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Celebrate

RISH CULTURE

Math major

Nathan Oweis, an eighth-grader at New Morning School, competed in the recent MATHCOUNTS competition at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

MATH-



COUNTS is a national enrich-

ment club and competition program that

promotes middle school mathematics achievement.

Consisting of fun and creative problems that promote critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, the MATH-**COUNTS** competitions have written and oral rounds, as well as individual and team components.



Toast to Canton

A wine and food tasting to raise funds for the Partnership for the Arts and Humanities and the Leadership Canton Alumni Scholarship Fund is scheduled for Friday, March 23, from 7-9 p.m. at the Traditions Clubhouse, located at 1315 Waterside Road.

There will be approximately 15 wine



P-C-S PENGUINS

WIN GIRLS HOCKEY

STATE CROWN

PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Business partners Pete Mans, Jim Rosenthal and Doug Mans have watched profits double the last two years as Mans Lumber rebounds from a sagging housing industry.

Out of the woodpile Lumber firm thrives after housing tumble

By Darrell Clem Observer Staff Writer

After surviving a housing market collapse that forced painful downsizing, Canton-based Mans Lumber & Millwork has doubled its sales to \$38 million during a two-year span that indicates the worst has passed.

Amid its rebound, the 112-year-old, fourth-generation family business has gar-. nered national attention, continued its



District moves to beef up security

By Brad Kadrich Observer Staff Writer

The Plymouth-Canton Board of Education Tuesday took steps to increase security at the three-high school Plymouth-Canton Educational Park

In one move, the board voted 4-2 (trustee Mark Horvath was absent) to hire a third school resource officer from the Canton Police Department, an agreement that will put a SRO in each of the park's three buildings, a boost from the two who patrol the park now.

Separately, the board got started on the process of adding security cameras in an effort to beef up security at the massive complex, giving the administration permission to seek bids on installation of such a system.

The agreement to hire a third SRO comes a couple of months after administration, while considering a number of moves to increase security, listed such a move as one of the priorities for better protection for the park's 6,200 students.

"Apart from the general deterrent factor which the presence of officers presents, the availability of the SROs on campus is an asset to the park administration in being able to quickly summon and secure police assistance in individual cases of need or in instances of a widespread or general emergency," Supt. Jeremy Hughes wrote in a memo to the board.

New deal

The Canton Police Department currently has two SROs assigned to the

tables with a variety of red and white wines provided by Holiday Market. A large assortment of hors d'oeuvres is included in the ticket price. Space is limited to 200 guests. Tickets are \$35 in advance, and, if available, \$40 at the door. Tickets can be purchased at Holiday Market and the Canton Chamber of Commerce.

For more information, call the Canton Chamber of Commerce at (734) 453-4040 or the Canton Supervisor's office at (734) 394-5185.

charitable efforts and become involved in promoting Canton as a burgeoning hub of culture and arts.

"It's a good story for Michigan," Doug Mans, company president, said, sitting with his business partners inside company headquarters on Michigan Avenue east of Beck Road.

Mans Lumber employed 210 workers and had sales of \$85 million in 2005, before the housing bubble burst. Within four years, the company had slashed its workforce to just 60 employees as sales plunged to \$20 million.

The company closed stores in Monroe, Hamburg and New Boston, but has maintained a 30-year presence in Canton, initial-

Please see LUMBER, A6

Doug Mans said his company's turnaround is "a good story for Michigan."

park, at no cost to the district. District administrators recently negotiated a deal with CPD to provide a third; although the district will have to even-tually pick up the total cost.

That cost (estimated at some \$90,000 a year) will be split between CPD and the district in the first year. Under the three-year deal, the district will pick up some 75 percent (\$67,541) in the second year and the entire cost the third year.

Board Vice President Adrienne Davis and trustee Mike Malonev voted against the measure.

"My sense is I'd like to wait," Maloney said. "We have a review (coming) on safety and security at the Park. I'd

Please see SECURITY, A2

Flasher targets Canton clothing store

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By Darrell Clem Observer Staff Writer

Police believe a pantyhosewearing flasher who exposed himself Saturday evening inside a Canton girls clothing store is the same suspect involved in a similar incident last September outside a Cherry Hill Village hair salon.

"It's so similar, it just doesn't seem likely we would have two people out there committing this same kind of offense," Detective Sgt. Dave Schreiner said.

Witnesses told police the latest incident happened about 7:45 p.m. Saturday when a white male wearing sheer women's pantyhose walked inside the Justice store on Ford Road west of Sheldon.

He also wore what was described as a cream-colored golf hat, black glasses and a blue button-down shirt, with a fleece jacket hanging on his shoulder. Witnesses said he walked around humming as he revealed himself through the pantyhose. Police aren't laughing.

"It might seem humorous at first," Schreiner said, "but when you consider he's exposing himself to young girls and children, it's not so humorous. It is a crime, and we want to stop it before it happens again.'

Anyone who has information is urged to call Canton Police at (734) 394-5400 or to make an anonymous tip for a possible cash reward to Crime Stoppers of Michigan by calling (800) SPEAK-UP, logging on to www.1800speakup.org or by texting CSM and the tip to 274635, or CRIMES.

Schreiner said anyone who sees the suspect in action should call 9-1-1, in hopes police can reach the scene before the suspect flees. Witnesses also should report a description of any vehicle the man may enter.

The latest incident comes six months after a man wearing nothing under pantyhose walked up to a window of Red Head Salon, on Ridge Road north of Cherry Hill. Witnesses described the man as 50-60 years old and said he stopped and stared into the salon while he was wearing sheer nylons, a winter skull cap, a jogging jacket and sneakers. Police believe the man is likely fleeing in a car.

"We suspect he probably got into a car (near the Justice store) because he was walking out toward the parking lot," Schreiner said. "When he's exposing himself to children, it becomes a lot more serious.'

dclem@hometownlife.com | (313) 222-2238



SECURITY

Continued from page A1

be more comfortable if we brought this back and looked at it in the context of an entire plan."

Administrators will also get started on the process of soliciting requests for proposals for the installation of security cameras. Installing such a system, where none exists now, could cost the district as much as \$900,000, depending on the level of coverage board members decide they want.

Payment plans

Brodie Killian, the district's executive director for finance, outlined several ways the district could opt to pay for the system.

"There are several options, some better than others," Killian said. Among them:

• There is still some \$1 million left from the sale of bonds in 2010. That money could be used, Killian said, to pay for the system.

· Using cash on hand,

with the district's budget situation, he said, is not really an option.

• Financing the purchase. "Considering (interest) rates are at near-historic lows, that's a pretty attractive option," Killian said.

The cost will also depend on the level of coverage board members decide they want. Hughes split the \$900,000 cost into estimates based on three levels:

• Covering just the main areas, such as entry/ exit points and the cafeterias.

• Covering main areas, plus hallways, common spaces, gyms, etc.

• Full coverage, including entry/exit points, hallways, cafeterias, common areas and outside areas such as the walkways between schools and the parking lots. RFPs are expected to

be sent before the end of March, with bids due back by mid- to late-April and a recommendation to the board the week of May 7.

> bkadrich@hometwonlife.com (313) 222-8899

CORRECTION

An incorrect headline in the March 8 issue of the *Observer* misidentified the upcoming theater production at Schoolcraft College in Livonia. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare begins Friday, March 23.

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Deadline nears for Rake-N-Go applications

Plymouth Community United Way is still accepting applications from senior citizens and disabled people who could use a hand with spring yard cleanup.

The Rake~N~Go takes place Saturday, April 28, in Plymouth, Plymouth Township and Canton.

Seniors and disabled persons in need of help should call Betty Nolan at (734) 453-6879, Ext. 7, or send e-mail to betty. nolan@unitedway.org for an application by March 22. Applications are also available on the Web site at www.plymouthunitedway.org or the PCUW office, 960 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Suite 2, Plymouth.

Volunteers are needed as well to clean yards and do light outdoor chores. To sign up, call Betty Nolan before April 12.

"Around Canton" is designed to announce upcoming events taking place in the community. Items will run on a space-available basis. Send details to bkadrich@* hometownlife.com

RELAY FOR LIFE FUND-RAISER

Date/Time: Thursday, March 15, 6-10 p.m. Location: Canton Cinema Details: Blocking Out Melanoma, walking in Canton's Relay for Life in honor of the late Kim Renzi,





The Plymouth Community United Way's Spring Rake-N-Go is scheduled for Saturday, April 28. Seniors and disabled persons in need of help should apply by March 22.

Last November, 350 volunteers made a difference

l- by raking and cleaning the yards of 50 homes owned

AROUND CANTON

by senior citizens and people with disabilities.

who coached the Plymouth
 High School freshman girls',
 in the volleyball team, holds a fundraiser at the Canton
 Ginema, which will donate
 S0 percent customer's concession total donated to team with voucher received from team prior to event
 and 25 percent of cus-

day of event. BUNNY BRUNCH

Date/Time: Saturday, March 31

tomer's concession with a

voucher received at cinema

Location: Plymouth Salvation Army Corps, Main Street just south of Ann Arbor Road

Details: The Salvation Army Plymouth Corps hosts a Bunny Brunch, an event that will help provide additional awareness to the community about ministry programs such as: Men's and Women's Ministry, Summer Day Camp, Tiny Tots Pre-School, Youth Programming, Emergency Disaster Services, and Tae Kwon Do. The Great Lakes Rabbit Sanctuary will also be on hand with their residents. Youth will receive an Easter basket they can fill with some treats and their completed crafts. There will also be a photographer available to take a family picture that can be taken home as an additional memory of the Easter holiday.

Contact: Call (734) 453-5464 by March 26.

VINTNER DINNER

Date/Time: March 24, 7 p.m. Location: 8515 N. Lilley in the Golden Gate Shopping Plaza in Canton

Details: Vintners Canton Winery celebrates its annual "A is for Amarone" dinner. Guests will be treated to the opening of the winery's Gold Medal-winning Amarone. The dinner, catered by A Family. Affair Catering, Plymouth and Chef BJ Page will feature Panzanella (Tuscan Bread Salad), Smoked Duck Risoto, Meyer Lemon Sorbet, Roasted Beef Tenderloin, Asparagus with Bernaise Sauce and Espresso Panna Cotta with Cocoa Whipped Cream. Each entree is paired with an award winning wine. Cost is \$40 and includes dinner, wine, tax and gratuity.

Contact: (734) 354-9463, website at www.vintnerscanton.com

GIVING HOPE EVENT

Date/Time: April 18, 6:30 p.m.

Location: Courthouse Grille, 41661 Plymouth Road in Plymouth

Details: Giving Hope, Women's Giving Circle hosts its spring educational meeting, featuring Dr. Debra Hollander, medical director of behavioral medicine services for St. John Providence Health System, talking about "The Impact of Stress on Our Bodies and Finding Our Inner Wisdom." Cost is \$10 per ticket (free to anyone under 21). Light refreshments and wine will be served.

Contact: RSVP to (734) 495-1200 or e-mail givinghopewgc@gmail.com



A2 (



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Township targets sidewalk repairs

By Darrell Clem Observer Staff Writer

Hundreds of Canton residents will have to plunk down money to fix damaged sidewalks along their properties as the township embarks this summer on the 14th year of its sidewalkrepair program.

An estimated 1,005 homes in 14 subdivisions are targeted for repairs to sidewalks that are cracked, buckled, sloped or otherwise damaged, creating potentially perilous situations Municipal Services Director Tim Faas said can lead to costly trip-and-fall lawsuits against property owners and Canton Township.

'The most common complaint filed against any community is a trip and fall," Faas said.

Property owners chosen for

this year's program collective-ly face a \$200,000 price tag roughly \$250 per home, Faas said - while Canton is expected to shell out \$140,000 for repairs that are the township's responsibility.

West end

Treasurer Melissa McLaughlin said subdivisions targeted for repairs are generally west of Canton Center. They are among the newer neighborhoods getting their first sidewalk inspection since the township began the program in 1999, initially focusing on older subdivisions.

Local officials initiated a systematic repair of sidewalks after the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that Canton and other townships had a responsibility to protect the public,

a school

setting,"

said

Heise,

whose

attend

public

children

after Canton had fought a flurry of lawsuits filed by people claiming trip-and-fall injuries.

"When Canton gets sued, every citizen in Canton gets sued," McLaughlin said.

Lawsuit payouts can range from \$5,000 to \$50,000, Faas said

Several residents spoke on the sidewalk-repair program during a public hearing Tuesday night by the Canton Township Board of Trustees, which hired Hardrock Concrete, Inc., to perform repairs. Residents may choose to do their own work or hire their own contractor.

Resident Susan Gorny indicated some homeowners, still struggling against economic woes and facing rising gas prices, might have difficulty paying the tab. She asked what

would happen if they don't make the repairs.

Tacking on

Faas said the township would perform the work and tack the cost on the 2013 tax bill. In dire situations, he said, a lien could be placed on the property and, in three years, foreclosure could occur - though officials indicated the situation has never reached that stage solely for unpaid sidewalk repairs

Homeowner George Miller urged the township to examine sidewalks near Field Elementary School, on Haggerty between Cherry Hill and Palmer, where he cited dangerous situations involving manhole covers

Another resident, Ron Henry, said he believes potholes and other problems on subdivision streets pose more of a risk than sidewalks. Supervisor Phil LaJoy said most of those repairs are Wayne County's responsibility.

Meanwhile, Faas said residents who believe they have been unfairly assessed costs for sidewalks that don't need repairs may ask the township for a reinspection. Given the sheer magnitude of the inspection process, he said, "our inspectors do make mistakes."

Subdivisions reviewed this year include Antique Forest No. 1 and 2, Cobblestone Ridge No. 3 and 4, Fairways West No. 1 and 2, Grand Oaks, Huntington Place No. 1 and 2, Kirkway, North Woods Place, Pinewood No. 1 and 2, Vintage Valley and miscellaneous locations.

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Heise opposed to cyber charter school bill

By Julie Brown Staff Writer

State Rep. Kurt Heise, R-Plymouth, didn't mince words when it came to cyber charter schools in Michigan.

"Cyber schools is on the House floor," Heise said Monday, March 12, during a constituent meeting at the Northville District Library. "I'm still a no. The votes aren't there for it. It's going to be interesting to see what happens.'

Cyber charters have operated in Michigan less than two years. "We don't have enough data," Heise said. He noted taxpayer money would follow operators, and there's little oversight of them. He trusts parents to do what's best, he said, but not necessatily providers.

"I think you need some of the human interaction that goes on with being in



schools. He emphasized he's not opposed to cyber education, but that cyber charters are typically run by out-of-state providers. Homeschoolers in Michigan have been indifferent or even hostile to the concept, he said.

Heise would be more amenable on cyber charters with smaller caps. "Cyber charters in Michigan are still very much a work in progress,' he said of the "largely unproven education technology." The two operators in Michigan have some 1,700 students. Heise also touched

on foundation allowance spending for public schools, which is the same as last year due to the state budget cycle. There are incentives for best practices such as merged services, which would increase per-pupil allocations.

