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PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Canton supervisor: Art Van has prime location

Williams says if furniture retailer vacates property, the Ford Road space wouldn't remain empty for long

David Veselenak [Hometownlife.com](#)
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Despite the announced closing of Art Van Furniture, Canton Township officials aren't worried that the company's new building will go unoccupied.

The Warren-based furniture retailer announced it would begin liquidation sales at all its stores, which includes the "flagship" store opened in 2018 at 41661 Ford Road.

If the company closes all its stores for good, Canton Township Supervisor Pat Williams said the 70,000-square-foot building just west of Haggerty won't go empty for long.

"We're sorry for the loss of that operation in our community," he said. "We are optimistic that once the dust settles ... that it will be quickly backfilled."

He said as soon as news broke March 5 that the furniture giant would begin liquidating, the township's economic development director, Kristen Thomas, began reaching out to potential future occupants in the case the store shuts down.

The demand for space along the road, he said, remains high.

"Ford Road is very, very popular and we are constantly being pinged for space just like that," Williams said. "I don't expect it to be vacant very

See ART VAN, Page 4A



Zeinab Abboud answers the phone at Zeina's Kitchen, 32758 Grand River in the Village Commons in Farmington.
PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Farmington welcomes new Middle Eastern restaurant

David Veselenak [Hometownlife.com](#)
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Zeinab Abboud has never opened a business before. But that hasn't stopped the Dearborn Heights resident from pursuing a dream.

"I guess every woman should do something special, not just the guys," she said. "Every woman has a power inside."

"When they have a chance to do something, they think up all the power."

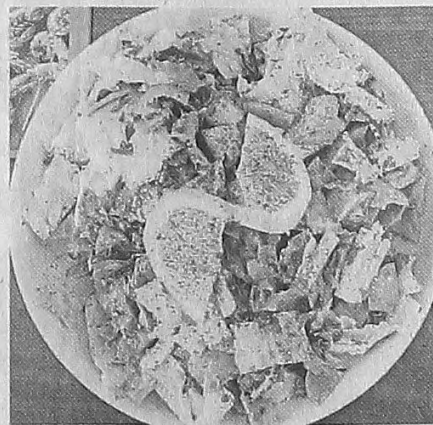
That goal was reached in February, as she opened Zeina's Kitchen in downtown Farmington. Located at 32758

Grand River in the Village Commons shopping center between Farmington and Power roads, the restaurant serving Middle Eastern fare opened after several months of work to renovate the space.

Inside, diners can expect a host of foods from Abboud's native Lebanon, including Fattoush salad, shawarma, and kabobs.

American dishes also dot the menu, including wraps and burgers, and the restaurant also has a breakfast menu. Abboud presses fresh juices at the juice bar, and has desserts such as baklava.

See RESTAURANT, Page 4A



Fattoush salad from Zeina's Kitchen.

McLaughlin, an icon of Canton Twp., dies at 62

Ed Wright [Hometownlife.com](#)
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Melissa McLaughlin, an iconic Canton Township difference-maker, died March 4 following a more than year-long battle with cancer. She was 62.

A lifelong resident of Canton, McLaughlin served as the township's treasurer from 2008 to 2016 and was a trustee for over 20 years.

She was chair of the Canton Downtown Development Authority until December, when her failing health forced her to take a step back.

Her love for Canton was also reflected in her decades-long service to the planning commission and historical commission.

"A township employee said it best earlier today: 'Melissa loved Canton, and Canton loved Melissa,'" said Canton Supervisor Pat Williams. "It's been a very rough day today. There are a lot of hearts that are broken."

"Melissa was ... one of the most accomplished human beings I knew. She was a rock star."

Former Canton Township Supervisor Phil LaJoy said McLaughlin was "Canton through and through."

"Melissa was an incredible person and she loved Canton Township," LaJoy said. "Canton Township wouldn't be what it is today without Melissa."

See MCLAUGHLIN, Page 4A

ELECTION RESULTS LATE

Results from Tuesday's election were not available in time for today's print edition.

Voters cast ballots for their preferred presidential choice and whether they supported a tax to fund the Detroit Institute of Arts. Some communities had local millage or bond requests for schools, refuse and police.

Results of those tax questions, as well as a breakdown on local vote totals for the Democratic presidential primary and DIA request can be found online at [HometownLife.com](#) as well as in the next print edition.

Livonia woman named grand marshal of St. Patrick's Day parade

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As Detroit's 62nd annual St. Patrick's Parade heads through Corktown on Sunday, Livonia resident Peggy

Sullivan Gray will lead the way for all the bands, color guards and floats.

Gray was chosen by the United Irish Societies, which puts on the parade, to be this year's grand marshal. The event is expected to draw nearly 100,000 on-lookers.

"It's just unbelievable," she said. "It's just such an honor."

Gray was born in Detroit after her grandparents left County Galway, Ireland, to make a life in the U.S.

"My grandfather, he just sang Irish songs," she said. "When he was a mailman in Pennsylvania they called him the singing mailman. He would just do his route singing Irish songs, and of course 'Danny Boy' was his staple."

Gray has spent her adult life involved in Detroit's tight-knit Irish community and typically walks in the parade every year in between selling copies of the Parade Times, an event fundraising publication she has worked on for 15 years.

But this year, her day will change.

"I'll lead the parade and then at ... the grandstand and I will cheer on every group as they go by," she said. "That's two hours, and then I'll just go around to different places and be introduced. It's going to be a fun day."

One thing that won't change is Gray's presence at a morning Mass, which she attends on parade day and on St. Patrick's Day itself, March 17.

For Gray, the day is as much about Mass as it is about shamrocks.

"When I was younger we went to Mass and we got to have whatever we gave up for Lent - just one candy bar," she said. "But I always do see it as starting with Mass. It is a saint's day, after all."

When her duties as grand marshal finish for the day,



Detroit St. Patrick's Day parade grand marshal Peggy Sullivan Gray was born in Detroit after her grandparents left Ireland to make a life in the U.S.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Gray said she'll likely go to the local Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) club for some dinner and time with friends.

This year's parade will start at 1 p.m. March 15 at Sixth Street in downtown Detroit and process down Michigan Avenue toward 14th Street. The day also features a Family Fun Zone and the Queen of the Detroit United Irish Societies pageant.

St. Pat's Senior Center Detroit, Bridges Beyond Boxing Detroit, Solanus Casey Center Detroit and UIS Scholarship Fund will benefit from this year's event.

For more information, visit detroitstpatricks-parade.com.

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at stankersle@hometownlife.com or 248-305-0448. Follow her on Twitter @shelby_tankk.

hometownlife.com

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Gov. Gretchen Whitmer speaks Monday at Burton Manor of Livonia.
PHOTOS BY DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Whitmer pitches roads plan during Livonia event

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Regardless of the medium in which they do it, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer told a packed audience Monday in Livonia that residents have always found a way to complain about the state's roads.

She showed a newspaper clipping from 1913 which showcased a resident complaining about the roads.

"How about that for a little perspective?" said Whitmer, a Democrat elected in 2018. "This is a challenge and it's a challenge we must meet."

Whitmer took her proposed budget for next year to Livonia on Monday, where she spoke before a sold-out luncheon organized by the Livonia Chamber of Commerce at Burton Manor.

Whitmer spoke about her plans for repairing the roads across the state, which includes borrowing \$3.5 billion to repair state trunklines.

That plan came after nothing happened between her and the Republican-led legislature last year, after Whitmer proposed raising the tax on gasoline to 45 cents per gallon to help pay for repairs to roads. But that plan was killed by the Legislature.

This year, Whitmer announced during her State of the State address that she would ask the State Transportation Commission to issue road bonds to make repairs on state roads, bypassing the Legislature. Moving in that direction, while not a permanent solution, allows for the state to make some moves toward repair when interest rates are low, she said.

"This is not a solution. This is not new funding. This is financing," Whitmer said. "This is financing so that we can reconstruct the roads that are falling into disrepair at such a rate that we can make people safer."

"We are not going to wait."

She also recapped her proposal regarding the environment, childcare and education, including her plan to increase funding for education and offering \$250 to help reimburse teachers who use their own money to provide supplies in the classroom.

"This budget reflects the largest



Whitmer speaks to Livonia school board President Mark Johnson.

"This budget reflects the largest funding increase for classroom operations in 20 years."

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer

funding increase for classroom operations in 20 years," she said.

Any proposed budget must work its way through the Republican-controlled Legislature before reaching Whitmer's desk to be signed into law.

While the budget was the main topic Whitmer discussed, she took questions at the end and electoral politics was brought up. Her talk came just one day before the presidential primary election in Michigan. She has endorsed former Vice President Joe Biden.

She spoke briefly about her reasoning for supporting Biden, but said that with all the issues this year in some of the first states to vote such as Iowa and New Hampshire, it was time to change the order in which states vote or caucus to decide the major party nominees.

"They shouldn't call the field before we get an opportunity to weigh in," she said. "I don't think that makes a lot of sense. Michigan's voice is incredibly important."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

