

CANTON OBSERVER

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CANTON GYMNASTS HEADED BACK TO STATE FINALS
SPORTS, B1

Doctor gets 1 day in jail, big fines

Bassel Altantawi sentenced in medical fraud case

Darrell Clem
hometownlife.com

A former Canton-based doctor who pleaded guilty in a medical fraud scandal has been sentenced to one day in jail and ordered to pay fines totaling \$278,355, a court clerk confirmed Tuesday.

However, Bassel Altantawi of Farmington Hills also has had his medical license suspended as he faces a hearing before the Michigan Board of Medicine, said Michael Loepp, spokesman for the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. The board could impose

penalties ranging up to permanently stripping Altantawi of his license to practice medicine, Loepp said.

Altantawi was charged last May in a 22-count case involving allegations he billed Medicaid and Blue Cross Blue Shield for



Altantawi

services he didn't provide while he worked at Canton Urgent Care on Ford Road, west of Lilley.

The medical facility had closed after his arrest, but is now open with new doctors and under new management.

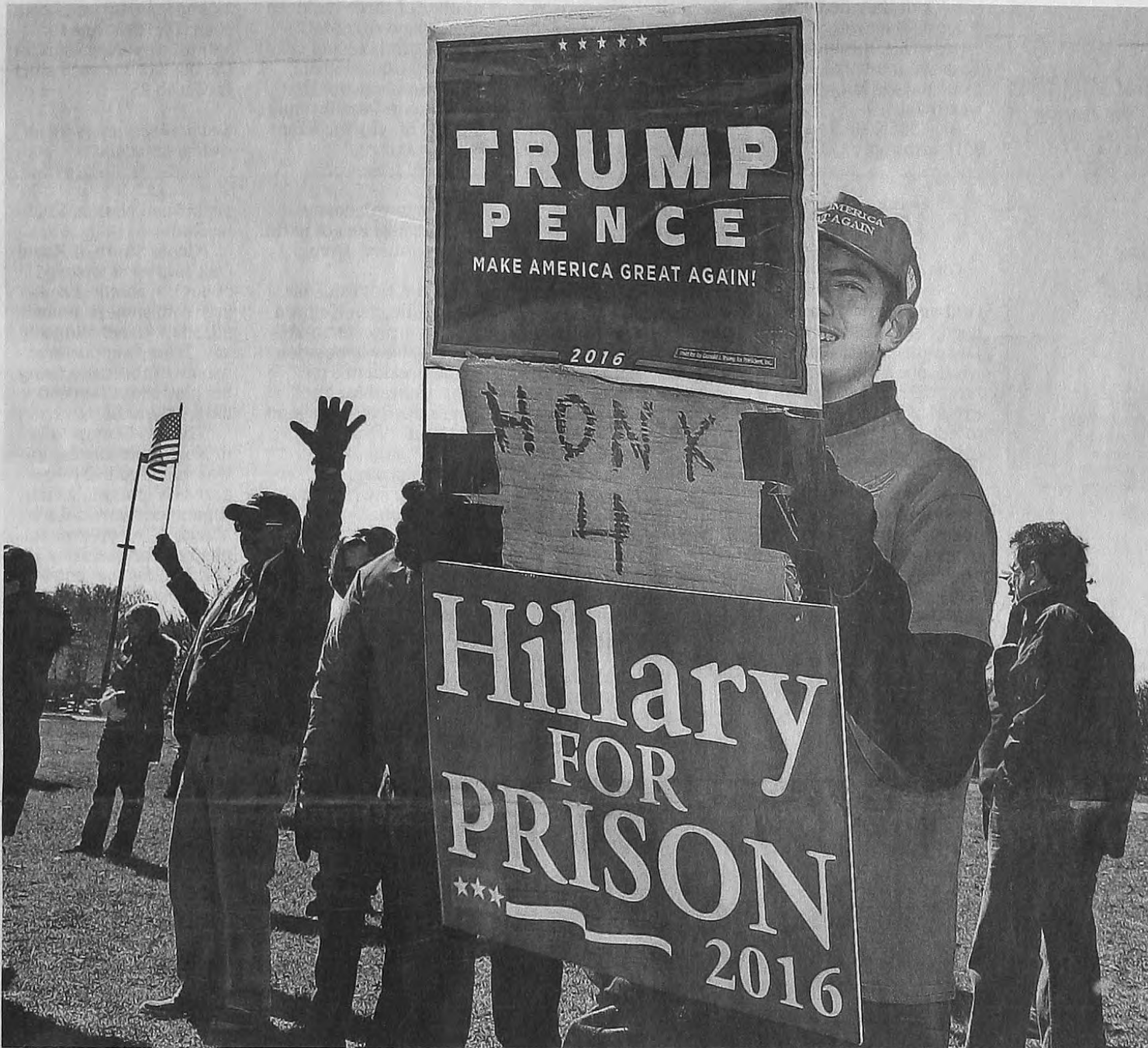
Averting a jury trial, Altantawi pleaded guilty in January to two counts of Medicaid fraud and two counts of health care fraud. His sentencing

came last week by Ingham County Circuit Judge Rosemarie Acquilina.

Altantawi received credit for the day he already had served in jail, the court clerk said. She also said the fines totaling \$278,355 already have been paid to the state of Michigan.

As part of his plea deal,

See DOCTOR, Page A2



Jon Changes of Novi rallies in support of President Donald Trump.

JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Results grow as kids keep 5K running

Brad Kadrich
hometownlife.com

Abbey Jansen agreed to become involved with the annual SJ5K in April 2016 as a means of getting a feel for what the event is all about and seeing if it held any interest for her.

Two months later, she'd agreed to become its student leader for 2017.

The SJ5K — Super Jess 5 Kilometer — is named in honor of its first beneficiary, former student Jesse Lindlbauer, who was found unresponsive in 2011. He was rushed to Mott Children's Hospital, and discovered to have a ruptured brain abscess, which caused complications like meningitis and brain trauma. A friend of his, Tommy Halewicz, wanted to help his family some way, so decided to organize a race to raise support: the Super Jess 5 Kilometer.

Now Jansen is leading the student-run effort for the 2017 event.

"I'll direct you to a quote from Mrs Savalox (the group's faculty advisor): Why do we help? Because we can," Jansen said. "When we have families in crisis in our community who need help, and I have the ability to help them through SJ5K, how could I not get involved?"

The SJ5K is organized every year by a new group of seniors, with a little help from some adult volunteers. This year's leadership team, for instance, consists of a dozen students. That first run was to benefit Lindlbauer and his family, but it has since grown into a charitable event that helps local families, as well.

While planning is "almost a never ending process," according to Jansen, the real nitty-gritty starts in October, when the team finalizes the nomination application, rubric and the plan to promote the next year's event. The team goes through the previous year's nomination materials, edits them as needed and promotes the nomination process.

The promotion team creates press materials and videos, the sponsorship team visits local businesses and organizations to recruit sponsors, set up fundraisers and "create connections," Jansen said.

Mostly, though it's about the

See SJ5K, Page A2

'A very brave man': Rally shows support for president

Matt Jachman
hometownlife.com

Right, left and in-between can agree: President Donald Trump isn't a traditional politician.

That's one of the things Barry Gibbs likes about him, that he's an outsider shaking things up in Washington, D.C.

"There are too many career guys in there," said Gibbs, of Northville Township, who was among about 60 people at a rally for Trump on Haggerty, just south of Eight Mile, on Saturday afternoon.

Waving U.S. flags and carrying signs with pro-Trump messages, supporters cheered the new president and urged

passing drivers to honk the horns on their vehicles. Many obliged, but there were some middle fingers, too, Gibbs said.

