

Novi News

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2013 • hometownlife.com

SPECIAL SECTION
HOLIDAY
GIFT GUIDE

Winter Winds Holiday Concert

The Novi High School Band Department presents its annual Winter Winds Holiday Concert at 7 p.m. today in the school's auditorium. The free concert will consist of a variety of repertoire including some holiday favorites like Leroy Anderson's *Sleigh Ride*. There will be performances by the Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble, Symphony Band, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz Ensemble.

Breakfast with Santa

The city of Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department and Novi Rotary will host the inaugural Breakfast with Santa from 9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday at the Novi Civic Center, 45175 10 Mile.

Families will enjoy a pancake breakfast served by members of Novi Rotary, visits with Santa and making a craft in Santa and Mrs. Claus' workshop. If tickets remain available after the pre-registration deadline (yesterday), they will be available at the door for \$7 per person. To register, visit cityofnovi.org or in-person at the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, located inside the Novi Civic Center.

Super coffee

Visit with Steve Mathews, superintendent of the Novi Community Schools district, for coffee at the Novi Public Library at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16, and 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18.

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Beck crossing coming

Construction to begin summer 2014

By Lonnie Huhman
Staff Writer

The first nonmotorized crossing of a major road under city of Novi jurisdiction will be located on Beck Road.

The city of Novi has teamed up with Spalding DeDecker Associates to begin the project

to develop a midblock crossing between Nine Mile and 10 Mile. Under a \$14,379 contract approved by the City Council, SDA will be assisting Novi's Engineering Division with the design and construction engineering services for this project.

"A properly designed midblock crossing can help direct pedestrians to cross in a defined location, rather than at random locations, and can help alert approaching vehicles that

pedestrians may be present, making the crossing much safer," said Novi Public Services Director/Engineer Rob Hayes in the recommendation to the council on Nov. 25.

This particular spot was identified in the city's 2011 Non-motorized Master Plan, which cited several locations for the potential development of non-motorized crossings or midblock crossings.

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BECK CROSSING



LIGHT IT UP!



Novi Mayor Bob Gatt got the assembled to yell Santa's name to get the jolly old fellow to show up and kick off the city's holiday season Friday. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The city of Novi celebrated the beginning of the holiday season with its Light Up the Night event last Friday on the Civic Center campus. In addition to Mayor Bob Gatt and Santa Claus lighting the holiday tree, the event included a petting farm from Michigan State University Extension, fire dancing and juggling from Detroit Circus, Five Star Entertainment food truck and performances of Chinese and Polynesian dance. Perennial favorites included free food samples from local restaurants, marshmallow roasting, outdoor music throughout the night, the holiday craft show, and a hay wagon shuttling people to and from the Novi Public Library to enjoy two magic shows featuring John the Magician. Light Up the Night was presented in partnership with Bright House Networks.



Erma's restaurant employee Rachel Marchione gives out cookies.

See NYA, Page A2

Adopt a Family epitomizes NYA's mission

Organization teams up for holiday program

By Lonnie Huhman
Staff Writer

The Novi Youth Assistance's annual Adopt-a-Family program is a perfect example of what this organization's mission statement means when it says, "strengthening families through community involvement."

Each holiday season, for over 20 years now, NYA has teamed up with the Goodfellows and other community members to help make Christmas a memorable day.

"This is a true community project each year," said NYA caseworker Tom Swieboda. "Many families have needs, so we try to act as a source between those who want to give and those who are in need."

At this point there are 44 families that have qualified to be a recipient for this holiday program. The families come from NYA recommendations or are referred. Each must fill out a recipient information form to verify needs and challenges. NYA is an organization made up of community volunteers, assisted by professional staff whose purpose is to provide support and positive growth experiences for families.

Swieboda said the background of the recipients vary with some being challenged by unemployment and others with medical issues. He said one family has a great-grandmother raising her great-grandson on a pension. It's not just gifts that recipients receive; some also get help with things like their utilities.

See NYA, Page A2

Fiscal accountability takes center stage at Walsh

By Lonnie Huhman
Staff Writer

Walsh College's conference on Fiscal Accountability for Public Sector Leaders on Dec. 5 gave attendees a look into what makes a municipality successful financially and what doesn't.

In the past decade, financial hardship has hit many municipalities around the state, and some have even had to straighten things out with the help of an emergency manager.

The worst-case scenario for public officials has been to have



Schimmel

their local government and services go bankrupt. The best-case has been to ride out the economic recession and, in some cases, make things better. Put in place by the voters and using tax dollars, these leaders are held accountable to get it done or changes will come.

This was one of the main points of the half-day session at Walsh's Novi campus. Faculty and government finance experts

discussed their experiences and insights under state law, as emergency managers, under municipal bankruptcy, debt financing, as well as those red-flag issues often ignored in municipal budgets.

The goal was to provide attendees — appointed and elected officials, and employees of public entities including state and local governments, school districts, authorities and commissions — resources available to municipalities and critical strategies to help them maintain fiscal strength.

Success story

The city of Novi is a shining example with its multi-year fiscal planning. Novi City Manager Clay Pearson gave basis for what he and other public officials have done to maintain and improve services during challenging times.

"There are many policymakers and staff such as Novi that made adjustments to cut costs during the Great Recession, that reduced employee head-

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LOCAL NEWS

CONFERENCE

Continued from Page A1

count and employee benefits," said Pearson, who helped welcome the attendees to the conference.

"Novi also made adjustments to how we delivered services and focused on getting the most long-term benefit from public dollars entrusted to us," he added. In Novi, a lot of well thought out techniques have been used to maintain accountability, but it's also owed to what Pearson calls the "hard work and focus every day from our great talented staff" that helps make a public organization successful.

Troubled areas
Schimmel said many times labor and legacy costs are the biggest challenges in getting a public budget shaped up. By not addressing the problems immediately, some public officials "kick the can down the road," leading to bigger issues.

"Cleaning up your own mess first," is where it starts, Schimmel said. Each situation for him has been different, but there were common problems and solutions, which include making sacrifices.

He said the plan they

"What they are doing is serving themselves instead of the community."

LOUIS SCHIMMEL, conference speaker, commenting on self-serving politicians

used in Pontiac was a good one. Consolidating services, privatizing others with Michigan-based contractors, selling property, introducing new economic development, and financial restructuring were some of the tools he employed.

In places like Detroit, emergencies were declared and managers sent in to fix dire financial situations. Conference speaker Louis Schimmel, who managed financial emergencies in Ecorse, Hamtramck and Pontiac, said much of the blame goes to self-serving politicians who turn a part-time job into a full-time job with the perks that can come with that.

"What they are doing is serving themselves instead of the community," he said of his experiences over the last decade.

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ROAD

Continued from Page A1

According to Hayes, the Beck crossing project is funded in the FY 13-14 budget. It will be located between Cheltenham Drive and White Pines Drive, which is also part of a future east-west regional pathway north of Nine Mile.

"Since this is the

first midblock crossing project under the city's jurisdiction, the design process will evaluate several improvements such as refuge islands, illuminated pedestrian beacons, and the location of the crossing relative to adjacent streets and other obstacles," added Novi Engineering Manager Brian Coburn in his report to the council.

The crossing will also include proper

signage and pavement markings to help increase driver awareness of potential pedestrian conflicts, according to the plan. Under the agreement, SDA will perform an analysis to verify that the proposed location is appropriate for a pedestrian crossing and conduct a limited traffic study on Beck Road to evaluate the traffic patterns and determine the appropriate design

for the crossing. The goal of the midblock crossing is to provide a safe crossing for all types of non-motorized users," Hayes told the council.

The project will be designed over the winter months, and construction of this project is expected to commence in summer 2014.

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NYA

Continued from Page A1

"The community donors don't know the families, but still give out of the goodness of their hearts," he said. "And the families don't know their donors, but they are extremely grateful for the generosity of others."

Many have been brought to tears upon seeing the gifts given to them through the program. Swiebeda said many of the wish lists the families and children come up with and hand in are not usually extravagant, but rather more

modest. A thank you note, with help from NYA, always follows a gift. Although the holidays are quickly approaching, there's still room for more help and recipients.

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Novi Youth Assistance case worker Tom Swiebeda and employee Barb O'Neill gather up some of the donated Christmas gifts that have been given to the youth mentoring program in the past weeks. They'll be given to the needy families of the program's youths. JOHN HELEN STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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Jurist recuses self in Novi judge case

Bowman is friends with accuser and accused

By L.L. Brasier and John Wisely
Gannett News Service

Oakland County Circuit Judge Leo Bowman recused himself Monday afternoon from hearing a complaint filed against Novi District Judge Brian MacKenzie, saying he could not be fair.

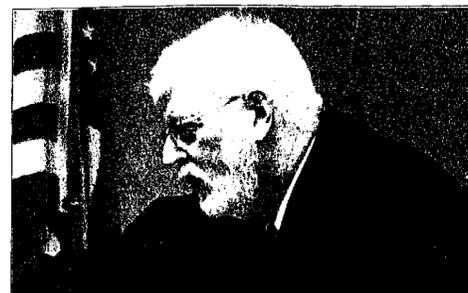
MacKenzie has been under fire since late November, when Oakland County Prosecutor Jessica Cooper filed a 238-page complaint with the county circuit court asking a judge there to take control of cases she believes MacKenzie has mishandled.

Cooper accused MacKenzie of breaking the law by falsifying court records, improperly dismissing cases and concealing public documents.

Bowman, in recusing himself, said he felt he could not be impartial. "My very, very close friendship with the Oakland County prosecutor and my friendship with Judge MacKenzie require that I recuse myself," Bowman said. "It's a motion by one friend against another." It's likely I could not be impartial."

MacKenzie was not present for the hearing. His attorney, John Lynch, said MacKenzie looks forward to confronting the allegations.

"Judge MacKenzie has detailed explanations in the allegations set forth, specific allegations to defend and detail," Lynch said. "Judge MacKenzie is very proud of the reputation he has built and intends to sustain it in these proceed-



Judge Brian MacKenzie at the 52-1 District Court in Novi is accused of improperly handling cases. KATHLEEN GALLIGAN | GANNETT MICHIGAN



Jessica Cooper

ings." The case now will be reassigned to another judge through a blind draw.

Cooper filed the lawsuit after discovering cases she said MacKenzie mishandled and then sealed, according to the complaint.

"District Judge Brian MacKenzie has been secretly setting aside valid convictions entered in plaintiff's cases - taking pleas on misdemeanor cases and then subsequently setting the sentences for dates when no assistant prosecutor and my friendship with Judge MacKenzie require that I recuse myself," Bowman said. "It's a motion by one friend against another." It's likely I could not be impartial."

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Kenzie's actions and her office be allowed to review his cases dating back 10 years. Cooper also is asking that the higher court order MacKenzie's court clerk to stop reporting that prosecutors are present at hearings when they aren't.

In the complaint, filed Nov. 26, Cooper said her office came across the irregularities through "serendipity," and began reviewing MacKenzie's cases.

In one case, a man was charged with reckless driving and assault and battery after engaging in a road-rage incident in which he drove his vehicle toward two individuals and used a gun slur, according to the complaint.

He pleaded guilty, but MacKenzie — using a spousal abuse law that allows judges to delay sentencing — eventually dismissed the conviction without telling prosecutors, the complaint alleged.

In another case, MacKenzie is accused of delaying the sentence for a man who pleaded no contest to a second offense of domestic violence after he was accused of beating his

girlfriend and tearing out her hair extensions. A second conviction allows for a stiffer sentence, but MacKenzie placed the man on probation and eventually dismissed the case without

consulting with prosecutors — despite saying on the record that prosecutors had agreed, the complaint said.

In granting a dismissal, MacKenzie told the defendant: "This is my gift to you," according to a copy of the transcript attached to the complaint.

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Novi athletes excel on and off the field

A summary of my athletic achievements would be short.

I was the fastest boy in fourth grade. Faster than the boy who eventually won the state hundred yard dash when we were both in high school. My little league team won the league championship when I was 9 years old. I played third base and caught the final out of the championship game. That sums up fairly well and fairly accurately the highlights of my athletic achievements.

My father, on the hand, was an exceptional athlete in Oklahoma. He was on three district championship football teams, qualified for the state track meet in the 100 yard dash, and went on the play football in



Steve Matthews
SUPER TALK

college. He earned 12 athletic letters in high school. It is not surprising then that the relationship that my father and I had often centered on sports. His love of sports transferred to me as I grew up. All my life I have been interested in sports, so my interest in our Novi School District athletic teams has some deep roots.

In the fall, Novi High School fielded 10 varsity teams. The students who participated on these teams willingly exchanged their time and energy for a

chance to participate with other students on a team. They agreed to attend practice, listen to coaches, and participate in strength training. They gave up other activities to work with, sweat with, train with, and bond with their teammates. This required commitment and dedication.

Implicit in this choice was an agreement to continue to work hard academically as well. In fact, most, if not all, of the coaches stress academics with our student-athletes. This requires a keen eye toward time management as these students athletes navigate school, practice, and homework every day.

As the superintendent, I marvel at the time, energy, and effort that these student ath-

letes give every day. As I reviewed the fall athletic summary five teams had extraordinary achievement. What did girls field hockey, boys soccer, boys tennis, volleyball, and girls swim have in common?

You might suggest that each of them had a successful fall sports season. And you would be right. The tennis team finished second in the state - falling one point short of the state championship. The field hockey team made it to the state semifinals. Our soccer team lost in the district final. While our volleyball team was KLAAs division champion, KLAAs conference champion, and KLAAs Association champion. Finally, the swim team had seven state qualifiers.

So, if your answer to what these teams had in common was that they had a successful season you would be correct. But that is not the answer that I was after.

These five teams earned academic all-state honors. The field hockey team had a team GPA of 3.5. The boys' soccer team had a team GPA of 3.47. The volleyball team had a team GPA of 3.54. The girls' swim team had a team GPA of 3.81. Finally, the boys tennis team had a team GPA of 3.86.