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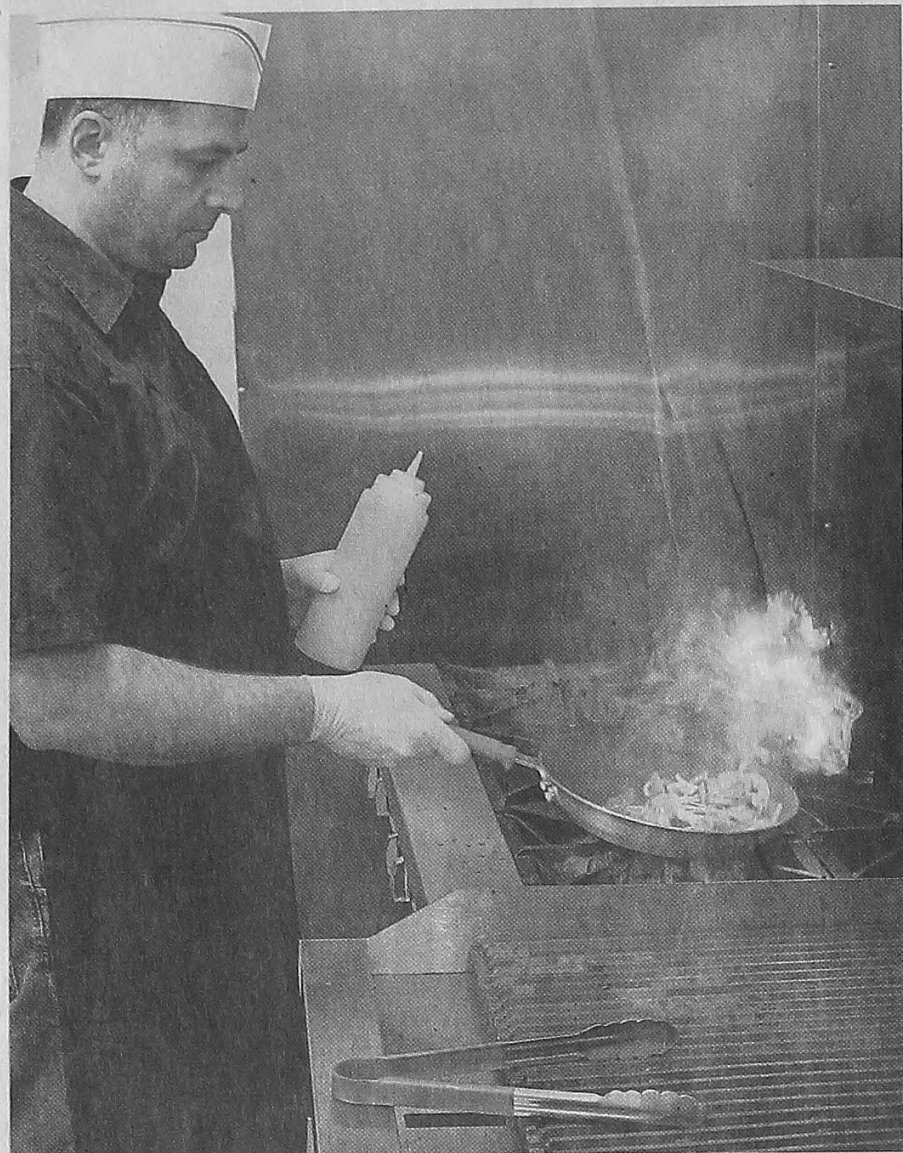
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Zeina's Kitchen chef Mohamad Soueid prepares a dish called ghalaba, made with chicken and sauteed vegetables. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Restaurant

Continued from Page 1A

Abboud moved to the United States several decades ago. After raising two sons who are now grown and living out of the house, she decided to open the restaurant and name it after her mother. "I wanted to do something. For 25 years, I came here, I didn't do anything," she said. "I have time to work outside." She said she wanted to open something a little farther away from home, and discovered the space that formerly

housed a Korean barbecue restaurant. "I like the area," she said. "Nice people, nice city. I'm happy here." The restaurant currently serves breakfast and lunch. A full menu can be found at zeinaseats.com. When diners come in, Abboud hopes to welcome them with the best-quality food she and her chefs can create. "I'm a good cook. When I cook, I enjoy it," she said. "I like the kitchen. "I put all my love into the food." Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

Art Van

Continued from Page 1A

long at all." He declined to share which specific companies the township reached out to, but said there were several that could either occupy the entire building or part of the building. The company is expected to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy sometime next week, according to the Detroit Free Press. The closures will impact all Art Van Furniture, Art Van PureSleep and

Scott Shuptrine Interiors stores. The store in Canton was the first store of its kind in Michigan for the retailer, which invested about \$15 million into the space and make it the first new look for the company in 20 years. Locally, Art Van Furniture has stores in Westland, Livonia, Novi and Bloomfield Township. Art Van PureSleep stores currently operate in Livonia, Westland, Plymouth, Bloomfield Township, New Hudson and White Lake. Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

McLaughlin

Continued from Page 1A

During her tenure as a governmental decision-maker in Canton, McLaughlin played a role in the national accreditation of the township's leisure services and police departments. The township owned a AA bond rating during her stint as treasurer. "Melissa was so well-spoken and well-read," Williams said. "She was never shy about sharing her opinion, but she did so in a positive, enlightening way. She was instrumental in starting (the) Canton historical district, among other projects. "Nobody knew Canton like Melissa." McLaughlin graduated from Eastern Michigan University in 1978 with a bachelor of science degree in education. She was actively involved in the 2018 road millage campaign, which was ultimately approved by Canton voters. Melissa was deeply committed to the Canton community, and passionate about its history. She was a walking, talking encyclopedia of Canton facts and anecdotes. She knew all of the stories, legends and lore of the community, as well as the background of its founding families, and was always willing to share that knowledge. "Melissa was about public service," said David Curtis of the Canton Historic Society. "Her forward visions of do-

ing things to make Canton a better community was sometimes frowned on. Her tenacity convinced people to change their minds. "It is because of her strong persistence we have things like houses in Cherry Hill Village not looking like all the typical colonial houses built in Canton before CHV. She was involved with moving the Bartlett/Travis house, the Cady/Boyer barn and the Clyde Corwin house. These moves resulted in the development of Preservation Park. "But the most outstanding quality about Melissa was she would listen. If you had the facts, she would change her mind." An avid gardener, McLaughlin could always be counted on for providing tips and recommendations for what to plant when, and where. Her own yard was always bursting with color and life from the wide array of flowers, bushes and trees she lovingly cultivated. McLaughlin is survived by her husband John; children Ian (Heather) and Bryan; grandchildren Colin, Jacob, Alex and Gavin; and siblings Tom (Marika) Noakes, Kathy Bonaventura and David Hybert. The family has entrusted care and services to the L.J. Griffin Funeral Home. A memorial service will be held in June at Cherry Hill United Methodist Church. Flags near the township offices were lowered to half-mast in honor of McLaughlin. Contact reporter Ed Wright at ewright@hometownlife.com or 517-375-1113.



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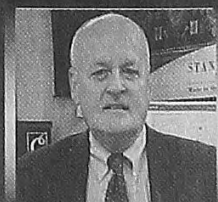
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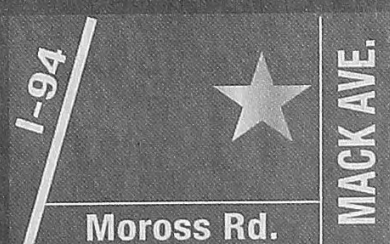


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Schoolcraft will offer scholarships to Art Van employees

The Schoolcraft College Foundation plans to provide scholarships for workers displaced by the imminent closing of Art Van Furniture Stores in Michigan.

On Sunday the company filed for chapter 11 bankruptcy and is currently expecting to lay off over 700 employees in Michigan.

Awards of up to \$500 per student may be used for credit or non-credit courses related to retraining, including career development, entrepreneurship and skilled professional trades.

The awards also may be applied toward the police or fire academies.

A total of approximately \$20,000 is available in scholarships.

"Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Schoolcraft College Foundation is able to help these workers train at Schoolcraft College for new careers," said Schoolcraft College President Conway Jeffress. "Art Van has been an incredibly strong philanthropic partner in Southeast Michigan for many decades, so this is our way of supporting those employees and their families."

For information on applying, email foundation@schoolcraft.edu.



Art Van Furniture sent a letter to the state's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity on March 5 informing them several hundred jobs would be eliminated at several sites as the company files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. JENNIFER TIMAR/LIVINGSTON DAILY

Art Van notifies state about eliminated jobs

David Veselenak
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

Art Van told the State of Michigan how many people will lose their jobs at one area store in light of the company's liquidation.

The company sent a letter to the state's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity informing them several

hundred jobs would be eliminated at several sites across the region.

That includes the store at 27775 Novi Road in Novi, which will lose 67 jobs when the business closes later this spring.

The letter only mentions the stores in Novi, Warren, Grand Rapids, Burton, Shelby Township, Lansing and Alpine as affected, totaling 721 jobs lost as required by

the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, which requires advance notice for large companies planning to let go of a large number of employees.

More employees are expected to lose their jobs than the 721 listed in the letter. The company employs about 3,100 people across the country.

A plurality of lost jobs at the Novi store will be

sales positions. Other jobs being eliminated include managerial jobs, pick-up associates and interior designers.

The company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy Sunday night, claiming between \$100 million and \$500 million in liabilities. It announced last week it would begin liquidation at its stores across the region after several decades in business.

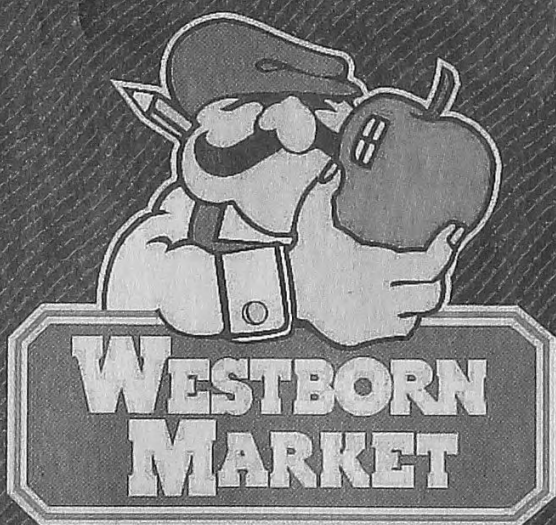
The longtime furniture business was purchased in 2017 by Boston-based Thomas H. Lee Partners from the Van Elslander family.

The letter submitted to the state, which is dated March 4 and was posted online March 6, indicates employees may be finished working before May 31, the date by which it was announced most stores would close.

"All affected employees have been notified of their approximation separation dates; that their separation of employment will be permanent; and they do not have any bumping rights," read the letter to the state. "While an exact date has not yet been established for these closures, it is anticipated that employment terminations will begin to occur on May 5, 2020 or a date 14 days thereafter."

The letter only details the layoffs at a few stores, though Art Van owns several other area stores. Those include Art Van Furniture stores in Canton, Livonia, Westland and Bloomfield Township. They are expected to close in the coming months as a part of the liquidation.

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728.



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Mother, son accused of homicide plead to charges

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

A Farmington Hills mother and son decided not to chance a murder trial and entered pleas last week to lighter charges.

Beatrice Flint-Tennyson, 68, pleaded no contest – meaning she does not accept or deny responsibility but agrees to accept punishment for a charge of tampering with evidence tied to the death of her husband, Darvin Tennyson.

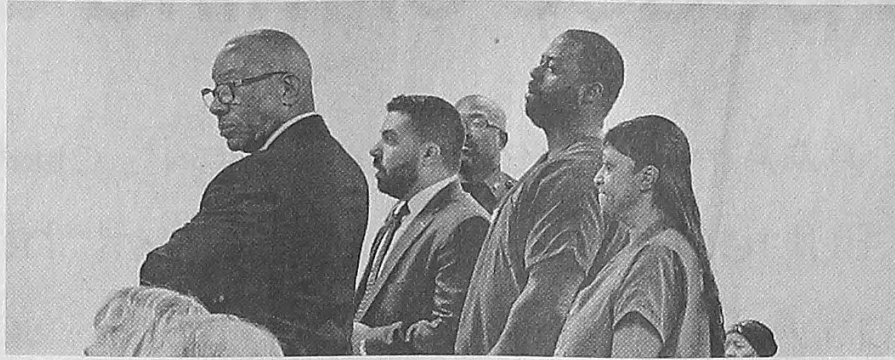
Her son, Delbert Flint, 47, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and being a habitual offender. Court records show convictions of assault, larceny, armed robbery and weapons use.