"I really think that he deeply cares about every American in our country," Gibbs said of Trump.

Projects Trump has taken up so far — working to repeal or revise the Affordable Care Act and trying to create jobs and keep U.S. companies in the country — "are good for the county and need to be done," Gibbs said.

"He's just been speaking out against globalization and he's talking about America

See TRUMP, Page A2



JOHN HEIDER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Supporters of President Donald Trump rally March 4 at Eight Mile and Haggerty in Northville Township. A few counter-demonstrators gathered on the Novi side of Eight Mile.



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Writer honored as mParks media advocate

Veteran Canton Observer reporter Darrell Clem was honored Tuesday by the Canton Township Board of Trustees after being awarded the mParks 2017 Media Advocate of the Year award.

The award for Clem, a longtime Observer staffer who has covered Canton since 2009, was announced Feb. 3 at the mParks conference in Grand Rapids. Canton Leisure Services Director Greg Hohenberger read the commendation at Tuesday's meeting.

"The Canton Board of Trustees and the Leisure Services Department would like to take this opportunity to officially present this award and

recognize Darrell for his dedicated efforts to promote the importance of Parks and Recreation" in the Canton community, Hohenberger said. "(Clem) embodies what it means to be a media advocate and vocal supporter of Parks and Recreation. Darrell always keeps the best interest of Canton Leisure Services in mind and uses special care in taking the right approach on its behalf. He attends many Leisure Services events and he fully embraces and shares the mission and passion for the Canton community."

Hohenberger pointed out Clem's "contributions to the community"

through his coverage and "strong ability to portray Canton in an incredibly positive light." He cited Clem's coverage when funds were "threatened for local therapeutic recreation programs." Within hours of his story being posted, Hohenberger said, local authorities had "reached out to assure funding would be supplied."

Clem was humbled by the recognition.

"I'm honored that Canton Leisure Services nominated me for this award," Clem said. "If my coverage of their programs has in any way helped the Canton community, I'm happy to have done it."



Township Supervisor Pat Williams (right) presents the award to Darrell Clem.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mom leaves toddler in car while shopping

Darrell Clem
hometownlife.com

A 2-year-old boy was left alone in a car while his mother was shopping at a Sprint store in Canton, police say.

The toddler had tears running down his face and was strapped into a car seat in the back seat of a Chevrolet Malibu while the engine was running, a police report said.

The incident unfolded about 5:40 p.m. Friday and ended with the 27-year-old mother being ticketed for child neglect — a ticket she said could hurt her chances of keeping the child during an ongoing custody dispute with the father, the report said.

Police went to the 46000 block of Michigan Avenue when a witness called 9-1-1 after she noticed the child alone in the car. She said the boy had been alone for as long as 30 minutes.

Police found the mother in the Sprint store. She said she had only been in the store for 10 minutes. She said the boy was sleeping, so she left him alone with the heat turned on in the car, the

report said.

Police advised her that it would be easy for someone to break out a window of the vehicle and take the child.

The mother, a Belleville resident, insisted to police that she is a good mother, the report said. Police ticketed the woman and released her at the scene. Police also reported the incident to Child Protective Services.

Gun threats

A man who told police he had been "relieved" of two murder charges in Detroit was taken into custody by Canton police amid allegations he threatened his ex-girlfriend with an Airsoft gun — a replica weapon, a police report said.

The 47-year-old suspect also told police he was affiliated with several gangs.

The incident happened about 9:10 p.m. Saturday, when the victim, a 23-year-old Taylor woman, called police from the 7200 block of Commerce to report that her ex-boyfriend had threatened her with a handgun, though no shots were fired. They have a

2-year-old child, who was with the mother.

The woman said she had initially called the ex-boyfriend to give her a ride to work. She said he arrived drunk and they argued over relationship problems, the report said.

She said he got the Airsoft pistol out of the trunk and pointed it at her. She said he then got out of the car and fled toward I-275 after she called 9-1-1, but he returned and drove off with her and the child, the report said.

Police spotted the car near Haggerty and Koppernick and took the man into custody as possible charges were pending. Police found the Airsoft pistol in a ditch near the scene of the initial argument.

Brass knuckles

Police arrested a 19-year-old Garden City man after searching him and finding brass knuckles in his coat pocket during a search, a police report said.

Police found the weapon after approaching three young men who were jaywalking on Joy Road, near Tavistock

Drive, on Canton's north side. The incident happened about 5:40 p.m. Sunday.

Police learned that one of the other men was wanted for a warrant out of Plymouth Township, so arrangements were made to turn him over to that community's police department. Canton police took the third man into custody after finding he was in possession of MDMA, otherwise known as Molly or ecstasy.

Stolen identity

In a case of stolen identity, a 53-year-old man notified police after someone used his personal information to file for unemployment.

The man said learned of the situation after he got an email from his employer, Ford Motor Co., advising him someone had filed the unemployment claim sometime during the last month, a police report said.

The man wanted to document the incident. Local police told him that fraudulent unemployment claims are investigated by the state of Michigan.

Canton cops combat alcohol sales to minors

Darrell Clem
hometownlife.com

Canton police have ticketed two stores amid allegations they sold alcohol to an underage girl working as a decoy with local authorities.

Police issued citations to employees at the 7-Eleven at 44285 Ford Road and Maria's Bakery, 115 N. Haggerty. The workers who sold the alcohol could face fines of \$100.

However, police Special Services Sgt. Ed Johnson said the business owners will have to appear for a hearing before the Michigan Liquor Control Commission, which can impose sanctions ranging from a warning to revoking a store's liquor license, depending on whether there have been repeat offenses.

The latest effort by the Canton Police Department's Special Enforcement Unit to catch local businesses that sell alcohol to minors occurred in February, Johnson said. Authorities rotate the areas of town

where they conduct their investigations.

Johnson urged business owners to discuss with their employees the need to avoid selling alcohol to minors by checking identification.

"It just needs to be reinforced to the employees because a lot of the business owners themselves might not be aware of how employees are operating," he said.

Police typically use minor decoys from the Canton Police Explorers program or high school students who interact with school resource officers at the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park.

Police also issued a list of businesses that followed the rules and didn't sell alcohol to minors. They are Super Fine Wine & Liquor at 1634 N. Haggerty; CVS at 7269 N. Canton Center Road; 7-Eleven at 43340 Warren; and Rite Aid stores at 180 S. Lilley and 4151 N. Canton Center.

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Schoolcraft program points girls to STEM

In a satisfying number, more than 80 girls Saturday pored over literature and examined examples of careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics at Schoolcraft College.

And that's exactly what was supposed to happen.

Schoolcraft hosted a five-hour symposium designed to point girls — particularly those in fifth through eighth grade — into STEM careers. With their hands-on event, Schoolcraft officials were hoping to encourage girls to get involved in STEM fields.

The event was hosted by Schoolcraft College, the Livonia branch of the American Association of University Women and Livonia Public Schools.

"One of the aims of AAUW nationally is to increase opportunities for girls in the STEM areas," said Carol Strom, an AAUW member and who also happens to be vice chair of the Schoolcraft College Board of Trustees. "We have found in the past that, when we

did programs where there were both girls and boys, that the girls tend to sit back and not contribute. (AAUW) felt it was important these activities be for girls only."

The event included hands-on demonstrations and experiments for the girls, as well as information sessions on STEM careers and college options for parents. Attendees heard from speakers like Dr. Robert Leadley, dean of occupational programs and economic development at Schoolcraft, and Dr. Tonya Matthews, president and CEO of the Michigan Science Center.