These student athletes should make us all proud. They represent Novi well.

Steve Matthews is superintendent of Novi Community Schools. He can be reached at 248-449-1204 or smatthews@novi.k12.mi.us.

STEM and Me



The Michigan Science Technology Engineering Mathematics Partnership recently held a STEM and Me contest, where students were instructed to create posters and videos illustrating how the pillars of STEM are a part of their daily lives. Glenqary Elementary had two students win awards in the poster competition: Finley Siegel (left) won third place and Maddie Tinsley won second place in the K-3 category. Prizes will be awarded to students Dec. 12 at a meeting of the Partnership Board in East Lansing at Michigan State University.

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Silly reward



Orchard Hills music teacher Nicole Gustafson (right) gets pelted with Silly String by a fellow educator during a Dec. 5 assembly that rewarded the school's students for raising funds for the PTO.

SCHOOL BRIEFS

Great Start Readiness Program

The Novi Community Education Preschool will be offering the Great Start Readiness Program for 4-year-olds starting September 2014.

To qualify for this state-funded program, children must be age 4 by Oct. 1, 2014, and meet two of seven criteria set by the state. The GSRP program is a free preschool and includes lunch and snack. Parents provide transportation.

The All-Dry Class will be held Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and follow the Novi Community School district calendar.

Novi Community Education Preschool uses the Creative Curriculum. This curriculum supports the children learning through hands-on activities, and follows the State of Michigan Early Childhood Standards. Lesson plans reflect social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development.

Registration is ongoing, beginning Jan. 6. Space is limited and enrollment is not guaranteed. Parents or guardians should contact the Community Education Preschool office to schedule a registration appointment at 248-449-1713.

The following documents are necessary for pre-registration: 12-month proof of income (2013 tax forms, FTA statement), child's birth certificate, health insurance, copy of child's immunization records, and three proofs of Novi residency (one proof must be a mortgage or lease).

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Carrier turn to the experts

Volunteering

Novi High School students Kanika Saxena, Amy Zhou and Tanaz Naterwala were at the Lord & Taylor's first floor door at Twelve Oaks on Nov. 30 volunteering for the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign. They decided to bring Tanaz's dog, Harley, and dressed him up in a reindeer costume, which helped bring in many more donations. Some customers stopped before they came out - just to see Harley, Wildcat students will be at both Lord & Taylor doors at the mall on Fridays and Saturdays until Dec. 21. They will also be at Busch's Market on 10 Mile just west of Meadowbrook in Novi. Last year, Novi students were awarded the Eastern Michigan Division Organization Volunteer Group of the Year 2013 from the Farmington Hills office of Salvation Army for their many years of dedication to the kettle drive campaign.



SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE UPDATES

Jazz Winter Wonders Concert

The Schoolcraft College jazz studies program, under the direction of Ricardo Selva, will present an evening of jazz performances featuring the talented musicians of the Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensemble, will present a special holiday concert for the community at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16, in the VisiTech Center, main campus in Livonia.

The concert program - featuring both large and small jazz groups performing traditional, contemporary, and holiday jazz arrangements - is free and open to the public. Donations are accepted at the door and help

Sounds of the Season Concert

Schoolcraft College's music ensembles, including the Choral Union, Synthesizer Ensemble and Wind Ensemble, will present a special holiday concert for the community at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17, in the VisiTech Center, main campus in Livonia.

This annual event - featuring a variety of spirited seasonal selections from a wide range of musical eras and a variety of genres - is free and open to the public. Donations are accepted

at the door and help fund scholarships for students in the jazz studies program.

Schoolcraft College is a public, predominantly two-year college, offering classes at the college's main campus in Livonia, Haggerty between Six Mile and Seven Mile; the Radcliff Center in Garden City; the Public Safety Training Complex in Livonia; and online at www.schoolcraft.edu.

WL Schools tech bond improvements begin

The Walled Lake Schools Board of Education heard a presentation on the first stages of implementation of the Safety, Security and Technology Bond program at its regular board meeting Dec. 5.

After discussions with district architect, TMP, and construction manager, Auch Construction, it was determined that the most efficient and beneficial way to get the work completed is to select clusters of schools and do the majority of the work in those buildings at one time.

"We favor this method instead of opting to try to do 'something' in each school," said WL Superintendent Ken Gutman. "This way, a school will ideally experience 'down time' one time, instead of disruption multiple times over several different years."

In addition to the security entrances, these schools will receive the entire complement of safety, security and technology work, which will render them unusable for any summer activities.

While some infrastructure work will be done at all schools beginning next summer, the substantive work at the remaining schools will take place in subsequent summers.

A schedule for the remaining schools will be developed and shared after the plans and specifications for next summer's schools are complete next spring. "We remain appreciative of the community's support of this Safety, Security and Technology Bond," said Gutman, "and we will keep the community apprised as the work and plans progress."

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Book captures golden era of Red Wings

Signing at Novi Library this Saturday

By **Lionie Huhman**
Staff writer

A new book visually captures the Original Six glory years of the Red Wings in a way rarely seen before, making it a great gift for any hockey fan.

It showcases vintage photographs from the sport's golden age and takes readers on a trip down memory lane during the years of 1942-67 with an assortment of photos from some of the best players, including Gordie Howe, Terry Sawchuk, Ted Lindsay, Sid Abel and other legends that forever changed the sport of hockey.

The Novi Public Library welcomes sports columnist Bob Duff and his new book, *Original*

Six Dynasties: The Detroit Red Wings, for an event on Saturday that will have him sharing photos and memories from his new book, answering some questions, and topping it off with a signing.

"It's a bygone era that in a lot of ways was the glory years of the sport when there were only six teams loaded with a ton of talent going at it every game," Duff said of the years his book covers.

As the sports columnist for the *Windsor Star*, Duff has covered the NHL since 1988 and is a contributor to *The Hockey News* and *MSNBC.com*. A big reason for the book is the photos, mostly unseen by fans, that he was able to use from the library of the now-defunct *Detroit Times*.

"These are some unique photos in that they've never been seen

before yet they capture the era really well," he said.

It's a combination of information-packed photo captions and array of photos.

Many of them show a series of great moments and plays along with montages for the different legendary Red Wings. Details like the different goalie masks worn, to up close shots of the famous "Production Line" as well as highlighting of the good and bad times the Wings experienced make this book comprehensive.

Duff will share this greatest period of Red Wings hockey at the Novi Library from 1-3 pm on Saturday, Dec. 14. To reserve a spot, call 248-349-0720; register online at novilibrary.org, or in person at 45255 W. 10 Mile.

Books will be available for purchase with 20 percent of the proceeds



benefiting the Novi Public Library. lhuhan@hometownlife.com | [Twitter: @lhuhan](https://twitter.com/lhuhan)
248-437-2011, Ext. 255.

NOVI HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Ring in the Holiday Season

Time/Date: noon to 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12
Location: Meadowbrook Activity Center

Details: Join in festive colors, a delicious luncheon and sing along to holiday favorites with the Harmonytown Barbershop Chorus. Price is \$7 for residents; \$8.50 for nonresidents. Registration ends Dec. 16.

Breakfast with Santa

Time/Date: 9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 14

Location: Novi Civic Center, 45175 10 Mile
Details: Together, the city of Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department and Novi Rotary will host the inaugural Breakfast with Santa. Families will enjoy a pancake breakfast served by members of Novi Rotary, visits with Santa and making a craft in Santa and Mrs. Claus' workshop. The pre-registration price is \$5 per person; free for children 2 and under. The deadline to pre-register is Wednesday, Dec. 11. If tickets remain available after the pre-registration deadline, they will be available at the door for \$7 per person. To register, visit cityofnovi.org or in-person at the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, located inside the Novi Civic Center.

Kiddie Crafts

Time/Date: 10:30-11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 14

Location: Novi Public Library's Youth Activity Room 138A
Details: Toddlers and preschoolers will have the opportunity to create a work of art using their imaginations and supplies that we will provide. It may

get messy so please dress accordingly. Each child must be accompanied by an adult helper. Registration is required; attendees must be between 18 months and 4 years old.

Holiday Family Road Rally

Time/Date: 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14

Location: Novi Civic Center, 45175 10 Mile
Details: Bring a team of four to six members, take off in your vehicle and search for "wild & crazy" predetermined items to photograph. Team members can consist of adults and kids, but one adult over the age of 21 must accompany the group. Each picture taken will help your team earn points in hopes of winning one of the evening's prizes. Extra points are given to teams with holiday attire. Immediately following the photo portion, participants will report for appetizers at a local restaurant (which is included) and awards. Your team must bring one digital camera. Price is \$100 per resident team; \$120 per nonresident team. Registration ends December.

Skating Exhibit

Time/Date: 1-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15

Location: Novi Ice Arena, 42400 Nick Lidstrom Drive
Details: Skating Club of Novi members perform figure skating routines to holiday-themed music.

Skate With Santa

Time/Date: 3-4:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 22

Location: Novi Ice Arena, 42400 Nick Lidstrom Drive
Details: Come Skate with Santa and enjoy raffles and games. Cost is \$4 for residents; \$5 for non-residents.

Locals part of 'Annie' production opening Dec. 13

Annie, the feel-good, rags-to-riches musical that took Broadway by storm, opens Dec. 13 at the Farmington Players Barn, and the holiday classic is almost sold out.

Maryama Lauter of Farmington Hills stars as the rambunctious little redhead who steals Daddy Warbucks' heart. She's almost 10½ years old, a fifth-grader at Warner Upper Elementary School, and she's playing her dream role.

"From a parent's point of view, I couldn't be more proud of Maryama's work so far in developing this role," said her mother, Amy Lauter, who is co-directing the show. "She pretty much eats, sleeps and breathes Annie."

Family hit

Annie, music by Charles Strouse, lyrics by Martin Charnin, book by Thomas Meehan, is currently enjoying a revival on Broadway. The family-friendly hit tells the tale of the young orphan girl searching for her birth parents. It's based on the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip.

When the show first hit Broadway in 1977 it was an instant hit, winning seven Tony Awards, including the "triple crown" for best musical, book and score loaded with musical hits — *Tomorrow, It's The Hard Knock Life*, *Maybe, NYC*, *Easy Street*.

In the Farmington Players production, Dorne Lefere of Metamora plays the billionaire Warbucks, who hopes to adopt Annie and helps her look for her parents.

"From a director's point of view it has been so rewarding to watch the chemistry. You can really see the genuine warm feelings they bring out in one another, which I think the audiences will really enjoy," Lauter said.

Co-director Terie



Shannon Groves (Grace) of South Lyon (from left), Maryama Lauter (Annie) of Farmington Hills and Rachel Biber (Miss Hannigan) of Huntington Woods on stage. WILLIAM SOULE

Ticket and Show Information

Because "Annie" is a show families can enjoy together, The Farmington Players added three Saturday matinees at 2 p.m. Dec. 14, 21 and 28.

Annie opens Dec. 13 on the Barn's brand new stage floor, and runs through Dec. 29. The show is sponsored by Mall Malisow & Cooney, P.C. Holistic Estate & Elder Care Planning Attorneys. The Barn is at 32322 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

Show dates and times

Opening night at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13; 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14; 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15 (senior \$2 off).
8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20; 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21; 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22; 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 27; 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 28; 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 29.

Tickets

Tickets (reserved seats) are almost sold out. Check www.farmingtonplayers.org and the box office at 248-533-2955. Tickets are \$18 for adults; \$2 for students any performance; senior Sunday, only Sunday, Dec. 15, \$42 off for seniors; group discounts are \$2 off any show for groups of 10 or more.

(Novi); Sydney Harker, Kate (Farmington Hills); Charlie Gass, Hull/Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus; Charlie Gass, Jimmy Johnson (Farmington Hills); Jerry Gass Drake/Hoovervillians (Novi); Shannon Groves, Grace

Farrell (South Lyon); Audrey Groves, Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus (South Lyon).

Carter Krumins, Apple-seller/Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus (Waterford); Madison Krumins, July (Waterford); Mark Krumins, Morganthau/Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus; Sound Effects Man (Waterford); Jordyn Lash, Alice (Orphan Chorus) (Huntington Woods); Maryama Lauter, Annie (Farmington Hills); Alidor P. Lefere III, Daddy Warbucks (Auburn Hills); Lily Mace, Tessie (Novi); Brandon Mace, Rooster (Novi); Reagan Marinucci, Julia (Orphan Chorus) (Farmington Hills); Daniel Murray, Bert Healy (Birmingham); Brennan Regan, Duffy (Farmington Hills); Meredith Shapiro, Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus (Farmington Hills); Sheri Shapiro, Mrs. Greer (Farmington Hills).

Jim Snideman, Lt. Ward/Dad McCracken/Wacky (Harold Ickes (Commerce Twp.); Karen Southworth Howe, NYC Chorus (Plymouth); Tony Targan, Mr. Bundles/FDR/Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus (West Bloomfield); Stephanie Vitor, Ushette/Servant/Hoovervillians (Farmington Hills); Brittany Ward, Star To Be/Hoovervillians/NYC Chorus Boylan-Sister (Ferndale); Katie Walker, Boylan Sister/Mrs. Pugh/Hoovervillians (Brooklyn); Sara Ward, Annette/Boylan Sister (West Bloomfield); Hazel Ward, Molly (West Bloomfield); Daijelle Williams Servant/NYC Chorus/Hoovervillians (Southfield); Marilyn Zerlak, NYC Chorus/Servant/Hoovervillians (Farmington Hills).

The production team includes Dianne Cragg, musical director (Berkeley); Ellen Doman, assistant director (Farmington Hills); Jill Jones, producer (Novi); Terie Spencer, director (Commerce Township); Tim Timmer, technical director and set construction (Wayne).

