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CANTON

OBSERVER

SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2018 ■ HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Water-sewer rates will decrease

Township residents should pay 6.35 percent less

Ed Wright
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

For the first time in decades, a significant water-sewage rate decrease is on tap for Canton Township residents.

The uplifting news was delivered during Tuesday night's Canton Township Board of Trustees meeting, which featured the results of a painstaking Water & Sewer Rate Study spearheaded by Municipal Services Director Tim Faas, Department of Public Works Man-

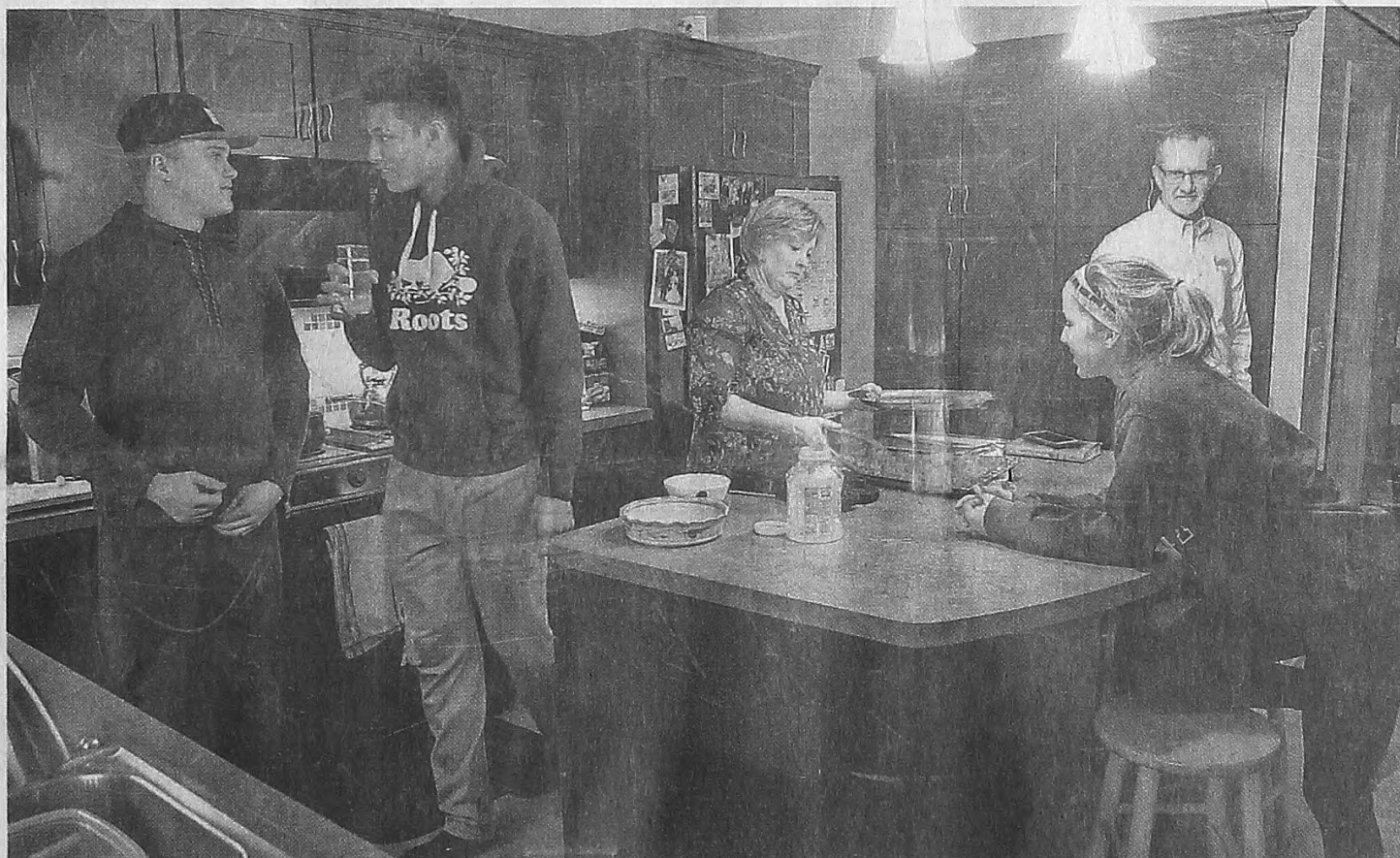
ager Bob Belair and Finance and Budget Director Wendy Trumbull.

The study's bottom line: A township homeowner with an average water-sewage usage rate will pay an average of 6.35 percent less for services from May 1, 2018, to April 30, 2019, as compared to the previous year.

An example used at Tuesday's meet-

ing showed a normal 2017 quarterly bill of \$365.98 from July 1 to Oct. 1 will fall to \$342.74 during the second quarter of this fiscal year. A family of five (considered above average in terms of water-sewage usage) will see its quarterly bill drop 6.65 percent from 2017.

See **WATER**, Page 2A



The kitchen is a busy place on this Wednesday evening at the Birchler residence in Plymouth. BILL BRESLER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Locals offer home away from home for USA Hockey players

Tim Smith
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

The long journey for National Hockey League players such as Detroit Red Wings star forward Dylan Larkin involves plenty of God-given talent and a non-stop desire to excel.

But that quest often requires a necessary pit stop for players in the USA Hockey National Team Development Program, where Larkin cut his teeth before moving on to the University of Michigan and the NHL.

We're talking about unsung heroes —

billet families who provide stability, friendship and a calm-before-the-storm environment for the teenagers who spend two years hundreds and even thousands of miles from their actual homes.

The next Larkin, Patrick Kane or Auston Matthews goes through their paces on the ice in hopes of hearing their name called someday by an NHL general manager. Off the ice, they can't get to that destination without down-to-earth people such as the Birchlers, McKendrys and Wrights, among many others.

They give unconditional love and friendship — and no matter where a

player winds up, it's as valuable to success as skating, stickhandling and sniping top shelf.

"My host family is a special group," said Luke Martin, a defenseman in the NTDP from 2014-16 currently at the University of Michigan and drafted in 2017 by the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes. "They made it (transition to U-M) incredibly easy on me. You have bad days while at the NTDP, but my host family understood that and made it easy to just come home and be myself around them."

See **FAMILIES**, Page 3A

Police: Shooting victim's wound 'very serious'

Matt Jachman
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

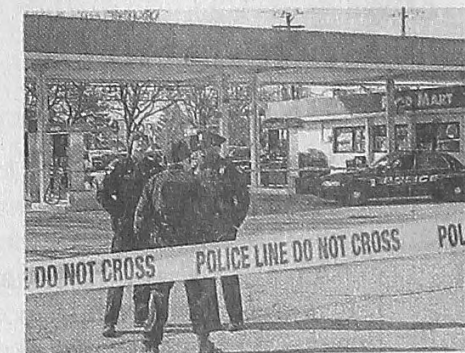
Police in Canton Township continue to investigate a Tuesday shooting that left a man in his 20s hospitalized.

The shooting took place shortly before 3 p.m. in the parking lot of the Valero gas station at Ford Road and Haggerty. Arriving police officers and township paramedics found a man who had been shot one time. He was rushed to a local hospital and an acquaintance of the victim's was arrested as the suspected shooter.

Chad Baugh, the township's deputy police director, said the shooting stemmed from an argument.

"We're trying to determine exactly

See **SHOOTING**, Page 2A



The Valero gas station at Ford Road and Haggerty, following a Tuesday afternoon shooting that left a man in his 20s hospitalized. BILL BRESLER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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Farmington Road to see work this summer

David Veselenak
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Add Farmington Road as another construction project taking place in Livonia come this summer.

That plan came to fruition within the last 10 days, as Livonia city officials worked with Wayne County to develop a plan to reconstruct and patch Farmington Road between Plymouth Road and the CSX railroad tracks in the city's industrial corridor.

This is the first time the city has worked directly with the county to help fix a county road, Mayor Dennis Wright noted. It's a decision, he said, that was a no-brainer for him and other city leaders as motorists cry out for road repairs. "We had to start somewhere," he

said.

The partnership will see Livonia pay for 20 percent of the project, which will be about \$175,000 of the \$805,000 total cost. Wayne County will pay for the other 80 percent. Livonia engineers will do the design work, while Wayne County will do the engineering and construction work.

Work will include reconstruction of a good portion of the southbound right lane, along with concrete patching and other repairs across the entire road.

Farmington Road between Plymouth and Schoolcraft was up for federal funding at one point, though it was eventu-

ally dropped from the list and did not receive grant funding for work, said Don Rohraff, director of public works for the city.

"We would have really loved to see both of those sides done," he said. "When it become a safety issue and an outcry from out citizens we've got to be able to work together."

While many of the roads across Wayne County are in bad shape, cities typically are handcuffed when it comes to fixing the roads most people complain about. That's because those roads are maintained by the county and cities do not have jurisdiction over them. In

Livonia, those include Inkster, Middlebelt, Merriman, Farmington, Wayne (south of Plymouth), Haggerty, Joy, Plymouth, Five Mile, Six Mile, Seven Mile and part of Eight Mile. The city maintains residential streets, as well as some major roads, including Newburgh, Stark, Ann Arbor Trail and Schoolcraft.

The 80/20 split of costs, Rohraff said, is identical to what Wayne County does with townships, such as Canton, which want to contribute funds to repair county roads.

Contact David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com.

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Water

Continued from Page 1A

Just once since 1991 (there was a 2.5-percent rate decrease in 2013) has the township's water-sewage rate decreased by more than 1 percent. Rates actually increased by 7.3 percent in 2016 and by more than 9 percent in 2015.

The largest rate hike over the past 20 years occurred in 2008, when residents' water-sewage bills grew by 20 percent.

The refreshing revelation — especially in light of southeast Michigan's ongoing battle with deteriorating infrastructure — was made possible by planning, foresight and efficiency, township Supervisor Pat Williams noted.

"As trustees, it's nice to be able to share some good news for a change,"

Williams said. "It's critical that residents should know we are now starting to see the benefits of long-term decisions made four, five years ago by former and current board members that are just now starting to pay off."

Williams pointed to two major catalysts when asked to explain the historic rate decrease.

"No. 1 is the decision to build our water tower last year," he said. "The tank fills up at night, when the water costs are lower, then it's available during the day, when usage is highest. Also, 100 percent of our sewage is being treated by the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority, which is a newer, more-efficient facility."

Each year's rates are set based on detailed research and analysis completed by Faas and Trumbull.

"My background is more technical,

while Wendy's is in finance, so we definitely had some high-level dialogue in January, when we were figuring out the upcoming rates," Faas said. "When we determined that we were going to be able to recommend a rate decrease, it felt good. In fact, we re-calculated everything multiple times to confirm our numbers were accurate."

Faas added that the benefits of the switch to using the YCUA sewage-treatment facility go well beyond monetary.

"It's a newer facility, so after the water is treated, it's much fresher than the facility we used to use," Faas said. "YCUA pumps the fresh, treated water back into the Lower Rouge River, so our rivers and streams are cleaner than they were in the past."

Contact Ed Wright at edwright@gannett.com or 517-375-1113.

Shooting

Continued from Page 1A

what the argument was about," Baugh said Wednesday morning. "The evidence is quite obvious they weren't in agreement."

Baugh declined to say where on his body the victim was wounded, but said there is concern for his health. "It was a

serious, very serious wound," he said.

The suspect was taken into custody without incident, Baugh said, and police recovered a semiautomatic pistol at the scene.

There is a construction project ongoing at the station, but Baugh said police have no information that either the victim or the suspect were workers on the project.

Both men are in their 20s, Baugh said, and neither is from Canton.

He said police appreciate the concern Canton citizens have shown since news of the shooting broke Tuesday.

"We'd just like to hope for the best for the victim. Hopefully, there's a positive outcome for him and his family," he said.

Contact Matt Jachman at mjachman@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @mattjachman.



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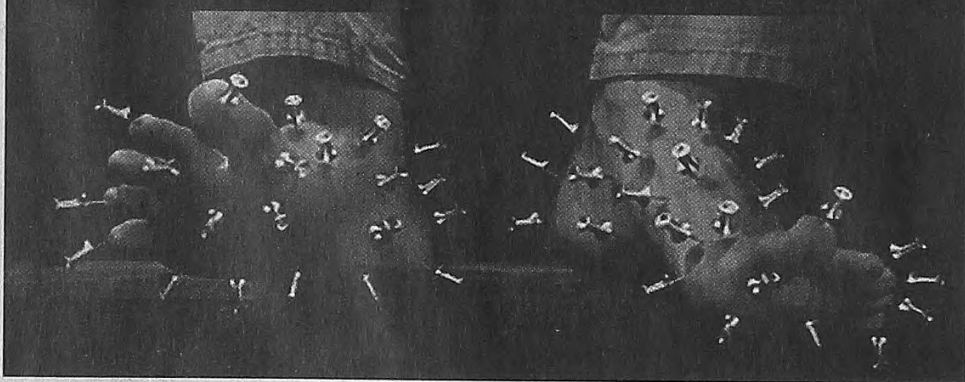
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Families

Continued from Page 1A

Not everybody can be a humble host. The NTDP always is looking to replenish its billet roster.

"Everybody's different," said Lisa Vollmers, who oversees the billet program as director of student-athlete services for the NTDP. "We have couples that are retired, who are empty-nesters. We have families with little people. We have families with an only child."

"They really run the gamut of all sorts of backgrounds. It's really just about their passion for working with the program and supporting a player who is moving away from home, who is going to have a very challenging two years."

Vollmers heads a staff that thoroughly vets each prospective household to make sure it's a good match for players making their way to Plymouth, Canton, Northville or Novi (the communities where billets must live) from points on the map such as San Diego or Orlando.

Just like home

The matches, more often than not, are made in hockey heaven.

"They serve as your second family," said Gavin Hain, an NTDP U-18 forward whose billets are Laurie and John Birchler of Plymouth. "Obviously, if you have a small question or a life question, you need to talk to them about — and they'll answer it."

"Playing here, it's hard, so I'm able to come home to a good place. Keep you company if you need it. It's nice."

Hain enjoys all the comforts of home, which for him is Grand Rapids, Minn. There is a playful greeting from enthusiastic Labrador retriever puppy Rocket, who is named after the Montreal Canadiens Hall of Fame player Maurice "Rocket" Richard.

His girlfriend (Kaelyn Denker) stops by while Laurie Birchler cooks up a dish of chicken with honey mustard, one of Gavin's favorites.

During this particular week, Hain had an NTDP brother hanging out with him at the Birchlers — U-18 forward and fellow Minnesotan K'Andre Miller (whose billet dad was recovering from surgery).

"It's awesome, obviously. I have a Minnesota chemistry," Miller said. "Just knowing (Hain) for so long, being on the same teams growing up, I wouldn't want to be with anybody else, to be honest."

Keeping it real

The role NTDP billet "parents" play is as key to how young men turn into potential pros as that of the coaches.

Without a stable home situation, the potential exists for a player to get distracted from becoming the very best he can be, both on and off the ice.

"It's been kind of fun, having these guys around and



Grilled cheese for lunch at the McKendrys. Jonathan Gruden (left) and Jack DeBoer each ordered two sandwiches each. In the middle is Theresa McKendry. BILL BRESLER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

WANT TO BE A BILLET?

What: Families are invited to consider hosting U.S. National Team Development Program hockey players for the 2018-19 season.

Who: The NTDP includes the U-17 and U-18 teams; players from all over the country join the program for two years. Billets provide a place for the players to live during their stay.

How: Contact Lisa Vollmers of USA Hockey at 734-453-6400, ext. 392, or send an email to housing@usa-hockey.org. More information is available at the USA Hockey website by clicking on the NTDP link.

giving them a support system to be there," John Birchler said. "It's kind of a unique situation, to bring kids you don't know in that are top athletes, to see them play and be part of your family."

"They (USA Hockey) do give you a book, but the main thing is, our ultimate responsibility is to give them a stable environment, a place to sleep, feed them, provide them everything they need there — and a family to be a part of."

With family life goes the same kind of chores that their actual children (Zane, 26, Vaughn, 23, and Bryn, 21) had to do.

"They've got things they're responsible for, just like our kids did," John said. "Whether it's cleaning up the dishes, taking the garbage out."

One recent snowy day, John worried about having to use the snowblower after work. When he arrived

home, there was a nice surprise.

"Gavin had done it," he said with a smile. "I told him he's my new favorite kid."

"We would definitely consider doing it again," Laurie said about billeting. "It wasn't as much of a burden as you might think it would be, because they have such a good support system through USA Hockey and because they're very focused."

"These guys have a lot at stake. This is a really important time for them. ... We try to keep them humble."

Like old times

In the Canton home of Pat and Theresa McKendry, NTDP U-18 forwards Jack DeBoer and Jonathan Gr-

See FAMILIES, Page 4A



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Families

Continued from Page 3A

den mostly are quiet and serious as they go about their business.

The two players — whose fathers have National Hockey League connections — typically get up, chow down and commute to Plymouth-Canton Educational Park, where they attend morning classes before going to practices at USA Hockey Arena.