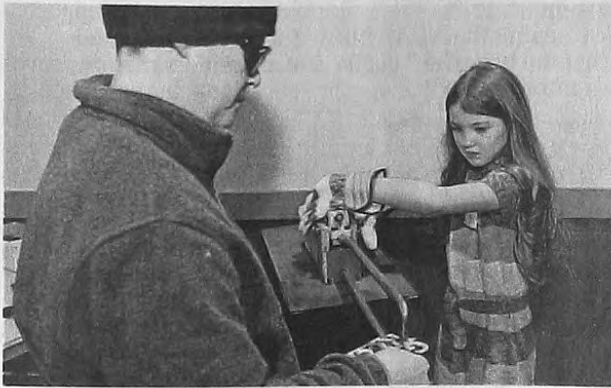
Organizers were very pleased with the success of the event, which the college has been hosting the last few years.

"We felt it's important for girls to have the opportunity to see the STEM activities as a real chance for them to develop in these areas as they get older," Strom said.

bkadrich@hometownlife.com
Twitter: @bkadrich



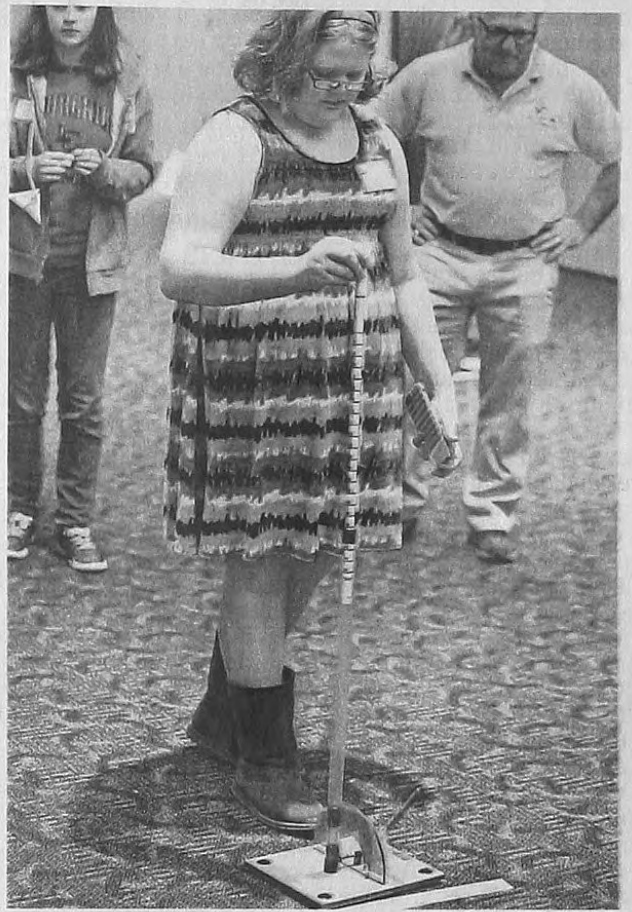
Riley Seremet (Johnson Upper Elementary) and Ella McNeece (Warner Upper Elementary) get hands-on instruction on operating a First Robotics vehicle from Northville Hillside Middle School student Ashna Khetan.



Jenna Rivera from Birmingham Covington School learns the art of welding from instructor Coley McLean.



Livonia students Noelle Divinagracia, Gabriella Wilson and JaiLynn Cruse take part in a technology experiment as they build rockets that they test during the AAUW Girls in STEM event Saturday at Schoolcraft College.



Holmes Middle School student Emily Konopka prepares her "Straw Rocket" for flight as she takes part in the AAUW Girls In STEM event held Saturday in Livonia.



Livonia middle school students Noelle Michalski, Leah Haberek and Alexandra Beck learn about DNA in the biology workshop.

CALENDAR

Continued from Page A4

Seeking volunteers

Compassionate Care Hospice seeks caring, compassionate volunteers with big hearts to help with patient care and companionship, office support, group activities and more.

Volunteer training sessions will cover mission and values, confidentiality, communication and listening skills, grief, loss, the dying process and information pertinent to serving the needs of the patients. Interested volunteers may also choose to receive additional training and serve as specialized spiritual or bereavement volunteer.

Compassionate Care Hospice is a community-based hospice organization committed to the highest quality of hospice care for patients, their families and other loved ones. Interested volunteers must complete the online application process prior to training. Early registration is encouraged because several steps must be completed prior to the training sessions.

The next new volunteer orientation is March 11 and will be at the office, 5730 N. Lilley Road, Canton. Contact the volunteer coordinator at 888-983-9050 with questions or to apply for a brief interview.

Red Wings suite raffle

The Livonia Jaycees will hold a raffle to win a suite package of 20 tickets and a \$300 food voucher for the Friday, March 24, Red Wings game against the Tampa Bay Lightning. The raffle is \$20 or three tickets for \$50. The drawing will be March 7 and the winner does not need to be present. Proceeds will go to the Jaycees to use to improve the community.

To purchase tickets, contact the Jaycees at

734-956-0548 or livonia-jaycees@gmail.com or at 37699 Six Mile, Suite 250, Livonia.

'Calling them Home'

St. Michael the Archangel Parish will offer a new Lenten series, "Calling Them Home," for all parents, grandparents, siblings and others who are interested in helping their special loved ones find their way home to the church. The four-week series, which will meet on consecutive Mondays from March 6-27 in the St. Michael's School cafeteria, will be led by well-known Catholic author, apologist and award-winning "Michigan Catholic" columnist Gary Michuta, who has extensive teaching experience with teens and young adults.

There is no charge or reservation required for this series. All area Catholics who are interested in this subject are welcome. St. Michael's is at 11441 Hubbard Road, just south of Plymouth Road, in Livonia. For more information, call the parish at 734-261-1455, ext. 200, or visit livoniastmichael.org

Weight management program

On March 14, St. Mary Mercy Livonia will host a weight management program titled Weigh Your Options. Registered dietitians will provide information to help individuals begin a weight loss program. Attendees will learn about success-

ful weight management programs, where to find reliable resources and healthy activities in the community and what is needed to develop a healthy lifestyle. Participants will learn how to read food labels, write SMART goals and determine their healthiest weight. The class will take place from 6-7:30 p.m. in St. Mary Mercy's Classroom 2, 36475 Five Mile Road, in Livonia (accessed from the south entrance).

There is a \$5 fee for this class and registration is required. Register at stmarymercy.org and click on "Classes and Events."

Slice for Life

Buddy's Pizza will team up with the Capuchin Soup Kitchen to host the 41st annual Slice for Life fundraiser. From 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. April 24, patrons who purchase a ticket can visit any Buddy's Pizza full-service location to enjoy an all-you-can-eat two-topping pizza and salad meal. A carry-out option is also available for purchase at all 11 Buddy's Pizza locations and includes either a four-square two-topping pizza or a medium-sized antipasto, Greek or house salad.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$7 for children. Advance tickets can be purchased at www.cskdetroit.org or by calling 313-579-2100, ext. 170. Tickets will also be available at the door. All ticket holders may also register to win one 8-square Buddy's Pizza every month for one year.

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Beaumont CEO urges Trump cautious steps with ACA

Delivering effective, efficient and extraordinary health-care to all requires full access to care. Health insurance, either private or government, is essential to that access, which is why Beaumont Health is urging President Donald Trump and members of Congress to tread carefully as they consider changes to the Affordable Care Act.

As of February 2017, about 12 million Americans have gained access to care through ACA plans on federal or state exchanges. Nearly one million people in Beaumont's home state of Michigan have health coverage through the ACA or the Healthy Michigan Medicaid expansion plan. Some 61,000 people are now getting treatment at our facilities as a result of the coverage through the Healthy Michigan Plan. Some of these individuals



John T. Fox
GUEST COLUMNIST

have very serious health conditions, such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

Greater access to care strengthens our ability to improve the health and wellness of the patients, families and communities we and other health systems serve.