Adelton Eye & Laser Center is pleased to introduce our new and expanded location located at 42000 Six Mile Road in Northville as well. After almost 10 years of service at our Main Street location in downtown Northville, we have an all new full service center. This center offers the same comprehensive

gueswork in selecting your eyewear. The optical department consists of 1000's of frames in all price ranges, including Tiffany and Co., Prada, Tom Ford, Dolce & Gabbana, Maui Jim, Oakley and Willy X. Our knowledgeable and experienced technicians will guide you in the selection of frames based on your style preference, budget, and functionality. Constantly updating equipment has allowed Northville Vision Clinic to continue being a leader in the field and recognized as one of the most comprehensive clinics in the area. By the addition of Adelton Eye and Laser Center, an incredible state of the art facility has been created. Our clinic can now offer services extending from examinations, contact lenses, treatment of diseases, cataract surgery and Lasik. Our staff and Dr. Levin extend a personal invitation to you and your family into our new home.

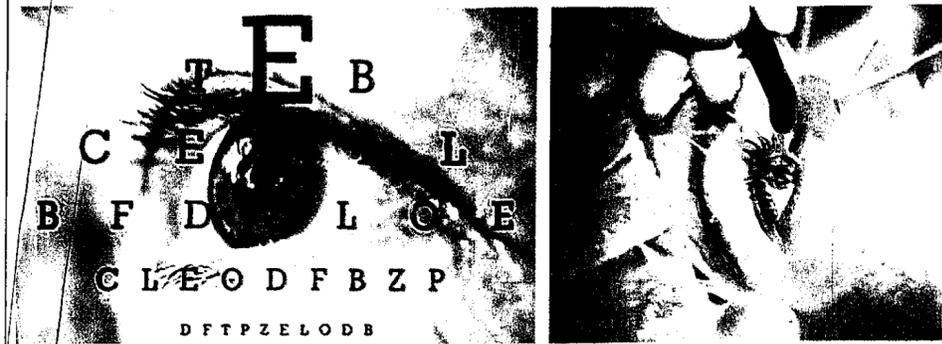
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NOTICE CITY OF NOVI REQUEST FOR SPECIAL LAND USE FOR SERVICE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PSLU 13-0008

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the applicant, Brent Martins is requesting Special Land Use approval at 41125 Twelve Mile Rd, E136 parcel #10-22-15-200-100. The applicant is requesting approval for use of a portion of the parcel for service of alcoholic beverages Friday, December 27th, 2013 at 9:30AM in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi Michigan to consider the request. Plans are available for review at the Community Development Department in the Novi Civic Center.

All interested persons are invited to attend. Verbal comments may be heard at the hearing and any written comments may be made to the Community Development Department, 45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi MI 48375 during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 PM and should be directed to Charles Boulard and must be received prior to December 27, 2013.

Charles Boulard (248) 347-0415



Northville Vision Clinic plus Adelton Eye & Laser Center equals a 20/20 Solution

Northville Vision Clinic is excited to announce we have moved to 42000 6 Mile Road into a brand new, state of the art facility with Adelton Eye & Laser Center. According to Dr. Martin Levin who started Northville Vision Clinic, "We are a full service family eye clinic that stresses individualized personal care. We have been providing the Northville area professional care for over 40 years." Our clinic offers examinations for adults and children and is a leader in the fitting of all types of contact lenses. Many types of ocular disease including infection and dry eye syndrome are treated at Northville Vision Clinic. All of our staff are trained opticians who have a combined total of over 100 years in the optical industry. We are constantly looking for the most current and fashionable eyewear to assure the patients have the best selection in the area. The full service on premise lab can guarantee the fastest service possible for eyewear. Priding ourselves on using the latest equipment including the Zeiss I Terminal for precision frame and lens measurements, allows the opticians to produce the most exact glasses possible. The I Terminal will also take four pictures of the patient trying on eyewear, so they can view themselves with the new frames. This eliminates the



eye care, including the management of glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, dry eye syndrome, cataracts, corneal diseases, conjunctivitis, retinal and vitreous abnormalities, and most other eye related difficulties.

Adelton Eye & Laser Center is additionally very excited to announce our new partnership with LASIKPlus.

LASIKPlus currently has more than 50 centers throughout the United States and the LASIKPlus surgeon network has completed more than 1 million laser vision correction procedures. We are ecstatic that LASIKPlus has picked us to bring their services to our hometown of metropolitan Detroit. As ophthalmologists who are fellowship trained in advanced cataract and LASIK surgery and who have already performed thousands of procedures, we feel that the resources that LASIKPlus offers are invaluable. Most importantly, we now have our own laser center located onsite at the new Northville location. This allows us to offer all of the most advanced laser vision correction procedures, including all laser LASIK surgery, within the confines of our own surgical suite. Along with the assistance of LASIKPlus, we have brought all of the "latest and greatest" technology for laser vision correction right into our office.

Adelton Eye & Laser Center will also continue to provide cataract surgery, including the use of premium lenses which allow correction for nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia. We have performed thousands of these procedures and continue to evolve with the recent advances in cataract surgery. Additionally, we will also continue to provide blepharoplasty procedures (eyelid surgery) for droopy eyelids and age related changes. In fact, the cosmetic component of our practice continues to expand as we now perform many cosmetic modalities including laser resurfacing procedures around the eyes and throughout the face.

With Northville Vision Clinic, we have attempted to create a comprehensive eye care experience at our new location where we are able to offer quality care and services for everything from eyeglasses and contact lenses to eye health-related issues to laser vision correction, cataract surgery, and multiple cosmetic modalities.

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Martin J. Levin, OD



Todd A. Adelton, D.O.



Howard B. Adelton, D.O., FAOCO

SOCIAL SECURITY

Many people are wrongly rejected when they apply for Social Security Disability benefits. Money was taken out of their pockets for Social Security taxes to ensure that they would receive disability benefits if they could no longer work full-time. Sadly, the government denies approximately 90% of those who apply for disability benefits.

Attorneys Bieske and Alfonsi can often make a winning difference at the application stage. And, if an appeal is necessary they have won several hundred cases before a court date is even set.

Those denied can appeal on their own but statistics for many years reveal that those represented by attorneys win a much higher percentage of appeals. And attorneys who specialize in Social Security Disability cases win a much higher percentage yet.

In addition to practicing only Social Security disability law attorney Bieske has written a book for attorneys about the

subject and has been interviewed on various television programs. Both attorney Bieske and Alfonsi have also been interviewed on various programs and have given speeches to many groups.

Bieske and Alfonsi represent clients from all over the state of Michigan. Their Livonia office is on Six Mile Road just west of I-75. Their Novi office is located on Haggerty Road just north of 12 Mile Road. Call them at 1-800-331-3530 for a free consultation if you have been denied, or if you are thinking of possibly applying for Social Security benefits.

www.ssdoffighter.com

Group: Trouble remains in Toyland

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

The holiday shopping season is in full swing as consumers try to score the best deal.

But the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan is cautioning those shopping for children to take a closer look at what they are buying to ensure that that best deal is in the best interest of kids.

The consumer group recently released its 28th annual "Trouble in Toyland" report that details the dangerous or toxic toys that can still be found on store shelves at every store from dollar stores to major retailers.

The report, which was unveiled in partnership with Beaumont Hospitals at Safety City U.S.A. in Royal Oak, touches on

four hazards — toxic, choking, magnetic and noise — and urges lawmakers to continue to be vigilant in enacting safeguards to protect children.

"The message is clear, we need to protect our youngest consumers from unsafe toys," said Eric Mosher, PIRGIM program associate. "Parents and caregivers should be aware of these common hazards while shopping this holiday season and throughout the year."

Mosher said a lot of progress has been made since 2008 when the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act was enacted in response to a "unprecedented wave of recalls," but it didn't solve everything. "Unfortunately there are still products out

there that fail to meet these important safeguards," Mosher said. "And some standards need to be even stronger."

The leading cause of toy recalls is choking hazards because, as Mosher notes, "toddlers like to put things in their mouths."

He said between 2001-12, more than 90 children choked to death on balloons, balls, toys and small parts of toys. And in the past year alone the Consumer Product Safety Commission recalled more than 172,000 toys for being choking hazards.

Mosher said a reason why many products hit store shelves is because they pass through the small parts choke test cylinder that PIRGIM

feels is too small. The group urges parents to complete their own at-home test with a toilet paper roll.

"If it can pass through the toilet paper roll it is a choking hazard for children under 3," Mosher said.

One of the most dangerous hazards mentioned in the report pertains to toxic toys because they can not be seen. According to the report, the following problems were found with toys.

A Ninja Turtles pencil case sold at Toys "R" Us was found to have 150,000 ppm of one of six phthalates banned from toys, as well as excessive levels of cadmium. It is not recalled because it is not a toy subject to the CPSIA's phthalates or toxic metal limits.

The Lamaze activity mat also tested high with antimony, but is allowed to remain on store shelves because it doesn't violate the CPSIA's soluble antimony limit.

Magnets pose a major threat to children because if swallowed they can cause severe internal damage, according to the report.

Toys that emit loud noises, like the Chat & Count smart phone that tests above 85 decibels and is intended to be held close to the ear, can lead to hearing loss down the road, the report said.

State Sen. Roger Kahn, who serves Saginaw and Genesee counties, said he is working on two pieces of legislation for Michigan.

The first deals with mercury and cadmium content on toys, and the

second is the creation of a safe toy for children council.

Kahn said they cannot predict what is going to happen five-10 year from now, but they need to be looking forward to provide information to parents.

"Our children are curious and fearless and it is up to us to protect them," he said. "That protection is empowered if you have the power to know about the safety or lack of safety of the things you buy."

The full PIRGIM report can be found online at www.pirgim.org and parents are encouraged to take a short quiz to test their knowledge at www.toysafetytips.org.

nmueller@hometownlife.com
586-826-7209

Town Center visit

Santa Claus helped Saturday with the official lighting of the Christmas tree at Novi Town Center on Nov. 30. Victorian-era singers, Ye Merry Carolers, supplied Christmas songs. Boy Scouts handed out hot chocolate and coffee and visitors received gift bags with certificates and candy canes. Children can visit Santa from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Performance Bike store. It's free, so bring your cameras.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Wixom officials to be sworn in

At the Tuesday, Dec. 17, Wixom City Council meeting, four individuals will take their Oaths of Office that will be administered by the Honorable David P. Viviano, Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. According to Wixom City Manager Tony Nowicki, the ceremony is open to the public and all are encouraged to attend the 7 p.m. event at Wixom City Hall Council Chambers, 49045 Pontiac Trail.

Wixom voters re-elected Kevin W. Hinkley as their mayor and Patrick Beagle and Thomas Rzeznek as city councilpersons in November. To fill the City Council position vacated by retiring City Councilperson James Catright, Nicholas J. Kennedy was elected by voters.

Get flu vaccination

The Oakland County Health Division urges residents to take preventative action and get vaccinated against seasonal flu. Oakland County's flu vaccine guards against four strains of flu this season.

Flu shots are available at Health Division offices in Pontiac and

Southfield from noon to 8 p.m. each Monday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

The Health Division offices are located at the following addresses:
» North Oakland Health Center, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Building 34 East, Pontiac
» South Oakland Health Center, 27725 Greenfield Road, Southfield.

Walk-in clients are welcome. Payment options include cash, Visa, MasterCard, Medicare and/or Medicaid (no checks or money orders). Credit card fees apply.

Residents can pre-register at www.oakgov.com/health and print out a consent form to bring to the clinic where they are enrolled. Online payment options include Visa, MasterCard, Medicare and/or Medicaid. Credit card fees apply.

One may also pay cash at the time of the appointment. Those who are unable to register online may call 248-859-7350 or 248-424-7120.

For more information about flu, visit www.oakgov.com/health, contact the Nurse on Call at 800-848-5533 or follow the Health Division on Facebook and Twitter @pub-

licealthOC.

Northville market coming Dec. 13-15

Handcrafters Unlimited announced its Northville Tinsel & Treasures Holiday Market has been ranked 79th in *Sunshine Artist* magazine's Top Traditional & Contemporary Craft Shows in the country. The popularity and success of the show is based off the simple concept of giving real handcrafted unique gifts.

The 34th annual market will be held Dec. 13-15 at the Northville Community Senior Center, 303 W. Main Street. Hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$3 per person per day, free for children 12 and younger. Compact umbrella strollers are welcome and food will be available from Edwards Café & Cater. Visit www.HcShows.com for more information.

Novi Chorales rehearsals

Do you like to sing and meet new friends? Join the Novi Chorales. Open rehearsals are going to be held at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 7 and 14 at the Novi Middle School, 49000 W. 11 Mile Road.

Give the gift of nature this holiday season



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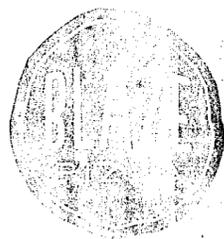
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The Novi Middle School cafeteria is filled with students, Novi Rotarians and their senior citizen guests on Dec. 5.

Holiday tradition

Rotarians, middle schoolers host senior citizens

By Lonnie Huhman
Staff Writer

The Senior Holiday Luncheon has become a local tradition for many and this year was another success with the singing of carols, eating of food, giving of gifts and a visit from Santa.

Through the efforts of the Novi Rotary Club, Middle School and Police/Fire departments, nearly 200 local seniors kicked off the season Dec. 5 with a visit to Novi Middle School for a holiday party.

"I enjoy this very much and try to come every year," said Mary Bartolo, a resident of Meadowbrook Commons. "The music, the food, everything about this is fun."

This holiday event has been going on for over 40 years and, according to Rotary President Mark Pehrson, it's only grown in its impact.

"It started out as a way to give back, but it's evolved into an important tradition," he said. "One of the neatest things to see over the years has been the friendships that have been built between the kids and adults."

After being ushered into the school with help from some police officers and firefighters, the party began with a musical presentation from a group of seventh- and eighth-graders.

The combined choirs got everyone in the mood by singing some Christmas standards. They were followed up by the eighth-grade orchestra, who kept the musical fun going.