"It is better than where we were a year ago, which was lousy," Heise said, adding retirement reform is the largest area open to change.

There's also much interest, he said, in the Five Mile corridor among businesses on both the Northville Township and Plymouth Township sides.

Heise will host another constituent hour 7:30-8:30 a.m. Friday, March 16, at Plymouth Panera's, Main and Ann Arbor Trail in downtown Plymouth.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Chief: Fire in apartment blamed on 'careless smoking'

said.

By Darrell Clem Observer Staff Writer

A fire that damaged a Cinnamon Pointe apartment building Friday night on Canton's east side has been blamed on careless disposal of cigarettes inside a container kept on a deck, Fire Chief Tim Dunn said Monday morning.

The accident can serve as a warning for smokers to make sure cigarettes are completely put out and to properly dispose of them, Dunn said.

The fire started just before 7:30 p.m. inside a second-story apartment of an eight-unit building on Cinnamon Circle, northwest of Cherry Hill and Lotz. No one was injured, and the entire building was evacuated.

"We got the people out," Dunn said, adding that no pets were injured, either.

"Our firefighters made a real good, quick, fast attack on the fire," he said, "and they were able to get it out pretty quick."

The resident who lives in the apartment where the fire started had left home before the blaze

started, the fire chief

Two second-story apartments and the attics above them sustained fire and heavy smoke damage, and two units below those had water and smoke damage.

Four other apartments on the north side of the building sustained smoke damage, Dunn said.

"The fire has been ruled accidental," he said. "The fire started on the outside deck of the apartment. It was caused by the resident discarding cigarettes in what he described as some type of plastic container.'

Dunn warned smokers to make sure cigarettes are discarded in an approved container and not kept close to a building

'They can ignite if they're not fully out," he said. "Make sure they're out. That also goes for things like discarding ashes from a fireplace." **Firefighters** remained on the scene at Cinnamon Pointe for three hours.

> dclem@hometownlife.com (313) 222-2238

Craigslist counterfeit

A man who arranged through a Craigslist ad to sell a ring notified Canton police after he made a sale and received counterfeit money.

The incident was reported around 6:30 p.m. Monday after the victim told police he arranged to meet the ring buyer at the Home Depot store on Michigan Avenue west of Canton Center.

The ring owner described the suspect as a white male with short dark hair and a tattoo on his left arm. The victim said the suspect agreed to pay \$300 for the ring, but the money was phony.

Gas station assault

2A man working in the Mobil gas station on the southwest corner of Joy and Haggerty roads was assaulted by a man who became irate inside the business, a police report said.

The incident happened around 10 p.m. Sunday. The employee said the man entered the gas station and attempted to steal a phone charger. The worker said he



noticed the man as someone who had stolen from the business before.

The employee confronted the suspect, who struck him in the mouth with a closed fist. He was described only as a white male in a police report.

One witness told police she saw a man in the gas station parking lot with a bat, and she said she saw him run across Haggerty Road as though he was chasing someone in a car. She said he was screaming and yelling.

Apartment invasion

3A man reported his Canton Crossings apartment southeast of I-275 and Joy Road was broken into between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. last Thursday. He listed missing items

as two guitars, \$200 and a small keepsake safe that contained items such as an old cell phone. He said the apartment had been ransacked, with the couch cushions turned over and mattresses flipped over.

Blazer stolen

4 A 60-year-old wom-an told police her 2003 Chevrolet Blazer was stolen from her driveway sometime prior to 2 a.m. Saturday on Rudgate, southeast of Palmer and Canton Center. The woman said she parked the car in her driveway about 6 p.m. Friday, later went to bed and woke around 11 p.m. when she heard loud noises.

She didn't look outside and only later noticed her. vehicle was missing. She told police she may have

You'll Be Savin' the Green at

misplaced her keys, possibly dropping them outside.

Condo break-in

Canton police were notified after it appeared someone tried to break into a 77-yearold man's condominium on Eastwind, southeast of Cherry Hill and Haggerty, prior to 11:45 a.m. Friday.

A maintenance man noticed the door of the attached condo was ajar and damaged. The resident was contacted while he was at Summit on the Park and advised to return home.

The condo owner told police he had left his home about 9 a.m. and activated his alarm. He said it didn't appear entry was gained to his residence, and nothing was missing.

- By Darrell Clem

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LOCAL NEWS

LUMBER

Continued from page A1

ly on Ford Road before moving seven years ago to its current 18-acre site. It also stayed in its 1900 birthplace of Trenton.

In its most significant move to survive the housing market crash, Mans Lumber consolidated with competitor National Lumber, which closed a Warren business that was once the nation's largest single-yard lumber company.

"We made it work," said Mans partner Jim Rosenthal; who came from National Lumber.

Rosenthal recalled the horrific years when new



om what we've gone through," Rosenthal said.

Rivals no more

Yet by consolidating two companies under the Mans Lumber name, one-time rivals survived and shifted some of their focus away from new housing to homeimprovement projects for people who decided to stay put.

The company caters to professional builders





BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Doug Mans said his company caters to professional builders and do-it-yourself homeowners because "people are staying in their homes."

and do-it-yourself homeowners, who are starting to spend more money on kitchen and bathroom renovations, new windows, deck additions and replacing items as small as doorknobs.

"People are staying in their homes," Mans said, though he has noticed owners are spending more to fix them up. "That's a big part of our business now.'

Mans Lumber developed closer ties to homeowners, contractors and companies such as Do It Best Corp., where it buys most of its lumber. By reinventing itself and boosting sales, Mans has increased its workforce from 60 to 82, a significant uptick even though it's still far less than the 210 employees of 2005.

The encouraging developments came despite what Rosenthal called a minimal increase in building permits.

Said Mans: "We've been outperforming the market."

The turnaround earned Mans Lumber a prestigious award as 2012 Entrepreneur of the Year from a respected industry magazine, LBM Journal of Lakeville, Minn., which singled out the company among others across the nation with sales of \$10 million to \$50 million.

Shining reminder Rick Schumacher, the LBM's editor and publisher, included Mans Lumber as a "shining" reminder that "it will take much more than a global recession to hold this industry down.'

The company's accomplishments have drawn local praise, too.

"Mans Lumber is a true Canton and Michigan success story," Canton Township Board of Trustees member Pat Williams said.

Consider the other accolades:

· After donating lumber to build houses for needy families through a Detroit-based Habitat for Humanity program, Doug Mans was named one of WXYZ-TV's (Channel 7) Persons of the Week late last year. Mans, Rosenthal and other company partners say they felt a responsibility to help Detroit as it struggles to rebuild one house - and one neighborhood - at a time.

 Doug Mans has become the new board chair for the Cantonbased Partnership for the Arts and Humanities, dedicated to regionally promoting local cultural and arts organizations and places such as The Village Theater at Cherry Hill.

Jill Engle, the partner-

ship's executive director, called Mans "a wonderful new chair, and personally I am thrilled to be working with Doug at the helm of our ship.'

Survival mode

 Alan Strickstein, a Mans partner who came from National Lumber, said the company has been instrumental in starting an industry outreach program that, in late March, returns for a second annual gathering at the MGM Grand in Detroit. The goal: work together to better thrive.

After surviving an industry disaster, Mans Lumber appears confident 12 years into its second century.

Company partner Chris Mans, Doug Mans' cousin, said the brighter future and all the attention the lumber company has received can be traced back to the dedication of its employees. Though the workforce shrank, he and others hope to rebuild it as the economy - and the industry - rebound.

"They are loyal, and they work hard," Chris Mans said. "They are the lifeblood of our organization."

> dclem@hometownlife.com (313) 222-2238

Buying local boosts Winter Market

By Darrell Clem Observer Staff Writer

After Canton's new Winter Market season debuted by drawing a record-shattering, 700plus visitors, organizers are ready for the next round of patrons looking to buy Michigan-made products sold inside the historic Cady-Boyer Barn.

The market returns 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday to Preservation Park, off

Ridge Road north of Cherry Hill, as an estimated 20 vendors roll out produce, farm eggs, artisan cheese and bread, flavored butters, smoked fish, handcrafted soaps and organic, antibiotic-free meats, among other items.

In its third year, Winter Market's seasonal debut Feb. 12 celebrated what market manager Tina Llovd cited as a 40-percent spike over last year's average.

"More folks are see-

ing the benefits of buying local," she said, "and the winter markets provide the opportunity to support Michigan vendors."

Lloyd attributed the Winter Market's popularity to patrons who don't want to wait until the warm-weather Canton Farmers Market, which begins in May, to buy their favorite products from companies such as Zingerman's Creamery of Ann Arbor, Natural Local Food Express of Plymouth, Day

Dream Cafe of Canton, JKM Soy Candles of Westland and Farmington Soap Works, among others.

Winter Market, on Canton's far west side, has become regional in scope, drawing vendors such as Sweet Delights Bakery of Bay City, Sansonetti Sauces of Holly and Prochaska Farms of Tecumseh.

Lloyd said the last Winter Market of the year technically in spring is set for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 22.



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Horses race around the track at Northville Downs on a recent night.



After the fourth race at Northville Downs in January, a horse steams in the sub-freezing air as he gets ready to head back into the paddock.



Winning the race Northville Downs survives changing times

By Brad Kadrich Observer Staff Writer

Severino "Bags" Bagozzi worked at Northville Downs for decades, right up until the day he died.

Ron Bondie of Plymouth Township has been there since 1964, and really doesn't see himself leaving any time soon, despite the fact he's moved into his 70s.

Much of the rest of the staff has been around 35-40 years, according to Michael Carlo, who, along with his brothers, now runs the track, started more than 100 years ago when a group bought the property and started the Wayne County Fair.

That kind of longevity, and loyalty, is part of what Carlo said makes Northville Downs sucthey asked me to work at the harness tracks, so I was working the afternoon tracks (post-time 3:30), and then at 8:30 for the harness tracks."

The Downs got started shortly after the turn of the 20th century, when a group of people bought the property — the track sits on about 50 acres, according to Carlo — and carved out a track.

"We used to have farmers bring their horses down to the oval to race them before it was a company, before it was legal, before it was anything," Carlo said with a smile.

That's when it was the Northville Driving Club, before a group led by Carlo's great uncle, John Carlo, came along in the mid-1940s and started the company that has run racing there ever since. Park Raceway allowed to keep its summer schedule.

"In some ways it's been a little better," Carlo said. "In the 80s and 90s it was better, because you weren't fighting a nice golf day or summer baseball. In January-April, there's not a lot going on. We became something to do."

There were easy years, and there were difficult years. The establishment of the lottery, and casinos, hurt business — "It didn't seem like it at the time, but the lottery really was competition," Carlo said — and Northville Downs was, according to Carlo, on the verge of closing its doors in the late 1990s.

Good timing Then came a break,

for instance, one person every live racing night gets a shot at winning \$100,000 — keep it interesting for the patrons. "This is just a great

"This is just a great night out," Carlo said. "You can come here with \$20 and watch four hours of racing, bet on every race, and still not spend your \$20."

Players who don't want to bet on the horses have other attractions at Northville Downs. The track runs a charity poker room and roulette, among other things.

"The poker player is different, and that's good for us," Carlo said. "The more products I can give you, the better it is."

The Carlo family has ridden the ups and downs of the roller-coaster existence of horse racing over the years. "Horse racing is an industry that has taken a beating the last 10-15 years, with the proliferation of on-line and casino gambling," Carlo said. "It's been a struggle to keep the track going, and keep it going for the families here who've made Northville Downs their lives. That's the allure for us." Bondie, for one, is grateful they've succeeded, and he doesn't see himself, despite his age, giving it up any time soon. "I love what I'm doing, I love the people I get to meet," said Bondie, who counts actors Mickey Rooney and Ann-Margaret among the people he's met. "I love what I'm doing ... I want to be around to enjoy it. They'll probably have to take me out of here on a gurney."

Visitors to Northville Downs watch races from other race tracks. Bettors can place bets on any race that's simulcast to Northville Downs.



Northville Downs driver Donald Gribbin leads his horse, Promiscuous, to a stall in the track's paddocks after the fourth race back in January. Northville usually has 14 races on the race nights, Fridays and Saturdays.

cessful.

"We've got a great core of people who've been with us a long, long time," said Carlo. "We've got families who've been racing with us for 40-50 years."

Long-time staffers

Bondie is one of those lifers. He's worked race tracks since the mid-60s, when his father was a mutuel clerk at Hazel Park Raceway and took him to work. His father's boss eventually offered him a job as a messenger. His work pleased the boss, who told him to leave an application while he went off to enlist in the Army, and there'd be a job waiting for him when he got out of the service.

"I enjoyed what I was doing; the public is always interesting to talk to," Bondie said. "Pretty soon I went from working the thoroughbreds, and

Family style

The family business passed on to Lou Carlo (Mike's dad), and is now run by brothers Mike, John and Edward. Mike came back to the family business after a few years doing sales and marketing for horse racing publications in New York.

"It's in the blood, it's what we know, it's what we do, it's what we love," said Carlo, who grew up at the track. "The attraction for my brothers and me is the on-going legacy, keeping it going."

Business was good. The track would run six days a week and used to race in the summer, when the weather was good and the economy was OK. The state Legislature then passed legislation that forced Northville Downs into winter-only racing, with the larger Hazel when the Detroit Race Course closed down.

"We got all their business the next year," Carlo said. "We were right back in business."

And right back in business pretty well. Northville Downs runs live racing Fridays and Saturdays from January through April, and simulcasts from other race tracks - a practice that became legal in 1995 and started at Northville Downs in 1996-12 hours a day, seven days a week year-round. Last year, some \$53 million was bet at Northville Downs.

Carlo said the track still remains a popular attraction because the staff makes sure it's a "fun night out" for people. You can still make a minimum bet of \$1, which means it doesn't have to be an expensive night. And in-track promotions —

bkadrich@hometownlife.com



As horses and drivers warm up outside, bettors go over their race track forms inside Northville Downs.



Northville Downs track at Seven Mile and Center in Northville runs harness races at night.

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BUSINESS

BRAD KADRICH, EDITOR Bkadrich@hometownlife.com

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IT'S YOUR BUSINESS Q&A



Crawford's Kitchen, located at 542 Starkweather in Plymouth, is a 'Mom & Pop' neighborhood restaurant offering homemade breakfast and lunch menu items as well as corporate and social catering products and services.

Kitchen offers homemade fare

Observer: Tell us about your business, including the types of services and/or products you feature?

Crawford's: We offer homemade dishes that include 10 freshly made salads with homemade dressings on the side, 11 grilled sandwiches on seedless Russian rye or dark whole wheat, ad 11 unique wraps on Lavash bread. All sandwiches are served with variety of sides such as cup of soup, house chips, potato salad, fruit salad, Coleslaw, etc. In addition, we offer a large Breakfast menu made from scratch. We also have an extensive catering menu for corporate and social events.