After returning to the McKendrys' home, it's usually dinner time. On game days, of course, naps come first.

The McKendrys are back in the billet game after a lengthy absence. Back in the 1990s, when Jack DeBoer's dad (Pete DeBoer) coached the now-defunct Plymouth Whalers of the Ontario Hockey League, they hosted future NHL player Harold Druken.

"The only difference was the (Whalers') players were a little bit older," Theresa McKendry said. "There's a little more restrictions on the kids we have now, just because of their age. They're a little more disciplined, because of their age and what they have to do. But it's pretty similar, other than that."

When Jack DeBoer earned a two-year stint with the NTDP in 2016 (24 months is the typical cycle of player development in the program), the McKendrys contacted their longtime friends about a "reunion" of sorts.

Jack DeBoer said the experience with the McKendrys — whose children Ryan, 32, and Laura, 31, are on their own — has been perfect. "I think it's been awesome," he said. "Pat and Theresa are like a second family to me."

Finding a connection

Gruden, son of former NHL player John Gruden, didn't join DeBoer and the McKendrys until midway through his first NTDP season.

"I was living with (original billet family) for four months. It just wasn't the right fit," said Gruden, 17. "I brought it (changing billets) up to the people there, that it wasn't the right fit."

Vollmers wouldn't have moved Gruden to the McKendry household had their been any issues with the younger DeBoer, either.

"It was no problem for us to say yes,"



Jack DeBoer is all smiles after Team USA scores during a recent game. RENA LAVERTY

Theresa said. "We already had Jack and we thought it would be more fun for Jack to have someone else here his age, rather than just hanging out with us."

"So my first question was, 'What do you feel about it, Jack?' ... The fact that they get along so well and don't have any issues and the four of us can get along and laugh a lot, it's a good fit. It makes their life a little easier."

Nodding in agreement was DeBoer, adding that "it's been a great experience here, just hockey-wise and billet-wise, too. Some guys, like him before (nodding toward Gruden), didn't have the best billets. They welcomed him with open arms. I think both of us can say they've been awesome and we couldn't ask for better people to stay with."

Gruden acknowledged he is in a much different situation than virtually all other NTDP players, simply because his actual family lives in Rochester, about 40 miles from the arena.

But USA Hockey mandates players live in the school districts that serve the program, which beginning in 2017-18 in-

clude Plymouth-Canton, Novi and Northville.

"On days like these, driving 45 minutes through the snow can be tough," Gruden said. "And also going to school with the guys, I wanted to have that team camaraderie outside the rink, doing activities with the guys."

Vollmers said it is rare when a player and family don't hit it off. When that happens, the program finds a suitable new billet.

"As players are there, they might not like the food or their rules," Vollmers said. "But we really try to work through things and, 90 percent of the time, just with open communication, everything can be resolved."

"Sometimes it's coaching a player (on how to integrate into a family environment). You can't just go there and go in your room and not participate. It's really important for you to become a member of the family. That's huge ... if there's good communication, it's usually golden."

Youngsters at home

The Birchlers and McKendrys have adult children who have moved away, but it's a completely different situation at the Novi home of Cameron and Emily Wright.

They now have a household with their two sons (Ben, 12, and Nate, 9) and NTDP U-17 players Judd Caulfield and Alex Vlasic (who attend Novi High School). Caulfield is about 1,000 miles from his home in Grand Forks, N.D. Vlasic's family lives in Illinois.

"We volunteered to billet because we thought it would have a positive impact on our family," Emily Wright said. "Our kids learn from watching others and we thought there wouldn't be better role models than the type of person selected for the program — boys requiring both a strong work ethic and a passion for hockey."

"The most challenging time for us was early in the season. When the players first move in, there is definitely an adjustment period as we get to know each other. The first few meals together were fairly quiet, but we tried to make everyone feel comfortable by cooking foods they know and liked — and, of course, talking about favorite foods are good ice-breakers."

One reason Vlasic was placed with the Wrights is because "he, like our family, cannot eat gluten. And since Alex and Judd realize how important nutrition is, they don't eat much junk food."

"So cooking a large enough quantity of food for meals requires multiple trips to the grocery store in a week," she added. "And since our boys are active in activities in the evenings, the food needs to be ready at various times."

The Wright boys get along with the players as though they were siblings.

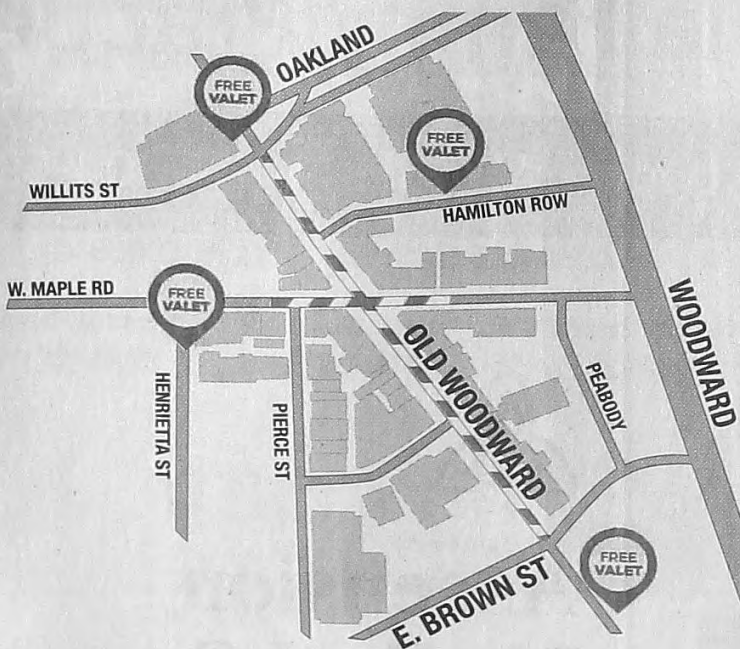
"There is a lot of activity and sports in the house," Emily said. "Alex and Judd will play all sports with Ben and Nate, whether it is basketball or football in the backyard to soccer or knee hockey in the basement."

"You can see the excitement on our neighborhood kids if Alex and Judd are able to play when they come over."

Indeed, with potential NHL players "in the house," neighborhood watches have never been so much fun.

Contact Tim Smith at tsmith@hometownlife.com.

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DISCOVERY STUDENTS IN DSO HONOR BAND



Eight eighth-grade students from the Discovery Middle School Band program were selected to perform in the DSO Middle School Honor Band for 2018: Joshua Brauchler (trombone), Kai Bunjik (tuba), Ben Ferencz (trumpet), Grace Laney (flute), Connor O'Loughlin (alto saxophone) Adam Peck (bassoon), Will Pryce (baritone) and Thea Schley (flute). These students were selected by the DSO and took to the Orchestra Hall stage March 18 for a concert. The students received the music a week in advance, rehearsed for eight hours and performed the concert that night.

PAGAN HONORED WITH MPARKS AWARD



State Rep. Kristy Pagan, D-Canton, was presented with the Michigan Parks and Recreation Association State Elected Official Award, the result of Pagan's commitment to improving the quality of life in the community, including her involvement in launching the Lead #LikeAGirl program in Canton Township, which is run through Canton Leisure Services to help instill leadership qualities in girls ages 11-15. Pagan is also the Democratic vice chair of the Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee where she helps craft the state budget for the Department of Natural Resources, which allocates money to state parks and trails, conservation officers and the Great Lakes. Pagan (right) received the award from Laura Mortier, recreation specialist at Canton Leisure Services, March 13 at the Canton Township board meeting.

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Village Theater issues call to artists

The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, in Canton is now accepting proposals for solo or group exhibitions for its 2019 exhibition season. Both local and regional artists are encouraged to apply and all mediums will be considered. The deadline for submissions is April 12.

To apply for a solo or group exhibition, artists must submit: a cover sheet with full name, address, phone number, email signature and date of submission; CD of high-quality JPG digital images; list of representative images submitted; document artwork, including the artist's name, title, medium, dimensions

and date of the work; current resume/biography, artist statement and availability. Artists' submissions may be sent via email to villagetheater@canton-mi.org or delivered directly to The Village Theater. For more information, go to www.cantonvillagetheater.org/418.

The Village Theater's exhibition committee, composed of local artists and art educators, will determine the final 2019 exhibition season's schedule. For more information, go to www.cantonvillagetheater.org or call 734-394-5300.



"LOVEfest" features the colorful whirling of Egyptian Tanoura Sufi dancers.

Village Theater to present 'LOVEfest: Welcome the Stranger'

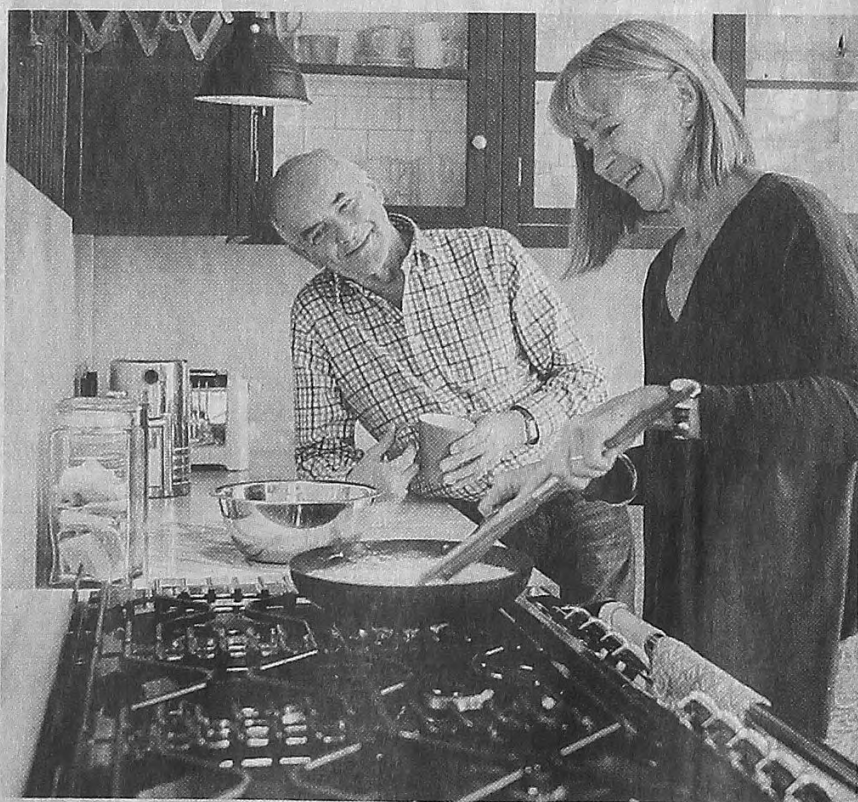
Kiran Ahluwalia will present "LOVEfest: Welcome the Stranger," performances of both traditional and modern arts from the Sikh and Muslim cultures at 7 p.m. Sunday, April 15, at The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, in Canton.

"LOVEfest" combines the talents of sacred and secular artists from both Muslim and Sikh traditions, featuring the passionate vocals of Ahluwalia (from India) and inspired Arabic song-

writing of Souad Massi (Algeria), combined with traditional Sikh temple singers and the colorful whirling of Egyptian Tanoura Sufi dancers.

Tickets are \$28 and available online at www.cantonvillagetheater.org or by calling 734-394-5300. Tickets can also be purchased at The Village Theater box office one hour prior to show time.

For more information, go to <http://www.kiranmusic.com/lovefest/>.



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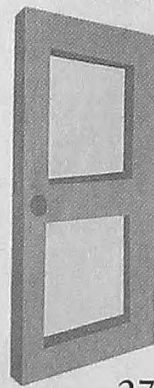
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Bookstock to sponsor cupcake contest

Bookstock, Michigan's largest used book and media sale, invites amateur bakers across Michigan to submit their recipe to its cupcake contest.

The winning cupcake will be featured at Good Cakes and Bakes, Detroit's hottest new bakery and contest sponsor, owned by Detroit natives April Anderson and Michelle Anderson. In addition, the winner and chefs will make the best cupcake recipe on the television show "Live in the D" on WDIV-TV (Channel 4).

A celebrity judging

panel, featuring Anderson, Detroit Free Press restaurant critic Mark Kurlyandchik and Detroit Free Press food writer Sue Selasky, will judge the contest. Local news anchors Carolyn Clifford (WXYZ-TV, Channel 7), Sherry Margolis (WJBK-TV, Channel 2) and Tati Amare (WDIV) will join Bookstock sponsor Sue Morse and honorary co-chair Rochelle Riley to announce the winners at 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 25, at Laurel Park Place in Livonia.

Complete rules and an entry form can be down-

loaded from the Bookstock website at bookstockmi.org/cookstock. Send the recipe and the entry form to cookstock18@gmail.com by midnight April 2.

Bookstock runs April 22-29 at Livonia's Laurel Park Place. Marking 15 years of supporting the need to read, Bookstock has generated nearly \$2 million for literacy and education projects throughout Oakland County and Detroit.

For more information, contact Beverly K. Phillips at 248-203-1527 or phillips@jfmnd.org.

CANTON LIBRARY EVENTS

The Canton Public Library is at 1200 S. Canton Center Road. For more information, call 734-397-0999 or go to www.cantonpl.org.

Open LEGO build

When: 7-8 p.m. Tuesday, March 27

Details: Come join us for one hour of creative play and building with our collection of LEGO and Duplo Blocks. All welcome to complete our challenges or free play. Lego creations will be displayed on our website after each meeting. This program is intended for kids ages 7-14.

Teen Boredom Busters

When: 3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 28

Details: Bored after school? Need a study

break? No worries, we've got fun activities in our Teen Space that are just right for your busy schedule. Stop by for five or 50 minutes, whatever works for you. Learn something new, meet a new friend or just relieve some stress.

NHS Tutoring

Details: NHS students from P-CCS's The Park are here to provide students in grades 3-12 free homework help. If you're interested in getting tutored, if you're under 12,

your parent must remain in the library and you must bring the assignment and any other needed materials. Tutoring is available 6-8 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday in the Children's Library. There will be no tutoring during breaks or school closures/snow days. Those seeking tutoring will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis. They will be allowed a 30-minute maximum if there is a line. Check www.cantonpl.org for ongoing schedule.



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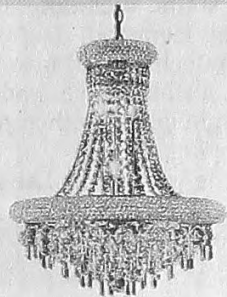
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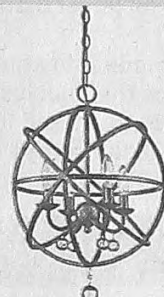
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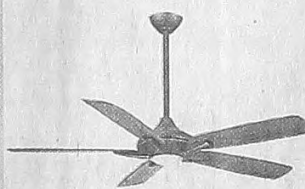
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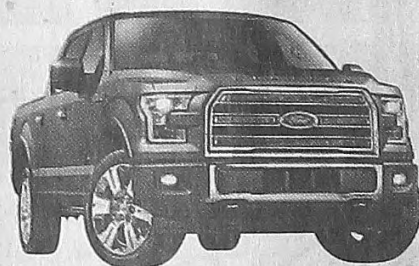
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Farmington Hills teen leads gun control protest

David Veselenak
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

At age 14, Cydney Jenkins can't drive a car. She won't even be able to vote for president until 2024. But the North Farmington High School freshman has already done something most people have never done: organized a march on the Michigan Capitol.

Jenkins is the planner behind the March For Our Lives event protesting for gun control efforts that was scheduled for Saturday at the Capitol Building in Lansing.

"Being there, I thought it would be a lot bigger and louder and a lot more noticeable," the Farmington Hills resident said. "It's definitely a lot larger than I anticipated."

The protest was made into an event post on Facebook, one that had just shy of 900 people RSVP to attend as of Thursday morning. Jenkins said she's expecting a big turnout for the protest,

especially with some young people coming via charter buses from the west side of the state as well.

The purpose of the protest is for common-sense gun laws, Jenkins said. It's her hope to eventually see the ban of AR-15 rifles, a weapon used frequently in mass shootings, as well as add a "red flag" law, which would allow for the removal of firearms from a dangerous situation after being petitioned to a local judge.

The march was to begin near the Michigan Hall of Justice in Lansing, then travel along sidewalks across the bridge over Pine Street and cross at Walnut before wrapping around the Capitol to the east stairs. Jenkins said several speakers were expected to present on the stairs, including state Sen. Hoon-Yung Hopgood, D-Taylor, state Rep. Tom Cochran, D-Mason, and Adele Colson, a Holt High School junior who has been involved with gun violence issues lobbying.

The protest in Lansing was one of



North Farmington High School freshman Cydney Jenkins, 14, and her mom Margo are working to establish a nonprofit, World Generation Advocacy. DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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hundreds scheduled across the country as teens have taken up the gun control cause, including others in Detroit and Ann Arbor. Sparked by the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., that left 17 people dead, teenagers across the country have begun to protest and even walk out of class to protest gun violence and call for "common-sense" gun laws to be enacted by lawmakers.

