:30-7 p.m. Jan. 15  
Where: Furst Auditorium, Novi High School  
About: Event honors Martin Luther King Jr. It's sponsored by Novi High's new diversity club, Students Promoting Unity and Diversity

SOURCE: Novi News research

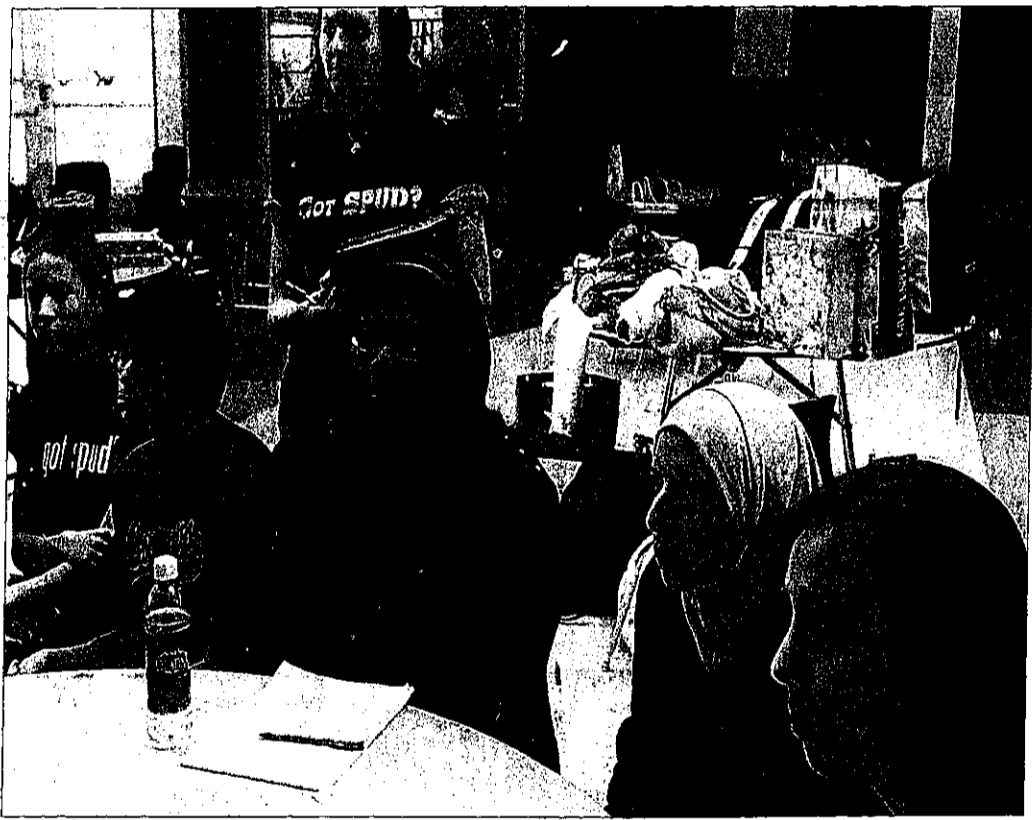


Photo by JOHN HEIDER/Novi News

Novi High School SPUD (Students Promoting Unity and Diversity) listen about their involvement in the upcoming Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day memorial gathering.

## Novi High School to honor King

**■ New club puts together elaborate event**

By Greg Migliore  
STAFF WRITER

Students at Novi High School will take a deeper look at diversity while honoring the achievements of Martin Luther King, Jr. at the first-ever Unity in the Community Program Jan. 15.

The 5:30-7 p.m. event will be held at Furst Auditorium in Novi High School and feature speeches, dance performances and reflections on the legacy of the civil rights leader's life.

Joseph Striplin, a noted violinist with the Detroit

Symphony Orchestra, will give the keynote speech. Mayor David Landry and Principal John Lawrence are also scheduled to make remarks.

The program is being coordinated by a start-up club at Novi High School, Students Promoting Unity and Diversity, or SPUD. It has about 20 active members.

"We're just trying to unify our community," said Novi High School teacher Nicole Carter, who sponsors the club.

### Startup group grows

SPUD has been around informally for awhile, but this is its first year as a recognized club. Last year, members painted a mural in the school's atrium that welcomes visitors in more than 60 different languages.

The group meets monthly and often has "speak-out"

sessions, which are facilitated discussions on a variety of topics that often offer edgy, provocative conversations.

"The students are able to see how the stereotypes evolve," said Carter, who is in her eighth year at Novi High School. She teaches civics, economics and government courses.

SPUD tries to spark awareness of different cultures, said Joseph Xu, club president.

"We just try to have everyone recognize both our differences and similarities and come together," said Xu, a 17-year-old senior who plans to attend the University of Michigan next fall.

Greg Migliore is a staff writer for the Novi News. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 107 or gmigliore@gannett.com.

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## Decent proposal: Bakery helps local resident pop the question

Novi couple plans August wedding

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Stephen Reiter wouldn't settle for just an ordinary proposal, so he took the cake.

The Novi resident wanted his girlfriend, Jessica Giddings of Novi, to always remember the day he asked her to spend the rest of her life with him.

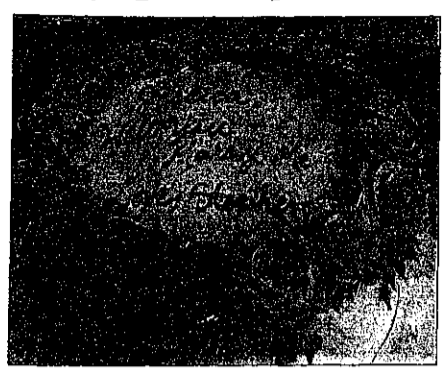
After much thought, Reiter, 24, came up with the perfect plan. He asked the Buttercream Bakeshop in downtown Wixom to bake a cake with the words "Jessica, Will You Marry Me?" written in icing on top of the cake, then somehow get her into the bakery while he hid in the back.

He chose the Wixom bakery because he knew that Giddings, 23, stops at the bakery often for cupcakes since it's near their home at Pentice Trail and Beck Road.

On Sept. 15, he enlisted the help of owner Lisa Dodge in the scheme. Now the two are planning an Aug. 31, 2007, wedding in Charlevoix.

"We wanted to have a destination wedding and found an old building at Castle Farms in Charlevoix," Reiter said. "It looks like a castle, but it's an old farm building." The two are 2001 graduates of Walled Lake Western, who didn't date during high school but became a couple in February 2003 after reconnecting through friends.