Both face sentencing later this month. They initially faced charges of homicide, tampering with evidence and disinterring and mutilating a dead body.

A judge bound them over after a months-long preliminary examination.

Their attorneys have protested.

“This case boils down to ‘When in doubt, guess,’” Cyril Hall and Amir Makled wrote in a brief opposing the case going to trial. “All of the alleged evidence provided by the government is nebulous, vague and wholly inadequate to support probable cause to bind over defendants.”



Darvin Tennyson, of Farmington Hills, was found dead in 2016. His stepson Delbert Flint, second from right, and Tennyson's wife, Beatrice Flint-Tennyson, right, who have been charged in the case, entered pleas last week.

HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

Detroit police and firefighters found Darvin Tennyson, a 60-year-old Chrysler worker, already dead in the trunk of a burning vehicle in Detroit on March 20, 2016.

Investigators soon turned their attention to Flint-Tennyson and her son. The burned car was registered to a Farmington Hills address, where it seemed Flint-Tennyson was living.

During the preliminary examination, Franciso Diaz, formerly of the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office, testified that he could not determine a

cause of death.

Diaz said he ruled the death a homicide, possibly by asphyxia, because of the circumstances.

Friends and co-workers said Tennyson worked years at Chrysler's Trenton Engine Plant.

Before dying, he told others that he and his wife were arguing over her son, who had moved in with the couple. The two men couldn't get along and Flint-Tennyson apparently never asked Tennyson whether her child could move in.

Redford man found dead in Lodi Township

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

A mother's search for her missing son from Redford Township eventually led to criminal charges after police learned the 27-year-old had been fatally shot in Lodi Township.

According to the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, the mother called dispatchers around 8 p.m. Feb. 26 to report that she had gone to her son's last known location and was chased away by a gunman whom she said fired several shots.

Deputies began investigating and arrested Kent Charles Hyne, 57, of Waters Road in the township.

They also found the victim, Kyle Christopher Luark, on Hyne's property. They said they learned Hyne shot Luark earlier in the day and Luark died from his wounds.

Hyne told deputies he was defending himself when the shooting happened. He has been arraigned on felony charges for allegedly disinterring and mutilating a dead body and concealing the death of an individual.

Community Engagement Director Derrick Jackson said it looks like Luark had visited Hyne's property in the past to buy medical marijuana.

Those with information can call Crime Stoppers, 1-800-SpeakUP.

Paw-sitive contributions for less fur-tunate

Plymouth auto engineer focused on helping cats

Bisma Parvez Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

By day, she's an engineer, working in the auto industry. By night, she's a fashion designer with an unusual mission: saving cats.

Dina Song has taken her love of cats to a whole new level by creating a business that gives back to cat rescue organizations. She launched Miau Miau Clothing Co., a brand that focuses on cat-inspired, high-quality, trendy apparel and accessories.

Song, 47, has an engineering degree and an MBA. She works full time for an automotive wire harness supplier but started her own business in 2018 because she wanted to advocate for homeless cats and kittens.

Song runs the business out of her Plymouth home as her second job.

“I've worked in automotive ... with all those experiences I thought, ‘You know what? I want to do something on my own,’” Song told the Free Press. “On top of that, I want to make a positive impact and give back and this was my avenue to do it.”

Her first goal was to get to CatCon, a

cat convention in Los Angeles. CatCon bills itself as the biggest cat-centric pop culture event in the world. Since its inception in 2015, the annual two-day expo has hosted over 78,000 attendees.

It all started when Song rescued a litter of kittens and their mother a few years ago in Plymouth.

“We found a kitten at my mom's house and it had to be bottle-fed. A couple of days later, the mother started bringing the other kittens out. Because the other kittens were so fearful, we actually had to trap them.”

“It was a very long process. Going over there every day and setting traps and seeing if we could catch them just to help them.”

Song said the cats had to get used to her so that they would come back to be fed. She learned how to catch cats by watching cat whisperers on social media. She says that rescuing animals can be emotional but gratifying.

“I am committed to grow the Miau Miau Clothing Co. brand and give a portion of our profits to no-kill cat rescues, and feral cat Trap-Neuter-Return programs throughout the United States,” she said.



Dina Song of Plymouth poses with some of the clothing items she makes for her business, Miau Miau Clothing Co. RYAN GARZA/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Obituaries

Helen Gracer (Watson) Reinink

Helen passed from this earth to be with her beloved Bernie on Thursday March 5, 2020. She was born August 29, 1931, the youngest of 5 children and only daughter of David & Alma (Williams-Hawkins) Watson. She married her childhood sweetheart Bernie Reinink on February 17, 1947; he preceded her in death February 17, 2015.

Helen grew up in Garden City MI, where she made a lifelong friend of Mary Jenkins Masters of San Antonio, TX. Helen and Mary loved to travel with their husbands Bernie and Eddie and meet up for vacations whenever they could. While Helen was young and raising her family she was very active in the PTO and their Pinochle Club and enjoyed gardening, canning and visiting with the other mothers in the neighborhood.

In 1968 Bernie & Helen and their family of 5 kids left the suburbs of Detroit for the country life and moved to the Irish Hills where in 1969 they began the business of Bernie's Country Store on US 12. Where she could be found in the gift section or behind the Deli Counter almost every day.

She loved each of her eleven grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren very much - each in her own special way - always leaving a bright red lipstick mark on your cheeks as proof. She was always interested in “What you had been Up To”... And she taught us the love of espresso coffee in cute little cups, crisp chicken patties and ice cream while listening to Paul Harvey on her kitchen AM radio. The pool at the old Farm House on Round Lake Hwy served for many summers, as the gathering area for all of the grandkids. When the kids showered off after the pool they could count on tons of pretty smelling shampoos to try out... and who could forget Grandma swimming late at night with Gidget the dog while still wearing ankle bracelets and pantyhose with her bathing suit. An overnight stay with



Grandma was never complete until she helped you say your prayers as you were tucked safely into bed. But best of all whenever any of us were sick or under the weather... Grandma would always show up with a small bag of goodies from the store... “To make us well”. We will miss you Grandma... Take good care of Grandpa Bernie and King the Wonder Collie!

Helen was preceded in death by her Parents, and Four Brothers and their wives: 1. Jasper (Dub) & Theone Hawkins 2. Curtis & Hazel Watson 3. Charles & Nettie Watson 4. David & Cora (Pat) Watson She is survived by her five children and their families. 1-B. Rex & Susan Reinink of Michigan and their 2 sons: Andrew & Michelle Reinink and their sons Ben and Jacob of Minnesota. Ford & Kristin Reinink and their son Max of Michigan. 2-Barry & Candy Reinink of Michigan and their 3 children: Barry II & Colleen Reinink and their daughter Anna of Idaho. Bert Reinink & Fiancée Danielle Patrick of Michigan and his children: Dustin Reinink of Virginia & Savannah Reinink of Virginia and Michigan. Sally & Tony Vermilya of Michigan 3- Keith & Susie Reinink and their daughter: Jenna Reinink & Jeff Pyciak of Michigan. 4-Roxanne & Terry Helinski of Michigan and their 3 children: Amanda and Bryan Reed of Michigan & her son Gabe Helinski of Michigan. Clint Helinski & Lori Mason of Michigan. Tara & Joshua Nance of Michigan and their daughters Cloie and Zoe. 5-Stacy & George Handy of Michigan and their 2 daughters; Laura & Phil Wright of Michigan and their children Macy & Cooper; Monica Handy & Steev Roberts of New York State and their children Mya, Arden, and Dax. Also Two Brothers-in-law and their wives: John (Jack) & Marilyn (Zschunke) Reinink Robert (Bobby) & Dora (Snyder) Reinink And Sister-in-law: Lucille (Ronald) Neibauer - Reinink As well as many loving Nieces, Nephews and Friends.

According to Helen's wishes her body has been donated to the University of Michigan Medical School. A private family memorial service will be held at a later date. www.PurseFuneralHome.com

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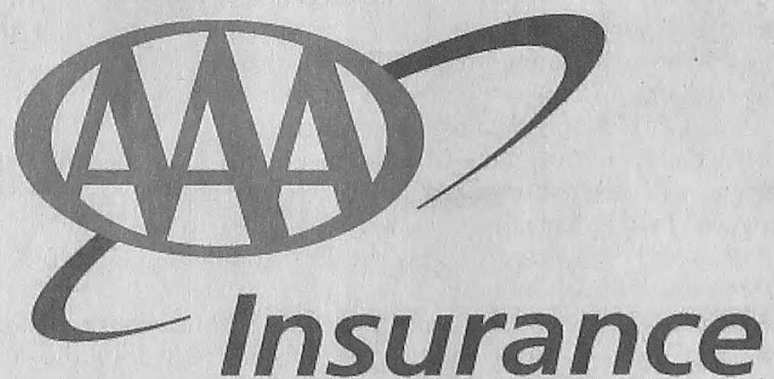
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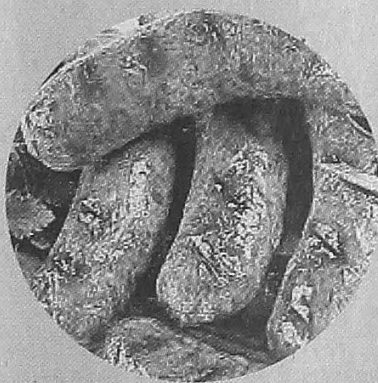
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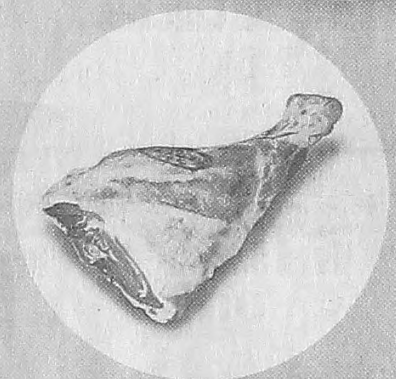
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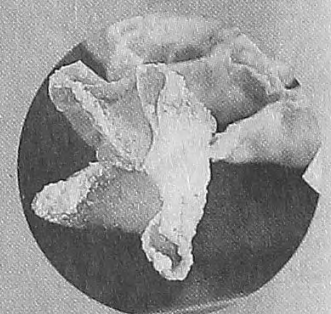
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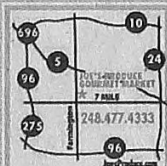
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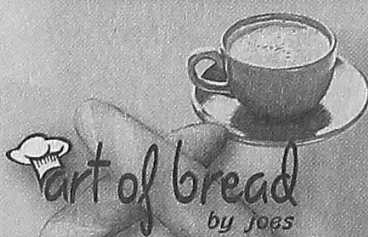
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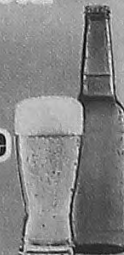
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Sports

Mercy hoops earns 2nd consecutive district title

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Trailing after one half of play against Novi in the district semifinal, Farmington Hills Mercy girls basketball got its act together, beating the Wildcats by nine and advancing to the district final. Facing North Farmington in an at-

tempt to make the regional round of the MHSAA playoffs for the second year in a row, the Marlins got their act together more quickly.