Jenkins said the Parkland shooting affected her and her classmates emotionally. Students were nervous and scared in the aftermath. After a little more than a week, she said, she began feeling inspired by the actions of other high school students across the country and decided she wanted to do something about it.

"When it first happened, there was a kind of numbness because it had always happened," she said. "And then it just hit me that night when I saw the videos (posted by students during the Florida shooting) ... it just hit me that this shouldn't be regular and this shouldn't be OK."

'Pray that it keeps going'

Margo Jenkins, Cydney's mother, said she's never seen this kind of passion from teenagers before and is proud of their efforts, especially after facing several roadblocks.

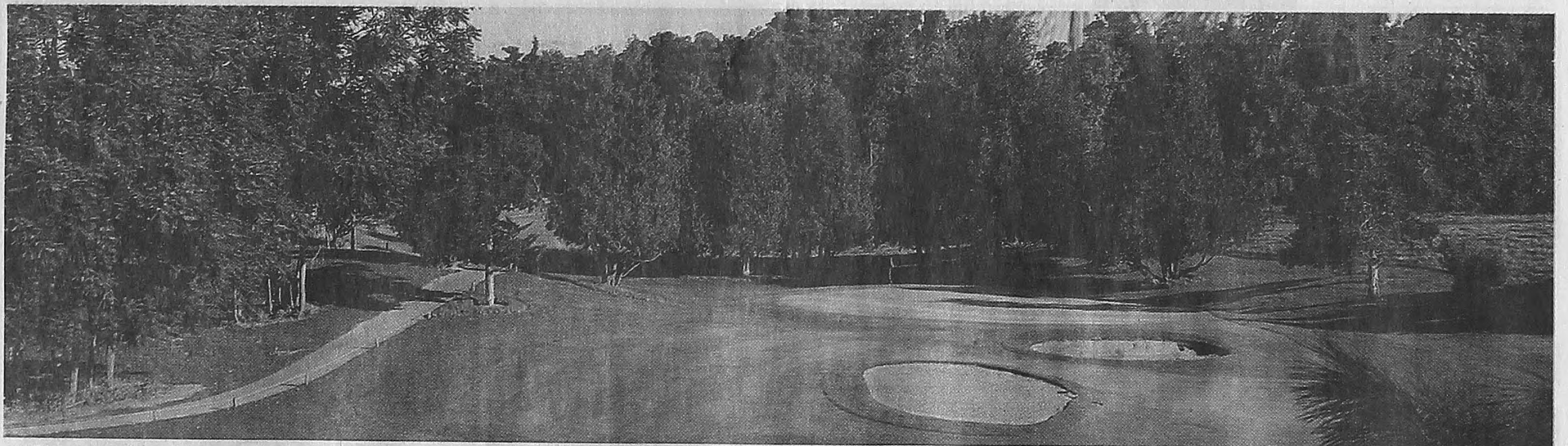
She said she's been amazed how long the national discussion has taken place on the issue and hopes her daughter's work and the work of other teens continues to have influence.

"I just pray, pray, pray that it keeps going. I pray that March 25 is as desperate as March 24," Margo Jenkins said. "That these kids can compel each other to keep going and not let it die out."

Cydney Jenkins's event wasn't the only event on the Capitol lawn pertaining to guns Saturday. A pro-Second Amendment march was scheduled for later in the afternoon, put on by 11% United Patriots of America.

The March For Our Lives event is one of the first events she's hoping to have under the creation of a new nonprofit,

See **PROTEST**, Page 9A



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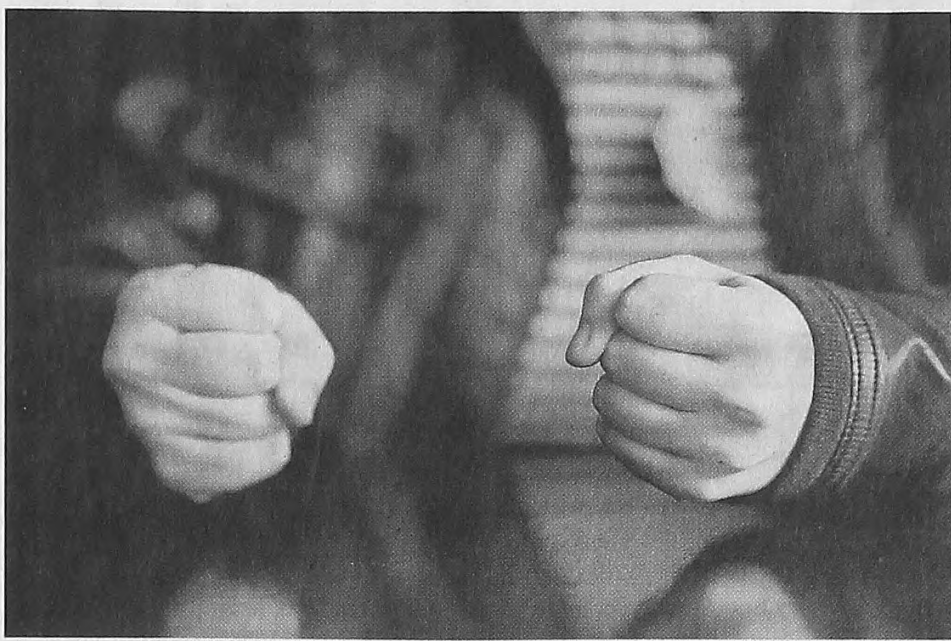


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North Farmington High School freshman Cydney Jenkins, 14, talks passionately about the March For Our Lives protest she organized. DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Protest

Continued from Page 8A

World Generation Advocacy. She said she hopes to utilize it to touch on topics that have largely been avoided in discussion, including diversity, mental health issues and poverty. But the main focus right now, she said, is gun control.

"As of now, we're dealing with gun violence, but there's still so much more that we want to do," Cydney said. "We want to hit everything."

Her mother said she knows teens today aren't trying to take everyone's guns away as some people are saying. As a former federal law enforcement official and as someone who keeps a firearm in her home for safety, she said responsible gun owners know something needs to be done to help protect their kids.

"My family is No. 1. My

"As of now, we're dealing with gun violence, but there's still so much more that we want to do. We want to hit everything."

Cydney Jenkins
Farmington Hills teen who helped organize protest

husband is the same way," she said. "But there's not one person that believes in the right to own a weapon that would say, 'This is OK' except that polarizing extreme."

"The majority of that group is going to say, 'But

children being slaughtered in a classroom is not appropriate."

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Anna's House promises no ordinary breakfast

Darrell Clem
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Anna's House has an ambitious motto: Saving the world from an ordinary breakfast.

After branching out from its west Michigan roots last fall with a hugely popular Westland eatery, Anna's House is ready to conquer Farmington Hills with its Twilight French Toast, Chorizo Breakfast Burger, vegan bacon Tempeh Power Bowl, Cuban Benedict or Dublin Omelette, with house-made corned beef hash, bacon, sausage and cheddar cheese.

CEO Josh Beckett chose Farmington Hills — specifically the former TGI Fridays site on Northwestern Highway — for the seventh Anna's House and the second in metro Detroit.

"We're loving being in the Detroit area," he said.

Anna's House has racked up several best-breakfast awards from Grand Rapids Magazine, MLive and Revue Magazine, among others, but Beckett said it's the top-quality, chemical-free meats from Wisconsin-based Jones Dairy Farm, cage-free eggs, vegan and vegetarian options and gluten-free dishes, among other offerings, that keep customers coming back.

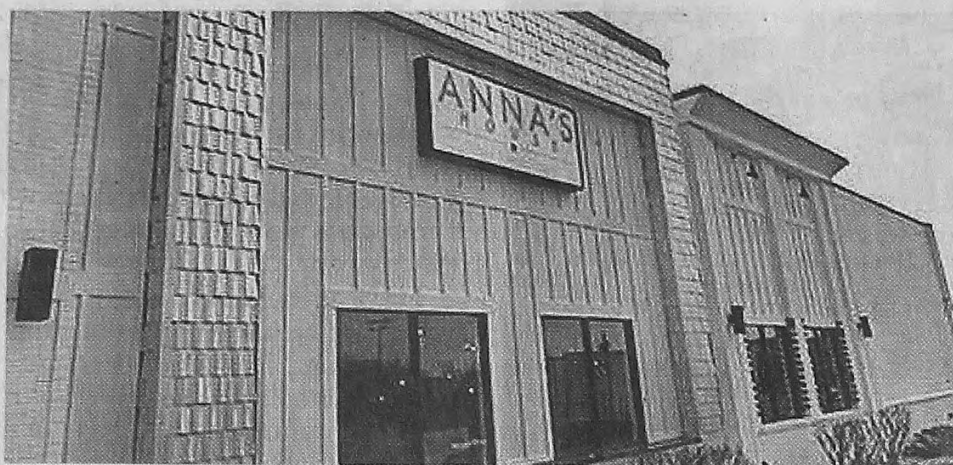
"There are so many dietary needs in this day and age," Beckett said, adding later, "We really want people to feel that this is a great place to go for the food and the atmosphere."

Menu items are made to be appealing to the eye, as well.

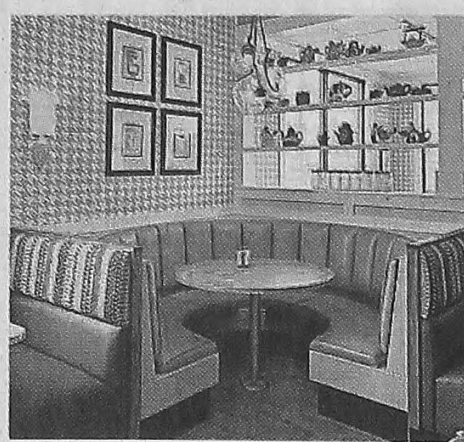
Anna's House has a bright interior and makes use of bright and pastel colors. The decor is retro chic and a large circular counter adorns the restaurant. The music is mostly from the '50s and '60s.

"We want it to be a happy place," Beckett said.

Evan Pazkowski, Anna's House marketing manager, said an interior designer has been putting the finishing touches on the Farmington Hills location. The restaurant, which seats about 220 people and has about 65 employees, has passed all its inspections.



Anna's House, a retro chic place that promises no ordinary breakfast, is coming to Farmington Hills. CURTIS LUBBERS | ANNA'S HOUSE



Anna's House has a retro chic decor and a menu that promises no ordinary breakfast. CURTIS LUBBERS | ANNA'S HOUSE

"We're good," he said. "We're ready to go April 2."

Opening day, the Anna's House team will be giving away \$20 gift cards once every hour, along with coupons Pazkowski said he plans to hand out.

Anna's House has served 3 million meals since it first opened 15 years ago, but it's a company that appears destined to grow. Beckett already is eyeing East Lansing and Ann Arbor as possible locations.

Beckett chose the former TGI Fridays site partly because he saw it as a way to open a new restaurant in an existing building.

"We're bringing that building back to life with a remodel," he said. "We're not tearing it down and wasting all the product."

Whether diners want chemical-free, antibiotic-free meats, a vegan omelette or want to splurge "like a mini-vacation right in the middle of the week," Beckett said Anna's House is ready.

Word has spread.

"We get emails constantly from people who want us to come (to their community) and rescue them from an ordinary breakfast," Beckett said.

For the Farmington Hills area, the wait is over.

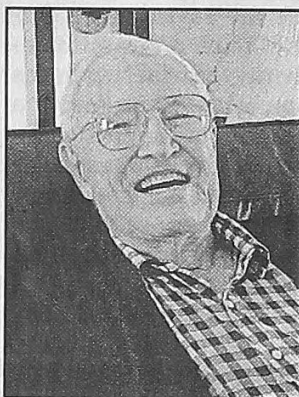
Hours are 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. For more information, go to <http://www.annashouseus.com>. The address is 32555 Northwestern Highway and the phone number is 248-254-3436.

Contact Darrell Clem at dclem@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @CantonObserver.

Obituaries

Frederick Maltby Warner, II

ANN ARBOR/MARINE CITY - Frederick, 96, passed away at Mallard's Landing on Thursday, March 8, 2018. He was born in Ann Arbor on July 9, 1921; one of nine grandchildren to the late Governor of Michigan, Frederick Maltby Warner and son of the late Harley Davis Warner and Dorothy Lavina Slocum. He married Phyllis Anne Klingler in Christ Church Cranbrook on November 14, 1952. Frederick had a deep passion for flying and race cars. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps after graduating from Cranbrook School. He served as a Captain in World War II, became a commercial pilot, General Motors pilot and then Flight Operations Manager. At the age of 70 he built an experimental helicopter which has been donated to the West Michigan Aviation Academy in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He enjoyed racing his Cadillac Allard in places like Sebring and Watkins Glen and further deepened his passion for race cars by becoming Promotional Manager for the first Chevrolet Corvette and a test engineer for racing components for the Corvette. Later in his career he was co-owner of Klingler Warner Pontiac GMC truck dealership in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He retired to Marine City, Michigan on the St. Clair River where he kept himself busy with many projects: flying his helicopter, spending time with his dogs, and visits from family and friends. Fred is survived by his son, Frederick "Rick" Maltby Warner IV of Marine City, MI and daughter, Marguerite "Maggie" (Tom) Klingler Warner Slovik of Onkama, MI. He was preceded in death by his wife, Phyllis; his parents; and sister, Dorothy Susan Warner Bowie. Cremation arrangements were entrusted to Bower-Rose Funeral Home, Marine City, and at a later date his military flag will be presented to the Warner Mansion and Museum in Farmington, Michigan. To honor the memory of Frederick Maltby Warner II, memorials may be made to the Warner Mansion and Museum. Donations to Friends of the Governor Warner Mansion, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan 48335, ph. (248) 474-5500 ext. 2225.



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Obituaries

Elaine Louise Ernewein

GARDEN CITY - Elaine Louise Ernewein, 71, passed away on March 6, 2018 in Garden City, Michigan. Elaine was born to George and Lillian Ernewein shortly after her father returned from service in World War II as a wounded veteran. Elaine was an only child and had graduated from high school while living in Detroit. She enjoyed a long, 32+ year career at Ford Motor Company before comfortably retiring.

Elaine was united in Holy Union with Philip Niemann in 2015 at Unity of Livonia. Elaine was known as a kind and generous person who loved animals and cared for the disadvantaged in society. Her greatest passion in life was caring for her family, friends, and cats. She collected anything and everything about cats and always appreciated receiving a cat related greeting card. Elaine was a voracious reader who initialed every book she read before passing along to others.

As she had no children of her own, Elaine loved giving presents to her extended families children and grandchildren every Christmas and on birthdays. She was well liked by all those she encountered in her day to day routines from hairdressers to floral arrangers to car mechanics to name a few. She and her parents were active members in the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Dearborn and she and Philip had most recently attended the Unity of Livonia. As a child growing up Elaine loved her dolls and kept them her entire life. She and her family spent much time with her grandparents Fred and Rose Haskell and Uncle Bill and Aunt Rosemary Vernier with the boy cousins at Lakeville Lake.

As a young adult she developed a confidence in succeeding in life, while always maintaining a priority of looking after her parents as they grew older. Elaine and her parents, while each was alive, had two favorite Michigan destinations a year. In the summer, they would travel to Copper Harbor and enjoy all the scenery and little stops along the way that the Upper Peninsula has to offer. In the winter, they would come to Grayling and enjoy Christmas



with the Haskell family. Presents and lots of cookies would always accompany the Erneweins as they played Santa Claus every year to the Haskell children, grandchildren, and eventually great grandchildren. Elaine also experienced a few enjoyable and relaxing vacations with friends to far away locations during her ambitious years. In the later years of her life Elaine found much comfort in the company of the Niemann family. She enjoyed a special companionship with her dear friend Philip and his extended family. Elaine was fortunate to have a guardian angel in Dan Amstutz who helped look after the wellbeing of both her and Philip as they encountered the pitfalls of growing older.

While Elaine Ernewein was an only child without children of her own, her passing is mourned by a large multitude of family and friends she gave her unconditional love and support to and who will miss her immensely.

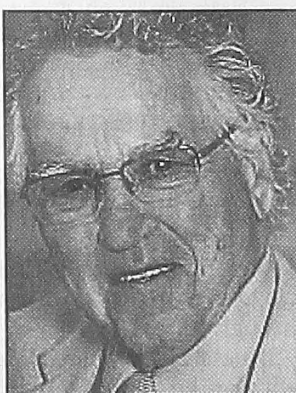
Elaine is survived by her dear friend Philip Niemann and his daughter Ruth (Gary) Holdren; many Niemann grandchildren; cousins Andrew Haskell, Ann (Steve Ukropen) Haskell, Thomas (Tina) Haskell, Rebecca Albright, and Paul (Ruth) Vernier; special family friend Dan Amstutz; and many children and grandchildren of the Niemann, Haskell, and Vernier families. She is also survived by many relations on the Ernewein side of the family. Finally, she is survived by her six cats: Bella, Patches, Daisy, Tippiie, Mickey, and Ginger. Elaine was preceded in death by her parents George and Lillian Ernewein; aunt and uncle Rosemary and William Vernier; aunt and uncle Joyce and Robert Haskell; cousins William Vernier and John Vernier; Philip Niemann's daughter Becky Niemann, daughter Mary Beth Wells, and son David Niemann; and many relations on the Ernewein side of the family.

