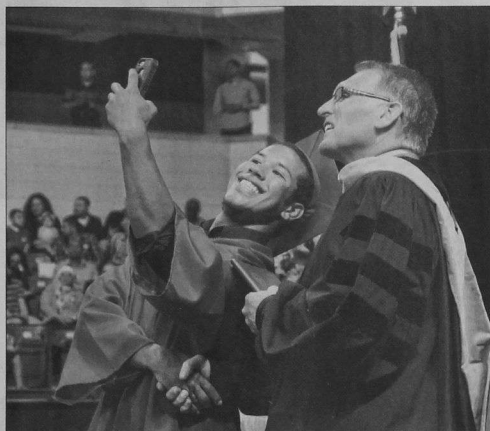


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Jevon Hill takes an epic graduation selfie with Superintendent Dr. Michael Meissen. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

TAKING LIFE'S NEXT STEP

Seniors earn their diplomas at graduation ceremony

By Brad Kadrich
Staff Writer

Sunday marked Dr. Michael Meissen's first commencement as superintendent of Plymouth-Canton Community Schools as he watched Canton, Salem and Plymouth seniors earn their diplomas during the annual graduation ceremony at Eastern Michigan University.

As the longest-serving member of the district's Board of Education, it was board President Judy Mardigian's last.

And both were inspired witnessing the graduates of the district's three high schools earn their diplomas and take that next biggest step in their lives.

"It was wonderful, but it was so bitter-sweet," said Mardigian, who won't seek

re-election to the seat she's held for 18 years. "The memories of all the years and the speeches and the kids. ... The happiest days as a school board member are seeing the kids at one of the major turning points in their lives. I'm really going to miss that."

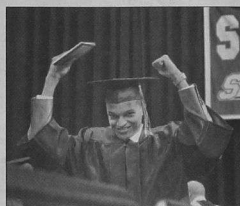
Meissen, just finishing his first year at the helm of the state's fourth-largest district, called the experience "awesome."

"As an educator, it's really rewarding to see the accomplishments of our students," said Meissen, who comes from a family of educators. "We have students who are really well-prepared by our teachers, by the community and by their parents."

For more photos from Sunday's ceremonies, please turn to pages A7, A8 and A10.



Myrka Paulina Diaz-Lopez and Andrea Veronica Andrade are excited to graduate.



Drake Marquan Jordan celebrates on stage.

Major outlet mall coming to Canton

By Brad Kadrich
Staff Writer

Shoppers tired of driving to Auburn Hills or Birch Run to find a good outlet mall will have their problems solved in the next 24 months or so if plans made by a Baltimore-based developer go through.

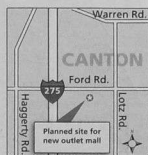
Paragon Outlet Partners is scheduled to break ground next spring on a 357,000-square-foot outlet mall that could feature as many as 100 stores and open by summer 2016.

Paragon's development would join other outlet malls in the region, including Tan-O-Outlets in Howell, Birch Run Premium Outlets in Birch Run and Great Lakes Crossing Outlets in Auburn Hills.

Kristen Thomas, Canton's economic development manager, said township officials believe an outlet mall in Canton could give the same sort of boost to the area as did IKEA when it opened in June 2006.

"The kinds of retailers they attract ... we don't have any of that in the area," said Thomas, who pointed out tenants in some of Paragon's other malls include brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Nike and Calvin Klein. "It would be a regional draw, just as IKEA is."

Thomas said the outlet mall, which would be located on the south side of Ford Road between Lotz and the I-275 interchange, would be good



for other businesses in the area.

"People would be coming from all over the area," she said. "People might spend the night here, they'll stay for dinner, they might do some more shopping along Ford Road. We have so many visitors to the area because of IKEA and the sports center on Michigan Avenue, it creates a great synergy. Not only did more visitors come, it brought more retailers who hoped to build off the draw of IKEA."

Aaron O'Malley, the general manager at Guitar Center on Ford Road near the site where the mall will be built, agreed with Thomas.

"More (customer) traffic in the area would be welcome," O'Malley said. "A destination spot like that is going to bring more foot traffic for (businesses) to interact with."

The kitchen manager at

See MALL, Page A2

Canton board adopts equal rights rules

By Darrell Clem
Staff Writer

In a crowd-rousing, historic decision Tuesday night, Canton became the 35th municipality in Michigan to adopt an anti-discrimination ordinance hailed as a major victory by the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and its supporters.

A crowd of human rights advocates packed a Canton Township Board of Trustees session, relaying personal stories and convincing elected officials not to stall their vote or wait for action out of Lansing.

Trustee Steven Sneiderman, the seven-member board's lone Democrat, drew majority support from his Republican

colleagues in helping to protect LGBT rights in housing, the workplace and public accommodations. He said gays can be fired simply because of their sexual orientation.

"It's not right," said Sneiderman, who brought the ordinance forward.

One 'no' vote

Trustee Tom Yack cast the lone dissenting vote, saying the state should take the lead rather than local governments who lack the expertise to investigate complaints. No one in the audience Tuesday spoke against the ordinance, though supporters say opposition still could surface.

Sommer Foster, a Canton resident, library trustee and

See EQUAL, Page A2



Tina Terrill speaks to the Canton Township board about the need for the ordinance. BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ONLINE: Complete lists of graduates online at www.hometownlife.com



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District votes to privatize custodians

By Brad Kadrich
Staff Writer

Over the protests of dozens of employees and supporters urging them not to do so — and despite cautionary tales from staffers who've worked with the private firm it was hiring — Plymouth-Canton's Board of Education voted Tuesday to privatize the district's custodial services.

In a 5-2 vote, the board agreed to hire Grand Rapids Building Services, Inc., to perform custodial services beginning with the 2014-15 school year. The deal is for three years, with mutual options for two more.

Brodie Killian, the district's deputy superintendent for business and operations, said the district should save some \$600,000 or \$700,000 in the first year of the contract.

GRBS was chosen from a list of four finalists, three of which are headquartered in Michigan. The fourth was a Chicago-based firm. The deal effectively

puts the district's 68 custodians out of work, many of them before they could become vested in the retirement plan.

"We recognize this affects many people who've been a part of our organization for many years," Killian told board members.

Killian said after the meeting that current custodians would be given "first crack" at jobs with GRBS. He said the contract will actually employ more custodians than the district has been able to provide. He said the district expects the coverage-per-square-foot for each custodian should drop and GRBS should provide some 30,000 more man-hours, the equivalent of nearly 11 full-time-equivalent positions.

"We made sure our scope of services were very clear," Killian said. That didn't make the district's custodians any happier. Many of them — dozens all told in the last couple of months — spoke to the board during the citizen comments part of the meeting agenda

about the dedication and sacrifices custodians have made, including reducing staff, giving back \$1 million and 17 unpaid furlough days the last two years.

Jon Stamper, a third-generation support staffer in the district, urged board members to find a different way to save money.

"For over 50 years, my family has served as familiar faces to the administrators, students and faculty of these schools," Stamper said. "Behind me is a room of familiar faces who arrive every day with the charge of looking after the security and well-being of the environment where this community's next generation grows."

Board President Judy Mardigan and Secretary Kim Crouch voted against the contract.

"It's not just about finances, it's about kids," Crouch said. "It's not just about who's teaching them, it's about who's working in our buildings. It's easy to say (custodians) aren't in the classroom, but they're a really



Plymouth-Canton custodians and supporters staged a quiet rally Tuesday night outside the district's board offices on Harvey, shortly before the Board of Education voted to privatize their jobs.

critical part. You can't outsource family." Other trustees blamed the district's financial ills on Lansing, saying the state has failed to provide adequate funding, especially for Plymouth-Canton schools. Trustee

Sheila Paton pointed out neighboring districts such as Livonia, Northville and Van Buren all get more funding than Plymouth-Canton.

"I don't understand why a kid in Northville is worth more than a kid in

Plymouth-Canton," Paton said. "I don't want to vote for (privatization), but I'm going to vote for it. I don't feel I have any other choices."

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Rendering of the proposed outlet mall on Ford Road in Canton.

MALL

Continued from Page A1

Hayden's, also located near the potential mall site, said the outlet mall "will be great."

"It will bring more value to this side of I-275, where there's less shopping," said Ditto, who runs the restaurant's kitchen. "I think our volumes will increase, especially at lunch time, when people are doing their shopping."

Nicholas King, a principal with Paragon, said

the company is "excited about Canton" and believes the metro Detroit market can handle — even needs — another outlet center.

Paragon, he pointed out, has been "successful developing outlet centers" for more than 20 years, including its most recent one in Minneapolis, Minn. He said the company is in the developmental stage right now and is "in the process" of speaking with potential tenants.

In fact, he said, he'll be in Canton today to meet with prospective tenants.

"We try to differentiate ourselves from the existing retail offerings in the market," King said. "We try to bring a unique tenant mix, some products and some brands that aren't in the area."

Thomas said Canton officials met with Paragon at a Las Vegas convention last month. She said the development comes at a good time, even for the traffic-challenged Ford Road/275 area. The township recently received some \$5 million for paving Lotz out to Cherry Hill and another \$1.8 million for improvements to the I-275 interchange.

"The nice thing is it's east of I-275 and most of the (traffic) problems are west of I-275," Thomas said.

King said Paragon has already started looking at traffic issues and doesn't think there will be additional problems related to the outlet mall.

"We'll do full traffic studies and work with municipalities and the state and local highway folks to make sure it functions for us and for everybody else," King said. "We've looked at it already and we don't anticipate any problems."

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EQUAL

Continued from Page A1

director of political advocacy for Equality Michigan, praised the township board's decision.

"I am overjoyed that my community decided to lead and show the state of Michigan that we need to protect all citizens," Foster said.

The board's vote marked a departure from its plan to delay a vote possibly until January to give the state time to address the issue. Canton's vote, which came after Trustee Pat Williams called for a required second reading, makes it illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, HIV status, race, color, religion, sex, age, height, weight, national origin, condition of pregnancy, source of income, family responsibilities and physical or mental limitations. Advocates say most of those already are covered by state or federal laws.

Tina Terrill said she came out as a lesbian at age 48. She said she chose to live in Canton 15 years ago because of its diversity. She pleaded with the board not to delay its vote.

"We need it now," she said.

Youth voice

Scott Green, a 15-year-old student at the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park, said the board should send a message against discrimination.

"It will send a personal message to every single student, every



Sommer Foster of Canton, director of political advocacy for Equality Michigan, speaks about the vote. BILL BREKLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

single family, that this is a conversation that needs to be had," Green said.

Canton resident Joe Mason said he supported the LGBT crowd because, as an African American, he recalled the fear of discrimination his grandfather faced decades ago in Mississippi.

"Send a message loud and clear," Mason said. Jay Kaplan, an American Civil Liberties Union staff attorney for Michigan's LGBT Project, said a growing number of companies are supportive of human rights legislation. He said the board's vote would show that "Canton values diversity."

The Rev. Bryan Smith, pastor of Geneva Presbyterian Church in Canton, said the church board supported a Canton equal rights ordinance that would reflect the values of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Smith urged the board Tuesday to protect people who live and work in Canton "starting tonight."

Mark Bonekowski, a Farmington Hills resident and gay Republican,

said he believes presidents such as Ronald Reagan would be on board to further LGBT rights: "The time is now."

Under the ordinance, people who believe they have faced discrimination can contact township officials, who could try to help the two sides reach a conciliatory agreement. If that fails, the township could potentially issue a citation for a civil infraction, with possible fines for confirmed acts of discrimination. Officials indicated Tuesday much of the work would fall on Supervisor Phil LaJoy.

After the meeting, LaJoy called the board's vote "the right decision."

Kate Borninski, treasurer of Plymouth-Canton PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), agreed.

"I think the board was very brave," she said. "It was a courageous thing they did, but it was needed. It sends a message that the board supports all people."

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Phil LaJoy talks to the group about the impact on business of Personal Property Tax reform. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER (STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

Voters get GOP view on state, local issues

By Matt Jachman
Staff Writer

Voters got a Republican perspective on major issues — from Wayne County's budget woes to the possibility of a regional water authority to state funding for roads and schools — Monday evening in Canton Township.

About 80 people packed the meeting room at the township administration building to hear election-year briefings from local and state officials on issues they face as Michigan's August primary approaches.

The condition of the state's roads — and finding money to improve them — took center stage. "I've been pretty passionate about finding a way to fix our roads without raising taxes," said state Sen. Patrick Colbeck, R-Canton, one of the panelists.

Joining Colbeck for the presentation were county Commissioner Shannon Price, R-Canton; Canton Supervisor Phil LaJoy, and Plymouth-Canton Community Schools Trustee Mike Maloney. Both Colbeck and Price represent Plymouth and Plymouth Township, as well as Canton.

Think different

Colbeck said he is against a proposed one-cent increase in the state sales tax — which would annually raise an estimated \$1.2 billion, the amount Gov. Rick Snyder has called for in additional road funding — and is looking for alternatives to the current system, both in operations and revenue generation.

Those would include, Colbeck said, cost-saving efficiencies in the Michigan Department of Transportation, roads that are built to last longer and are less costly to maintain and programs for generating revenue such as rest-stop concessions, highway billboards and the sale of naming rights.

"Let's look at a different way of doing things," Colbeck said.

Price also addressed road conditions, listing several local improvement projects planned for 2014 and beyond, including:

- Widening Cherry Hill to three lanes between Canton Center and Beck, in 2015.

- Widening Beck to three lanes between Warren and Ann Arbor Trail, in 2015.

- A new traffic signal at Beck and Saltz, in



Sen. Pat Colbeck talks about public school funding.

2014.

Upgrading portions of Lilley in Plymouth (between Main and Ann Arbor Trail) and Canton (between Warren and Joy), in 2015 or 2016.

DWSD future

Price also spoke of the possibility of turning over the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department to a regional authority, for a price, which is part of a broader plan to help Detroit emerge from bankruptcy. The plan, which has spurred push-back from some suburban leaders, is in court-ordered mediation; Price said Detroit's emergency manager, Kevin Orr, is also considering selling the department to a private entity.

Price said suburban leaders are seeking department data that will help them make a decision and want to make sure that future rate increases can be capped.

"If we can't cap increases at 4 percent, it's a bad deal and we don't want it," Price said.

Price also addressed the issue of the county's budget deficit, which, he said, was at \$175 million as of last Sept. 30 and on a course to increase by \$30 million this fiscal year.

However, Price said, a multi-faceted deficit elimination plan could result in a small surplus by the end of 2015.

Price said the decline in property values that came with the Great Recession can be blamed for much of the county's deficit. Some \$120 million in tax revenue was lost, he said, while the county made budget cuts totaling \$90 million.

"We've got to find that extra \$30 million," he said.

Numbers game

Maloney, the schools trustee, and Colbeck also took up the issue of public education funding, with Colbeck saying an

accounting change — the state putting more money into its education retirement fund so that districts would have to add lesser amounts to that fund — and the drying up of federal stimulus dollars after three years contributed to a perception that schools were getting less money.

"You cannot say that we haven't made education funding a priority," Colbeck said.

Colbeck and Maloney also blamed declining enrollment in the Plymouth-Canton district for some of the funding loss. The district had 18,974 students during the 2008-09 school year and about 17,794 currently, according to numbers provided by Colbeck. Declining birthrates and competition from charter schools have led to the loss, Maloney said.

Colbeck said the district must still cut \$6 million from its 2014-15 budget before the budget is finalized at the end of the month and that it is on an unsustainable spending path. "Things are going in the wrong direction," Maloney said.

He advocated closing more schools ("It's got to happen," he said), selling property the district won't need and not moving to a full schools of choice enrollment model. He also said the district has been hiring too many administrators of late and should put more emphasis on keeping class sizes as small as possible.

"We should have more teachers and less chiefs," he said.

Forum organizer Michael Hansel said an informal group called the Canton Township Republican Caucus put together the meeting with the aim of informing voters. Another forum is tentatively scheduled for some time in July.

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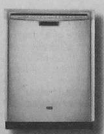
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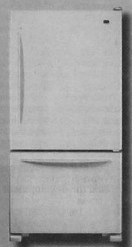


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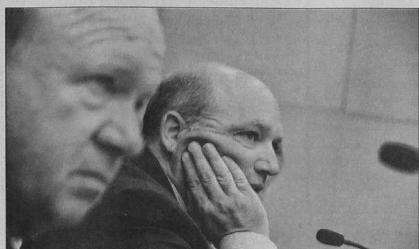
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County Commissioner Shannon Price speaks about county issues, including the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. At left, Canton Township Supervisor Phil LaJoy.

CANTON CRIME WATCH

Disorderly woman

Canton police arrested a 20-year-old woman and cited her for being disorderly following allegations she went into a medical facility on Hagerly south of Ford Road and was demanding medicine, a police report said.

