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SPORTS, B1



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Before You 'I do' Wedding Forum

Getting married or know someone that is in the near future and don't know where to start? Come to the 2nd Annual Before You "I Do" Wedding Forum presented by Wedding Professionals from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29 at the Hotel Baronette in Novi. You will learn how to save money, get the most out of your special day, current wedding trends, and hear tips from the pros that work in the industry every day.

Get tips from a wedding planner, a photographer, videographer, baker, stationary designer, linen company and many more. It is \$5 to attend and space is limited; reserve tickets in advance at www.b4uido2.eventbrite.com. Every bride that attends will be able to enter a huge wedding giveaway.



NOVI NEWS

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Police looking to community for help

New program allows residents to view incidents in their area

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

Novi Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police David Molloy is of the belief that "an informed community is a prepared community."

So in an effort to better inform residents of crimes occurring in the city, the Novi Police Department is partnering with The Omega Group and Oakland County's Courts Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) to provide current information on where crimes are occurring.

By using www.crimemapping.com, residents can see reported criminal activity in an area, determine the type of crime and

"If we can get information out so people can see where incidents are taking place, they can be of assistance to us and they can help us solve some of these crimes."

DAVID MOLLOY
Novi director of public safety/chief of police

see when crimes have been taking place.

Molloy said the department has been working on this program for a little while and is glad to see it come to fruition.

"If we can get information out so people can see where incidents are taking place, they can be of assistance to us and they can help us solve some of these

crimes," he said.

The Novi Police Department has lost roughly 11 percent of its uniform officers over the last few years due to cuts, and thus there are fewer eyes and ears in Novi neighborhoods.

And while Molloy would like to have those bodies back, he understands the times and has his department poised to have



ONLINE

To view Novi's crime map, visit www.cityofnovi.org and go to the Novi Police Department page. Residents with an iPhone may also download an application to view the information.

continued success.

"We need to do things differently and come up with alternative solutions to prevent crimes," he said. "But when crimes take place, you have to have the information and wherewithal to engage the community and say help us the best you can."

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Book presentation at Fox Run

The public is invited to attend a free January 21 presentation of the book "Have We Possibly Met Before? And Other Short Stories" by German author Susana Piontek at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21 at Fox Run (41000 13 Mile Road, Novi); RSVP to Mel.Tansill@Erickson.com.

She will be joined in this book review/commentary by her well-known husband, Dr. Guy Stern, a retired Wayne State University professor and current director of the International Institute of the Righteous at the Holocaust Museum. Stern translated the book from German to English.

Piontek is a seasoned author who has published numerous stories in a wide range of books and magazines in Europe. This is her first book for an English-speaking audience. The book offers seventeen short stories that surprise, shock, question conventions, and always end surprisingly.



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Novi High freshman Katera Price delivers her speech on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to a panel of judges on Jan. 5. Price and two other students gave speeches that day that they hoped would be presented at Novi's annual "Unity in the Community" event on Jan. 16.



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Novi High School student Narsh Raghunathan delivers his speech on the importance of following Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s non-violent ways on Jan. 5.

Woman follows dream of being an actress

'Plant Diaries' gives intimate look into lives of auto workers

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

Novi resident Ilene Abramson is proof that it's never too late to chase a childhood dream.

Abramson, who has her Ph.D. in higher education and taught for many years before being laid off in 2008, always enjoyed being on stage, and last spring started acting on a paid basis.

She has had a few minor roles and served as an extra since getting back into acting. Her most recent role is in the upcoming production of *Plant Diaries*, playing Jan. 13-15 at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center.

Abramson said she enjoys acting because she likes using her skills to "express a good story to other people."

"If Mother Nature gave me the gift of expressing those stories, it would be a crime if I didn't use it," she said. "All the roles I have had have been so moving."

Plant Diaries, writ-

DETAILS

The Ford Community and Performing Arts Center is located at 15801 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. Tickets can be purchased at the door, by calling (313) 943-2345 or online at www.tentwentytwo.com. The show starts at 8 p.m. all three days, Jan. 13-15.

ten and directed by Des Lamont, tells the story of what it is like to work in the Detroit auto industry, complete with the ups and downs. Abramson is playing a factory worker with a lot of issues, a role she feels comfortable handling thanks to her background.

She said teaching English to international adults gave her a taste of the obstacles they have to overcome, seeing as many of them worked in factories and on the line.

The play, she believes, will give people a "new understanding of what

Please see **ACTRESS, A6**

Honoring the dream

Teacher hopes Martin Luther King Day becomes a day of service

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY.

What: Community event honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

When: 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 16

Where: Novi High School

Other: Everyone in the community is invited and asked to bring canned goods for a local food bank

There is nothing Corey Nuckolls would love more than seeing the Novi Community School District change how it treats Martin Luther King Day.

Instead of giving students the day off, as it currently does, the high school teacher dreams of a day of service where the students use the day to remember King and give back.

"Talk is cheap," he said. "We must stop talking and start doing."

Please see **MLK DAY, A2**

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MLK DAY

Continued from page A1

And for the sixth straight year, Nuckolls and the Students Promoting Unity and Diversity club at the school are trying to "walk the walk" by hosting a Unity in the Community Program at 7 p.m. Monday at Novi High School.

what he stood for and how you can promote his principles in your life," he said. Katera Price, a freshman at the school, is excited about Monday's program because it's "a good way to bring a diverse community together in one place."



A panel of judges listens to students' MLK speeches on Jan. 5. From right are Dr. Steve Matthews, Bob Steeh, David Ascher, Nicole Carter and Nicole Cotton.

Novi students benefit from bell ringing

Woman comes back to donate \$100

By Nathan Mueller Staff Writer

The bells have been put away for the season, but the experience Novi High School senior Ben Rathi got from being a bell ringer for the Salvation Army is something that will last forever.

This was his third straight year being a bell ringer through the high school's Interact Club, and he said the day of service is always enjoyable.

"I learned to be thankful for what I have, and volunteering for those less privileged always feels gratifying and fulfilling," he said.

Rathi was joined at Twelve Oaks Mall in mid-December by club members Mrudhula Shyam, Matthew George, Namathra Aduri, Patrick Renner, Will Li, Nathan Louie, Anitha Thipparthi, Valerie Fraser and Alyssa Yarrish, all who signed up on a first-come first-serve basis. There were so many volunteers

that some even had to be turned away.

The highlight for Rathi came after he held the door for a woman entering Lord and Taylor who said she didn't have any money on her at the time but would be back to donate. Some people say that and never return, but the woman didn't disappoint, coming back to Rathi's door and putting \$100 in his box.

"That's the most I have ever seen, and I have to say, it was extremely generous of her to do so," he said.

He said he encourages more students to volunteer because it makes them feel good to know that the money raised is going to help others through tough times.

"It's especially rewarding when you see someone donate a large sum of money and say 'thank you' to the bell ringers," he said.

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Winter provides recreational opportunities

By Philip Allmen Staff Writer

Grant Kirchner learned how to fish with his grandfather at one of Kensington Metropark's ice fishing for beginners program. The Commerce teen has been hooked ever since.

"It's a fun thing to do instead of sitting around watching television in the winter," said Kirchner, a Lakeland High School junior. The metropark will hold four ice fishing classes this winter for kids and adults interested in learning more about the sport.



Brian Daniels spends an afternoon last winter ice fishing. Kensington Metropark will hold several introductory ice fishing classes in January and February.

The program starts with some classroom learning about the equipment and techniques needed to fish through a hole in the ice. And if weather permits, participants will head out on Wildwing Lake to drop a line in the water and test their newfound skills. Mike Broughton, an interpreter at Kensington's Nature Center, said winter is the only time

that Wildwing Lake can be fished — only the western end is open to fishing — and more wintertime fishermen set up on adjacent Kent Lake so there's less pressure on Wildwing. "Hardly anyone fishes it that often in the winter," Broughton said. "There's decent size perch and blue gill out of that lake."