Observer: How did you first decide to open your business?

Crawford's: My husband was working as a chef in a corporate restaurant environment but wanted to open his own where he could be more creative and independent. I have an MBA and worked in marketing for 15 years

CRAWFORD'S KITCHEN

Business name and address: Crawford's Kitchen, 542 Starkweather, Plymouth

Your name: Ania Crawford, owner/business manager; Jeff Crawford, executive chef

Your hometown: Canton

Business opened: June 6, 2006

Your business specialty: We are a "Mom & Pop" neighborhood restaurant offering homemade breakfast and lunch menu items as well as corporate and social catering products and services. We transform simple, fresh ingredients into familiar & healthy meals. Hours of operation: Tuesday-Sunday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Phone: (734) 454-5724

ing for, including ample parking space for our guests as well as large area to design and build a large patio.

Observer: What makes your business unique?

Crawford's: We are a neighborhood "Mom & Pop" restaurant where the owner is also the Chef who takes a personal accountability for the products he creates. My husband makes everything from scratch using the freshest ingredients. He doesn't freeze any-

recent economy affected your business?

Crawford's: We have noticed a slight decline in our corporate catering business because a number of companies in the area have gone out of business, and other experience budget cuts which affect their spending on luncheon meetings and other events. Our social catering has not been affected much.

Observer: Any advice for other business owners?

Crawford's: Do it right. We believe that "you do it

Are you ready to cut the cord?

By Jon Gunnells Guest Columnist

A friend of mine recently cancelled his cable subscription after growing increasingly tired of expensive bills for programming he never watched. For a few months, the friend has gotten his entertainment fix for less than \$10 per month courtesy of Netflix.

Cancelling cable for digital subscriptions is called cord cutting and it's a trend that has grown as video streaming has become easier thanks to more sophisticated smart phones, game systems and even tablets.

Even if you are in love with cable or satellite television, cord-cutting may be worth consideration because of the financial savings and flexible programming options.

To determine if you are the type of person who could cancel a household mainstay like cable, you must first determine what programs you watch. Then compare costs between cable and digital streaming options.

For about the cost of a Starbucks coffee (\$8), Netflix will stream movies, and television shows directly to your smartphone, tablet, internet ready TV, PS3, Xbox or Wii. Old movies, new releases and television shows from America's Funniest Videos to Workaholics are available instantly with a Netflix



television shows for

\$7.99 with no commit-

ments. Just like Netf-

lix, there is no need for a

digital receiver. All you

need is a supported portable device, computer or

game system.

cable box, new remote, or

Amazon Prime is more

of a newcomer to the digital streaming game, but

they too offer an exten-

But what if you don't

have an Internet ready

television or game sys-

tem and don't feel like

action thriller on a tiny

phone or tablet screen?

Don't worry; a number

Roku offers digital

devices that connect

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and stream content for

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tions and also offers 350

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Tech Savvy

Jon Gunnells

rip- **Roku players** Roku players also have HD capabilities and con-

nect seamlessly with applications you may have on your phone or computer such as Pandora, Spotify, Angry Birds or Facebook.

One of the drawbacks to cord cutting is the inability to watch sports at an economical price. Sure there are streaming services available to catch every NHL, NBA or NFL game. But those packages can cost as much as \$350 per season.

And while there are a number of sports channels including the SEC Network the Big Ten Network is not available to stream through any service at any cost.

If you aren't a big sports fan however, a combination of Netflix and a Roku player would cost about \$39-\$70 up front depending on your chosen device, followed by about \$8 per month. That's around \$150 per year, or about one and a half months of cable.

As you can see, cord cutting savings are astounding and the programming is vast and growing. If you are looking to save money or become less of a slave to your TV, consider cutting the cord yourself. The results may surprise you.

Jon Gunnells, a Northville Township resident, is a social media planner at a Detroitbased advertising agency. He can be reached at jonathan. gunnells@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @GunnShOw.



but lost my job due to economy. One evening we decided to start a catering business in Northville and Plymouth. After about a year and a half of catering we decided to open a restaurant. My husband has 30 years of culinary experience. I am business savvy and have a passion for food. We concluded that we make a great team and are quite capable of running a successful restaurant.

Observer: Why did you choose Plymouth?

Crawford's: We already had catering accounts in Plymouth and Northville, and strong brand recognition. The location offered everything we were lookthing, and the only fried food is the house chips, everything else is either baked or grilled.

Observer: How has it changed since you opened? Crawford's: We have

changed our inside décor a few times to make it more interesting. We have added more equipment including additional grills, etc. to make sure our food comes out faster. We also expanded our patio (doubled in size) to accommodate everyone, especially during busy weekends. We have changed our menu to include breakfast, and additional lunch items and specials.

Observer: How has the

right or you don't do it at all." Most of all have PAS-SION for what you do. Observer: What's in store for the future of your business?

Crawford's: Due to our continuous growth, we are "outgrowing" our dining room capacity. During the off-season months, when our patio is closed, we are faced with many challenges due to lack of space. Although, we would like to remain the warm, "Mom & Pop" restaurant (like in the old days), we would love to either expand or move to a location nearby that would allow us to offer more sitting inside.

CANTON CHAMBER CHAT

After-hours mixer

The Crow's Nest Bar & Grill hosts the chamber after-hours mixer 5-7 p.m. Thursday, March 22.

There is no charge for chamber members and a \$10 cost for non-members. Reservations are required. The Crow's Nest is located at 6166 Canton Center in Canton.

To make reservations, call the chamber office at (734) 453-4040 or e-mail admin@cantonchamber.com. Hosting sponsor is the Crow's Nest Bar & Grill, and the presenting sponsor is Tradefirst.com.

Dinner auction

The Canton Chamber Annual Dinner Auction takes place 7 p.m. Saturday, April 28, at Burton Manor in Livonia. This year's theme is "Made in Michigan."

Chamber officials called the auction, sponsored this year by Jack Demmer Ford, a "fun night for socializing and networking with key businesses and community leaders in a social setting."

"Our chamber depends on its resources to subsidize important programming, services, educational development, as well as promote advocacy in the community," said chamber President Dianne Cojei. "Funds raised from the auction are crucial in maintaining our mission to stimulate positive business growth in the Canton community."

Area businesses have been extremely generous with their Auction donations this year, Cojei said, and "we have more than 200 raffle items, which include several restaurant packages, many gift baskets, electronics, tools, household items and jewelry."

Tickets for the auction, the chamber's largest fundraiser, are \$75 per person, which includes entrance to the event, dinner, premium bar, raffles, live & silent Auction, DJ and entertainment.

Last year's event drew a crowd of over 380 attendees and featured prizes from categories such as Jewelry, Travel & Entertainment, Sports & Leisure, Home-style, and Electronics. This year's auction is expected to draw a similar crowd.

For more information on please contact the Chamber office at (734) 453-4040.

Ribbon cutting

Regency at Canton cuts the ribbon on its facility at 45900 Geddes with a ceremony 4 p.m. Thursday, March 29.

The ribbon cutting ceremony, chamber officials said, is a "great way to welcome Regency at Canton to the chamber and to the community."



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OPINION

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

OUR VIEWS

Stay safe and sober Plan ahead for celebrating St.

Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day is a popular night out to celebrate with friends and family. Unfortunately, it is also very dangerous.

Last year in Michigan on St. Patrick's Day, two people died in alcohol-related accidents and 101 people were arrested on drunken driving charges for having a blood alcohol level of .08 or higher. Thirty four of those arrests were at "super drunk" levels of 0.17 or higher.

Nationally, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 39 people were killed in traffic crashes involving at least one driver or motorcyclist with a blood alcohol level of .08 or higher on St. Patrick's Day 2009.

This year, St. Patrick's Day falls on a

St. Patrick's Day fell on a Saturday in 2001. That's when Anna Bonde of Livonia was killed by a drunken driver at just age 19. The 1999 Churchill **High School** graduate was en route to volunteer at an elementary school in New **Orleans** during her spring break from college.

Saturday, which means more people may be inclined to celebrate because they don't have to go to work the next morning. St. Patrick's Day fell on a Saturday in 2001. That's when Anna Bonde of Livonia was killed by a drunken driver at just age 19. The 1999 Churchill High School graduate was en route to volunteer at an elementary school in New

Orleans during her spring break from college.

Dave Bicknell, a manager at the Bennigan's on Ann Arbor Road in Plymouth, and Dena Brotherton, a manager at 4 Friends Bar & Grill in Canton, agree on one thing: It's one of the busiest days of the year. "We throw a big party," said Bicknell, echoed by Brotherton, who said, "We have a big crowd that comes in." That's just two of the many places in Plymouth and Canton that are events scheduled. The beer and the alcohol will likely be flowing increase the chance for accidents. To keep that from happening, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offers the following tips for celebrating St. Patrick's Day without being arrested for drunken driving and without endangering either yourself or an innocent motorist: · Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin. · Before drinking, designate a sober driver and leave your car keys at home. If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, so you are sure to get home safely. If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact local law enforcement. If you know someone who is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely. The sign of St. Patrick's Day is the shamrock. It is supposed to signify good luck, but you should not rely on luck to keep yourself and others safe if you plan on drinking alcohol to celebrate. Instead, follow the advice given by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

COMMUNITY VOICE

What do you think of all the "human signs" you see along the road, with people holding ads for businesses?

We asked this question at the Canton Public Library.



"These people are actually employed, though it's almost a demeaning task. I guess it's OK." Robert Gaither Detroit



"It doesn't hurt anything." Karen Wensley Belleville



"I think it's a good thing. I used to dress up like the Statue of Liberty for Liberty Tax Service." Jessica Lowes Canton



"They're all right. I feel sorry for them standing there because it must be the most boring thing they've ever done." Cori Zgliczynski Canton

LETTERS

Great community

Just want to take a moment and share what a wonderful community Canton is. My husband John died unexpectedly on Feb. 1. I called the 9-1-1 crew for help. They quickly arrived and assessed the situation. I was informed that nothing they could do would help John as he was already gone.

From there they quickly took over in the most gentle, kind and understanding fashion. They calmed me as best they could, called and made arrangements and then stayed until the funeral home arrived to pick up John. Officers Alex and Jesse were especially supportive to me. They kept me informed every step of the way.

Often we hear negative words about local law enforcement personnel. They encounter multiple difficult situations daily some in which I am sure are difficult for them to deal with, however I want others to know that when a sensitive situation arose they stepped up to the plate and went beyond to do their job in a professional, respectful fashion. This was truly appreciated and will always

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We welcome your Letter to the Editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We may edit for clarity, space and content. Submit letters by the following formats:

Web: www.hometownlife.com Mail: Letters to the Editor, Canton Observer, 615 W. Lafayette, Second Level, Detroit, MI 48226 Fax: (313) 223-3318 E-mail: bkadrich@hometownlife. com.

Deadline: Letters should be received by 9 a.m. Monday to be published in the Thursday edition.

Well ... a call came telling me not to worry about anything. Soon after prepared meals, drinks and everything else needed were delivered to the family. All of this was coordinated through the efforts of the following community groups: Canton Lions Club, Canton Chamber of Commerce, Newcomers and Neighbors Club and numerous other individuals from the community. Through the various efforts of the community's outpouring of love and generosity what was already a difficult time was made much easier. Many thanks; I am glad to live and volunteer in this great community. **Aldona Chew** Canton land Community Schools Board of Education, administration, students and staff, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep sense of gratitude to the residents of this community who supported our Feb. 28, 2012, Sinking Fund.

Your continued support will provide our students with the educational opportunities they deserve and a learning atmosphere necessary to increase achievement. The long-term impact of this successful Sinking Fund will allow the district to effectively upgrade our educational programs and enhance our entire school community. The amount of pride this community has in our students and schools is clearly evident and your role as citizens is extremely important to the Wayne-Westland team.

Please be assured that I am looking forward to working with you and providing the very best for our students and community. I am hopeful that you will continue to share in my excitement and enthusiasm about the Wayne-Westland Schools.

You have entrusted us with your children and now the resources to continue to improve our schools.

Doing so could save your life or the lives of other motorists.



Brad Kadrich, Community Editor Susan Rosiek, Executive Editor **Grace Perry,** Director of Advertising be remembered.

Within the next few days, we experienced an outpouring of love from many others in the Canton community. Having much family arriving from out of state for the funeral, I was anxious as to how and where I would need to go to feed them. I knew that at this time it would be much more than I could handle.

Thanks for support On behalf of the Wayne-WestSince assuming the superintendency and during the many Sinking Fund presentations, I pledged to you that my team and I will deliver on the promises made. Working together, we can provide the very best possible educational programs for all students within the Wayne-Westland Community Schools district.

> Gregory J. Baracy, superintendent

GUEST COLUMN

Treasurer's Office serves well

By Raymond J. Wojtowicz Guest Columnist

t is with tremendous regret that I read and hear repeatedly comments that all Wayne County officials are corrupt. As indictments have been filed against some former county employees there is a growing perception that all who work for Wayne County are corrupt.

As Wayne County Treasurer, I am appalled. As



Wojtowicz

with other offices throughout Wayne County, my office is filled with hard working, dedicated, public servants. We are struggling to service the many distressed taxpayers in danger of losing homes to foreclosure. With fewer

resources due to budget cuts and unprecedented demand for services as a result of the challenging economy, I am proud of the effective and efficient services my staff provides.

Together with the staff, I have dedicated my life to public service. We all share a belief that we are here to do all we can ethically, morally and professionally for those we serve.

Regardless of the political turmoil that swirls around the county, this

office continues to serve the local governments, the county and the citizens to the best of our abilities.

In the past several years we have continued to innovate in the discharge of our duties. From assisting tens of thousands of taxpayers in avoiding foreclosure to moving to extremely productive online auctions to financing billions of dollars to fund essential government services, the staff continues exemplary service on behalf of the citizens we serve.

Following is brief summary of some recent accomplishments and innovations over the last several years:

• In 2011, successfully borrowed a quarter of a billion dollars to fund essential government services throughout the county and for communities.

•Initiated an online auction of tax foreclosed properties which last year generated \$32 million in sales.

• Now including "reverter" clauses in deeds to fight blight and the neglect of properties by auction purchasers addressing concerns about inappropriate speculators.

• Coordinated with Register of Deeds Bernard J. Youngblood to electronically record deeds saving time and resources.

•Working to institute electronic certification of deeds to speed the process for our citizens.

•Coordinating efforts with the 43 communities of the county to move

to electronic filing of tax rolls to more efficiently track taxes and provide easy access to the voluminous information essential to administration.

•Last year, provided \$15 million to Wayne County to balance the budget and provide needed financial stability.

•In 2011, assisted over 14,000 taxpayers in avoiding foreclosure, helping stabilize neighborhoods by preventing the blight that accompanies the abandonment of properties.