Giddings recently graduated with a degree in general business



Here's the two-layer, marble cake that Lisa Dodge and staff from the Buttercream Bakeshop in Wixom made for Stephen Reiter of Novi's creative proposal for girlfriend, Jessica Giddings, of Novi.

### Cake's her favorite food

Reiter finally thought of proposing to her with a cake because that's her favorite food.

"I called Lisa at Buttercream Bakery and asked her if she could help me out," he said. Since Reiter and Giddings were both still in school and working, he only had a short window of time to propose.

Giddings works two sales jobs and is a dance team coach at Walled Lake Western. Reiter was working for a local civil engineering firm.

"Lisa fit in the request in less than a day," he said. "She was excited about it, and I was excited because Jessica likes sweets." Reiter had known for a while he

was going to propose. His stepfather, Paul Hering, manages Darakjian Jewelers in Southfield and searched for the right gem for months. He finally found the perfect stone — a 1.5-carat, radiant-cut diamond.

Reiter had the ring and the cake. Now all he had to do was get Giddings into the bakery.

That's when Giddings' best friend, Aimee Ivey, a fellow dance team coach who also works with her, came into play. Reiter called Ivey the night before and orchestrated a plan to get Jessica into the bakery.

"She told Jessica she was picking up a sheet cake for her mom's friend's retirement party on the way to dance team practice," he said. After tackling traffic and having to stop for gas, Giddings was an hour late getting to the bakery.

When she walked in, the cake was sitting on the display case.



Stephen Reiter popped the question to girlfriend Jessica Giddings at the Buttercream Bakeshop in Wixom on Sept. 15. The Novi residents are planning an Aug. 31, 2007, wedding in Charlevoix.

### Let there be cake

The Buttercream Bakeshop in Wixom is located at 49046 Pentice Trail just east of Wixom Road. For more information, call (248) 926-2999.

"She was surprised. And I was very pleased the way it turned out. It took a lot of effort, but everything turned out great."

Stephen Reiter  
Resident, Novi

Then Reiter came out and got down on bended knee with the ring. The moment brought tears to her eyes.

"She was surprised," Reiter said. "And I was very pleased the way it turned out. It took a lot of effort, but everything turned out great."

Giddings said getting Ivey involved was key.

"But, it was hard for her to keep the secret all day," she said.

Giddings said at first she didn't think the cake was for her.

"Then, I finally realized it was for me," she said. "The whole staff was looking at me with this cheesy smile. I knew something was up, but my best friend hid everything very well!" She suspected a marriage pro-

posal was coming, but she didn't know when.

"He was sneaky," she 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 pffleming@gannett.com.

## CHAPLAINS: Clergy welcome larger roles

continued from 1A

Novi and John Pavelko of Crossroads Presbyterian Church in Walled Lake will be sworn in at a ceremony at Novi police headquarters Jan. 17.

The chaplains are volunteers, and Elfiner said they find their calling through a very difficult period in their life. Elfiner, who has been a pastor since 1969 and a chaplain with the Novi police since 1991.

### Vital roles

The chaplains take on several roles with the police departments. One of the toughest and most frequent is accompanying officers to inform family members of a death after an accident or crime. They also often travel to the scene of incidents to support officers and victims.

"We're there to help them



SOURCE: Novi News Research

through those immediate moments," Elfiner said.

And it can be a tough job for the chaplains as well. Elfiner, 63, remembers nervously arriving at an auto plant after a shooting.

"I was just there in case anybody wanted to talk to relieve

"Sometimes you just need a sounding board."

Paul Stulgross  
Novi Police Officer

some stress," he said. In the aftermath of traumatic events, the chaplains help police recover and make sense of things, even riding along in a patrol car if that's where the officers feel most comfortable.

"Sometimes you just need a sounding board," Novi police officer Paul Stulgross said.

Simply talking goes a long way towards helping officers deal with the daily hazards they face. Elfiner recalled helping a local detective come to grips with two gruesome deaths he encountered back-to-back.

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# Now serving: Novi youth

■ Youth council makes motions, floats and community connections

By Tracy Mishler  
SPECIAL WRITER

Walt Barnes remembers a time when kids were treated like kids.

The 76-year-old Novi resident said today's youth are treated like little adults.

"It's actually nice to see kids getting out there and helping others, rather than sitting in front of the latest gaming system," Barnes said. "Youngsters should be allowed to have fun. But in today's day and age, we always seem to be planning for tomorrow."

Barnes said he regularly attends Novi city meetings, and he was happy to hear the city welcomes youth to serve as well.

"We need more activities and events for our youth," he said. "It keeps them out of trouble."

The Novi Youth Council, created in 2005, consists of 19 high school students who reside in Novi.

Appointed by city council for a two-year term, the Novi Youth Council focuses on engaging other Novi youth in community service and educating them in city municipal government, said Sheryl Walsh, Novi community relations manager and youth council staff liaison.

"Similar to other positions in the city, (council members) apply for the position," Walsh said. "There was originally supposed to be 13 members, but we had 60 applications (when the council was first started)."

Walsh said Novi's youth council is different than other cities. "Most youth councils are focused on providing activities for other youth," she said. "They mainly serve as a social aspect for the community."

"Our community reports to city council on a biannual basis making recommendations on issues concerning Novi youth and informing them about what initiatives they are working on."

■ **Novi Youth Council!**  
For more information on the Novi youth council, visit [www.ci.novi.mi.us/government/youthcouncil.asp](http://www.ci.novi.mi.us/government/youthcouncil.asp)

"I see our mission this year is to help the youth get to know the rest of the community."

Scott Czekaj  
President, Novi Youth Council

### Past, present and future

Since their first meeting, the Novi Youth Council has worked with city police on several initiatives, hosted a two drug-free all-night movie marathons and several other events.

The council raised more than \$2,500 at this year's "Addicted to Movies, not Drugs" event at the Imagine Theater.

"It was our biggest yet," said youth council President Scott Czekaj. "We've got many more ideas in the works."

Czekaj said the council recently built a float, celebrating Novi's diversity, for the Ringing in the Holidays Parade.

"We're also planning on partnering with the senior citizens in the area to interact with them more," he said. "We have an idea in the mix to have a senior-to-senior prom. Maybe a get-together or dinner."

The Novi Youth Council also plans to team up with local elementary schools more and host the second annual Project Stecker Shock with the police department.