This event really has become a great way for the students to connect with the visiting seniors. The students worked hard to make it as much fun as possible through decorating the cafeteria to singing carols while the seniors ate.

According to student coordinator and NMS teacher Lynn Serenson, the work to prepare for this event started early in the fall and involved students' meeting each week to plan and prepare.

"It feels good to support them and bring a smile to their faces," seventh-grader Sophia Psiakis said. "Helping the community is important and we hope this does that."

The fun was topped off with lunch, the giving of gift bags and a visit from Santa Claus, who made his way around the cafeteria to greet everyone and say hello.

The many smiles made it clear that holiday cheer and fun were had by all during this great community event.

Lhuhman@hometownlife.com
248-437-2011, ext. 255
Twitter: @lhuhman



Novi Rotarian Mav Sanghvi (center) enjoys a Christmas carol serenade from Novi Middle School students.



The Novi Middle School orchestra entertains its guests on Dec. 5.



Novi Middle School student Brett Mackay brings out some lunch for the school's senior visitors.



Just to make sure it's real, Mary Forrester gives a tug to Santa's beard.
JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

RELIGION CALENDAR

Brightmoor Christian Church
Location: M-5 and 13 Mile, Novi
Contact: 248-227-4420 or www.brightmoorchurch.org

Church of the Holy Family
Location: 24505 Meadowbrook Road
Contact: 248-349-8847 or visit holyfamilynovi.org

Crosspointe Meadows Church
Location: 29000 Meadowbrook Road, south of 13 Mile
Contact: 248-669-9400, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Thursday or visit www.crosspointemeadows.org

Passages
Obituaries, Memories & Remembrances

BLACKMAN, CLARA JEAN
Age 92, died December 9, 2013. A private family service will be held. www.phillipsfuneral.com

DARNELL, JEAN ALBERTA HOYT
Age 96, passed away peacefully in her sleep Monday, December 2, 2013.

CELESKEY, FLORENCE ADELIN
Age 91, resident of Highland, devoted parishioner of Church of the Holy Spirit, member of the Women's Club, a Third Order Carmelite and a healing minister from Don Scopus, passed away peacefully on Saturday, December 7th, 2013.

DAUL, ELAINE
A long time resident of Walled Lake, Michigan and Milford, died on December 3, 2013 after complications from a stroke she suffered days earlier. She was 83 years old.

LYNCH & SONS
Funeral Home
248-664-6645 or visit www.LynchFuneralDirectors.com

Let others know...
When you have lost a loved one, place your notice on our website and in "Passages", a directory located in every edition of your hometown newspaper.

Paying tribute to the life of your loved one.
Call: 800-579-7355
Fax: 313-496-4968
Email: passages@hometownlife.com

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Ladies Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Tuesdays
Men's Bible Study: 9 a.m. First Saturday of every month

First Church of the Nazarene
Location: 21260 Haggerty, north of Eight Mile
Contact: 248-348-7600 or visit fcnazarene.org

Destiny Worship Center
Location: Ridge Wood Elementary School, 49775 Six Mile, Northville
Contact: DestinyW3C@gmail.com or visit www.DW3C.org

Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Location: 34567 Seven Mile, Livonia
Web: www.emmanuel-livonia.org

First Presbyterian Church of Northville
Location: 200 E. Main
Contact: 248-349-0911 or visit www.fpcnorthville.org

First Presbyterian Church
Location: 205 E. Lake Street (corner of Wells and 10 Mile), South Lyon
Contact: 248-437-2875

Faith Community Presbyterian Church
Location: 44000 W. 10 Mile
Contact: 248-349-2345 or visit www.faithcommunity-novi.org

First Baptist Church of Northville
Location: 217 N. Wing
Contact: 248-348-1020

Meadowbrook Congregational Church
Location: 21355 Meadowbrook Road, between Eight Mile and Nine Mile
Contact: the Rev. Arthur P. Ritter, senior minister, 248-348-7757, visit mbccc.org or e-mail to office@mbccc.org

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church
Location: 47650 N. Territorial Road, Plymouth Township
Contact: 734-453-0326, Ext. 221

Our Shepherd Presbyterian Church
Location: 1200 S. Sheldon Road, Plymouth
Contact: pastor Bill Burke at 734-927-0891

Northville Christian Assembly
Location: 41355 Six Mile
Contact: 248-348-9030; ncalife.org

Novi-Northville Center for Jewish Life
Details: Events, programs and activities for all ages

St. James Catholic Church
Location: 46325 10 Mile, Novi
Contact: 248-347-7778
Pastor: Monsignor John Kasza

St. John Lutheran Church
Location: 23225 Gill Road, Farmington Hills
Contact: 248-474-0584 or visit stjohnlutheran.com

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Location: 201 Elm St., Northville
Contact: 248-349-3140

Unity of Farmington Hills
Location: 32500 W. 13 Mile, Farmington
Contact: 248-737-9191; Administrative@Director@unity-yh.com

Orchard Grove Community Church
Location: 850 Ladd Road, Building C, Walled Lake
Web: www.orchardgrove.org

Our Saviour Apostolic Lutheran Church
Location: 54899 Eight Mile, Novi
Contact: Pastor Jon Hix 248-349-5665 or visit www.legacychurch.us

Orchard Grove Community Church
Location: 850 Ladd Road, Walled Lake
Contact: 248-926-6584; www.orchardgrove.org

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Location: 47650 N. Territorial Road, Plymouth Township
Contact: 734-453-0326, Ext. 221

Our Shepherd Presbyterian Church
Location: 1200 S. Sheldon Road, Plymouth
Contact: pastor Bill Burke at 734-927-0891

Our Savior Apostolic Lutheran Church
Location: 5745 S. Sheldon in Plymouth
Contact: 734-453-0190, Ext. 16, or visit www.stjohnsplymouth.org

Pentecostals of Novi
Location: Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile
Contact: 248-697-8158 or visit www.thepentecostalsot-novi.org

Plymouth St. John's Episcopal Church
Location: 5745 S. Sheldon in Plymouth
Contact: 734-453-0190, Ext. 16, or visit www.stjohnsplymouth.org

Praise Baptist Church
Location: 45000 N. Territorial Road, Plymouth
Contact: 734-748-3958

Novi United Methodist Church
Location: 41671 W. 10 Mile
Contact: 248-349-2652 or visit umcnovi.com

Holy Cross Episcopal Church
Location: 40700 W. 10 Mile
Contact: 248-427-1175 or hollycrossnovi@gmail.com

Hope Lutheran Church
Location: 39200 W. 12 Mile (east of Haggerty), Farmington Hills
Contact: 248-912-0043

Lakes Baptist Church
Location: 309 Decker Road, Walled Lake
Livonia Church of Christ
Location: 15431 Merriman, Livonia
Contact: 734-427-8743 or visit www.livoniachurch.net

Legacy Church (formerly First Baptist Church and Orchard Hills Baptist Church)
Location: 23455 Novi Road, Novi
Contact: Pastor Jon Hix 248-349-5665 or visit www.legacychurch.us

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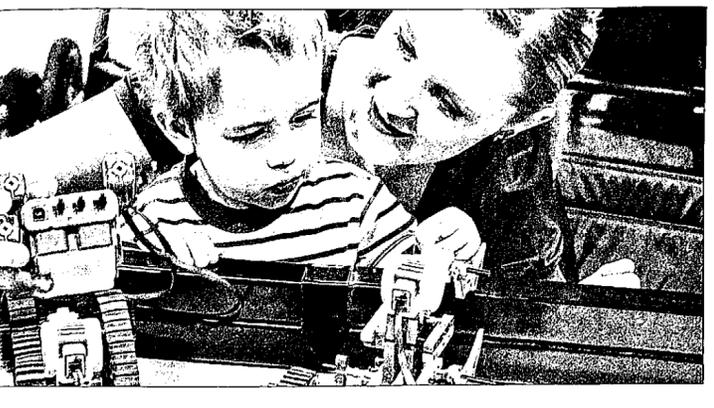
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Wonderfest

Lindsay Hill and her son Liam, 2, check out some remote-controlled robot Dupo toys at the Dec. 6 Christmas Wonderfest at Novi's Suburban Collection Showplace.



Your Invitation to Worship

A large directory of churches and religious organizations. Each entry includes the church name, location, contact information, and service times. Churches listed include Brighton, Milford, Novi, Walled Lake, Whitmore Lake, Highland, New Hudson, Northville, Livonia, and others. The directory is organized in a grid-like fashion with columns for different areas.

For more information regarding this Directory, please call Susan at 248-349-2652 or visit our website at www.hometownlife.com

OUR VIEWS

Cops and Kids

An event for Christmas and beyond

There's an event that takes place every year, but you probably don't know about it. It's not publicized or promoted. The folks involved are low-key about it, and there isn't any horn-blowing when it's over. But its impact is substantial and well worth noting here.

It's called F.O.P. Cops and Kids, and it took place this past Saturday.

It's a collaborative effort between the Novi Police Department, Novi Youth Assistance, Lakes Area Youth Assistance, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 128 and the Novi Target store.

F.O.P. is made up of all the police departments in southwest Oakland County — Novi, Walled Lake, Wixom, Commerce, Millford, South Lyon and Northville.

Twenty of those departments' officers, including many of Novi's finest, volunteered their time on Saturday morning to partner with a child and take them

on a Christmas shopping spree at Target. Each child, ages 5 to 17, had \$200 to spend, with the majority of it going towards clothing and shoes (and a few toys at the end).

Ten children were picked from both of the local Youth Assistance programs. Tom Swiebeda, a case-worker with Novi's YA, had 105 families referred for counseling last year and 73 students attended the teen center this past summer. The NYA also facilitates grants for skill-building activities (sports, dance, karate, camps, etc.) Simply put, his organization knows these families.

Erick Zinser, Novi's acting assistant chief police, helped coordinate the event along with Oakland County Sheriff's Detective John Jacob. The funding came via a grant from Target as well as money raised by the F.O.P.'s annual golf outing, according to John Kirkpatrick, president of the F.O.P. who participates in the shopping every year with his wife.

Besides getting much-needed items for Christmas, these children pick up something else perhaps even more valuable: a new perspective on police. Walking side by side with an officer is something they'll remember for a long time, if not forever, and they learn that police are here to help in their communities.

And, guess what? The police officers love it, too. David Molloy, Novi's chief, had seven other officers volunteer their personal time to assist Saturday as well. That's how much they believe in the program.

Novi police officer K. Gruenwald helps Anna Gibbs of Walled Lake find a new baby doll during the F.O.P. Lodge 128's annual Cops and Kids event held at the Novi Target on Saturday. CUSTIS DROGAMILLER



COMMUNITY VOICE

Do you have a holiday spending budget or wing it?

This question was asked at 12 Oaks Mall in Novi.



"Sort of a budget. Each family member exchanges one gift to one other person. We place more importance on the gift of being with family."

Michael Ogden
Berkley



"I just wing it, but my husband thinks we do."

Barb Sullivan
Brighton



"I mostly wing it, but I do look for the sales and best prices."

Rebecca Rose
Lyon Township



"I kind of wing it."

Rick Craft
Novi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Return proper course

"That government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

One hundred-fifty years ago, the above words were spoken by Abraham Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address. Our country was in both a physical and constitutional struggle when Lincoln delivered these words.

From an ideological perspective, it seems to me that we are currently in a struggle no less critical than the one of Lincoln's time. In 1863, the quest to free the slaves and the issue of the legitimacy of secession were paramount.

Today, in what seems to me to be a very analogous situation, we again find our Constitution under attack. The very essence of our Republic, a government of, by and for the people, is at stake. Our upholding of our Constitution has been degraded to such a degree that I worry it may soon be too late to reverse this trend. Consider the following:

1. The Affordable Care Act is clearly an assault on Article I Section 1, the First Amendment and the 10th Amendment of our Constitution.

2. The attempts to undermine the Second Amendment, especially in the last two years have been shocking.

3. The stated intent to legislate and change the Affordable Care Act from the executive branch, with no authority to do so, is a slap in the face to the separation of powers as established by our Founding Fathers.

4. The president stated that he had the power to attack Libya without approval from Congress. This would have been a violation of Article I Section 8 of the Constitution which clearly states that only Congress has the power to declare war. This would also have been a violation of both

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We welcome your letter to the Editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. Letters should be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content. Submit letters via the following formats. Letters must be received by 9 a.m. Monday for Thursday's print edition.

Web: www.hometownlife.com
Mail: Letters to the Editor, 101 N. Lafayette St., South Lyon, MI 48178
Email: cstone@hometownlife.com

Blog: You may also let your opinions be heard with your own blog at www.hometownlife.com.

only name four or five. Without a change in the advertisement of these programs, valuable money is being poured down the drain with nothing to show for it.

As citizens of Novi, we all are given the responsibility to stay informed on what is going on in the community. We need to stay alert and up-to-date on events by reading newspapers, using the Internet, and even simply keeping an eye out for signs as you travel your daily route to work and school each and every day. If Novi is going to be a leader for others around the state, it can start by advertising recreational activities in order to create a more unified community.

Connor Vergin
Novi

Save wolves

I am writing in response to your article about the wolf population on Isle Royale from the Dec. 5 paper. I think that we should in some way intervene with the decreasing wolf population. If, as they say, the island is the only place where a predator (wolves) and a major ungulate (moose) exist together without human interaction, then maintaining the wolf population is extremely important to the world of ecological research.

I like the idea of a genetic rescue to clean up the gene pool. That way, we can hopefully save the wolf population as well as keep the wolves on the island for further research. I know that this could cause a huge upset with the National Park Service since the wolves aren't being threatened directly by human interaction, but I feel that it is a necessary risk to take in order to save this once threatened species and this important research opportunity.

Brendan Budd
Novi

the letter and spirit of the War Powers Resolution.