Safety first Metropark staff will pre-drill holes through the ice before the program, saving those learning to fish from a little extra work. But if the weather doesn't cooperate, no one will venture out on the ice.

DETAILS Kensington Metropark will hold four ice fishing for beginners classes: Jan. 21 and 28 and Feb. 4 and 11. The three-hour programs run 1-4 p.m. and include classroom and outdoor time at the nature center. They are open to kids ages 6 and older, as well as adults. A fishing license is required for those 17 years of age and older, \$5 per person fishing, and registration is required by calling (248) 685-1561.

"Right now it's looking scary for the ice. It's been so warm and rainy." The Kirchner family lives on Lake Sherwood. Grant Kirchner said he checks the ice's thickness by drilling holes through the ice at the end of his dock. The neighborhood association notes problems spots throughout the lake in its newsletter, and often he'll wait until he sees others on the ice with their snowmobiles or four-wheelers before heading out himself. Six inches of ice typical-

ly suffices, he said. That's the same thickness Kensington staff wants for its winter programs. But there are other considerations, as well, according to Broughton. New ice is preferred, because it's stronger than old ice. When drilling through the ice, the angler can determine its age by its color and amount of air pockets. New ice is clearer and has fewer air pockets, which forms after snow falls, then freezes on ice. Old ice is whiter and not translucent. The older the ice, the thicker it needs to be, said Broughton.

There are no specific regulations at Kensington on when the ice is usable. Common sense, he added, plays a major role. "It's strictly up to the person on when it's safe to go out there," said Broughton. Different sport Those accustomed to sitting in a fishing boat or fishing from shore during the warm summer months need to adjust to ice fishing. Different poles, hooks and bait are needed when out on the ice. Short poles are needed, and anglers jig, instead of casting and reeling. Jigging involves lightly bouncing the line at a certain depth. Smaller hooks and bait are needed. "It's a completely different type of thing," said Broughton. "It's harder to get the fish in the winter time. The fish have slowed way down, because they're cold-blooded." Kirchner said he's been asking for ice fishing gear as presents ever since he learned of the sport. This Christmas, he received an ice shanty. "The lake isn't frozen (yet)," he said Friday. "It's bumming me out." Kensington has some ice fishing gear to loan for its beginners programs. Broughton said basic rigs can be purchased at retailers for as little as \$10. The metropark allows anglers to keep fishing shanties on Kent Lake throughout winter if registered with the park office. Otherwise, those fishing are not allowed to leave anything on the ice overnight. psallmen@hometownlife.com (248) 685-1507, ext. 226



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Hannah, one of the sows at Kensington Metropark's Farm Center, gave birth to a litter of 10 piglets on Dec. 21. This piglet, photographed at a day old, and its siblings will be sold to are farms after they're weaned from their mother.

Piglets join Kensington farm center stable

By Philip Allmen
Staff Writer

The newest additions at the Kensington Metropark Farm Center arrived just in time for Christmas.

Hannah, one of the metropark's sows, gave birth to a litter of 10 piglets Dec. 21. It was the Yorkshire pig's fifth litter. She's given birth to 53 piglets at the farm center. "It was a perfect birth," said Chris Williams, one of the interpreters at the center. "It was nice; over and done with before lunch."

The piglets will be raised for the next month or so at the farm center while the piglets are weaned off their mother. Then, Kensington sells the piglets to area farms. Williams said Kensington is one of the last farms in the area to raise and sell

farm animals like pigs, which typically are sold within a 3-mile radius. Piglets are usually sold to families who raise and process them, as well as for 4-H projects.

"I usually see a few at the fairs — Fowlerville and Oakland County," said Williams. At birth, the piglets weigh 1.3 pounds, but by four months can be 125 pounds and 400 pounds by the time they are a year old. On average, piglets gain a pound of weight per day. That rate slows down after a year.

The pigs at Kensington — there are five sows at the farm right now — give birth year-round. Typically the pigs produce two litters per year, said Williams. He expects the next litter in spring. Pigs have a gestation period of three months, three weeks and three

days, according to Williams.

Kensington's pigs are among the most popular barnyard animals at the farm center. A number of families stop in regularly to check the status of them, particularly with the expectant mothers. A goat is due in February, the next major birth expected at the farm.

The park maintains a fairly steady stable of animals, including six horses, three cows, six goats, 16 sheep six pigs, three rabbits, a donkey and about 30 ducks and geese.

Kensington Metropark's Farm Center is free and open to the public, although a motor vehicle entry pass is required. The center is open daily 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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State's university boards to be reduced?

By Christopher Behnan
Gannett News Service

A proposal to re-evaluate the need for Michigan's public universities to have separate governing boards is being viewed as a threat to autonomy by university officials, and a step toward improving students' access to higher education by some lawmakers.

House Bill 5000 would create a 13-member University System Restructuring Commission that would issue annual reports about the efficiency of the governance of Michigan's 13 taxpayer-funded universities.

State Rep. Bill Rogers (R-Genoa Township), a co-sponsor of the bill, said the proposed commission doesn't have a specified direction but that its initial focus may be to determine whether multiple university boards are necessary.

He said the prospect of reducing the number of university boards wouldn't reduce autonomy the boards currently enjoy, nor infringe on competition among universities to draw students. "I don't know that there's any hard-core direction. It's more the conversation," Rogers said of the proposal.

"We've got to work on kind of making things more efficient," he added.

The University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University have their boards elected in statewide elections as required in the state constitution. The other state universities, including Oakland University and East-

ern Michigan University, have boards appointed by the governor.

Reducing the number of university boards would be arguably the opposite of a new law that completely uncaps the allowed number of K-12 charter schools in Michigan by 2015.

In pushing for that measure, lawmakers said having unlimited charter schools would increase competition among public schools and give students more options.

Rogers said another House bill would expand competition among universities by allowing community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees — specifically in the fields of cement technology, maritime technology, energy production technology and culinary arts.

Under that bill, community colleges could grant bachelor's degrees in nursing, but only if approved by the Michigan Board of Nursing. That proposal, House Bill 4496, was passed in the House and has sat in committee since late June.

Rogers said most Michigan voters have never met, let alone read about candidates for the U-M, MSU or Wayne State boards. He said most voters have no connection to the people representing their taxpayer-supported universities.

"We need to get it to where people will maybe take the time and know," he said.

Michigan has a unique governance system for public higher education as the only state without some sort of statewide coordinating board or gov-

erning board, experts said.

The legislation, against the backdrop of tensions over this year's 15 percent cut to state aid, has set off a conversation about governance of the state's 13 taxpayer-funded universities and whether it should be more centralized.

At their best, university system boards allow states to think in a coordinated manner about how to produce an educated work force. At their worst, such systems and boards become expensive bureaucracies producing red tape for campuses, experts said.

Individual Michigan universities quickly opposed the commission bill this year.

"It's pure unadulterated politics," said Martin Taylor, a Democratic member of the University of Michigan's Board of Regents.

The commission proposal, introduced in September, also would charge the commission with analyzing universities' operations and oversight and reviewing higher education governance in other states.

The bill calls for 11 of 13 commissioners to have voting rights. Of those 11 members, four would be state residents not officially associated with a state university, appointed by the governor.

The two nonvoting members of the commission would be the state superintendent of schools and director of the Department of Technology, Management and Budget.

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Northville musician travels, but finds local audiences great, too

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Donna Lee Holman's 1998 Jeep Wrangler, which she still owns and drives, inspired a song she wrote, "This Old Jeep."



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Donna Lee Holman sings at Northville's Next Chapter bookstore on Dec. 7. Her session that day was filmed by the Jeep Corp. as Holman sang a song about her own Jeep Wrangler — and the adventures they've had together.

Holman, 36, of Northville, has been a musician some 20 years. She recalled her graduation from Livonia Franklin High, and her wish for a Jeep. Her late grandmother got her a Hot Wheels toy instead. Later, Holman could afford the real thing, and went to trade in the Jeep but didn't like the trade-in price. At the dealership, she recalled her grandmother's liking ladybugs. "My whole Jeep was filled with ladybugs," said Holman, who's a vocalist, plays guitar and is learning piano. "I took that as a sign."