After trailing 3-2 early in the first quarter, Mercy (20-3) never fell behind again, beating the Raiders (12-10), 66-40, in the District 25 final Friday at Farmington.

Winning their eighth district final since 2010, the Marlins were scheduled to take on Detroit Renaissance in the regional semifinal Tuesday at Southfield Arts and Technology.

Here are three takeaways from Friday's game:

See MERCY, Page 3B

Stevenson's season ends in hockey quarterfinal

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Trailing 1-0 at the end of the first period, Livonia Stevenson came out of the locker room fired up, ready to change the narrative of the state quarterfinal against Trenton.

Trenton forward Hunter Allen shook two defenders, getting Stevenson goalie Brendan Stroble to try and trap the puck, leading to Allen poking it in for the first score of the game.

Instead, the Trojans continued their run.

Trenton forward Collin Preston took assists by Allen and Brad Nemeth, giving the Trojans a two-goal lead 37 seconds into the second period, a lead that would remain. Stevenson fell to Trenton, 5-1, in the state quarterfinal at the Dearborn Ice Skating Center.

Earning regional titles in each of the past six seasons, Stevenson extended its losing streak in the state quarterfinals to four, having lost to the Trojans in the quarterfinal for the past three seasons.

"They cashed in on their opportunities," Stevenson head coach David Mitchell said. "We gave them too many opportunities. ... I didn't think we had enough. We just didn't execute as well as we can and as well as we could have."

The Spartans cut their deficit to one at the beginning of the second period, as Tanner Liptow attempted a shot, Ethan Waldo recorded the rebound and the score.

But even with 34 shots on goal, Trenton goalie Jory Cormier, rated as the top goalie in the state, stopped the Spartans' other 33 attempts.

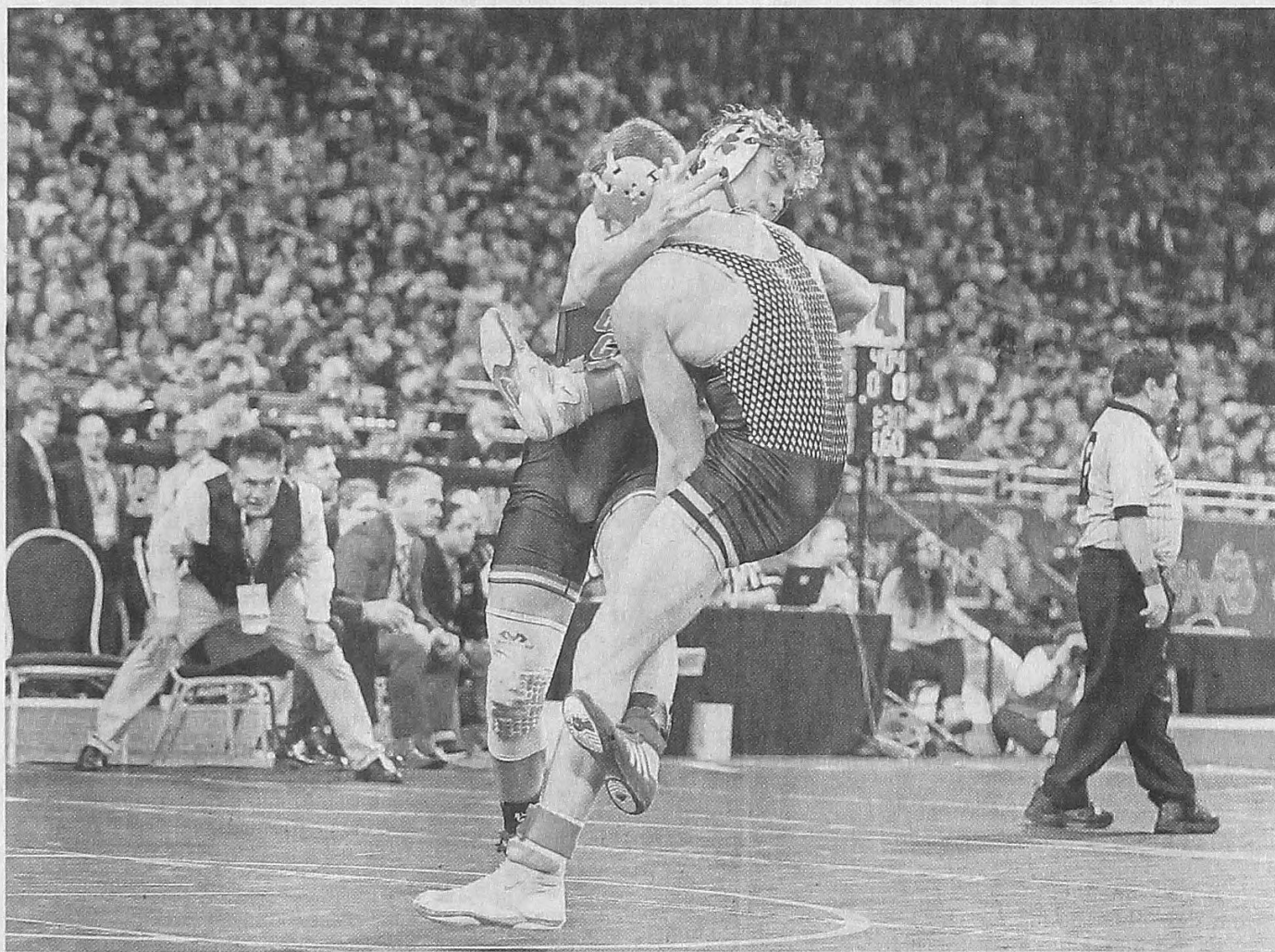
"When you let him see the puck, he's going to make the save," Mitchell said. "He was on tonight. I don't know that we made his life difficult enough. We tried early on, and I think we got to him a bit early, but we only put one past him, and that's what it was."

Coming off a triple-overtime win against Novi to secure the regional title, Mitchell said chasing goals against a goalie of Cormier's caliber is tiring.

The Trojans piled on, scoring two goals in the third period - including an empty-netter by Ethan Holt that secured the four-goal victory.

Stevenson earned a 2-1 win against Trenton on Dec. 14 during the regular season.

"We know that our road is extremely difficult, and people know how I feel about that," Mitchell said. "It struggles when you have the road that you do, year in and year out. It wears on you."



Catholic Central's Derek Gilcher earns his third consecutive individual state wrestling title. COURTESY OF SCOTT CONFER

CC wrestlers win six individual state titles

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Steven Kolcheff walked off the mat to a smattering of boos and cheers, having just earned his second straight state title after defeating Livonia Franklin's Jake Swirple in the heavyweight finals.

Brendin Yatooma, Catholic Central's 215-pound state champion, ran up to him, hugged him and said, "That's how you do it."

Coming into Saturday with nine state finalists, Catholic Central left with six MHSAA individual state titles.

Yatooma, Kolcheff, Josh Edmond

(140), Derek Gilcher (160), Manuel Rojas (189), and Dylan Gilcher (112) each brought home individual state titles for the Shamrocks.

Kolcheff said this is what he expected.

See WRESTLERS, Page 2B

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Stall calls complete Kolcheff-Swirple rivalry

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Steven Kolcheff always knew it would come down to Jake Swirple.

In the quest to earn his second-straight individual state title at heavyweight, the Detroit Catholic Central wrestler had to beat the Livonia Franklin wrestler he had a history with. Kolcheff had to beat Swirple, the one who beat him in the regional to hand him the No. 2 seed in the final tournament.

But when the two stepped onto the mat for the final time Saturday — Swirple pacing back and forth like he did for the majority of the afternoon in the practice area — it was more than for just one state title.

It was a culmination of years of bouts. Years of dueling to determine who the best heavyweight in Michigan was.

It was a rivalry that started in the third grade.

Swirple and Kolcheff both participated in the MYWAY state wrestling tournament — a Michigan youth wrestling association — when they were younger, facing each other in the third grade in the state final.

Kolcheff won the first bout.

When both advanced to nationals, Swirple had a chance at redemption in the national final, but eventually fell short again.

“I was a little upset because I lost to him at nationals,” Swirple said. “But that’s been driving me my whole life. You got to learn from losses, you don’t dwell on them. You learn from losses.”