Bob Cushman
Northman

Publicize rec opportunities

With a variety of parks, cultural, and recreational services located throughout the city, citizens of Novi are seemingly given easy access to the outdoors and to the community. However, it may not be all that simple. While residents all have the ability to utilize these facilities, they are rarely encouraged to put recreational services to use as organized public events, and activities are poorly advertised. In order to improve our parks and recreation, more events need to be publicized to citizens.

Novi's recreational services are a very important part of the city and are a key factor in attracting new residents. The Recreation and Cultural Services Department offers around 1,300 recreational programs for all ages. The problem with this lies in the fact that most citizens can

GUEST COLUMN

Working families can't afford another shutdown-style crisis

Last month, we saw Washington at its worst. Republican leaders including Rep. Kerry Bentivolio, driven by the Tea Party, recklessly shut down our government and brought our nation to the brink of default. Ignoring voices of reason from working families across Michigan, some of our leaders in Congress listened to shouts of "shut it down" and inflicted unnecessary damage to our economy.

The shutdown cost 120,000 jobs in the first two weeks of October and will reduce economic growth by at least 0.25 percent in the fourth quarter.

And here in Michigan it directly impacted 27,693 federal workers.

Thankfully, reason prevailed, Republican leaders relented and Congress appointed negotiators to work on a new budget agreement.

Now it's on to the next fight in Washington. But before we get caught up in another news cycle where extremists convince us we shouldn't invest in our future, it is worth noting that a congressional budget is a vision. It is a blueprint that outlines our priorities as a nation.

A good budget invests in America. It doesn't rob our government of the resources it needs to succeed.

A good budget properly funds its obligations and promotes the creation of well-paying jobs. It doesn't bargain away protections for



our seniors and it isn't balanced on the backs of working families. As Democrats and Republicans, including Rep. Bentivolio, spend this month negotiating how to avoid another government shutdown, it is important to remind Washington politicians about what working families need.

The recovery is still being dragged down by the repeated budget crises manufactured by Republicans in Congress. Budget austerity in the Tea Party Congress has already slowed annual economic growth by 0.7 percent, cost 1.2 million jobs, and increased the unemployment rate by 0.8 percent, according to Macroeconomic Advisers.

First, Congress should repeal the sequester it created, not replace it. The sequester's arbitrary across-the-board cuts have hurt everything from education to child care to medical research.

Repealing the sequester would generate 800,000 jobs by this time next year, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The next budget should undo this painful damage—and not replace it with other harmful cuts.

Most importantly, policymakers in Washington must reject proposals to cut Social Security, Medicaid, or Medicare benefits. They should avoid deficit hysteria promoted by billionaires and the 1 percent. Instead of terrifying our parents and grandparents with threats to cut Social Security and Medicare benefits they've earned, politicians should protect these vital programs that have shielded the elderly and vulnerable from poverty for generations. Our nation's safety net should be strengthened, not weakened, because

working people need more economic security, not less.

Instead, Congress should look to raise new revenue by repealing the tax subsidies that encourage corporations to send jobs overseas and ending special tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. When the average CEO's salary for the first morning on the job is the same amount the average worker makes in a year, it's clear that the wealthiest Americans and corporations making record profits can pay their fair share.

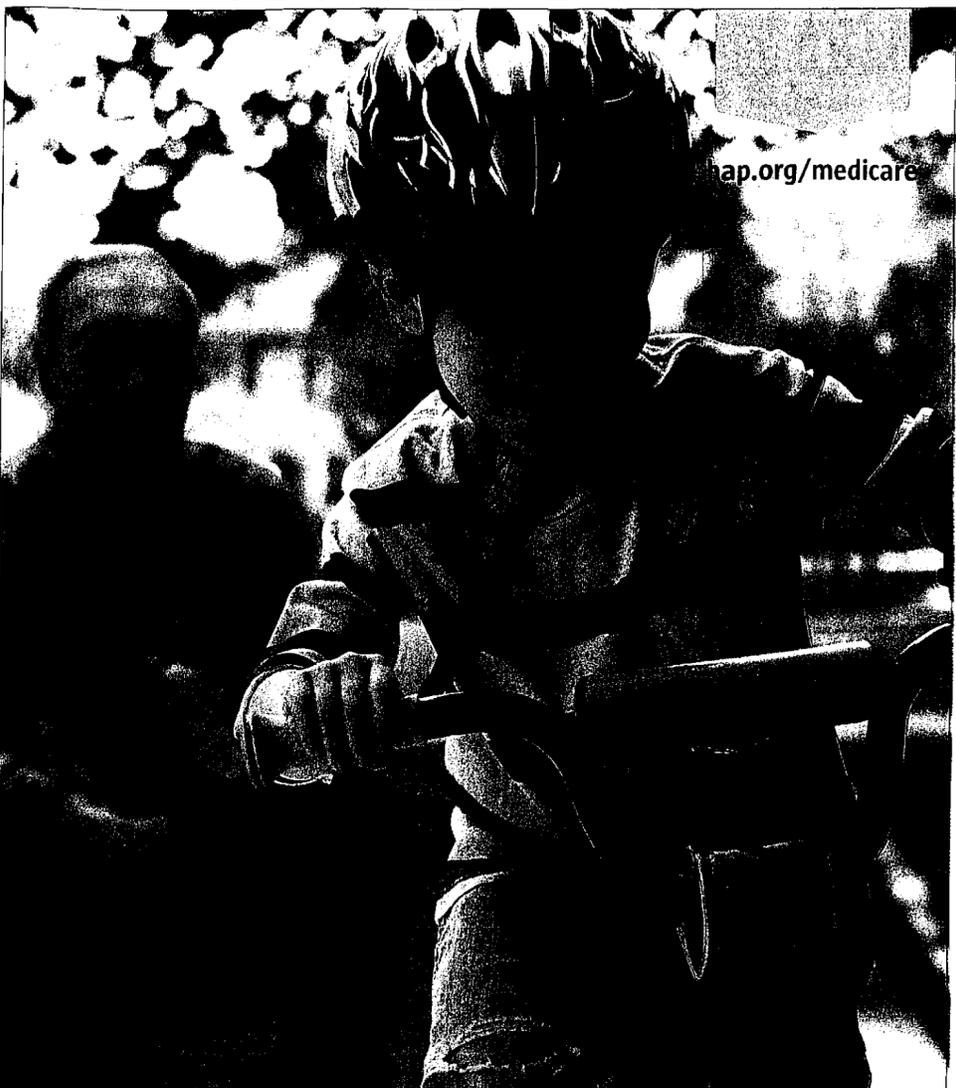
Ending these undeserved and wasteful tax breaks would allow us to invest in our workforce and create the well-paying jobs millions so desperately need. By rebuilding our infrastructure, education, and manufacturing base, we can create good jobs with good benefits and provide relief to our struggling working and middle class. This is America, after all. No job should trap anyone in a vicious cycle of poverty.

In addition, Congress needs to pass comprehensive immigration reform, so that 11 million aspiring Americans are no longer second-class citizens and the rights of all workers are protected. Allowing hard-working immigrants to contribute to our communities would increase our economic growth, support important benefit programs and create jobs across Michigan. The Center for American Progress estimates that comprehensive immigration reform would create new jobs every year.

By focusing on helping working families instead of how to score political points, Congress can produce a budget that supports an economy that works for all.

It is time to tell Rep. Bentivolio: Instead of shutting down progress, please listen to the needs of the hardworking voters who sent you to Washington.

Richard Trumka is president of the AFL-CIO. Karla Swift is the president of the Michigan State AFL-CIO and a resident of Livonia in Michigan's 11th Congressional District.



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NOVI NEWS

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Drive through living nativity at Orchard Methodist

By Joanne Maliszewski
Staff writer

Members of the Orchard United Methodist Church are reviving a tradition this year — a drive-thru, living nativity complete with actors, singing and animals.

"We are really excited to bring this back," said volunteer Suzanne Kosiba.

She recalled the last time the church hosted the evening, living nativity in 2002. Kosiba and her family were angels at one of the stations posted throughout the church driveway and parking lot.

"It was a heavenly experience to be dressed as angels singing Christmas carols," Kosiba said. "Being in the dark with spotlights has a different feel to it."

The outdoor nativity will run 5:30-8:30 p.m.

LIVING NATIVITY DETAILS

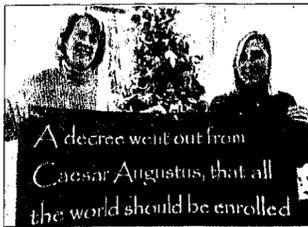
When: 4:30-8:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15
Where: Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, on the east side just south of 14 Mile in Farmington Hills
Admission: Free. Enter at the southern driveway to begin the nativity tour.

Sunday, Dec. 15. The event is free and visitors will remain in their cars and take the tour through nativity scenes that will be illuminated with spotlights. Visitors will follow a path etched in luminaries. The event is free.

"This is our gift to the community," said Julie Wright, a volunteer and former church staff member.

Visitors will enter at the church's southern driveway — on the east side of Farmington Road, just south of 14 Mile — and make their way through the path of the living nativity.

The first stop is Caesar Augustus. The next



Orchard United Methodist Church volunteers Julie Wright (left) and Suzanne Kosiba display one of the biblical passages that will highlight the living nativity Dec. 15. JOANNE MALISZEWSKI

stop is Mary and Joseph with a real donkey, Angels, shepherds, the Three Wise Men and an alpaca all lead the way to the final stop with baby Jesus. Sheep will also be in the nativity.

The church hosted a living nativity first in 1987. It continued in the early 1990s with more stations for visitors to view. After the 2002 nativity, the church parking lot was expanded and the event was not continued in subsequent years, said volunteer Julie Wright, who is a former church

staff member. "I had such good memories of it I wanted it to come back," Wright said.

First she checked with the Rev. Carol Johns, senior pastor, and the Rev. Suzanne Goodwin, pastor of Christian Ministries. The response was positive. "I am a cheerleader. Suzanne and Julie have it all under control," Goodwin said.

Visitors will see props, such as the king on a throne and baby Jesus with Joseph and Mary in a shed. All will be in costume. In fact, work is under way on the costumes of which doubles are made because the evening requires four shifts of about 33 volunteers each.

Church volunteers Janice Mitchell of Farmington Hills and Carole Parker of Orchard Lake are refurbishing existing costumes and adding new ones for all of the actors' role.

"We have a huge closet of costumes from our theater productions at the church," Wright said. Wright contacted Carousel Acres in South

Lyon — they had used the company before — and sure enough the owners could provide animals for the living nativity.

"They provided animals for petting zoos," Wright added.

At each of the stations that visitors will drive through, the volunteers have had signs made referring to passages from the Biblical nativity passages. "If we get this done the way we want, there will be information at each station," Goodwin said.

In keeping with the high-tech trend, Goodwin said that QR codes will be available for access by phones that visitors can use during the drive-through nativity or later. The information will be available on handouts that will be given as visitors enter the nativity.

"We want to make sure people know they can just drive through the nativity. They can come before or after dinner. They can even come in their pajamas," Kosiba said.

Maliszewski@hometownlife.com 313-550-8558

Visit with Santa



Ariana Roseman, 2, contemplates a visit with Santa during a trip to Novi's Twelve Oaks Mall on Dec. 3. After a short discussion with Santa and her mom, Daniela (right), Ariana ultimately decided against a sit-on-the-lap visit for a photo. Still, Santa gave her a coloring book to brighten her holidays. Santa is at Twelve Oaks Mall seven days a week now through Christmas Eve and is located at center court on the mall's lower level. JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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See the previous page for fantastic items from... **Joe's Meat & Seafood** Part of bread

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SECTION B (NN)
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SPORTS

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Young grapplers open season 3-1 in duals

Davis trio and Jackson have strong showings in opening weekend

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

Novi's grapplers started the new season by hosting four other teams from throughout southeast Michigan, and things went pretty well. The Wildcats went 3-1 Saturday, with wins of 46-21 over Pineckey, 44-23 over Ferndale and 39-31 over Jackson and falling 60-18 to Brandon. Among the highlights was freshman Travis Davis, who went 4-0 at 103 pounds, although two matches were by void. Heavyweight junior Stevie Davis and junior Evan Davis each went 3-0 at 285 and 140 pounds, respectively, but Evan lost his lone effort in the 135-pound weight class. Sophomore Willy Jackson was also impressive, going 3-1 at 112

ON TAP

Novi's wrestling team (3-1) continued on last night at Northville before heading to New Boston, Mass. at 9 a.m. Saturday and Waterford Kettering at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday where Plymouth Salem and Walled Lake Northern will also be in attendance.

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

Novi's grapplers started the new season by hosting four other teams from throughout southeast Michigan, and things went pretty well. The Wildcats went 3-1 Saturday, with wins of 46-21 over Pineckey, 44-23 over Ferndale and 39-31 over Jackson and falling 60-18 to Brandon. Among the highlights was freshman Travis Davis, who went 4-0 at 103 pounds, although two matches were by void. Heavyweight junior Stevie Davis and junior Evan Davis each went 3-0 at 285 and 140 pounds, respectively, but Evan lost his lone effort in the 135-pound weight class. Sophomore Willy Jackson was also impressive, going 3-1 at 112

during the successful opener. Senior Matt George went 2-1 at 119 pounds, freshman Scott Latham 2-1 at 135, junior Kyle Benkarski at 152, senior Ben Wright 2-0 at 160 and senior John Hood at 171. "I thought we wrestled well for the opening weekend, especially since we are so young," Novi head coach Brad Huss said. "We are starting two freshmen, five sophomores, four juniors and three seniors at this point. We need to continue to improve with our technique, and that will happen over the next two weeks of extensive teaching and drilling."