• Updating cashier stations to increase efficiency and accuracy by installing cash recyclers, credit card acceptance, and check scanners.

•Mindful of the distress taxpayers feel, dedicated to treating all customers with honesty, dignity, and respect.

The public needs and deserves to know that there are those in public service who are here to serve. On behalf of the staff at the treasurer's office, I feel a need to address the misconception that all public servants in Wayne County are dirty based on the perception of the actions of a few. I am proud to work with the dedicated staff in this office. It continues to be my pleasure to serve the good people of Wayne County.

Raymond J. Wojtowicz is the treasurer of Wayne County. For more information, go to www.treasurer. waynecounty.com.

Becoming a landlord isn't for everyone

By Rick Bloom Guest Columnist

ne question that keeps coming up at talks I give is whether buying homes and renting them out would be a good investment. The theory being that homes, particularly in southeast Michigan, have dropped dramatically in value and, at the same time, the rental market is relatively strong. And since home values are at or near their bottom, an investor could make money on renting the property while

Money Matters Rick Bloom

Bloom some oth er issues to con-

sider. Unlike stocks or mutual funds, owning real estate is totally different. Whereas you can sometimes put a mutual fund or a stock on automatic pilot, not so with real

Giving Hope accepts grant requests

estate.

I tell people that when you own real estate and you're a landlord, it's not an investment, it's a business. You are required to be much more proactive than you would be with a stock or a mutual fund.

Collecting rent

At a minimum, you have to make sure your tenants are paying every month. In addition, you have to be involved in the repair and maintenance of the property. You can hire a management company to do these things, however, they can be expensive, particularly if you only own a few properties.

Being a landlord is not easy and one of the most difficult aspects is dealing with tenants. Not only do you have to screen your tenants, but you also have to be willing to evict them if they don't pay the rent.

This is one of the most difficult issues that potential landlords must address. If you can't honestly say that you would evict a tenant for nonpayment of rent, then you can't be a landlord. Even if you do hire a management company, ultimately the decision whether to evict is yours.

If you've decided that you have what it takes to be a landlord, then you need to look at the economics. Even though this is a good rental market, you can't assume that the property will be rented 100 percent of the time. You must factor in some sort of vacancy rate. In addition, you must also factor in the cost of repairs and maintenance.

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Whether you do the repairs yourself or hire out, there's still a cost. Remember it is not just regular maintenance that you need to consider, but also that you will need a new roof and other major items every so often.

Buying real estate for rental purposes is a business that people have done well with, but it's also a one in which others have failed miserably. If you're thinking about

buying real estate and becoming a landlord, I recommend you talk to someone who is a landlord. Also read some books about being a landlord.

Just like investing, if you do your homework ahead of time and go into it with realistic expectations, you'll have a much greater chance of success.

Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@ hometownlife.com. For more information, visit his web site at www.bloomassetmanagement.com.

The Giving Hope Women's Giving Circle is seeking to provide grants to organizations to enrich the lives of women and children in the Canton-Plymouth communities.

Organized in 2006, Giving Hope is a group of community women who are pooling their philanthropic dollars in order to make a difference in the lives of local women and children. In addition to grant-making, Giving Hope has created an endowment fund for future granting and is educating women as to needs in the Canton and Plymouth communities.

"At this time we are encouraging area organizations to read our granting guidelines and determine if they have a need that we can match with our granting efforts," said Marion Rozum, chairwoman of the Giving Hope Grants Committee. "The granting committee will accept applications through April 1. The dollar amount of the requested grants can range anywhere from

range anywhere from \$500 to \$4,000." Grant criteria are as

follows: • Be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) with a current

State of Michigan License to Solicit, if applicable • The grant must be pri-

marily for women or children • Canton and Plym-

outh residents must be the majority population served

• The grant is a onetime gift, it is not intended to be financial support • The proposed program should begin in 2012 and be completed by June 2013

• The grant request must have clear objectives with a measurable outcome

Interested organizations should submit a grant application no later than April 1, 2012 to: Giving Hope, Women's Giving Circle Grant Committee, c/o Canton Community Foundation, 50430 School House Road, Suite 200, Canton, MI 48187. To request an application or to verify your organization's eligibility prior to submitting a proposal, contact Joan Noricks at the Canton **Community Foundation** at (734) 495-1200.



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SECTION B . (CP) THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2012 OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC HOMETOWNLIFE.COM SPORTS

TIM SMITH, EDITOR tsmith@hometownlife.com 734-469-4128

DIVISION 2 GIRLS HOCKEY STATE FINAL

'P-C-S!'

Park's girls hockey team finally on sports radar

t happens every winter in the halls of Canton, Plymouth and Salem high schools.

Players on the Penguins — a varsity girls hockey team composed of players from all three schools are met with shrugs and raised eyebrows when talking to other students about their squad.

That blend of apathy and surprise also is something Plymouth-Canton-Salem Penguins players and coaches experience out in the community.



"Oh, you mean there's a girls hockey team at the

Park?" Well, after Saturday night, it's a pretty good bet that the team is being talked about beyond the confines of Arctic Edge Arena, its

Tim Smith

home rink. From the opening faceoff until the celebrations nearly three hours later — when PCS forward Mariah Tucker scored in triple overtime against Farmington Hills Mercy for the 3-2 victory and Division 2 state championship — there was a feeling of exuberant discovery in the stands. "I think it really opened the eyes

"I think it really opened the eyes for a lot of people that didn't know much about girls hockey or the fact we have a varsity team at the Park here," PCS head coach Mary Beth Johnson said. "But they saw some great hockey tonight and I think we collected a few more fans just because of this game.

"It was great to see the support of the community and the alumni and everybody that was here to cheer them on. I think if we didn't have that, maybe it would have been a different outcome."

Loud and proud

All night long, chants of "P-C-S!" reverberated inside the arena, fighting to be heard over the strains of a large Mercy contingent's own cheering section.

Most of the game, Penguins fans had an edge in the decibel department.

And there were plenty of students



The tired but happy Plymouth-Canton-Salem Penguins hoist the Division 2 state championship trophy at Arctic Edge Arena in Canton.

Pens work OT for title

By Tim Smith Observer Staff Writer

It wouldn't have been out of place had ace bandages and ice packs filled the state championship trophy hoisted Saturday night by the Plymouth-Canton-Salem Penguins girls hockey team.

Nearly out of oxygen and energy — but not desire or great goaltending — the host Penguins survived injuries to key players Nicole Natelborg and Cortny McAdoo to pull out a 3-2 victory in the third eightminute overtime against Farmington Hills Mercy at jampacked Arctic Edge Arena.

Scoring the winner just 21 seconds into the third OT was senior forward Mariah Tucker. Her backhander to the right of Mercy netminder Clarissa LeVasseur bounced off the goalie's shoulder and found its way inside the cage.

"I wasn't even trying to score on that, I was just trying to get off the ice, I was dying," Tucker said. "That is the most relieving moment, the most exciting. I'm just feeling the love right now."



Keeping tabs on each other Saturday night are Alexandra Conner (No. 4) of the Farmington Hills Mercy Marlins and Mariah Tucker of the PCS Penguins. Tucker scored in the third overtime to give the Penguins the championship.

scoring threat Natelborg and top-six junior forward McAdoo left the Penguins down two players as the marathon unfolded.

After the game and awards

But senior goalie and Miss Hockey nominee Kaitlyn Allard made numerous clutch saves to extend the Michigan Metro Girls High School Hockey League Division 2 championship tilt just long enough for the Penguins (16-4) to prevail.

At the Joe

Canton's Ted Pletsch of Bowling Green's men's hockey team will be competing this weekend at the CCHA championship at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Pletsch's team is the

No. 11 seed in the CCHA playoffs and won two consecutive road series (including over



Pletsch

top-seeded Ferris State) to reach the championship weekend.

The Falcons will face off at 8:05 p.m. Friday against the University of Michigan and if victorious in that game will advance to the championship game at 7:35 p.m. Saturday.

A third-place game will be played at 3:35 p.m. Saturday, involving the losers from the Friday contests.

Pletsch's dad is CCHA commissioner Fred Pletsch, also from Canton.

'Cats hockey meeting

Players interested in joining the prep or varsity boys hockey teams at Plymouth are invited to attend an informational meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday in Room 2112 at Salem High School. Parents also are encouraged to attend.

Head coach Gerry Vento will cover spring and summer plans for both teams. For more information, e-mail Vento at gvento1@ yahoo.com.

7 MU women All-Academic

Seven Madonna University women's players were among 162 across the country honored Monday to the 2012 Daktronics NAIA Division II Scholar-Athlete team. To be selected, a student-athlete must be nominated by her head coach, maintain a 3.5 grade-point average or. higher and have reached junior academic status to qualify for this honor. The Crusaders selected include seniors Erin Bentley (Ida/pre-medicine), Katie Martin (River Gabriel Richard/pre-medicine) and Megan Murphy (Onaway/general science with an elementary education minor). They are joined by juniors Michelle Lindsey (Bloomfield Hills Marian/nursing), Kaylee McGrath (Livonia Stevenson/nursing), Kristie Porada (Gibraltar Carlson/pre-medicine) and Heather Pratt (Flushing/ business administration). Martin is a repeat selection from last season and all seven were chosen last month to the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference allacademic team.

And there were plenty of students wearing their school colors, including top athletes such as Canton

Please see P-C-S, B2

Down, not out

Hard checks levied by the Marlins against PCS senior presentation, Natelborg (serious leg injury) and McAdoo . (concussion) went for further medical evaluations.

Please see PENS, B2

JOHN KEMSKI

Canton's Erica Lucas, shown performing on the uneven parallel bars at regionals, won a Division 2 state championship on vault last weekend.

'Amazing' season ends for Chiefs

By Tim Smith Observer Staff Writer

Grand Ledge once again spoiled things for Canton's varsity girls gymnastics team on Friday at Grand Rapids Kenowa Hills. But individual gymnasts from Canton, Salem and Plymouth all made their mark the following day at the individual finals.

4

On Friday, the Comets tallied 149.400 points to outdistance Canton (148.575) for the second year in a row. Salem came in eighth in the team standings with 140.300 points.

"Friday's meet was close all the way," veteran Canton head coach John Cunningham said. "As we finished on beam, (Grand Ledge) was on bars right next to us. They pulled off a 9.8 and 9.7 finish and edged us by .825. "It was a thrill to be

"It was a thrill to be

Please see CHIEFS, B3

Tourney spotlights lacrosse

By Tim Smith Observer Staff Writer

Lacrosse is finally getting the green light and Saturday's annual "Black and Blue Tournament" is proof.

All three boys varsity teams at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park are helping to put on this year's scrimmage-format tournament — organized by parent boosters and a popular way for squads to gear up for next week's official start of the season.

In all, there will be 11 varsity teams playing at least four 25-minute scrimmages on the varsity turf football field at PCEP. Games will run from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. "There's not a lot of

opportunities for anybody to see what lacrosse really is unless they come to a high school game," Plymouth lacrosse booster Jill Halpin said. "This is a one-stop, (people can) pick up a lot of different games just by coming over to the field."

The event (the fourth annual, but only second as the "Black and Blue") solely was a Plymouth-Salem production in previous years, hence the moniker.

All together now But with Canton joining the effort this year



Lacrosse is a hit with Plymouth's John Halpin, shown at the 2011 Black and Blue tournament.

(although the Chiefs did participate on the field in 2011), it might soon be time for a change.

"The name 'Black and Blue' was Salem and Plymouth," explained Plymouth parent Bob Conley. "But in the spirit of unity for the Park (it was decided) to open it up. They (the Chiefs and their boosters) will participate this year and then next year I'm sure we'll reconfigure the name.

"We just wanted to ride off of last year's success and didn't want to change the name."

According to Conley, the collaboration of the three PCEP programs is a big deal.

BLACK AND BLUE

What: "Black and Blue" boys lacrosse tourney. When: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. Where: Plymouth-Canton Educational Park varsity turf football field; co-hosting the tourney are parent groups from Plymouth, Salem and (for the first time) Canton. Who: Eight schools are participating in addition to the three Park boys varsity squads. New to the lineup is Dearborn Divine Child, with other teams including Farmington, Haslett-Williamston, North Farmington, Novi, Saline, Tecumseh and Walled Lake Northern. Format: The preseason tourney gives all teams a chance to play four or five 25-minute scrimmages. No championship trophy will be awarded. Admission: Free, although spectators are invited to bring canned food goods to be donated to Gleaners Food Bank.

"For the three schools to come together to host an event says a lot for the Park," said Conley, whose junior son, Brad, is a goalie at Plymouth. "And then

Please see LACROSSE, B3

NAIA salutes MU's Bijelic

Madonna University sophomore redshirt Dran Bijelic (Utica Eisenhower) was named to the Daktronics NAIA Division II Scholar-Athlete men's basketball team.

The nursing major, who appeared in eight games for the Crusaders this season, was among 106 recognized throughout the country carrying a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or better.

'Special' victory for Whalers

By Tim Smith Observer Staff Writer

Something special happened for the Plymouth Whalers Sunday afternoon at Compuware Arena against season-long nemesis Owen Sound.

Namely, four powerplay goals and stellar penalty killing — particularly during a lengthy 5-on-3 disadvantage in the third period — as the Whalers earned a 4-3 OHL victory before 3.132 fans.

As a result, West Division champion Plymouth defeated the Attack for the first time in four meetings this season and caught Western Conference and OHL points leader London with 95 points.

London lost 1-0 to Kitchener Sunday night, but the Knights still have a game in hand on Plymouth. The Whalers only have two games left.

"We're still trying to get first overall," Whalers head coach and general manager Mike Vellucci said. "Those two points mean something with London and/or to make sure we're in front of the teams in the east."

As for the trouble his team has had with Owen

Pro-Spart an vabilia & More

RENA LAVERTY

Plymouth Whalers winger JT Miller (No. 12) skates away from the boards and Owen Sound defender Gemel Smith (No. 9) Sunday afternoon at Compuware Arena.

Sound (losing 6-2, 5-4 and 5-1 in the first three meetings), Vellucci did not have the reason other than "they play very hard. Today, we had more scoring chances and their goalie (Scott Stajcer) played pretty good. But they compete very hard." Fortunately for the

Whalers, Plymouth netminder Scott Wedgewood also was solid. He stopped 33 of 36 shots, including several prime chances in front of the Whalers' crease during Owen Sound's third period power plays. Owen Sound finally scored with 4:40 left to cut the Plymouth lead to a goal when Daniel Zweep chipped in a rebound.

But the Whalers shut the door in the final minutes, pinning Stajcer in his zone until 45 seconds remained as Owen Sound head coach Greg Ireland tried to get an extra attacker out on the ice in an attempt for

the equalizer.