The incident happened shortly after 7 p.m. Monday as Canton police received a call about a woman causing a disturbance.

The suspect initially went into a radiology suite in the building, yelling and refusing to leave, and then she went into a separate urgent care facility, the report said.

The woman at one point threatened to retrieve a weapon from her backpack, the police report said, though none was ever revealed. When police arrived, the woman was trying to get medication from a pharmacy.

Babysitting ruse

A 20-year-old Canton woman notified police of a bizarre chain of events after she met a woman through an online babysitting website, a police report said.

The woman told police Sunday she had arranged

babysitting services for a woman who was moving to Canton. She said it was agreed the woman would send a check for \$2,775, some of which would be used to buy a wheelchair for a child.

The Canton woman received the check, deposited it into her credit union account only to receive notification that the check was written from an account that had been closed. In the meantime, the Canton woman had a \$10 fee charged to her account. That is the only money she is believed to have lost.

The police report indicated the envelope the Canton woman had received was from Phoenix, Ariz.

Neighbors tussle

Police were investigating an incident on McKinley, southeast of Cherry Hill and Ridge roads, after receiving reports of a tussle between neighbors around 10 p.m. Friday, a police report said.

A 64-year-old man told police he came home from dinner and his home smelled of smoke because a next-door neighbor had started what was described in a police report as a "recreation fire." The man advised the neigh-

bor of the situation, prompting the neighbor—a 43-year-old woman—to come over and try to enter his house to have an apparent discussion with his wife, the report said.

The man stopped the woman at the back porch and they got into a scuffle, resulting in a chair being knocked over and the man's T-shirt being torn, the report said. The man, described as intoxicated, also was accused of knocking the woman to the ground.

Larceny from car

A 24-year-old Inkster woman told police someone broke through a plastic rear window of her car while it was parked Sunday afternoon in the 42000 block of Ford Road, east of Lilley. She said the intruder took her wallet, \$15 in cash and a pack of cigarettes.

Jeep vandalized

A 62-year-old man told police someone carved an "X" into the rear quarter panel of his 2014 Jeep while it was parked in his driveway on Saratoga, southeast of Warren and Lilley, a police report said. There were no immediate suspects in the incident.

—By Darrell Clem

Man sent to prison after accosting woman in Canton

By Darrell Clem
Staff Writer

A Romulus man has been slapped with a prison sentence of three to 10 years after he pleaded guilty to one of two counts of fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct following charges he sexually accosted two women at Canton retail stores.



Christopher Neil Knight, 20, was imprisoned Friday by Wayne County Circuit Judge James Callahan because the Canton incident, which occurred in April, amounted to a parole violation for an unrelated larceny case from 2011, a court clerk said.

Knight received an additional two years of probation for the fourth-degree CSC charge.

Callahan's ruling came after Knight in late May pleaded guilty to one of two charges involving allegations he sexually accosted women at retail stores along Ford Road, Can-

ton's key retail corridor. His plea averted a trial.

Canton police initially arrested Knight on charges he grabbed a woman by the buttocks inside the J.C. Penney store on Sheldon east of Ford and pushed her before fleeing the store the afternoon of Sunday, April 20. Within an hour, authorities said a second woman was accosted as she walked to her car outside the nearby Kohl's store.

Canton Deputy Police Chief Debra Newsome said Knight was arrested after he then returned to the J.C. Penney store, where he tussled with employees before police arrived and took him into custody.

Even before his sentence Friday, Knight had been remanded to jail by Callahan after he missed a court hearing and was taken back into custody.

Knight pleaded guilty to one count of fourth-degree CSC in return for the second charge being dismissed.

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PLYMOUTH CRIME WATCH

Shoplifting arrest

A 37-year-old Canton Township man was arrested the afternoon of June 3, following a foot chase, in the shoplifting of groceries and personal care items from the Kroger on Ann Arbor Road at Sheldon.

Police were called after a Kroger security worker confronted the man as he left the store and the man ran through the parking lot, dropping items that had apparently been taken from the store, according to a Plymouth Township Police Department report.

Another security guard and a Plymouth officer, in addition to township officers, joined

the search for the man, who had crossed Sheldon. The Plymouth officer confronted the suspect in a residential area east of Sheldon, stopping him by threatening to use a Taser, and the man was arrested, police said.

Police found a leather jacket, described as the one worn by the shoplifter, in the left-turn lane on Sheldon, concealed in it were a sirloin steak, packages of tuna fish and cat food and beauty products from Kroger.

Two days later, police recovered other items from the yard of a house on Brookline, near where the suspect was stopped; a man there said he had found them while doing

yard work.

One of the security guards told police he had seen the suspect in the store take a container of skin cream from its box and conceal it before leaving, paying only for two cans of potato chips.

Kmart shoplifting

Another shoplifting arrest took place June 3 at the Kmart on Ann Arbor Road. The suspect, a 17-year-old, also from Canton, was released on bond the next day with a citation for third-degree retail fraud.

Police said the teen was arrested after a store security worker confronted him outside the store shortly before 2 p.m. and police were called.

The security guard told police he had watched via a video system as the teen concealed store merchandise in a purse; he was found carrying hats, a pair of flip-flops, beauty products, a razor, a package of underwear and more, police said.

Disorderly

A man threatened a store clerk and ended up smashing his phone June 2 at a party store on Five Mile near Beck. No one was hurt.

The incident took place just after 7 p.m. at the Cigar and Liquor Emporium, a police report said.

The clerk told police the man walked in enticing him to

fight, saying, "You want to go outside?" He said he recognized the man from a previous incident in which he did not have enough money to buy beer.

The clerk called 9-1-1, he said, but when the man walked up to him, he dropped the phone. The man picked it up, walked outside and threw it on the ground, smashing it, the report said. He left in an older gray vehicle, and police were called.

Police said store surveillance video confirmed the incident occurred as the clerk described.

—By Matt Jachman

Join Us This June for Father's Day & Fun at Independence Village

Events At:

Independence Village of Plymouth
14707 Northville Road, Plymouth, MI 48170
734-453-2600

Rock Around the Clock

Wednesday, June 11 | 1:30 pm

Grease your hair and grab your leather jacket. Put on your saddle shoes and poodle skirt. It's time to join us for a 50's-style sock hop with entertainment provided by "The Dance DJs." Soda shop favorites will be served.

Father's Day Celebration

Friday, June 13 | 1:30 pm

Join us to celebrate Father's Day a little bit early as we honor dads with great music, great food and a very special surprise. You won't want to miss this exciting event!

Estate Planning & Asset Protection Workshop

Tuesday, June 24 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Elder Law Attorney Nicole Wipp will show you the simplest, smartest path to planning for your family, protecting your assets. Get info on the Veteran's Improved pension benefit as well. Light refreshments will be served.

Presented by: Family & Aging Law Center

Father's Day Brunch at All Communities

Father's Day Brunch

Sunday, June 15

White Lake: 11:30 am – 2:30 pm

Plymouth: 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Enjoy a delicious brunch prepared especially for your family by our expert chef and culinary team.

Share a meal.

Share a memory.

Share a laugh.

Celebrate dad together with us.

Adults \$17.00

Children 12 and under \$13.00

Children under 4 eat free

Events At:

Independence Village of White Lake
935 Union Lake Road, White Lake, MI 48386
248-360-7235

Taste of Italy

Wednesday, June 4 | 12:00 pm

That's Amore! Come and enjoy an afternoon Italian style. Experience delicious Italian food and listen to the song stylings of Mario Messina as he sings some of Dean Martin's most popular songs.

Presented by: Mario Messina

Father's Day Celebration

Thursday, June 12 | 1:30 pm

Celebrate Father's Day a little bit early with the amazing sounds of The Paint Creek Boys And Fiddler.

Nashville Nights

Tuesday, June 24 | 6:00 pm

Pull on your boots and grab your cowboy hat. It's time to join us for some foot stomping music and entertainment with the very talented Nashville stage performer Mark Edwards. Light refreshments will also be served.

Presented by: Mark Edwards

PLEASE RSVP THREE DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT

W- to maintain programs in new budget year

District finances starting to stabilize after lean years

By Sue Mason
Staff Writer

The bottom line is beginning to improve in the Wayne-Westland Community Schools, which will continue to offer a full program of choices for students in 2014-15.

As opposed to previous budget years, when the district has used as much as \$6 million of its fund equity to cover expenses, this new year's draw will be just over \$400,000.

And that amount could be erased, if Gov. Rick Snyder gives his blessing to a State School Aid Act that would increase the minimum foundation grant by \$175 per pupil for Wayne-Westland, as opposed to his proposed \$111.

"We knew we would have a

structural deficit in 2013-14, but came out of it in 2014-15," said Jim Larson-Shidler, the district's deputy superintendent for administrative and business services. "We should come out with a balance of \$4.7 million. The fund equity is pretty low, but this is where we believe the district will turn the corner."

Larson-Shidler is projecting expenditures of \$504.4 million with revenues of \$504.4 million for fiscal 2014-15. A bulk of the money — an estimated \$82.8 million — will be in state school aid, projected to increase to at least \$7,187 per student.

He also anticipates \$7 million in state money to help pay for employee retirement costs. The state has capped the amount districts pay at approximately 25 percent of payroll. The money will help cover the difference between the cap and the actual rate of

33.99 percent for 2014-15. The new budget also projects:

- a loss of 50 students. The amount reflects the pleasant surprise in the 2013-14 school year when an expected loss of 250 students turned into a six-student gain.
- A continuing decline in local property tax revenue; however, the 3.1-percent drop is far less than last year's 8-percent reduction. As a result, the district anticipates receiving \$15.5 million in local revenue in fiscal 2014-15.
- Another indication that the worst is behind the district is the delinquent property tax revenue. Larson-Shidler pegged that amount at around \$30,000.
- The decline in property values also will have an effect in the district's debt levy, which will increase to 5.46 mills, up from the current

5.26 mills. The sinking fund levy will remain at 0.9922 mills.

With the refunding of the bonds taking effect next year and property values leveling off or going up, we should see that millage go down next year," Larson-Shidler said.

A loss of five positions in the new school year. The district is losing 18 teachers due to retirement and Larson-Shidler expects most of the 11 teachers who are being laid off will be recalled for the 2014-15 school year.

An increase in health care of 3 percent with hard cap costs paid by employees increasing to \$5,857 for single coverage, \$12,250 for a new two-person coverage and \$15,975 for family coverage.

The severity of last year saw the district's utilities come in \$600,000 over budget and \$300,000 over historical highs. As a result, a two-year

average is being used in the new budget, Larson-Shidler said.

District Superintendent Greg Barac acknowledged that erasing the district's structural deficit came with the help of employee concessions and cost containment.

With the loss of state lawmakers like Rep. Robert Kosowski, the district is getting closer to the regaining its Wayne-Westland language.

"With \$860,000 (more in per-pupil funding) next year, we might be able to add to our balance," Barac said. "I'm really grateful for Bob Kosowski's efforts on our behalf. He was able to work across the aisle and get our language back in the school aid bill that went to the conference committee. That's the first time in several years."

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Twitter: @SusanMarieMason

A degree – and life – worth having

Disability doesn't keep woman from making the grade

By Sue Mason
Staff Writer

Angela Long is a typical college graduate. She set a goal for herself and went after it while continuing to work up to 35 hours a week at the Kroger store on Ford Road in Westland.

She did it for a reason. She wanted to prove to those people wrong who had told her she would never go to college. It wasn't easy. With one or two classes a semester, it took 12 years to complete her studies at Schoolcraft College. In the case of one math class, she finally passed it after taking it four times.

"I turned that around and said, 'Yes, I can' and I think I did that," the 31-year-old Long said. "I have a liberal arts degree. I'm relieved and so overwhelmed at the same time."

The accomplishment is all the more special for Long, who was born with Down's syndrome. But she hasn't let that get in the way of living her life to the fullest.

"She's always been pretty independent, respectfully independent," her mother Linda said. "I never thought about how long it would take. She loves school, and I was thrilled she wanted to go to college."

'No idea'

Long's accomplishment flies in the face of doctors who told her mother when she was born not to get attached to her. She was told her daughter would never walk or talk that she should just put her away.

"I didn't know anything was wrong with her," Long said. "When the doctor asked if I noticed anything different and I said no, I was told, 'I think she's mongoloid.' I had no idea."



It took 12 years, but Angela Long is all smiles about receiving her degree from Schoolcraft College in Livonia last month. BILL BRLESER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

After that, no one would talk to Linda Long and they wouldn't bring her daughter to her. Her doctor wasn't there for the delivery and never came to see her. He had never delivered a special-needs baby.

Her husband Jeff couldn't be there and "the two of us were alone." But it was something her father said that turned the tide. He asked his daughter if his new granddaughter had 10 fingers and 10 toes and told her if she does, then take her home and love her.

"I felt OK, if he said that, I should do what he said," Linda Long said. "All we had to rely on was our faith. It hasn't been easy, but at graduation I thanked her for taking us on this adventure."

The Longs treated their daughter as normal as possible and had normal expectations. All they ever asked was she do things to the best of her abilities. They set "standards and didn't make allowances," Linda Long said.

Involved in school
Long attended the Wayne-Westland schools

and graduated from John Glenn High School in 2002. She and her mother admit that school was a challenge, but she stuck to it. She had some challenges, sometimes with teachers, and her middle school peers made it tough, but the jovial Long embraced high school, serving on the student council every year and as a class representative.

She enjoyed all of her classes at Schoolcraft, especially English. For science, she wrote a paper about Down's syndrome and got an A. It took outside intervention to help get past her weak subject, business math. It helped having a father who is a financial manager, her mother said.

"I had a history class and had to do a paper," Long said. "We were at Disney and I did it at the last minute. I got an A."

Her accomplishment didn't go unnoticed by a friend, Ashlee Baracy, who interviewed her for a story for WDIV-TV (Channel 4). The segment has brought Long's "fans to the store" who tell her they saw her on TV and that she is a star. It has also been sent to

an international Down's syndrome association and has been seen in Spain and China.

"I'm glad I did it and I got it done, but now what do I do next," Long said. "I might continue with college. Maybe I'll transfer to a different college. I'm not sure, it might be a university."

An inspiration

She's also has become an inspiration to others.

"One of her co-workers told her that she's going back to college to take classes. 'If you can do it so can I,'" Linda Long said. "She's very confident and she believes in herself."

Linda Long also would like the doctor who delivered her daughter to see her today.

"I'd love the doctor to see what she accomplished," she said. "No one could have ever imagined the life she has lived. At graduation, she told me that 'I think God brought me to this point.'"

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Twitter: @SusanMarieMason

Production company taking one-act scripts

TLC Productions is accepting scripts for the 2015 Canton One-Act Festival, post-marked no later than Aug. 31, 2014.

The festival takes place Jan. 16-18, 2015, at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill in Canton. TLC Productions is made up of Canton residents Tim Chanko, Linda Pohl and Christopher Tremblay.

"This festival brings new plays to the Canton community and Village Theater at Cherry Hill stage," the trio said. "As aspiring playwrights, we looked for other venues to submit our one-act musicals, but there weren't any nearby groups organizing any competitions or festivals."

"Since we have been afforded the opportunity to present our new works at the Village Theater, we wanted to provide a platform and event to showcase other emerging playwrights of plays and musicals as well as to aspiring directors."

TLC is looking for original plays no longer than 15 minutes in length. Multiple sub-

missions from a playwright are accepted; however, no children's shows will be considered. For a list of complete guidelines and for information on the judging process, go to cantononeacts.com. The deadline for works is Aug. 31.

In October, TLC will present dramatic readings of the semifinalists' scripts. Selected shows for the One-Acts Festival will be announced online at cantononeacts.com by Oct. 31. In October, there will be auditions for the selected plays. Playwrights can request to direct their own show if show is selected or TLC Productions will appoint a director. Preference will be given to aspiring directors.

TLC Productions will award first-, second- and third-place awards based on audience preference. The One-Acts Festival is organized by TLC Productions and offered in partnership with the Village Theater at Cherry Hill. For more information, contact info@tclproductions.org or cantononeacts.com.

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Livonia Public Schools Opening Japanese Immersion Magnet Program To Out-Of-District Students

Livonia Public Schools is opening its Japanese Immersion Magnet program to Limited Schools of Choice 105c for the 2014-15 school year. This program is geared toward elementary students looking for a specialized learning experience in a Japanese/English dual immersion setting.

Seats are open to students entering Kdg, 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th grade in the 2014-15 school year, 50 seats in Kindergarten; 25 seats in each grade 1st-4th
Limited Registration Window: June 10 - June 24, 2014

Applications will be accepted at LPS Board of Education Office - Personnel Department, located at 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI 48154 June 10, 2014 at 8 a.m. - June 24, 2014 at 4 p.m.