Chrysler Corp. has expressed interest in "This Old Jeep" for a commercial, good news for Holman. She performs noon to 2 p.m. each Wednesday at The Next Chapter Bookstore & Bistro in downtown Northville, with husband Ron Harkrader, who plays upright bass and guitar. "I play some light percussion, too," Holman said. She's opened for Rascal Flatts, Kid Rock and others. Holman was on a Fox 2 morning broadcast Dec. 5, playing "Cool Water," the title song off her CD. "Everybody was complimenting me," she said of the recent TV appearance. "It went really well."

Her husband's also an entertainer. Holman performs with him and with others. "They seem to like it because it's unique," she said of customers. "It's really kind of neat that I'm able to do that. The people are very receptive."

At the bookstore, they do a range from Patsy Cline to Norah Jones, "unique classics that people like to listen to." Holman and others are also raffling off a guitar, with proceeds to Last Chance Dog and Cat Rescue. Additional information on the raffle is available on Holman's website, www.donnasongwriter.com.

METROPARK CALENDAR

General: 2011 annual parking and boat launch permits are available at the park office. Vehicle entry permits are \$25; senior citizen \$15. Boat launching permits are \$30; senior citizen \$15. The HCMA and Oakland County Parks permits, valid within both park systems, are \$48. Daily entry fee is \$5.

Kensington

Note: For more information for registration, call the Kensington Park office at (248) 685-1561 or (800) 477-3178. The Nature Center office phone number is (248) 685-0603. Pre-registration required for programs and a \$2 fee per person unless stated otherwise. Park hours are 6 a.m.-10 p.m. daily.

Nature Center

Bears: Sharing Your World with Wildlife: Saturday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Nature Center. All requirements for this badge will be met during this indoor/outdoor program. Fee: \$5 per Scout. Preregistration required. Winter Wildlife Walk: Sunday, Jan. 15, 2 p.m. Many kinds of wildlife stay active during the winter months. Join an interpreter and search for winter birds and mammals. Fee: \$3 per person. Bring binoculars and wear boots. For ages 6 years and older. Preregistration required.

Ice Fishing for Beginners: Saturday, Jan. 21, 1-4 p.m. A chance for beginners to learn about ice fishing, then wet a line (ice conditions permitting). Bring ice fishing rods and dress for the weather. Fee: \$5 per person that is fishing. For ages 6 years and older. A fishing license is required for those 17 years of age and older.

Farm Center

Ice Harvesting: Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 28 and 29, 1-3 p.m. See ice harvesting demonstrations and discover the importance of ice in times past. Join the farm staff in putting up a supply of ice the old-fashioned way. Blocks of ice will be cut using antique saws and a variety of equipment. Horse-Drawn Hayrides or Sleigh rides: weekends, noon-4 p.m. Take a relaxing horse-drawn hayride or sleigh ride (snow conditions permitting) past the fields and through the woods. Hayrides are \$3 per child, \$5 per adult.

ACTRESS

Continued from page A1
life is like to be underemployed, unemployed or worried that the very next day you may be laid off." "It will give people a front row seat that looks into an automotive plant, and by watching you will experience love, passion, patience, gratitude and the family atmosphere in the Detroit automotive industry," she said.

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Artist at work

Vic Leo works in glass, steel in 'more of a structural form'

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Vic Leo's artwork, as well as that of artists he's learned from and respects, is prominent in the Northville Township home he shares with wife Kathleen Ripley Leo.

Vic Leo, 68, started as a glassblower in the mid-1980s at the then-Center for Creative Studies in Detroit. He now works in glass and steel and recently received Best of Show honors for a piece, "Strata," at a University of Michigan-Dearborn show.

"Kathleen and I started collecting glass at the very beginning of the glass movement in this country," said Leo, a Ford Motor Co. retiree from the Executive Development Center with a master's degree in labor and industrial relations. That glass movement, much based nearby in Toledo, Ohio, will mark its 50th anniversary next year.

"I always was interested in the fundamentals of that art form," he said. Meeting artists and learning about their work prompted him to begin CCS studies.

"We were collecting these people and we wanted to know how tough it was on them," Kathleen said of the art form.

"I found that I was developing strongly and I was moving in that direction," her husband said. In 2002, he began to call himself an artist. In 2005, he began with steel, welding and machining work at Schoolcraft College.

Leo continues to work at Schoolcraft for that part of his work, renting at Baron Glassworks in Ypsilanti for the glasswork. His work is at Starving the Gallery in downtown Northville and the Lansing Art Gallery in that city, where it's sold.

"The objective was to put the glass in more of a structural form," he said. "Who knows what's next? I just work where I want to work."

Leo explained a new art form takes dedication, experience and work to start. "If you're going to be serious about it, you have to get into the discipline. I think stone is out."

The couple has two grown sons, Mark and Joe, who grew up in Northville, attending Winchester Elementary, Meads Mill Middle School and Northville High. Mark's now in Arizona and Joe in Maine, and the Leos have two grandchildren ages 2 1/2 and two weeks.

"We encouraged them to go out, the world's your oyster," he said. The senior Leos have been married 41 years, in Northville since 1978, and she's a writer, poet and novelist who teaches at Schoolcraft.

"She works in the verbal and I work in the visual," he said. Their sons grew up around his artwork and admired it — and nothing was ever broken.

"This is a perfect place to raise a family," she said. They enjoy the Northville Commons subdivision where they live, and appreciate the great school district.



PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Northville glass artist Vic Leo holds up his creation 'Strata' at his home on Dec. 1. Strata took Best of Show at a University of Michigan show that ended Oct. 27. To create the glass vase's colorful design, Leo needs to keep the piece at more than 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit for 20 days.



Glass artist Vic Leo puts a creation of his into the red hot flames on a furnace.

do paperweights, I will not do Christmas ornaments."

At the recent U-M-Dearborn show, Leo received a \$500 Best of Show prize. That all-media show was juried by B.E. Winslow, director of the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art at the Midland Center for the Arts.

"I was really blown away," he said of the honor. "It was really great."

Leo also competed in the 2011 Grand Rapids Art Prize event that ran through Oct. 9. The grand prize for that was \$250,000, sponsored by Fifth Third Bank.

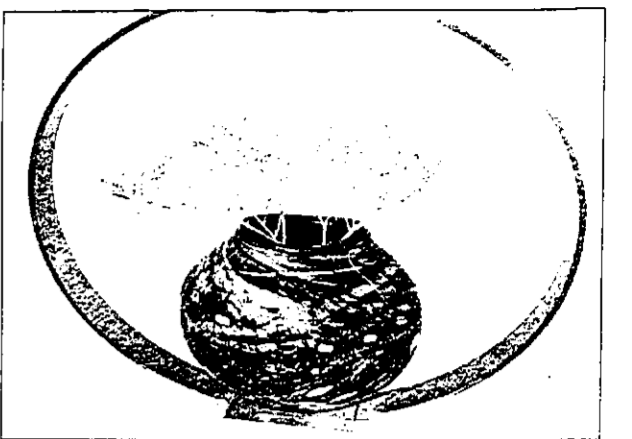
"You've got to produce pretty big stuff" for that show, he said. It drew many artists, and he jokes "We'd be in the Bahamas right now" if he'd won that.

Leo is concentrating on moving from vessel into sculptural form. His "Steward" shows that if you want flowers on the right, you must take care of the earth on the left.

"There's an interdependence of the planet," he said of the pulley piece, featuring a globe that turns through use of magnets and solar cells from a high-tech California firm.

"Sentinel," stands guard over resources and is joined by the third, "Monitor." The three glass and steel pieces took some three years through design, how to create and the work. Leo calls himself a minimalist who takes his work to the minimum steps.

Physically challenging
His "Opera Singer" shows that approach, and he plans to do a companion piece for a ballet dancer. His work in his basement often begins with wood and plastic, and he noted the physical demands of glass tend to make it a younger person's art form.