Additionally, Novi got a look at a lot of underclassmen that



Wildcat wrestler Scott Latham helps his opponent up after pinning him during a Dec. 7 multi-school tournament at Novi Middle School. JOHN HEIDER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

See GRAPPLERS, Page B2

Not a Chance:



Northville junior Alec Morgan (left) tried to poke the puck away from Novi senior Chris Kennedy during the Mustangs' 3-0 victory over rival Novi Dec. 4 at Novi Ice Arena. CHRIS JACKETT

Northville junior goaltender Boutin makes 27 saves, shuts out Novi icers

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

The final score is not a good indicator of how close the game was and how hard each team battled in the first baseline rivalry hockey matchup of the season. Northville (3-1-1, 2-0-0 Kensington) pulled away late Dec. 4 to earn a tough 3-0 victory over Novi (3-3-0, 2-1-0 Kensington). Senior Buster White put the Mustangs on the board with 2:34 left in the first period on a rebound put-back from the left of the crease while Northville was on the power play. Junior Alex Morgan and senior Tim Eis assisted. "I thought we kind of played our systems in the first period, but we didn't seem to have a lot of intensity in the first period," Northville coach Clint Robert said. "I felt like, in the second period, we came out extremely flat, had penalty troubles. Basically we didn't do anything we practiced. Third period, the boys just kept their heads, kept moving their feet and things went a little better I think." After giving up a 12-5 shot advantage in the first period, the Wildcats took over, out-shooting Northville 16-7 in the second period while enjoying both a 5-on-3 power play and two regular penalties that went back-to-back for 3:59 of consecutive power play time. However, a stellar performance by Northville junior netminder Chance Boutin (27 saves) kept Novi off the board. "He played great. He bailed us out on a breakaway,"

See ICERS, Page B3

ON TAP

Novi's icers (3-3-0, 2-1-0 Kensington) were set to visit Brighton (2-3-0, 0-0-0 Kensington) two nights ago before hosting Livonia Franklin (2-3-0, 0-2-0 Kensington) 6 p.m. Friday and Livonia Churchill (1-3-0, 1-1-0 Kensington) 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, both at Novi Ice Arena.

Shamrocks hoops team brings back experience

Squad looks to turn in better results than last season

By Sam Eggleston
 Correspondent

Bill Dyer doesn't make excuses when it comes to losses and losing records. Instead, he just accepts the reality and plans to make adjustments for the future. In the 2012-2013 season, the Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks compiled a 5-16 record and lost in the district tournament opening game. This year, which is Dyer's 24th at the helm, will be different. "We will be better," he said. "Our seniors have the opportunity to have a good senior season. Our young kids are going to learn a lot from them as the year progresses. We will compete hard every night and we have guys that will come off the bench and give us a lot of energy." The Shamrocks return more experience to the team than they had last year. They have more height and team chemistry. They have a tal-

See HOOPS, Page B2

ON TAP

The Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks basketball team will play at Divine Child next Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

NOVI SPORTS ROUNDUP

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

Wildcat tankers swim to strong season debut

Novi's boys swim and dive team kicked off its season Dec. 7 at the Fenton Relays, where they finished second out of 13 teams with 396 points, just two points behind Ann Arbor Skyline, who was sixth in Division II last season. The format of the meet was relays only, and the Wildcats took first in five events.

Toraki Maehata, Phillip Billiu, Joel Kotyk and Joey Berman won the 200 backstroke relay in 1:52.68, while Tanner Vincent, Arthur Shi, Maehata and Jacob Robbins combined to win the 200 free relay in 1:33.14. John Heslop, James



Novi's boys swim and dive team finished second of 13 teams with Dec. 7 at the Fenton Relays while winning five of the events. SHONA VINCENT

Popyk, Phillip Billiu and Berman won the 850 crestedo relay in 8:34.42, while Sid Ka-

Perhaps the highlight of the day was Vincent, Shi, Maehata and Robbins winning the 400 free relay with a meet record time of 3:27.08, breaking a record of 3:27.61 set in 1981 by Saginaw Arthur Hill. "This was a great meet to start off our season," Novi coach Brent Pohlonski said. "It was a big confidence boost to have so many best times and to be on the verge of state qualifying times after just nine days of practice." The 'Cats host Canton at 6 p.m. tonight.

Novi bowlers roll short in Early Bird tourney

Starting their season at the Early Bird Tournament at Drakeshire Lanes last weekend, Novi's teams found they had room to build this season.

The boys finished 15th out of 20 teams with a score of 3,579. They were led by Diandre Moreland with a three-game total of 564, which was good for 40th place individually, and Scott Pryson, who was 44th while shooting 556.

The girls entered two teatons into a field of 20, finishing 10th with 3,174 and 17th with 2,545. Sara Schulz finished 11th individually with a three-game total of 582 (high game 225) and Megan Engels was 20th with a 538 score.

The Wildcats will next host Walled Lake Western 3:30 p.m. today at Novi Bowl before heading to Brighton Bowl on Friday to face Hartland.

Chris Jackett is a freelance writer covering Novi High School sports for the Novi News.

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Wildcats demolish Pirates in opener

Novi turns 40-4 halftime lead into victory with starters out early

By Chris Jaccett
Correspondent

The starting lineup may look a little different, but the results were the same as Novi's girls basketball team rolled to a lopsided victory over Pinckney in the season opener for both teams.

The Wildcats (18-3, 10-0 KLA Central in 2013-14) defeated Pinckney (2-18, 0-10

West) with a 55-24 showing that included a 40-4 lead by halftime. The reserves held onto a 50-14 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

Fourth-year starting point guard Kerri McMahan led the way with 24 points on 8-for-12 shooting while playing just the first 13 minutes of the game. She also went 7-for-10 from the free throw line while tallying five rebounds and two steals.

Novi coach Bill Kelp said he didn't expect things to go as smoothly as they did in the season opener after graduating three starters.

"(We) knew she would prob-

ON TAP

Novi's girls basketball team (1-0) looked to continue their winning ways two nights ago against Walled Lake Central (0-1) before hosting Walled Lake Northern (3-0) Friday and visiting Canton (0-2) Tuesday, both at 7 p.m.

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ably be best player on the court," Kelp said of McMahan. "She took advantage of a changing team with a new coach; which she should do."

Senior Taylor Pavlika is the other returnee to the starting lineup. She added four points, seven rebounds, three assists and two steals in the opener.

Joining McMahan and Pavlika as starters were a trio of girls who had already earned

their varsity letters. Junior Alex Felice (two points, seven rebounds, six steals), senior Dina Fawaz (six points, six rebounds) and senior Kristen Schubring (three rebounds) each made their mark in limited action as the newer varsity members could log some experience.

"Good to get everyone in and also to see what new girls to team would look like," Kelp

said. "Everyone (surprised me) in both positive and negative ways. Evaluating to see who will emerge into the rotation and how big or small it might be."

With the lineup changes for the Wildcats and others in the league, Novi will have to battle if they hope to retain a fifth-straight Central Division title.

"Anyone can win the Central Division," Kelp said. "Hopefully we can make it five in a row."

Chris Jaccett is a freelance writer covering Novi High School sports for the Novi News.

NOVI SPORTS BRIEFS

Stanford named to Capital One team

Saginaw Valley State University junior kicker Scott Stanford, a 2011 Novi High School graduate, has been selected to the Capital One Academic All-America Division II Football Team.

Stanford carries a 3.79 cumulative GPA as an accounting major. He kicked 11 field goals in 2013, with a long of 51 yards. He made a 51-yarder in the team's homecoming victory over Northwood and a 50-yarder in the team's final home contest of the season against Northern Michigan. Stanford kicked a school-record 58 extra points to total 91 points for the Cardinals. The junior posted 45 touchbacks out of 83 total kicks.

To be eligible for Academic All-America consideration, a student-athlete must be a varsity starter or key reserve, maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.30 on a scale of 4.00, have reached sophomore athletic and academic standings at his/her institution and be nominated by his/her sports information director.

Hockey classes for youths

The Novi Ice Arena (42400 Nick Lidstrom Drive) has skilled instructors gearing up to teach hockey to boys and girls in the 4-11 age group—everything from putting on hockey equipment to taking their first shot on goal and working in a team environment—in their upcoming "Learn To Play Hockey" classes.

This program is for kids who have a basic knowledge of skating. It will be broken into two sessions of nine classes each, running 6-6:50 p.m. each Wednesday. Session 1 runs through Jan. 22 (no classes Jan. 1). Session 2 runs Jan. 29 to March 26. Sign up for both sessions now and save with a discounted price.

The emphasis of the class is to create a fun and challenging environment for players to learn the beginning stages of balance, skating in equipment and stick handling.

Each skater will receive a hockey jersey as a part of the class, but will be required to have their own hockey equipment.

HOOPS

Continued from Page B1

ented bench that includes plenty of young faces—two sophomores and a freshman.

The team also brings plenty of true athletes to the floor this year—but that's also a downside to start the season.

"We're not like most other basketball programs in the state," Dyer

GRAPPLERS

Continued from Page B1

were tested in at least one match during the day. Despite early results, the team appears to have a healthy mix of age distribution, featuring two freshmen, four sophomores, three juniors and five seniors picking up at least one victory last weekend.

"We saw many positives on the day," Smith said. "From our seniors right down to the freshman in the lineup. It was fun to watch. Looking forward to the season and developing this team."

Chris Jaccett is a freelance writer covering Novi High School sports for the Novi News.

ICERS

Continued from Page B1

a 2-on-0. He played a great game for sure," Robert said. "We have a lot to work on, but I like our team."

The Wildcats upped the pressure in the third period, gaining several good chances, including a 2-on-0 by juniors Ryan Baxter and Bryan Pegert, but Boutin came up big again. The offensive pressure also thinned out the Mustangs a few strong opportunities.

It was a Novi breakthrough with 7:17 remaining in a physical game that led to a penalty and ejection.

Northville's Connor Brown capitalized just five seconds later with a shot from the point off the faceoff to give the Mustangs a 2-0 lead when he snuck it past Novi senior netminder Austin Petty (29 saves). Senior Alex Stuart and Whitel assisted.

"It was a rivalry game, intense," Novi coach Mark Vellucci said. "I think the biggest thing for us was the lack of position play and we're usually better at that."

They scored a power play goal on I don't want to say a bad penalty, but a little undisciplined there. Second period we were all over them and I think their goalie won them the game. Especially in the second period when we had a 5-on-3 power play and a couple chances. If anything this shows us we have a little work to do."

Novi kept the pressure going and a low shot

WINTER SCHEDULES

NOVI HIGH SCHOOL
Ice hockey
12:05 p.m. Uxbridge
12:17 p.m. Uxbridge
12:30 p.m. Uxbridge
12:43 p.m. Uxbridge
12:56 p.m. Uxbridge
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WINTER SCHEDULES

DETROIT CATHOLIC CENTRAL WINTER SCHEDULES
Ice hockey
12:05 p.m. Uxbridge
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Northville tankers look to division, conference titles

By Sam Eggleston
Correspondent

The Northville Mustangs boys swimming and diving team typically sets the same goals each year—go for the Central Division title and the Kensington Conference crown before focusing on bringing home the best state finals finish their talent allows for.

This year is no different, despite the fact that the Central Division is potentially the most competitive in the K.L.A.A. this season.

South Lyon Consolidated will all be looking at similar objectives in 2013.

Leading the team this year will be captains Andrew Westphal, Josh Liu, Ryan Moore and Nick DuFresne. They

ON TAP

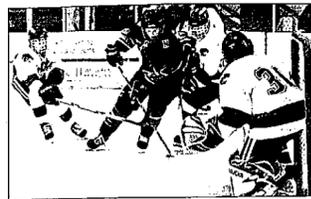
The Northville Mustangs boys swimming and diving team will compete a week from today when they host Birmingham Brother Rice at 6:30 p.m.

have plenty of swimmers to lead, too, with a roster of 45 tankers. Last year, the Mustangs finished 9-2 overall and were runner-ups in the division and conference. They finished 23rd in the state finals.

The top performing tanker returning is Westphal, who was eighth in the state in the 50 freestyle and 10th in the state in the 100 free.

This year's team includes (in alphabetical order): David Alameddine, Nikolai Arton, Yash Bajaj, Shane Borran, Jack Breuch, Daniel Brown, Ben Cracraft, Ancheng Da, Taran Deshpande, John Duan, Nick DeFresne, Chris-

tian Field, Chris Geng, Mike Grimes, Roman Grossi, David Handy, Matthew Hezemy, Nate Holloway, Taiyo Ichikawa, Mark Kaminski, Sho Kikumori, Joe Krakowiak, Matt Lee, Connor Lepish, Josh Liu, Jack Maibach, John Monterosso, Matt Monterosso, Ryan Moore, Alan Ruan, Thomas Rys, Mike Scarrantino, Matthew Schaefer, Fred Schulz, Nirek Sharma, Ryan Smelt, Troy Stacer, Danny Teng, Anton Travis, Dominick Tripoli, Brendon Tseng, Andrew Westphal, James Xue, Jarvis Yan, Kevin Yang, Christian Yap, Frank Zhang and Larry Zhao.



Northville senior Tim Eis (center) battles through a crowd of Novi defenders to get a shot on Novi senior netminder Austin Petty (right) during the second period of the Mustangs' 3-0 victory over rival Novi Dec. 4 at Novi Ice Arena. CHRIS JACCETT

from the point with 5:13 remaining had Boutin going low for the save before a deflection by a defender had it skip just an inch or two over the crossbar.

But the Mustangs' defense would clamp down and junior Jack Meacham would add an empty net goal with 1:25 remaining, off assists from Eis and Boutin, to put Northville up 3-0 as chants of "little sister" came up from the Northville student section as a true indicator of how big the rivalry had become for both teams. The final scoreline put an exclamation point on a true goal-keeper's duel.

"He's a four-year varsity player. This is his year to shine," Vellucci said of Petty. "The five games we've played, he's kept us in all the games, the close games especially. I expect it from him to keep us in the games. If there's anything about our team weakness-wise, it's our overall team defense... It's a long season and obviously it's tough to lose to a rival. They deserved to win that they played better than

us for the three periods."

Three days after being shut out, the Wildcats' offense steamrolled South Lyon Unified (1-5-0, 0-1-0 Kensington) at Novi Ice Arena. After a scoreless first period, Novi notched three in the second and five in the third on Lions netminder Justin Zabinski (42 saves) to claim an 8-0 victory as Petty (six saves) earned the win.