A funeral service for Elaine was held on March 18, 2018 at the Harry J. Will Funeral Home, Redford Chapel, 25450 Plymouth Road, Redford, Michigan with the Reverend Eileen Patra presiding. Elaine was laid to rest at Woodmere Cemetery in Detroit on March 19, 2018.

Harry J Will Funeral Homes

Jane K. Rutkowski (nee) Zajma

LIVONIA - Born in Detroit on July 11, 1922, Jane died at her daughter's Ann Arbor home on March 21, 2018. She was 95. She lived a fiercely independent life until the age of 93, when she left her home in Livonia to live with her daughter. Jane's friends and family often referred to her as "a force of nature" or "a real piece of work." She could always be counted on to say the unexpected and engage perfect strangers in amusing conversations. She is survived by two daughters, Kathryn (Vince) Scanio of Farmington Hills and Mary Ann (Dennis) Watson of Ann Arbor. Jane was extremely proud of the personal and professional accomplishments of her three grandchildren, Marc (Lisa) Scanio, Stephen (Jennifer) Scanio, and Annemarie (Chris Hock) Scanio. She adored her six great-grandchildren: Oliver, Amelia, James, Josephine, Donovan and Palmer and led each to believe that he or she was her favorite. After graduating from Pershing High School, Jane attended Detroit Business University. During WWII, she employed her secretarial skills for the War Department. She also had fond memories of tending a Victory Garden with her father. In 1948 Jane married Alfred C. Rutkowski, formerly a U.S. Marine Corps naval aviator. The couple lived in Hamtramck, where Jane was involved in many activities at Our Lady Queen of Apostles Church, Girl Scout Troop 1026, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the March of Dimes. Alfred died in 1970 and Jane took over the management of his Detroit business, Largo Lounge Bar and Grill on Livernois, for the next several years. She subsequently worked for Comp-U-Check, Inc. in Southfield, Michigan and the Medical Fitness Center in Livonia. In her senior years, Jane took delight in several cruises and countless trips to Crystal Mountain. Visits to Poland, Italy and Hawaii were among her most exhilarating travels. She loved penny slots, thrift store shopping, and a good cup of coffee first thing in the morning. On her 95th birthday—a glorious summer day—Jane enjoyed a gathering of family and friends who celebrated her "good, long run." She was particularly glad that her special friends, Diane Reckley and Lee Padula, were there to join the party. Jane Rutkowski's sharp mind and intellect never waned. Up until her final days she solved word puzzles, watched "The View", and read the daily newspaper, pointing out articles of interest and noting the bargains in the supermarket circulars. Even though Jane hated to leave this earthly life, her loved ones are grateful that hers was a peaceful transition to the Sweet Bye and Bye. She will be missed like a front tooth. A memorial Mass in her honor will be celebrated on Mother's Day.



Dougals G. Avery

PLYMOUTH - passed away March 17, 2018 at the age of 81. Beloved husband of Janet. Loving father of Denise (Mark) Bruner, Cheryl Geraty-Avery and Steve. Dear brother of Jim and Greg (Nancy). Cherished grandfather of Michael Douglas (Jess) Wiley, Russell, Joel, Marissa (Wes) Wicklund, Alana (Stewart) Duncan and 2 great-grandchildren, Zuri and Micah. Resting at the L.J. Griffin Funeral Home, 8809 Wayne Rd (at Joy Rd.) Wednesday 1-9 pm. Memorial Visitation Thursday at 10:30 am from the Harvest Christian Church, 24400 W. 7 Mile Rd (W. of Telegraph) until time of Service at 11 am Share "Memorial Tribute" with the family at griffinfuneralhome.com.

GRIFFIN
L.J. GRIFFIN FUNERAL HOME, INC.

Logan Harold Mathis

LAVONIA, GA. - Logan Harold Mathis, formerly of Detroit, passed away peacefully at his home in Lavonia, GA, on February 22, 2018. He graduated from Western High School and Wayne State University. He was a veteran of the USAF. He retired from Ross Controls. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at the Lavonia Presbyterian Church. Online condolences may be sent at www.stricklandfh.com.



Phyllis Ann Belletini

- - Phyllis passed on March 15, 2018 at age 55. Beloved wife of David for 24 years. Loving and happy mom of Serafina, Ramo, and Sophia. Loving daughter of the late Gasper Mocerri and the late Barbara Brown. Sister of Paul Mocerri, Lesley (Tony) Clark, Beverly (Branyo) Kasper, and sister-in-law of Dennis Belletini. Surrounded by a large extended family. There was a Memorial gathering on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 with Remembrance's delivered by family and friends, followed by a Memorial service on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at Harry J. Will Funeral Home in Livonia. Memorial donations to: Angela Hospice, St. Jude, or the Humane Society. For more information, please visit www.harryjwillfuneralhome.com

Harry J Will Funeral Homes



Patricia Angela Thoresen (nee Cucchi)

NEW HUDSON - Former resident of South Lyon and longtime resident of Farmington, Patricia died on March 20, 2018 at the age of 87. Memorial visitation will be held at Lynch & Sons Funeral Home, 404 E. Liberty St., Milford on Sunday, March 25, 2018, from 10 AM - 3 PM, with a time of sharing at noon. Memorial contributions may be made in her name to Active Faith Community Service, South Lyon, MI or to Salem-South Lyon District Library, South Lyon, MI. For further information phone Lynch & Sons, Milford at 248-684-6645 or visit www.LynchandSonsMilford.com

May peace be with you in this time of sorrow.



Sylvia Camilleri (Farmilo)

LIVONIA - Former resident of Dunedin, FL, Sylvia passed into God's hands on March 19, 2018. She was born 98 years ago in Malta.

Married to Michael Camilleri (deceased 1991) for 50 years, Sylvia was the loving mother of four children: Mary Camilleri, Edward Camilleri (deceased 2008), Deborah Rais and Gerald Camilleri. She had eight grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren. Her sister, Victoria Caruana and numerous nephews and nieces survive her.

A memorial Mass will be held at 9:30 AM, Tuesday, March 27, 2018, at St. Aidan's Parish, 17500 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI. Luncheon will follow in Church Hall.

Interment will be at Holy Sepulchre, 25800 W. 10 Mile Road, Southfield, MI at a later date.

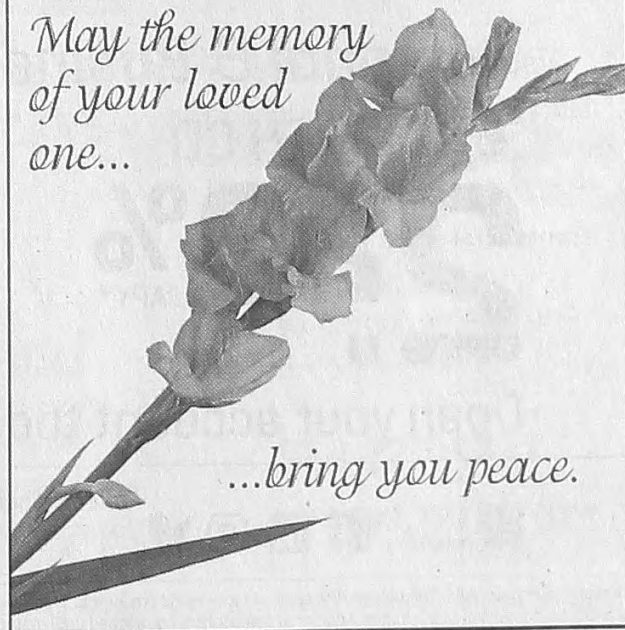
In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Sylvia's name to Angela Hospice, 14100 Newburgh Road, Livonia, MI or online at <https://www.angelahospice.org/donate>



*May
Eternal
Rest
be
Granted
Upon
Them*

*May the memory
of your loved
one...*

...bring you peace.



AREA EVENTS

Send calendar items to LIV-OENewstip@hometownlife.com. Items must be received at least two weeks prior to the event.

Pagan to host coffee hour

State Rep. Kristy Pagan, D-Canton, will hold a coffee hour at 7 p.m. Monday, March 26, at the Canton Administration Building, 1150 S. Canton Center Road. Pagan invites residents to join her to discuss their thoughts and ideas about how she can best represent and address the needs of her constituents.

Pagan encourages individuals to contact her directly at KristyPagan@house.mi.gov or by calling her office at 517-373-2575. To sign up for email updates, go to pagan.housedems.com.

Music at the Elks

Jazz @ The Elks happens 7-9:30 p.m. the last Tuesday of each month at the Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge No. 325. There is a \$10 donation at the door, which includes hors d'oeuvres.

The Dave Bennett Quartet returns Tuesday, March 27, featuring Bennett on clarinet, keyboards, drums and guitar, joined by Cliff Monear on keyboards, Jeff Pedraz on bass and Doug Cobb on drums.

The Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge No. 325 is at 41700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth. For more information, call 734-453-1780, go to www.plyaa325.com or email jazzattheelks@gmail.com.

Michigan Phil 100 Women event

The Michigan Philharmonic will host its third annual 100 Women event, which will focus on the orchestra's successful educational programming, will feature its CLASSical Music Ensemble. The event is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 28, in the PARC Theater at the Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex, 650 Church Street.

The event is catered by Jeff Zak Catering and tickets are \$100. For more information, call 734 451-2112 or go to www.michiganphil.org.

Kandouz exhibit at Village Theater

The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, in Canton will exhibit the collected works of artist Mustapha Kandouz in the Gallery@VT, through March 29. This exhibit, titled "Facets of the Human" features numerous paintings that represent Kandouz's interpretation of the human condition; what it means and how it is shaped by modernity.

This exhibit is free and open to the public from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday, during public performances at the theater and by appointment by calling 734-394-5300. The gallery is closed each holiday.



The Dave Bennett Quartet will play Tuesday, March 27, at the Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge.

For more information, call 734-394-5300 or go to www.cantonvillagetheater.org.

Lions Club Easter egg hunt

The Plymouth Lions Club will hold its annual Easter egg hunt at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 31, on the ballfields of Plymouth Township Park, 46640 W. Ann Arbor Trail. Bring baskets and camera for photos with the Easter Bunny.

VFW fish dinners

The Plymouth VFW Post 6695, 1426 S. Mill Street, will host fish dinners during Lent 5-7 p.m. each Friday through March 30.

Diners can get cod or walleye, baked or fried. There will also be shrimp and chicken strips available. All dinners include french fries, baked potato or mac and cheese, along with cole slaw, a roll and butter. Coffee is on the house, all other drinks are available on a cash

basis. There is also a dessert table and 50/50 drawings.

Salvation Army rummage sale

The Plymouth Salvation Army will hold a rummage sale from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, April 6, at the Salvation Army Community Center, 9451 S. Main Street. Tables rent for \$20. For more information, call 734-453-5464.

Mom to Mom Sale

Canton Leisure Services will host its annual Mom to Mom Sale from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 21, at the Summit on the Park, 46000 Summit Parkway.

More than 60 booths will be on-site, offering great deals on everything that is baby, child or maternity related. Moms will be selling gently used children's clothing and shoes, plus toys, books, DVDs/videos, baby gear, Halloween costumes, water and swim gear and more. Shoppers will also be able to find great deals on furniture, strollers, high chairs and more in the large item area.

Admission is \$2 8-9 a.m. and \$1 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All sales are cash only (note that there is no ATM on the premises). For more information, call 734-394-5460 or go to www.cantonfun.org.

All-sports equipment sale

The city of Plymouth Recreation Department is holding an all-sports equipment sale from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 2, inside the Plymouth Ice Arena, 525 Farmer Street. Each 10- by 10-foot spot is \$20 and space is limited. You may purchase multiple booths and we will ensure that your spots will be next to each other.

Admission is free. For more information or to register, go to www.ci.plymouth.mi.us or call 734-455-6620.

Plymouth H.S. reunion

The Plymouth High School Class of 1963 is celebrating its 55th class reunion Saturday, Aug. 18, with a dinner at The Summit in Canton. Other activities include a golf outing, a night mixer Friday, Aug. 17, at Karl's Cabin and an indoor picnic Sunday, Aug. 19, at the Plymouth Arts & Recreation Complex. For more information, contact Nancy Richard Earle at 734-634-8974 or nancyearle@comcast.net.

Baseline Folk Society

The Baseline Folk Society continues its 2018 season, at The JWH Center for the Arts, Plymouth Community Arts Council, at 774 N. Sheldon Road. Performances include 10 open-mic artists and then the feature act at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$5 at the door, including performers. Sign-up for open mic starts at 6:15 p.m. and ends at 6:40 p.m. Performances are the third Saturday of each month, September through May.

The season schedule is available on its Facebook page. For more information, email bfsresident4u@gmail.com.

Diabetes support group

A diabetes support group meets 2-3:30 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at the Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main Street. Facilitator is Fern Vining, R.N., a diabetes educator. The group is sponsored by the Plymouth Lions Club.

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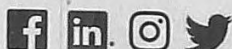
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LO-GM0000552-03

Paying off mortgage is intelligent use of inheritance money



Money Matters

Rick Bloom
USA TODAY NETWORK —
MICHIGAN

Q: I just inherited \$150,000 and my husband and I can't decide what to do with the money. We both work and our salaries more than cover all of our living expenses. We each have a 401(k) plan and some savings accounts. We are debt-free except, for our home. Our current mortgage is about \$140,000 at about 4.5 percent. We plan to work another 10-15 years. When we retire, we each will have a pension. What I want to do with the money is pay off our mortgage. My husband doesn't feel the need to be mortgage-free; he thinks we should invest the money. We've decided that since it is my inheritance, I will make the final decision. I would like to give my husband some good reasons other than it makes me feel good to pay off the mortgage. Can you give me some good financial reasons to pay off our home?

A: First, let me say I think comfort is definitely something that should be factored into the equation. When you take a step back and think about it, the purpose of money is to have comfort. When you have the resources, you can afford some of the "luxuries" of life that make life easier. No one should dismiss comfort as a legitimate use of money. I think comfort is extremely important in making investment decisions. I always tell investors it is important for them to be comfortable with any investment. If you make an investment and that investment keeps you up at night, no matter what the return is, it's not an appropriate investment for you.

In discussing the situation, the first thing I would talk about would be the economics. When you pay off your

mortgage, you're getting a guaranteed 4.5 percent on your money. Four and one-half percent is not a great rate of return, but it is significantly better than rates of return on CDs, money market accounts and U.S. treasuries. In addition, paying off your mortgage is a risk-free investment in that you know the exact rate of return you're receiving and market conditions will not affect your return. If you invest in stocks either individually or through mutual funds, we all know there is risk involved.

I would also discuss with your husband the fact that paying off the mortgage doesn't mean you can't add to your investment portfolio. What I would recommend you propose to your husband is that, each month, you invest the money you would have used to pay your monthly mortgage payment. If you do that, by the time you retire in 10-15 years, you would have accumulated a nice size portfolio.

If your husband mentions that by paying off the mortgage you would lose out on tax write-offs, you can tell him that is not the case. In looking at the numbers you have provided me, whether you pay off the mortgage or not, this year you will more likely than not take the standard deduction. The standard deduction would actually provide you with a larger deduction than if you itemized. You can tell your husband that there's absolutely no tax disadvantage by paying off the mortgage.

Being debt-free can provide many people with peace of mind and, although you can't measure that in dollars and cents, it's a good feeling and it will take some weight off your shoulders.

Good luck!

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



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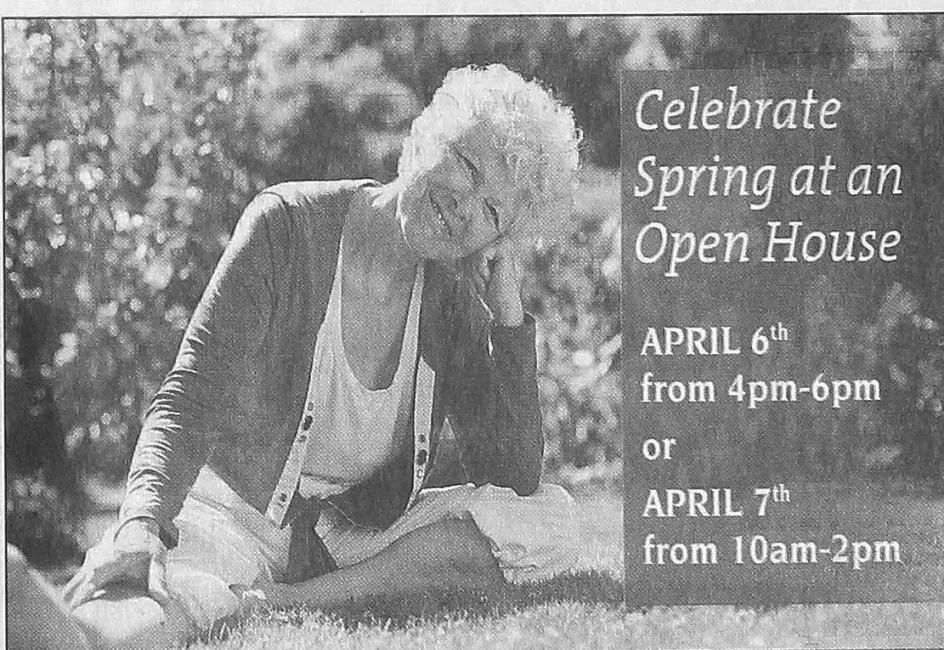


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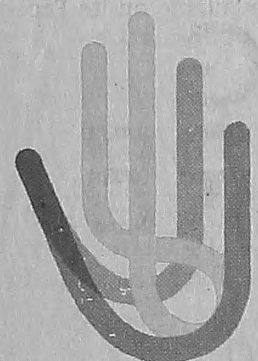
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Love across cultures ... in your own backyard!