Leo has begun to sculpt the frames for his glass vases, like this stainless steel enclosure that he created at a studio at Schoolcraft College.



Vic Leo utilizes Schoolcraft College's metal fabricating studio to do his welding.

He owns a piece called "Gripped" by Harvey Littleton, the father of contemporary glass, as well as pieces by other artists, including some from other countries. "Within 50 years, it became phenomenal all across the world," he said of the glass movement, which emerged from factories with artists doing their own thing in glass. The form is working to take its place alongside painting and other more established forms. "I'm drawn to what these artists were doing," he said. He doesn't copy the big teachers in the movement, but their work influences his.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Ritter & Marsoupiian Sarah Marguerite Ritter and Andrew Jason Marsoupiian, both of New Baltimore, are engaged to be married in summer 2013. The bride-to-be is the daughter of Michele Ritter and Bill Ritter, of Macomb. She is a graduate of Eisenhower High School and is a pharmacy technician. The groom-elect is the son of David and Dawn Marsoupiian, of Novi. He is a graduate of Novi High School and is a teacher at Oakland Community Technical Center.

NEWSMAKERS



Gary Piotrowicz The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) has named Gary Piotrowicz as the agency's new deputy managing director/county highway engineer, effective Monday, Jan. 16. Piotrowicz, who is a registered professional engineer (PE) and registered professional traffic operations engineer (PTOE), has been employed by the Road Commission for nearly 15 years. Most recently, he served as the director of the RCOC Traffic-Safety Department, which oversees the agency's traffic engineering, traffic signals, signs, guardrail and other safety-related issues. Prior to that position, Piotrowicz served as the traffic-signal engineer (head of the Traffic Signal division of the Traffic-Safety Department) and was the project manager for RCOC's Faster And Safer Travel Through Routing & Advanced Controls (FAST-TRAC) high-tech "adaptive" traffic signal system. Prior to joining RCOC, he spent three years with the Federal Highway Administration and also worked for a civil engineering firm. Piotrowicz holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Michigan State University and a master's degree in transportation, also from MSU.

NOVI NEWS BRIEFS

Saturdays are Super at the Novi Senior Center

The City of Novi Senior Center is planning a series of Saturday events that will have attendees moving, grooving, celebrating, and competing. "This is the sixth year we have offered the Super Saturday Series, and each year everyone has a fantastic time," said Rachel Zagoroli, Senior Services manager. I am excited for 2012 themes. I know everyone will enjoy themselves and the events will bring back wonderful memories of bygone eras. Each Super Saturday event includes a meal and live entertainment. All events are from 4-6 p.m. at the Novi Senior Center. Jan. 28 - Forties Frolic Big Band - "You'll have a swinging time!" Feb. 25 - Nifty Fifties - "Let's rock around the clock!" March 24 - South of the Border - "It's fiesta time!" May 5 - Derby Day - "Race Day - Novi Senior Center-style" Tickets for each event are \$7 for Novi residents and \$8.50 for non-residents. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are available at the Novi Senior Center, 25075 Meadowbrook Road or the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. 10 Mile Road. To learn about upcoming events, fitness classes, educational programs, or support services, call the Novi Senior Center at (248) 347-0414 or visit cityofnovi.org.

Designer appearing at Art Van

Interior designer Jeff Lewis will make a guest appearance at Art Van Furniture in Novi from 7-9 p.m. Jan. 12. Known for his real estate investments, interior design expertise, and personality, Lewis will offer tips and answer questions that will help Art Van Furniture guests create the homes of their dreams. Having developed some of the most coveted homes in the Los Angeles area, Lewis has earned the title of America's most well-known house flipper from his starring role in Bravo's docu-series, "Flipping Out". The Novi store is located at 27775 Novi Road.

Loose weight, gain your health

InnerLink Chiropractic of Novi is part of The Maximized Living Makeover contest, a worldwide, life-changing event: one day that affects thousands of people. On Jan. 28, Inner Link Chiropractic will be focused on weight loss. Maximized Living will help you discover how to lose more weight in less time through advanced nutrition and fitness techniques. Discover the fitness essentials to optimal health at the 3-hour workshop. "We are excited to offer the Maximized Living Makeover to our community," said Dr. Chris Niedziński. "We are dedicated to teaching people how to live in true health and fulfill their goals and potential. We know this program has the power to transform lives and we are looking forward to being a part of it." For questions or to register for this event, please contact Niedziński at InnerLink Chiropractic, (248) 349-0300. Guests are welcomed and encouraged.

Committed to a healthy new year?

Did you overindulge this holiday season? You're not alone and the City of Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services department offers a variety of classes to help you commit to a healthy new year. Perennial favorites such as Zumba, Zumba Gold, Basic Yoga, Power Vinyasa Yoga, Stretch and Strength, and Balance Training have sessions beginning in January. New classes including Fitness Kickboxing and Target Toning have been added this year to create a comprehensive fitness program. Classes are offered both day and evening and many take place in newly renovated fitness rooms at the Novi Civic Center. For detailed class information and to register, visit cityofnovi.org and click on the Engage! link or contact the City of Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services department at (248) 347-0400.

Flu shots

Oakland County Health Division will offer \$11 flu shots at Health Division offices located at the following addresses: • North Oakland Health Center, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Building 34 East, Pontiac • South Oakland Health Center, 27225 Greenfield Road, Southfield Hours are noon-8 p.m. on Monday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. Registration is preferred. To register for a flu shot, go to www.oakgov.com/health. Clients may select the location, date and time of appointment. Online registration also provides a consent form that must be taken to the clinic where the client is pre-enrolled. Online payment options include Visa, Mastercard, Medicare and/or Medicaid. If you are unable to register online, please call (248) 858-7350 or (248) 424-7120.

Christmas classic

"It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play" is presented at Andiando Novi through Jan. 15. Inspired by the classic American film, "It's a Wonderful Life" is being performed as a 1940s live radio play in front of a studio audience. Produced and directed by Aaron Moore, the production stars Katie Galazka, Joel Mitchell, Kirsten Knisely (Beehive), Patrick O'Reilly (Five Course Love) and Kevin Young. Showtimes are 8 p.m. Thursdays; 9 p.m. Fridays; 7 p.m. Saturdays; and 6 p.m. Sundays. For reservations, call (248) 348-4448 or www.ticketmaster.com.

Novi News online

Have you checked out our website? It's chock full of local news from the Novi community and is updated often. There are several cool features at www.hometownlife.com that allow you browse through the latest news and features from your neighboring communities, too, chime in with your opinion on our stories, editorials and letters to the editor, check out our amazing photo galleries and videos that are captured daily by our reporters and photographers. Readers can also find garage sale listings — with a map! — each week from Wednesday-Sunday. So, bookmark www.hometownlife.com to be sure you're always in-the-know in your hometown. You can also find us on Facebook by searching "HometownLife."

Wanted: vacation photos!

Take a copy of your Novi News along on your vacation and we'll publish a photo of you and your travel companions in the paper with the headline: Wish You Were Here. Just be sure to include the newspaper in your photo. Send your photo to a .jpg format to cstone@gannett.com. Identify everyone in the photo (first and last names) and tell us where they live. Tell us when the photo was taken and where. Tell us what was special about your trip, if you wish. Include a daytime phone number so we can contact you if necessary. Then look for your photo in the newspaper and on our Facebook site under WISH YOU WERE HERE!