"I see our mission this year is



Photo by JOHN HEIDER/Novi News

The Novi Youth Council meets at city hall. From left: Kathleen Hlavaty, Vice chair Chris Jodoin, Vidhi Bamzai, Dayne Dines, and Sheryl Walsh - Novi community relation manager. Back row, second from left, Gabrielle Hagege, Stephanie Raymundo, Kevin Lai, Florianne Silvestri and Jeremy Hilliard.

to help the youth get to know the rest of the community," Czekaj said. "We want to help them know what's going on in their city and make them more aware of what's going on."

"We want to serve them, and so far, I think we've done a great

job. Hopefully future councils will continue to do that."

### Joining up

Walsh said all Novi High School students are welcome to fill out an application for the

council. "Any student that wants to be involved in their community is welcome," she said. "Just fill out an application, write the required essay and have references."

Walsh said applications are

submitted to the city clerk and the process takes place in June, each year.

"They are an incredible group of students," she said. "They continue to amaze me."

"I feel blessed to have the opportunity to work with them."

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# Brooktown development brings live-work concept to Novi area

Developer breaks ground on Grand River project

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Adorno Piccinini believes Novi residents are ready for one of the hottest concepts in new developments today: the mixed-use.

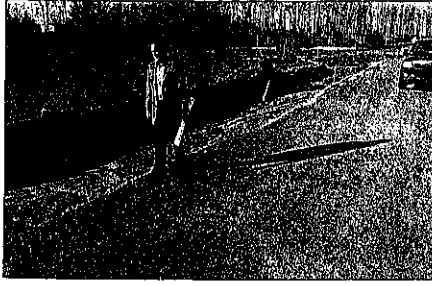
Piccinini, president of the Novi-based ADCO group, hosted a groundbreaking ceremony Oct. 19 at Brooktown, his newest such development on the south side of Grand River Avenue west of Meadowbrook Road.

The project mirrors Southtown on Allen Road north of Northline Road in Southgate, another development that opened in May and combines retail and residential.

"We've sold 54 condos there already," Piccinini said. "Our goal is to sell 70 this year. We're bucking the trend in a down market."

People can view one of seven models at the Southtown complex and receive a complimentary meal. Piccinini said a lot of people won't buy in Brooktown unless they can see a model.

Brooktown models won't be completed until June or July. A priority wait list has already been established for the 225 condominiums, which will start at about \$180,000 each.



Photos by JOHN HEIDER/Novi News

Novi's Brooktown developer Adorno Piccinini walks along the site near Grand River Ave. where condos will soon rise.

"There are already about 200 names on the list," Piccinini said.

Prospective buyers can learn more about the new Brooktown development by visiting [www.brooktowncondos.com](http://www.brooktowncondos.com).

The condos range in size from 1,300-1,700 square feet.

Each condo features a brick, stone and wood exterior with cathedral ceilings, either a balcony or patio and a two-car garage. All appliances, blinds and carpeting are also included in the units designed by the Alexander Bogaerts architectural firm in Bloomfield Hills.

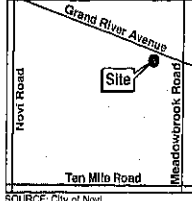
The commercial space will include about 30,000 square feet of retail and about 40,000 square feet of office space.

A couple of outdoor dining areas are planned, as well as a pool and clubhouse for the condominium dwellers.

Piccinini said several prospective tenants, including some well-known local businesses on the retail side, have expressed an interest in occupying space in the new development.

"Plus, we're giving them the option to own the property as

## Brooktown Development



SOURCE: City of Novi

well on the commercial side, if tenants prefer to own their office space," he said.

## Concept introduced in 2004

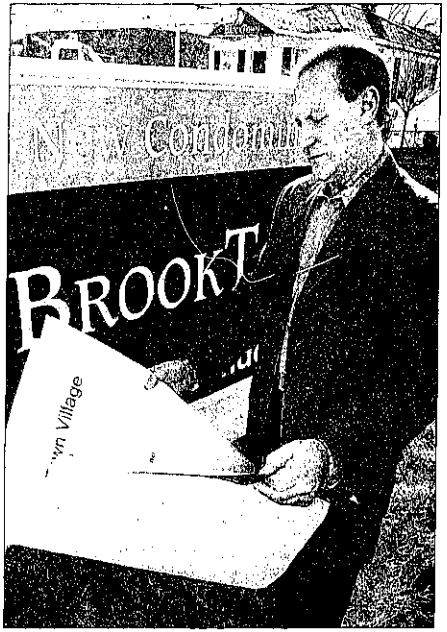
The project has been in the works since June 2004. Rezoning requests and other details were completed in December 2005. It took until this past August to obtain all the necessary permits to break ground.

Piccinini said several national and local retailers have contacted him about moving into the development.

"Novi is one of the most desirable areas in the tri-county area," Piccinini said. "If I was going to take a risk, I'd take it in Novi."

For more information, call (248) 305-8980, ext. 106.

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](mailto:pfleming@gannett.com).



Brooktown developer Adorno Piccinini reviews blueprints at the site of his Grand River Avenue site slated for 1,300-1,600 square foot condominiums.

**"We've sold 54 condos there already. Our goal is to sell 70 this year. We're bucking the trend in a down market."**

Adorno Piccinini  
Developer, Brooktown

# Experts: Prevent radon from invading your home

State Pointe Media  
SPECIAL TO THE NOVI NEWS

It's a simple fact that during this time of year more people begin to spend more time indoors. And with houses better insulated these days and windows shut tight for much of the year, homeowners and renters need to be aware of a dangerous substance that could be present in the air in their homes.

Indeed, the U.S. Department of Health has issued advisories encouraging everyone to learn about radon in their homes and the harmful effects of exposure to this odorless gas.

"Indoor radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and breathing it over prolonged periods can present a significant health risk to families all over the country," said Dr. Richard H. Carmona, the former U.S. Surgeon General.

"It's important to know that this threat is completely preventable. Radon can be detected with a simple test and fixed through well-established venting techniques."

Radon is an invisible, odorless and tasteless gas, with no immediate health symptoms, that comes from the breakdown of uranium inside the earth. It can seep into a house through its foundation.

According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates, one in every 15 homes nationwide has a high radon level at or above the recommended radon action

level. This danger is particularly a concern for people who are housebound or stay indoors most of the time. If you also smoke, your risk of lung cancer is much higher. As such, more than 20,000 Americans die of radon-related lung cancer every year. And the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon causes several thousand preventable lung cancer deaths each year.