Couple turns gun shop into feed store

Sharon Dargay
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Feed store owner Kevin Simmerman of South Lyon says he understands his customers' needs because he's one of them.

"I'm a horse person," he said. "I am the people here. I think like them and I know their business. I'm not a hardware store selling horse feed. If you want horse feed, come to someone who knows what it's about."

Simmerman and his wife Rita own Legend Land, a horse farm, boarding and training facility in Green Oak. They operate Legend Land Feed & Supply in Whitmore Lake and opened their second Legend Land feed store March 2 at 8880 Pontiac Trail, just south of Eight Mile, in Salem Township.

The new store sells feed and other products for horses, goats, chickens, dogs, cats and birds, along with landscape and farm equipment such as manure buckets, spreaders and hay barns. It stocks gear for all riding styles and also sells and installs fencing, plus does excavating, drainage and mud removal.

Customers can pick up from the store, backing their pickup trucks and trailers into Legend Land's loading area for large orders, or request home delivery.

"Before I had a feed business, every Thursday I had to stop and get my shavings. Every Saturday, I spent hours getting my horse feed. I had to go to all these different places and it took a lot of time," Simmerman said. "How can I make this a really good business? Make deliveries. Save these people all that time."

"We deliver to 100 farms in the area, between one and five tons of product at a time. They can call and order everything. We bring it, we put everything away, we leave the receipt in their feed room and we turn out the lights. Does it get any easier than that? It's the next thing to Amazon. We're like Amazon on wheels."

The company delivers farm equipment throughout Michigan and will be one of more than 100 vendors at the Michigan Horse Council's Michigan Horse Expo, Friday through Sunday, March 9-11, in the Pavilion at Michigan State University.

Don Packard, Michigan Horse Council president, recently visited Simmerman's newest store and gave it a thumbs up.

"It's in horse country, where there is stable after stable of horses. It's an excellent location," Packard said.

Simmerman began scouting locations for his second store in 2016, but had difficulty finding the right building with sufficient space. He needed room for customers with trucks and trailers who buy pallets of feed and farm equipment.

"If I could find a drive through, I'd open a drive through, but I can't find one," Simmerman said. "So what we do is back their truck in, put everything in and they drive away. We load it for them. So we deliver to your farm and put it away and, even if you drive here, we'll still load your truck for you. I can't make it any easier."

The 4,000-square-foot building in Salem Township sits on two acres of land, offering an opportunity for expansion and giving trucks plenty of loading room. It's more than twice as large as the Whitmore Lake store.

Simmerman bought the property in December 2017 and spent two months making it ready for its grand opening. He swapped out propane gas for natural gas, removed interior doors and one wall to create a more open floor plan, removed shelves and scrubbed away grime.

"This was a feed store, originally, I was told," he said. "Then it was a farrier school and then a gun store. We're bringing it back to life as a feed store again."

Contact Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com.

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Maundy Thursday - 7pm

Good Friday - 7pm

Easter Sunday
Resurrection Worship - 10am

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HOLY WEEK

At The Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church
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PALM SUNDAY - Sunday, March 25
10:30 a.m. Worship for All Ages
Adult and Youth Choirs, Procession of Children with Palms
Nursery Care Available

MAUNDY THURSDAY - Thursday, March 29
Joint Service of Worship at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
7:00 p.m. Worship & Communion
at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
25475 Five Mile Rd. Livonia, MI
Sanctuary
Nursery Care Available

GOOD FRIDAY - Friday, March 30
Joint Service of Worship at St. Timothy Presbyterian Church
7:00 p.m. Worship
at St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church
16700 Newburgh Rd. MI
Sanctuary
Nursery Care Available

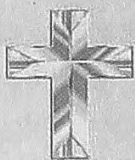
EASTER SUNDAY - Sunday, April 1
10:30 a.m. Worship for All Ages
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GOOD FRIDAY

12:30 pm Passion Play
1:00 pm Stations of the Cross
1:30 pm Good Friday Liturgy
3:30 pm Fish Fry (until 7pm)

HOLY SATURDAY

12:00 pm Blessing of Food
8:00 pm Easter Vigil Mass

EASTER SUNDAY

9:00 am Mass
11:00 am Mass

St. John Neumann Catholic Parish All Are Welcome to Celebrate His Resurrection!

Palm Sunday - March 24th & 25th
4:30pm Saturday 8:30am, 10:30am,
12:30pm & 6pm Sunday

Holy Thursday - March 29th at 7pm

Good Friday - March 30th at 1pm

Basket Blessing - March 31st at 11am

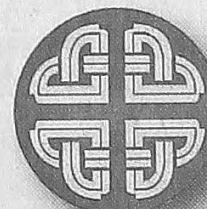
Easter Vigil Mass - March 31st at 8:30pm

Easter Sunday Mass - April 1st 8:30am,
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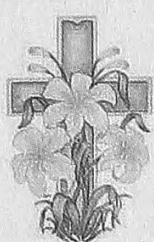
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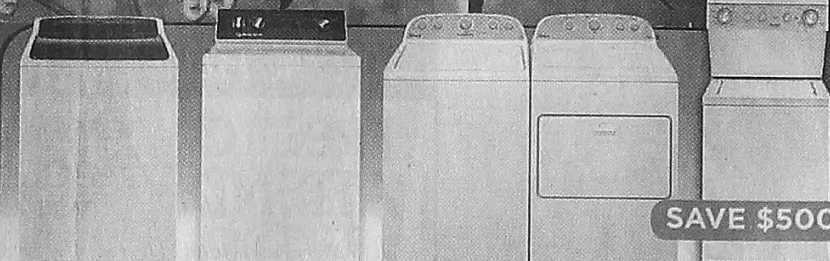
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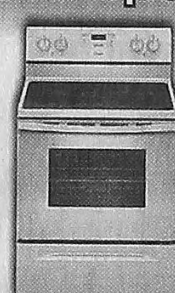
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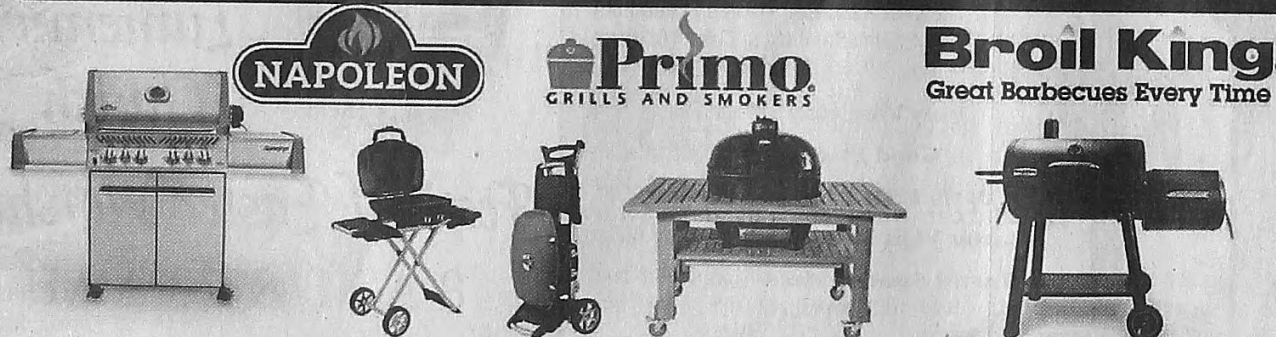
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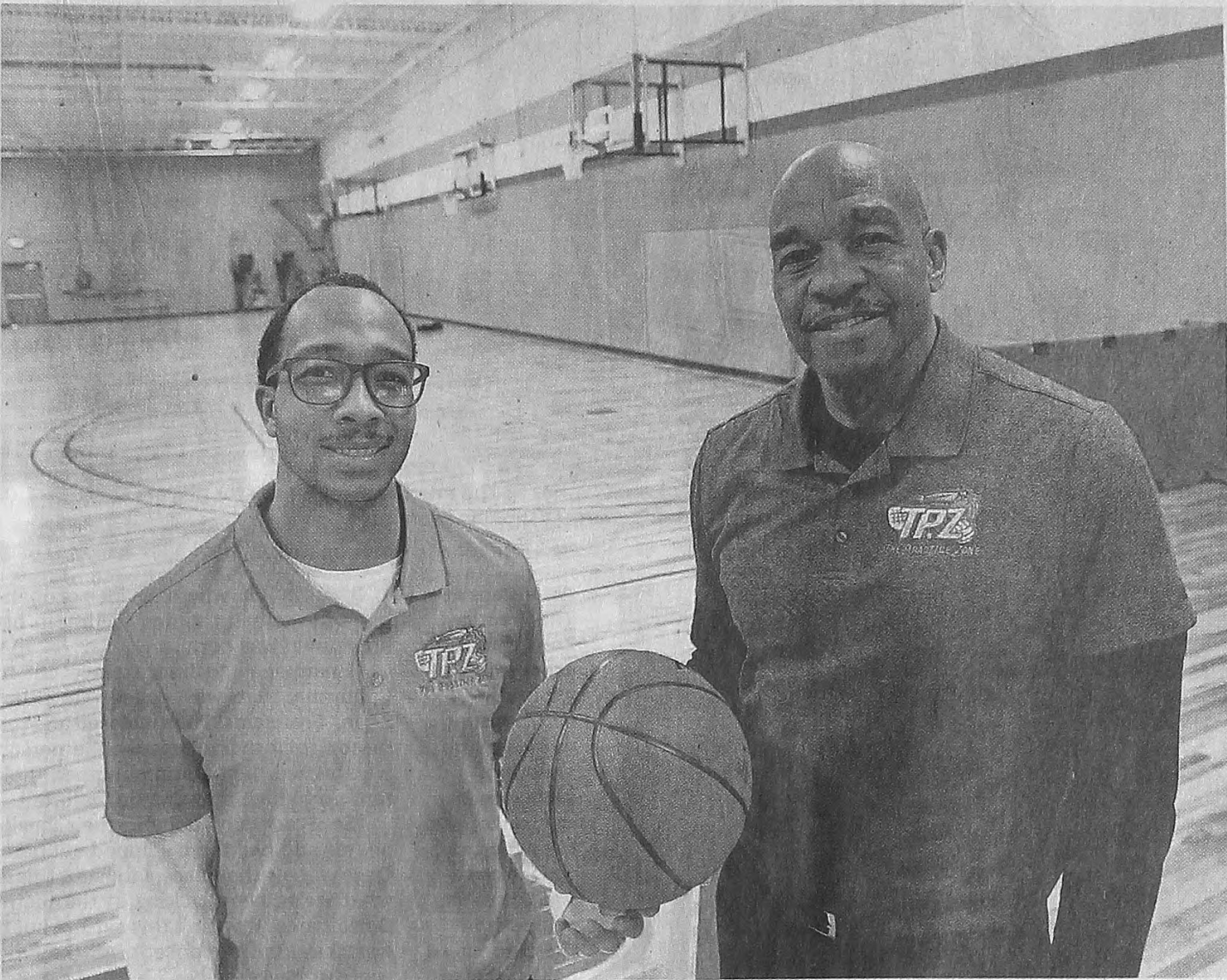
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Sports

YOUTH ATHLETICS



Fred Procter and his son Nolan have opened The Practice Zone, a basketball training facility in Farmington Hills equipped with seven shooting and three ball-handling stations for players to work on fundamentals. DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

GIRLS SOCCER

Kopitz set to make comeback following ACL tear

Brad Emons
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

It's been a long road back, but Audrey Kopitz is seeing the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel.

The senior girls soccer player from Livonia Stevenson is on the comeback trail after suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee during a 2-1 win in the district semifinal last June 1 over host Northville.

Kopitz, who as a junior earned first team Division 1 all-state honors after scoring 24 goals and adding 13 assists, missed the district championship game, a 4-1 loss to Novi.

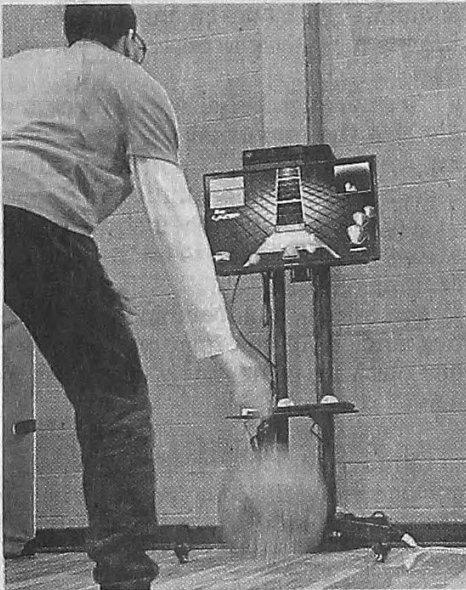
"I feel ready to go. I'm excited and ready to kick it back," said Kopitz, a Madonna University signee who has 54 career goals for the Spartans. "It's been 10 months since I've been in an actual game, really. I had to re-learn how to walk with my left leg again. I was in a huge brace for a couple of months. It's an experience I don't wish on any other player, because it sucks. I was out for so long that you lose your conditioning. You have to gain your confidence back. It's a process, but I'm glad it happened then, because it's my

See KOPITZ, Page 3B



Stevenson's Audrey Kopitz, a Division 1 all-state player as a junior, has recovered from a torn ACL.

IN THE 'ZONE'



An interactive video machine will record dribbling techniques for players to examine and to improve their skills. DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

New basketball training facility opens in Farmington Hills

Marty Budner
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Sports, basketball in particular, have always played a big role in Fred Procter's life.

So it's no surprise he's bouncing into the business world with a basketball training facility.

Procter and his son Nolan have opened The Practice Zone, a multi-purpose training center in Farmington Hills which specializes in basketball, but can also make accommodations for volleyball and pickleball.

"I think, for both of us, sports have been a huge part of our lives and what we've been able to accomplish," Fred

said. "I started to think about a need to do something like this and then it became a passion. This is a way we can make a difference."

"I've been in basketball forever and so this was a chance to kind of give back to sports. But also, it was a chance to promote some good, solid fundamentals for kids and for adults, too."

"There is, to me, a lack of fundamentals in the game. I saw it when I was in L.A. and when I was here in Michigan," he added. "It was a case of watching kids play and noticing they did not have a full grasp of the fundamentals of the game."

The center's official grand opening was Saturday, but the facility recently was made available for area basketball coaches and a few players to examine, about 40 in all. It received positive reviews.

See ZONE, Page 2B

PREP SOFTBALL

Veteran Ashe takes over Mercy program

Marty Budner
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Jerry Ashe has been associated with the Mercy High School softball program in some coaching capacity for the past 22 years, but never as a head coach.

That changes this year.

Ashe, who was officially given the job in January, takes over the program from Alec Lesko, who coached the Marlins to

their only state championship in 2016. This marks Ashe's first job as a high school varsity head coach.

"It's a totally different animal," said Ashe, a 1971 Detroit Catholic Central graduate. "It's a challenge, especially taking over for Alec, because he's so knowledgeable and that kind of thing, but I'm welcoming the challenge."

"One of the things I've learned over



Ashe

the years is to help the kids out. And that's what I've done in an assistant's role. I never really aspired to be a head coach, but the position opened up and we couldn't fill it with anyone that we thought was adequate to do what we think should be done at Mercy.

"So I threw my hat in the ring," he added. "And I got it and I'm excited about it."

Ashe first came to Mercy in 1996, when he was asked to help out then Mercy head coach Jack Falvo, who is credited with putting put the Marlins on the softball map with four straight trips to the final four.

The West Bloomfield resident has served at every level of the Mercy softball program, starting as the middle school head coach, freshman coach, ju-

See MERCY, Page 2B



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Zone

Continued from Page 1B

Former Southfield High School basketball coach Gary Teasley, who is now a part-time physical ed teacher at Saxon International Language Academy Elementary School in Farmington Hills, attended and said the new facility is a much-welcomed opportunity for kids to upgrade their basketball acumen by giving them advanced workout opportunities.

"I think it's a fabulous facility," said Teasley, who also coaches recreational basketball in Southfield. "It's almost like a batting cage for basketball where kids can go and get some work done — do what I consider homework."

"This may be a big thing for kids who are getting started and recognize that they have to get their shots in and get to work. It's a wonderful place to do that and you can see the value in it, because kids can go there in the off-season and get some work in."