CHURCH EVENTS

CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY Location: 24505 Meadowbrook Road Contact: (248) 349-8847 or visit holyfamilynovi.org Mass Schedule Time/Day: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Sunday; 9 a.m. Monday-Friday; 7 p.m. Monday-Wednesday. Holy Days: 9 a.m., 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. Reconciliation: beginning 9 a.m. Saturdays or by appointment Priests: Father Bob LaCroix, pastor and Father Michael Zuelich, associate pastor CROSSPOINTE MEADOWS CHURCH Location: 29000 Meadowbrook Road, south of 13 Mile Road Contact: (248) 669-3400, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Thursday or visit www.crosspointemeadows.org. Sunday Worship: 11:15 a.m. Bible study classes: 10 a.m. for all ages Details: Nursery and older children programs available. Worship blends traditional and contemporary elements resulting in a multi-sensory worship experience. Destiny Worship Center Location: Ridge Wood Elementary School, 49775 Six Mile Road, Northville Contact: DestinyW3@Gmail.com or visit www.DW3C.org. EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Location: 34567 Seven Mile Road, Livonia Contact: (248) 442-8822 or www.newhopecenter.com

GET LISTED! Submit: Send calendar submissions via e-mail to cstone@gannett.com; by fax to (248) 685-2892; or by mail to Church Events/Northville-Nov, 101 N. Lafayette, South Lyon, MI 48178. Items must be received by noon on Monday to be included in Thursday's newspaper. Contact: (248) 349-2345 or visit www.fairchcommunity-novi.org. Sunday Worship: 10 a.m. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NORTHVILLE Location: 217 N. Wing Contact: (248) 348-1020 Sunday Worship: 10:45 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. 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 BAPTIST CHURCH OF NOVI-FAMILY INTEGRATED CHURCH Location: 45301 W. 11 Mile Road Contact: (248) 349-3647 or firstbaptistchurchofnovi.org. Family Bible Hour: 9:45 a.m. Family Worship: 11 a.m. Bible Study: 6 p.m. Family Movie Night: 5:30 p.m.; fourth Sunday of every month. FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE Location: 21260 Haggerty Road, north of Eight Mile Road Contact: (248) 348-7600 or visit dfcnazarene.org. Sunday Schedule: 9:15 a.m. Worship service with Praise Band, children's Sunday School and Adult Bible Fellowship; 10:15 a.m. Fellowship and refreshments; 11 a.m. Traditional worship service, Children's Church, Youth Sunday School and Adult Bible Fellowship; 6 p.m. Evening Service, Children's program, Youth Worship Service. Wednesday Schedule: 5:30 p.m. Family Meal, \$4 per person, \$12 per family; 7 p.m. Children's Caravan, Club 56, Bible Study, Quilting, Adult Classes, Youth Blast Thursday Schedule: 6 a.m. Men of Purpose Prayer Group FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTHVILLE Location: 200 E. Main St. Contact: (248) 349-0911 or visit firstpresv.org. Sunday Worship Time: 9:30, 11 a.m., 3 p.m. Single Place Time/Date: 7 p.m. every Thursday Details: Single Place is a social organization for singles 40 and up hosted by the First Presbyterian Church of Northville. Thursday meetings feature speakers, games, or entertainment followed with an ice cream social. FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Location: 205 East Lake Street (corner of Wells and 10 Mile Road), South Lyon Contact: (248) 437-2875 FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF NORTHVILLE Location: 777 West 8 Mile Road, Northville, MI 48167 Contact: (248) 349-1144 or visit www.fumcnorthville.org. Sunday Worship: Meditative - Held in the Chapel - 8 a.m. Contemporary - Held in the Sanctuary - 9:15 a.m. Traditional - Held in the Sanctuary - 11 a.m. Sunday School: Nursery - 9 a.m. Nursery - 1-3rd grade - 9:15 a.m. Nursery - 5th grade/Special Needs - 11 a.m.

Your Invitation to Worship

Grid of church listings for Brighton, Milford, Highland, Livonia, Plymouth, Northville, New Hudson, Wixom, and South Lyon. Each entry includes church name, address, and service times.

Passages

Obituaries, Memories & Remembrances 1-800-579-7355 • fax 313-496-4968 • htwwobits@hometownlife.com Deadline: Tuesday 9:45 a.m. for Thursday

Obituary notices for various individuals including HALLABRIN, HAROLD; BEAN, JENNIFER NICOLE; JOHNSON, MARY ELEANOR; KANE, GEORGE; BENTHAM, GEORGE; CREECH, RAYMOND; FOLEY, LENA COLLEEN; KELMER, LILLIAN M.; GIEBEL, JEAN MCCOMBIE; MCPHERSON, JOAN E.; KINSMAN, HELEN; LAABS, NANCY; LAKOWICZ, JOSEPH A.; MUNIR, STEVEN GREGORY; MAHON, RITA ANN; QUALMAN, AMY JUNE; THOMSON, JAMES N. "JIM"; TOWNSEND, MARY MAXINE; ULKER, KEITH.

Automakers ready to show public they are back

Paul Oleksa of ZF Automotive Group in Northville checks out his engineering firm's 9-speed transmission Monday at the NAIAS. ZF's transmission will be used by Chrysler in 2013 and produces fuel economy savings of about 30 percent, according to published reports.



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

NAIAS opens Saturday, runs through Jan. 22

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

The buzz is back at the North American International Auto Show. And when the doors open to the public on Saturday, patrons will be overwhelmed by sleek new cars, interactive displays and auto companies poised to meet the needs of their consumers.

Bill Perkins, Bloomfield Township resident and chair of the 2012 NAIAS, said there is so much to see and do that even people who are not car enthusiasts will want to head to the Cobo Center.

"People will truly enjoy it because there are a lot of new things going on," he said. "It's a must attend show."

The show opens Saturday, Jan. 14, and runs until Sunday, Jan. 22. Show hours are 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day except Jan. 22 when it closes at 7 p.m.

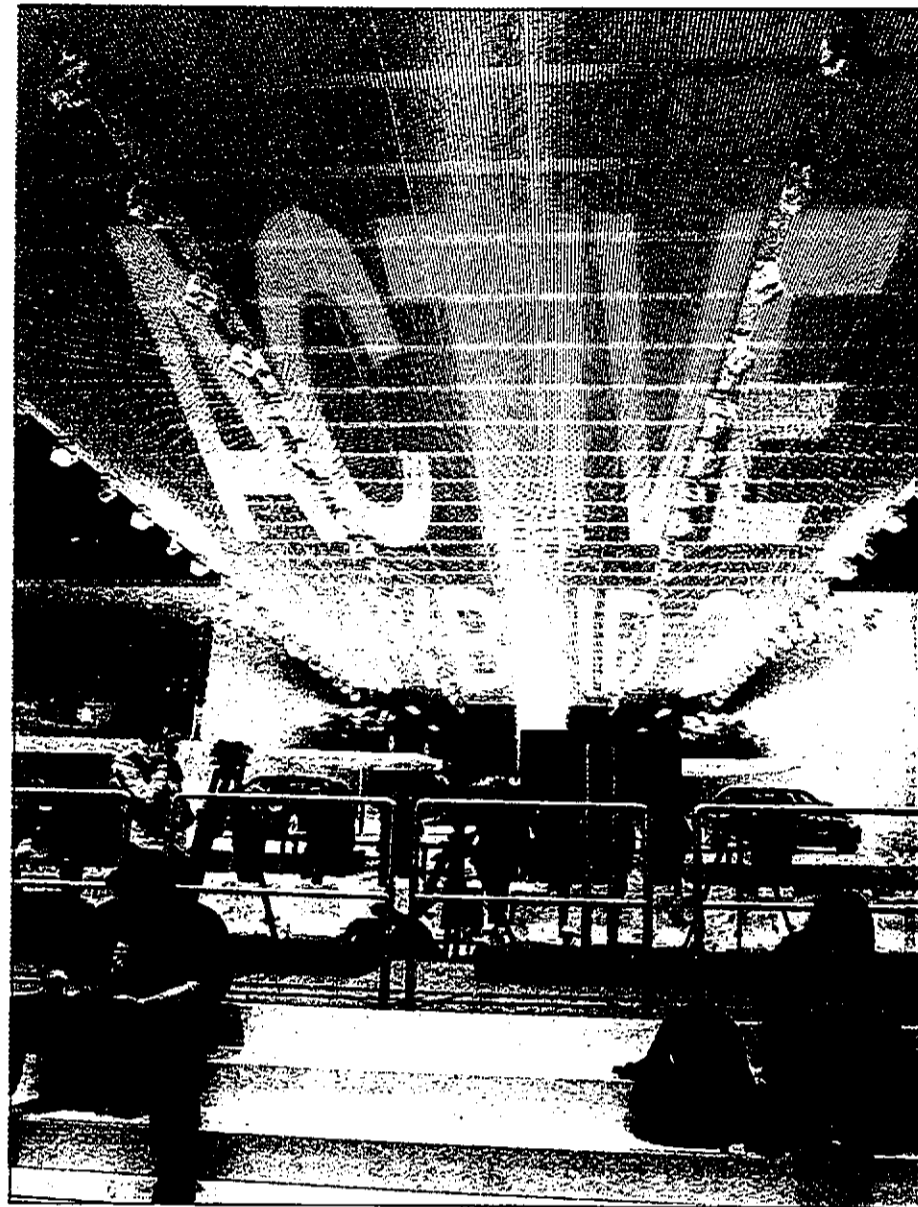
Lauren Halpin, a Plymouth resident who was working as a model for Lincoln on Tuesday, said she liked the intimate access of press week, but plans to come back during the public show with her brother.