However, simple test kits can reveal the amount of radon in any building. These kits are available for around \$20 and sometimes are distributed free by local government agencies. Those homes with high levels can be fixed with simple and affordable venting techniques.

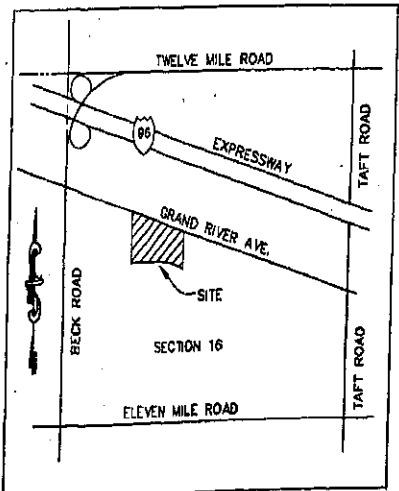
That's why the government is recommending that homeowners and renters test their homes for radon every two years, and retest any time they move, make structural changes to their homes, or occupy a previously unused level of a house.

And radon can occur in seemingly random patterns, with different houses on the same block having a different radon level. Homeowners therefore should not necessarily assume their houses have low levels if their neighbor's home had low radon levels.

For more information about radon visit the EPA's Web site [www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon); call your state radon office; or call a national toll-free hotline at 1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236).

## CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, January 10, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **OLDE TOWN OFFICE VILLAGE, SITE PLAN NUMBER 06-30 FOR PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN, WETLAND PERMIT, WOODLAND PERMIT, AND STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN SECTION 16, SOUTH OF GRAND RIVER AVENUE, EAST OF BECK ROAD, IN THE I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.** The subject property is 10.73 acres and the applicant is proposing to build four multi-story medical/general office buildings.



All interested persons are invited to attend. Verbal comments may be heard at the hearing and any written comments must be received by the Planning Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 until 4:00 P.M., Wednesday, January 10, 2007. Published January 4, 2007

NOVI PLANNING COMMISSION  
MARK PEHRSON, SECRETARY

(1-4-07 NN 330538)

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# Novi Chamber of Commerce to celebrate 40 years of service

**Domino's CEO Brandon to speak**

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER



**How to register**  
Cost to attend the Jan. 17 Novi Chamber of Commerce luncheon is \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. For more information or to make reservations, contact the chamber office at (248) 349-3743. RSVP by Jan. 10.

David Brandon, chairman and CEO of Domino's Pizza in Ann Arbor, will be the guest speaker at the Jan. 17 Novi Chamber of Commerce's 40th Anniversary and 2007 Board Installation Luncheon. The event will take place at noon at Fox Run retirement village in Novi.

**Board installed**

The chamber will combine its 40th anniversary celebration with an installation of its 2007 board members. David Brandon, chairman and CEO of Domino's Pizza, Inc., in Ann Arbor, will be the guest speaker.

During college, he was a member of three Big 10 champion football teams under the late, legendary coach Bo Schembecher. 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.

**OBITUARIES**

**OBITUARY POLICY**  
The first seven lines of an obituary are published free of charge. After that, there is a fee of \$3 a line. Pictures may be published for \$25.  
\*Deadline for obituaries is Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. for publication in Thursday's newspaper.  
For more information, call 888-999-1288, or contact your funeral home.  
\*Holiday deadlines are subject to change.

# FIGHTING BACK

**Cancer foundation honors late husband**

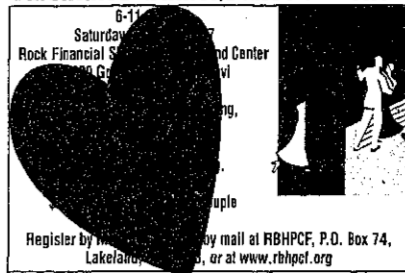
By James Mitchell  
GANNETT NEWS SERVICE



Pat Hall started a pancreatic cancer foundation in her husband's memory.

Dick and Pat Hall never made it to Florida, at least not together on the vacation they once planned. They met late in life, and Dick often told her that Florida was his favorite place. Two years after they started dating, vacations — all of their decisions — changed when Dick was diagnosed in 2002 with pancreatic cancer. In April 2005, Dick lost his battle with cancer at age 54, but his spirit and attitude live on through the efforts of Pat, who formed the Richard B. Hall Pancreatic Cancer Foundation not long after her husband's death. Novi's Rock Financial Showplace will be the site of the foundation's next fund-raiser when the Second Annual Richard B. Hall Pancreatic Cancer Foundation Dinner/Dance takes place Saturday, Feb. 10. Reservations are requested by Monday, Jan. 30. As a licensed, 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, Pat hopes the Lyon Township-based foundation can provide support and encouragement to cancer patients. "He just had a positive attitude," Pat said. "He treated it like it was a bad cold and thought he could kick it." Pancreatic cancer is difficult to detect before it becomes fatal, and an estimated 32,000 patients died from the condition this year. Surgical removal is possible, provided the cancer has not reached an inoperable stage, and the main treatment options are chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Both are expensive options, and not everyone is "blessed" with health care coverage. Dick often spoke of that — how one injection he received during therapy came with a price tag of \$4,000. Treatment with proper insurance, however, can be costly, and Dick — a generous man whom Pat said routinely sent donations to any number of charitable causes — met many patients who said their insurance carrier did not cover certain aspects of treatment. Pat said that proper health care coverage is part of a "tool box" that cancer patients need to carry with them in their battle against the disease. Health insurance, excellent moral support and a top-notch medical team are other key tools, Pat said. "I just think everyone should have a tool box, so you can get up every day and fight it," Pat said. "Even if it's just to help some lady go out to dinner with her family more time," support from friends and family is an integral part of that tool box. Helping patients fill their tool box is the goal, Pat said. Funds raised through the foundation will be funneled through the Charach Cancer Treatment Center at Huron Valley Sinai Hospital in

**The 2nd Annual Richard B. Hall Pancreatic Cancer Foundation Valentines' Dinner/Dance Benefit**



Register by mail at RBHPCF, P.O. Box 74, Lakeland, FL 34020 or at www.rbhpcf.org

SOURCE: Richard B. Hall Pancreatic Cancer Foundation

Commerce Township, where Dick and Pat were familiar faces during his struggle. The two were married in January 2005, just three months before Dick passed away, in a hospital room bed-side ceremony.