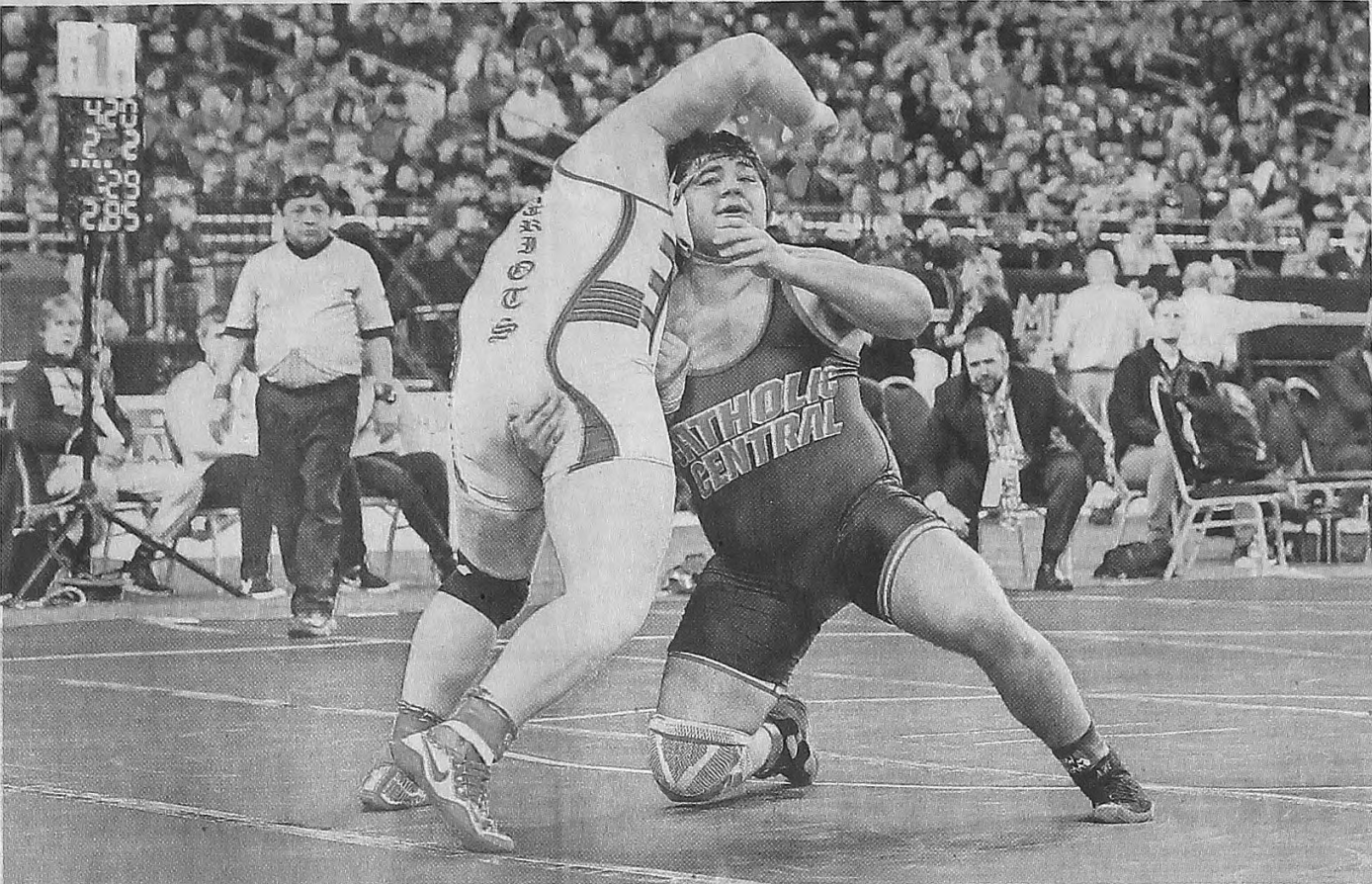
After stepping away from the sport entirely during his middle school years, Swirple returned for Franklin, returning to his rivalry with Kolcheff on the mat.

The two met in the Observerland tournament as Kolcheff won again, defeating Swirple in triple-ultimate overtime. seemingly decided by a coin flip and which wrestler escaped from the other one first.

But in the regional tournament, the narrative shifted.

Swirple defeated Kolcheff in the regional heavyweight final, becoming the No. 1 seed in the state tournament and putting a target on his back as the one to beat.

However, that did not erase the grandiose task the Livonia Franklin senior faced in the final match of his final career, doing something he has never done



Catholic Central's Steven Kolcheff earns a state title at 289 against Livonia Franklin's Jake Swirple. COURTESY OF SCOTT CONFER

twice: beating Kolcheff, who stood between him and his first individual state title.

“He’s like ‘Dad, this is where I want to be, but I don’t have the hardware to prove to people’ — obviously because that was one of his goals,” Matt Swirple, Jake’s father, said. “He wanted to beat Steven.”

Kevin Kolcheff can tell by his son’s body language how he is going to do on the mat. On Saturday, Steven exuded confidence.

Kevin encouraged his son prior to the start of the match, telling him to do what he has always done against the area opponent.

He knew the final would come down to his son and Swirple, but that does not mean he thinks the matchup deems the word “rivalry.”

“I don’t think we have ever lost to him until last week,” Kevin Kolcheff said. “They’re so similar now: Jake’s a big, strong, fast, smart kid. Neither of them are too offensively active. They are defensive wrestlers where they kind of

wait for the opponent to make a mistake.”

That’s exactly what happened in their final bout.

After each wrestler was called for a stall in the first period, neither Kolcheff nor Swirple had the upper hand, leaving regulation deadlocked at two points.

The two met at the center of the mat for the overtime coin flip. When Swirple won it, he celebrated, something that rubbed Kolcheff the wrong way.

However, instead of complaining, he used it to fuel his fire.

“We went to overtime, I went to my corner, and I just said, ‘Let’s go,’” Kolcheff said.

The two hand fought until Kolcheff attacked. Swirple stood his opponent up, saying that he recorded the double-overs takedown in bounds, securing his first ever state title.

Instead, a stall call was given to Swirple. Kolcheff celebrated again.

“It’s tough. I put so much effort into this. So much,” Swirple said. “Coming up that short, just an inch or two short,

it’s gonna hurt for a while, but I just have to keep working.”

As the two passed each other after shaking the hands of the opposing coaching staff, Swirple, straight-faced, yet visibly angry shot past Kolcheff, who, in response, repeated “That’s two, that’s two,” to his opponent’s direction.

While boos echoed through Ford Field, seemingly agreeing with Swirple’s account, Kolcheff raced to the front of the Catholic Central fan section as teammates surrounded him, drowning out the outside with love from the inside of the program.

Afterwards, that’s what Kolcheff said he will remember: the camaraderie of his teammates, his so-called brothers in the midst of dominance.

He won’t remember the response, or Swirple.

Kolcheff will instead remember being a two-time state champion.

“I’m a two-time state champ,” Kolcheff said. “No one can tell me anything different.”

cgay@hometownlife.com

Wrestlers

Continued from Page 1B

“We’re one of the most smart-alec teams in the country, I think,” he said. “We rag on each other all the time, but I truly believe we are a band of brothers. Amazing.”

“Coach (Mitch) Hancock has molded us into something that I don’t think can be replicated anywhere else.”

While Kolcheff expected to win, he did not expect to win in the way he did.

Heading into the overtime period deadlocked at 2, Swirple was called for a stalling call, giving Kolcheff the sudden victory.

“We were hand fighting, he tried going a shot, just rolling on top of him. I actually kind of stood him up, and I got double-overs, and I threw him. I thought I was going to get a takedown because I was in bounds still, then the ref, for some reason, called stalling, saying, I guess, I wasn’t being active,” Swirple said. “I was being active because I was countering his move with the double-overthrow. I can’t explain it in words.”

After both Kolcheff and Swirple were each called for a stall call in regulation during the bout, the Catholic Central senior said it’s something to expect when the two match up.

“To get that stall call, it’s a part of wrestling,” Kolcheff said. “The kid really wasn’t doing anything.”

“I’m happy with my victory. I’m a two-time state champion and nobody can tell me anything different.”

Seven wrestling titles

Derek Gilcher is the first wrestler in Catholic Central history to earn seven state titles — four team state championships and three individual state championships — in his four-year tenure, securing the record with a 3-2 decision against Davison’s Jay Nivison.

“It’s crazy, just adding to the legacy of the program,” Gilcher said. “The accomplishments show all of the hard work from the athletes and the coaches and the fans.”

Edmond joined Derek Gilcher as a

three-time state champion, transferring from Orchard Lake St. Mary’s to Catholic Central prior to the start of his sophomore year.

“Most people know what it’s like to be a one-time state champion. I just got three,” Edmond said. “I think it’s a blessing.”

“I’m just proud to be a part of the CC wrestling family.”

Winning four straight state team titles with 23 individual state champions in the past four years, Catholic Central head coach Hancock is still in shock about what this senior class was able to put together in the past four years.

“It’s a little numbing, you know, to win four titles there and to put this together at the individual state tournament on top of what they did last year. You know, it’s not easy to do,” Hancock said. “Just really proud of them, and I think when they look back in 10 years or when I look back in 10 years, I think we will have greater appreciation of what we accomplished.”

“Right now, it’s all about the process, doing the best that we possibly can, and I think we are still in that moment, but in a bit, I think we will look back and say these were some dominant and special days.”

Brown, Dunbar end careers with wins

Shawn Brown’s focus shifted when he woke up Saturday morning.

After losing to Seaholm’s Jackson Vance in the state quarterfinals, the Westland John Glenn wrestler had revenge on his mind when he took the mat in the fifth-place match.

“I already had my mind made up before the match that I wasn’t going to lose,” Brown said. “It didn’t matter, it’s my last match.”

“So I just got on him, set it up in my favor.”

In the final match of his high school career, Brown earned the pin against Vance, securing a fifth-place finish at the individual state finals at 152.

A year after losing in the blood round of the regional round, Brown was hoping to earn a state championship in his last attempt, but fell short.

Birmingham Groves’ 189-pound

Division 1 state final results

Local wrestlers in the final matches:

103

Third-place match: Drew Heethuis (CC) defeats Patrick Wlodyga (Hartland), 11-1, in a major decision

112

First-place match: Dylan Gilcher (CC) earns the technical fall against Aiden Smith (Brighton) at 4:29, giving the Shamrocks their first state title of the day. Seventh-place match: Josh Mars (Westland John Glenn) loses to Tamin Machart in a 6-2 decision

119

Seventh-place match: Jack Gattoni (Northville) falls against Kevan Troy (Rochester) at 4:17

125

Fifth-place match: T.J. Bunn (CC) earns the fall against Jeremy Sarter (West Bloomfield) at 3:19

130

Fifth-place match: Garrett Engelhart (Livonia Churchill) loses to Blake Noonan (Rochester Hills Stoney Creek) in a 8-0 major decision

135

First-place match: Eddie Homrock (Brighton) vs. Camden Trupp (CC) loses a major decision, 9-0, to Eddie Homrock (Brighton). Fifth-place match: Phillip Burney (CC) loses to Nathan Jerore in a 11-2 major decision

140

First-place match: Josh Edmond (CC) records a technical fall at 5:50, outscoring Zach Johnson (Brighton), 23-7, earning his third-straight state title.

wrestler Damon Dunbar fell short as well, falling to Rojas 1:18 into the state semifinal.

However, in the third-place match, Dunbar ended his career with a win, defeating Rockford’s Cole Gleason in a 7-2 decision.

Dunbar is the first wrestler in Groves history to earn more than 200 wins, leaving with the most pins in school history.

145

First-place match: Marc Shaeffer (CC) falls to T.J. Daughtery (Waterford Kettering), 3-1, with an overtime sudden-victory loss.

152

First-place match: Josh Barr (Davison) defeats Logan Sanom (CC), 5-3, to remain undefeated as a freshman. Fifth-place match: Shawn Brown (Westland John Glenn) earns the pin against Jackson Vance (Birmingham Seaholm) at 4:40.