"It's very intimate. You can get some half-court work done, which will allow you to work on offense or defense," he added. "You can get creative, even with post shots with two machines. I'm excited about it. It's the first one I've seen like that and it's the perfect scenario."

Working on fundamentals

Nolan Procter was an all-conference football and basketball player at Birmingham Groves who went on to earn a Division I football scholarship at Akron. He later became a women's basketball graduate assistant coach and has worked with AAU and high school players for more than seven years.

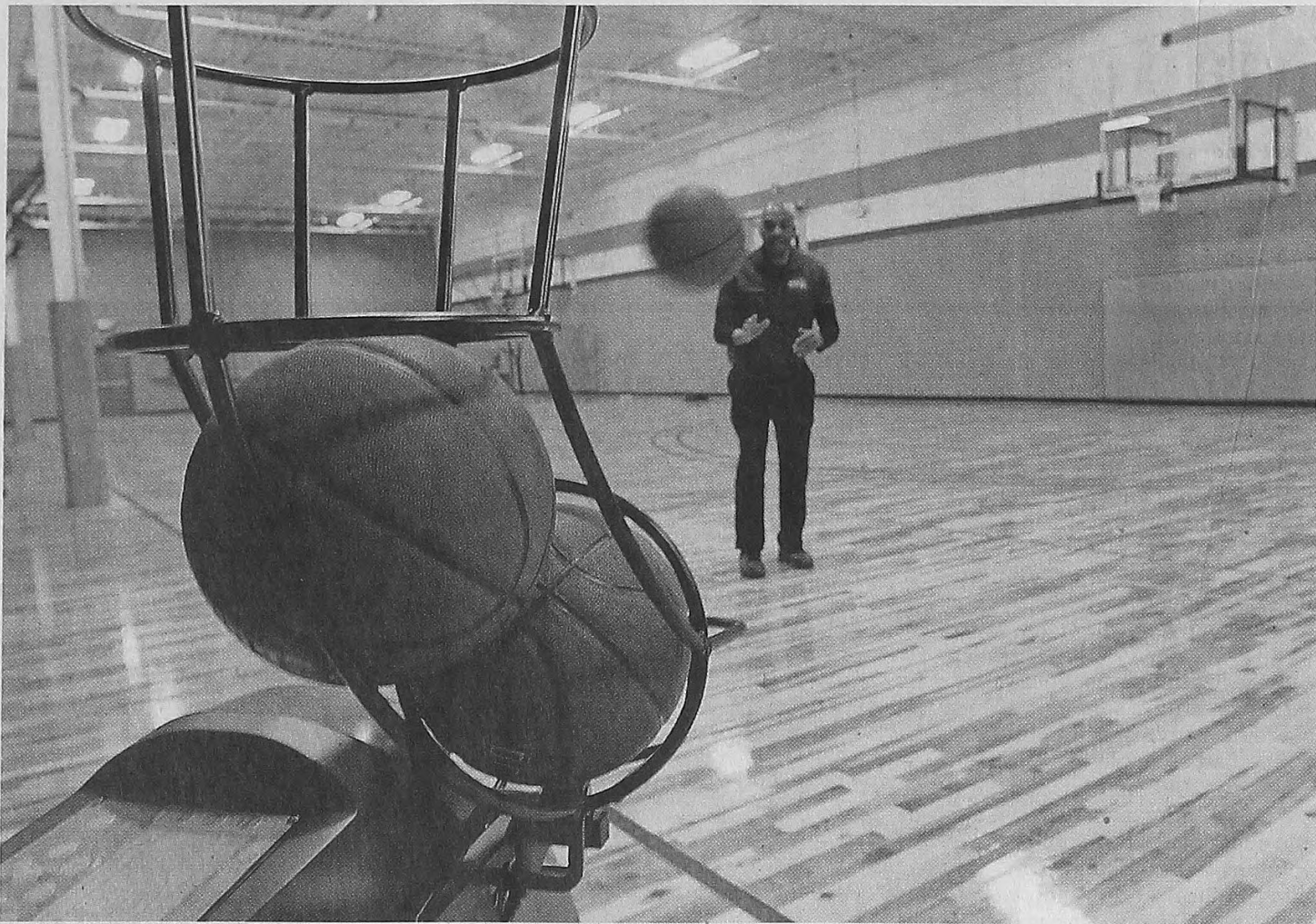
Like his dad, he can't stress enough the importance of learning basketball's fundamentals. And, he said, The Practice Zone will be a perfect start towards that goal.

"I am excited. It's going to be fun working with kids that are playing now," said Nolan, who most recently served as a YMCA sports director in Milford. "I wish I had a place like this to go to when I was a kid working on my fundamentals. That's what's needed now."

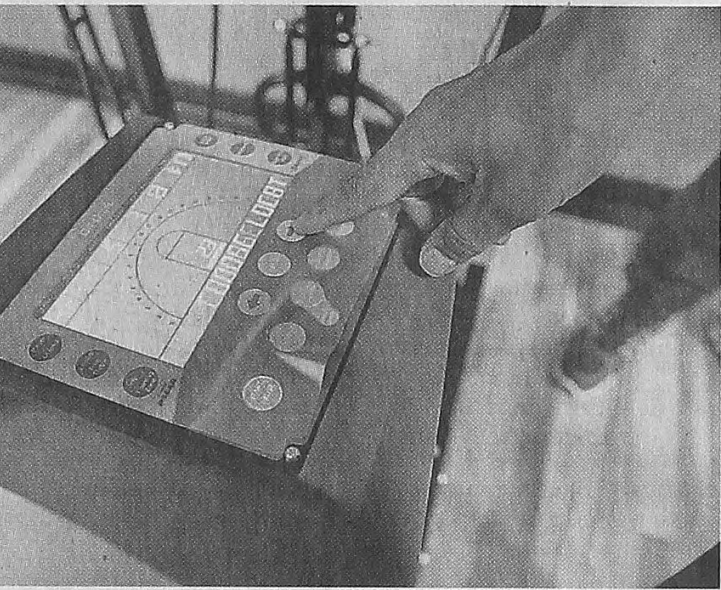
"Kind of the idea that we have is to, essentially, come here and utilize the half court. Whether it's to work on your ball-handling or your jump shot, those things are at your hand here," he added. "The glory about our situation is that we are not trainer-based. People can come here and just rent the gym and work out."

The Practice Zone, located at the southeast corner of 10 Mile and Haggerty roads, is designed to help players improve their basic skills. In other words, like the name implies, practice their craft with the latest technology and under review from the Procters, who have a wealth of coaching and basketball knowledge.

The center includes seven shooting stations — shooters can complete 1,000 repetitions in 30 minutes — conveniently spaced on two half courts. Three ball-handling stations, which allow patrons to immediately review their dribbling with the latest interactive video and infra-red cameras, are available.



Whether short jumpers or long-distance bombs, one of seven stations at The Practice Zone allows for players to automatically receive balls in a variety of shooting positions. DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Attendees at The Practice Zone can program one of seven ball-shooting machines for shooting distances from the basket and the speed at which they want to catch passes from the automated ball-throwing machine.

DAN DEAN | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Impressive basketball resume

The elder Procter has an impressive basketball resume, which spans more than 30 years at the high school, college and AAU levels.

The 1974 Martin Luther King High School graduate played three years of college basketball at Wayne State University. He started his coaching career at Detroit St. Martin De Porres, where he led the Eagles to the 1987 girls basketball state championship. He went on coach the women's basketball teams at Lake Superior State University and the University of Detroit.

In 1997, he leaped over to Birmingham Groves in an administrative capacity — first as athletic director and then as a principal. In 2014, he moved to California, where he served as an assistant superintendent of the Milken Community Schools in Los Angeles.

While it does not accommodate any full-sized court activities, the Procters said the plan is help provide for extensive practice sessions along with three-on-three league play for both men and women. Individual, group and team training will be available while embracing the motto of "practice makes perfect."

"Three-on-three play, for me, is the foundation of understanding the game," Fred said. "Think about it. In a five-player situation, two people can just hide and they don't have to do very much. In three-on-three, there is no hiding, baby. You have to step up and do something."

"Three-on-three helps the kids understand the game much better," he added. "One of the classes we will run will be a three-on-three situation."

It was in L.A. where the idea of opening a basketball training facility in his hometown was born.

"I happened to find a place out in California that was called The Shot Zone," Fred said. "Then it closed and the reason it closed is because the person who owned the building bumped their rent up so high they couldn't afford it."

"So I actually bought their backboards and had them shipped out here. Once we saw that place, I thought this is what we've been lacking in the metro Detroit area. It wasn't this set-up, but it was that kind of concept. All they did was just basketball."

"My thing was, we wanted to do more than that," he added. "So we included the ball-handling, we included the pickleball, we included the classes, because I wanted to work on skills and the kids can kind of put it into play."

In addition to the three sports, The Practice Zone has the goal of one day providing physical education classes for charter school and home-schooled students. There is also an observation deck complete with Wi-Fi for parents or friends to watch the on-court proceedings.

"It's not only the basketball piece, but it's also the opportunity to work with my son," Fred said. "I don't know that there are many opportunities for people to actually work with their child. This is an opportunity for us to do this and it's exciting."

For prices, membership opportunities and more information, call 248-987-6692 or go to www.tpzmidichigan.com.

Contact Marty Budner at mbudner@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @MartyBudner.

Mercy

Continued from Page 1B

nior varsity coach and then advancing to assistant varsity coach in 2004. He has assisted under six different varsity coaches.

Keep winning tradition going

Now he's ready to take over the program, with a goal of maintaining Mercy's winning tradition that includes an impressive 100-18 record the past three seasons. The mark includes a school-record 43 wins during the historic title-winning campaign two years ago.

"I'm looking forward to keep Mercy's winning tradition of competitive softball going," Ashe said. "I think it's been about seven years since we haven't had a winning record."

Last spring, Mercy captured its sixth straight district championship, was the Catholic League tournament runner-up and finished with a 30-12 record.

The Marlins enter this season with a young team composed of only three seniors and one junior. The roster includes 13 players who are either sophomores or freshmen.

Mercy's undisputed leader is senior Anna Dixon, who returns as the team's leading hitter with a stellar .491 career average. The Hillsdale-bound four-year starter batted a team-leading .565 last spring and also led the Marlins in RBIs with 70. She was second in runs scored with 73.



Senior Anna Dixon, a four-year varsity player, owns a stellar .491 career batting average and will be a leader on the Mercy softball team this season. FILE PHOTO

Dixon, who will be a team captain, will catch and play third base. She takes over the catching duties from Dunya Kizy, a returning starter who will miss the season due to injury.

"Anna is very consistent with her bat, although we'd like to see her hit for a little more power," Ashe said. "She is very knowledgeable of the game. She's a very quiet leader, but she sets an example by the way she plays, the way she works hard and the way she helps out the kids."

Sarah Cassidy, the team's only junior, will move from left to center field. The



Olivia Iafate heads a list of three sophomore pitchers this season for the Mercy softball team. MARTY BUDNER

three-year varsity player is a consistent performer with a strong glove (.891 fielding percentage) and good arm.

"I see Sarah stepping up and becoming a leader," Ashe said. "She is very steady with a good arm and, with any speed she lacks, she overcomes by taking charge and going after the ball."

Grace Nieto is a promising freshman with a rich heritage — her sister Kaycee was an all-state pitcher for the Marlins who played college ball at Utah. Nieto, a shortstop, is already committed to play Big Ten softball at Northwestern University.

"Grace grew up with softball in her blood and I think she's going to be a

heck of a shortstop," Ashe said.

Sophomore pitching staff

The pitching staff is young, but returns with a year of experience as each member saw plenty of action last year as a freshman.

Olivia Iafate finished with a 21-7 record and hurled 156 innings with a 3.63 earned-run average and 113 strikeouts. Samantha Shea appeared in 19 games with nine wins. Sophomore Julia Crowley, a transfer from Ann Gabriel Richard, will offer depth on the pitching staff.

"Olivia was our mainstay last year and Sam is our other pitcher and we're really excited about getting them back," Ashe said. "Olivia has good control and hits her spots. She is not a flame thrower, but she hits her spots and her pitches have some movement to them."

Depending on the weather, of course, Ashe will make his varsity coaching debut at the East Lansing Invitational, scheduled for April 14. Mercy's first home game is scheduled for 4 p.m. April 17 against Gabriel Richard.

"We look to get back to the Catholic League playoffs. That's one of our goals," Ashe said. "It's a young team, but I don't think we have a weak player on the roster."

"We really have a good group of kids and I'm looking forward to it," he added. "I'm excited about the season."

Contact Marty Budner at mbudner@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @MartyBudner.

Birmingham Rangers skate to state title

Marty Budner
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Steve Carrel's hockey teams have made it to the state finals in the past, only to come up empty-handed.

This year was different. The 2004 Birmingham Rangers youth hockey team, representing the Birmingham Hockey Association, captured the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association's 2018 14U A Bantam state championship March 11 at the Detroit Skating Club.

"It is probably safe to say it has been over 20 years since a Birmingham team won a state championship," said Carrel, who has coached this core group of players through the Squirt Major and Pee Wee Minor levels in the past. "I think the kids probably don't get the history behind it, but they certainly know how hard it is to win a state title."

"These kids have been playing a long time and they have never won anything like that. We have won three of the last four district tournaments, but we have never been able to win the state title. I would say the players were just so excited to reach that goal."

"There are a lot of teams throughout the state and this is an incredibly large accomplishment," he added. "I'm very proud of them."

The Rangers, a Bantam level (seventh- and eighth-graders) travel team, had a remarkable playoff run as they finished with a 12-1 combined record in district and regional tournament action.

The two-month state tournament journey began in mid-January with district action. The Rangers went undefeated in their eight district games, including a 3-0 shutout over the Plymouth-based Compuware squad in the district final played at the Birmingham Ice Arena.

Winning with a team effort

Carrel's squad then advanced to the seven-team state finals at the Detroit Skating Club, where things started slowly. The Rangers were shut out, 5-0, in their opening game by the host USA



The Birmingham Rangers bantam team captured the MAHA state championship with a 4-1 triumph over the Michigan Ice Hawks.

Eagles.

However, they rallied to win their next two pool-play games — 6-0 over Grand Rapids Fox Motors and 3-2 over Saginaw — to qualify for the four-team final round.

The Rangers defeated Traverse City in the semifinal, 3-2. Birmingham then skated past the Michigan Ice Hawks, 4-1, to claim the historic Tier II championship.

"During the season, you have your ups and downs. That's kind of natural," Carrel said. "But at the beginning of the season, when we laid out our goal, that's when all the players said we'd like to win the state championship. That certainly was a goal of ours."

"We knew we had a really group of kids who really got along and we didn't have a lot of issues," he added. "It was a good group who came together. As one parent said, 'It was like a family.'"

Birmingham's top offensive players

in the state finals were forwards Ashton Trombley (seven goals, four assists) and Ben Pouliot (five goals, six assists). R.J. Carrel, a 13-year-old Covington Middle School student who will be attending Groves High School, had eight assists.

The Rangers had a strong group of defenders, led by Andrew Jacques and Dylan Magdich. The team's two goalies were Kameron Ragon and Trevor Hill.

The rest of the team included Beckett Woodbury (defense, Cranbrook Middle School), Charlie Engelhart (forward, Covington Middle School), Francis Rose (forward), Brady Talaski (forward), Charlie Finsilver (forward, Cranbrook Middle School), Tariq Comai (forward), Connor Gengle (defense), Owen Penny (forward), Kyle Barbour (defense) and Matthew Rickabaugh (forward).

"Everyone was a huge contributor to this championship," said Carrel, who lives in Birmingham. "The one thing about our team this year is that we had

16 shutouts. Those are pretty good numbers. We're a very fast team which focuses on puck possession."

"We're not going to go out there and outwit other teams. That's not how we are," he added. "But we're going to possess the puck, make plays and outwork everyone. That's our goal and we have a great group of players."

The Rangers also skated to second place during the regular season in the Little Caesars Travel League's Yzerman Division with a 10-2-1 record. They started out their season in late July with an overnight training camp at Adrian College and ended it March 11 with the state championship in Bloomfield Hills.

"They put in the extra work this year to get done what they needed to get done," Carrel said. "I was very excited for them."

Contact Marty Budner at mbudner@hometownlife.com.

YOUTH BASEBALL

Little League players learn ropes at fun clinic

Tim Smith
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Henry Wight-Young stepped up to the plate to face the soft-touch pitches of Plymouth Wildcats senior Zach Beadle.

The 10-year-old — one of several players from Plymouth's Precision Patriots Little League baseball team — took a mighty cut and and ripped the rubber-coated baseball past Beadle.

"Hit!" Beadle yelled, before sending another pitch toward Henry. This time, the ball was popped up into the netting. "Out!"

That "hit-hit-out" contest was part of the fun March 17 for some 92 area kids in grades 1-8, during the annual Plymouth Wildcats Baseball Clinic.

"I think it's great that we get experience with all these high schoolers. We're learning a lot," Henry said. "We learned how to tag in a rundown ... like pickle."