"My dream car has to be the Audi A8," she said.

While the cars are the obvious draw, there are plenty of other activities to engage the public. Many automakers have simulators people can use, fun giveaways and even a test track featuring electric-drive and hybrid vehicles in the Michigan Hall that people can drive (get there early or expect to wait).

Tickets for the show are \$12 for adults, and \$6 for seniors and children 7-12. Children under 6 are free. Tickets can be ordered at the show or online at www.naias.com.

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JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The displays at this year's North American International Auto Show are more complex and brightly designed than ever before.

Automakers preening at auto show as industry rebounds

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer

The mood and atmosphere at the North American International Auto Show is noticeably different this year, as automakers feel as if the weight of the recession that nearly crippled them has lifted.

Now with the Big Three leading the charge, domestic and international car companies are pounding their chests as they release new cars and appear ready to compete once again.

"There is optimism," said Cyril Benito, a Bloomfield Hills resident and program manager for the new Dodge Dart. "Not only are we producing great cars, but they are being validated in the



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

marketplace. "Optimism is absolutely here. It took a couple years to grow, but everyone has some momentum."

General Motors, Ford and Chrysler are all yielding profit for the first time since 2004 and gained shares in the marketplace for the first time since 1988 and experts predict auto companies

will add 60,000 jobs in the United States over the next year and 190,000 jobs by 2015.

Bryan Johnson, a Canton resident and manager of marketing and communications for the Northville-based SF Group, said all it takes for him to know the car companies are coming back is to take a look at the elaborate displays and see how much money they are spending on them.

"Everything is positive now," he said. "You see a lot of positive momentum and there are a lot of new products coming out and people are excited to see them."

It's not all about the Big Three either, as a pair of foreign automakers took home the North American Car and Truck



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Harman has a research center off Cabot Drive in Novi.

of the Year awards. The Hyundai Elantra was car of the year and the Land Rover Range Rover Evoque was the top truck.

Nearly every company had something to debut this year, and it wasn't just a smoke and mirrors act. Hampden Tenner, a Bloomfield Hills resident and U.S. product director for Cadillac, said day to day the confidence is a reality.

"We are working on building and growing and that adds a level of excitement," he said. "We are back to doing our best, both for Cadillac and General Motors."

Phil Eyerler, who lives in Northville and works for Farmington Hills-based Harman, called last year a "comeback year."

"This year there is a lot more confidence," he said. "You can just see it."

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Snyder talks about state, auto industry comeback

By Nathan Mueller
Staff Writer



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Governor Rick Snyder and Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford Jr. walk the floor of the Auto Show.

Sometimes the simplest change can make all the difference.

And for Gov. Rick Snyder, moving his press conference on Tuesday to the main show floor at the North American International Auto Show instead of being in the basement at the Cobo Center (where it was last year) gave him the perfect metaphor.

"In many respects people thought (the state of Michigan) was in the basement in the past," he said. "But we are no longer there, we are making a strong comeback in the state and it's about reinventing Michigan."

Snyder took his usual tour of the exhibits when he arrived at Cobo before meeting with more than 200 engineering students from various universities in the state for a talent discussion.

"You can be the catalyst, you can be on the ground floor of the comeback of Michigan," he said to the students.

Snyder, along with Dr. Won Suk Cho, president of Hyundai America Technical Center, also used the press conference to announce a deal to expand Hyundai's Superior Township technical center.

The company will be investing \$15 million to construct the facility and add 50 full-time jobs over

the next five years. The state will fund construction of a new power substation that will improve the power output to the building.

Snyder said he wants to continue partnerships like this, and focus on the people who make the automotive industry go.

"In many respects the people that engineered, designed or even manufactured the products were Michiganders," he said. "And that is something all of us should take great pride in because that is something we can show the rest of the world. When people look at the best products in the world, where they are designed, where they are engineered, where they



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Governor Rick Snyder is the center of attention walking the floor of the show.

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Dozens and dozens of skaters showed up for the Dec. 28 "noon skate" at the Novi Ice Arena.

PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Skating away



Jake Blaine, 17, helps Kimber Johnston, also 17, around the rink at the Novi Ice Arena on Dec. 28. The arena had a particularly full noon skate that day — with everyone out of school or off work looking for something to do.



Skaters enter the rink.



Mike Marinescu helps his son Nicholas, 4, around the Novi Ice Arena on Dec. 28.



A youngster helps a fallen comrade up off the ice.



Visitors to the Novi Ice Arena can rent skates to get around its rink.

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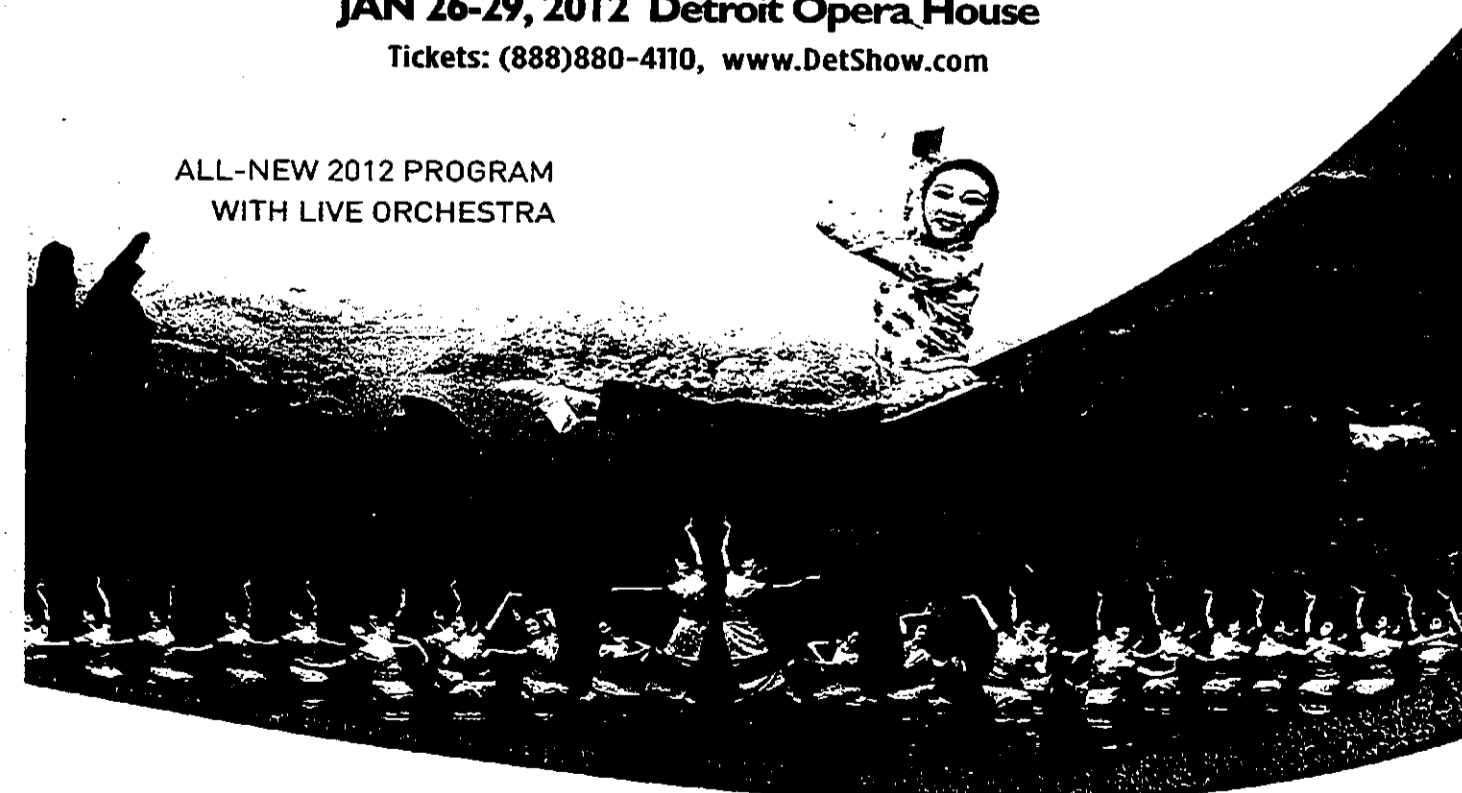
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- Richard Connema, critic for Talkin' Broadway