NO LATE OR FAXED APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. All candidates must meet the stated minimum selection testing criteria in Japanese Language Proficiency.

For complete information on the application process, visit www.livoniapublicschools.org or contact Livonia Public Schools at 734-722-2522.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH MEDICAL MARIHUANA ACT MORATORIUM ORDINANCE SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE NUMBER 1016 - Amendment 7

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH BY AMENDING ARTICLE 5, MEDICAL MARIHUANA ACT MORATORIUM OF CHAPTER VII, CRIMINAL CODE; TO EXTEND THE MEDICAL MARIHUANA ACT MORATORIUM; PROVIDING FOR APPEAL; PROVIDING FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING AND RECOMMENDATION; PROVIDING FOR TOWNSHIP BOARD FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF ACTION; PROVIDING FOR SERVICE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL AND SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH ORDAINS: SECTION 1. MORATORIUM (MEDICAL MARIHUANA ACT USES, FINDINGS; APPEAL, ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING PROCESS; WRITTEN FINDINGS ON APPEAL. This section provides for findings by the Township Board, setting a six (6) month moratorium on medical marijuana uses; an appeal, administrative appeal process and Township Board written findings and statement of action. **SECTION 2. VIOLATION AND PENALTY.** This section provides that any person or entity that violates any provision of this Ordinance may, upon conviction, be fined not more than Five Hundred (\$500.00) Dollars or imprisoned not more than Ninety (90) days, or both, in the discretion of the court. **SECTION 3. REPEAL.** This section provides that all Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect. **SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY.** This section provides that any unenforceable section can be severed from the rest of the Ordinance.

SECTION 5. SAVINGS CLAUSE. This section provides that adoption of this Ordinance does not affect proceedings, prosecutions for violation of law, penalties and matured rights and duties in effect before the effective date of this Ordinance.

SECTION 6. PUBLICATION. This section provides that the Clerk for the Charter Township of Plymouth shall cause this Ordinance to be published in the manner required by law.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance provides that this Ordinance shall take full force and effect upon publication. Copies of the complete text of this Ordinance are available at the office of the Charter Township of Plymouth, 9955 N. Haggerty Road, Plymouth, Michigan 48170, during regular business hours.

PLYMOUTH-CANTON COMMUNITY CALENDAR

YOGA CLASSES

Location: Tuesdays, June 10 through June 22, 10:30-12:30 a.m.
Date/Time: St. John Neumann Church, 44800 Warren, Canton
Details: St. John Neumann offers yoga classes in a six-week package (except June 24). Cost is \$42 for the six-week course or \$10 as a walk-in.
Contact: For details, call Lauren Burrell at 313-671-7599.

JEWELRY/HANDBAG SALE

Date/Time: Saturday, June 14, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Location: Salvation Army Thrift Store, 43603 Joy Road, Canton
Details: The Salvation Army Southeast Michigan Adult Rehabilitation Center hosts the second annual Jewelry and Handbag Sale. From freshwater pearl necklaces and rhinestone earrings to patent leather pumps and designer handbags, shoppers will find exceptional deals on classic accessories to create the choicest wardrobe. Additionally, guests can pick up \$11 raffie tickets for a chance to win pairings of accessories from Charming Charlie and Glitz and Ears. Winners will be selected post-event and notified by phone.

FLAG RETIREMENT

Date/Time: Saturday, June 14, 2 p.m.
Location: VFW Post 6695, 1426 S. Mill, Plymouth
Details: June 14 is Flag Day and VFW Post 6695 will host a flag retirement ceremony, assisted by Boy Scout Troop 1539. The public is invited to the 30-minute ceremony, at which organizers say the public can "learn more about our flag and how to properly retire it." Hot dogs, chips and pop will be provided following the ceremony.
Contact: Call 734-459-6700 for more information.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Date/Time: Sunday, June 15, 7-11 a.m.
Location: Canton Plymouth Mettetal Airport, 8550 N. Lilley, Canton
Details: The EAA Chapter 113 hosts its annual Father's Day pancake breakfast. Bring the whole family for breakfast, helicopter rides and static displays. Proceeds help fund the EAA 113 Aviation Scholarship Program. Free admission; breakfast costs \$6 for adults, \$4 for kids.

CRATERS NEEDED

Date/Time: Oct. 18
Location: West Middle School,



Scholarship winner

Recent Canton High School graduate Amanda Glass of Canton is shown with her parents, Don and Kay Glass, both Plymouth-Canton teachers. Amanda Glass received the Gail Marshall Scholarship during June 1 worship at Geneva Presbyterian Church in Canton. Bob Marshall and his family give the scholarship to a deserving high school graduate in Gail's memory. Amanda will attend Bowling Green State University in Ohio this fall to study digital arts.

44401 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth

Details: The Delta Kappa Gamma Education Society hosts its annual Juried Craft Show. Proceeds from the show provide scholarships for young people who are pursuing a career in education and mini-grants for educators in the district.

Contact: For more information, contact Debbie Cortellin at debcortellin@comcast.net or 734-451-1525.

GHOSTS OF PLYMOUTH WALK

Date/Time: Sunday, June 29, 7 p.m.

Location: The walk circles Kellogg Park in downtown Plymouth and lasts about 90 minutes. Participants should meet at the Fountain in Kellogg Park.

Details: Participants can meet and greet some of the characters from Plymouth's past during the Plymouth Historical Museum's "Ghosts of Plymouth" walk. Hear the tales of early Plymouth from the characters themselves, such as Phil Markham (inventor of the Markham Air Rifle), his

mistress Blanche Shortman and his spurned wife Carrie, colorful physician Dr. Luther Peck and George Starkweather, the first white male born in Plymouth Township. Tickets are \$10 per person (\$5 for children under 10) in advance or \$15 (\$10 for children under 10) at the park and can be purchased at the museum's website using PayPal or at the Plymouth Historical Museum, 155 S. Main Street.

Contact: Call 734-455-8940 for more information.

BLOOD DRIVES

Date/Time/Location:

» Sunday, June 22, Our Lady of Good Counsel, 47650 N. Territorial, Plymouth, 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

» Monday, June 23, Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main, 1:45 p.m.

» Monday, June 23, VFW Post 6695, 1426 S. Mill, Plymouth, 1:30-7:15 p.m.

» Wednesday, June 25, Friendship Church, 1240 N. Beck, Canton, 1:45-4:45 p.m.

» Monday, June 30, Salem High School, 46181 Joy in Canton, 3-8:45 p.m.

Details: The American Red Cross sponsors the above blood drives.

Contact: Donors can make appointments by calling 800-RED-CROSS or going to www.redcrossblood.org and enter search by zip code.

CRATERS WANTED

Date/Time: Sept. 5-7

Location: Downtown Plymouth's Fall Festival
Details: The Plymouth Fall Festival has openings in the Craft Show. Applications are available on the Craft Show page at www.plymouthfallfestival.com. Deadline is June 30. Deadline for all other craft applications is July 15.

Contact: More information can be found on the web site or email Colleen Brown at craftshow@plymouthfallfestival.com.

GARDEN WALK

Date/Time: Tuesday, June 24, noon to 3 p.m.

Location: The walk features a variety of gardens, descriptions of which are located on the tickets.

Details: The 19th annual "Flowers are Forever" garden walk in Plymouth includes gardens with a variety of features, as well as many ideas that can be adapted to your own garden. Complimentary refreshments and a perennial sale will be at one of the gardens. Master gardeners will also be available. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 the day of the walk, half-price for children 12 and younger. The Trailwood Garden Club, a branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association, is the sponsor. Tickets are available from members, Backyard Birds on Main Street, Saxon's Garden Center on Ann Arbor Trail and Sideways on Forest.
Contact: Marilyn Detmer at 734-454-4625.

Bills aim to streamline voting procedures for military personnel

A three-bill package that would increase and protect opportunities for members of the military to participate in local, state and federal elections has been introduced by a local lawmaker.

State Rep. David Knezek, D-Dearborn Heights, joined state Rep. Sarah Roberts, D-St. Clair Shores, in introducing the three-bill package on military voting.



Provisions of the package would allow service members to register to vote via electronic means; submit absentee ballots electronically when stationed overseas; and would require ballots that are postmarked by the close of the polls on Election Day and received before the certification of election results to be counted toward the final election totals.

"Currently, our service members overseas must go through a tedious and timely process in order to fulfill their most basic civic duty. I personally experienced this when I was serving in Iraq and tried to vote," Knezek said. "My ballot never arrived and I wasn't able to participate in the election. Sadly, more than 100,000 members of the military can say the same from that year."

By allowing overseas voters to submit their ballots electronically, House Bill 5635 would make Michigan the 23rd state to allow for an absentee ballot to be returned electronically. For those who choose to return their ballot by mail to the local clerk, House Bill 5634 amends Michigan Election Law to require that if the ballot is postmarked before the polls close on Election Day, it will be counted and tabulated for the final

results of the election. House Bill 5633, sponsored by Roberts, creates a process for individuals to submit their voter registration electronically on the Secretary of State's website.

According to a study completed by Pew Research, military personnel who are stationed overseas and hope to participate in an election in Michigan must go through a process that takes no less than 57 days.

"That would mean that a service member has to request their ballot in August, if they want to participate in the November election," Knezek said. "In a state like New Mexico, where electronic submissions are accepted, the process takes no more than eight days. Michigan can do better and we know there's a model out there that works."

All too often, service members are disenfranchised by the process to do something as basic as voting for the commander-in-chief, Knezek said.

"This legislative package was designed to empower our men and women in the military to have a voice in their local, state, and federal elections back home — to exercise the very rights that they are fighting to protect each and every day," he added.

Knezek serves as co-chair of the House Democrats' Veterans Services Task Force and has introduced numerous pieces of legislation in an effort to make Michigan a more veteran-friendly state. Some of these proposals include granting veterans in-state tuition rates at public universities and community colleges; protecting veterans who use psychiatric service dogs as a method of treating PTSD and TB; and allowing businesses in Michigan to adopt preferential hiring policies for veterans.

Summer entertainment EVENTS

FREE PRIZES

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Go to hometownlife.com and look in the DONT MISS module or visit fb.com/OEHometown.

FEATURING:

Freedom Hill Concerts

- Diana Ross - 6/13
- The Temptations and Four Tops - 6/21
- Foreigner, Styx and Don Felder - 7/10
- Willie Nelson and Alison Krauss & Union Station - 7/31
- Beach Boys - 8/10
- Tony Bennett - 8/15
- Yanni - 8/17
- Doobie Brothers - 8/27
- Hall & Oats - 9/21
- Toledo Zoo Tickets
- Movie Tickets
- Pizza Coupon

AND MORE

CITY OF PLYMOUTH
ORDINANCE #2014-05

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 78, THE CITY OF PLYMOUTH ZONING ORDINANCE IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PLYMOUTH FOR THE PURPOSE OF REGULATING ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES.

Section 1 - The City of Plymouth Ordains:
 Section 78 "Zoning" in the Code of Ordinances of the City of Plymouth Is hereby amended by adding the following described text revisions.

Section 2 - Modify the definition of "Accessory use or Accessory," "Habitable Space," and "Occupiable space" in Article II, Section 78-21 Definitions.

Section 3 - Modify Article XVII

ARTICLE XVII, SCHEDULE OF REGULATIONS

Section 78-191, Notes to schedule

Section 4 - Modify Article XXI

ARTICLE XXI, ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND USES

Section 78-260 - Regulations

Section 5 - Rights and Duties

Section 6 - Validity

Section 7 - Ordinances Repealed

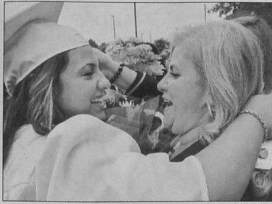
Section 8 - Effective Date

Introduced: 5-19-2014
 Enacted: 6-2-2014
 Published: 6-12-2014
 Effective: 6-13-2014

The entire ordinance is located in the City Clerk's office for review of any interested person during regular business days, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30p.m.



Alyssa Nicole Bradley accepts her diploma from Superintendent Dr. Michael Meissen.



Canton graduate Hannan Haddad greets her aunt, Mervet Haddad.



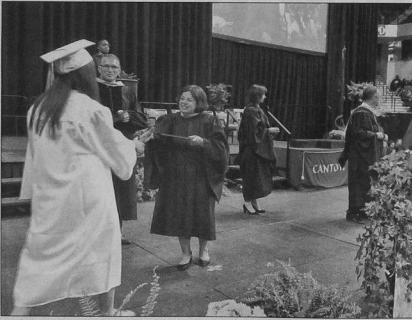
It's a selfie times three for Maliha Ilyas Chaudhry, Feza Ali and Yasmine Abdeldayem.



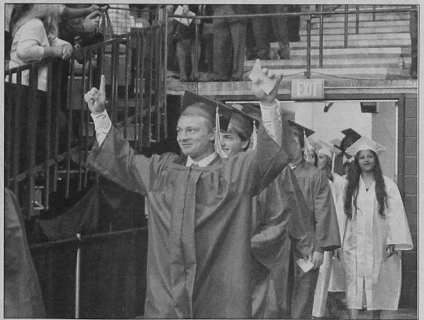
Listening to speeches. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SENIORS MOVE TO LIFE'S NEXT PHASE

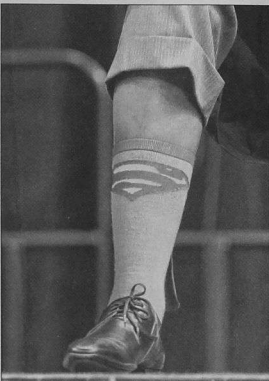
The Class of 2014 at Canton High School crossed the stage and took home that coveted diploma during commencement exercises Sunday at Eastern Michigan University. For the complete list of graduates and even more photos, please visit the *Observer* website at www.hometownlife.com.



Graduates must move quickly. The ceremony lasts just over an hour.



Seniors make their grand entrance.



Principal Hal Heard III shows off his Superman socks that help remind him that he can do whatever needs to be done.



Happy Canton graduates.



"Song to Tradition," performed by P-CEP Combined Choirs.



Senior class speaker Shannon Perry address her classmates.



Andyana Miller helps Isha Patel with a last-minute cap adjustment.



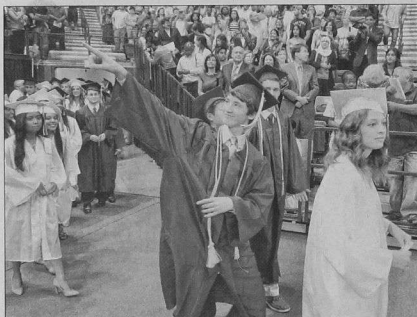
Assistant Principal Allie Suffety congratulates Salem graduates. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

THE NEXT BIG STEP

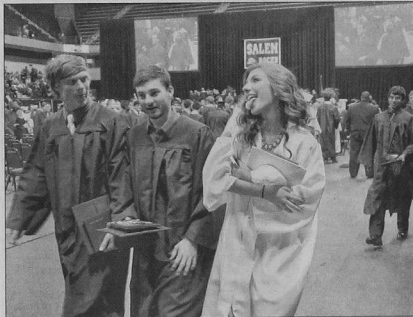
THE CLASS OF 2014 at Salem High School crossed the stage and took home that coveted diploma during commencement exercises Sunday at Eastern Michigan University. For the complete list of graduates and even more photos, please visit the *Observer* website at www.hometownlife.com.



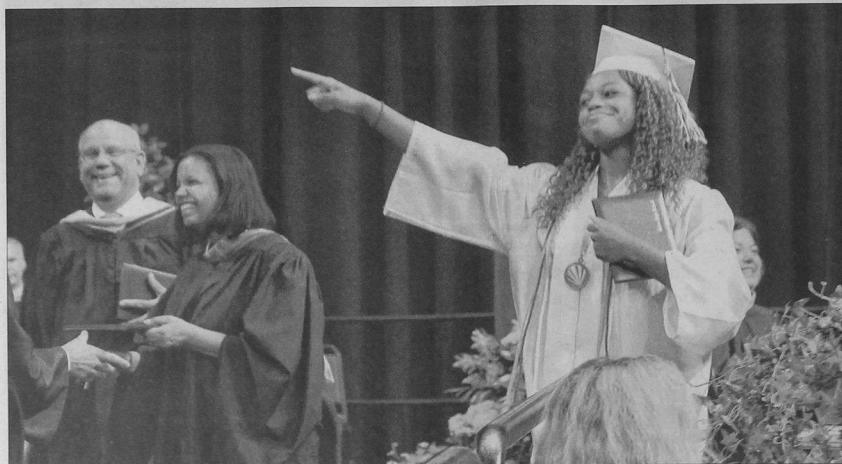
Salem graduates are seconds away from the end of their high school experience.



Enter the arena and look around for family and friends.



Graduates leave the arena.



Chineze Ekihsie Mbanugo gestures to her family.