160

First-place match: Derek Gilcher (CC) earns his third-straight state title, with a 3-2 decision against Jay Nivison (Davison).

189

First-place match: Manuel Rojas (CC) earns his first state title with a 7-3 decision victory against Colin Jagielski (Temperance Bedford). Third-place match: Damon Dunbar (Birmingham Groves) defeats Cole Gleason (Rockford) in a 7-2 decision. Seventh-place match: Isaac Kinne (Lake Orion) earns the fall against Justin Pronyk (Salem) at 4:03.

215

First-place match: Brendin Yatooma (CC) defeats Luke Stanton (Brighton) with a 4-2 decision victory.

289

First-place match: Steven Kolcheff (CC) earns a sudden victory after Jake Swirple (Livonia Franklin) was called for a stall in the overtime period.

“It kind of hit fast,” Dunbar said. “All four years have blown by.”

“When you think of four years, that’s a long time, but it’s really not. It went by too fast. I’m happy with my high school career.”

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Canton's Ben Stesiak wins Athlete of the Week

Andrew Vaillencourt Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Canton senior Ben Stesiak is no stranger to the spotlight.

The three-sport athlete was the football team's quarterback, is the point guard on the basketball team and will play baseball again this spring.

In his team's recent run toward a conference championship, Stesiak has been playing his best basketball and won our Hometown Life Athlete of the Week poll.

Against Belleville in the KLAA semifinal, Stesiak scored 18 points, including a Larry Bird-esque shot at the final buzzer from behind the backboard that won the game. He followed up the miracle shot with a 29-point outburst against Howell in the KLAA title game.

He won our poll by receiving 18,544 votes (48.84 percent), edging runner-up Carson Kleven, a hockey player from Livonia Stevenson, who received 14,643 votes (38.56 percent). Novi hockey's Jay Naidu finished third with 4,342 votes (11.44 percent), while Churchill hockey's Bryant Riley placed fourth and Northville hockey's Nick McInchak placed fifth.

We caught up with Stesiak and asked him some questions:

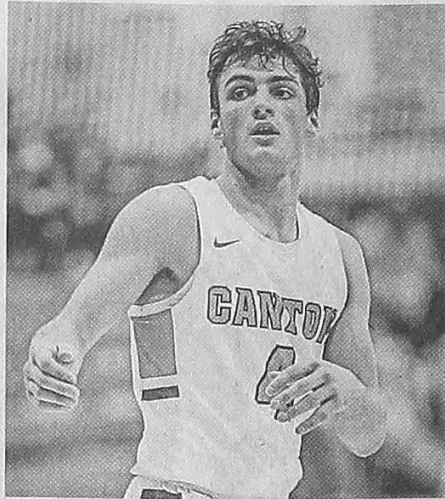
You were on fire last week, with a buzzer beater and then 29 points against Howell. How has your game developed in recent weeks? Do you feel as confident as you have all year?

"First off I would like to thank my family, friends and all of Chief Nation who has supported me. It is an honor to be named Hometown Life Athlete of the Week!

"I feel I have been much more confident with my game recently. I have been able to get to the rim lately, with control. That is the most important part, having control when I drive to the lane is key to my success. Against Howell I was able to see my first couple of shots drop, and that gave me the confidence to keep shooting the ball. I was able to catch a hot hand that game."

Canton has a difficult district ahead, what will it take to win a district title?

"Winning a district has been our team goal since the start of the season. We are



Canton's Ben Stesiak scored 29 points against Howell in the KLAA championship game last week.

going to do anything and everything we can do to make sure that we achieve that goal. It will start with playing for each other. Strong and tough defense has a huge impact and playing good defense has been a key emphasis for our team this year. Our best offense will come once we get stops on defense. If we can play great team defense and communicate together at all times, we will be a tough out."

Who is your favorite athlete and why?

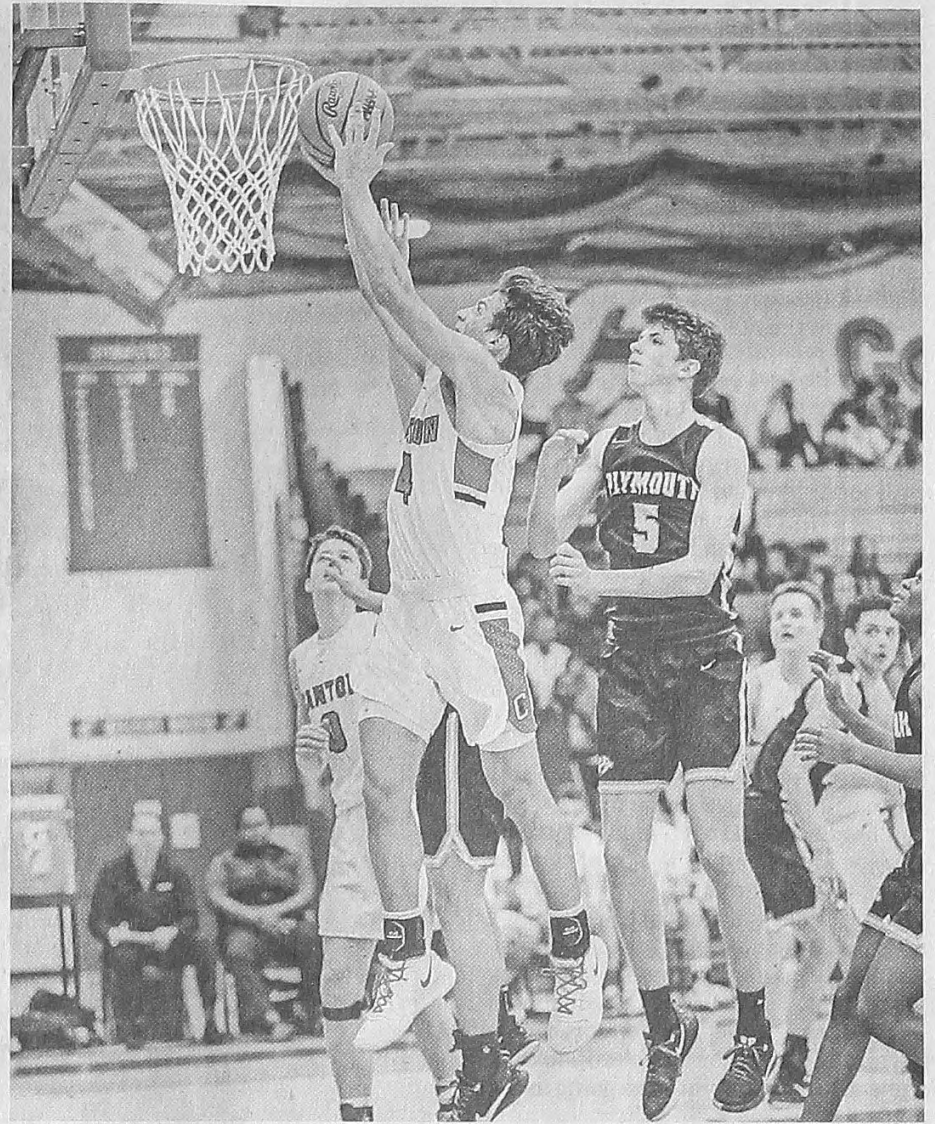
"My favorite athlete has to be Cassius Winston. Cassius is an amazing player and is one of the best guards in the NCAA. The way he can create for himself and his teammates as well, is far superior to most guards."

Cassius is a star player for Michigan State which makes him even more likable to me. The way he sees the floor is comparable to Magic Johnson, and that's saying a lot."

What's your favorite TV show or movie and why?

"My favorite movie is The Sandlot, and it has been since I was a little kid. That is my go to movie, and it will always be a classic for me."

What do you like to do in your free time outside of basketball?



Stesiak hit the game-winning shot at the buzzer against Belleville in the KLAA semifinal. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL VASILNEK/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"Along with basketball I love to play baseball and football. I play all three sports at Canton. Outside of sports, Jake Vickers and Tyler Milo (both of whom are on the basketball team) and I love to go out and fish whenever we can get the chance."

What are your future plans? Are you planning to play a sport in college/ do you know where you're going yet?

"I'm still undecided on college. I hope to

have the opportunity to continue my athletic career at that next level playing baseball. Right now I'm just enjoying the journey of my senior year. More work is to be done."

Contact reporter Andrew Vaillencourt at availlenc@hometownlife.com or 810-923-0659. Follow him on Twitter @AndrewVcourt. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Mercy

Continued from Page 1B

Starting strong

After shoot around, Mercy head coach Gary Morris addressed his team, talking to them about their first-half production through the first two games of the season.

He said he could sense a level of timidity in his players, saying they played tight in the first half of wins against Farmington and Novi.

"Maybe it was the pressure of expectations - I mean, we were the favorite to win this district," Morris said. "So I said, 'Guys, don't let those expectations weigh you down. Let's go out and play the way we have played all year.'"

And that's what the Marlins did.

Holding a six-point lead after the first eight minutes, Mercy used a 13-0 run - with six of forward Julia Bishop's team-leading 16 points - to balloon its lead to 15 at the half.

Morris praised the play of Bishop and freshman Maya White in the paint, also pointing to the Marlins' consistency from the perimeter against the Raiders, hitting five 3-pointers, including three by junior Alexis Butler.

However, Morris focused on what he has built his roster on this entire season: defense.

"From our defense, we generate offense," Morris said. "Yeah, we can generate it off the press, but I think if we play really sound defense, we can generate it that way too in the halfcourt."

Mercy allowed only eight points in the first half with only one North Farmington player exceeding double-digit scoring: junior forward Heaven Rogers, who posted 10 points.

Progress made

One season after finishing with a 2-17 record, North Farmington head coach Jeff Simpson left his team's district final loss disappointed, but satisfied with how far this team has come.

"I can't think of one game where we didn't play hard," Simpson said. "We didn't always play smart, you know. We didn't always take care of the basketball, but at least they always gave me 100 percent effort, and as a coach, that's all I can ever ask."

The Raiders finished the year with 12 wins, overcoming a four-game losing streak at the end of 2019 to come back and win six of their next eight games.



Players on the Mercy High School bench rise to cheer for their teammates on the court. PHOTOS JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



North Farmington's Sela Lefler brings the ball upcourt.

North Farmington finished in fifth place in the OAA White, winning six of 12 games against conference opponents.

The Raiders will lose seven seniors next year, but Simpson will look back on this team fondly as one that overcame adversity and competed in each game they participated in.

"This year, every game we were in, we were fighting," Simpson said. "Every game in the fourth quarter, we were in it. Maybe not today, but we still were coming close."