The Lions struggled to stay out of the penalty box, amassing 12 penalties that led to six of the eight Novi goals via power plays.

Novi's offense was led by Brad Hofelich (three goals, three assists), Chris Kennedy (one goal, three assists), Fegert (one goal, three assists), Mark O'Reilly (one goal, two assists), Josh Ward (one goal, one assist), Brendan Wexler (one goal) and one assist apiece from each Matt Kopel, Mark Czapski, Brennan Martin and Mitchell Magliocco.

Chris Jaccett is a freelance writer covering Novi High School sports for the Novi News.



A trio of Novi High wrestlers urges on their teammate Scott Latham as he's about to pin an opponent on Dec. 7. JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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bright house NETWORKS

Kettle caps career with third team title

By Jeff Theisen
Sports Writer

Milford senior runner Brian Kettle turned in another stellar performance at state as the Mavs did just enough to earn their third consecutive state championship.

Kettle finished second overall in Division 1 (15:31.7). In the last three years, he finished second, first and second as the Mavericks collected team titles each time.

Kettle was named 2013 Mr. Cross Country as well. The award is annually presented to the top senior in the state by the Michigan Interscholastic Track Coaches Association.

Along the way, Kettle ran to his third consecutive regional title and second straight Oakland County title.

"Brian has been a cornerstone of our program for the past three years," coach Brian Salyers said. "You don't contend for state titles and national rankings without a front-runner like Brian."
"He likes to race and he likes to run fast," he added. "Those are qualities that have served him well throughout his career. Brian has amassed an incredible resume and created his own legacy within the Milford cross country program."



Milford senior Brian Kettle, 2013 Mr. Cross Country, is the All-Area Runner of the Year.

First team Dan Sims Northville

The senior capped off a stellar career with a 10th-place overall finish in the Division 1 race, leading the Mustangs to a fifth-place finish as a team. Sims was a three-time state qualifier and finished all-state all three years. His top time of 15:52 came at the state finals. Sims finished third at regionals, won the Mustang Invite and was the Kensington Conference champion. He is also a three-time academic all-state honoree.

"Dan is the best pure runner I have ever coached," coach Chris Cronin said. "To describe it more accurately, he glides. His running form can be really deceptive because he doesn't look like he's moving that fast, but then you realize that no one can stay with him - it's devastating."

"That being said, what makes Sims roll is his competitive fire. You might beat Dan

in a race, but you will never out-compete him. One of the best leaders I've ever worked with."

Nick Noles Northville

The junior was the second all-state runner for the Mustangs this year in 21st (15:58.8). It was his second all-state run. Noles was champion at the Wayne County meet and runner-up at the Mustang Invite and at the Kensington Conference race. He had a top time of 15:57 and is academic all-state.

"When Dan Sims was out in September, Nick stepped into our No. 1 spot and really solidified our attack," Cronin said. "He lives to run against the best and on the biggest stages. That's where great runners live."

Conor Naughton Northville

The sophomore was yet another top runner for the Mustangs. He had a best time of 16:01 with a fourth-place finish at the Wayne County championship, fourth at the

Kensington Conference championship and was 67th at the state finals.

"Conor emerged as one of the state's top sophomores in 2013," Cronin said. "Consistency became his trademark as he earned medalist honors at every big invitational we attended. His 16:01 was the third fastest time this season and he now ranks 11th all-time at Cass Benton (home course)."

Kevin Black Milford

The senior saved his best season for last. He was eighth at Oakland County, fifth at the Lakes Conference meet and fourth at regionals (15:36). Black finished the season 61st at the state finals (16:26.6).

"I was very impressed by Kevin's poise and toughness this season," Salyers said. "He really developed into an outstanding runner and helped our team achieve great things throughout the season."

Jeffrey Field Milford

The senior had his best run of the year at the state finals, finishing 49th (16:24) and second overall for the champion Mavericks. Field was 20th at Oakland County and 21st at the

ALL AREA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

RUNNER OF THE YEAR

Brian Kettle, Milford
FIRST TEAM
Dan Sims, Northville
Nick Noles, Northville
Conor Naughton, Northville
Kevin Black, Milford
Jeffrey Field, Milford
Andrew Thomas, South Lyon
Brian Barnes, Novi

SECOND TEAM

Sean McCullough, Northville
Jason Ferrante, Northville
Joost Plaetnick, Novi
Sahisnu Malapati, Novi
Sean Noone, Milford
Kyle Garbowits, Lakeland
Jackson Grzymkowski, Lakeland

HONORABLE MENTION

Milford: Clinton Caddell (sr), Nick Northville; Ben Cracraft (fr), Nick Dufresne (sr), Sam Krems (jr), and Jacob Kamn (jr)
Novi: Nate Hall (sr), Cameron Misko (jr), Andy Mizerowski (jr), John Landy (fr), Michael Dickmann (sr), Collin Thomas (jr), Palguna Thalla (sr)

South Lyon: Jordan Oldie (jr), Dan McMillen (sr), Bryce VanAsselt (jr)
South Lyon East: Adam Caruso (so), Charles Marchand (so), Paul Domanić (sr)

The sophomore won the Lakeland 9-10 invite and had a best of 16:08. Plaetnick finished the year 48th at the state finals (16:23.1).

Sahisnu Malapati Novi

The junior posted a top time of 16:27.
Sean Noone Milford
The junior was the lone non-senior in the top five for the Mavericks at the finals. Noone finished 22nd at Oakland County, 13th at the conference meet and 10th at regionals (16:14). He finished the year 54th at the state finals and the third runner in for the Mavs (16:25.2).

Kyle Garbowits Lakeland

The sophomore was third team all-conference and finished eighth at regionals (16:39.4). He finished the season with a trip to states, where he finished 102nd.

Jackson Grzymkowski Lakeland

The sophomore medaled at the Oakland County invite and finished ninth at regionals to punch a ticket to states. He finished 60th (16:26.2) at the Division 1 state finals.

"He has a great enthusiasm for competition that motivated his teammates to do their best."

Catholic Central did not turn in All-Area nominations.

Brian Barnes Novi

The senior had a best of 16:04 and was the No. 1 runner all season right up until the finals. Barnes had a medical issue and needed an IV, but still managed to finish 73rd in 16:31.5.

Second team Sean McCullough Northville

The junior is a two-time state qualifier and placed 46th at the Division 1 finals (16:22.8). McCullough was fifth at the Wayne County invite and sixth at the conference meet. He had a top time of 16:05 and is academic all-state.

Jason Ferrante Northville

The junior is also a two-time state finalist. He was ninth at the conference meet and runner-up at the Wayne County invite. Ferrante finished the year 175th at the state finals. He had a top time of 16:09.

Joost Plaetnick Novi

The sophomore won the Lakeland 9-10 invite and had a best of 16:08. Plaetnick finished the year 48th at the state finals (16:23.1).

South Lyon East: Adam Caruso (so), Charles Marchand (so), Paul Domanić (sr)

The senior had one main goal in his last go-around - make the state finals. Thomas accomplished his goal with a 10th-place finish at regionals (16:00). It was the fastest South Lyon time ever at Huron Meadows. Thomas was eighth at the conference meet and 13th at Oakland County. He finished the year in 93rd place at the Division 1 finals.

"Andrew had a phenomenal year this season, running as the Lions' No. 1 all season and winning most dual meets," coach Scott Smith said.

"He has a great enthusiasm for competition that motivated his teammates to do their best."

Jeffrey Field Milford

The senior had his best run of the year at the state finals, finishing 49th (16:24) and second overall for the champion Mavericks. Field was 20th at Oakland County and 21st at the

Kevin Black Milford

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"I was very impressed by Kevin's poise and toughness this season," Salyers said. "He really developed into an outstanding runner and helped our team achieve great things throughout the season."

Jeffrey Field Milford

The sophomore was yet another top runner for the Mustangs. He had a best time of 16:01 with a fourth-place finish at the Wayne County championship, fourth at the

Catholic Central skaters edge rival Trenton

By Sam Eggleston
Correspondent

When the Trenton Trojans and Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks hockey teams face off, it's usually an all-out fight to the end.

Last week's game between the two MHL opponents was no different. The Shamrocks skated away with a 4-3 decision.

In the first period, Trenton scored first with 4:26 off the clock as Griffin Sawyer used assists from Quinn Preston and Phillip Pugliese on a power play to earn a 1-0 lead.

That advantage lasted fewer than three

ON TAP

The Shamrocks hockey team will be back on the ice when they visit Cranbrook tomorrow at 7:15 p.m. before hosting Grosse Pointe North at 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

minutes before the Shamrocks evened the game on a goal by Mitchell Ossowski, who scored on a power play with assistance from Alex Kreutzer and Austin Featherstone.

In the second period, the Shamrocks took the lead, 2-1, with 8:53 off the clock as Owen Kipke scored an unassisted goal, followed exactly 30 seconds later by an unassisted score by Trenton's Mitchell Galea to tie the game again.

But the Shamrocks managed to add another tally with 16:52 off the clock as Featherstone scored on a power play off assists from Ryan Burnett and Ossowski.

In the final period, Catholic Central went up 4-2 off a goal by Brent Jones with 4:11 off the clock as a pass by Burnett.

The Trojans scored the final goal three minutes later on a power play when Sawyer scored to cut the lead to 4-3. Aaron Arturi and Preston assisted.

Shamrocks wrestling team looks to another state title

By Sam Eggleston
Correspondent

Is there any doubt the Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks wrestling team is underlining a state championship run for the team and as many possible individuals this season?

The team, which has been ranked 11th in the nation and is the defending state champion, returns a slew of talented grapplers, including four All-Americans, three of which have state titles under their belt.

"This is an experienced, senior-laden group that has been through the trenches and knows how to win big matches when it counts," said Catholic Central head coach Mitch Hancock, who is in his sev-

ON TAP

The Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks wrestling team will be on the mat when they compete in the Tim Horn Invitational at 9 a.m. Saturday. They will then compete next Friday and Saturday in the Oakland County championships.

enth year leading the powerhouse program.

Some of those seniors who are keeping the squad laden with talent are Drew Garcia, Logan Marwick, Malik Amine and Nick Bennett.

Garcia, who wrestles at 171 pounds, has two state and is a junior national All-American. He is committed to wrestle for Cornell after he graduates.

Marwick, who is in the 189-pound weight class, is a returning state champion and All-American. He will wrestle at Indiana next season.

Amine, at 145 pounds, is a state champion and an All-American. He recently committed to wrestling for the University of Michigan.

Bennett, at 152 pounds, may not be a state champion, but he looks to rectify that this year. He is an All-American selection and will wrestle at Nebraska.

The team, said Hancock, will need to solidify its senior leadership and stay healthy despite having an extremely grueling schedule that finds the team wrestling many of the top-25 ranked teams in the country this season.

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9Round Fitness and Kickboxing owner Boo Sadikot gives a jab to a moving bag in one of the gym's many workout circuits. JOHN HEIDER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Changing lives through kickboxing

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Boo Sadikot is excited about his new business, 9Round Fitness & Kickboxing, on the northeast corner of Five Mile and Haggerty roads.

The business at 15404 Haggerty, where Northville and Plymouth Townships meet, is in the Haggerty 5 Gateway Center. Its kickboxing circuit offers a full-body workout.

"We change the workout every day so the clients are never going to get bored," he said of the nine stations, which clients complete in 30 minutes with a personal trainer on site. The personal trainer "motivates the client every step of the way."

Ages of clients range from 12 on up to older adults, of both genders at the franchise operation with locations in other states.

At 9Round Fitness & Kickboxing, you can come and go as you wish with a membership, with

the circuit training model meaning there are no class times. Jessie Harris is manager of the Northville location, currently the only one in Michigan although Sadikot plans two more sites to be determined.

"It's a great concept," he said. "We really found a great niche within the fitness industry. It's a great workout, it's a lot of fun." Members receive hand wraps and boxing gloves for workouts, and also benefit from a nutrition program. Sadikot and staff look forward to serving the Northville, Plymouth and Livonia areas. He noted manager Harris is certified as a personal trainer with the nine-round program.

Sadikot lives in Commerce Township with his wife, a Northville High School counselor, and 6-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter. He came here 16 years ago as a London, England, native.

"There are so many

unfortunate deconditioned people around. It's very empowering to change people's lives," he said. "It's very rewarding, very empowering."

He's not a newcomer to the fitness industry, being owner and manager of Fitness Together, 24276 Novi Road, at Novi Road and 10 Mile in Novi. That business (www.fitness-together.com/novi) is celebrating its 10th anniversary.

Hours at Fitness Together at 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Friday, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. Fitness Together's phone is 248-348-9230.

Fitness Together is also a franchise operation. Sadikot started out about 16 years ago working in a health club in Northville. He branched out to owning the Fitness Together operation in Novi, and more recently researched 9Round Fitness & Kickboxing before opening it.

jbrown@hometownlife.com

Cable franchising renewal begins

By Joanne Maliszewski
Staff Writer

When it comes to cable television, communities have little authority to make major changes in the franchises that govern companies, such as Bright House Networks, which serves Novi, Farmington and Farmington Hills.

"The reality is that when you go through state franchising, what's going to change? Nothing," said Joe Durkin, senior director of corporate communications.

City Managers Vince Pastue of Farmington and Steve Brock of Farmington Hills wouldn't dispute that. "We look at where we have the latitude with the state and federal statutes," Pastue said. "It has been phenomenally reduced."

City officials are gearing up for renewing the cable franchise that will expire in 2015. While officials in the three cities are in communication over the upcoming renewal, each city must take action separately, Pastue said.

Nonetheless, Durkin said Bright House Networks is still interested in hearing what residents in the three communities have to say about their cable service.

"It's good for consumers to come in and have a say," Durkin said.