Tickets available for 388th Army Band Concert

By LeAnne Rogers
Staff Writer

Patriotic music will be part of the program Saturday, July 5, as the 388th Army Band performs at the Wayne-Ford Civic League.

"Part of the band played in the dedication of the (Veterans) Memorial Garden," said Ken Mehl of the Westland Veterans Association. "This is the first time that I know of when the full band will be here."

Tickets for the Concert Americana are free, but donations are suggested to the Veterans Memorial

Garden of Westland.

"They will do a two-hour concert. I think that includes one break," Mehl said. "They will do patriotic songs. They will also perform big band, the blues, maybe some country and rock 'n' roll."

A maximum of 500 tickets will be available for the concert, with unassigned seating. The doors will open at 6 p.m., with the concert set to begin at 7 p.m.

"Someone I talked to today wanted 20 tickets. There is no limit on the number of tickets; we just want people to use the tickets," Mehl said.

Many people may have heard the 388th Army Band perform in other concerts, including its annual visit to Frankentown during the ice festival.

With a tab of about \$250,000, the bulk of the cost for the memorial garden is through fund-raisers and donations.

Located behind the William P. Faust Public Library, the memorial garden was dedicated Veterans Day 2013. The memorial garden features covers with engraved markers containing information about each war in which the

United States has been involved.

The 388th Army Band was originally formed in 1943 at Camp Sieber, Ala., as part of a support group for Gen. George Patton's 3rd Army in Europe. However, it was deactivated before overseas deployment in 1945. The 388th was reactivated in 1952 as part of the U.S. 2nd Army.

The 388th is stationed in Livonia and at the 83rd Infantry Division Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center in Whitehall, Ohio. The band is currently made up of musicians from Ohio, Michigan and



The 388th Army Band will perform Saturday, July 5, at the Wayne-Ford Civic League in Westland.

parts of Kentucky. The range in age from 17 to 50-plus years.

Tickets for the concert are available at the Westland City Clerk's Office, Westland Lock and Key and from members of the

Westland Veterans Association. Or call 743-716-3432, 743-604-6484 or 743-788-7753.

rogers@hometownlife.com
Twitter: @LRogersObserver

BUSINESSES PUSH FOR PROPOSAL 1

Supporters of August ballot issue want tax on equipment eliminated

By Wayne Peal
Daily Press & Argus

Proposal 1 would eliminate Michigan's personal property tax if voters approve it in the Aug. 5 primary election.

Despite how it is referred to, it is not a tax on homeowners. The tax is levied only on Michigan businesses' equipment.

It's also a tax that has been criticized in some quarters for hurting existing businesses' ability to expand and the state's ability to attract new businesses and new jobs.

Proposal 1 would preserve the Legislature's already approved four-year personal property tax phaseout and the exemption given this year to businesses with less than \$80,000 in cash value.

It would also adopt a new reimbursement formula for the municipalities that have long depended upon the tax and give greater financial support to schools.

None of that would happen, plus the tax would stay as it is, if voters say no.

Supporters acknowledge the issue isn't the easiest sell.

"There is confusion out there," said Kelly Rossmann-McKinney, whose Lansing-based agency, Truscott Rossmann, is handling publicity regarding Proposal 1.

The personal property tax has long been a sore point for large and small businesses. On the other hand, municipalities have said that eliminating it without coming up with an alternative revenue source — as the Legislature did — leaves them facing substantial budget cuts.

Proposal 1 attempts to answer both concerns by amending the Michigan Use Tax, another state tax, to provide money directly to municipalities for police, fire and other local services.

PROPOSAL 1 WORDING

Approval or disapproval of amendatory act to reduce state use tax and replace with a local community stabilization share to modernize the tax system and help small business grow and create jobs. The amendatory act adopted by the Legislature would:

1. Reduce the state use tax and replace with a local community stabilization share of the tax for the purpose of modernizing the tax system to help small business grow and create jobs in Michigan.
 2. Require Local Community Stabilization Authority to provide revenue to local governments dedicated for local purposes, including police safety, fire protection and ambulance emergency services.
 3. Increase portion of state use tax dedicated for aid to local school districts.
 4. Prohibit Authority from increasing taxes.
 5. Prohibit total use tax from exceeding constitutional 6-percent limitation.
- Should this law be approved?

It would also increase the dedicated tax revenue given to schools.

Putting the measure on the ballot was required by state law; the Legislature couldn't have enacted those kind of changes on its own.

But the decision to put it before voters received overwhelming bipartisan support in the state House and Senate.

The Michigan Municipal League and Michigan Chamber of Commerce, two groups not always in lockstep, have also given their support. So, too, have a host of other organizations, from the Fraternal Order of Police to the Michigan Association of School Boards to the Michigan

Farm Bureau. "When (Great Lakes) business are looking for a place to expand, it might not be Texas or California, but it might be Illinois, it might be Wisconsin," Rossmann-McKinney City Manager.

Though tempered by the fate of other Lansing-made promises, the guarantee that municipalities would be reimbursed was enough to secure support from the Michigan Municipal League.

"Ideally, we would have liked to have seen a (state) constitutional amendment, but this does represent what we were looking for," said Howell City Manager Shea Charles, chair of the MML's finance committee.

To make up the revenue, the state would create a local community stabilization share out of the current state use tax. Such action would generate slightly more than \$96 million in replacement local revenue for 2015-16. It would jump to \$380 million in 2016-17, when the full phaseout is complete, and rise every year after that.

That's why supporters are busy making the rounds and they might have no more eloquent spokesman than Howell Police Chief George Basar, past president of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

"This isn't a tax in anything," said Basar, a Proposal 1 supporter. "The personal property tax is levied in perpetuity against business equipment."

"I've talked to one local business owner whose company has been here 70 years and he's still paying taxes on equipment that might have been there that long," Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Pam McConoghey said. "Michigan is the only state that taxes businesses this way."

Michigan businesses have long paid the tax, which dates to 1893, is outdated.

Among other states in the Great Lakes region, Illinois, New York, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin levy no such tax, while Indiana's tax lessens as a business' equipment ages.


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4th Annual Healthy Aging Conference

Saturday, June 28
8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
St. Mary Mercy Hospital
South Auditorium

Join many other seniors, families and caregivers for a day that includes exhibitors and seminars by expert speakers on various topics including stroke prevention, resources for seniors and caregivers, and healthy eating. Lunch is included.

All activities are free of charge.

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Seminar Presentations

9 - 9:45 a.m.

"All About Stroke" - How to reduce risks and recognize warning signs
Speaker: **Gail Schramke, NP**

10 - 10:45 a.m.

"Maintaining Independence As We Age" - What an assessment and prevention can do to help you stay healthy -
Speakers: **Gerald Turlo, MD & Jessica Weathas, LMSW**

11 - 11:45 a.m.

"Connecting Seniors and Caregivers to Resources" - Learn about exercise programs for seniors and supportive services available in the community
Speakers: **Julie Burr, AADP, CHC and The Senior Alliance Staff**

"Eating for a Healthy You" - Food demonstration
Mary Condon, RD
Boxed lunch provided

8 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Exhibitors

- "Ask the Nurse Practitioner"
- Senior living
- Joint health
- Memory and balance screening
- Stroke
- Podiatry and physical rehabilitation
- Heart health
- Tours of Senior Assessment and Resource Institute
- Exercise programs for seniors
- Eye and ear care
- Home health care

Pre-registration is preferred. For more information or to register, call 734-655-1706, or visit stmarymercy.org/healthyagingconference.

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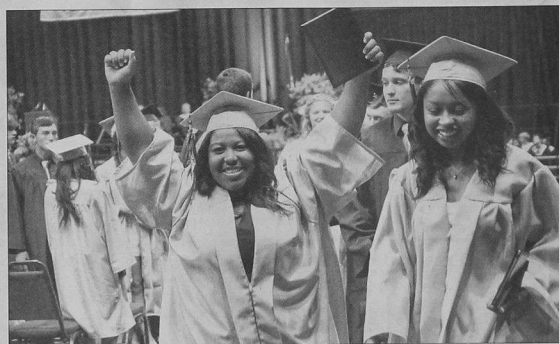
Caps fly at the end of commencement. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SCHOOL'S OUT FOR WILDCATS SENIORS

THE CLASS OF 2014 at Plymouth High School crossed the stage and took home that coveted diploma during commencement exercises Sunday at Eastern Michigan University. For the complete list of graduates and even more photos, please visit the *Observer* website at www.hometownlife.com.



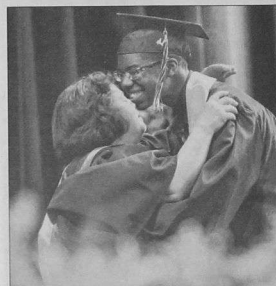
Ghassan Ali Iqbal (from left), Matthew Alec Busch and Alexander Jason Decker can hardly wait to line up for the procession.



High school is over. The next chapter in life begins.



Looking for friends and relatives.



Judy Mardigian hugs Marcus Granderson after his rousing speech.



Jocelyn Margaret Haddad shows her feelings.



P-CEP Combined Choirs perform "Song to Tradition."

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS Q&A



AmeriPlus Financial owner Aadi Nathoo said his firm finances "the American dream, one dream at a time." BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Canton broker helps finance 'American dream'

Observer: Tell us about your business, including the products and services you offer.

AmeriPlus: Full line of mortgage products available. Purchase or refinancing. We offer exceptional service with competitive rates.

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

AmeriPlus: Did some mail ads with an overwhelming response.

Observer: Why did you choose Canton?

AmeriPlus: My family and I have been residents of Canton since 1999. We love it here.

Observer: What makes your business unique?

AmeriPlus: Combined lending experience of over 40 years. Our service out-does the rest.

Observer: How has it changed since you opened?

AmeriPlus: Moved locations over the years toward the heart of Canton, Ford and Canton Center.

Observer: How has the economy affected your business?

AmeriPlus: We weathered the storm and are ready to serve the community with all their financial needs.

Observer: Any advice for other business owners?

AmeriPlus: Keep strong and reach out to the community for loyal support. Canton is a great place to strive.

Observer: What's in store for the future of your business?

AmeriPlus: We are in the process of obtaining our own funds to lend. Becoming a banker in the community keeps us competitive at a larger scale.

DETAILS

Name: AmeriPlus Financial
Address: 45340 Hanford, Canton
Title: Aadi Nathoo, broker/owner
Hometown: Canton
Opened: 2000
Employees: 7
Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, weekends by appointment only
Specialty: Financing the American dream, one dream at a time. Competitive rates, great service.
Contact: 734-737-9600;
www.AmeriPlusfinancial.com

Business workshop

The Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce hosts a business development workshop 8:30-9:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 24, designed to teach participants the best places to prospect new businesses.



Souchock

The workshop, "Free Prospecting Tools Only a Click Away," features Plymouth District Librarian Carol Souchock talking about where to find information on almost any business prospect. It takes place at the chamber office, 850 W. Ann Arbor Trail, in downtown Plymouth.

Souchock will take participants step-by-step on how to use these tools. She can show how to pull from criteria that fits your customer profile to allow for specific targeting. Chamber officials call the workshop "a must" for anyone in sales or business acquisition.

There is no cost to attend. To RSVP, email

teri@plymouthchic.org or call 734-453-1540.

Grub Crowd sponsors

The Canton Chamber of Commerce is offering members the opportunity to sponsor the chamber's annual Grub Crowd, set for 6-10 p.m. Tuesday, July 22. Four sponsorships are available; sponsorship deadline is June 12.

Menu Sponsor, \$500 - Includes company name on posters and menus, plus name on the T-shirt that 600 guests will be wearing the night of the event; also six tickets to the event.

Transportation Sponsor, \$500 - Includes company name in each Fun Bus, plus name on T-shirt that 600 guests will be wearing; also six tickets to the event.

T-Shirt Sponsor, \$135 - Includes company name on T-shirt, plus two tickets to the event.

T-Shirt Sponsor, \$75 - Can't come to the event? The chamber will list company name on the T-shirt (600 shirts).

To get a sponsorship application and for more information, call the chamber at 734-453-4040.



Grand opening

Iconic Luxe Salon held a grand opening June 2, with owner Jackie Pon joined by her staff, family, friends and the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce ambassadors for the ribbon cutting. The salon is located at 818 S. Main Street, next to the Mayflower Party Store.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Accountants scholarship

Canton resident John Michael Shaffer, a student at Michigan State University, was one of 16 state college students named as recipients of the Michigan Accountancy Foundation's Fifth Graduate Year Scholarship.



Shaffer The MAFA is a non-profit organization that promotes excellence in accounting education.

Each recipient of the scholarship will receive \$3,000, for a combined total of \$48,000, to help fund his or her fifth/graduate year of college.

Zin closes

The Zin Wine Bar, located on Forest Avenue, has closed its doors, according to information provided by the Plymouth Downtown Development Authority.

DDA officials said, however, to look for John Cook, owner of Pizzeria Vino on Pennington, to re-open the restaurant as Locale Bar and Kitchen.

DDA officials said the business will "have a new look inside and a new menu." Corsi hopes to have Locale Bar and Kitchen open "in a couple of months."

Jewelry donation

During the month of June, Dearborn Jewelers of Plymouth will donate \$3 of every \$10 watch battery sale to Eie's Place, a healing center for grieving children and teens.

Each week, peer support group programs help hundreds of children, ages 3-18, learn how to cope and begin to heal after the death of a parent, sibling or other close family member or friend.

For more information about the organization, go to www.eiesplace.org.

New yoga studio brings Zen to all

When Empower Yoga Studio opens its doors June 14, students will find no "guru" dictating classes. Instead, the new studio will be sporting a "community" approach, freeing its team of teachers - each with yoga specialties - to lead classes in their own preferred style. The result: a breadth of options for matching teachers to tastes, interests and abilities, all in what owner Julie Cook calls "a judgment-free environment."

Cook said her studio is designed to appeal to people with all levels of yoga experience.

"In our technology-filled lives, sky-high stress is an epidemic in our society. We don't get the chance to reboot and heal. Yoga can reduce stress levels, improve health and quality of life," said Cook, a certified yoga instructor. "At Empower Yoga, we meet the student where they are with a variety of class styles and levels that meet our students' unique needs and interests."

For example, in addition to classic Vinyasa classes (hot and otherwise), there's the ongoing "Yoga for Beginners," a 30-day program that gently guides those who are new to yoga. "Healthy Backs" is a restorative yoga that is ideal for anyone seeking healing and relaxation. For competitive athletes, there's Cook's "Endurance Yoga" - a program that caters directly to the needs of competitive athletes. Cook said Endurance Yoga has built local renown for its ability to improve athletic performance while reducing risk of training-related injuries.

"Yoga for athletes is



Cook usually taught in a gym and participated in pants miss out on a quiet, peaceful experience," she said. "The Empower Yoga setting is serene, providing a Zen-like, relaxed feeling the moment you walk in the door. It's yoga the way it meant to be experienced."

The experience is an essential element to generate the full power of yoga, she says.

"The meaning of yoga is to 'yoke.' It creates a oneness with both the body and mind, balancing the brain and easing stress and depression," Cook said. "The physical postures help us to work out all of the stress and tension that we hold deep in our tissues."

Indeed, yoga's physical postures (called Asanas) are designed to keep the body strong, fit and flexible, while breathing techniques aim to focus the mind.

"Together they work beautifully to change the biochemistry of the brain and help restore balance to both body and mind," Cook said. Cook's passion and enthusiasm for the power of yoga to change lives is evident in the studio's philosophy of "Karma Yoga" - the act of giving without any expectation of receiving.

"Empower Yoga Studio is at 41620 Six Mile in Northville Township. There are a number of grand opening specials, including 30 days of unlimited yoga classes for just \$30. For more information, call the studio at 248-719-7520 or visit www.empoweryoga.net.

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OUR VIEWS

Flag Day grew from humble roots

"We take the stars from Heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing Liberty."

That's what George Washington once said about the newly created American flag during the American Revolution.

Authorized June 14, 1777, by Congress, what we now know as the Stars and Stripes first flew over the walls of Fort Stanwix in the wilderness of upstate New York. It is unlikely that the soldiers within those walls, who were taking on the most powerful nation in the world at the time, realized that the red, white and blue American flag would become one of the most recognizable symbols in the world.

Although despised by some, the Stars and Stripes has inspired countless others in nearly every corner of the globe, especially where people have lived under tyranny. It isn't the design of the flag (though it is certainly handsome, as flags go) that is inspiring. It is the very ideals for which the flag has stood and which it has represented since its inception: liberty, democracy and freedom. While there have been plenty of times in our history when we have not lived up to those ideals, they have still been our guiding principles since the founding of this nation. They were the ideals that inspired the makers of the flag and those who fought to fly it over their heads — not just in the American Revolution, but in every American war since, including today in Afghanistan.