Any disruption to access and coverage would be devastating to the health of those who are now insured and receiving treatment for acute or chronic conditions. Keeping patients healthy begins with health insurance coverage, so they can have access to physicians and primary care sooner rather than later. Preventive screenings, immuni-

zations and tests help to prevent illness or detect it at the earliest, most treatable stages. When care is provided earlier at lower cost, a medical condition can be stopped from advancing to a more serious state and unnecessary medical risk and cost can be avoided.

Repeal of the ACA without an adequate replacement plan could well wreak havoc on both the health and economic stability of our patients, clinicians, hospitals and communities.

In a letter sent on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of people we care for annually, the leadership of Beaumont Health asked President Trump and lawmakers to carefully consider the most essential elements of the ACA in discussion of a future healthcare system.

Keeping the ACA's "10 essential benefits," such as maternity and new-

born care, mental health, substance abuse and pediatric services, will help maintain early interventions, so conditions can still be addressed earlier and at less cost.

Uninterrupted care for the millions covered by the ACA must be maintained, and so should benefits, such as protections against rescinding insurance benefits after a person becomes ill; coverage for children to age 26 and those with pre-existing conditions; and preventive and primary wellness coverage that's essential to healthier lives and lower health care costs.

The ACA has pushed our industry to make improvements in quality and the patient experience. And provider organizations have answered the call. Support for technological advancements that improve care coordination, such

as telehealth and electronic health records, should continue because they enhance access to care and improve quality and safety. Technology can also help avoid duplicative care.

Support for research to eradicate diseases such as cancer, and to identify best treatments for chronic conditions, should not only continue, but increase. To combat physician and nurse shortages, support for training of healthcare professionals must also increase.

Healthcare bureaucracy can impede our ability to offer patient and family centered care. So any new healthcare proposal needs to streamline regulations and protocols that limit clinicians' time with patients.

Decisive action is needed to address the sharp rise in pharmaceutical prices that is straining hospital budgets and

preventing people from getting the lifesaving drugs they need.

We implore our elected leaders to work with those of us in healthcare in determining what's best for the future of the system as they consider new policy directions.

Mapping the best way forward for the health of our nation is an important, laborious task. Caregivers and those who support patient care at hospitals and health systems nationwide work collaboratively every day to improve the health and wellness of the patients and families we serve. We urge our federal and state officials to also work together in a bipartisan manner to ensure the best possible health-care for all Americans.

John T. Fox is president and CEO of Beaumont Health based in Southfield.

LETTERS

Hills council lauded

I've been a homeowner in Farmington Hills for over 45 years. I've attended subdivision meetings, city hall meetings, city council meetings, and I've volunteered at the public schools and worked on political campaigns here in Farmington Hills.

Recently I attended our Farmington Hills Mayor Massey's Town Hall meeting at our fire station on Nine Mile. Councilman Dr. Randy Bruce, and Councilwoman Valerie Knol, also attended and offered valuable comments about activities within our city. I wanted to personally commend Massey for arranging these informal settings and spending time with homeowners who voiced concerns about topics ranging

TO SUBMIT LETTERS

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from dead deer found in various subdivisions, to the recent road repaving project completed in the Independence Commons subdivision near Drake Road and Grand River Avenue.

Massey was very knowledgeable about the laws governing our road repairs, and his explanation "of the facts" surrounding this project was very helpful. There were 330 homes involved in this road repair project, and 80 of these homeowners are suing the city so they will not have to pay the total assessment that our city expects for reimbursement. Our city

pays 20 percent of the total costs, and the remainder of the expense is divided among the homeowners for these new roads.

As I saw and listened to the few homeowners, from the 80 who are complaining, I think it's important to view the facts and not focus on the minority involved in this project. A majority of the homeowners, 250 of them, who did not join this complaint with the city, were not at this meeting, thus, we can only assume that they are accepting our and enjoying their new roads, and the home value that they now have for the future.

Our city has a grading scale to determine the worse road requiring repair to the least in need. Our city then has to budget for the 20 percent

that they have to allocate to fund each project. If your roads are determined to be in the worst condition, then it's important to repair them as recommended by the city.

I live in a subdivision that is in need of road repair, as well, but we understand that other areas have a priority because of a deteriorating condition and safety issues involved. Because our city does not have sidewalks, we depend on our roads to be safe, and free of potholes, as we use them for not only driving our cars, but also for walking, walking our dogs, etc.

Massey also commented that many of our existing subdivisions have gone over 30 years on their current paved roads, and although the homeowners paid their

assessments many years ago, they've paid nothing for the many years that have passed since their original paving. Other neighboring cities have used millages to pay for road repairs, however, why pay \$700 per year for 30 or 40 years, instead of a one-time cost, over 10 years, and not pay for a lot more dollars to pay other subdivisions in the city.

The purpose of my letter today is to remind each of us that we need to respect and honor those Farmington Hills homeowners, like Mayor Ken Massey, who are willing to take on the political roles in our city to handle not only roads, but the multiple of issues that face our city every week. They are willing to learn the facts, make decisions, and represent us each day to create a

city that we're all proud to call our own.

*Diane Holcomb
Farmington Hills*

Say no to Nestle

My name is Ashley Kasper, and I am a senior at Livonia Stevenson High School. I was assigned to read an article for my AP Biology class, and came upon one regarding Nestle's approval for pumping additional water from a Michigan well.

I do not think Nestle should be allowed to pump more water from the Ewart, Mich., well. To start off, the economic gain for Michigan is practically none. One cannot consider \$200, a permit fee, and 20 jobs to have a significant impact on the Michigan economy. Over-pumping water

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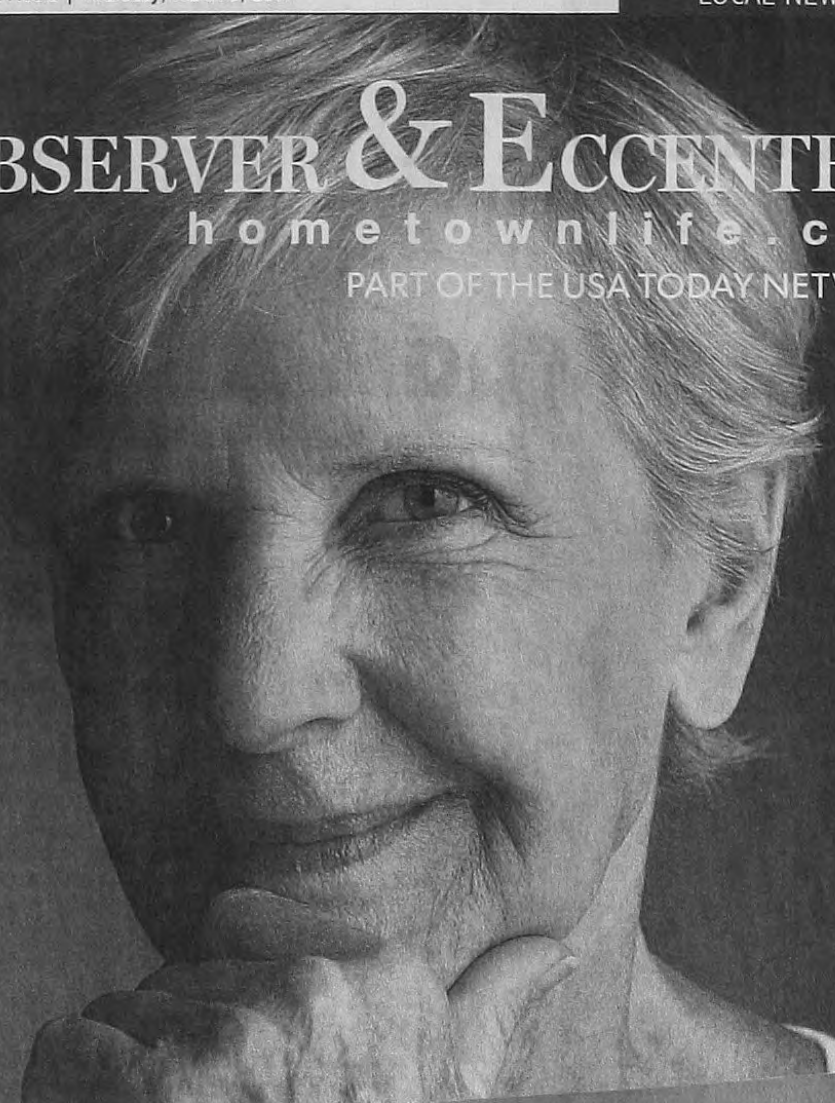
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BOYS HOCKEY

Wildcats stymied in regional final

Early goals, Broyles' netminding propel Chargers to 4-1 victory

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

It wasn't a state championship celebration Saturday night for Livonia Churchill, but it was pretty close.