Four annual events are planned for next year, starting with the Feb. 10 dinner/dance in Novi. Other events include a Texas Hold 'Em Poker tournament in April at the South Lyon Hotel, a golf outing in June at River Bank Golf Course in Lyon Township and a bike tour, Pedal for Pancreatic Cancer, at Island Lake Recreation Area in Brighton in September.

The four events, Pat said, symbolize the activities the couple enjoyed, even briefly, before Dick was diagnosed.

"I knew what I had to do," Pat said of her quest to establish a foundation in her husband's memory. Over the months, the foundation was established and registered as a nonprofit agency, a seven-member board of directors was named and a partnership agreement formed with Huron Valley Sinai Hospital. Through the Charach Center, the foundation will reach out to families and patients enduring long, painful hours of therapy and struggling to make ends meet against costly medical bills.

"We want to help people get that shot they can't afford; cancer doesn't wait," Pat said. "We want to fill that financial void."

**BUSINESS BRIEFS**

**Rio Wraps eating contest set**

Rio Wraps in Novi will sponsor a Super Bowl Burrito-Eating Contest at 1 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 4190 Grand River Ave. just west of Meadowbrook. Contestants age 18 and older will have the chance to move on to the final round and compete for \$7,500 worth of prizes. There is no entry fee, but contestants must register at the store by Friday, Jan. 12.

Entrants will be asked to eat three pre-made standard burritos and as part of the event, the Grand River Avenue location will also offer 99 cent tacos the day of the contest.

For more information, call (248) 374-0690.

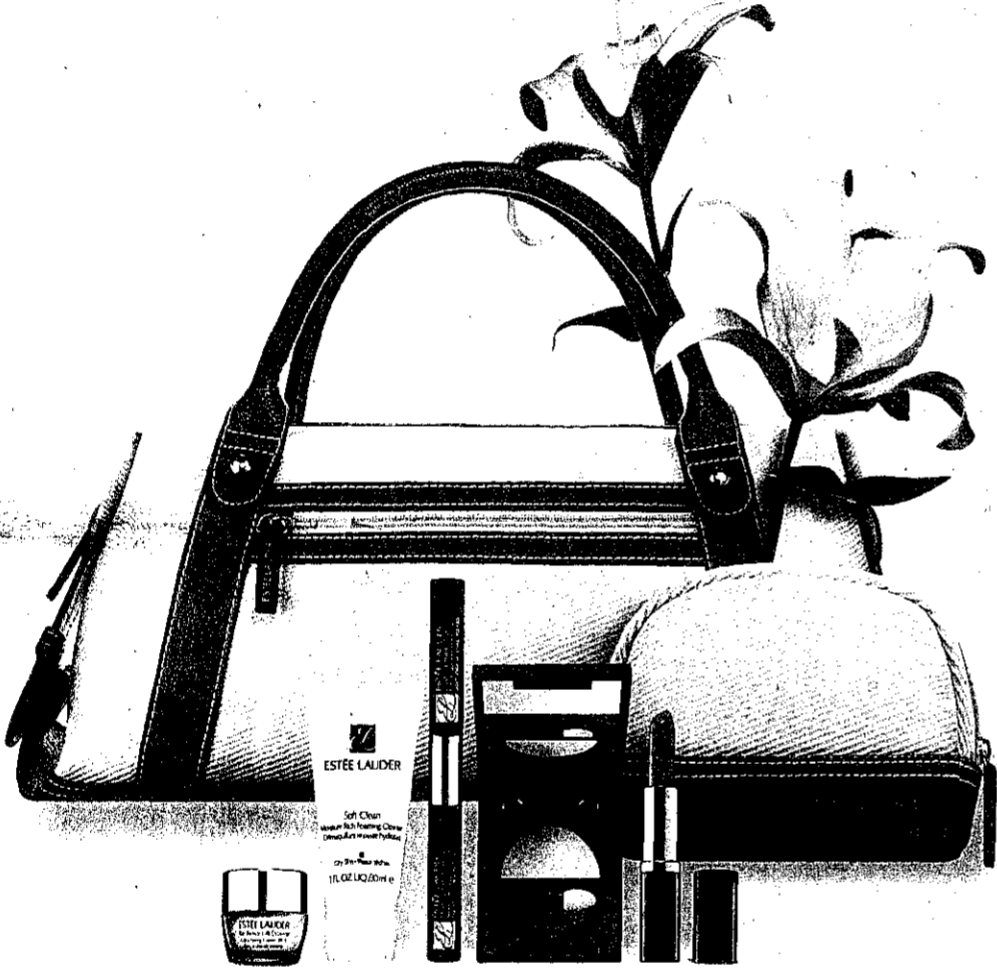
**Michigan's economy weakens**

The Michigan Business Activity Index compiled by Comerica Bank in Detroit fell 1 point in November, to 101. The latest reading is down about 3 percent from a year ago, and so far this year, the index has averaged 2.4 percent less than it did in 2005. The latest reading is the lowest since September 2001.

"With the Michigan-based auto companies cutting production to tame excessive inventories of SUVs and light trucks, it is no surprise that our index shows the state economy struggling as 2006 was drawing to a close," said Dana Johnson, chief economist at Comerica Bank. "More auto-sector buyouts, declining homebuilding, and sluggish national growth is likely to keep our index depressed in early 2007."

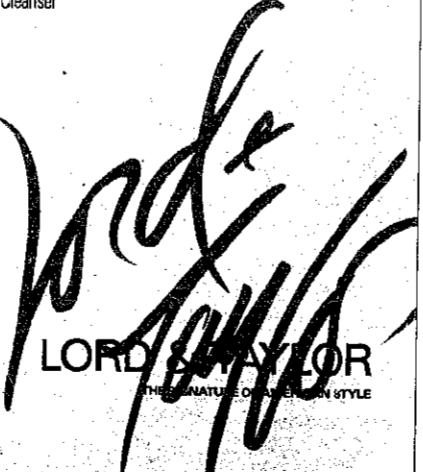
The Michigan Business Activity Index represents 10 different measures of Michigan economic activity compiled monthly by the Economics Department of Comerica Bank. The MBAI is seasonally adjusted, corrected for inflation, and expressed as an index, with 1996 as base year equal to 100. The MBAI series has been calculated monthly since 1957 and depicts state economic activity over seven full swings of the U.S. business cycle.