"Now we're having a fun hitting game over here. If it's a good hit, it's a hit. If it's a bad hit, it's an out. You keep hitting until make an out."

Station to station

As many as 10 Patriots were part of the fun, with others including Jake Barnes and Evan Jacob, both also age 10.

The batting cage was one of seven stations set up inside the gym; they had just worked with varsity players on base-running.

"I learned how to tag up," Jake said, adjusting his all-sports goggles as he made his way into the cage. "You have to wait until they catch it and then you can start going."

Evan said the extravaganza was the first time he's participated: "It's pretty fun so far."

Make no mistake, the older "kids" were having just as great of a time — even though they'd all rather be outside on the baseball field instead of on a basketball court.

"I came to these clinics when I was in eighth grade," said Beadle, who has recovered nicely from a horrific broken leg sustained during the 2017 football season. "So it means a lot to help the same



The Plymouth Wildcats baseball clinic was a hit both for the varsity team and area youth players. PLYMOUTH BASEBALL

kid that I was, essentially.

"They had the little kids come out here earlier and they had a lot of fun with it. And now it's stepping it up a little bit for the bigger kids and they're having a great time."

Talking baseball

According to Beadle, conversation about baseball tips and nuances proved to be a two-way pipeline.

"They're having a lot of fun," Beadle said. "They're interacting with our players, our players are interacting with them. Every time we try to help kids, they're taking into account what we're saying, they're listening to the coaches. It's going good."

At another station, senior outfielder Chase Every launched high throws toward youngsters — who caught and fired the cloth baseballs back his way.

"I just like coming out here. I've been doing this since my sophomore year," Every said. "Just kind of here to get them better. ... Not so much (working on) cut-offs, just the basic fundamentals, because there's such a difference between where some of these kids are at."

"Some of these kids, like the guy right

here, he knows what he's doing. Some kids are actually learning."

Bigger and better

The entire 2018 Wildcats varsity squad, which was scheduled to open the season Saturday at home against University of Detroit-Jesuit, participated in both sessions (grades 1-4 took part in the morning; grades 5-8 in the afternoon).

Senior Kyle Aniol was among players working infield drills, while seniors Jake Cain and Mitch Harber helped kids on getting a secondary lead, getting back to first on a pick-off attempt and dealing with rundowns.

Between two nets (one for the soft-toss batting practice; the other for hitting off a tee) was a makeshift bullpen with room for three pitchers to throw to catchers.

"It's a great turnout. It matches last year's, which was a record turnout," Plymouth coach Jason Crain said. "Every year, it gets a little bigger for us. This is the fifth one that we've done here at Plymouth."

"We started in the upper 60s and every year it's gotten a little bit more. I

think it's a testament to our varsity boys, because they basically run it."

According to Crain, the varsity players always relish having a chance to connect with youngsters.

"We just think it's part of being part of the community," Crain said. "It's a game that we love; we love baseball. And with kids having so many choices and things to do, we want to make sure they have an opportunity to not only sharpen their skills before they get ready to go outside this time of year, but just to continue to build on what they've been doing all winter."

Every joked about another benefit to taking the time to spend a few hours with some potential future Plymouth Wildcats.

"It gets our name out in the community," Every said with a smile. "So when we go out and sell our coupon books, they recognize us."

After the successful clinic, you can definitely book that.

Contact Tim Smith at tsmith@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @TimSmith_Sports.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Country Day wraps up 13th state title

Marty Budner
hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK —
MICHIGAN

Senior Kaela Webb had the ball and dribbled out the final few seconds of Country Day's Class B state championship game March 17 at Calvin College. When the buzzer finally sounded, she smiled, threw the ball high into the air and was mobbed by her teammates near mid-court.

The celebration convened as Country Day defeated Jackson Northwest, 64-48, to clinch its second straight state championship, third in four years and 13th in program history. The Yellowjackets' year-long goal was finally achieved.

"I just looked up and Max and me, we started smiling because never did we think about winning three state championships," said Webb, who sparked the offense with game highs in assists (seven) and steals (six). "But we came in hungry after our freshman years and we wanted to continue that. That was lost in our sophomore year and we knew didn't want to do that again.

"This team is so special, because we had to find our own identity," she added. "We had to pick up where we left off last year and we knew we had to work even harder."

Like Webb, senior forward Maxine Moore was a freshman on DCD's 2015 state championship squad. The Western Michigan University-bound forward was simply delighted with her third state title.

"I'm so blessed and grateful. I have to give it up to my teammates and especially coach (Frank Orlando) for instilling a tremendous work ethic in all of us," said Moore, who helped lead her team to a 23-4 record. "In practice every day, this was our common goal. This is where we wanted to be.

"And to have three of these — not a lot of people can say that," she added. "And me and Kaela and Destini (Lewis) are so proud of our program, our coaches and everybody."

Used all their weapons

The Yellowjackets needed all their weapons to get past a determined Northwest team that advanced to the state championship game for the first time in program history. The Mounties had a raucous crowd base, which filled half the gym, looking to bring their team that coveted first state title trophy.

Northwest never led and trailed by 10 points after the opening quarter.

However, the Mounties twice battled back to cut into DCD's lead — once midway through the

second quarter, when they got within three points (27-24) and late in the third, when they trimmed it to five (44-39). On each occasion, Country Day showed its championship composure and went on a run of its own to regain control of the game.

DCD's Lewis and Maddie Novak connected on back-to-back triples late in the third quarter to make it 50-39 heading into the final eight minutes. The Yellowjackets wrapped up the win with a 14-9 fourth-quarter advantage.

Powell led DCD scoring

Junior Jasmine Powell led DCD's scoring with 19, including a pair of treys, and a team-high seven rebounds. Novak finished with 13, nine of which came in the second half. Junior forward Adrian Folks finished with 12 points.

Webb, the Providence-bound guard, scored 11 points.

Contact Marty Budner at mbudner@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: @MartyBudner.

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PREP ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



TRAVEON MADDOX, JR.

SENIOR
BOYS BASKETBALL
NOVI WILDCATS

Novi's Traveon Maddox, Jr. has proven this boys basketball season he has ice in his veins.

The 6-foot-5 senior guard, who was voted Hometown Life Prep Athlete of the Week, made the game-winning shot with only 2.8 seconds left to give the Wildcats their first-ever Class A regional title to beat previously unbeaten Ann Arbor Skyline, 61-59, March 16 at Salem.

And he did it again Tuesday night with a buzzer-beater in the state quarterfinal at the University of Detroit's Calihan Hall to knock off Belleville, 75-73, as Novi earned its first trip in school history to the state semifinals on Friday at Michigan State's Breslin Center. (Game time is 2 p.m.)

In the five games during Novi's state tourney run, Maddox is averaging 18.6 points with highs of 22 each against Belleville and Northville (in the district final when he had five dunks).

"He's a special player," Novi coach Brandon Sinawi said following Maddox's clutch performance in the quarterfinal. "I've mentioned it before, he's made big-time plays in big-time games and is a big-time player. He's a Division 1 player who is going to do a lot of great things at the next level."

Maddox, who was also a three-year standout wide receiver for the Novi varsity football team, is headed to play basketball next year at Oakland University.

This season he's averaging 19.5 points, 4.7 rebounds and 3.0 assists per game. He's shooting 48 percent from the field, including 33 percent from three-point range, and is a 75 percent free throw shooter.

"My favorite player is Kobe (Bryant) and I try to pattern my game after Kobe," Maddox said of the

retired Laker great. "So, I watched so much of Kobe Bryant . . . I've seen he plays inside and outside. He can go to the basket whenever he wants to. He can shoot the jump shot whenever he wants to. His pull-up game is nearly unstoppable. And that's one thing I really, really worked on in the off season was my pull-up game, attack the basket a lot stronger and finish over people."

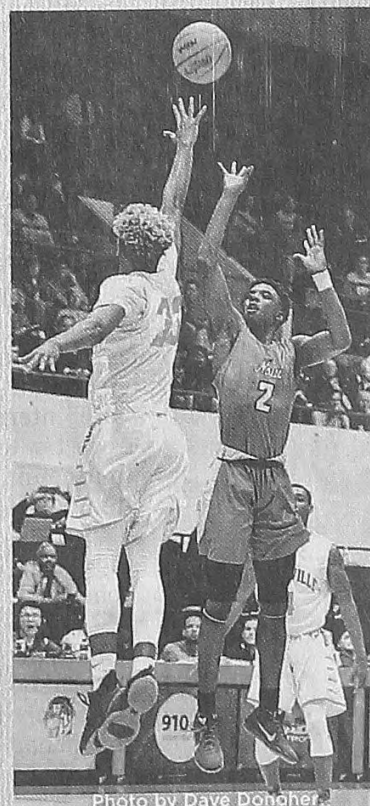
Maddox credits his family and fellow Novi senior classmate Xavier Martin for putting him in the position where he is today.

"I have a sister, but he's my best friend, I call him my brother," Maddox said. "Outside of basketball he keeps me level headed and supports me through everything. I really appreciate him for that. My mom (Alisha Thomas) and my dad (Traveon Maddox, Sr.) have also pushed me all the time."

A preseason top 20 team, Novi stumbled out of the gate going 1-5 at the start, but has now won 11 of its last 12 and stands 17-8 overall heading into the Final Four matchup Friday against Holland West Ottawa (24-2) at Breslin.

And Maddox believes there is one big reason why the Wildcats turned their season around and have earned their first-ever Final Four berth.

"Just getting our brotherly connection, trusting each other," he said.

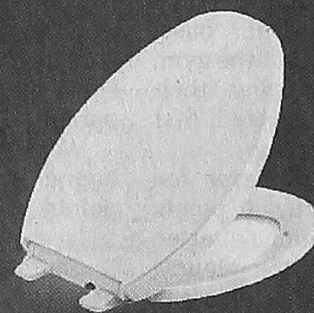


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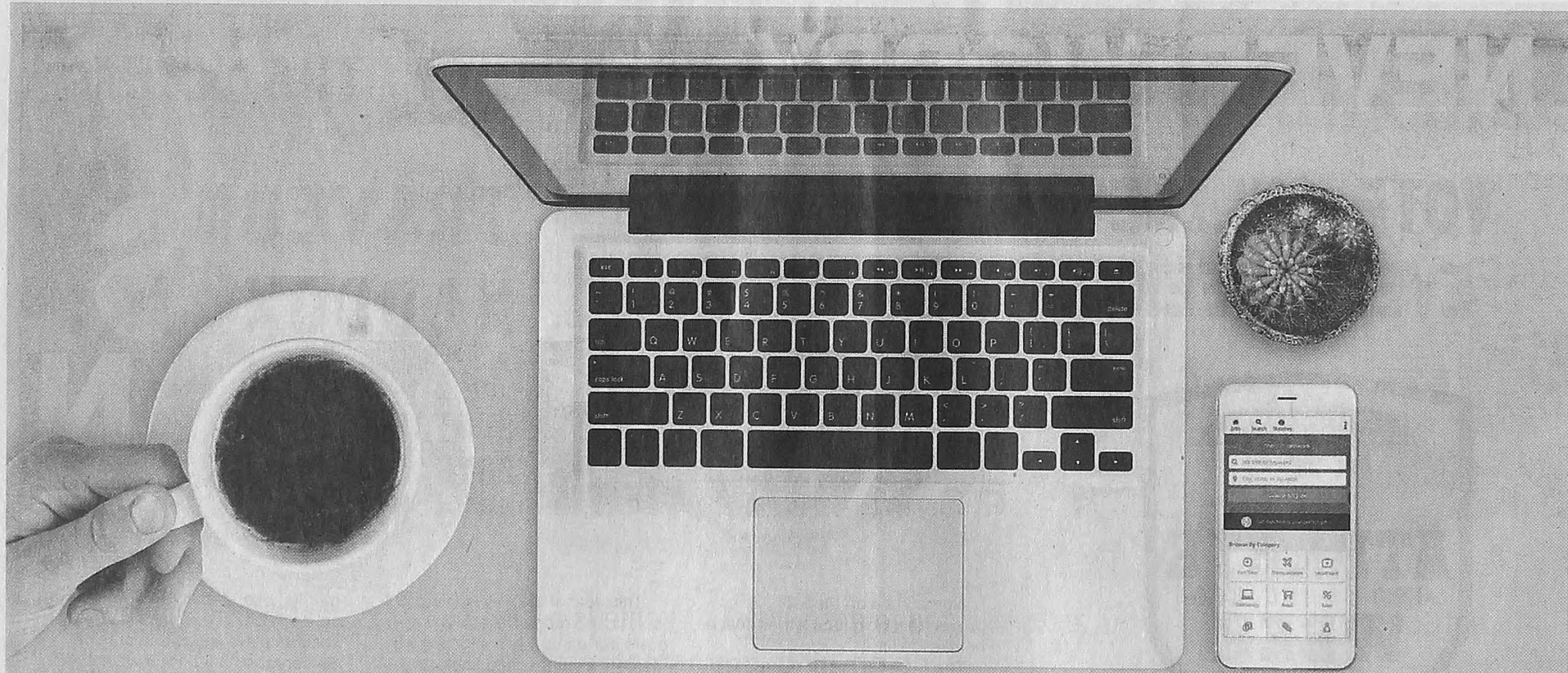
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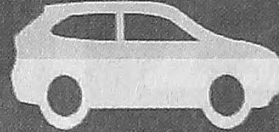
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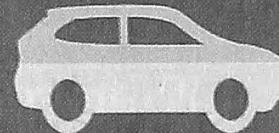
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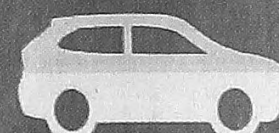
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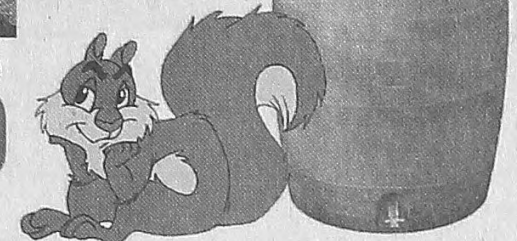


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How to get the best severance package

BY KATE LOPAZE

THEJOBNETWORK.COM

So ... it happened. You've gotten the bad news that you're fired, or laid off. It may feel like the world is ending — or you may just feel shock. Whatever you're feeling, the fact remains the same: You're leaving your job, and not by your own choice. While you do need to embrace that reality, you don't necessarily have to take the severance package that was initially offered to you.

When the worst happens, take these considerations into account to see if you can improve your severance:

Talk to a lawyer

An employment attorney can help you navigate the waters after you've been terminated, particularly if you feel like you were fired without proper cause or you were marched out of the office quickly without the chance to take stock of the situation. This doesn't mean "sue the bastards," but it does mean you should get a professional's advice on whether you do have grounds for a potential suit. An attorney can also help you figure out if you have any wiggle room for negotiation.

Negotiate yourself

Even if you do have an

attorney, it's usually the best course to do the negotiating yourself (unless you are likely to file a lawsuit — then it's best to have your attorney either present or speaking on your behalf). Having someone negotiate for you can escalate the tension, so be careful to keep the tone civil if you're hoping to get a better deal.

Ask for more

At this point, you have little to lose, so you should request a higher severance payment. You should definitely be real-

istic — the payment is unlikely to double or triple from an initial offer, but you may be able to negotiate a lump sum payment versus continued salary or an increase in the total payment.

Nail down insurance information

One of the trickiest parts of unemployment can be insurance coverage, especially if you're used to having solid coverage through your job. The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act

of 1995 (COBRA) means you can likely continue your insurance coverage for up to 18 months, but at your own expense. If coverage is a concern, this is a point to raise with the company. You may be able to get the company to keep paying for your insurance for a period of time after you leave.

Ask about unused benefits

Some companies may offer a check in exchange for unused vacation or personal

time, so be sure to see what's on the table and fully understand what your company's policies are on that front.

Be clear on what's in the severance agreement

Always, always, always read the fine print. Some severance agreements contain "non-compete" language, which limits your ability to go work for a competitive company. Others contain a nondisparagement clause, which means you may have to forfeit your total severance package if you're busted saying anything negative about the company after you leave (even if it's true). Make sure you understand what the conditions are if you accept the severance package.

Once you get the bad news, the important thing is: Don't panic. Or if you do panic, try to get it out of your system and then settle in for the next phase of talking through the logistics of your leaving. Just like negotiating a salary, you may have the chance to improve your package — if you ask for it.

Kate Lopaze is a career advice journalist for TheJobNetwork.com where this article was originally published. She investigates and writes about current strategies, tips, and trending topics related to all stages of one's career.



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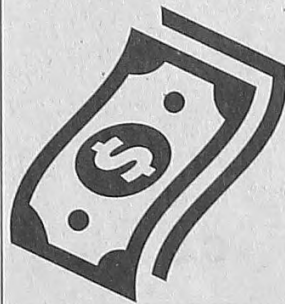
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85 Persian-
founded faith
86 "That feels
go-o-od!"