The Chargers jumped out to an early lead against Plymouth and earned a 4-1 win in the Division 2 boys hockey regional final at Arctic Edge Arena in Canton.

And after the regional trophy was handed off from head coach Jason Reynolds, players held it aloft and moved in uni-

son from center ice to the boards along the bleachers.

On the other side of the glass were screaming, ecstatic Churchill fans sharing the team's first regional title in five years.

"We had to dedicate it (the win) to our fans for showing up to our games and motivating us to keep going," said senior goalie Drew Broyles, one of the stars of the game with 32 saves — including 15 in the frantic third period.

Reynolds, who is in his fifth season at the Churchill helm, said the players' including fans in the happy scene was something that made all the sense in the world because "our mantra all season long has been one team, one vision, one united

charge."

The regional title was the first one for Churchill since 2012, during Pete Mazzoni's last season.

"This is sort of the culmination of a five-year process for me," Reynolds said. "It's never easy to follow such a successful coach like Pete Mazzoni was, to take something that belonged to him and make it your own."

"This was a process to bring the right players together, guys who had the passion to put in the work. These guys have had a vision all season long and I'm really proud that these guys have seen it through thus far."

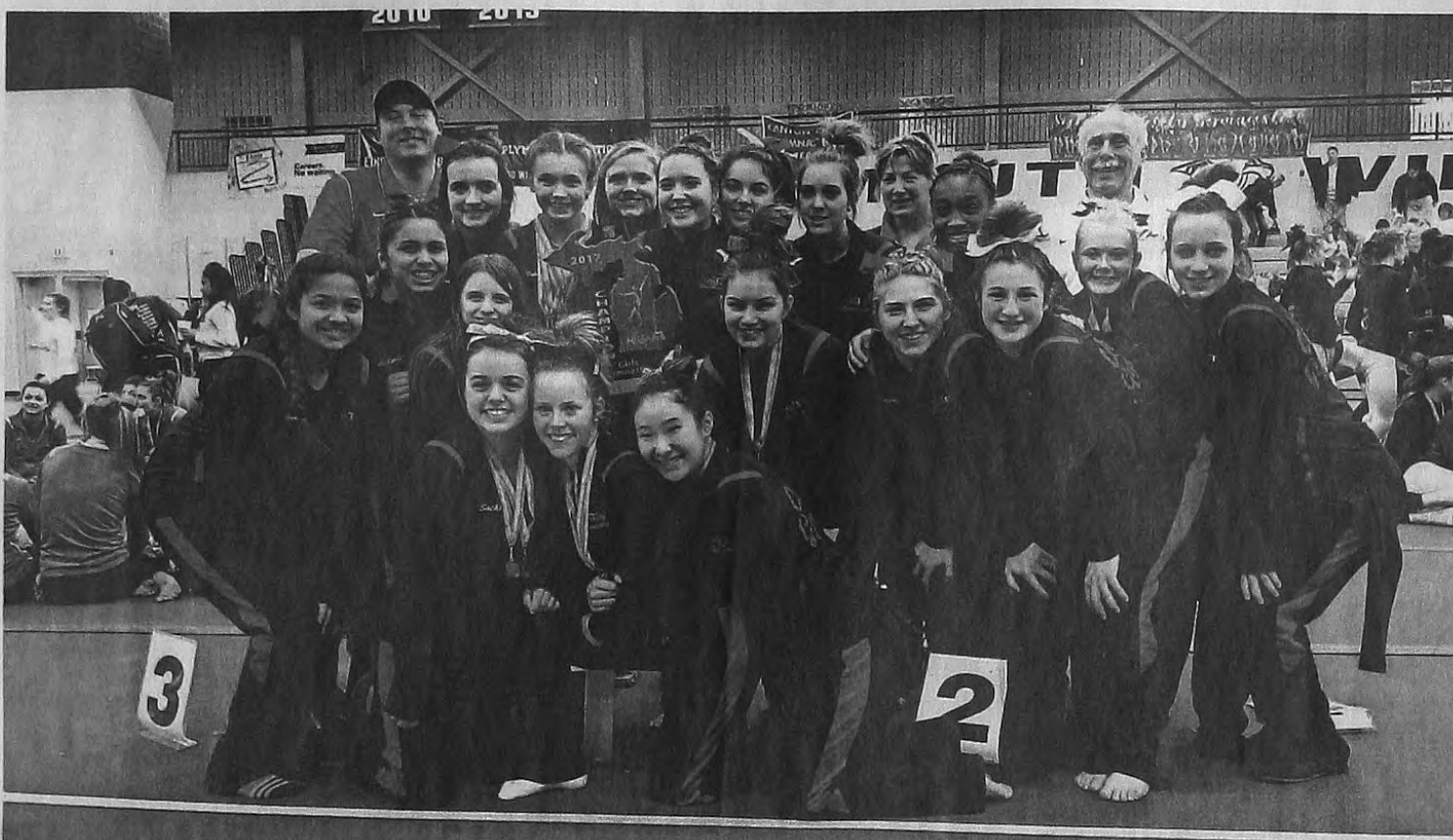


JIM PAPAIOANNOU

As dejected Plymouth players skate away, Livonia Churchill boys hockey players mob each other after winning 4-1.

See HOCKEY, Page B4

GIRLS GYMNASTICS



SUBMITTED

Canton's varsity girls gymnastics team celebrates after winning the MHSAA team regional championship Saturday at Plymouth High School.

REGIONAL REPEAT

Canton Chiefs top field of four state qualifying girls gymnastics teams; Plymouth places third

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

Catapulted by six gymnasts' all-around excellence, Canton captured another MHSAA regional championship Saturday at Plymouth High School.