The Plymouth power play was the big story of the game, with four goals in six opportunities — two scored by forward Stefan Noesen (goals 36-37) in the second period.

Trailing 2-1 after one period (with Plymouth winger Tom Wilson the lone goal scorer for the home team), Noesen snuck his own rebound high on Stajcer's short side with 13:25 left in the middle stanza.

Power switch

About two minutes later, the Whalers' power play struck again.

Center Andy Bathgate fired a cross-crease pass to Noesen, stationed on the left side of the Owen Sound goal. The Ottawa prospect fired a one-timer into the twine.

Before the second period ended, with Plymouth enjoying a two-man advantage, the Whalers made it 4-2.

This time, Bathgate sent a carbon-copy pass — from right-to-left to center JT Miller. The 2011 first-round pick of the New York Rangers tapped the puck into the wide-open cage.

Bathgate, stuck on 19

goals for several games, unselfishly passed up a chance to take the shot at scoring his 20th.

"The goals are nice, also getting to 20's a nice milestone," Bathgate said. "But'I outdid my points from last year (he has 62, eclipsing his career mark of 60). So I'm not going to worry about it. If they end up in the net, if I get an assist or not, I don't really care."

He then smiled about setting up players like Noesen.

"It's pretty easy when you got Noesen over there," Bathgate added. "He seems to find the spot and he's open all the time. He's got a real knack for putting the puck in the net."

That three-goal surge held up as Plymouth managed to bend but not break during the third. Wedgewood stopped 17 of 18 shots in that stanza, including one where he extended his left pad to thwart Artur Gavrus near the right post.

Scoring in the first for the Attack were Cameron Brace and former Whaler defenseman Jay Gilbert.

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PENS

Continued from page B1

"That's the toughest game we've played so far," Allard said following the Penguins' happy awards ceremony. "I think there are teams that are better in Division 1, but that game was so close the whole time and we both wanted it so bad that it was intense."

Adding to the intensity was the squad's determination after Mercy hits injured Natelborg (who scored in the third period to briefly give PCS a 2-1 edge) and McAdoo.

'Before Nicole got off the ice, we all told her we'd win it for her," Allard said. "It was a big deal, because she's a art of our team. We did it together." PCS senior defenseman and captain Emily Bullock noted the team refused to give up. "We did it with perseverance," Bullock said. "We don't have that big of a bench and going down two players and playing through three overtimes is not easy."



They're No. 1! The PCS Penguins pose with their MMGHSHL Division 2 championship trophy and medals after defeating Farmington Hills Mercy in triple overtime Saturday night. Team members (listed alphabetically) are goalie Kaitlyn Allard, captain Emily Bullock, Jenna Carter, CeCe Hitch, Beth Johnson, Emily King, goalie Becky Lough, Jackie Lough, Cortny

touched off a mob scene in the right circle, with Tucker buried under a mob of happy teammates.

In the stands, a large gathering of Penguins fans, family members and alumni broke into a happy chant of "P-C-S! P-C-S!" as they had throughout the night.

"We were saying to the girls between the first and second overtime that it's not necessarily going to be a pretty goal," Johnson said. "Sometimes it's the dirty ones (goals) in front that win the game and that's kind of what happened."

Natelborg could not even walk after the game, but she was helped out onto the ice for the awards ceremony. Also on hand was McAdoo.

Fired up

Beaming with pride was Penguins head coach Mary Beth Johnson, who helmed the team's second D2 title in three years.

"Our girls had a lot of heart and they weren't going to take no for an answer," Johnson said. "It's very rewarding. I think our players really stepped up, especially when both of them went out.

"They were playing for Cortny and Nicole even more than ever. It just gave us more fire."

Allard had the heat all night, however. Her string of big stops had Mercy head coach Brandon Malinowski shaking his head.

"Hands down the best goalie I've seen in a long time," Malinowski said. "She's phenomenal. You McAdoo, Nicole Natelborg, Elizabeth O'Donohue, Alexis O'Flynn, Sydney Smith and Mariah Tucker. Standing at far left is head coach Mary Beth Johnson; standing at far right are assistant coaches Emily Nelson and Brad Johnson.



Grace Martin of the Farmington Hills Mercy Marlins dives in an attempt to poke-check PCS Penguins forward Nicole Natelborg (No. 7). At left for the Penguins is sophomore forward Jenna Carter.

get that many shots on goal, well ... she had our number tonight."

The Marlins (17-5) turned up the juice in the third period and first two overtimes, and did knot the score at 2-2. Senior defenseman Lauren Hensick — given a four-minute boarding penalty in the second period after checking tiny McAdoo into the wall — did a spin move in the right circle and fired a hard shot that got past Allard with 8:12 to play in the third.

But Allard later stymied senior forward Alexandra Conner on a dangerous rush to send the contest to overtime.

Close calls

Late in the first OT, an apparent Mercy goal was waved off by an early whistle. Moments later, Conner had a wide-open net to shoot the puck into, but her shot clanked off the inside of the far post. Natelborg was injured on an open-ice hit in the neutral zone with 7:02 left in the second overtime. But the Penguins continued to hold the fort, helping Allard with tireless effort all over the ice.

Then came the moment many in the Arctic Edge stands were waiting for. The Penguins — outsized, outnumbered, but not outworked — forced play deep into the Marlins' end.

Senior forward Jackie Lough sent the puck from the bottom of the left circle toward LeVasseur, who turned it aside. Tucker tracked the puck down in the right corner, fought for space to the left of LeVasseur and backhanded it in.

The winning tally

Trading goals

PCS was badly outshot (44-21). But Mercy never was able to take the lead thanks to Allard's spectacular netminding and a couple of timely goals by the Penguins.

With 5:32 left in the first period, Bullock passed the puck to Tucker at the bottom of the left circle, and her shot slipped past LeVasseur.

That lead held up until Hensick surprised Allard with a wraparound marker with just 2:17 to play in the second.

Once again, the Penguins took the lead with 8:12 left in the third period on a shorthanded tally. Sophomore forward Jenna Carter, who was a solid two-way performer all game long, sent a pass to Natelborg in the Mercy zone. Natelborg circled the net and beat LeVasseur with a shot from the right of the cage.

Immediately preceding the PCS goal was a sparkling stop by Allard on forward Madeline McClain.

It only took Mercy 2:08 to even things up again, on Hensick's second goal.

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P-C-S

Continued from page B1

senior boys goaltender Spencer Craig.

Plenty of Penguins alums made sure to come out, too. Standing and yelling until they were hoarse were players from the 2010-11 team, including Sarah Coleman, Tory Campbell, Rebecca Majszak and Rhianna

Fleisher.

"Here come the alumni," Johnson shouted following the awards ceremony, as the girls shuffled out onto the ice toward her. They weren't about to miss out on sharing the moment.

But what had Johnson really smiling following the game was what some young girls mentioned to her after watching the entertaining nail biter.

"I had a few players that are about 10 years old right now and they said they want to play (with PCS) in four years," she said. "It's exciting that those girls got to see a great game and have something to look forward to in the future."

If those girls skate with the Penguins, it would mean Saturday's riveting championship game and accompanying atmosphere indeed had a lasting impact.

Maybe from now on, the Penguins will feel they finally belong on the sports radar at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park.

Tim Smith is sports editor of the Plymouth-Canton Observers. He can be reached at (734) 469-4128 and tsmith@ hometownlife.com.



JOHN KEMSK

Penguins fans cheer loudly after the championship-clinching goal is scored Saturday night at Arctic Edge Arena.

PCEP tankers make splash at EMU

By Tim Smith **Observer Staff Writer**

Victor Zhang came closest to a state championship among Plymouth-Canton Educational Park performers at last weekend's Division 1 state finals.

The Canton senior's runner-up time of 50.86 seconds in the 100-yard backstroke Saturday at Eastern Michigan University's Jones Natatorium was just a touch or behind the 50.83 firstplace finish turned in by Lansing's Blake Howe.

Zhang also placed third in the 200 individual medley with a time of 1:50.23 and was part of the sixthplace 400-free relay team with Jay Jin, Adrian Simion and Mike Carlson.

Canton head coach Dave Le said Zhang's times in the backstroke and IM, both on Saturday, set new school records.

"It was a nice ending to a successful season," said Le, whose team placed 13th with 62 points.

Winning the state team championship with 326.5 points was Saline, while Salem placed 29th with 16.5 points. Although Plymouth participated, the Wildcats were not in the team standings.

Scoring in the finals for Salem were divers Nick Griwicki (10th, 356.50 points), Charlie Dillon (15th, 325.50), Jeremy Wellman (10th, 100 back-



PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plymouth swimmer Adam Liakos goes all-out during the state meet at Eastern Michigan University.

D1 SWIM FINALS

stroke, 54.55) and Jason Zhang (16th, 100 back, 55.65).

Salem head coach Chuck Olson praised the Rocks for a "great effort in the prelims (Friday) with a personal best by the team."

In the prelims, the 200medley relay team of Wellman, Turner Solterman, Jerry Bai and Zhang came in 22nd with a time of 1:40.72

Bai, Wellman, Zhang and Matt Pairitz were 32nd in the 400-free relay with a mark of 3:24.23.

Zhang finished 24th in the 200 IM (2:00.33) while Wellman placed 25th in the 100 fly (54.13).

For Plymouth, Adam Liakos and the 200 medley relay team competed at prelims, but did not score high enough to continue into Saturday's finals.

Liakos swam times of 22.81 in the 50 free (38th) and 54.56 in the 100 fly (32nd). The top 16 per event made the cut for the finals.

Meanwhile, Plymouth's 200 medley relay team of Cameron Earls, Nick Weber, Liakos and Alex Wilson had a personal best time of 1:42.96 and placed 28th.

2012 MHSAA BOYS SWIMMING & DIVING STATE FINALS RESULTS March 10-11 at EMU's Jones Natatorium TEAM STANDINGS: 1. Saline, 326.5 points; 2. Rockford, 233; 3. Birmingham Brother Rice), 176; 4. Ann Arbor Pioneer, 143; 5. Zeeland, 128.5; 6. Novi Detroit Catholic Central, 111; 7. Troy, 9.25; 8. South Lyon, 89; 9. Hudsonville, 86; 10. Saginaw Heritage, 80; 13 Canton, 62; 29. Salem, 16.5. AREA FINISHERS

200-yard medley relay: 1. Saline (Tom Walls, Josh Ehrman, David Boland, Michael Bundas, 1:33.87; 18. Canton (Adrian Simion, Victor Zhang, Jay Jin, Mike Carlson), 1:39.26; 22. Salem (Jeremy Wellman, Turner Solterman, Jerry Bai, Jason Zhang), 1:40.27; 28. Plymouth (Cameron Earls, Nick Weber, Adam Liakos, Alex Wilson), 1:42.96. 200 freestyle: 1. Adam Whitener (Saline), 1:39.11.

200 individual medley: 1. Boland (Saline), 1:50.8; 3. V. Zhang (Canton), 1:50.23; 14. Jin (Canton), 1:58.70; 24. J. Zhang (Salem), 2:00.33. 50 freestyle: 1. Eric Chisholm (Rockford), 20.76; 20.



Canton Victor Zhang competes during last weekend's boys swimming and diving state finals.

Carlson (Canton), 22.43; 38 Liakos (Plymouth), 22.81. 1-meter diving: 1. Dan Gironza (South Lyon), 3:15.15 points); 10. Nick Griwicki (Salem), 356.50; 15. Charlie Dillon (Salem), 325.50.

100 butterfly: 1. Boland (Saline), 49.62; 25. J. Well-man (Salem). 54.13; 32. Liakos (Plymouth), 54.56; 39. Jin (Canton), 55.00.

100 freestyle: 1. Whitener (Saline), 45.37; 35. Carlson (Canton), 49.85

500 freestyle: 1. Seiji Osawa (Pioneer), 4;32.22 200 freestyle relay: 1 Rockford (Nick Dulak, Bryan Wasberg, Craig Wasberg and Chisholm), 1:24.34 (Division 1

meet record). 100 backstroke: 1. Blake Howe (Lansing), 50.83; 2. V. Zhang (Canton), 50.86; 10. (tie) J. Wellman (Salem), 54.55; 16. J. Zhang (Salem), 55.65. 100 breaststroke: 1. Ehrman (Saline), 55.36 (Division 1 meet record) 400 freestyle relay: 1. Saline (Boland, Fisher, Ehrman, Whitener), 3:04.26 (Division 1 meet record); 6. Canton (V. Zhang, Jin, Simion, Carlson), 3:12.50; 32. Salem (Bai, Matthew Pairitz, J. Wellman, J. Zhang), 3:24.23.

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MU baseball squad cranks up offense

Scoring in eight of the game's nine innings, the Madonna University baseball team tallied a season-high 20 runs and season-best 21 hits in a 20-11 victory Saturday over Grace College (Ind.) to close the team's spring trip at Chain of Lakes Park in Winter Haven, Fla.

Senior outfielder Dan Harder paced MU offensive attack, going 4-for-4 with two homers and six RBI as the Crusaders improved to 14-9 overall. He leads the team in hitting (.481) with five homers and 16 RBI Junior center fielder Alex Charles added four hits to go along with five runs scored, while senior Billy Hardin III (Livonia) went 3-for-4 with two RBI.

run, opposite field shot to right that put the Crusaders on top 2-0.

The Crusaders added three runs in the second, another in the third and three more in the fourth to stake freshman starter Justin Hicks to a 9-0 lead heading into the bottom of the inning.

Hicks was perfect through the first 3.1 innings, not allowing a single base runner. But the rookie right-

hander walked Den-

Brent Easterday that made it 13-8.

A walk, three singles and a wild pitch later, Grace had scored two more times and climbed back into the game, trailing by just three, 13-10.

Back in front

The Crusaders then roared back four runs in the top of the sixth to go back up 17-10.

Saarela sent the side down in order in the sixth before giving way to

MU opens its Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference play Saturday and Sunday at home against Aquinas College in a pair of double-headers. Both twinbills start at 1 p.m.

MU softball

After dropping the day's opener to No. 22ranked and unbeaten University of Mobile (Ala.) by a final of 1-0, the Madonna University softball team bounced back to defeat Bryan College (Tenn.), 6-5, in nine innings before upending No. 6 Belhaven University (Ala.), 7-2, to close out the Crusaders' spring trip Saturday at the Gulf Coast Invitational in Gulf Shores. MU, which now stands 9-8 overall, returns to action Friday against St. Catharine College (Ky.) as part of the Campbellsville/Lindsey Wilson Classic (Ky.). MU out-hit host Mobile, 4-3, but it was the Rams who scored the game's only run in the bottom of the fourth using a double and a single to open the inning before a double play ball allowed a run to score.

CHIEFS

Continued from page B1

in the hunt, but we didn't lose, they beat us. We had a great meet and our 149.1 school record still would have lost.'

Cunningham added that the 2011-12 Chiefs were "an amazing team that had an amazing year. I couldn't be more proud of them."