"It was an extraordinary experience... the level of skill, but also the power of the archetypes and the narratives were startling. And of course it was exquisitely beautiful."
- Cate Blanchett, Academy Award-winning Actress



"It's absolutely beautiful, it was so inspiring. I think I may have found some new ideas for the next Avatar. It was a very unique performance."
- Oscar-Winner Robert Stromberg, Production Designer for Avatar and Alice in Wonderland

"A great job bringing together the history of Chinese culture. The sound effects, the visual effects, the special effects—it's just amazing."
- Amerigo Fabbri, Dean, Yale University

"A beautiful show—fantastic! If you ever get a chance to see it, you should."
- Joy Behar, Co-host of ABC's The View

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'Cats spooked by Cougars

Novi claws past South Lyon East

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

The young Cougars program from South Lyon East is all grown up and ready to give the KLAAs a scare. The Cougars (5-2, 0-1 Central) jumped out to an early lead Jan. 6 against Novi before the Wildcats (5-1, 1-0 Central) clawed back into it with a barrage of baskets late in the first quarter to surmount a 11-8 lead.

"Much improved. It was just a matter of time before they started to catch up with everyone," Novi coach Bill Kelp said. With solid performances by sophomore Kerri McMahan (19 points, three rebounds, three steals), senior Ally D'Annibale (14 points, four rebounds) and junior Jade Antolec (10 points, eight rebounds), Novi was able to scratch their way to a 47-38 victory.

"It's nice to have the experience they do, we just need to get others to contribute more," Kelp said. "Not just scoring, there are many ways to contribute."

The teams were neck and neck through the second and third quarters. East used a 13-12 advantage to cut Novi's halftime lead to 23-21, but the 'Cats had a 15-13 advantage to head into the final quarter up 38-34.

"Our plan was to try and score inside," Kelp said. "Unfortunately, our starting center was in foul trouble the whole night."

With senior Anna Lausch finishing with five fouls, the rest of the team took a lot more inside looks. The 'Cats were 2-for-7 - 2-for-4 from McMahan -



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
 A Novi Wildcat leans into a Brighton Bulldog during the team's Jan. 3 scrimmage at Novi.

Novi cagers start year with win

By Chris Jackett
 Correspondent

After struggling through the first month of the season, Novi's boys basketball is off to a new start with the New Year.

After matching last season's loss total at 0-5 in December, the Wildcats (1-5, 1-0 KLAAs Central) had everything clicking last Friday as they dismantled South Lyon East (1-4, 0-1 Central) on the Cougars' home court.

"We played better overall as a team than before the break," Novi coach Brian Tass said. "I think our guys are starting to realize how hard we need to play and getting more excited to push the ball up the floor. The win gave our guys some confidence."

Nearly doubling their opponents' point total, Novi cruised to a 65-33 victory behind 14 points from sophomore guard Nelson Cagle.

The 'Cats shot 20-for-46 from the field (43.5 percent) and 23-for-32 from the line (71.9 percent) while collecting nearly as many rebounds on offense (23) as they had on defense (25).

"We are going to hang our hat in this program on defense and rebounding," Tass said. "The rebounding mentality is something we drill into these guys and will be looking for in future plays."

"Our goal for free throws is over 70 percent (on free throws). I'm happy we're putting them in because those will win us games this season."

Several players had a big hand in the victory, but big Michael Jocz's 10 rebound (five offensive), four steals and five points were a senior force the Cougars couldn't get past for baskets. Novi had 12 steals and six assists while committing just eight turnovers on the night.

"Mike Jocz really has a gift of finding offensive rebounds," Tass said. "He's getting better at finishing around the basket. I thought he did a heck of a job in the back of our press to get those steals."

Major contributors to the Wildcats' offensive onslaught were senior guard Scott Kempa (10 points, three rebounds, two steals) and junior guards Charles McKinney (nine points, three rebounds) and Tre

Please see **BOYS, B4**

Area packed full of gridiron talent

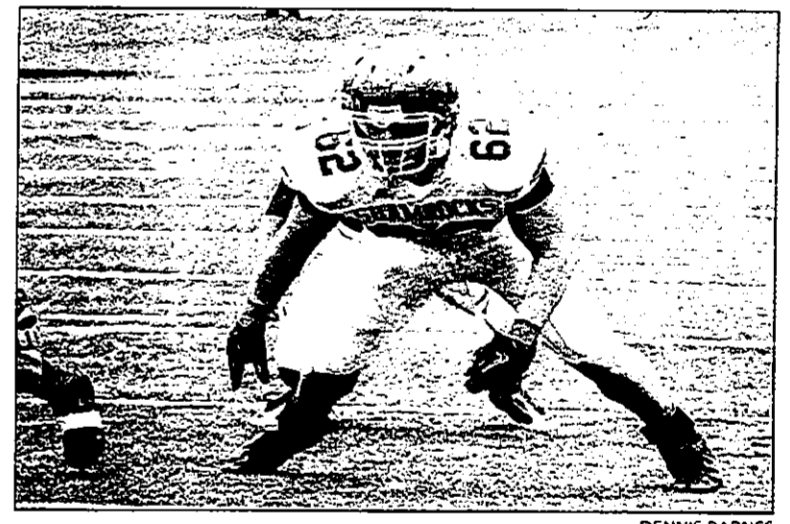
Detroit Catholic Central's Godin wins top honors

By Sam Eggleston
 Correspondent

The 2011 high school football season in our coverage area was packed full of outstanding teams, including two that suffered just a single loss during the regular season and one that finished second in the state-just short of the Division I title.

From the dazzling offensive players who seemed capable of putting points on the board no matter who their opponent was to the defensive players that were tasked with stopping the best offenses in the state, the 2011 Hometown All-Area Football Team is chock full of outstanding talent. On one hand, it was an easy team to select, because every team in the conference had standout players. On the other, it was difficult deciding who earned First-Team honors and who would be named to the Second-Team - a good problem for area sports writers to have. A lot of these names will also seem very familiar to the avid reader - because many were 2010 All-Area selections as well.

But one player stood out above all other when it came to



DENNIS BARNES
 Catholic Central's Matt Godin is the All-Area Football Player of the Year. He will be taking his talents to the University of Michigan.

Shamrocks collect huge victories

Grapplers earn wins over Oxford, capture CC Invite title

By Sam Eggleston
 Correspondent

The Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks wrestling team is showing no signs of slowing down in their march for another team state title. Their most recent victims of the regular season? Oxford, Lutheran North and Divine Child, not to mention the Shamrocks' foes in the CC Invitational.