Never were we so moved, so determined, as the memorable raising of our flag on Iwo Jima in World War II and over the ruins of the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001. Our nation has come a long way from the simple beginnings of the U.S. flag and Betsy Ross. It has become a national symbol of pride and a call to patriotic fervor, marked Saturday as a national holiday.

It is a tradition rooted in the 1800s. The idea of a day celebrating our flag can be traced back to 1885 in Fredonia, Wis. On June 14, 1885, Bernard J. Cigrand, a 19-year-old teacher at Stony Hill School, placed a 10-inch, 35-star flag in a bottle on his desk then assigned essays on the flag and its significance. This observance commemorated Congress' adoption of the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777. This observance was also the beginning of Cigrand's long years of fervent and devoted effort to bring about national recognition and observance of Flag Day.

The celebration spread to New York and, soon thereafter, it moved to the Philadelphia home of Betsy Ross, where the Sons of the Revolution celebrated the day. The movement then took hold in Pennsylvania, where the superintendent of public education moved Flag Day ceremonies into Independence Square. Then the observance moved on to Chicago with school children there.

In 1914, Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane gave a Flag Day address. As a culmination to the groundswell of support, President Woodrow Wilson established Flag Day on May 30, 1916. But it wasn't until Aug. 3, 1949, that President Harry Truman designated June 14 as National Flag Day. Started by children and their teacher, it is appropriate for all of us to reflect on the meaning behind the flag. The National Flag Day Foundation hopes we'll all stop at 7 p.m. Saturday for the annual Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

May we all be flag bearers in spirit, if not in actuality. And may our flag continue as the standard for the liberty and justice we so treasure.

FLAG RETIREMENT

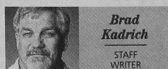
Date/Time: Saturday, June 14, 2 p.m.
Location: VFW Post 6695, 14242ially Mill, Plymouth
Details: June 14 is Flag Day and VFW Post 6695 will host a flag retirement ceremony, assisted by Boy Scout Troop 1539. The public is invited to the 30-minute ceremony, at which organizers say the public can "learn more about our flag and how to properly retire it." Hot dogs, chips and pop will be provided for the ceremony.
Contact: Call 734-459-6700 for more information.



The American flag with its red and white stripes and white stars on a field of blue was authorized June 14, 1777, by the Continental Congress.

STAFF COLUMN

Some of school board's pain is self-inflicted



increasingly frustrated administrators have presented the board with a variety of options they believed would bring money into the district.

Two years ago, when the board decided to close Fiegel Elementary, the administration had recommended — based on the same declining enrollment figures officials are lamenting today — the closing of a second elementary (either Gallimore or Hulsing elementaries).

The political will wasn't there; closing Fiegel took them two tries (they were poised to do it the year before, but backed down at the last minute). Board members backed off a potential decision to close Gallimore again this year (it will almost certainly happen next year).

The administration has suggested raising class size (an option they rightly declined) and opening the district to a schools-of-choice plan that would have opened 200 K-2 seats and brought in more than \$1.4 million. Closing an elementary school, which they know they don't need anymore, would save them another \$1.1 million.

In the classroom
And, for the first time (at least with any consequence), the cuts have hit the classroom. The district is cutting 44 teachers, more than seven full-time-equivalent interventionists and 10 music specialists.

The latest to feel the pinch are the custodians. After giving

back \$2 million and some 21 jobs, plus taking pay cuts and 17 unpaid furlough jobs the last two years, the district's 68 custodians are losing their jobs to privatization after the board voted 5-2 to hire Grand Rapids Cleaning Services at Tuesday's meeting.

Kathy Ladenberger is president of the custodians union. In 1997, she took home \$948.55 for working 80 hours. Seventeen years later, she took home \$877 for 88 hours. Her people are not just losing their jobs; some of them are losing a shot at a pension. She said that's a tough pill to swallow when administrators are getting large raises, as several did earlier this school year.

Part of the pain
"My people are very disappointed," Ladenberger said. "We're just as worthy as any of them, because we're part of the team the superintendent likes to talk about. You can't have a team without all the players."

Everyone understands these cuts aren't easy and some help from Lansing would be welcome. Everybody, including those losing their jobs, thinks board members are in pain doing what they're doing.

The anguish in board President Judy Margidgian's voice Tuesday was evident while talking about privatization, which she and Trustee Kim Crouch voted against.

But as much as they agonize, there's no question of that — at least some of the pain is self-inflicted. That probably makes it hurt even more.

Brad Kadrich is community editor of the Plymouth Observer and the Canton Observer. He can be reached via email at bkadrich@hometownlife.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Our' children

After reading the letter to the editor June 5 from Nancy Austin, I thought a reply was necessary.

Based on our years of public school teaching in Plymouth-Community Schools, we offer the perspective that the mix of cultures is enriching for all. Our students, from every group, brought into the classroom the histories and raw materials of differing cultures for the benefit of all, including the adults.

This blend of classroom citizens goes together an enlarged understanding of the complex world of the 21st century in which they will be working and raising their families.

All the children in this community are our children.
Debra MacGregor, Nancy Sullivan
Plymouth

Long-distance sentence

I was interested to see, based on his recent posting to the editor in the Observer, that even from Plymouth no less, which must be some 8,000 miles away, that Tom "Courts Martial" Kelly was able to collect and weigh the evidence, hand down a guilty verdict and then sentence the Army sergeant to death.

Dennis Cooperson
Plymouth

Food drive thanks

The Salvation Army sends their sincerest thanks to all who participated in the recent National Association of Letter Carrier Food Drive. This year, over 60,000 pounds of food was collected in Plymouth and Canton and this food will be distributed right back to this community.

Space doesn't allow us to thank each vendor who donated

food or supplies. Nor does it allow for us to thank each mail carrier, volunteer and/or donor, but please know how much we appreciate everyone who participated in the overall success of this community effort.

A special thank you to Barb Mitchell and Tammy Bosman (Plymouth Post Office) and Gloria Gorney and Lois Spitz (Canton Post Office) for the many years of leadership they have given this effort.

Laurie Aren
Salvation Army, Plymouth Corps

Who's telling the lies?

Two interesting articles were featured on the front page of this paper June 1. The first was about a GOP forum being held in Canton Township.

According to Republican spokesman Mike Hansel, the

See LETTERS, Page A13

OUR VIEWS

Campaign finance reform no easy fix

A U.S. Senate committee is taking on a near-impossible task — dealing with the knotty issues of campaign finance reform.

Not that any real resolutions were forthcoming from the hearings of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, but it may help if the committee could at least frame campaign finance reform proposals more coherently. At a minimum, that would require examining the issue not as one problem to consider, but two.

One is the "dark money" conundrum. Dark money — political contributions whose sources are made untraceable — is a troubling issue.

Both sides use dark money, although Republicans seem to use it more. Its proliferation, thanks mostly to the Citizens United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2010, threatens the voting public's confidence in elections. Accurate or not, dark money spreads the cynicism that election outcomes are controlled by moneyed interests, not by the interests of the voting public.

The other problem, which the Senate panel should examine separately, is of rising campaign spending, generally. The different issue arises now because of the Supreme Court's *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission*

decision, which struck down cumulative limits on an individual's contributions to candidates or political groups in an election cycle.

Dark money and more money are not the same thing, despite the insistence of advocates of reform.

Let's take that last issue first: The injection of more money flooding into political campaigns. Advocates of control have persisted since the Watergate era of the mid-1970s in the belief — fervently held — that a magic formula exists to control spending in politics. Few endeavors in the American experiment have proven more meretricious.

Since the advent of earnest campaign finance efforts post-Watergate, campaign spending has soared. From 2000 to 2004, spending on presidential and congressional campaigns rose 30 percent, to \$3.9 billion. It has continued rising, inexorably, in the Barack Obama era.

A primary reason for that rise is that the stakes continue to increase. When government becomes more important in our lives, people pay to assure most of that power works for our side's interests, not the other guy's.

The McCutcheon decision acknowledges that reality by

eliminating the ceiling on an individual's ability to contribute, while maintaining limitations on contributions to individual candidates.

Dark money is the more troubling of the two. Even the high-court majority in *Citizens United* saw lack of transparency in making contributions to be a serious problem. The trouble is in finding a meaningful solution.

Fast, electronic disclosure helps with transparency. But it helps only if the immediate contributor is identified.

Most other recommendations seem to treat the same wearisome, all-but-useless trails followed by previous ineffectual spending controls. One reformer group, Public Citizen, wants senators to ban "direct candidate solicitations" when candidates appear "at any fundraising event in which contributions in excess of candidate limits are being solicited."

This sort of hyper-specificity is like red meat to the smart campaign guys who make fortunes finding alternative routes around ineffectual roadblocks.

Short of lifting limits altogether on direct contributions to candidates, there are few easy answers for the dark money conundrum. But hapless Rubie Goldberg failing at the issue won't help.

LETTERS

Continued from Page A12

purpose of the meeting is to clear up liberal misinformation and outright lies. I would like to suggest to Mr. Hansel that if he is truly interested in bringing to light misinformation and outright lies, then no forum is needed. Just watch any commercial being aired on TV which is paid for by Americans for Prosperity (for the rich) or listen to any Republican politician in Lansing who says the economy is great or they didn't raise taxes or that they are looking out for all the people in our state.

The second article addresses the outsourcing of the Plymouth-Canton Schools custodial department. School board Treasurer Mark Horvath is all in favor of the privatization, despite the subject failure of outsourcing the school transportation department, which now has a budget deficit of \$540,000.

How long will it be before the corporation that gets the custodial contract comes back to the well for more money and any imagined savings vanish? But Horvath, like his fellow Republicans in Lansing, will have succeeded in harming union members

and enriching some private corporation.
James Huddleston
Canton

Uphold Michigan's RTFA
The local ordinance officer just yesterday tried to force his way on to my property and garage to see if I had chickens or not. His "justification" was that he heard the RTFA protection was taken away from small farm operations like mine.

Leaving the intent of state law (PA 93 of 1981 as amended) up to local interpretation will cause undue hardship on citizens as the local authorities are incapable of understanding the law as written and intended. As described by the event above.

All of the GAAMP changes this year were poorly written and not even read by the Ag Commissioners except for the Siting GAAMP, which is the most poorly written document that I have ever seen. The Siting GAAMP needs to be nullified and rewritten by actual stakeholders, not appoint industry bureaucrats. It needs sound, unbiased science as a platform to build good policy for the citizens of Michigan.

Randy Zeilinger
Garden City

Tips for hiring a contractor



Rick Bloom
MONEY MATTERS

tion at www.bbb.org that is free.

It is important to recognize that the BBB has information on members and non-members. Also, members of the BBB do not receive preferential treatment. Members and non-members are judged on the same standard.

Once you've selected a contractor, the contract you sign is important. Contracts are not standard and consumers should not sign without reading every word. In addition, don't assume you can't make changes to the contract, because you can.

In reviewing the contract, make sure the date due for first payment is spelled out. I am leery of any contract that calls for 100 percent of the money to be paid upfront or even a down payment as high as 50 percent. A 25-percent down payment is more than sufficient.

Make sure final payment is not due until the job is com-

pleted. Make sure the contractor has an incentive to complete the job as soon as possible. The contract should state when the project is going to be completed. In addition, consider a penalty provision if work is not completed on time.

A home is the single largest purchase most people will ever make. It's not like an investment you can sell if you're not happy with it. Your home is where you live. That's why it's important to do your homework before allowing anyone to work on your home.

The consequences of hiring the wrong contractor can be devastating. Once you have decided to do a home improvement project, take your time to hire the best person for the job. The contractor may be busy and unable to get to your project immediately. However, the best contractor for the job is generally worth waiting for. Good luck.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. His website is www.bloomassetmanagement.com. If you would like him to respond to your questions, please email rick@bloomassetmanagement.com.

Investing in state transit options is long overdue, essential

Imagine being unable to do something as simple as driving to the store or visiting your physician.

For many seniors across Michigan, this is the frightening reality – unless they have continued access to local transit options, including “dial-a-ride” in many rural communities, particularly in northern Michigan. That’s one reason seniors across the state are backing the proposed increase in revenues for our state’s transportation infrastructure, along with proposals to ensure that all aspects of the infrastructure are included in the spending formulas allocating revenues.

Michigan drivers combat gaping potholes and countless craters in the roads every day on their way to work,



Clark Harder
GUEST COLUMNIST

school and around their communities. Bold action is needed to address these problems, not only for riders’ safety, but to pass comprehensive transportation funding in our state.

While many see the immediate problems with our roads, it’s the other shortcomings of our current transportation funding that aren’t as immediately evident but are just as crucial for Michigan’s elderly, as well as farmers, boating enthusiasts, our tourism industry and more. Senate Majority Leader

Randy Richardville’s plan is to increase transportation funding – not just for roads, but for all of our transportation infrastructure, including much needed harbor dredging and repairs, rail improvements vital to agriculture and transit, including rural dial-a-ride services that meet the needs of Michigan’s increasingly aging population.

Sen. Richardville’s bold plan would meet the needs of Michigan for years to come. That’s why it is backed by business groups, including the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and Business Leaders for Michigan, the Michigan Farm Bureau, the Michigan Boating Industries Association, the Michigan Railroads Association, the Michigan Public Transit As-

sociation, the Michigan Environmental Council and many others who believe it’s time to fund long overdue structural repairs to our roads and bridges and invest in public transportation that so many depend on in their daily lives.

Public transportation is how many in Michigan – especially seniors – depend on getting around. Michigan public transit served more than 4.3 million elderly riders in 2010. According to the Michigan Department of Transportation, use of mass transit by seniors is up 40 percent in the last decade.

Michigan lawmakers are moving to provide more dollars to our state’s transportation system and that’s a good thing. But funding the public transit system for Michigan’s

seniors to maintain their independence is vital.

Every dollar raised by the Legislature needs to go through the state’s long-established and full transportation formula. That formula currently allocates a few cents of every dollar for important purposes like city buses and rural “dial-a-ride” services, as well as other infrastructure.

It’s well past time for Michigan to move forward on improving our transportation system – all aspects – with major investment. We encourage our lawmakers to take the steps necessary to help move Michigan forward.

Clark Harder is executive director of the Michigan Public Transit Association.



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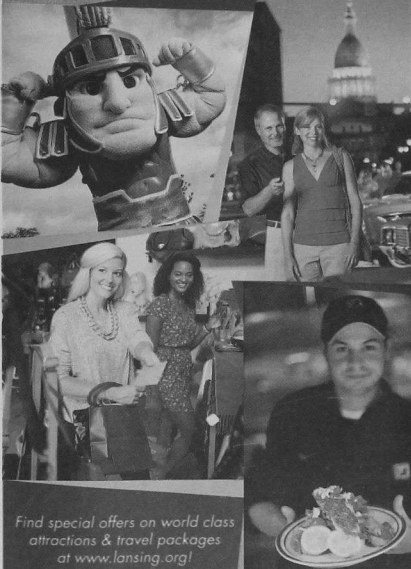
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The Splash-N-Blast at Kensington Metropark is open daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. PHOTOS BY LAURA COLVIN

LOCAL FAMILIES COOL OFF AT KENSINGTON'S SPLASH-N-BLAST

By Laura Colvin
Staff Writer

Scott Young and his family came Saturday from Howell for some fun family time at Kensington Metropark's Splash-N-Blast water park in Milford.

"We came out to enjoy a nice day," Young said, noting that, while they frequently spend time at Kensington, Saturday was the family's first-ever visit to Splash-N-Blast. "My wife and I both work all week, so this is a great place to come on the weekends to enjoy some time with the kids. It's a fun place and it's nice, after a long winter, to finally get out of the house."

Located on the north end of Martindale Beach, Splash-N-Blast, opened in 2006 and includes two 240-foot twisted water slides and an adjacent spray area where water shoots from colorful cannons, palm trees, serpents and a whale.

Riders also choose between the open slide or ride down in the dark through the enclosed slide.

"I love the closed slide," said Katie Stephenson, Splash-N-Blast supervisor. "It's like a tunnel, and you don't know what's coming next."

The water park is appropriate for all ages, but those who wish to ride the water slides must stand at least 48 inches tall.

The Splash-N-Blast is open daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., through late summer. Entry to the



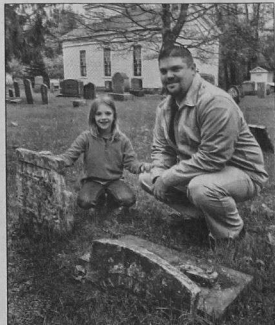
Julie Young swings Caleb, 10 months, through the spray at Kensington Metropark's Splash-N-Blast.

Splash-N-Blast is \$5 for adults and \$4 for kids. After 5 p.m., adults pay \$4 and kids enter for \$3. A metropark vehicle entry permit also is required to enter any metropark.