Canton did boast a champion, as undefeated Erica Lucas finished first on Division 2 vault with a 9.55. She was 11th in D2 all-around (35.675).

Ayana Lewis, one of four



Nicole Jacobs, shown from earlier this season, was Salem's top all-around performer at the Division 2 state meet.

Salem, respectively, were Nicole Jacobs (35.125) and Brittany Ramirez (33.825) with Andrea Melotti of the Rocks 21st (33.625). Melotti came in ninth on bars (8.925) while Jacobs finished 15th on floor exercise (8.900). On vault, Ramirez and Morgan Soper came in 15th (9.125) and 16th (9.100), respectively. Highlight D2 performers for Plymouth were Jane McCurry and Reagan Engstrom. McCurry earned a seventh-place tie on floor with mark of 9.375 while Engstrom's season's best 9.0 on vault earned her a share of 19th.

Junior Matthew Cook collected three hits and three RBI while earning the win in relief.

The Ontario native threw two scoreless innings, striking out a pair while allowing just one hit for this third win of the season.

Getting it started

MU took the lead in the first on Harder's first homer of the day, a twonis Kan before moving to second on a single and then moving to third on back-to-back singles before coming home with the first Grace run of the game.

MU tacked on four runs with two outs in the top of the fifth to take a commanding 13-1 lead, but Grace answered with nine runs in the bottom of the frame, getting to Hicks for four runs on three hits.

The big blow to Hicks came on a bases clearing error by the Crusaders that allowed three runs to score. Sophomore lefty Aaron Saarela then came in and walked the first batter he faced before hitting a batter and giving up a grand slam to

Cook in the seventh.

The 6-foot-4 Canadian retired the Lancers in order in the seventh and stranded a pair of runners in the eighth to keep MU comfortably in front heading into the ninth.

Junior righty Jeremy Gooding (Livonia) came in for the ninth and while giving up a run, closed the game.

Grace (1-2) had a total of 11 hits.

Hardin is second in hitting (.396) with a homer and 13 RBI, while Victor Barron (.396) is next with three homers and 15 RBI.

The Crusaders, who returned to action Wednesday at Central Michigan, are hitting .299 as a team with a 3.76 ERA.

D1 gymnasts for Canton, was voted Senior Gymnast of the Year for the state and finished sixth on vault (9.4) and seventh on uneven parallel bars (9.25).

The Chiefs garnered 11 individual medals and four all-state winners. Freshman Jocelyn Moraw and Melissa Green each collected four D1 medals.

Senior D1 performer Nicole Lasecki tallied a 9.05 on vault (16th) and 8.925 on floor exercise (17th).

Finishing 16th and 20th in D2 all-around for

GIRLS GYMNASTICS RESULTS

MHSAA GIRLS GYMNASTICS TEAM FINAL RESULTS

March 9 at Kenowa Hills TEAM RESULTS: 1. Grand Ledge, 149.400 points; 2. Canton, 148.575 points; 3. Kenowa Hills Grandville; 145.100; 4. Athens-Avondale, 144.200; 5. Farmington, 143.425; 6. Highland-Milford, 142.225; 7. Howell, 142.100; 8. Salem, 140.300; 9. Freeland Swan Valley, 138.325; 10. Brighton, 138.300; 11. Grosse Pointe, 138.050; 12. Forest Hills, 137.800.

MHSAA GIRLS GYMNASTICS INDIVIDUAL FINAL RESULTS March 10 at Kenowa Hills

DIVISION 1 Vault: 1. Taylor Tepper (Grandville), 9.675; 6. Ayana Lewis (Canton), 9.400; 14. Jocelyn Moraw (Canton), 9.150; 16. Nicole Lasecki (Canton), 9.050; 17. (tie) Melissa Green (Canton), 8.950

Uneven parallel bars: 1. Christine Wilson (Grand Ledge), 9.700; 7. Lewis (Canton), 9.250; 9. (tie) Moraw (Canton), Green (Canton), 8.975; 26. Lasecki (Canton), 8.175.

Balance beam: 1. Tepper (Grandville), 9.625; 9. Moraw (Canton), 9.325; 10. Green (Canton), 9.300; 15. Lewis (Canton), 9.000; 23. Lasecki (Canton), 8.150.

Floor exercise: 1. Ashley Moskal (Athens-Avondale), 9.800; 6. Moraw (Canton), 9.450; 8. Green (Canton), 9.375; 17. Lasecki (Canton), 8.975; 22. Lewis (Canton), 8.700. All-around: 1. Wilson (Grand Ledge), 38.400; 8. Moraw

(Canton), 36.900; 10. Green (Canton), 36.600; 11. Lewis (Canton), 36.350; 19. Lasecki (Canton), 34.350

DIVISION 2

Vault: 1. Erica Lucas (Canton), 9.550; 13. (tie) Brittany Ramirez (Salem), 9.125; 16. Morgan Soper (Salem), 9.100; 17. (tie) Nicole Jacobs (Salem), 9.050; 19. (tie) Reagan Engstrom (Plymouth), 9.000; 21. (tie) Andrea Melotti (Salem), 8.950. Uneven bars: 1. Sara Pelti (Grand Ledge), 9.700; 9. Melotti (Salem), 8.925; 14. Lucas (Canton), 8.725; 26. (tie) Jacobs (Salem), 8.375; 37. Ramirez (Salem), 7.900; 41. Adelaida Jepperson (Salem), 7.325. Balance beam: 1. Lauren Clark (Grand Ledge), 9.475; 15. Lucas (Canton), 8.850; 23. Jacobs (Salem), 8.625; 24. (tie) Marina Milad (Canton), 8.600; 32. (tie) Ramirez (Salem), 8.250; 35. Engstrom (Plymouth), 8.050; 36. Melotti (Salem), 7.925.

Floor: 1. Amanda Lumley (Farmington), 9.625; 7. (tie) Jane McCurry (Plymouth), 9.375; 14. (tie) Jacobs (Salem), 9.075; 23. (tie) Soper (Salem), 8.900; 30. Kennedi Lewis (Plymouth), 8.675; 33. (tie) Lucas (Canton), Ramirez (Salem), 8.550; 40. Melotti (Salem), 7.825.

All-around: 1. Pelti (Grand Ledge), 37.275; 11. Lucas (Canton), 35.675; 16. Jacobs (Salem), 35.125; 20. Ramirez (Salem), 33.825; 21. Melotti (Salem), 33.625

LACROSSE

Continued from page B1

with the booster clubs' support for the sport, they're able to put on a very nice event.

"The teams that came last year were all very complimentary, and even to the point where they wished their booster clubs could support them as well as what they were seeing."

The tournament offers a primer for the 2012 season, while enabling recreation and incoming high school freshmen players a glimpse into what the sport at the varsity level is all about.

"It does give the underclassmen a chance to see what lacrosse is going to look like at the high school level," said Salem parent Athena Troher.

She has two sons on the Salem varsity, Nick (senior midfielder)



John Halpin (No. 12) of Plymouth High School's boys lacrosse team shoots the ball during the 2011 Black & Blue Tournament. This year's tourney is all day Saturday at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park's varsity turf football field.

and Vince (sophomore defender).

"I think it's a great thing for our program and just for lacrosse in general because there aren't a lot of opportunities for the (PCEP) kids to play together," Troher said. "And to have that many schools interested in getting out there just shows how much the sport is

growing in and of itself."

On the rise

For years lacrosse was popular on the east coast. It then grew in prominence in Colorado and in California. But now, to the delight of Halpin, it's "sure catching on now" in Michigan and surrounding states.

Evidence of that, noted

Conley, is the University of Michigan's decision to sanction lacrosse as an official varsity sport instead of the club-team status it previously had.

players worth their salt will have a shot at receiving athletic scholarships. That's a selling point to parents. But there's plenty to offer the athletes on the field, too.

"It is (growing) because awareness has been raised about it and boys absolutely love it," said Halpin, whose son, John, is a junior attacker for the Wildcats. "It takes all the skills from hockey, baseball, soccer. It's so physical.'

It's so popular, too. Halpin added that John has played a number of sports, and lacrosse is at the top of his rave list. So let the games (er, scrimmages) begin.

> tsmith@hometownlife.com (734) 469-4128

That means high school

Sunday, March 11, 2012, at the

McGuire Skilled Nursing Facility

in Hillsdale, She was born on July 14, 1922 in Hilham, Tennessee to

William & Ova (Dale) Bilyeu.

She was married August 7, 1948

to Gerald L. Wright and he pre-

ceded her in death Nov. 11, 1993.

Pearl retired in 1949 from the

Ford Motor Company. She was a

graduate of Dearborn High School. She was one of the original, "Rosie the Riveter's". In her

younger years she enjoyed swim-

ming, dancing and bowling with

her sisters. In her later years Pearl

enjoyed bingo, gardening, painting and talking politics. Surviving are three children, Pamela

(Gregory) Podsiad of Osseo and

Sandra (Michael) Gee of Lavonia

and Gerald (Glenna) Wright Jr. of Merkle, Texas; 13 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren and 1 great

great-grandchild also survive. She

was preceded in death by her par-

ents, husband, a son James and a daughter Patricia Diane, 3 sisters

and 2 brothers. Funeral services

for Pearl Wright will be Wednesday, March 14, 2012, at 10:00 a.m., at the VanHorn-Eagle

Funeral Home in Hillsdale with

Dr. Daniel Pann , officiating.

Interment will take place at South Lyon Cemetery in South Lyon, Michigan Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. The family will receive

friends for visitation Tuesday

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BELSLEY, LOIS

B4

Passed away on March 10, 2012 at age 87. She was the beloved wife of the late Benjamin Belsley for 56 years. He predeceased her February 20, 2002. Loving mother of Larry (Elaine) Belsley, Linda (John) Reardon, Jeanie (Patrick) Allen, Steven (Patti) Belsley, and Sally (Ron) Blaszczyk. Dear grandmother and Great-grandmother of many adoring grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral service will be held today at the Apostolic Christian Church of Livonia Thursday March 15 2012 at 11:00AM. Memorial donations may be made in her name to the Woodhaven Retirement Community, 29667 Wentworth, Livonia MI 48154.

In memory of



COLEMAN, Thomas M.

Age 67, of Westland, MI, passed away March 13th, son of Malcolm and Margaret Coleman. He married Paula Coleman (Taylor) Sept. 24th, 1967 and she survives. He is also survived by two sons, Donald Thomas (Michelle) Coleman and Sean Patrick (Angela) Coleman; his grandchildren: Kyle Thomas, Thomas Paul, Carlie Ann; one sister: Sharon (Orval) Flick, many nieces, nephews and his faithful dog Buba. He was preceded in death by his parents and one son Ronald. Arrangements at Purse Funeral Home, Adrian, MI Viewing and funeral service will be held at St. Simon' & Inde Catholic Church, Westland, MI. Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society



ELLIS, KATHRYN JEAN

2012. Jean would have 1924 been 88 years old on March 25. She was a sweet, caring woman who raised five children; a very kind and loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt and friend. She was the loving wife of more than 40 years of Russell W. Ellis, who predeceased her in 1986. She passed away peacefully on March 12, 2012, surrounded by family. Born in Detroit, Jean was the daughter of Allan and Mabel Hedley, who both had emigrated from Ontario, Canada. She graduated from Farmington High School in Michigan and attended nursing school in Barrie, Ontario. While there, she met Russ at Wasaga Beach, Ontario, as he was serving in the Canadian Army and based nearby. They married in Stayner, Ontario, in 1943. As the war ended, they lived for a short time in Windsor, Ontario, before moving to the Farmington area where they settled and raised their children. Jean was primarily a homemaker, though she worked for a short time as a nurse and later as a bookkeeper in Russ's real estate business. She was also a member of First United Methodist Church of Farmington since 1947. She loved spending time with family, grandchildren and friends, traveling, music and reading. She believed in the power of faith and positive thinking, as well as the value of tolerance. For more than 40 years, she enjoyed many happy and peaceful times at the family cottage at Belmont Lake, Ontario. Jean is survived by her children, Joan, Judith, William (Theresa), Robert (Lisa) and David (Eileen); sisters, Margaret Schlack and Patricia Eisenlord; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; six nieces and nephews. A Memorial Service will be held 11:00 a.m. Friday, March 16th, at the First United Methodist Church of Farmington, 33112 Grand River Ave., Farmington, MI 48336. The family willsreceive friends for visiting from 9:30 a.m. until 10:45 a.m. in the Markham Room of the church. In lieu of flowers, donations are suggested to First Step, firststepmi.org. Arrangements by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington.

ock Funeral Home, Farmingto www.thayer-rock.com

www.ulayer-toek.com



GORDON G.

March 11, 2012. Age 85. Loving companion of Peggy Vella. Loving father of Gordy, Susan Irish, Gregory (Donna), Gerylann, Nancy (Bill) Wilcox, Geoff (Ashley) and Gary (Charisse). Also survived by 14 grandchildren and 10 Great-grandchildren. He worked at Otis Elevator. Funeral Saturday 10 a.m. from the Chapel of L. J. Griffin Funeral Home, 7707 Middlebelt Road, (at Ann Arbor Trail). Family will be receiving visitors Thursday 6-9 p.m. and Friday 12-9 p.m. Share a "Memorial Tribute" with the family at grifflinfuneralhome.com



HOOVER, ADA ILENE "ADALENE"

Age 96, March 9, 2012. Beloved wife of the late William Hoover. Loving mother of Vickie (Sam), Smoker and Joyce (Doug) Wells. Dear grandmother of Jeremy (April), Joe (Nicole) and Daniel (Jennifer). Great-grandmother of Lucas, Ella and Zoe. Interment was held at Parkview Memorial Cemetery. A Celebration of Life will be held. Contact Joyce for details. Memorial donations may be directed to Samaritan's Purse International Relief. Please share a memory at www.rggrharris.com

JACOBS, BETTY J.

Of Wayne March 10, 2012 age 90. Beloved wife of the late George K. Loving mother of Doreen (the late William) Roe, John (Marilyn) and Deborah Gillette. Dearest grandmother of Stacy Gillette and Mark Thurber. Dear great-grandmother of Anabelle Davis. A memorial gathering will be held Saturday, March 17th from 1:00 until 3:00 at the Uht Funeral Home, 35400 Glenwood St. Westland. Please visit and sign a tribute at www.uhtfh.com.



KLEKNER, MALVINA

Age 91 of Livonia. Beloved wife of the late Roland C. Loving mother of Roland S. (Olga), and Thomas. Dear grandmother of Carolyn, Christina, Danielle, and their mother Catherine. Preceded in death by her two brothers in Hungary. Malvina enjoyed Hungary. Malvina enjoyed friends, sewing, gardening, bak-ing, world travel, and her cherished cat. Visitation will be held at Fred Wood Funeral Homé-Rice Chapel 36100 5 Mile Rd. Livonia of Levan) Thursday from 1-9PM with a 7PM Rosary. Funeral Friday at Holy Cross Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, Detroit, Mi. In-State 10:00AM, Mass Interment 10:30AM. Holy Sepulchre Catholic Cemetery.