Rematch

The Mercy team has seen Renais-

sance recently.

After beating Bloomfield Hills Marian for the Catholic League title, the Marlins lost to the Phoenixes, 44-32, in the Operation Friendship game Feb. 27, right before the start of playoffs.

Renaissance has been on a hot streak as of late, winning 21 of 23 games this season, scoring more than 50 points in all but two games.

Bishop realizes that the Marlins are in a unique position. She knows that, with no seniors on the roster, this team will have the opportunity to regroup, no matter the result of the playoff run, and try again in the 2021 playoffs.

However, the mindset, especially against the Phoenixes, who handed the Marlins their third loss of the season, remains the same. Bishop said that Mercy still has something to play for.

"Usually right now, this is where seniors step up most and this is where we fight for those seniors, make sure we make no game their last game," Bishop said. "It's a different mindset now because we're always like we can always fall back to the 'We can do it next year.' That's not the mindset with this team, and we're really focused on this year and this game, one step at a time."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Churchill offense slips in regional final loss

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

For the majority of the season, Livonia Churchill hockey has only gotten stronger as the game has gone on. The Chargers came into the playoffs recording only 11 first-period goals, slightly increasing to 14 in the second and skyrocketing to 45 in the third this season.

That continued March 4 in Churchill's quest to its first regional title since 2018. Despite outshooting Chelsea 19-13 in the first two periods, the Chargers could not convert on a score.

Despite the third-period success throughout the regular season, Churchill (13-12-2) could not convert late, allowing Chelsea to score the deciding goal with 6:09 left in the game, falling to the Bulldogs, 1-0, in the Region 23 final at the Ann Arbor Ice Cube.

Chelsea junior Corbin Steele finished off assists by Devin McIntyre and Tyler Valik, helping hand the Chargers their fourth shutout loss of the season.

However, Churchill showed plenty of promise offensively, recording 29 shots on goal, including 10 in the third period.

Churchill head coach Jason Reynolds said it came down to the lack of success on rebounds off misses.

"The biggest disconnect was that we didn't pick up the second or third opportunities that the goaltender was giving to us," Reynolds said. "We needed more follow-through, we needed more traffic in front of the second or third looks at some of the pucks that were going to the net."

After Churchill botched two open looks — including an open chance by Luc Greener when Chelsea goalie Harrison Lantis was out of goal, trying to reset for the offense — the Bulldogs had their chance in the middle of the second period.

Churchill defenseman Donovan Young was called for roughing, giving Chelsea a two-minute power play. With 11 seconds to spare, Chargers forward Jimmy Targosz was called for another roughing call, giving the Bulldogs another two-minute man advantage, which Churchill survived.

While Reynolds did not see what led to Chelsea's only finish of the day, he said he expects fast and quick slap shots



Churchill hockey could not find the back of the net against Chelsea in the regional final, like Nick Liebau did against Franklin in the semifinal. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

to go in every once in awhile, no matter how the goalie is performing.

"When you have a low-scoring game like this, anything can happen," Reynolds said. "They got the better of it."

Chargers goalie Bryant Riley recorded 21 saves in the 1-0 loss.

Churchill was trying to return to the state quarterfinal for the first time since losing in the Division 3 state final to Detroit Country Day in 2018. After the majority of that team disbanded after that postseason run, Reynolds faced a re-

building process.

Coming off an early exit in the 2019 playoffs, Reynolds said he saw progress from this group, preaching that this group — a group that will lose only five seniors next season — that it must move on quickly.

"This was a team that we started rebuilding last season. We had an early exit last year. This year, we've continued to build through a lot of adversity, a lot of growth," Reynolds said. "I think we managed to take a few steps forward. So

now we have a group that was young last year that will be moving ahead to their senior year this year. We have a good core group returning. I think you just need to stay the course and continue to build. That's all you can really do."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

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Stevenson topples Novi in triple-OT regional

Andrew Vaillencourt Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

It took three overtimes, but for the sixth year in a row, Livonia Stevenson moved on to the state quarterfinals as a regional champion.

After Stevenson defeated both Plymouth and Canton and Novi beat South Lyon, the two KLAA foes battled March 4 at Eddie Edgar Ice Arena in Livonia. It was a much tighter game than expected, going to three overtimes before the Spartans won, 2-1.

Stevenson improves to 25-2-1, while Novi concludes its season at 13-11-3.

"You have to give all the credit in the world to Novi and the type of game they played and their game-plan with coach Mark Velluci," Stevenson coach David Mitchell said. "Their goaltender was unbelievable. It was an unbelievable high school hockey game. Obviously it's really nice to be on this end of it, but you feel for the guys over there. You don't lose sight of that, they played their hearts out."

Here are takeaways from the game:

The game-winner

With each team's season hanging in the balance, tension — but also excitement — was in the air. Both teams played strong hockey throughout the evening.

Novi got the scoring started in the first period, stunning the Spartans just about two minutes into the game. The goal was scored by Nate Erskine and was unassisted.

The goal clearly caught Stevenson off guard. Despite controlling play for most of the period, the Spartans did have some sloppy moments.

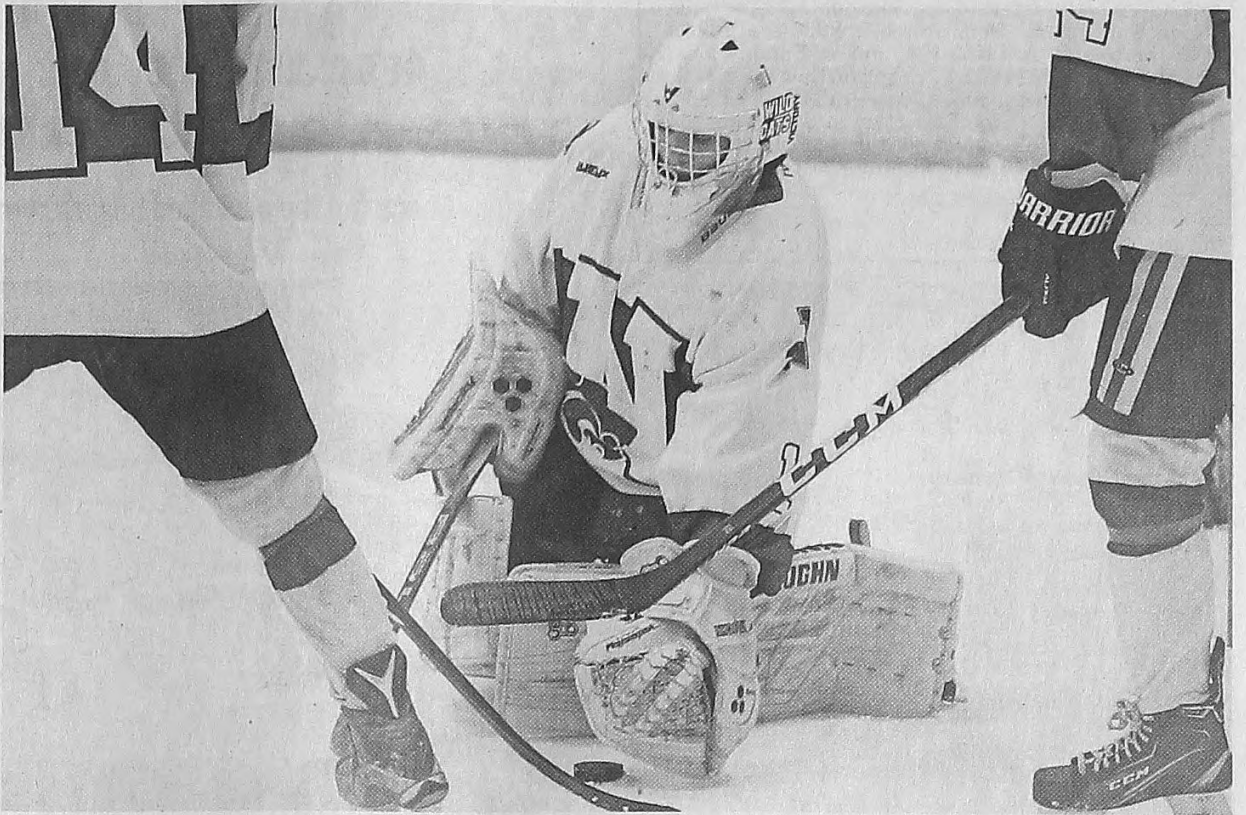
They didn't stay shut out forever. With 8:23 remaining in the second period, Stevenson's Ethan Waldo found Seth Lause on a beautiful pass in front of the net that he put home for the goal, tying the contest at one. The score remained tied for the next 49 minutes of play.

The third period saw a handful of penalties, which gave Novi some chances, but the game ultimately went to overtime. Two overtime periods, however, would not be enough.

Stevenson had gradually begun to get stronger offensively throughout the extra periods, and there was a feeling in the air that no matter which team scored, there was going to be some puck luck — and that's exactly what happened.

Stevenson's Noah Turner passed to teammate Brenden Heard, who skated around to the right circle and fired a shot on net. The puck deflected off Novi sophomore goalie Austin Muirhead's stick, over his head and in front of the net where Stevenson's Ian Kimble was there to knock it into the goal.

"(Brenden) took it in on the right side, I just got the right position, it hit his stick and went up, and I was there to put it in. It all happened so fast, it was a high-paced game," Kimble said. "It's like the world flashes before you. Triple OT finisher to move on in the regional final, it doesn't hap-



Novi goalie Austin Muirhead gathers up a shot on goal against Stevenson. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

pen often, it's a great feeling."

The Spartans' bench emptied and celebrated with the large group of students along the boards.

"The emotions are relief," Mitchell said. "You know you're one bounce away from your season ending. It was relief and excitement and jubilation, it's very hard to describe. You feel really good for your guys who got rewarded, I thought they deserved to be rewarded and they were."

Unbelievable goaltending

It was very clear who the most valuable player on the ice was Wednesday night: Muirhead.

The sophomore goalie stopped 54 of 56 shots to keep the Wildcats alive and in the game.

"We all know Stevenson is one of the best teams in the state," Muirhead said. "Although this is really sad, I think we put up a pretty good fight. Losing in triple overtime really sucks, but I'm proud of everyone."

The performance caught the eyes of everyone in the arena, especially Mitchell.

"He was unbelievable, I told him it's one of the greatest performances that I've seen live in terms of a goaltender, the way he played, his calm demeanor and how he swallowed pucks up," Mitchell said. "Nothing but congratulations to him, I know it's not the result he wanted but he was

outstanding tonight."

Muirhead hopes that this type of game can lead to more success next year. "It shows to all the other teams that we're not quitters," Muirhead said. "We can compete with any team in the nation and next year we'll be even better and looking to go even further."