"We get a lot of repeat custom-

ers," Stephenson said. Entry also includes a wristband, which allows Splash-N-Blast visitors to come in and out of the park during the day.

colvin@hometownlife.com | 248-390-7356



Ryan Muirhead kneels with his daughter Laney, 7, by one of the broken stones at the cemetery at the Salem-Walker Church. HAL GOULD/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Man recovers sunken headstones at historic Salem-Walker Cemetery

By John Lovelady
Correspondent

Ryan Muirhead has a somewhat unique hobby. It involves hanging out at the historic Salem-Walker Cemetery, where he helps recover and reset water stones.

Officially established in 1864, the Salem-Walker Church and Cemetery, located on Angle Road near Seven Mile, is the final resting place for locals, dating back to as early as the creation of the state of Michigan in 1837.

"As you can see," said Muirhead, 37, "there are certainly graves which date back prior to the church's construction."

Tombstones mark graves from a number of American conflicts, including the Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II. Salem-Walker Cemetery is home to several generations of deceased soldiers and civilians, stretching a wide span of years from the country's past.

Leading a hand

But that history can cause problems.

"Because of the age of some of these stones, the supporting ground beneath has collapsed and left them close to, or entirely beneath, the dirt," Muirhead said.

Wanting to help the Muirhead family began to dig up the sunken stones so they can level the ground with sand or gravel before then resetting the headstones into the grave sites.

Muirhead, with the help of his father and brother, has begun clearing the overgrown thickets along the southern-most burial plots. Other visitors have taken notice of the efforts.

"It feels rewarding when somebody thanks you for your work and time," he said. "It's also very interesting, because you usually get to hear their family story as well and it gives the graves a new sort of personality."

A local history buff, Muirhead knows about several of the prominent family names found within the cemetery. As a

result of Muirhead's familiarity and participation with the cemetery, the church has recently gone as far as to elect him as a trustee of its managerial board.

"He's a keeper," church secretary Lone Nowak said. "I think it's great what he's doing. He's a man with a family and to take personal time to preserve the cemetery for future generations is a very kind act."

Peace and memories

"It's peaceful over here in the cemetery," Muirhead said, "like stepping back into a time long ago, when life was simple."

Initially sparking his interest with the historical site was the nearness of his childhood home, as well as the fact that his grandparents, Roland and Lillian Muirhead, are both buried there.

"I remember sitting on the church steps as a kid and watching my family and friends play football here in its front yard," he said.

The Salem-Walker site isn't merely a source of hometown pride, however. In 2011, it was used to film a scene in the Hollywood film *The Five-Year Engagement*.

"It was pretty interesting," Muirhead said. "They shot a rainy day scene during a beautiful sunny weekend. I'm not sure how they did it."

The Salem-Walker site also has gained publicity as a member of the Historical Washinaw Area Attractions group and as a hot spot for ghost seekers such as the South Lyon Paranormal Society.

While the cemetery is almost 200 years old, it's still in use today. The Salem-Walker Church and Cemetery holds an annual Christmas service the Sunday before Dec. 25 and is open for weddings, concerts or special occasions. The church can be reached at 248-437-0394.

"Because of people like Ryan, the Salem-Walker site will now be available for the public's appreciation for many years to come," Nowak said.



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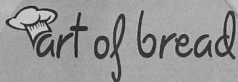
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D1 SOFTBALL REGIONALS

SOFTBALL
QUARTERS

Miscues costly as Canton falls

Bulldogs take advantage in 6-1 win over Canton

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

The two top teams in Division 1 met Tuesday afternoon in a girls softball quarterfinal match-up at Novi.

Only one of those teams had a good game, however. Canton made four key errors and could only manage two hits against Romeo senior pitcher Taylor Weaver as the Bulldogs rolled to a 6-1 triumph.

It marked the second consecutive season that Weaver got the best of the Chiefs' and pitcher Hanna Warren in the quarterfinals. Incidentally, Weaver and Warren will be future roommates and teammates at Central Michigan University.

"You can't give a good team four outs," lamented Canton first-year head coach Al White, whose team went into the game ranked No. 1 in D1 with Romeo ranked second. "We didn't play our best today. They're a good team, we're a good team, they were the best team today."

Canton senior short-stop Palge Aresco, whose double in the third was the only well-struck ball against Weaver (the Chiefs' other hit was of the infield variety), by senior Eryn Birchler in the seventh), goes props to the Romeo righty.

"She was throwing us inside really well, she just beat us today," Aresco said. "She threw very well, she's a great pitcher

See CHIEFS, Page B2



Canton senior second baseman Kendyl Richter smacks a two-run double in the sixth inning of the Chiefs' 10-1 win over Farmington Hills Mercy. (JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO)



Trotting back to the Canton dugout after scoring in the sixth on a Hanna Warren double are Elizabeth Yager (No. 1) and Kendyl Richter. At left is Hannah Shuler (No. 21).

CHIEFS GET IT DONE

Canton bests Mercy for second straight regional crown

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Saturday was deja vu all over again for Canton's varsity girls softball team.

For the second year in a row, the Chiefs defeated Farmington Hills Mercy for the Division 1 regional championship at Novi High School, the latest triumph a 10-1 shellacking instead of a one-run nailbiter — which was the case in 2013.

An 11-hit attack was more than enough for senior pitcher Hanna Warren, who gave up just four hits and struck out eight, only giving up a run in the bottom of the first.

Warren, who has been bothered by an ankle injury most of the season, was strong throughout and also helped her own cause with a two-run double in the third to open up a 4-1 edge.

"She's not 100 percent, either," said Canton's first-year head coach Al White, whose No. 1-ranked team improved to 32-7. "She missed probably about four weeks of work with that ankle. She came back and tried to pitch a couple times. She got us through the games that she threw but it was hurting her."

"If you watch her when she hits and runs, she's still got that little bit

See REGIONAL, Page B2

HOCKEY MISSION

Disabled U.S. veteran's Michigan Warriors league aims to spark competition, camaraderie among military 'brothers'

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

After Josh Krajewski came home to Livonia after serving five years in the United States Army, he longed for the same kind of camaraderie and teamwork. He needed a reason to compete and pull together for a common goal.

Then Krajewski discovered hockey through the Breakfast Club morning program at Suburban Ice - Farmington Hills and found a perfect physical and social outlet.

He wants other veterans to make that same discovery.

This spring, the Livonia Stevenson alum is leading another mission, to

launch the Michigan Warrior Hockey Program designed for any disabled or wounded veteran — regardless of skill level, injury or gender — who want to be part of something again.

"When guys get out of the military, they lose that team-building concept and that camaraderie concept," said the 27-year-old Krajewski before a recent drop-in hockey session at Suburban (where he also skates in a spring league for adults of various skill levels). "They worked together for years and years with the same guys and they don't have that anymore."

"So what I really want veterans to

See WARRIORS, Page B3



Playing hockey renews competitive juices and camaraderie dormant in some U.S. veterans after they are discharged. Josh Krajewski (right) wants his fledgling Michigan Warriors league to provide that opportunity for other vets.



Livonian Josh Krajewski takes a breather at Suburban Ice - Farmington Hills. He is organizing a nonprofit hockey program for disabled U.S. veterans. A seven-week clinic at Royal Oak Lindell Arena gets it started.

PHOTOS BY JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO

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REGIONAL

Continued from Page B1

of a limp. But ... I think the adrenaline will carry her through now."

The Chiefs have another encore waiting for them, too, as they square off against Romeo at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in a D1 quarterfinal, also hosted by Novi.

Warren will face Romeo pitcher Taylor Weaver, repeating the pitching matchup from last year's quarterfinal — which the Chiefs dropped.

"I think it's going to be huge," said Canton senior shortstop Paige Aresco, about the team banking on last season's experience. "We've already been through this, we're ready to go and ready and we're looking for some revenge from last year. "We're swinging the bats really well and we're fielding really well."

Spark plugs

Aresco was a big reason for Canton's success Saturday. She went 2-for-3 in the 11-0 semifinal win over Birmingham Seaholm and followed up with a 2-for-3 outing against the Marlins, driving in three runs and scoring another.

Mercy also reached the regional final thanks to a blowout, romping to a 10-0 victory over Walled Lake Central.

Starting both games in the circle for the Marlins was sophomore pitcher

Abby Krzywiecki, whereas the Chiefs pitched sophomore MacKenna Payne in the Canton win over Seaholm.

"That was our plan coming in here," White explained. "We thought Payne could do it and give Hanna some rest. It worked out that way." Canton got rolling early against the fifth-ranked Marlins and starting pitcher Abby Krzywiecki with a two-run first.

Leadoff hitter Elizabeth Yager (3-for-4, two runs, one RBI) was safe on an infield single and scored on a double to deep center by senior second baseman Kendyl Richter (2-for-4, two runs, two doubles, three RBI).

Following with another run-scoring hit was Aresco and the Chiefs nearly had a third run in the frame. A fly ball to right would have scored Aresco, but it was ruled she left third base early to negate her tally.

"Yager is a great lead-off hitter and we tell her all the time, 'You get on we're going to score,'" White said. "And she got on both games, first inning, and we scored in both."

Answer time

The Marlins didn't waste any time answering, however.

Singling to center was junior Alex Sobczak (who had two of Mercy's four hits in the contest) and she scored on a one-out base hit by Krzywiecki,

slicing the Canton lead to 2-1.

After Warren hit Jordan Ewald with a pitch, White came out to have a confab with Warren. The pep talk must have helped the pitcher relax, because she fanned Courtney Avromov and Molly Murphy to end the inning.

"Yes, I had a rough first inning," conceded Warren. "The coach just came out and said 'You're a better competitor than this, and our whole team is a better team than this.' I knew after that inning I would settle down."

Canton expanded the lead to 4-1 in the third thanks to a clutch, two-out double off the fence in left by Warren. That scored Richter and Aresco.

The Chiefs then sealed the victory with a six-run surge in the sixth, knocking Krzywiecki out of the contest.

A bases loaded walk to senior Bryn Birchler made it 5-1 and Yager brought home another on an infield chopper.

Richter and Aresco capped off the uprising, each plating two runs with line-drive doubles to left.

"It was fun, me and Yager just try our best to get on base," said Richter, who hopes to walk on at Wayne State University. "Because we have a strong lineup behind us. "Paige hits us around all the time, so we're ready for her to hit behind us."



Canton celebrates after winning the Division 1 girls softball regional championship at Novi.

Warren had little trouble getting through the final two innings, despite a double to center by Murphy in the seventh.

Starting strong

In the five-inning, mercy-rule victory over Seaholm, the Chiefs scored four runs in the first and Payne shut down the Maples, giving up just two hits and striking out nine.

Sparking the offense were Richter (2-for-3, three-run triple), Aresco and Nicole Clark (2-for-3).

According to Warren, the job turned in by Payne was an unusual request behind her own strong game in the final.

That gave her a chance to be fully rested and ready for the Marlins. "I'm feeling a lot better, not sore at all," Warren said. "It helps having the (four) pitchers that



Making a catch deep in left-center to end the sixth inning Saturday is Canton's Elizabeth Yager. JOHN KEMSKI/EXPRESS PHOTO

we do that are each extraordinarily good on their own terms. "To have that support and to not have to pitch the first game was a huge reliever. She (Payne)

pitched awesome." Canton's other pitchers include junior Hannah Shuler and freshman Peyton Philbeck.

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D1 BOYS GOLF FINAL

Title bid off course; Wildcats slip to fifth place

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

There wouldn't be a Day 2 comeback this time around for Plymouth's varsity boys golf team.

The Wildcats in 2013 rallied from a three-stroke deficit after the

first day of the Division 1 finals at Michigan State University's par 72 Forest Akers East course to force a fifth-player tie-breaker against ultimate champion Battle Creek Lakewood.

Last weekend, Plymouth trailed by three strokes entering Saturday's action but fell further behind — ultimately finishing fifth with a 296-301-597 tally.

Swartz Creek (293-291-584) edged Novi-Detroit Catholic Central (293-292-585) for the championship.

"The guys were focused and ready to play," said Plymouth head coach Dan Young about his squad. "I'm very proud of these seniors. They have established a tradition of excellence at Plymouth over the last four years."

One of those seniors, Chris Koziar, came in tied for ninth overall among individuals with a 71-72-143 scoreline. Seniors John Tatti (73-73-146) and Evan Chipman (74-77-151) also had solid showings in their prep finales. Freshman Jack Boczar chipped in with a 78-82-

160 finish. Also for Plymouth, Kyle Melnick and Alex Decker combined for a 82-79-161 tally.

Canton junior Donnie Trospier, who battled the flu during Day 1, chimed in with a 78-68-146 scoreline.

"On Friday he was feeling under the weather," Chiefs head coach Tom Alles said. "... Because of that I think it affected his concentration level which resulted in an unusual amount of bogeys and only one birdie. On Saturday he

returned to the course feeling better and determined to play his best golf.

"Donnie was disappointed with his play on Friday but showed a great deal of heart to bounce back and play so well on Saturday." For Catholic Central, top performers were James Piot (tied for sixth overall, 72-70-142), Dominic Mancinelli (72-76-148) and Glenn Piot (74-74-148).

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CHIEFS

Continued from Page B1

and she made us uncomfortable in the box, for sure."

The Chiefs (32-8) took an early 1-0 lead in the bottom of the second. Walks to Kaitlin Keys and Hannah Shuler, sandwiched around an error, loaded the bases with nobody out. Halee Warren then was safe at first when the Romeo shortstop threw late to home trying to force courtesy runner Olivia Grant.

But Weaver slammed the door shut on further damage, helping her own cause by turning a line drive up the middle into a double play.

"That shows how good

of a pitcher she is," said White, about Weaver. "She can get to that next gear, and that's what it takes as a competitor."

Staked to the one-run lead, Warren could not hold it for long. She threw wildly to first on a come-backer and Romeo junior catcher Kayla Noch singled up the middle to score Geordin Craun.

Small ball

Another Canton error allowed Breanna Olley to reach first to open the fifth and she moved around to score the go-ahead run on a sacrifice bunt, infield single (by Craun) and a successful squeeze bunt by Morgan Gardner.

Two defensive gems by Romeo infielders kept

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speedsters Elizabeth Yager and Kendyl Richter from getting on base in the bottom half. Had either reached safely, the Chiefs might have been in business with Aresco and Warren coming to the plate.

Instead it was another 1-2-3 frame for Weaver, who set down 12 batters in a row until Birchler's meaningless single.

"That third baseman (Erin Barg) made one heck of a play on Yager's chopper," White said. "And then the shortstop (Gardner) then came and topped her with that backhand in the hole and throws out Kendyl."

That's two legitimate great plays right there." Romeo (30-6) then opened up a 4-1 edge in the sixth, helped by two more Canton errors. The big blow was a triple to center by Barg, who scored on a wild relay throw to third.

The Bulldogs tacked on two insurance runs in the seventh, but by that time, the outcome essentially was sealed because of Weaver's dominance. She struck out eight batters and seemed to get stronger as the game proceeded.

"That's an outstanding team over there," Romeo coach Dave McClary said. "Hanna Warren is an excellent pitcher, and it took everything we had to put the ball in play."

"... We capitalized on some opportunities, we got some momentum, played a little small ball which isn't very customary for us. But today it worked out."

Romeo advanced to Thursday's semifinal at Michigan State University. The Bulldogs will face Bay City Western.

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Stark's ready for new heights at CMU

Plymouth graduate Stark groomed to be heptathlete for Chippewas

By Tim Smith Staff Writer

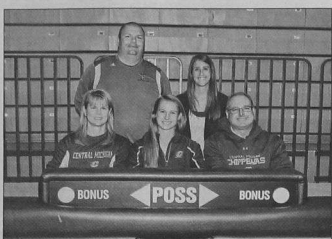
There's no seven ways about it.

Having just graduated from Plymouth High School, Holly Stark's future as a college heptathlete is just around the corner.

And yes, the 17-year-old Stark recently signed her national letter of intent with NCAA Division I Central Michigan University to compete in all seven events of the heptathlon, although her best event with the Wildcats was the 100-meter hurdles (she recently placed 19th in that event at the DI state finals at Rockford).

According to Stark, a Canton resident, she found out that her future with the Chippewas included the heptathlon during email correspondence with coaches after she decided CMU was a perfect fit for her.

"It will be interesting to see what happens," said Stark, about becoming a heptathlete. "But it's a lot of training all at once. ... Obviously, there's



Plymouth's Holly Stark recently signed to join Central Michigan University's women's track and field team. On hand to celebrate her signing day are: (back row, from left) Wildcats' head coach Ricky Styes and assistant coach Laura Mamassian; (front row, from left) her mom, Cheryl Stark, Holly Stark and her dad, David Stark. (JOHN KEMSKI) EXPRESS PHOTO

going to be frustrations in trying to learn so many new things at once, but I'll just try and tackle one thing at a time, one problem at a time.