Please share memories at Fredwoodfuneralhome.com

STEINLAUF, EDWARD

79 of Bartow, FL passed Saturday. away on March 10, 2012. native of Michigan he moved to Bartow in 1997 after retiring. Edward was a Army Korean War Veteran. He was preceded in death by his wife Margaret and he is survived by Debra Medland (Thomas) and Elaine Jennings (John). Three grandchildren Jason Claypoole (Jessica), Brian Jennings and Lindsay Jennings. The remains of Edward and his wife Margaret are being placed at rest at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, FL. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.whiddenmclean funeralhome.com

May **peace** be with you in this time of **sorrow**.

PERRY, ELIZABETH WRIGHT, PÉARL R. age 80, died March 9, 2012. Age 89, of Hillsdale, passed away

Age 80, died March 9, 2012. Visitation was on March 12 at Phillips Funeral Home. Funeral March 13 at St. Joseph Catholic Church, South Lyon. www.phillipsfuneral.com



March 10, 2012 age 81 of Canton. Loving wife of the late William Edward. Dear mother of Diane (Bill) Dowlin, Scott (Gail) and Randy (Tammy). Proud grandmother of Erin, Jordan and Erika.Funeral service Friday 1 PM at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 46401 West Ann Arbor Road (btwn Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. Visitation Thursday 3-9 .PM at the funeral home. Memorial contributions may be made to Arbor Hospice, American Cancer Society or The Michigan Humane Society. To share memories please visit

vermeulenfuneralhome.com.



evening from 6-8 p.m., at the funeral home. Memorial contributions are suggested to the American Cancer Society. www.eaglefuneralhomes.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2012 **OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC** HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Celebrate Irish culture with food, music, dance

By Sharon Dargay O&E Staff Writer

More than 40 dancers and 20 musicians will keep toes tapping and hands clapping for nine hours at the 27th annual St. Patrick's Day Irish Fest in Westland.

"We've got five fiddlers, banjo, flutes, harp, piano, pipes. We've all played together for years. A lot of them are my former students. They're in college and are coming home to play," said Mick Gavin, musician, fiddle teacher and the Redford resident who founded the annual gathering.

"The whole thing has blossomed over the years into this production. We really don't have a set program. It's word of mouth — you're up in a half hour or you'll be on at 4:30 p.m. or the step dancers are coming, so we need a piano player and a couple of fiddlers on. It's not as complicated as one might think. We're all very familiar with each other. It's more comfortable there than in a crowded pub. There's a big dance floor, a big stage, and no drunks. It's totally different.'

Gavin is proud of the family-friendly atmosphere at the event, which will start at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 17 at the Hellenic Cultural Center, 36375 Joy, east of Newburgh, Westland.

"I wanted to have a cultural day for children and families. It's just a great family day. It's for the community.

A cash bar will be available, but plenty of food will be served, too. The menu includes Emer-



Holland Raper will be among the musicians at the 27th annual St. Patrick's Day Irish Fest in Westland.

27TH ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY IRISH FEST

What: A music, food and dance celebration of Irish culture

When: 3 p.m.-midnight, Saturday, March 17 Where: Hellenic Cultural Center, 36375 Joy, east of Newburgh, Westland, Details: Irish traditional musicians, singers and dancers; cash bar and Irish food available for purchase

Admission: \$10 at the door; children 14 and under admitted free

ald Isle favorites such as corned beef sandwiches, dinners and Irish stew, along with hot dogs and pizza.

Dancers, fiddlers

Dancers from Ardan Academy of Irish Dance and O'Hare School of Irish Dance in Plymouth will perform. Siblings and dance champions,



Members of Crossroads Ceili perform last December at The Ark in Ann Arbor. They'll play traditional Irish songs this Saturday in Westland.

Brian and Megan McParland, who now also teach dance, will be on hand.

"Holland Raper," from the Berklee School in Boston (Mass.) will be there. Holland is one of my former students. Since she was 9, I went to her home and taught her for four hours every week in one sitting. which is unusual for a 9or 10-year-old," Gavin said. "I would ask, 'Are you tired?' And she'd say no."

In addition to Raper and Gavin on fiddle, Gavin's son Michael will play fiddle and banjo and his wife, Colleen will play flute, whistle and Irish pipes. Other musicians will include Kelsey Lutz on fiddle, Lance Wagner on fiddle, Balladeer Eddie McGlinchey with vocals, guitarist Column Paige, Ray Maguire with vocals and guitar, the Dolowy family of Plymouth with fiddle and dancing, Cape Breton pianist Tom Mac-Neil and his son, Callum on Highland pipes.

"They enjoy the camaraderie of being on the big stage," Gavin said, referring to the musicians.

Planning a party

For several years before he founded the annual St. Patrick's Day event, Gavin began

building an audience for Irish music by inviting musicians to play concerts locally.

"I used to get phone calls in November and December trying to book me for St. Patrick's Day. 'Could you come out and play some tunes?' I finally said, 'Listen, why not get a hall and get all these musicians together and have a St. Patrick's Day party?'

"Twenty-seven years later we have St. Patrick's Day (Irish Fest)," Gavin said. "It's in a big hall that holds 1,000. The retirees come in around 3 p.m. to see the dancing and hear music. Families come in around 5-6 p.m.

They like to eat first and then let the kids dance around and watch the dancers."

Musicians will play from 3-4:30, followed by dance performances that are scheduled to end at approximately 9:30 p.m. Musicians will take the stage again and play until midnight.

Musicians will play traditional favorites, take requests and even sing Happy Birthday if anyone in the audience is celebrating.

A raffle also will be held to raise funds for Ardan Academy dancers who plan to compete in world competition this vear.



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ENTERTAINMENT

GET OUT!

Art

CITY GALLERY

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, through April 13; meet-theartist reception, 6-9 p.m. Monday, March 19 Location: In the Costick Center, 28600 W. 11 Mile, Farmington Hills Details: Unique, edgy paper dress creations made of entirely recycled materials by artist Matt Richmond. **Richmond's materials vary** from plastic Kroger bags to Target holiday wrapping paper. The exhibit also features a wide array of fashion images by various photographers, starring Richmond's designs Contact: (248) 473-1856

DETROIT INSTITUTE **OF ARTS**

Time/Dates: 2 p.m. Sundays

Location: 5200 Woodward, Detroit

Details: Target Family Sundays, storytelling, performances, free with admission

Exhibits: Detroit Revealed: Photographs 2000-2010, an exhibit of 50 photos through April 8; Gift of a Lifetime: The James Pearson Duffy Collection of drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures and photographs through March 18

Contact: (313) 833-7900, www.dia.org

NORTHVILLE ART HOUSE

Time/Date: Through March 23

Location: 215 W. Cady, Northville

Details: Call for entries for the 4th Annual West of Center All-Media Show. Applications with jpgs on CDs must be hand-delivered or shipped to the Northville Art House to arrive by March 23. Applications are available on the Art House website at www.northvillearts.org. The show will open June 1

Current exhibit: Anarchy of the Line; Drawing Comes of Age features works by 14 artists, through March 24

Contact: (248) 344-0497 or e-mail to arthouseoffice@ northvillearts.org

UNIVERSITY OF MICHI-GAN

Time/Date: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday, through May 20



Paper dresses by Matt Richmond are on display through April 13 in Farmington Hills.



Devil's Night Dames captain Yo-Yo, greets fans at Masonic Temple in Detroit. Her team will take on reigning champion roller derby team, the Detroit Pistoffs, Saturday, March 17.

Comedy

COMEDY JAM

Time/Date: 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Saturday, March 24 Location: Michigan Firehouse Museum, 110 W. Cross, Ypsilanti Details: Fifth annual jam features Rex Havens in his one-man comedy, "Bidding You A fond I Do" and bene-fits the museum. Tickets are \$25 for general seating and \$35 for premium seating Contact: (734) 547-0663

GO COMEDY!

Time/Date: Various show times Wednesdays through Sundays

Location: 261 E. Nine Mile, Ferndale Details: Improv most nights. Open mic/jam session show for improvisers is 10 p.m. Wednesdays Contact: (248) 327-0575; gocomedy.net

Hear pirate tunes at barbershop chorus show

Harmony Town Chorus will pillage and plunder its way in song across the seven seas, 3 p.m., Sunday, March 25 at Thurston High School, 26255 Schoolcraft, Redford.

The buccaneer-themed "A Pirate's Life," concert will feature a play set to music as the Chorus sings pirate songs, hunts for buried treasure and finds a safe harbor where they can end their journey

Ebb 'N' Flow, the 2011 District Quartet champions, and Harmony Town's quartet, Impulse, also will perform.

Tickets are \$13 in advance and \$15 at the door.

The price to "board" our Barbershop voyage are just 13 dollars advance, 15 dollars at the door. Buy online at wesingbarbershop. com or call (734) 743-1764.



Tony Pyrkosz (left), Paul Michalik, Frank Adams, and Don Bohnwagner get into the spirit of their upcoming concert, "A Pirate's Life," Sunday, March 25, in Redford.



Location: University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor

Details: "Fluxus and the Essential Questions of Life," includes more than 100 works by major artists, such as Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik and George Maciunas; admission is free

Contact: (734) 764-0395

Benefit

LSO TEA

Time/Date: 2-4 p.m. Sunday, March 18 Location: Livonia Marriott Inn, located between Newburgh and I-275 off Six Mile, Livonia

Details: First annual tea event to celebrate the "wearing of the green" with great food, fun, prizes and Irish music. Tickets are \$30 and benefit the Livonia Symphony Orchestra. Reservations due Thursday, March 25

Contact: www.livoniasymphony.org; (734) 522-1687

JD'S HOUSE OF COMEDY

Time/Date: Various show times Wednesday-Saturday evenings

Location: 25333 W. 12 Mile, inside Star Theatre complex, Southfield

Details: Stand-up shows, 8 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m., 10:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; Apollo amateur night, 8 p.m. Wednesday Contact: (248) 348-2420 or www.ticketmaster.com

JOEY'S COMEDY **CLUB OF LIVONIA**

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Mondays, open Mic; 8 p.m. Tuesdays, Local Legends; 8 p.m. shows Wednesdays, Thursdays; 8 p.m. & 10:30. p.m. Fridays, Saturdays Location: 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia Details: Tracy Smith, through March 17; Horace HB Smith, March 21-24; Dave Landau, March 28-31 Contact: (734) 261-0555, www.kickerscomplex.com

Subscribing has

The following subscribers have won a FREE 4-square Cheese Pizza from Buddy's in our weekly drawing:

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- Margie Raymond Canton
- Kenneth Griffin **Farmington Hills**
- Richard Boyce Garden City
- **Daniel Zigulis** New Hudson
- Donna Keller Livonia
- Lorraine Auten Westland

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- Clifford Jones Southfield
- Walter Sahijdak . Novi
- Steve Mahan Milford

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Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, March 15, 2012



B8.(*) THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2012 OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

FOOD

SHARON DARGAY, EDITOR SDARGAY@HOMETOWNLIFE.COM (313) 222-8883 FACEBOOK: HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Preaching the wonders of coffee

By Dan Dean Staff Columnist

am a believer. I once was lost, but now am saved from the lousy coffee syndrome that has taken a firm hold on the psyche of our fast-paced, have to have everything on



the go, society. I am here to preach the virtues of quality coffee. Maybe it's the fact that

Coffee Preacher

Dan Dean

I am staring down at my 50th

birthday and I am tired of the push for more and more — whether in food portions or drink sizes. I would rather spend more money for real quality in smaller portions. And this is most evident in the coffee

I choose to drink. Like most people who make life-changing adjustments, I was near the bottom. Oh sure, those around me thought that I was in coffee heaven. I owned my own coffee shop and had access to all the coffee and espresso one could drink. And while on the outside I had a beautiful, supportive wife and three amazing kids and one killer coffee shop inside I had a stirring deep in my soul. I knew that there had to be better coffee.

Let the blind see

I had read about the comparisons of coffee to wine and on the surface it sounded plausible - both wine and coffee are made from an agricultural crop. And as I had read, the very nuances that give grapes their distinct flavor profiles that show up in wine - things like soil quality, altitude, climate and processing meu ods - all can be identified in coffee beans. I was still a skeptic, until another recovering photojournalist/coffee guy sent me a pound of coffee that opened my eyes. With alleluias ringing in my head, I sipped the pure blissfulness that originated from a farm in Panama. That coffee from Jeff Taylor at PT's Coffee in Topeka, Kan., is the one that I now blame for occasional impulse purchases of \$25 and even up to \$50 for a halfpound of coffee. The reality is - in the long run - to truly appreciate and savor coffee can



Using coffee from a local roaster less than a week old, a small 4-oz. cup, filtered water and a single brewing device like the Bee House ceramic dripper pictured above is a wonderful way to appreciate all coffee has to offer in flavor and aroma.



Subscribers can read about local coffee roasters who are changing the perception of coffee in today's issue of Hometown Life Inspire.

bean coffee from A&P ground at home in a \$10 grinder. But it was when I became aware of the care and hard work it takes to produce coffee that I truly started to walk the walk. The coffee we drink - except for the kind still sold as ground coffee in a can - is the seed of cherries grown at a high altitude, requiring the cherries to be picked and sorted by hand. There are different methods of removing the pulp to reveal the seed, which ultimately is the coffee bean, that is mostly a manual process as well, depending on the meth-

od used. It is a labor of love and hard work for farmers trying to eke out a living for their families. But there are roasters like my friend Jeff Taylor who are working directly with farmers to produce better crops and hence a contract to pay a higher price for beans. These Direct Trade relationships are making a better life for the producers and a better cup for consumers.

Unravel the mystery

There is something special that happens when the correct weight of beans ground just right — is unit-ed with the correct weight of filtered 201.5-degree water. The combination produces a mouth-watering aroma from pungent steam resulting in a beautiful, creamy, sweet, slurry of goodness. It may take a leap of faith to start your walk along a path to appreciating a smaller quantity of quality coffee - but the payoff in the end is likely more money in your pocket

CITY BITES Bon appétit

FARMINGTON HILLS - The staff and students of Oakland Community College's Culinary Studies Institute will prepare an "April in Paris" dinner Thursday, April 5, at OCC's Orchard Ridge Campus, located on Orchard Lake Road just south of I-696. The sixcourse meal highlights French foods and wine and will begin with passed hors d'oeuvres at 6 p.m. A cash bar also will be featured. Tickets are \$60 per person. The event will feature entertainment typical of a French bistro and the Culinary Studies Institute Bakery will be open, offering French pastries to take home, or enjoy on site. Participants may "dress to impress" (men in ties, and women in pearls) in their favorite French attire, including berets. Get a ticket order form at www.oaklandcc. edu/culinary, or by calling Maureen Gilbert at (248) 522-3700. Checks should be made out to Oakland Community College.