The Chiefs tallied 143.425 points to edge runner-up Northville (142.45), with Plymouth third at 141.05. All three of those teams qualified for Friday's team finals, set for 2 p.m. Friday at Plymouth, as will a fourth team from Region 3 — Livonia Blue, which tabulated a 140.4 score and got

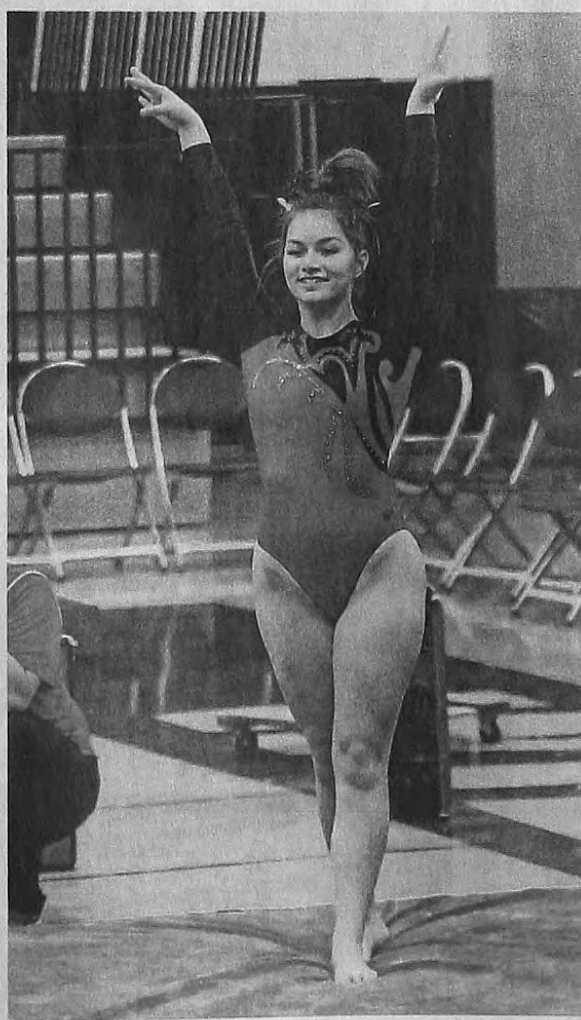
in as the state's 13th team as a wild card.

The top three teams from four regions automatically qualify. Each team will bring five girls per event to try and bring home the state championship trophy.

"Canton started on floor exercise and essentially put the meet away with a 37.3 team start," said John Cunningham, veteran coach for the Chiefs. "Not that it was easy, since bars was the only other event that they won."

Cunningham pointed to

See GYMNASTS, Page B4



JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO
Canton's Katie Dickson performs her routine on floor exercise during regionals.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Austin's death shocks Churchill community

Chargers' popular boys track and field coach was 'heart and soul' guy

Brad Emons
hometownlife.com

Whether it was coaching his own team or managing track and field meets, Livonia Churchill's Rick Austin was always right in the middle of things willing to lend a helping hand.

But on Monday morning, the Churchill High athletic family lost a dedicated coach and teacher when the 57-year-old Austin passed away from complications following surgery for a heart ailment.

"It's tough, it's a big loss for us obviously," Churchill athletic director Marc Hage said. "He was a Livonia guy, that's where he came up through the system, and it was near and dear I remember him telling me. When he started his career here he came over from Dearborn and he always wanted to be here. It was his dream to come back here, work in a place where he went to school at. It meant so much to him and it was so special to him. He just wanted to be back here where he got such a good start. He put his heart and soul into everything that he did, especially his coaching. It was such a passion."

Austin, who taught business education at Churchill as well as at the Livonia Public Schools Career Center, will be remembered not only for his one regional, three conference and six division boys track titles, but also for his passion and the interaction with his student-athletes.

"He was a heck of a coach," said Churchill head boys cross country John McGreevy, who had served as Austin's track assistant since 1996. "He coached track, football, basketball. He was a gym rat. As much as he loved the sports, he loved the kids he coached. He was very loyal to Churchill and he was very loyal to his fellow coaches. It's a great loss to Churchill and the Livonia community. He can't be replaced."

Austin graduated from Churchill in 1978 where he was a standout hurdler. As a senior

See AUSTIN, Page B4

PREP BOWLING

Salem boys win Division 1 state championship



SALEM BOWLING

Salem's varsity boys bowling team celebrates Friday after winning the Division 1 state championship. From left are Noah Samuels, Ryan Gonyea, Brendan Kwapis, Shane Rusinek, Joshua Hall, Alex Mattson, Mitchell Rusinek, co-coaches Kathie Hahn and Glenn Clark.

Rocks prevail against Hudsonville, 1,285-1,232

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

There was nothing "phenomenal" about how Salem's varsity boys bowling team competed at Friday's Division 1 team finals in Sterling Heights.

But the Rocks had energy, camaraderie and clutch performances going for them, according to co-coach Kathie Hahn — and those things were enough for Salem to top Hudsonville 1,285 to 1,232 in the championship game.

"Some of the key things

from our team today was just their consistency, they picked up spares," Hahn said. "But the main thing was the high energy they had, staying focused as a team, and encouraging each other and supporting each other. That was key today."

"Because there weren't any major, phenomenal scores. The strikes were not coming easy. So they picked up some really key splits today, and just stayed all-around consistent."

The matchup with Hudsonville was nip and tuck. In the Baker games, Salem only won by 33 pins (385-to-352)

See BOWLING, Page B4



ANDREW WOOD | LIVONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
The late Rick Austin ran track and coached track for 21 years at Churchill.

MID AMERICAN POMPON CHAMPIONSHIP



Salem's junior varsity pompon team celebrates after winning the championship in its first season. The Rocks won the JV division at the Mid American Pompon Championship held Feb. 19 at the Breslin Center. SUBMITTED

New kids on the block: Salem JV Pom wins states



Salem performs to the music of Britney Spears at the Mid American Pompon Championships. SUBMITTED



Salem High School's junior varsity pompon team performs on the Breslin Center floor Feb. 19. The Rocks won the championship in their division. SUBMITTED

First-year team wins at Mid American finals

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

Salem's first foray into starting a pom pon program is off to a championship start. The first-year junior varsity program won in its division at the Mid American Pompon State Championship held Feb. 19 at the Breslin Center in East Lansing, and head coach Kristy Adams envisions nothing but smooth sailing ahead as she looks to start a varsity team in 2017-2018.

"I'm hoping so," said Adams, formerly head coach of the Garden City High School varsity team, which also won this year in Class A/Division 1. "I'm hoping that the win really drags in a lot of attention and we end up with a big turnout for tryouts next season, so that we can have two teams (varsity and JV) and have a successful program."

In describing the difference between competitive cheer and pom pon, Adams noted that cheer "is more gymnastics and pom is more dance. But you still need a lot of stamina to get through a three-to-five minute routine."

Adams credited camaraderie and choreography for the victory, which Mid American officials told her was the first time a brand new JV program won on the

first go around. "I think it's amazing, we really didn't even have expectations for it to take off this way," Adams said. "I think it takes the choreography of the routines and I kind of knew from the beginning when the team got the Team Unity Award at camp we were off to a good start, because without that you can't have a successful team."

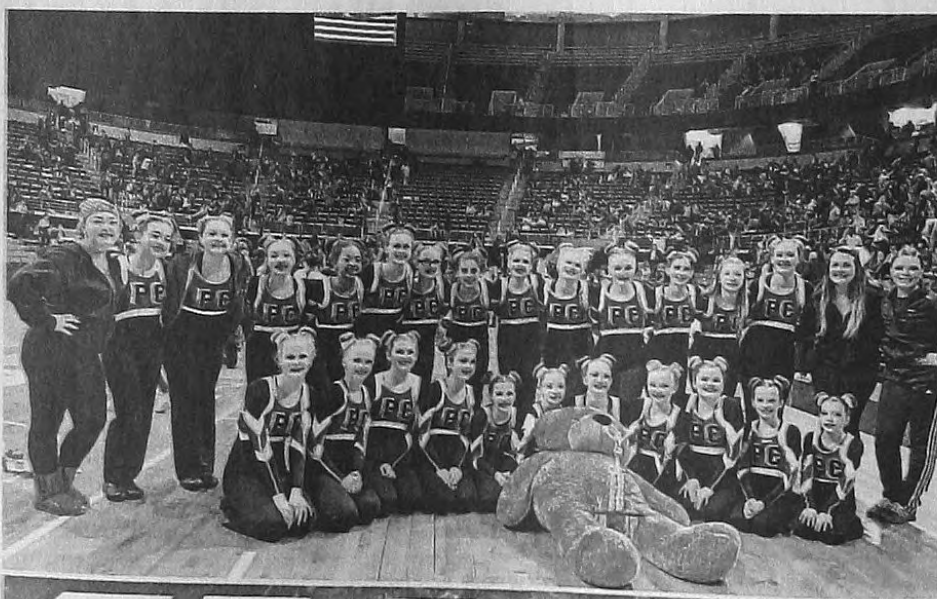
About competing under the Breslin Center spotlight, Adams added that "it was really exciting, just because it's a huge college campus and a huge stadium, so you really got a feel for like a big crowd instead of being in a high school gym. It really helps get their adrenaline running."