"I think it's what's going to get me through it." CMU coach Mark Guthrie gauged her interest, although she likely would have had the scholarship regardless just on her outstanding performances

in the 100 hurdles. Stark won the regionals in that event last month at the Park with a mark of 16.53 seconds; her personal best for the year was 16.29.

"He said 'Hey, looking at your body type and your times we're thinking about having you in the heptathlon, which is shot put, javelin, high jump, long jump, 800, 200 and 100-

meter hurdles,' she said. 'I'm just really excited to have the opportunity to continue to compete outside of high school and kind of move forward.'

Mind over matter

Stark's versatility is only exceeded by her determination and mental toughness to not let obstacles stop her.

Throughout her four-year career with the Plymouth varsity, she endured numerous sprained ankles and pulled muscles.

"I sprained my ankle multiple times, mostly on the right; it's been at least five times," Stark said. "I have permanent ligament damage in my right ankle, and have had to go to the doctor multiple times for custom-made orthotics to keep my bones aligned because there's a slight tilt that gives me the tendency to roll (the ankle)."

"Sophomore year I pulled my quad and was pretty much in a wrap until the end of the season, and this season I also have a pulled quad. So I've just been dealing with those things all along."

According to Wildcats head coach Ricky Styes, those injuries never deterred Stark from her quest to contribute to the team.

"We're super excited for her," Styes said. "She's worked her way into any scholarship, any opportunities to run in college is a testament to her hard work and perseverance."

"She's battled injuries over the years. That has not slowed her down or stopped her in any way, shape or form." Styes added that the CMU coaching staff will be getting a standout athlete and person to work with over the next four years.

"Holly's one of those girls, one of those athletes, that you only get once in a while," he said. "From a coaching perspective, she's one of the easiest kids to coach because she wants to do well, she works hard to do well and we just kind of guide her in the right direction and let her do her own thing."

With a very successful high school career behind her, Stark now can't wait to see what lies ahead.

"I want to take it as far as possible," Stark said. "I would be extremely happy with eventually qualifying for nationals, that's what's next after states. Whatever comes, comes."

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MEN'S SOCCER

Catic's hat trick bolsters Bucks' 6-0 PDL triumph

The Michigan Bucks flexed their offensive muscle Saturday night before a huge crowd of Saline Area Soccer Association (SASA) supporters with a 6-0 romp over K-W United FC at Saline H.S.

The Ontario squad from Kitchener and Waterloo (2-1, seven points) came into the game as the only undefeated team in the Premier Development League's (PDL) Great Lakes Division and had not conceded a goal in three

games so far. That all changed when the team leading scorer Dzenan Catic led the first place Bucks to their second straight shutout win for the week and repaid United for the team's only loss on the season.

The Bucks, who improved to 3-2 (11 points) in the Great Lakes' Central Conference, got a hat trick from Catic, the Davenport University standout who tallied

goals in the 36th minute (from Brandon Beresford), 44th minute (unassisted) and 71st minute (from Will Roberts).

David Goldsmith got the next two goals in the 76th and 81st minutes, respectively, from Ken Tribbett and Jeff Adkins.

Defensively, the Bucks were tight but did yield a couple of first half opportunities that goalkeeper Adam Grinwis (University of Michi-

gan) made look routine.

In the 26th minute he made a sliding save at the six-yard box that cleared a very dangerous chance for Jay Chapman and in the 30th minute he made one of his signature diving saves off a long cross that was headed for the top corner to keep United off the score sheet.

Grinwis is the goals-against league leader with only two allowed in five matches.

The Bucks who are tied for first in the division with the Chicago Fire U-23 (3-2-2, 11 points), will spend the rest of the month on the road and that begins with a trip to Toronto to take on the Lynx next Sunday before heading Friday, June 20 to FC London on Friday, June 20.

For more information, Bucks home games or youth soccer camps, visit www.buckssoccer.com or call 248-334-7460.

WARRIORS

Continued from Page B1

get out of this, is there's a place for that to continue after the service. That's what I want this hockey program to be. I want it to be more than just coming out on the ice and skating. I want that team-building, that warrior spirit to continue."

Eyeing Computware

The team, to be known as the Michigan Warriors, could have a future home "base" at Plymouth Township's Computware Arena.

"They're very open to helping veterans," Krajevski said. "They take care of veterans at every hockey game we go to." (Plymouth) Whalers, they do a veteran salute there.

"They host one vet at each game, they're very pro-veteran people over there. And that's been recommended to me by other veteran organizations, to talk to those guys. So yeah, that's definitely at the top of our list where I want to skate."

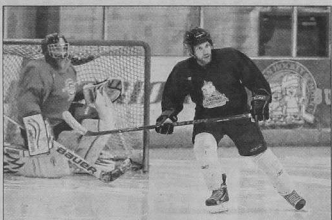
Krajevski — who served in Iraq and Afghanistan with the 3rd Infantry Division, and discharged with what he described as an "invisible wound" — was always a fan of the Detroit Red Wings growing up in Redford Township.

But all of a sudden, Krajevski found out that playing hockey was much better than watching it. His fledgling Michigan Warriors program will give others the same opportunity at no cost to them. He is working with the Michigan Veterans Service Division to make it a 501(c)3 (nonprofit organization) with donations and sponsors hopefully enabling men and women to be fully equipped for game action.

Stress-busting fun

"It's something I've always wanted to do. I never just had the time to do it," Krajevski said. "Once I got into it I was hooked. When I first started I was skating four or five days a week, just to learn how to do it."

"I wanted to better myself on the ice, and it's just fun. It keeps me in shape, and it's a good stress reliever; it burns energy. All of those positive byproducts of playing hockey with



Josh Krajevski (right) plays adult hockey at Suburban Ice - Farmington Hills. That arena could be a future home for the Michigan Warriors, as could Computware Arena in Plymouth Township. (PHOTOS BY JOHN KEMSKI) EXPRESS PHOTO

buddies was evident during Krajevski's recent drop-in session with others from Suburban's Beginner Adult Developmental Hockey League.

The impromptu skate filled a scheduling void for the league, on hiatus during Memorial Day week.

For 90 minutes, he skated but also blew a tire on occasion. He sent pucks at goalies and threw body checks against the boards — all with a big grin on his face.

"Like a kid in a candy store. 'Absolutely, whether it's drop-in with guys I've never skated with before or I'm out with the team I play in a season with, it's fun,' he continued. 'I just love being out on the ice.'

"All the guys were here for the same reason, to be a little competitive but have fun. We're not all on the same teams out here (drop-in), but we're all in the same league (BADHL)."

Open to all vets

The following day, Krajevski was headed back to Afghanistan for a 10-day stint in protective services. He was expected to return this week and get back to work on putting together the Michigan Warriors, patterned after successful vets-and-hockey programs in Minnesota and Washington, D.C.

The first salvo will be a seven-week developmental clinic at Royal Oak Lindell Ice Arena. "It's going to be more of a development and team-build-

ing seven weeks, let everybody get to know each other on the ice and have fun," Krajevski said. "Build off that team spirit that we have from the military and carry it over onto the ice."

The ultimate goal is for the program to have enough players to have "standup" and "sleed" divisions and play in a house league.

"We're doing a standup program for the guys that can stand up and play hockey and we're doing a sled program for guys that can't stand up, whether they're missing a limb, whether they're paralyzed, whatever it may be," Krajevski explained. "We're doing both because we don't discriminate against certain disabilities."

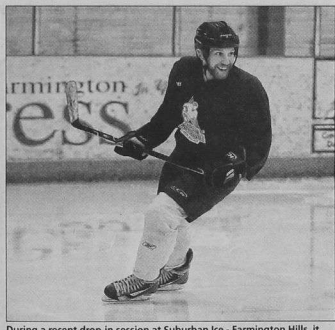
"We want to welcome and invite any veteran that wants to come out and skate. We're going to do both."

Getting on board

There could be fundraisers and charity skates all over metro Detroit with different teams, perhaps even the Red Wings Alumni.

"This program, while we're a disabled veteran team program, that's not what we're focusing on," Krajevski said. "We're not focusing on 'This guy broke his back, this guy lost a leg.' That's not what the program's about."

"It's about building that teamwork and camaraderie and having the guys come out. Instead of staying home, hanging out by themselves, not sure what to do with their lives, give them somewhere to



During a recent drop-in session at Suburban Ice - Farmington Hills, it was tough for Josh Krajevski to stop skating — or smiling.

VETERANS PLAY

What: Livonia's Josh Krajevski is organizing the Michigan Warrior Hockey Program. He is working to get the program designated as a 501(c)3 entity (non-profit).

Warriors: The team will be known as the Michigan Warriors and the logo will feature the outline of the Michigan mitten, resplendent in red-white-and-blue colors.

Who: The program will be open to any disabled/united U.S. veterans regardless of skill level, severity of injury, gender and age. There will be "standup" and "sleed" divisions, the latter for vets who are paralyzed or have lost their limbs in combat.

Where: Later this month, there will be a seven-week development and "get to know you" clinic at Royal Oak Lindell Arena. Hopes are to branch out across metro Detroit for practices and games, with Computware Arena in Plymouth Township and Suburban Ice — Farmington Hills possible landing spots.

Sponsors: To help provide equipment for players and defray costs for ice time, Krajevski said donations and sponsorships are essential.

Original Stix: Stepping up so far is Terry Johnson, owner of Detroit-based Original Stix (www.originalstix.com). Johnson not only designed the Warriors' uniform, the company is in talks with Krajevski about running a fundraiser. The company makes cell phone cases out of actual hockey sticks.

Contact: Call Krajevski at 313-461-3211 for more information, or send him an email at jkrajevski1@yahoo.com.

going to take over really quick," he emphasized. "Just talking to guys through emails, everybody says 'Can't wait to get on the ice with our brothers.'"

"It carries over from the military to the ice rink."

Contact Info: To reach Josh Krajevski about the Michigan Warriors, call him at 313-461-3211 or email him at jkrajevski1@yahoo.com smith@hometownlife.com

Youth lacrosse on the rise in Canton

Youth lacrosse is growing by leaps and bounds in Canton, and the Canton Youth Lacrosse Club is celebrating on-field success and enough demand to expand the program.

First for the team successes: the CYLC's team in the division for grades 5-6 won the championship in the Midwest LaxBash Tournament and finished with a 22-2 record.

And the club's team in the division for grades 7-8 finished in the semifinals at the tournament, completing the year with a 16-4 mark.

The CYLC is operated by Canton Leisure Services and is the only local recreational la-

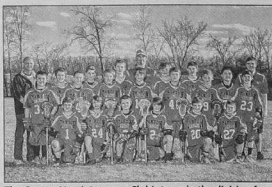
cross program serving the Plymouth and Canton communities.

Lacrosse is one of the area's fastest growing sports, as underscored by enrollment figures for the CYLC.

When the program got started six years ago, there were about 36 players for two teams (grades 5-8) and coaches struggled to fill rosters.

Now, there are six teams, from grades 3-8, with more than 120 players and a registration waiting list annually.

Meanwhile, Canton Leisure Services is looking to add a girls program with free clinics this summer.



The Canton Youth Lacrosse Club's team in the division for grades 5-6 recently won the Midwest LaxBash Tournament. Pictured in the back row (from left) are coach McLaughlin, N. Mathew, A. Gattoni, M. Kite, J. Hanton, T. Schewe, J. Gregory, N. McLaughlin, Coach Caswell, D. Bartnicki, K. Witzak, G. Caswell, C. Parks, Yoon, E. Rettell and coach Gore. In the front row (from left) are H. Albano, G. Roach, M. Mihalic, B. Zwarka, S. Peterson and N. Warren-Green. Not pictured are coach Albano, B. Allen and J. Vickers.



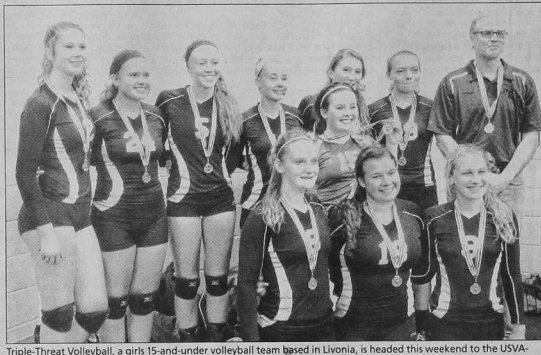
The Canton Youth Lacrosse Club's team in the division for grades 7-8 were semifinalists in the Midwest LaxBash Tournament. Pictured in the back row (from left) are coach Hisey, C. Miller, K. Diton, J. Nugent, coach Miller, Hansen, N. Elwell, N. Azarovitz, coach Flanagan, D. Kaye, B. Twinney, C. Flanagan and coach Schneider. In the front row (from left) are C. Cunningham, N. Polydoros, N. Stoneburg, W. Siewers, I. Schneider, E. Szmajaj, I. Gozdor, P. Benson and B. Nowicki. Not pictured is K. Scott.

Meeting the Challenge!

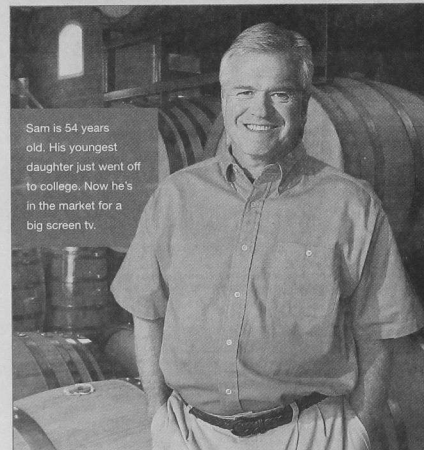


Local players met the "challenge" at the recent Michigan Challenge Premier High School Softball Tournament. Plymouth High School third baseman Brittny Miller (right) won the tourney's Home Run Derby and Utica Ford II pitcher/outfielder Alex Sorgi (left) of Shelby Township won the competition for Fastest Runner Home to Home with a time of 10.73 seconds. Both events featured 28 participants, one for each of the 28 teams at the tourney.

Banner season



Triple-Threat Volleyball, a girls 15-and-under volleyball team based in Livonia, is headed this weekend to the USAVAs National Championships in Chicago after going 12-3 and placing third out of a pool of 36 teams in the Michigan Junior Volleyball Association championship held in Grand Rapids. Triple Threat has played in five regional tournaments this season capturing three titles, finishing second once and third in another en route to a 59-10 overall record (best since 1985). Team members include: Beth Scupholm (Stevenson), Lucy Neville (Dearborn Divine Child), Rachael Johnson (Stevenson), Megan Gendjar Churchill and Anna Rozenbaum (Stevenson), all of Livonia; Lydia Bell (Plymouth), Katie Rocker (Plymouth), Lauren Meador (Salem) and Jacquelin Bonnell (Salem), all of Plymouth; Emma Hammelef (Novi), Novi; and Rachel Wheelley (Divine Child), Belleville. The head coach is Julian Wargo (Farmington Hills). He is assisted by Joe Neville and Gary Smart, both of Livonia. JOE NEVILLE



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SANDLOT BASEBALL

Michigan Rams start fast in Collegiate play

The Michigan Rams are off to a flying start in the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League.

Mark Weist (Michigan State) went 2-for-2 with a triple and three RBI as the Rams improved to 6-0 Monday with an 8-3 triumph over the Michigan Bulls at Livonia's Ford Field.

Kyle Jusick also doubled twice with an RBI, while Trent Drumheller went 2-for-4 with a run scored. Also collecting RBI were Johnny Slater (two), Dominic Jamett and Travis Harvey (Henry Ford Community College/Livonia Stevenson).

Winning pitcher Jake Balicki (University of Michigan) went the first five innings, allowing one run on five hits and three walks. He struck out four before Jacob Gardner came on to pitch the final two innings, allowing two runs (both unearned) with four strikeouts and three walks.

Maverick Prine led the Bulls offensively going 3-for-4 with a triple, double and run scored. Daniel Jipping (Plymouth Christian), Joe Williams and Tyler Reed each knocked in a run.

Losing pitcher Nick Sarmiento allowed eight runs on six hits, four

walks and two hit batters over 5½ innings as the Bulls slipped to 4-1 in the LCBLL.

Rams take pair

On Sunday, the Rams took a double-header from the Michigan Hurricanes, 5-1 and 3-1, at Ford Field.

Weist went 4-for-4 with a triple and RBI as the Rams took the opener. Nolan Page also knocked in a pair of runs, while Slater and Mike Vomastek (Stevenson) each contributed an RBI.

Left-hander Jeff Sorenson (Wayne State) allowed just one unearned run on five hits over the first 6½ innings to pick up the victory. He struck out five and walked three before Hunter VanMaele came on to get the final two outs.