Vegan chef

WEST BLOOMFIELD — Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital will offer a vegan cooking class with Chef George Vutetakis, executive chef at Garden Fresh Gourmet, 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, March 28, in the demonstration kitchen at the hospital, 6777 W. Maple. Registration will close 72 hours before the start of class. Cost is \$19. The class will feature recipes from Vutetakis' Vegetarian Traditions: Favorite Recipes from My Years at the Legendary Inn Season Café cookbook. Vutetakis, who learned to cook in his Greek grandmother's kitchen, doesn't try to imitate meat in his cooking but instead focuses on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and beans. He works with local organic farmers, whom he credits as the heroes behind the creation of his sustainable,

Crafting one small cup of coffee at a time using fresh roasted and fresh ground coffee, is a sensory overload well worth the few minutes it takes to brew.

Walk the road less traveled

My journey started long ago, when I gave up the can for Eight O'clock whole and more money for coffee farmers.

It is a miracle to behold and worth the leap of faith that will unlock your senses to a new way of thinking about coffee.

Next month: Think I am crazy for spending \$50 on a bag of coffee? I am not the only one.

Dan Dean, assistant managing editor of presentation for the Observer & Eccentric and Hometown Newspapers, is a former independent coffee shop owner. He can be reached by e-mail at ddean@hometownlife.com. healthy cuisine. To register or for more information call (248) 325-3890, or e-mail dk@hfhs.org.

Wine tasting

LIVONIA - Learn to guess what's in the glass using all your senses at a wine tasting at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 29 at d.vine wines, 17386 Haggerty. You'll learn about terrier, grape varietals, growing regions, and how winemaking techniques can affect how the wine presents itself. Cost is \$15 per person; \$10 for Wine Club members. Call (734) 432-3800 for reservations; www.dvinefinewines.com.

Find a premium pour at the local watering hole

The cover story of the latest installment of *Draft Magazine* highlights the 100 Best Beer Bars in Amer-

ica. The Midwest district is well represented by Michigan establishments worthy of the coveted award. Many are located outside the distribution of this paper but

13

Beer Tracker

still worth a vis- Nate Parsons

it for those seeking beer enlightenment further than the front porch. The Hop Cat in Grand Rapids comes highly recommend for those looking for premium pours with a casual vibe.

The premise behind Beer Tracker is to bring attention to what many consider the best beer in the world, and more importantly where these selections can be obtained locally. Piqued with enough interest, a visit to the local liquor store would be warranted by the reader, then back home for a private tasting. Although enjoying a world class beverage in the comfort of home has benefits, venturing out to the local waterhole has its upside.

be a cost savings, especial-

ly if you are accustomed to

parting with \$4 or \$5 for a

sugary 24-ounce concoction

that has little resemblance

to the agricultural product.

Navigating today's drinking landscape for those looking for a premium pour is a hit or miss proposition with no guarantees. While there is no silver bullet to satisfy all, there are those who make a conscious effort to cater to the beer enthusiast.

Hermann's Olde Town Grille – Plymouth

Hermann's is considered by most the quintessential neighborhood pub, the type of place that demonstrates the "social lubricity" a couple of good pints can facilitate. Someday it will become desirable and even fashionable for every town to have a local neighborhood pub. Until then, Hermann's will have to suffice. Not known for an extensive tap line, Franziskaner, a traditional German Hefe-Weisse brewed



by Spaten Brau always is present. Upon delivery the body is cloudy orange, as hints of lemon, honey, and clove scents drift from the glass. Taste is citrusy and refreshing, perfect for the summer but enjoyed year around.

Pizzeria Biga – Farmington Hills

The idea of beer and pizza starts the mouth watering like

Pavlov's dog. Taking this concept to the next level has been a winning combination for many proprietors. Pizzeria Biga, on the boarder of Farmington Hills and Southfield, offers authentic Neapolitan pizza and a well-thought-out beer menu. Old Rasputin Imperial Stout from North Coast Brewery can be found here on a nitro tap... worth the trip in itself. The black opaque offering with cascading carbonation packs a punch at 9% ABV. The robust flavor yet silky delivery is an intoxicating tonic for those looking to graduate from a traditional Guinness.

Ashley's Pub - Westland

Boasting 101 beers, Ashley's is the place when looking for sheer quantity and quality. Truly a world class selection from local product to premium sippers from abroad. The draught line changes daily with rotating Belgium, US Craft, Michigan Craft, and Beer of the Month selections. Piraat, a Belgium IPA from Brouwerij Van Steenberge is a mainstay on tap. Served in the proper glassware Piraat shimmers smoky orange with a snowy white head. Layers of bready malts and citrus wash the mouth and exit with a crisp finish. A slice of heaven in our own backyard.

Just a few of my favorites! Tell me yours? Cheers!

Nate Parsons can be contacted at modevin@yahhoo.com

JULIE BROWN, EDITOR REAL ESTATE B9.(*) JCBROWN@HOMETOWNLIFE.COM THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2012 (313) 222-6755 **OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC** FACEBOOK: HOMETOWNLIFE.COM HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Home Expo pros see rebound in economy

By Julie Brown O&E Staff Writer

Jason Benward of Canton is remodeling manager for Horton Plumbing & Remodeling of Plymouth, and among some 135 vendors at the 11th annual Canton Home Expo March 3-4. He and other business people were seeing plenty of potential customers those days at the Summit on the Park in Canton.

"The 'age in place,' we call it," saïd Benward, who cites taller toilets and step-in shower replacements for older people who wish to stay in their homes.

"And they're maintenance-free, which is nice," he said of the upgrades. "There's no grout or caulk.'

Benward said sales are up, "especially in Canton. Canton right now is booming, which is great. We love serving Canton." His business dates back to 1985.

The annual expo, which draws some 5,000-6,000 over a Saturday and Sunday, is sponsored by Canton Township, the Canton Chamber of Commerce and the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Lee Brees, general manager of Colonial Heating & Cooling in Plymouth, was also pleased with expo traffic for his first visit to the event.

"It's been very nice," said Livonia resident Brees, whose business started 13 years ago. "Traffic has been good.

He noted a lot of people still can't move from their homes easily, so they fix them up. Rebates and tax credits brought him past business.

"We are seeing a different kind of business coming up," said Brees, who agreed some people buy-



The Canton Home Expo draws a big crowd each year of those eager to learn about home improvement options.

ing bank-owned homes need work done on those.

Projects in mind

Jennifer and Allen Williams of Canton were firsttime visitors to the Home Expo. The homeowners had just arrived.

"We have some ideas," said Allen Williams, who with his wife has two dogs and a cat. They've been in their home six years.

"We haven't done any major work, just general upkeep," he said. They may replace floors in the kitchen/dining areas, as well as updating the bath and the kitchen counters.

"Just checking it out right now," he said. "It's literally five minutes down the road.'

Nearby was Shawn Brown of N.A. Mans



Canton Township staffers answer questions on building and inspections during the recent Home Expo.

Building Center of Canton and Trenton, familyowned since 1900. They

do the Canton show most years, the Downriver resident said.

"Things are picking up," Brown said. "People are anxious for spring, I think. They seem to be fixing up what they have."

When asked about the recession ending, Brown said, "I hope so, definitely hope so."

Jason Breneman of Troy was representing Everdry Waterproofing of Sterling Heights at the Summit. "People aren't buying new houses, they're fixing them up," Breneman said.

Those who buy fixeruppers need work done as well, said Breneman, whose employer's been in business since 1977. He said the recession is "possibly" over.

'Coming back'

Todd Kroll of Birmingham owns Kroll Construc-

\$207,000

\$60,000

tion of Garden City, in business 51 years. "It's been excellent, it's been good," he said of business. 'It's coming back. A lot of interest early in the year."

His customers are looking at bath remodeling, roofing, siding, "a little bit of everything. They're looking to fix up their homes.

Kroll credits a "phenomenal referral program" of word of mouth, supplemented with other promotional efforts, in the business' longevity.

"Our past customers keep us going," he said. 'That's how my dad built the business."

John Weyer, Canton building official, was a busy man at the two-day expo. It started as a oneday event and grew, said Weyer, a Canton resident.

Some 135 vendors come, mostly from southeast Michigan. "We've even had them come from as far as Ohio," Weyer said.

Some vendors have attended yearly since the start. Customers have projects in mind and can get answers.

"They can come out and within a couple hours go through the show," he said. Free admission's also a draw, and vendors pay less than at other shows.

The Home Depot sponsors workshops for kids. The Detroit Carpenters Council was outside raffling off benches.

Weyer said the expo helps businesses, residents and township officials interested in code enforcement.

"So it's just a win-win. It's just very positive," he said. "We're happy to see the new housing starts," he added, noting many others wish to stay put and upgrade homes.

jcbrown@hometownlife.com

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HOMES SOLD-REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS/WAYNE

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estate closings recorded the week
of Nov. 28 to Dec. 2, 2011, at the
Wayne County Register of Deeds
office. Listed below are cities, ad-
dresses, and sales prices.

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1939 Echo Woods Dr	\$253,000
7198 Fox Woods Dr	\$232,000
50036 Grant St	\$220,000
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HOMES SOLD-REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS/OAKLAND

e are the area residential state closings recorded the of Nov. 21-25, 2011, at the and County Register of Deeds . Listed below are cities, ad- es, and sales prices.	\$175,000 BLOOMFIELD HILLS 4895 Franklin Rd 6702 Cathedral Dr 5507 Farmers Ln 1847 Golf Ridge Dr 2388 Klingensmith Rd 5495 Shadow Ln COMMERCE TOWNSHIP 4700 Botany Gln 5618 Deerwood 2360 Melmoor St	\$225,000 \$156,000 \$390,000 \$390,000 \$320,000 \$22,000 \$30,000 \$241,000 \$241,000	FARMINGTON *33615 Hillcrest Dr FARMINGTON HILLS 37814 Blossom Ln 34645 Brittany Dr 33449 Colfax Dr 27654 E Echo Vly 34743 Huntington Ct 23040 Montclair St 28400 Rollcrest Rd 29760 Sierra Point Cir 29860 W 12 Mile Rd	\$55,000 \$185,000 \$248,000 \$77,000 \$40,000 \$775,000 \$57,000 \$57,000 \$57,000 \$125,000 \$125,000 \$31,000	FRANKLIN 30500 Rosemond Dr NOVI 45565 Bristol Cir 21403 Chase Dr 41691 Magnolia Ct 23310 Meadowbrook Rd 302 South Lake Dr SOUTH LYON 23665 Country Club Dr 54901 Grenelefe Cir W 54907 Grenelefe Cir W	\$148,000 \$288,000 \$429,000 \$90,000 \$119,000 \$150,000 \$110,000 \$304,000 \$50,000	52528 Trailwood Dr 52528 Trailwood Dr SOUTHFIELD 27100 Harvard Rd 28402 Idensbrook Ct 18455 Kesh St 17176 Meirose St 30058 Sparkleberry Dr WHITE LAKE 8835 Cove Ct 9105 Steephollow Dr	\$125,000 \$2,000 \$190,000 \$48,000 \$50,000 \$255,000 \$175,000 \$185,000	
S Old Woodward Ave Unit	3260 Melmoor St	\$73,000	29860 W 12 Mile Rd	\$31,000	54907 Grenelete Cir W	\$50,000			

Real Estate Career Seminar

A free Real Estate Career Seminar will be held 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15, at Keller Williams Realty 40600 Ann Arbor Road, Suite 100 Plymouth. For more information, contact Lesley Aiello at (734) 459-4700 or laiello@ kw.com.

Seminar on Tuesdays

A free Reverse Mortgage Seminar is 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Colonial Mortgage Corp., 33919 Plymouth Road, Livonia. No obligation. Learn about reverse mortgages. RSVP with Larry Brady at (800) 260-5484, Ext. 33.

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@addedvaluerealty.com or visit FreeForeclosureTour.com.

New face

RE/MAX Classic welcomes aboard veteran Realtor Shangrila Seawright to the Can-

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS



Shangrila Seawright

age. Seawright specializes in residential and commercial sales and brings with her a strong background in bank-owned and investment properties.

estate broker-

"Shangrila is a wealth of knowledge in residential investment properties in

Western Wayne and Oakland counties," said broker/owner Carol Boji. "Her high level of energy and enthusiasm is a welcome addition to our office and our firm. We are very happy to have her join us.'

On Facebook

RE/MAX has launched a new Facebook page for customers and the public to get direct answers for their real estate questions from RE/ MAX experts. The new site is a chance for the public to ASKREMAX and get clear, expert answers in real time.

Visit www.facebook.com/

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Finance Seminar

Learn how to finance your purchase and rehab projects in and around Detroit. Hear from an expert in the lending business, Trent Dalrymple, who has more than 25 years of experience. Real estate and investment professionals are welcome. Seating 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, 26711 Woodward Ave., Suite 301, Huntington Woods.



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		30 Yr.	Pts.	15 Yr.	Pts.	Other
1st Choice Mortgage Lending	(734) 459-0782	3.625	0	3	0	J/A
Accurate Mortgage Solutions	(800) 593-1912	3.75	0	3.125	0	J/A
AFI Financial	(877) 234-0600	3.625	0	3	0	J/A/F
Ameriplus Mortgage Corp.	(248) 740-2323	3.75	0	3	0	J/A
BRINKS Financial Group	(800) 785-4755	3.5	0,875	2.875	0.5	J/A/V/F
Client Services by Golden Rule	(800) 991-9922	3.625	1	2.875	0.625	J/A/V/F
Co-op Services Credit Union	(734) 466-6113	4.125	0.25	3.375	0	J
Dearborn Federal Savings Bank	(313) 565-3100	4.125	0	3.375	0	A
Fifth Third Bank	(800) 792-8830	4.125	0	3.125	0	J/A/V/F
Golden Rule Mortgage	(800) 991-9922 .	3.75	0	2.9	0.5	J/A/V/F
Group One Mortgage	(248) 282-1602	4.125	0	3.5	0	J/A/V/F
Mortgages by Golden Rule	(800) 991-9922	3.5	1.625	2.75	1.375	J/A/V/F
Talmer Bank & Trust	(800) 462-2786	4	0	3.375	0	J/A/V/F

Above Information available as of 3/9/12 and subject to change at anytime. Rates are based on a \$200,000 loan with 20% down & credit score of 740 or above. Jumbo rates, specific payment calculation & most current rates available Fridays after 2:00 P.M. at www.rmcreport.com Key to "Other" column - J= Jumbo, A = Arm, V = VA, F = FHA & NR = Not Reported. All Lenders are Equal Opportunity Lenders. Lenders to participate call (734) 922-3032 © 2012 Residential Mortgage Consultants, Inc., All Rights Reserved

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