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**Providence Hospital delivers first 2007 baby — two days late**

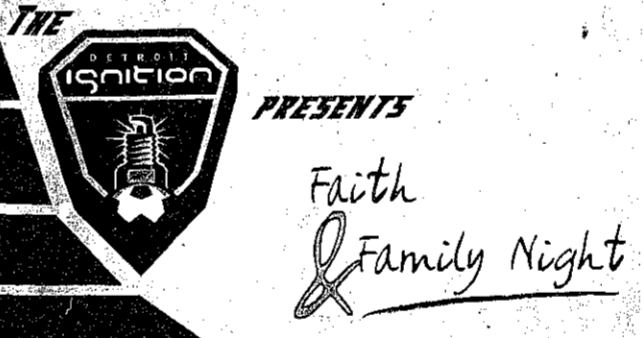
**Mother shocked he was the first**

By Pam Fleming  
STAFF WRITER

Luciana Theford didn't think her baby would achieve celebrity status on his first day on earth. But that was before the 20-year-old Detroit stay-at-home mother went into labor late on New Year's Eve. Tariq Ja'ail Theford soon became the first baby born in the new year at Providence Hospital in Southfield.

Most would think the first baby would have been born shortly after midnight. But Tariq took his time. He was born at 5:36 a.m., weighing in at 8 pounds, 8 ounces and 21 and 3/4 inches long, and still made his own little bit of history.

There are actually seven in the Theford family with stepson, Ronald Jr., 11. Other children include Asia, 16; Nur, 10; Daniel, 7; Najab, 5; and Ford, 3. This was the couple's sixth child, and their last according to Luciana after a short but rather difficult labor with Tariq.



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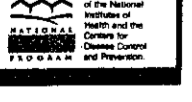
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# SPORTS

# BEST OF 2006

## Soccer title, cross country runner-up head list

By Jeff Theisen  
NOV NEWS

The 2006 high school sports seasons contained some of the top performances in Michigan. The following are the top five performances from 2006.

### Soccer State Champs

1. The Novi girls soccer team went up against cross-town rival Northville in the state finals and pulled off a 3-1 victory. Wildcat junior Stephanie Crawford scored all three goals, two in the first half, to lead the charge. "It just feels good to have played our rivals in a really tough game and win. My teammates were just amazing out there," Crawford said after the game. Freshman keeper Erin Zeris earned her 16th shutout of the year to keep the team's record perfect at 24-0. Novi coach Brian O'Leary, who earned Coach of the Year for the second straight year, said, "The two best teams in the state played today."

### What a Run

2. The Novi boys cross country team finished second at state to fellow conference mate Pinckney. Wildcat senior Mike Wheat led Novi with an All-State finish in 20th place overall (16:01.8). Senior Alex Prasad just missed making All-State status, finishing in 32nd (16:10.2). Finishing out the top five were junior Justin Lumley (41st), senior Keny MacDonough (59th) and senior Mike Beard (43rd). "All seven guys, I think, set records for themselves today," Novi head coach Robert Smith said. "We ran the best we could." Novi also won the regional meet with Wheat capturing first place.

### Best-Ever Finish

3. The Novi girls tennis team faced the best of the best at the state meet. The Wildcats faced either the champion or the runner-up in all of the singles and doubles matches. But facing the best meant the Wildcats qualified in all eight possible positions. Six of the eight positions picked up at least one win, earning 16 points for the Wildcats. Ann Arbor Pioneer ran away with the meet, earning 37 points, but second place was Holland West Ottawa with just 19 points. Grosse Pointe South and Ann Arbor Huron followed with 18 and 17 points respectively for third and fourth. "We weren't too many points out of second place," Novi head coach Jim Hanson said. "We were right there in the mix. I'm so proud of the way the kids played." Novi will return nine players from the 2006 team.

### Equaling the Best Finish

4. The Novi girls tennis team equaled its best-ever finish at state with a fifth-place finish. Just like the boys, all eight flights were represented by the girls. Katie Samuelson at No. 2 singles, Sara Carlson at No. 4 singles and the No. 1 doubles team of Jackie Wang and Allison Yee each made the semifinals to lead the Wildcats.



Wildcats' Shannon Cody, left, and Rachel Barndt celebrate their state-title victory with a hug after defeating the Mustangs 3-1 in the state finals at Troy High School.

Photo by JOHN HEIDER  
NOV NEWS



Novi girls tennis player in action.

Novi girls tennis player in action.

Novi girls tennis player in action.

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Novi girls tennis player in action.

### Athlete of the Week Submissions

Happy New Year to all the coaches, athletes and readers. The Athlete of the Week is submitted by coaches from Novi and Catholic Central. Submissions can be made to Novi News sports writer Jeff Theisen at [jtheisen@gannett.com](mailto:jtheisen@gannett.com) or at (248) 349-1700, ext. 104.



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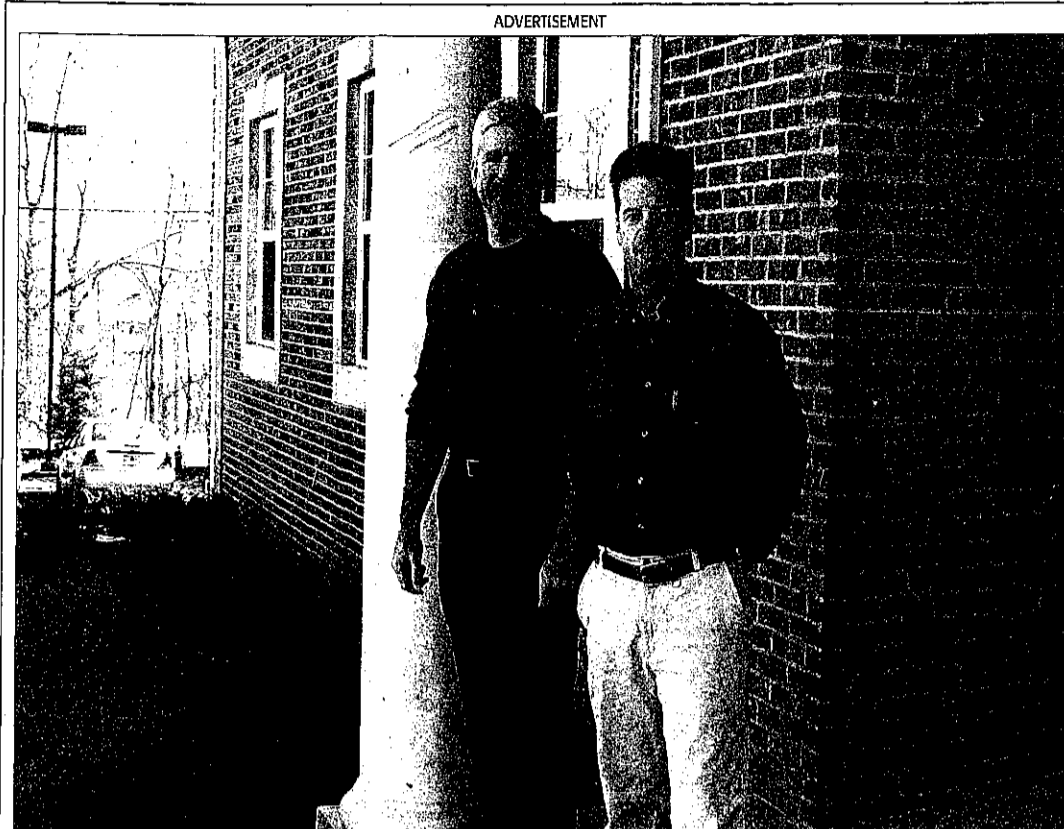
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Group 3 is a general contractor and commercial real estate developer and builder. Tim Adams and Charlie Percy stand in front of their offices in the beautiful Woodland Center in Milford, which still contains several available office condominiums.