The Shamrocks took down Oxford in a rematch of last year's state finals match, 49-13, as the team recorded six pins in the contest. Earning falls for the Catholic Central were Trevor Zdebski, Ken Bade, Logan Marcicki, Nick Mason, Kevin Beazley and Bob Coe.

ON TAP

The Detroit Catholic Central Shamrocks wrestling team is scheduled to compete again at 10 a.m. Saturday in the CC Super Duals before hosting Cincinnati Moeller, Richmond and Lowell at 10 a.m. Jan. 21.

The Shamrocks also sent their white squad to start the Catholic High School League schedule and were not disappointed as they earned wins over Lutheran North, 76-3, with seven pins and Divine Child, 62-9, with eight pins. In the CC Invitational, the Shamrocks won the team title with 234 points while Davison finished second with 195.5 and Hudson was third with 167. Earning individual titles were Bade, Marcicki, Alec Mooradian, Drew Garcia and Beazley. The invitational was a wrestling fans dream - three of the finals matches consisted of six wrestlers who were state champs in 2011.

"Anytime you can win a tournament with the company we had today, you have to be a bit pleased," said Catholic Central coach Mitch Hancock. "To have three matches in the finals consist of both wrestlers being defending state champs says something about the strength of this tournament. With that being said, we still have a lot of work to do. We had a few guys who received a wake up call this afternoon and that's a good thing. We have to understand that this is all a stepping stone to the state finals in late February and March, and with the way we

ON TAP

Novi's boys basketball squad (1-5, 1-0 KLAAs Central) was scheduled to host South Lyon (3-2, 1-0 Central) last night and Northville (2-4, 0-1 Central) tomorrow before visiting Plymouth Salem (7-0, 1-0 Central) Tuesday. All games tip off at 7 p.m.

Sam Eggleston is a freelance writer and former staff sports writer for the Northville Record and Novi News.



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Scoop's Hound Dog Highlights

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Deadline for submissions: 1/26/12

All entries need to be received at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers by close of the business day on Jan. 26th. Winners to be announced in the February Scoop's Hound Dog Highlights.

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When it's cold outside sometimes the only thing a kid can do is have BIG TIME FUN. Here are some fun things to do with your friends and family outside or indoors. In either case, get ready to have loads of fun and laughter.

OUTSIDE FUN:

- Get a group together and have your own winter game competition. Create a colorful ice sculpture using food colored frozen water made in plastic or Styrofoam cups. Create years of fun memories with the whole family.

INDOOR FUN:

- Get a night of giving. Take one evening and go through your closet and pull out clothing that you no longer want and give it to charity. Have a Home Movie Buffet.

COOKING WITH SCOOP

Here is a fun tasty treat to try at home with mom and dad. Ingredients

- 10 cups popped popcorn 1 cup butter 3/4 cup sugar 1 (3 ounce) package fruit flavored gelatin mix 1 tablespoon corn syrup 3 tablespoons water

- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Grease a 1/4 sheet pan. Distribute popcorn evenly in the baking pans and put in the oven to keep warm. Combine butter, sugar, gelatin, corn syrup and water in a saucepan over medium heat until 250 degrees F. Pour mixture evenly over popcorn and stir until the popcorn is coated. Put popcorn in oven. Bake for 5 minutes then stir and bake for 5 more minutes. Pour out popcorn onto a large piece of foil. Let cool and enjoy.

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Lucky winner from last month's contest

Caroline Loder Age: 9 Community: Livonia My tradition is every winter my family and I do puzzles. For instance, this winter we already finished a hot air balloon puzzle and we are doing a jelly bean puzzle right now. Next, we will do a button puzzle. When my grandparents come over they like to help too. They actually do their own puzzles every winter at home too.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Bradley White Community: Canton Jan 12 Brandon Lewandowski Community: Garden City Jan 29

REAL ESTATE

Livonia woman to serve on 2012 CREW board



Mary LeFevre

Commercial Real Estate Women Detroit, an organization influencing the success of the commercial real estate industry by advancing the achievements of women and celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2011, announces the following CREW Detroit members will serve on the 2012 CREW Detroit Board of Directors:

Director: Nicole Heyart; vice president, Luna Tech Designs, LLC, Plymouth. Heyart is a resident of Sterling Heights. Treasurer: Donna Hanson, CPA; partner, Plante & Moran, PLLC, Auburn Hills. Hanson is a resident of Lake Orion.

Secretary/Communications Director: Andrea Burge, senior project manager, LEED BD+C, Director: Nicole Heyart; vice president, Luna Tech Designs, LLC, Plymouth. Heyart is a resident of Sterling Heights.

Jones Lang LaSalle Project and Development Services, Detroit. Burg is a resident of Bloomfield Township.

CREW Detroit (www.crew-detroit.org), founded in 1986, is a dedicated and influential organization of women through networking and member-to-member driven business opportunities. It is a founding chapter of CREW Network, a professional organization of more than 8,000 women and men in commercial real estate women in the U.S. and Canada that serves as a key resource to CREW chapter members and the commercial real estate industry.

Use caution in yule decor

Our homeowners love to get in the spirit of the holidays and our association sponsors a decorating contest, hosts a party in the Community Center and uses association funds to adorn common elements. Unfortunately, however, the association party and common area decorations support Christmas. There are residents who support other religions and are complaining that the association isn't doing enough to support their religious beliefs and backgrounds. What do you think?

This is a difficult question which may sometimes lead to an issue of religious discrimination. Under federal fair housing laws, it is unlawful to discriminate against any person in the provision of services or facilities because of religion

the law is broadly interpreted. You may wish to have all of the major religions represented in your decorations or make it as nonsectarian as possible. Perhaps a general holiday party policy and decorations which do not provide any implications as to a religious representation would be appropriate, but you are best to consult with your attorney for a legal opinion.

Our association is concerned about using volunteers because of the risks that may be involved. Do you have any suggestions?

When in doubt, check with your insurance agent. Ask the volunteers if they have their own insurance. Ask the volunteers to sign a hold harmless agreement drafted by your attorney. Be sure you are getting good volunteers. In fact, you are choosing to use them. Make sure the volunteers have the skills to do the job. Make sure that their work is reviewed through proper oversight and, have a board resolution, either authorizing the volunteers to do the work or clarify what type of work cannot be done by volunteers. Everything else being considered, it is probably a good idea not to utilize volunteers unless you are adequately protected.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track, second edition. It is available for \$9.95 plus \$1 shipping and handling. He also wrote Condo Living: A Survival Guide to Buying, Owning and Selling a Condominium, available for \$24.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling. Call (248) 644-4433 or visit rbmeisner@meisner-associates.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-WAYNE

Table listing real estate transactions in Wayne County for the week of Sept. 26-30, 2011. Includes columns for address, price, and various neighborhood listings like Canton, Livonia, and Westland.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-OAKLAND

Table listing real estate transactions in Oakland County for the week of Sept. 19-23, 2011. Includes columns for address, price, and various neighborhood listings like Farmington Hills, Farmington, and Farmington Hills.

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Career Seminar: A Real Estate Career Seminar will be held 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 19, at Keller Williams Realty.

Tax appeals: Learn how to prepare for receiving your 2012 'This Is Not a Tax Bill' in March and 'How to Appeal Your Property Taxes' by Mark Avery.

Real Estate Sales and Appraising: Learn about a career in residential real estate. Attend a free one-hour seminar or shadow a top agent to get an inside feel of the business.

Designation: Bert Patterson of REMAX Classic in Canton has earned the Certified Investor Agent Specialist (CIAS) Designation.

Investment is limited so call (248) 547-3006, or sign up at www.metro-mi.com. These free one-hour seminars will be 6-7 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of the month at Metro Mortgage Investments.

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build wealth through real estate investment, and homeowners facing foreclosure find potential buyers for their properties.

Seminar on Tuesdays: A Free Reverse Mortgage Seminar is 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Colonial Mortgage Corp.

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.

On Facebook: REMAX has launched a new Facebook page for customers and the public to get direct answers for their real estate questions from REMAX experts.

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