Christian Holder collected the lone RBI for the Hurricanes, while starting pitcher Demetrius Bryant, who gave up two runs on six hits in four innings, suffered the loss.

In the nightcap, Brody Harris pitched a complete-game three-hitter for the Rams. In seven innings, the Spring Arbor University left-hander allowed one unearned run

while fanning five and walking only one.

Vomastek, who knocked in the game-winning run in the bottom of the sixth, went 2-for-3 as did Nolan Page and J.T. Conti. Drumheller also added an RBI.

Losing pitcher Jerrid Terrill gave up three runs on five hits, two walks and two hit batsmen in 5½ innings. He struck out two. Tyler Keeter finished up as the Hurricanes slipped to 0-4 in LCBLL play.

McDonald stars

Hillsdale College's Chris McDonald (Stevenson) was the hero Friday as the Rams belted the Hurricanes at Ford Field, 12-0.

McDonald threw six shutout innings to pick up the win. He struck out six, walked two and allowed three hits. Connor Fannon completed the shutout in the seventh.

McDonald also went 4-for-5 at the plate with an RBI and two runs scored.

Other offensive producers for the Rams included Slater (3-for-4, three RBI, three runs), Drumheller (2-for-4, two RBI, two runs), Harvey (double, two RBI), Eric Jacobson (RBI) and Nick Harris (RBI).

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Salem alums play June 22

Salem's fifth annual baseball alumni game is now Sunday, June 22, at the varsity field.

There will be open registration and batting practice beginning at 10 a.m. that day. Family and friends are invited to attend. So far, players from 1975 to 2012 have signed up to play.

Contact Mary Theisen

at salemrocksalumni@gmail.com.

Father's Day Run

Join the Plymouth YMCA as it celebrates a community tradition at the 35th Fathers Day Run, Sunday, June 15.

The morning of fun and fitness will kick off at 7:30 a.m. with the Detroit Tigers mascot PAWS leading the start and the National Anthem by Plymouth Attorney

John C. Stewart.

The run offers an event for every age: Kid's Fun Run (7:30 a.m.), 1-mile walk/run (8 a.m.), 5K walk/run (8:15 a.m.) and 10K at 8:45 a.m.

Meanwhile, volunteers for the event are needed. Contact Cindy Morency at cmorency@ymca-detroit.org.

Proceeds support the Plymouth YMCA Annual Financial Assistance Campaign.



Inspire Theatre's new digs have plenty of room. PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

INSPIRE THEATRE BACK IN BUSINESS WITH NEW, LARGER VENUE

By Sharon Dargy
Staff Writer

Inspire Theatre opens a two-weekend run of *Steel Magnolias*, Friday, June 13 at its new location, a former machine shop, in Westland.

The cast, keeping scripts in hand, will present the drama as a staged reading, a cross between "reader's theater" and a fully memorized play.

"There are props and extensive blocking," said Len Fisher, Inspire Theatre's founder and director. "Some scenes I'm requiring them to memorize."

The format allows Fisher to quickly stage a play within weeks of opening the community theater's doors in its new venue after a yearlong hiatus. Youth actors performed in the new space last month, but Fisher said he couldn't wait for the fall season to draw a prime time audience.

"We needed to do something and do it quickly," he said.



Director of *Steel Magnolias* is Len Fisher of Wayne.

"This is our soft opening." A grand opening will coincide with the musical comedy revue that kicks off the new season in late September. Fisher said anyone who was involved with a previous show at Inspire Theatre will be invited back to perform. Auditions will take place in August.

Searching for a home

The new location is a departure from the theater's last three venues which were set at churches in the area. When its former landlord declined to

renew its lease in spring 2013, Inspire Theatre packed away props and sets in storage and its members began looking for another rental property. Fisher managed to find a temporary site for his spring youth production, but canceled the final adult play of the 2012-13 season.

"Everyone was looking for a building."

But two months into the search, a diagnosis of prostate cancer sidelined Fisher, who spent the summer regaining his health after treatment.

"It was a wonderful awful thing to happen because we had suspended the theater and I didn't have to deal with it. The only thing I had to deal with was my health," he said, adding that his prognosis is good.

The theater resumed its youth classes in February at Trinity Church in Livonia. Fisher credits parents for helping to keep the youth program

alive after months of inactivity.

"They were all positive and anxious to get the kids back into it. There are other programs out there. They chose to wait until we got going again. I like to believe we have a program people enjoy being a part of and that's why they come back. That's our goal."

Fisher also had teamed up with a friend, Tonya Dallas, who teaches children how to act for commercials and film. She will share the 5,000-square-foot building that Fisher found while driving along Executive Drive, north of Ford Road.

Room to grow

"It's pretty perfect," Fisher described the new space. The site has plenty of room for storage, offices, dressing areas, a stage, an auxiliary stage, risers and the 200 folding chairs Fisher bought from the Osceola School District.

"We could tell it was a ma-

chine shop because of the enormous amount of electrical availability and the layers of dirt," Fisher said. "When we rented space in a church we had to run large cables down the length of the church. Members cleaned, painted and hung lights. Fisher hopes to build a "green room" and platform for sound controls.

Inspire Theatre is running an online fundraising campaign for venue expenses.

Tickets for *Steel Magnolias* are \$11 for adults and \$8 for senior citizens and students. Shows are at 7:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 13-14 and 20-21, and 3 p.m. Sunday, June 15, at 5767 Executive Drive, Westland.

Auditions for *No Stone Unturned*, an original murder mystery comedy, are set for 7-9 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, June 16-17, at the theater. The show is July 25-27 and Aug. 1-2.

Call 734-751-7057 for more information.

ANIMALS
DETROIT ZOO

Time/Date: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Labor Day, with closing time at 8 p.m. Wednesday in July and August
Location: 4696 service drive and Woodward, Royal Oak
Details: Admission is \$14 for adults 15-61, \$10 for senior citizens 62 and older, and for children ages 2-14; children under 2 are free. Parking for cars and vans is \$5. Detroit Zoological Society members get free admission and parking.
Contact: 248-541-5717

ARTS AND CRAFTS
JANICE CHARACH GALLERY

Time/Date: Noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, through June 26
Location: Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield
Details: The works of Avraham Loewenthal are on exhibit. Loewenthal's paintings incorporate themes of Kabbalah, holidays and prayer with contemporary design.
Contact: 248-432-5448

NORTHVILLE ART HOUSE

Time/Date: Gallery hours, 1-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, through June 28
Location: 215 W. Cady, Northville
Details: "West of Center" show is an eclectic, contemporary exhibit that includes sculpture, encaustic, acrylic, photography, mixed-media, oil, watercolor, glass/ceramic, found object and more.
Contact: 248-344-0477; http://www.northvillearts.org

VISUAL ARTS ASSOCIATION OF LIVONIA

Time/Date: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, through June 30
Location: Livonia Civic Center Library, second floor Fine Arts Gallery, 33000 Civic Center Drive, off Five Mile, east of

Farmington Road, Livonia
Details: "Artistic Expressions" exhibit will feature work by association members in all media, including watercolor, acrylic, oil, pastel and mixed media. Work will be available for sale
Contact: 734-838-1204

FOLLOWERS
FARMINGTON PLAYERS

Time/Date: 12:30 p.m. registration; 1 p.m. audition
Location: The Farmington Players Barn, 23232 W. 12 Mile, Farmington Hills
Details: The theater will stage *Asnic and Old Lace* September-October. The directors are looking for strong characters. Email the director to request a copy of the script
Contact: arsenic@farmingtonplayers.org

COMEDY
EMERGENT ARTS

Time/Date: 5 p.m. Sunday
Location: The Mix Studio Theatre, 8 N. Washington St., Ypsilanti
Details: Comedian Chilli Challis coaches new and experienced standup comics at weekly workshops. An open mic show follows the class
Contact: info@emergentarts.com; www.chillichallis.com

JOEY'S COMEDY CLUB

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Thursday, June 12, and 9 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 13-14
Location: 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia
Details: Featured comedian Melvin Bender makes fun of real life situations and has opened for: Yosi Berman, Wayne, Dave Coulier and Cedric The Entertainer. Tickets are \$12 Thursday and \$16 Friday-Saturday
Contact: joeyscomedyclub.net; 734-261-0555

MARK RIDLEY'S COMEDY CASTLE

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Thursday, June 12,

9:30 p.m. Friday, June 13, and 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Saturday, June 14
Location: Fourth and Troy Streets in downtown Royal Oak
Details: Tony Deyo is known for his sharp, quick material and comedic timing. Tickets are \$10-\$18
Contact: 248-542-9900; info@ComedyCastle.com

DANCE
MUSIC HALL

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Saturday, June 28
Location: 350 Madison, Detroit
Details: Complexions Contemporary Ballet program includes choreography to the works of Rachmaninoff and a special tribute to Stevie Wonder's music; \$35
Contact: 313-557-2143

FILM
PENN THEATRE

Time/Date: 7 p.m. and 9:05 p.m. June 20-21; 4:45 p.m. and 7 p.m. June 22 and 7 p.m. June 26
Location: 760 Penniman, Plymouth
Details: *Heaven is for Real*, admission \$3
Contact: 734-453-0870; www.penn-theatre.com

REDFORD THEATRE

Time/Date: 8 p.m. June 13 and 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. June 14
Location: 17360 Lahar, north of Grand River Avenue, Detroit
Details: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *War of the Worlds*; \$5
Contact: 313-537-2560

HISTORY
KEYWAY MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Time/Date: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 1-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, June 27 through Sept. 7
Location: 434 State St., Ann Arbor
Details: The exhibit, "Ancient/Modern:

The Design of Everyday Things," examines how inhabitants of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East both resembled and differed from contemporary Americans by juxtaposing ancient and modern objects of similar use and/or appearance. Opening lecture by Donna Braden of The Henry Ford is 6 p.m. June 27. Admission is free
Contact: 734-764-9304

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Time/Date: 1-4 p.m. Wednesday, Friday-Sunday
Location: 155 S. Main, Plymouth
Details: Admission is \$5 for adults, \$2 for ages 17
Coming up: Ghosts of Plymouth walk is set for 7 p.m. Sunday, June 29, starting at the fountain in Kellogg park in downtown Plymouth. This museum fundraiser will consist of tales of early Plymouth residents told by characters. Advance tickets are \$10; \$5 for children, 9 and under, available at the museum or through its website, plymouth-history.org. Tickets at the door are \$5 more
Contact: 734-455-8940

MEET AND GREET

Time/Date: 7 p.m. June 19
Location: Baldwin Public Library, 300 W. Merrill, in downtown Birmingham
Details: Milica (Mila) Govich, who performed in the film, *The Fault in Our Stars*, will talk about the experience of filming a movie and will take questions from the audience
Contact: 248-647-1700

MUSIC
BERMAN CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Time/Date: 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 16
Location: Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield
Details: Chad Smith, drummer for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, will be interviewed by Gary Graf, a music journalist. After the interview, Axis Music en-

sembles will perform with Smith. Tickets are \$17 for ages 17 and under; \$27 for 18 years and older. Buy tickets 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Berman Center box office, online at theberman.org/box-office, or at the Berman Center, up to two hours prior to the event
Contact: 248-799-8100

JAZZ@THE ELKS

Time/Date: 7-10 p.m. the last Tuesday of the month
Location: Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge 325, 47700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth
Details: Dobbins, Krahnke, and Weed Trio perform Tuesday, June 24. 10:30 donation at the door includes hours of du'es
Contact: 734-453-1780 or email plymouthelks1780@yahoo.com

MICHIGAN PHILHARMONIC

Time/Date: 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 28
Location: Kellogg Park in downtown Livonia
Details: The orchestra plays a free concert, "An American Salute"
Contact: 734-451-2112; michiganphilo.org

MIX STUDIO THEATRE

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Friday, June 13
Location: 8 N. Washington Street, Ypsilanti
Details: Pianist Ann Dahl kicks off a series of piano nights at the theater. Admission is free. A tip jar will collect donations
Contact: 734-985-0875

TRINITY HOUSE THEATRE

Time/Date: Most shows start at 8 p.m., doors open at 7:30 p.m.
Location: 38840 W. Six Mile, Livonia
Details: Christopher Williams, June 12; Mark Stuart, June 13. Most shows. Tickets are \$15, and \$12 for subscribers. Only cash and checks accepted.
Contact: 734-464-6302

LIGHT UP THE GRILL WITH
CROWD-PLEASING

SKEWERS

Haul out the grill and light up the coals — it's time to move the Father's Day party to the warm outdoors.

Enjoy the company of friends and family on Dad's special day with easy, zesty recipes for kebabs.

These versatile skewered treats are sure to please.

Here are a few tips and tricks to use when grilling with skewers:

» To please a diverse crowd, prepare an assortment of marinated vegetables and meats for guests to customize their own skewers.

» Add a few dashes of hot sauce to your favorite condiments for a spicy twist on classics like bottled ketchup, barbecue sauce, and mayonnaise.

» Soaking wooden skewers in warm water 30 minutes before grilling will help prevent them from burning.

For more recipes and tips, visit www.tabasco.com.

Courtesy of Family Features

SWEET AND SPICY FRUIT SKEWERS

Makes 4 servings

- 12 wooden skewers, each about 6-inches long
- 3 medium ripe purple plums, each cut into 8 wedges
- 2 ripe medium peaches, each cut into 8 wedges
- 2 tablespoons Tabasco Green Jalapeño Pepper Sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger

Soak skewers in water to prevent burning, at least 30 minutes.

Preheat grill to medium.

Toss plums, peaches, Tabasco Green Sauce, honey and ginger in large bowl. Skewer 4 wedges of fruit on each skewer. Grill 5 to 8 minutes, turning once and brushing with any leftover mixture.

Serving suggestion: Serve as a dessert or as side dish with pork, chicken or ribs.



CHICKEN SKEWERS WITH AVOCADO CREAM DIP

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Makes: 6 appetizer portions

Marinade

- ½ cup orange juice
- 1½ teaspoons Tabasco brand Original Red Sauce
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1½ teaspoons key lime juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon Achiote paste
- 1 tablespoon minced white onion
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 (5-ounce) chicken breasts cut into 1-inch cubes, 36 pieces total

Dip

- 1 medium-sized ripe avocado
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- 1 teaspoon key lime juice
- 1 teaspoon Tabasco brand Original Red Sauce
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Skewers

- 12 1-inch square pieces white onion (about 1/2 onion)
- 12 1-inch square pieces green bell pepper (about ½ pepper)
- 12 1-inch square pieces red bell pepper (about ½ pepper)

Whisk marinade ingredients in a large bowl until smooth. Fold in chicken pieces. Mix well. Refrigerate covered for 30 minutes to an hour.

While chicken is marinating, place all dip ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth. To assemble skewers: Thread one piece of red pepper onto a 3- to 4-inch skewer or toothpick, followed by chicken, onion, another piece of chicken, and green pepper.

Preheat either a grill or a stovetop griddle to medium-high heat. Cook the skewers on the first side, about 2 minutes, then turn, cooking for 2 minutes on all 4 sides.

Serve with Avocado Cream Dip.

THAI CHICKEN MARINADE

Makes 4 servings

- 2 tablespoons peanut oil
- 2 tablespoons chunky peanut butter
- 1½ tablespoons Tabasco Original Red Sauce
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- Scallion for garnish

Combine peanut oil, peanut butter, Tabasco Sauce, lime juice, soy sauce, ginger, garlic and curry powder in large bowl. Cut chicken along grain into ½-inch wide strips; toss in peanut mixture. Cover. Marinate at least 2 hours to overnight.

Soak eight 12-inch-long bamboo skewers in water.

Preheat grill to medium-high or broiler.

Thread chicken strips lengthwise onto skewers.

Grill just until cooked through, about 5 minutes.



CHIPOTLE SIRLOIN AND VEGETABLE KEBABS

Makes 4 servings

- 4 (12-inch-long) skewers (or eight 6-inch-long skewers)
- ½ cup chili sauce
- 2 tablespoons Tabasco Chipotle Pepper Sauce
- 1 tablespoon fresh chopped rosemary
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 pound beef sirloin, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 1 medium yellow squash, cut into 1-inch chunks
- ½ pound medium mushrooms
- Rosemary sprigs, for garnish

If using wooden skewers, soak skewers in water.

Combine chili sauce, Tabasco Chipotle Sauce, rosemary and salt in medium bowl. Divide mixture into 2 bowls. In one bowl, add beef chunks; toss to coat. Let stand 15 minutes.

Preheat grill.

Thread beef onto two 12-inch-long skewers. Alternately thread zucchini, yellow squash and mushrooms on remaining two skewers. Brush vegetable kebabs with reserved chipotle mixture. Grill kebabs 6 to 8 minutes or until meat is of desired doneness and vegetables are tender, turning occasionally. Remove kebabs to platter. Garnish with rosemary sprigs, if desired.

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