Contact reporter Andrew Vaillencourt at avallenc@hometownlife.com or 810-923-0659. Follow him on Twitter @AndrewVcourt. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.



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- 35 Steak/lobster combo dish
- 39 Leave behind
- 41 Aquarium shop supply
- 42 Endowing organization
- 45 Didn't allow to pass, as a bill
- 50 Swimmer Gertrude
- 51 — the night before ...
- 54 Novelist — Stanley Gardner
- 55 Pass, as a bill
- 59 "Lady Love" singer Rawls
- 60 Really hate
- 62 Jeans brand
- 63 Recline lazily
- 64 Regulating system
- 67 Main nun
- 69 Nest egg abbr.
- 70 Estevez of "Tex"
- 71 Attractive
- 78 Tesla's Musk
- 79 Volley starter
- 80 Flora and fauna
- 81 GPS display
- 82 Vogue thing
- 83 Uruguay's Punta del —
- 84 Good buds
- 85 Campout fuel
- 87 Suffer from hunger
- 89 Like an attention-grabbing actor
- 96 Unrefined petroleum
- 99 Eppie who's known as Ann Landers
- 100 Home-state candidate
- 104 Skillful feat
- 106 Clodhopper

DOWN

- 107 Pitcher Hersher
- 108 Grassy tract
- 109 Deceive
- 110 With 27-Across, makeshift sheds
- 112 Theater area
- 114 What the starts of seven answers in this puzzle might do?
- 121 California beach city
- 122 Online merchants
- 123 Sharpens
- 124 Appraise
- 125 Sign on a dead-end street
- 126 Start
- 1 Grafton's "— for Ricochet"
- 2 "If u ask me ..."
- 3 Singer Sarah
- 4 Bad way for a ship to run
- 5 "Livin' La Vida —" (1999 #1 hit)
- 6 Swing to and —
- 7 Some jabs in the ring
- 8 "Ciao!," in Chihuahua
- 9 Gets bronze
- 10 Special attention, for short
- 11 Conceit
- 12 Singer Cooke
- 13 Start a golf hole
- 14 Longtime Russian dynasty members
- 15 Large gametes
- 16 "Carmen" composer Georges
- 17 D-Max pickup truck maker
- 18 Appellation bestower
- 19 Neck warmer
- 24 Halley of Halley's comet
- 29 — Schwarz (toy store)
- 31 Clodhopper
- 32 — Dhabi
- 34 San — (Texas city near Abilene)
- 35 Ungodliness
- 36 The Trojans of the NCAA
- 37 Musical beat
- 38 1950s prez
- 40 Losing effort?
- 41 Add-on charge

ACROSS

- 43 Cal's twin in "East of Eden"
- 44 Fill to excess
- 46 More itty-bitty
- 47 Redenbacher of popcorn
- 48 Omission of a syllable
- 49 Archbishop Tutu
- 52 Affliction
- 53 Projectile path
- 55 Slips by
- 56 Most majestic
- 57 Calgary locale
- 58 Meat cutter
- 60 Large artery
- 61 Ho-hum
- 62 Hasty escape
- 64 2000-15 CBS drama
- 65 Prison melee
- 66 Laugh half
- 68 ND-to-LA dir.
- 72 Rockets' gp.
- 73 Actor Gerard
- 74 Chucks out
- 75 Art Deco artist
- 76 Summers, in Somme
- 77 Dr. Seuss' title turtle
- 82 Warty hopper
- 84 Very risky
- 85 Hit sketch show since '75
- 86 Tattooing tool
- 88 Outmoded TV adjunct
- 90 Aviary sound
- 91 A, in Berlin
- 92 Classic Chrysler
- 93 Heat-attached patches
- 94 Prefix with natal
- 95 Mutt's threat
- 97 Adaptable truck, in brief
- 98 Stun with sound
- 100 Pro — (perfunctory)
- 101 Opera songs
- 102 Osso buco meats
- 103 "Kukla, Fran and —"
- 104 Carpentry peg
- 105 — nous
- 109 Stallion-to-be
- 111 Iterate
- 113 Samantha Bee's station
- 115 Southern Sioux
- 116 Thai tongue
- 117 Lucy of TV's "Elementary"
- 118 1940s prez
- 119 Really little
- 120 July hrs.

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18	19
20						21									22					
23					24										25					
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107					108						109				110	111				
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121							122									123				
124							125									126				

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

SUDOKU

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

3/12

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!

CHORUS WORD SEARCH

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

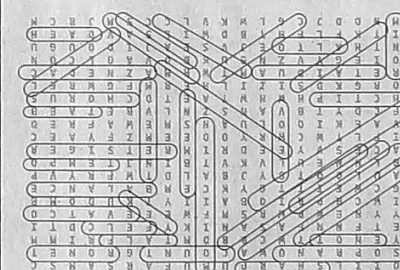
Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- A CAPPELLA
- ACCENT
- ALTO
- AUDIATE
- BALANCE
- BARITONE
- BASS
- BEAT
- CADENZA
- CHEST
- CHOIR
- CHORUS
- CLEF
- COUNT
- ENSEMBLE
- FALSETTO
- FLAT
- HEAD
- KEY
- MAJOR
- MEASURE
- MINOR
- MODIFICATION
- MOVEMENT
- MUSIC
- OCTAVE
- PITCH
- REGISTER
- SHARP
- SIGHT
- SOPRANO
- TEMPO
- TENOR
- TOE
- VOCAL
- VOWELS

ANSWER KEY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20																		
23																		
31	32																	
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107																		
112																		
121																		
124																		



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

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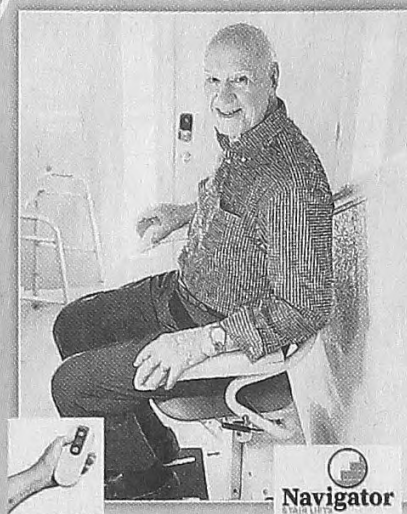


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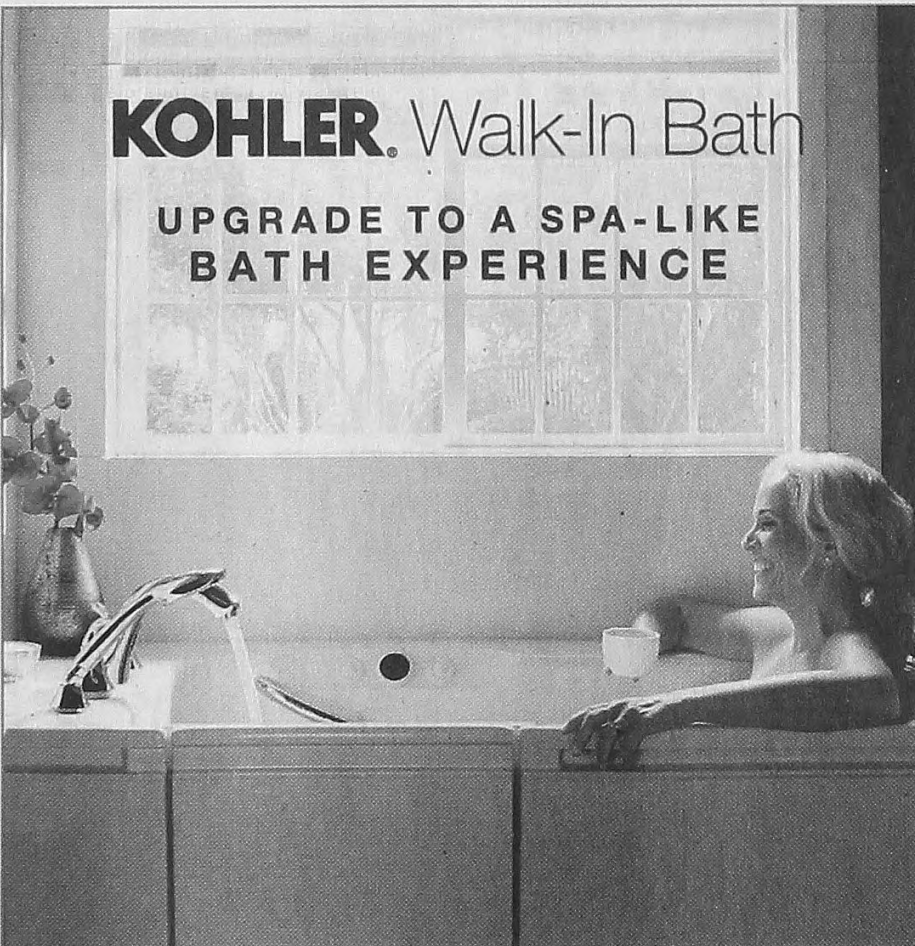
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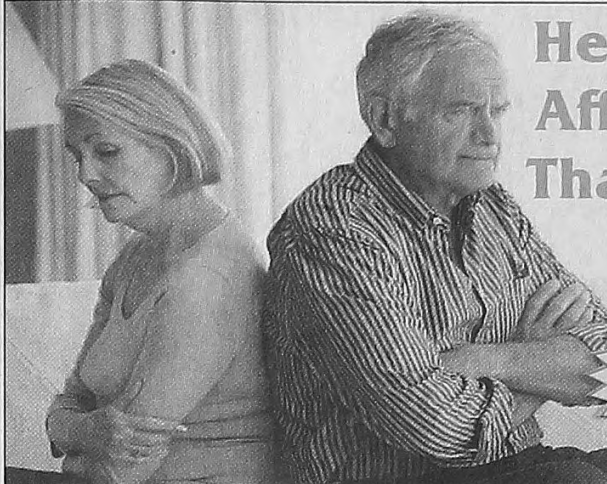
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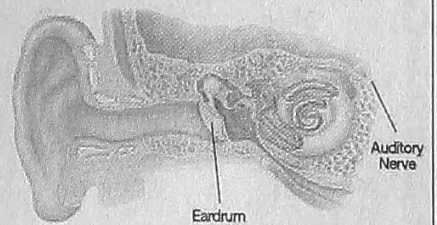
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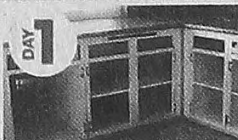


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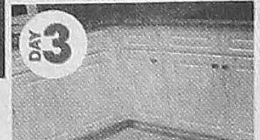
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