## Office condominiums save money

Group 3 offers flexible options for medical offices and other professionals

By Kate Phillips  
SPECIAL WRITER

It's changing the way professionals do business. Group 3 Construction and Development LLC has revolutionized the small office practice by bringing the office condominium to Michigan. Partners Tim Adams and Charlie Percy have developed a strong reputation in the community as they build and develop solutions for local professionals, and those who want to extend their practice into the area. "Office condominiums are good for the entire community, because when people own a building, they take better care of it and it is an asset to the community over the long-term," said Charlie Percy.

**GROUP 3 CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT LLC**  
1550 N. Milford Road, Milford  
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Commercial lease, while other lease with an option to buy. The type of office that can be built is also flexible. Group 3 offers customized build-outs, in both new and existing properties. They're experienced enough to help buyers design the perfect space for their practice, whether it centers around a medical use, professional office or retail.

**SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS**  
For several years Group 3 has been offering business professionals office condominiums throughout the Oakland County.

Adams and Percy are embraced by the local communities because the buildings reflect the beauty of the surrounding areas, and are constructed out of quality materials with classic architecture that will continue to look good as time passes. The offices of Group 3 are located in the lovely Woodland Center on Milford Road, just north of the Village in Milford Township. Other successful projects are the Heritage Crossing on Highland Road at the Millford Road in Highland, plus Saddlebrook Farms and Stonecrest in Highland.

**GENERAL CONTRACTORS**  
Group 3 also works as general contractors for commercial and residential projects. Percy serves as the construction manager, after nearly 20 years as a builder. The company is now working on a large addition at Edgewood Country Club in



Edgewater Medical Building in Commerce Township is conveniently located near the hospital. Immediate occupancy is available.

Commerce, and Dobsis Restaurant in Waterford.

Group 3 is available for construction work on new and existing structures.

**NEW OFFICES AVAILABLE**  
Group 3 is now offering a number of spaces in prime locations throughout the area. Office condominiums and lease to own space is now available in:

- **Old Town Village**  
This 105,000-square-foot building is still comfortable with old-world charm. The medical and general office building is located at Beck Road and Grand River Avenue in Novi.
- **Edgewater Medical**  
This 29,000-square-foot building is located in Commerce Township, near Edgewood Country Club, shopping areas, and other medical offices. There is still 12,000 square feet available.
- **Marquee Building**  
The Marquee Building is a sleek, three-story contemporary building offering 21,000 square feet of office and general retail space. It is located on Pontiac Trail, just south of Maple Road in Walled Lake.
- **Village Plaza**  
This 27,000-square-foot three-story building will be constructed on Milford Road in downtown Milford, across from Hester and Jimmy's Restaurant. It will include office and retail space.
- **Hartland Offices**  
A new property is being planned in the growing community of Hartland. The smaller building, which is only 10,000 square feet, will fit in with the quaint downtown village. It will be located right next to town hall on Hartland Road, north of the M-59 and U.S.-23 interchange.
- **Union Lake Medical**  
A 12,000-square-foot medical and general office is now in the planning stages. The beautiful, traditionally styled building will be located on Union Lake Road, just north of Commerce Road, in Commerce Township.

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Page 16A

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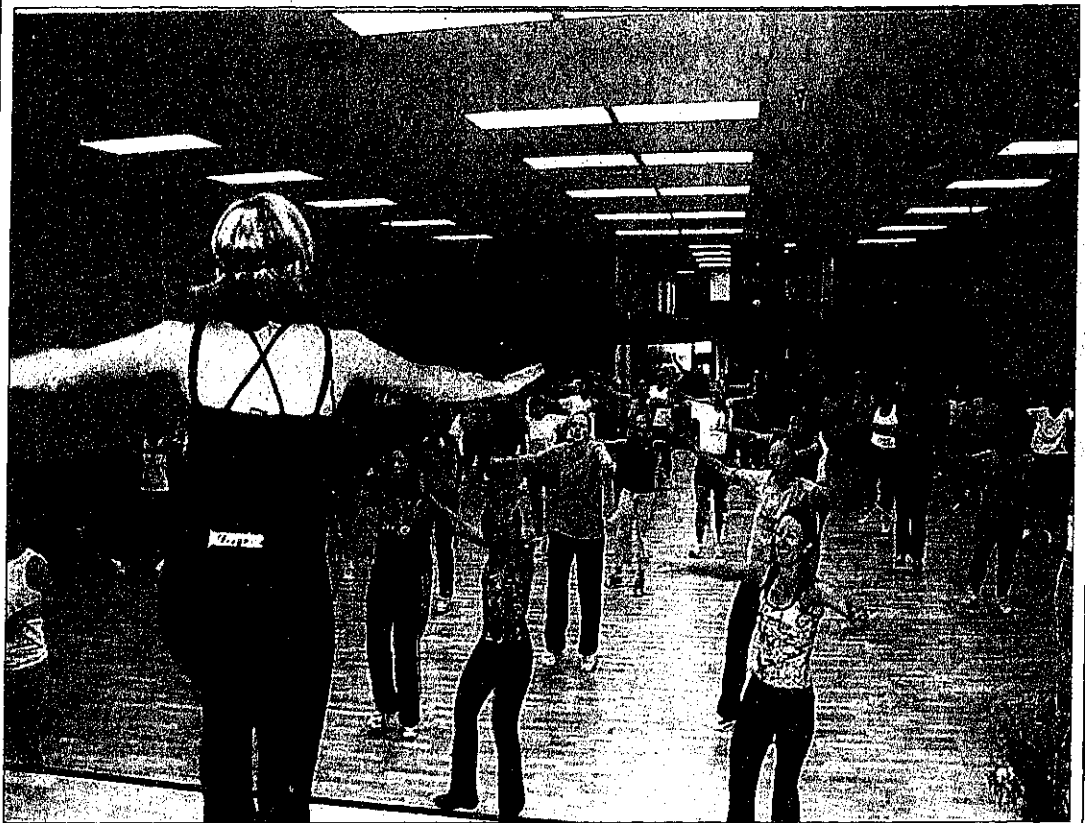
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Women get a full-body workout during Jazzercise classes in the new studio in South Lyon.