Parent Beth Pranschke agreed that the atmosphere at Breslin Center was "wonderful" for the girls on the squad, including her daughter Morgan Rochowiak (a junior and team captain).

"I didn't even think this was possible," Pranschke said. "We have girls who have never done pom before."

According to Adams, her connection to the Garden City program provided an assist as the Rocks performed to a Britney Spears remix of music from the 1990s and early 2000s.

"I coached at Garden City before, which I think that also was a big help because the varsity team at Garden City is pretty successful," Ad-



Placing third at the Mid American Pompon Championships Feb. 19 was the Plymouth-Canton Middle School team. SUBMITTED

ams said. "They acted like big sisters to them, so they were able to look up to another varsity even though we have no active one at our own school."

In addition to Rochowiak, the team's only other junior is Elena Serafimovski.

Seven sophomores and 10 freshmen comprise the rest of the roster.

Sophomores include Alexis Alva, Brienne Fuller, Olivia Hoeschele, Ashley Janik, Kendall Paz, Olivia Quesada and Georgia Walkonis.

The ninth-graders are Gurasees Dhingra, Morgan Homann, Cordelia Householder, Alexa Krejcar, Hannah Kulp, Zion Rankin, Emily Riley, Paige Stanecki, Alexia Vance and Breanna Winters.

Adams is helped by assistant coaches Nikki Foster, Courtney Bryden and Becky DeWater.

Livonia prevails

Also finishing first Feb. 19 was Livonia Pompon, a competitive squad comprised of girls in grades 5-8 in Livonia Public Schools.

The team competed against 12 other squads at the Breslin Center. It is coached by Andrea Shook, Brittany Rees, Kari Barden, Jillian Henderson, Aiden Shook and Rachel Parrelly.

Team members include Isabella Abate, Avrey Black, Abigail Boettcher, Sydney Castilenti, Ava Collyer, Allison Garpow, Rylee Guidash, Alison Gwiddz, Ainsley Johnston, Meghan Kelly, Ruby Klingensmith, Sarah Lamb, Mackenzie Latham, Isabel Longoria, Brianna Martin, Morgan Matick, Izzy

Migora, Emily Mitchell, Sophie Nomides, Madison Norton, Madison Prowse, Rachel Salutes, Sophia Schlatterbeck, Claire Sierota, Jenna Walters, Zoe Zagar and Emily Zimmerman.

Third for PC middles

The Plymouth-Canton Middle School Pompon team finished third Feb. 19 at the Mid American Pompon state finals.

Fifth-, sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade girls from Plymouth and Canton comprise the team, which also recently won the MPA State Championship (at Saginaw Valley State University) for the second year in a row.

Coaches are Chelsea Schroeder, Ari Bologna and Joslyn Covault.

Team members, listed alphabetically are: Adelyn Bhavsar, Bridgette Bowser, Lacey Courtney, Cassidy Craggs, Cassidy Davis, Alana Deckov, Lydia Donnelly, Maria Hall, Taylor Hendershot, Olivia Henry, Ella Linton, Natalie Lorenz, Autumn Matt, Nicole Miller, Katie Montroy, Natalie Nissen, Andrea Pike, Rachel Provenzano, Sabrina Saveski, Gracie Stirrett, Grace Teichman, Brooke Tyszkiewicz, Riley Walker and Erin Zoli.

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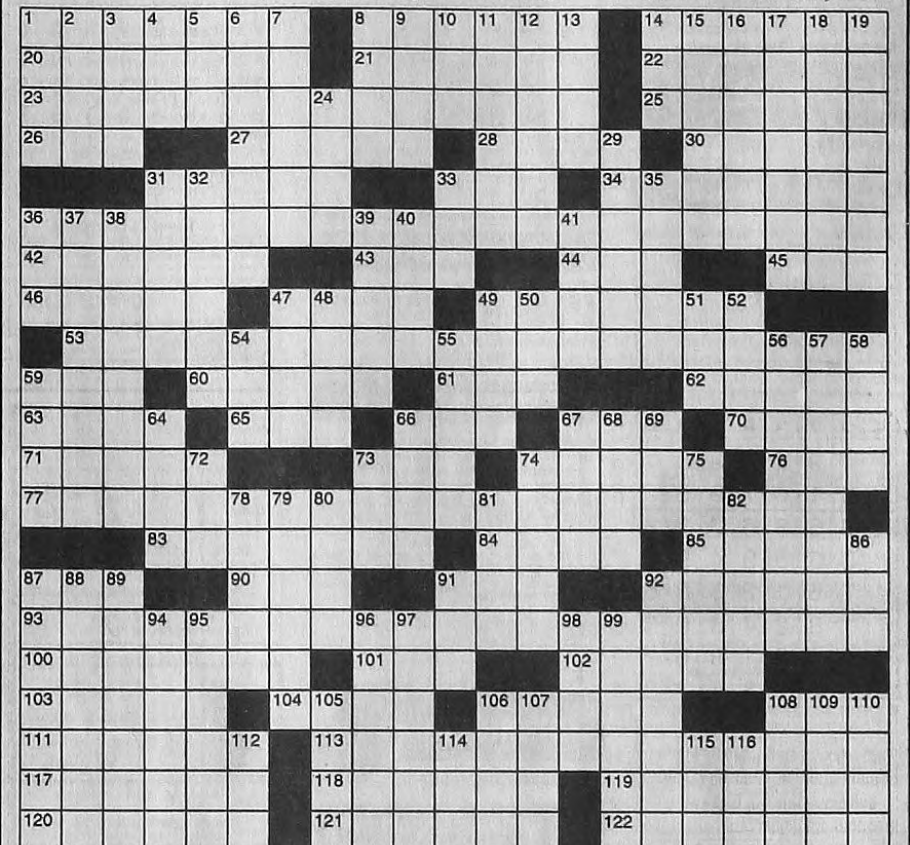
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THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER
CROSSWORD PUZZLER