Public meetings

Three public meetings are scheduled in each of the cities, beginning with Farmington Hills at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9, as part of the Farmington Hills City Council's regular meeting at city hall, 31555 11 Mile.

The Hills and Farmington City Councils, however, will also meet with Bright House officials at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9, in the community room at the Hills City Hall.

The other meetings are at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16, in the city of Farmington at city hall, 23600 Liberty, and 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11, in the city of Novi at city hall, 45175 10 Mile.

Residents in the three cities may attend any of the meetings.

"Depending on the input, we will sit down with Bright House," Brock said. "Bright House has been doing a pretty good job."

Changes in federal and state laws that govern cable service and access were designed to allow for competing companies to offer service in communities. The drawback is the cost of infrastructure investment for a new company to set up and offer service, Brock said.

A new company cannot use Bright House infrastructure. AT&T, however, entered the market a few years ago, installed fiber optic lines and made use of older lines that were available, Brock said.

City officials have encouraged competing companies to enter the cities, but there have been no takers — other than AT&T U-Verse.

Although customers typically raise concerns about price and channel lineup, Brock said the public input meetings are not for those issues, over which the communities have no authority.

"This isn't just Farmington and Farmington Hills. It is national," Pastue said.

Durkin said that when it comes to programming, a company such as Bright House, has to consider all tastes in viewing. "Some viewers may love and crave drama. For others, it's just about sports."

In the past year, as Bright House negotiated with some of its providers, such as CBS Corp., it had a number of channel

blackouts until agreements were reached. Bright House provided other programming on the channels that were blacked out during negotiations.

Cable access

What city officials can manage is public cable access, which includes the Southwest Oakland County Cable Consortium, with headquarters on Nine Mile in Farmington.

Under franchise agreements, communities in which a cable company provides services also pays franchise fees. Farmington Hills, for example, in the current budget year will receive \$1.3 million from Bright House with a contribution from SWOCC of \$7,600.

Some of the fees are used to pay for cable-casting government meetings, plus employee salaries relating to that use, Brock said.

SWOCC also offers studios from which residents may tape shows for the public access channels. For example, the late local historian Ruth Mochlin often interviewed guests for public access.

When cable television first arrived in the local community in the 1980s by way of MetroVision, which later became Bright House, cable access appeared to offer a plethora of opportunities.

With the rise of iPhones and other e-devices, cable casting has become less popular. Today, residents can post their shows, for example, on YouTube, Brock said.

"The game has changed so much. The public doesn't use it (cable cast shows) as much anymore. We use it for some of our tapings."

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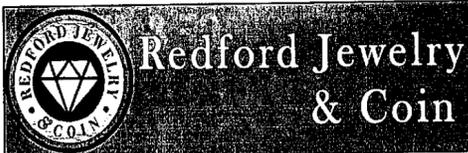
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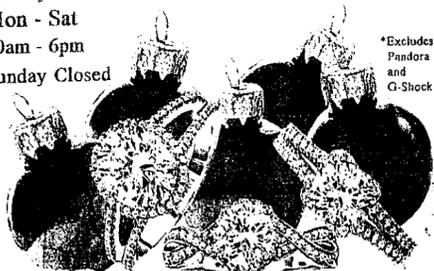
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New look

The Novi Red Lobster restaurant on Novi Road just north of I-96 was recently remodeled inside and out, and celebrated with a ribbon cutting Dec. 6. Show (left to right) are Christopher Johnson, Bryanna James, Sheila Taylor, general manager, Charleen Dimovski, and Cyndi Delise.

NOVI BUSINESS BRIEFS

Gov. signs Crawford bill eliminating obstructive DEQ requirements

Michigan taxpayers will save millions thanks to the removal of restrictive Department of Environmental Quality regulations, according to State Rep. Hugh Crawford (R-Nowi).

Crawford, who recently attended a ceremonial signing of the bill, introduced the legislation after he was approached by local businesses and municipalities that were forced to take costly measures to ensure they were complying with the regulations.

"I am extremely pleased to see this legislation passed into law and want to thank the local business and municipalities that brought this issue to my attention," Crawford said. "This legislation is a perfect example of how updating regulations can have an extremely positive effect on both our local communities and more importantly, Michigan taxpayers."

Public Act 180 of 2013

Rocky's fundraiser



The team of Northville Rocky's, including owner Rocky Radwicz (from left), general manager Penny Zywick and Chef de Cuisine Joe Gardiner, have been extremely generous at spreading goodwill and great food throughout the land. First, they served up guests at the Lights, Camera, Auction annual fundraiser to support Variety the Children's Charity at the Novi Imagine Theatre. Next, they sponsored and catered the Nov. 23 opening night afterglow of Ebenezer at Tipping Point Theatre. Though it's their busy holiday season, Northville Rocky's, as the Tipping Point opening night sponsor, promises a delicious New Year's Eve at Tipping Point Theatre. Your \$75 ticket (\$50 is tax-deductible) includes an 8 p.m. performance of "Ebenezer" by Joseph Zettelmair, live music, strolling hors d'oeuvres by Rocky's, raffle ticket for Orin Jewelers and a champagne toast to ring in 2014. To reserve tickets, call 248-347-0003 or go to www.tippingpointtheatre.com. JULIE VOLLES

has already saved Lyon Township \$80,000 and will help taxpayers across the state save \$5 million, according to Crawford.

AIR DUCT CLEANING

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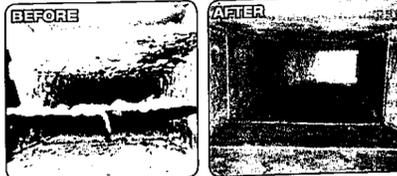
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Common Problems Related To Crawl Spaces Are:

- Standing Water in your crawl space
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- Insulation falling down, wet, or moldy
- Excessive construction debris to where you can't get in your crawl space
- Crawl space humid and the plumbing sweating
- Floors cold in the winter
- Musty odor in house

Our FREE Inspection Includes:
• Check All Lines for leaks
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• Written Estimate for All Recommended Work
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SENIOR CITIZENS
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Realtors' gala has fun, fellowship, outreach to needy

Thursday evening, Dec. 3, the Greater Metropolitan Association of Realtors held its annual Holiday Party at Glen Oaks Country Club in Farmington Hills.

Over 30 prizes were raffied off, including gift baskets, wine, decorative holiday pieces and a large flat screen smart television. All proceeds from the 30/50 raffle, totaling \$524, went to Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan and all toy donations, totaling \$506, went to the Farmington Area Goodfellows.

Celebrants enjoyed a large buffet dinner, speeches from GMAR leadership, music from a professional piano player and a DJ. Women were presented a red rose as they entered and attendees had a professional picture taken of them in front of the tree to commemorate the occasion.



Santa Claus was a big hit with the revelers on Tuesday, Dec. 3.

Chicago a toddling town

Q: We are thinking about building a new apartment building in the Detroit area, but understand that Chicago has been awarded with respect to high tech high-rises. Do you have any information about that?

A: Chicago is a hotbed for high tech high-rises, as was depicted in a Sunday, Nov. 17, 2013, Chicago Tribune Real Estate article, and my personal observations. Many of the apartments in Chicago, particularly along the Gold Coast, have been converted to condominiums. However, with the influx of young persons who cannot afford condominiums, developers have recognized the need for apartment development.

So called smart technology is giving some apartment communities a competitive edge by expediting the leasing process. Some of the high tech amenities which Chicago developers are utilizing are keyless entries, fro-doing elevators, package tracking, a distributed antenna system, tracking workbooks, tech gurus across the country, Bluetooth audio systems and convenient charging power outlets with USB ports. You are best advised to consult with a rental agent in Chicago to compare these apartments with more traditional ones.

Q: Could you give me some basic information about the Biggest Water Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (BW Act)?

A: The BW Act requires that most properties insured through the National Flood Insurance Program be charged rates reflecting the full risk of flood loss. The premium increases apply immediately to flood insurance policies covering businesses and when residential properties are sold or a lapse of policy is renewed.

The BW Act additionally requires that maps be updated on an expedited schedule. Apparently, due to BW Act reforms, many homeowners are facing significant increases in their flood insurance premiums. It may be that these increases are so substantial that homeowners can no longer afford to maintain flood insurance coverage.

The BW Act additionally requires that FEMA study how substantial increases in flood insurance premiums would affect overall participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. There is new legislation that has been submitted in an effort to set aside substantial flood insurance rates, but you are best advised to consult with your local congressman or senator as to how it may impact you.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of "Condo Living 2: An Authoritative Guide to Buying, Selling, and Operating a Condominium."

It is available for \$24.95 plus \$5.55 for tax, shipping and handling. "Condo Living 2" is available in both print and e-book editions. The e-book is available for download through iTunes, Amazon.com, and BarnesandNoble.com.

He is also the author of "Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track," second edition. It is available for \$9.95 plus \$2.20 for tax, shipping and handling. Call 248-644-4433 or visit bmeisner@meisner-law.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Short sales: If you owe more than what your house is worth, you may be interested in a free informational seminar on short sale procedures.

Bonnie David, broker/owner of Quantum Real Estate, is the presenter. It will be 6-7 p.m. Thursdays at 129 N. Lafayette, downtown South Lyon.

Seminar on Tuesdays, Thursdays: A free seminar on government-insured reverse mortgages is offered by Colonial Mortgage Corp. on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. and Thursdays at 2 p.m.

Free foreclosure tours: Free foreclosure tours are 1 p.m. every other Sunday. Meeting place is Panera Bread on the southeast corner of Middlebelt and I-96.

Email Georgia@deedvaluelocal.com or visit FreeForeclosureTours.com.

Car Report



By Dale Buss

Highlander Hybrid Offers Winning SUV Formula for Toyota

Highlander was one of the sales leaders for Toyota in November, with a 22-percent gain over a year earlier, moving more than 11,500 units in the month across the U.S. market.

But for day-in, day-out use, Highlander Hybrid provides a great combination of advantages. It's flawless in highway-cruise mode and provides plenty of juice for acceleration, just what you want in a vehicle that also has a great capacity to carry humans and cargo.

Interior room is ample for the most part, even allowing for the extra room that hybrid batteries sometimes take up. On a long jaunt for the Thanksgiving holiday, Highlander Hybrid provided plenty of room not only for two adults in the front but also for two more adults sprawled out in the second row and a big haul of cargo that ranged from luggage to bags of gifts.

Like the regular Highlander, the hybrid version offers a second-row innovation: The bench slides fore and aft to alter the ratio of legroom to cargo capacity and even reclines, a la a minivan, for greater comfort. Its unique 40/20/40 split design has a movable center section that allows for a second row of seats to be folded down for extra storage space.

One definite problem with the vehicle, however, is that with the third seat row upright, there's only room in that row for a couple of kids. And in that mode, cargo room behind it is very limited.

Another thing I appreciated in driving the Highlander Hybrid was that the controls and gauges didn't make it obvious at all that I was driving a hybrid. Far removed from the enthusiasm displayed by early hybrid models (including some Toyotas) that featured complicated gauges that showed the flow of electric energy in the car, the Highlander Hybrid plays it pretty straight. You've still got to fill the gas tank before the fuel gauge goes to "E."

And like the regular Highlander, Highlander Hybrid comes equipped standard with a six-speaker stereo with a USB port and Bluetooth, and options such as a helpful backup camera and Toyota's Entune infotainment system.

The vehicle comes in base and Limited trims. Power comes from a V6 engine and two electric motors paired to a continuously variable transmission. On-demand all-wheel drive is standard in all models.



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All Highlander models were updated for the 2011 model year, with some tweaks since then.

Of course the biggest question with Highlander Hybrid, as with most hybrids, is whether the price premium you pay is really worth it compared with a conventional version of the same vehicle or a comparable nameplate.

I didn't do all the math, but that question with Highlander is very apropos because the premium is about \$10,000 over a regular Highlander, putting it near the top for any mainstream vehicle of the spread between a hybrid and a regular version. And yet with only an 8mpg advantage over the regular Highlander in city driving, the hybrid version takes a long time to complete the payback.

In the meantime, Highlander Hybrid owners will have to be satisfied with making just a slight contribution to the eco-sphere - and with the fact that the vehicle they're driving is pretty much the performance equal of the regular Highlander.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-WAYNE COUNTY

Table listing real estate transactions in Wayne County, including addresses, sale prices, and dates.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-OAKLAND COUNTY

Table listing real estate transactions in Oakland County, including addresses, sale prices, and dates.

WHEELS Real Estate listings for Dodge, Ford, and Mercury vehicles, including models like the Dodge Dakota, Ford F150, and Mercury Sable.

HOMES HomeFinder real estate listings for various properties in the area, including homes with multiple bedrooms and bathrooms.

SERVICES Home services including moving, cleaning, and home maintenance, with a focus on quality and customer satisfaction.

Local news and FARMINGTON HILLS DIAMOND FOREST real estate listings, highlighting local coverage and premium real estate services.

RENTALS Home rental listings for various properties, including apartments and houses, with details on pricing and amenities.



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CINARRON SPRUCE
JEFFERSON SPRUCE
HARRISON BLAKE SPRUCE
GRANTWOOD PINE
SUN BRIDGE PINE W/STAYLIT LIGHTS WAS \$300.00 \$279.00
SUN BRIDGE PINE W/STAYLIT LIGHTS WAS \$300.00 \$270.00
7 1/2' EASTON PINE W/STAYLIT LIGHTS WAS \$450.00 \$299.99
7 1/2' BALSAM FIR W/STAYLIT LIGHTS WAS \$300.00 \$199.99
7 1/2' SUPER SAVER SPECIAL
7 1/2' MARIETTA SPRUCE W/ INCANDESCENTS \$99.99
7 1/2' EASTON PINE W/STAYLIT LIGHTS \$399.99
7 1/2' REDMOND PINE W/STAYLIT LIGHTS WAS \$600.00 \$399.99
CANADIAN SPRUCE W/ LED LIGHTS WAS \$225.00



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SUN. 12-5:00