## Jazzercise works off extra pounds

By Kate Phillips  
SPECIAL WRITER

After just a couple months in its new home, Jazzercise of South Lyon has been seeing amazing results.

A week of free classes and a \$25 discount are offered to new students with registration. The staff at Jazzercise is hoping that even more women will try out Jazzercise this January and begin to see amazing things happening in their own lives.

"I challenge people to come in and see one class, either participate or just watch, and they'll love it so much, they'll want to come back," said Jamie Martin, owner of the South Lyon fitness center.

### FULL BODY WORKOUT

Jazzercise of South Lyon is a large, colorful fitness center that offers exercise classes that both challenge and motivate. The classes consist of a 30-minute to 40-minute fat-burning aerobic workout followed by strength training with weights, stretching and a cool down. Instructors combine aspects of Pilates, kick boxing and traditional aerobics into a fun routine that provides plenty of variety, but is still easy to pick up.

All fitness levels can get a good workout because the instructor shows ways to modify the workout according to each individual's needs. It's a challenging workout for the experienced athlete, yet it is simple enough for a beginner. Highly qualified instructors go through ongoing training and are available to help with individualized fitness goals.

The upbeat, popular music and rhythmic routines make it a lot more fun than exercising on machines.

"You feel like you are listening to the radio and having fun with your friends," said Jamie. "We have a great time."

Jazzercise has continued to change and evolve over the years to include the latest techniques and trends. Some clients have been enjoying Jazzercise for several decades, though it has changed and improved throughout.

### GETTING RESULTS

The physical results are nothing short of amazing. A number of clients at the South Lyon studio have had major weight loss — from 5 pounds to more than 80 pounds. Many of the women have reshaped their bodies, firming and toning, and building a trim



Photos by KATE PHILLIPS

Kellie Turczyn and Nikki McEvers provide free childcare in the kids' clubhouse while moms workout.

physique. A number of clients have gotten good reports back from the doctor after spending several months doing Jazzercise — lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and the elimination of early symptoms of disease.

And most importantly, the women are feeling better. They are smiling on the inside and out. Most of the women report increased energy and stamina, and a more positive outlook on life, said Jamie.

"After just two weeks they say that they can't believe how much energy they have," said Jamie.

### MOTIVATION

At Jazzercise, clients stay motivated because of the personal connection. Jamie and each of the instructors get to know the people in the classes and develop close relationships over time.

"We want there to be a personal connection," said Jamie. "You are meeting people and making friends and when you come in you feel like you have a connection."

With only women in the classes, the bonds seem to form almost immediately. Even those who just come in once a week feel comfortable with the other ladies in the class. Those relationships help the women to stay

motivated to continue with their fitness plans, Jamie said.

"The women know that people would miss them if they weren't there," said Jamie. "That's important."

### LOVING JAZZERCISE

Like many of the clients, as soon as Jamie Martin tried out a class, she never wanted to stop. It was a decade ago. Jamie was feeling a bit bored with her usual workout so she went with a friend to a Jazzercise class.

"I loved it right away," Jamie said.

As she continued to workout with Jazzercise, Jamie started making plans to become an instructor and start her own Jazzercise location. She loved the idea of helping other women lose weight and get fit, while staying fit herself. So seven years ago Jamie started Jazzercise in South Lyon. Classes were offered through continuing education, and usually met in a school or a dance studio. As more people tried it, the number of offerings grew.

Finally, the right opportunity came up for Jamie to open up a center of her own. Last July the beautiful fitness center opened to the public. The location includes wood floors, a delightful kids area and a friendly gathering

### JAZZERCISE OF SOUTH LYON

Classes: For women or children  
Where: 22177 Pontiac Trail, South Lyon  
Phone: (248) 486-3674  
Online: www.jazzercise.com  
Childcare: Free during classes

place. The large, 5,600-square-foot facility means that more classes can be offered during more flexible times, including during the day, in the evening and on weekends.

Now eight instructors lead 24 classes per week and are constantly adding new classes.

### COMPLIMENTARY CHILDCARE

While moms workout, kids can play, for no extra charge. There's a cozy red-sided clubhouse with all sorts of building blocks, trucks, and educational toys. Fully trained childcare providers take care of the little ones with the same vigilance as they care for their own children at home.

As parents of Abbie, 4, Carson, 2, and Chloe, 1, Jamie and her husband Matt understand the need to include the children in a workout plan, in order to make it work for a busy mom. They've seen that a mothers workout more often when there is free, quality childcare right on site, like at Jazzercise.

### JR. JAZZERCISE

The fitness centers offers Jr. Jazzercise classes for kids as well. Elementary aged children can take an after-school class that is offered at the same time as an adult class. It includes exercise, games, nutrition education and a craft.

Preschool and kindergarten children can take a Jr. Jazzercise class during the morning while their mom takes a class or exercises along with the children. Kids will learn coordination, strength and balance through educational play using music, stunts, playground skills and dance.

### GET IN SHAPE

Start now on your New Year's Resolution. Classes are ongoing. Jazzercise doesn't require any sort of contract. Students can pay for an individual class or attend an unlimited number of classes for \$39 a month.

Jazzercise is located at 22177 Pontiac Trail, near Farmer Jack, in South Lyon. For more information call (248) 486-3674.

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