- ACROSS**
- 1 Seasoned seaman, slangily
 - 8 Trees that yield a chocolate substitute
 - 14 Entry
 - 20 Muckety-muck
 - 21 Spain and Portugal, collectively
 - 22 Produce
 - 23 Start of a riddle
 - 25 There since birth
 - 26 Zeta-theta link
 - 27 Longtime name in gas
 - 28 — Three Lives" (50s TV series)
 - 30 Sri Lankan language
 - 31 Light unit
 - 33 Toothpaste-endorsing org.
 - 34 Big and offish
 - 36 Riddle, part 2
 - 42 Small Aussie parakeet
 - 43 Variety
 - 44 Small, for short
 - 45 Ending for baron
 - 46 Plum lookalikes
 - 47 Diner cuppa
 - 49 Warm up, as leftovers
 - 53 Riddle, part 3
 - 59 Fighter with Fidel
 - 60 Neighbor of Egypt
 - 61 Retina locale
 - 62 Italian farewells
 - 63 Baseballer Aparicio
 - 65 Clark of "Hee Haw"
 - 66 Original "Hee Haw" ailer
 - 67 A fire sign
 - 70 Threaded fastener
 - 71 Pop singer
 - 73 Gunky stuff
 - 74 Perm parlor
 - 76 Ph.D. hopeful's test
 - 77 Riddle, part 4
 - 83 Pedal for a floor loom
 - 84 Domain
 - 85 11 hours before noon
 - 87 Lead-in to Magnon
 - 90 "I'm — loss"
 - 91 Bikini part
 - 92 Acting unthinkingly, informally
 - 93 End of the riddle
 - 100 Cry to a good dog
 - 101 18-wheeler
 - 102 "I — Say No" (snow tune)
 - 103 Cheese-topped chip
 - 104 Help to do wrong
 - 106 Jiggly treat
 - 108 Real heel
 - 111 Torino locale
 - 113 Riddle's answer
 - 117 Stop, legally
 - 118 "Seinfeld" gal pal
 - 119 Via El or FX
 - 120 Will concern
 - 121 Prison boss
 - 122 Harmful flies
- DOWN**
- 1 Boy of Mayberry
 - 2 Place for hay
 - 3 "A little dabb'l —"
 - 4 "Shameless" ailer, briefly
 - 5 Aladdin's monkey pal
 - 6 City in southeast Wyoming
 - 7 Big Apple opera house
 - 8 U.S. prez, militarily
 - 9 "Peek —, I see you!"
 - 10 Kylo (Darth Vader's grandson)
 - 11 Tater Tots brand
 - 12 Sch. locale with microscopes
 - 13 In no danger
 - 14 Foe of Spinks
 - 15 NBA position
 - 16 Rabbinical mysticism
 - 17 Descendant of Esau
 - 18 Bowling aims
 - 19 Having only daughters
 - 24 Skye of films
 - 29 Bad boy in "The Omen"
 - 31 Raced in a certain sled
 - 32 Big IT company
 - 33 Biblical boat
 - 35 Eastern rice dish
 - 36 Half a fl. oz.
 - 37 Hilo dance
 - 38 "Modern Family" actor
 - 39 Sofa type
 - 40 Writer Paton
 - 41 Grades K-12
 - 47 Karate relative
 - 48 "Scram!"
 - 49 Light units
 - 50 Vegas-to-Denver dir.
 - 51 Tic — -toe board
 - 52 Peeved state
 - 54 " — Mutual Friend"
 - 55 Football's Tim
 - 56 Ensnarl
 - 57 Concert itinerary detail
 - 58 Bone: Prefix
 - 59 Musical score symbol
 - 64 River buildup
 - 66 Manage
 - 67 Not on time
 - 68 Lioness in "Born Free"
 - 69 "How lovely!"
 - 72 ENT part
 - 73 Hair stiffener
 - 74 Singer
 - 75 Political columnist
 - 76 Peggy
 - 78 1954-77 defense gp.
 - 79 Sister of Tito Jackson
 - 80 Hard cheese
 - 81 Singer Corey
 - 82 Not fitting
 - 86 Labor Day, e.g.: Abbr.
 - 87 Whodunit poison stuff
 - 88 Goes around
 - 89 One rejected
 - 91 Seek aims
 - 92 Cincinnati citizens, say
 - 94 Mexican bloom
 - 95 Certain reed player
 - 96 Ring of the iris
 - 97 Build-it-yourself auto
 - 98 Rights group, for short
 - 99 Actor Lyle or actress Nita
 - 105 Parcelate
 - 106 Mrs. Jaton
 - 107 Idyllic garden
 - 108 Airport waiters?
 - 109 Fit for the job
 - 110 Hair colorers
 - 112 Gobbled up
 - 114 Lad or lass
 - 115 Road hazard
 - 116 Belfry animal



For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702-4247 or smccllellan@michigan.com. Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

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8			6		2			3
		1				5		
	9		8	6	7		4	
	7		1	2	3		5	
		8					9	
3			9		8			2
		2				1		

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

4	8	1	5	3	7	2	9	6
2	7	9	8	1	6	4	5	3
5	6	9	4	2	2	8	1	7
6	5	8	3	2	1	9	7	4
7	9	2	4	6	5	3	8	1
1	3	3	7	9	8	5	6	2
8	2	5	6	7	4	1	3	9
3	1	3	2	7	1	3	4	9
4	9	6	1	4	8	3	7	2

CRAFTY WORD SEARCH

B I D T N I A P L E D O M N R T G R W M
A C R Y L I C M F A H T E L E Y E N P A
G S S P H N D P B T M U G M B N G D Q Y
N D Y C A P B A E L H I M N G T R A C E
I E L O P R H R A G K O N G N I K S A M
S C I L P C I C S R R S T A M P D N E P
S O C L L D S H E G N A Y W T D E Q S M
O U N A I W Q M L A N O I S N E M I D A
B P E G Q C I E C L M K A D F T A P E T
M A T E U G Q N I Q S K R O S R O Q F T
E G S Q E E T T Y S I A C P L U Y G M E
G E V I S E H D A C O V E O E F W P W S
O D C R A Y O N S B I N F V T O O Q A F
K F K B F W N E R Y C R T P S S O U I K
L G E B I F T E N I Q O B Y A N D N K V
A E P I L Q T B L A L C M A P Y E R Y U
H K Q O L S U S B B P R O M F E N U A C
C P S I O E N G N I T L I U Q A U V U C
T S K P L S R M H Y S S O L G B A L W E
V N R A Y G U T S M U D G E B I B T G W

- WORDS**
- ACRYLIC
 - ADHESIVE
 - APPLIQUE
 - CARDSTOCK
 - CHALK
 - COLLAGE
 - CRAYONS
 - DECOUPAGE
 - DIMENSIONAL
 - EASEL
 - EMBOSSING
 - EYELET
 - FABRIC
 - FLOSS
 - GLOSSY
 - GLUE
 - GROMMET
 - LAMINATE
 - MASKING
 - MATTE
 - MODEL
 - PAINT
 - PARCHMENT
 - PASTELS
 - PEN
 - PENCILS
 - POSTERBOARD
 - QUILTING
 - RELIEF
 - SMUDGE
 - SMUDGE
 - STAMP
 - STENCIL
 - TAPE
 - TRACE
 - WOODEN
 - YARN

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

Crossword Answers

OLDSALT CAROBS ACCESS
POOHBAH IBERIA LEADTO
IFYOUREINONEOF INBORN
ETA AMOCO ILED TAMIL
LUMEN ADA APELIKE
THEUNITEDARABEMIRATES
BUDGIE ILK LTL ESS
SLOES JAVA REHEATS
ANDYOUWANTANINFANTTO
CHE SUDAN EYE CIAOS
LUIIS ROY CBS LEO TNUT
ELLIE GOO SALON GRE
FALLASLEEPWHATSHOULD
TREADLE AREA ONEAM
CRO ATA BRA ONAUTO
YOU DOTOMAKETHATHAPPEN
ATTABOY RIG CAINT
NACHO ABET JELLO CAD
ITALIA ROCKADUBAIBABY
DESIST ELAINE ONCABLE
ESTATE WARDEN TSETSES

Word Search Answers

ACRYLIC
ADHESIVE
APPLIQUE
CARDSTOCK
CHALK
COLLAGE
CRAYONS
DECOUPAGE
DIMENSIONAL
EASEL
EMBOSSING
EYELET
FABRIC
FLOSS
GLOSSY
GLUE
GROMMET
LAMINATE
MASKING
MATTE
MODEL
PAINT
PARCHMENT
PASTELS
PEN
PENCILS
POSTERBOARD
QUILTING
RELIEF
SMUDGE
SMUDGE
STAMP
STENCIL
TAPE
TRACE
WOODEN
YARN