89 "One-I lama"
poet, grind
your teeth!"?
92 Had some
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south of the
border?
95 Poker cost
96 Norma —
(Field role)
97 Horse's kin
98 Call halfway
to a walk
99 "Delish!"
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101 Twisty letter
102 Far northern
city inhabited
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120 Erwin of
films
121 Young kid

SUDOKU

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

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!

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Y L M A D T R L D A M P E W S A I P A R
M E A N E A C A C P B O S C Y V T C P O
E R N A M I H N R K F L T H U W I A C T
N A D L O C A I Y R O P S S S G Y T C U
T I X Y G O N M A E O I T M U Y R A Y B
K S A T R S G R W R T H C N W C E L O I
C L N I A S I E A U T S U W B K C O P R
O E C C P A S T Y T R N D O S C O G D T
T A H S H K I D A C A O O D M I R H Y S
S E O P I D N F L A F I R K A L G R K I
R C R L C B G R F F F T P R L C O M O D
E O S T X V D E E U I A S A I T T H Y Y
T M A N O F A T C N C L W M N P N B N X
A M X A B X T U B A L E H E N N I A H C
I E N N G H A R Y M Y R V B E A C O N S
L R U E I W D N W U R N U N T H O A W H
E C C T B I M S K P I T U O K C E H C P
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SALE
STOCK
TENANT
TERMINAL

ANSWER KEY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20																		
23																		
30	31	32																
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92																		
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106	107	108																
115																		
122																		
125																		

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

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Car Report

WHAT'S A BUICK? BRAND WANTS TO LEAD WITH ITS ENVISION SUV, OTHER VEHICLES, AS IT PLANS TO LEAVE NAME OFF FUTURE MODELS



By Dale Buss

Say this for Mary Barra, General Motors' CEO: She keeps shaking things up. And letting her lieutenants shake things up.

The latest examples, of all things, are what is happening

to Buick's logo, and how GM is expanding its ride-sharing trials through Maven.

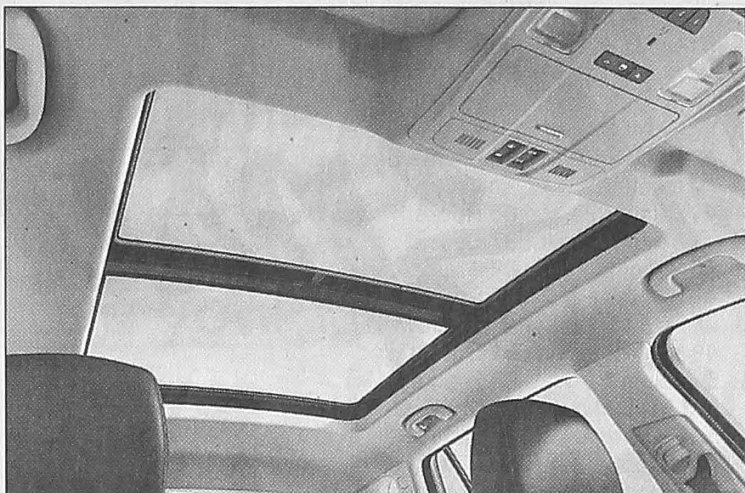
Now consumers who really believe "That's Not a Buick," in line with the brand's long-running marketing campaign, may have a point: Buicks won't say "Buick" on them for much longer.

GM's fabled near-luxury marque will remove its brand name from its 2019 model-year vehicle line, the Detroit News reported, starting with the refreshed, China-manufactured Envision crossover this spring.

What will remain is the Buick tri-shield logo without the name, both on the front grille and on the back of each vehicle.

Buick is counting on research that it conducted at the beginning of 2017 that established 73% of those surveyed were able to connect that logo with the Buick brand without the wordmark or lock-up version of the logo and name to jog their memory, the report said.

GM may feel reassured by what happened when it toyed with the Cadillac logo several years ago, removing the iconic laurel branches that surrounded the Cadillac shield. Consumers accepted it fine.



Envision's panoramic sunroof is a key feature.

Now it's Buick's turn to refresh its visual identity. The brand would like to continue to distance itself from its traditional identification as the vehicle of choice for the over-50 crowd by modernizing its look to appeal to millennials and newcomers to the brand.

As GM has noted, "Nearly 60 percent of all Encore buyers come from outside General Motors. These new-to-Buick customers are increasingly return buyers, with nearly half of them likely to trade in their vehicle to buy another Buick SUV. In addition to attracting new customers to the Buick brand, the 2019 Envision is designed with these existing Encore customers' evolving needs and preferences in mind.

"The Envision's exterior has a sculpted front fascia, new grille and headlamps that align with the new face of Buick. Crisp horizontal lines on the front create a more premium look and feel, while redesigned

taillamps, reflectors and side markers give the back end a wider and more athletic stance. New optional 19-inch wheels provide an expressive and distinct profile.

A new pricing approach is revealing: "All trim levels have been adjusted toward the heart of the premium compact SUV market, further positioning the Envision to capture the interest of loyal Buick owners looking to move up to the next-sized compact SUV and conquest buyers who are considering Buick for the first time."

"The Envision brings a tremendous growth opportunity for the Buick brand," noted Sam Russell, Buick marketing director. "The new pricing strategy not only puts the Envision in the heart of the industry's largest segment, but also better positions it in relation to Encore, our top-selling nameplate."

In recent years Buick has introduced a number of SUVs and crossovers in a bid to appeal to millennials and

to escape that identification, even as it has dramatically overhauled and slimmed down its sedan lineup.

With Super Bowl spots, celebrities such as Miranda Kerr and attractive vehicles ranging from its well-received SUVs to a new convertible, "That's Not a Buick" certainly helped in recent years as the brand survived the remake of GM's brand architecture post-recession and became a dependable player in the company's U.S. lineup.

So far this year, in what is a down year overall for the U.S. light-vehicle market, Buick sales have declined by only about 4%, compared with declines of more than 7% for GMC and nearly 14% for Chevrolet, and a 7% boost for Cadillac.

The brand also is trying to build up its Avenir trim line in its vehicles as an important premium sub-brand, based on a sleek concept vehicle that Buick introduced three years ago. The move basically mimics what GM

has been able to accomplish already with the Denali high-end trim line for its GMC trucks and SUVs; GMCs typically are sold alongside Buicks in US showrooms.

Buick also has become GM's best-selling brand in China—where its cars also don't say Buick—selling 1.18 million vehicles there last year.

In the meantime, GM also General Motors also keeps pushing the envelope in ride-sharing, expanding its Maven service to Austin and Toronto and now, reportedly, launching an Airbnb-style service that will enable car owners to rent out their vehicles when they aren't using them.

Bloomberg reported that GM plans to start a pilot program this summer through Maven that will allow car owners to put their vehicles on Maven's digital platform for other drivers to rent and then share revenue with the automaker. To date, Maven has only rented GM-owned vehicles.



The 2018 Buick Envision has the brand performing well in an important SUV segment.

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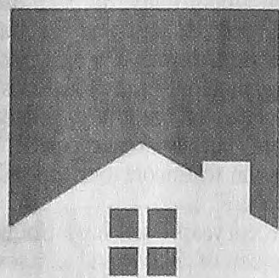
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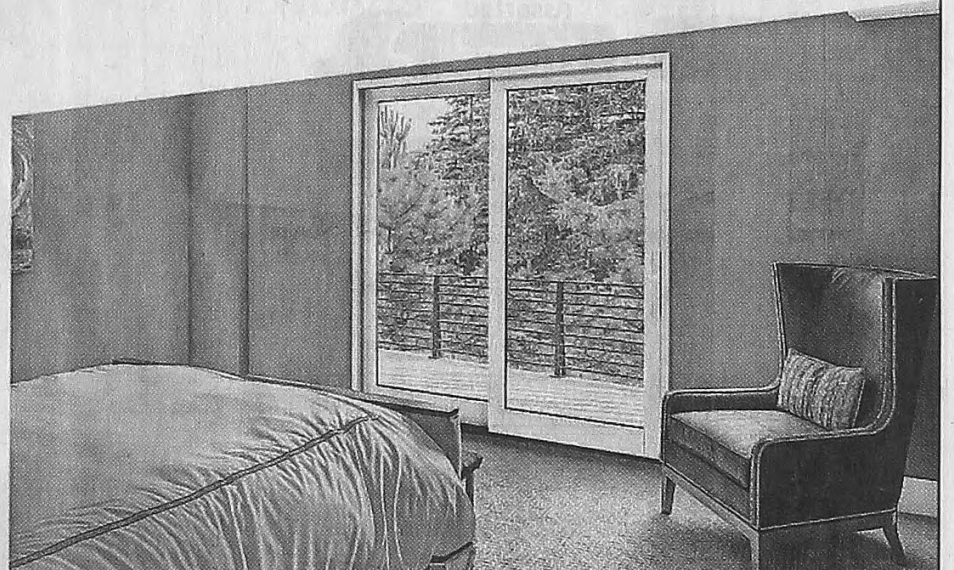


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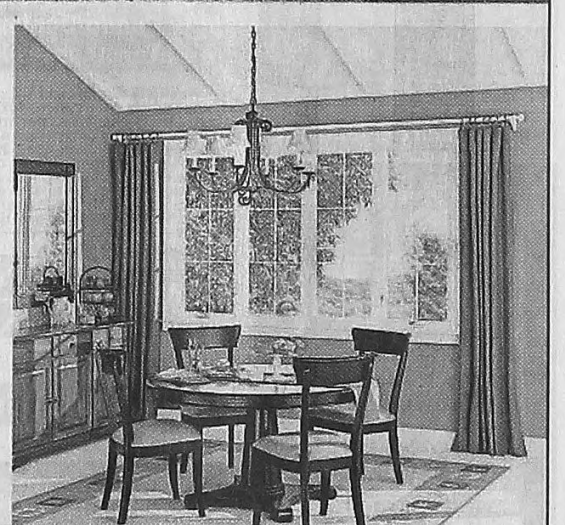
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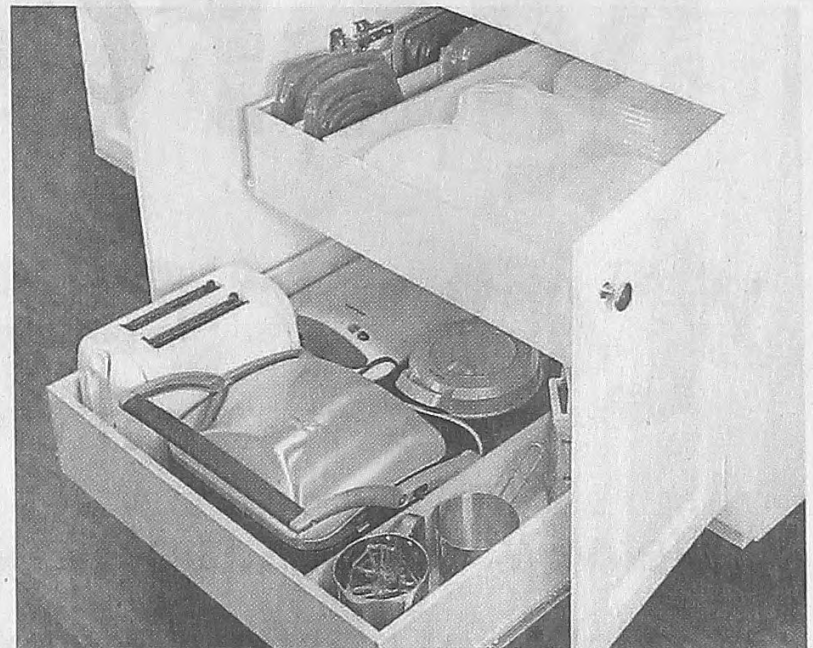
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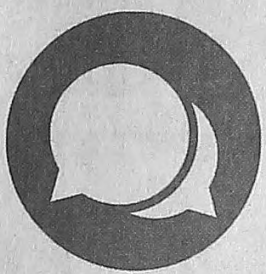
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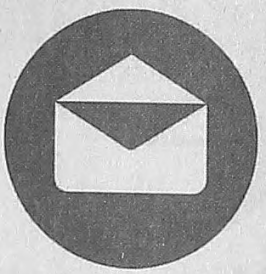
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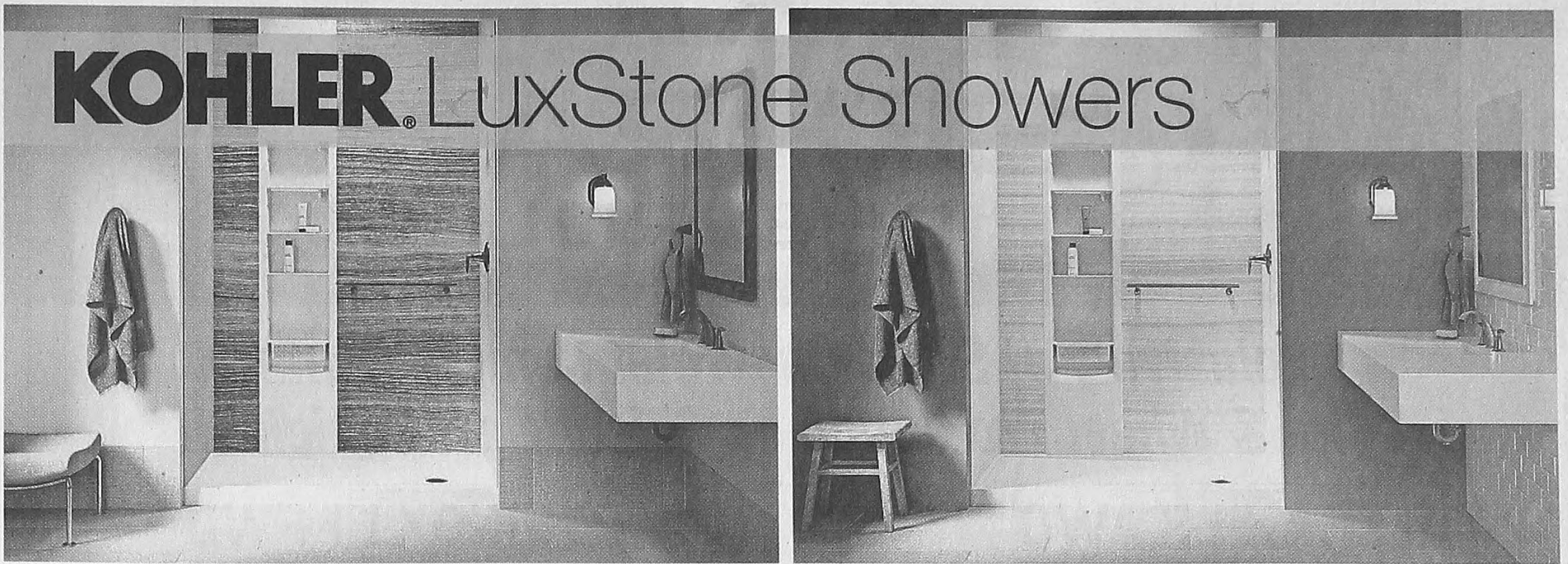
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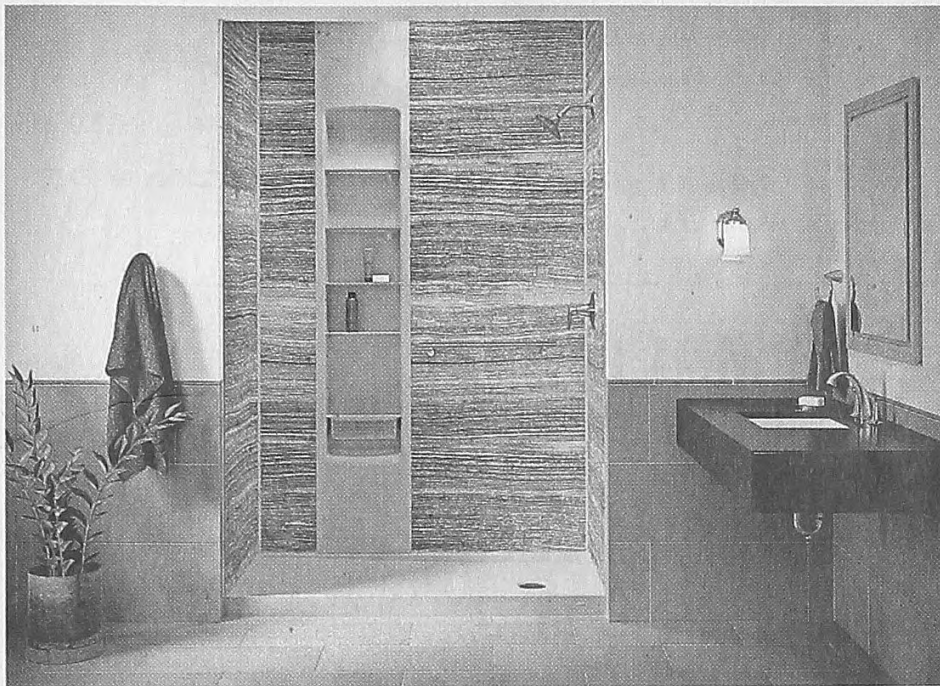
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