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# OBSERVER

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2020 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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## Livonia approves outdoor restaurant seating

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As restaurants prepare to welcome patrons back, many Livonia eateries will likely be able to expand or create outdoor seating.

At city council's May 27 meeting, members voted unanimously on a directive allowing restaurants to apply for permits to create or expand outdoor seating when the state allows restaurants to partially reopen Monday.

"This is a short-term fix, if you will, so that the restaurants can recoup a little bit of the money that they've lost," said Paul Bernier, the city's attorney.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced June 1 she would partially lift restrictions on restaurants and bars June 8, allowing seating indoors at 50% capacity.

Council's directive will allow for an additional 25% capacity seating outside.

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The Tin Cup Bar & Grill on Newburgh in Livonia will soon be opening its patio seating for guests.  
JOHN HEIDER/  
HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Livonia Franklin High School senior Madison Moore reacts to receiving a \$5,000 scholarship from Community Choice Foundation on May 27 in a drive-by ceremony conducted by the credit union and the school. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Scholarship winners honored with drive-by ceremonies

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Moore family already has several lawn signs celebrating daughter Madison's graduation from Franklin High School this year.

They added another one May 27, this one celebrating a Community Choice Credit Union scholarship, which Madison received during a brief drive-by ceremony conducted by the credit union and Livonia Public Schools officials.

"Keep them coming, keep them com-

ing," Lori Moore, Madison's mother, said of the growing number of lawn signs. "We're celebrating. I say the more, the better. She's got to be recognized. We love it."

Madison is joined by two other Livonia Public Schools students as recipients of a \$5,000 scholarship from the credit union, which operates two branches in Livonia. The other recipients are Franklin High School senior Maddy Reynolds and Stevenson High School senior Emma Prowse.

The program received more than

1,400 applications from across the state, with three coming from Livonia.

Typically, a reception honoring the recipients is held in the spring, but the coronavirus pandemic has halted such gatherings. That's when credit union leadership decided to honor scholarship winners in the most pandemic-appropriate way possible: with lawn signs, flowers and some recognition in a ceremony conducted outside each recipient's home.

See WINNERS, Page 6A

## Westland sets July 1 for return of recycling

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Curbside pickup of recyclables is returning to Westland, effective July 1.

City council voted unanimously at its June 1 meeting to enter into an agreement with Republic Services, ensuring recycling pickup for at least the next two years.

Council also voted 5-2 on the 2020-21 fiscal year budget, which includes funding for recycling.

"I know this is something we've all heard from residents time and again on and it's really an honor to be able to protect our environment, combat climate change and bring recycling back to the city of Westland," Councilman Mike McDermott said.

In March, voters chose approved a millage that will fund the sanitation budget, which includes recycling services.

Mayor Bill Wild said Republic Services was the city's only bidder. Westland's recycling will be taken to the company's Southfield location and processed for \$120 per ton.

As part of the two-year deal with Republic Services, the city will pay \$125 per ton in the second year, then negotiate a price for a third year of service if officials choose. Council plans to equip bins with stickers to remind residents what can and cannot be recycled.

Although the city was working with ReCommunity, now owned by Republic Services, for processing when the recycling program ended in March 2019, it does have history with Republic.

"When we first started our recycling program, Republic would actually, with their own trucks, come pick up our recycling and take it to a place in New Boston," Wild said. "They do have history working with the city and their operation is located in Wayne."

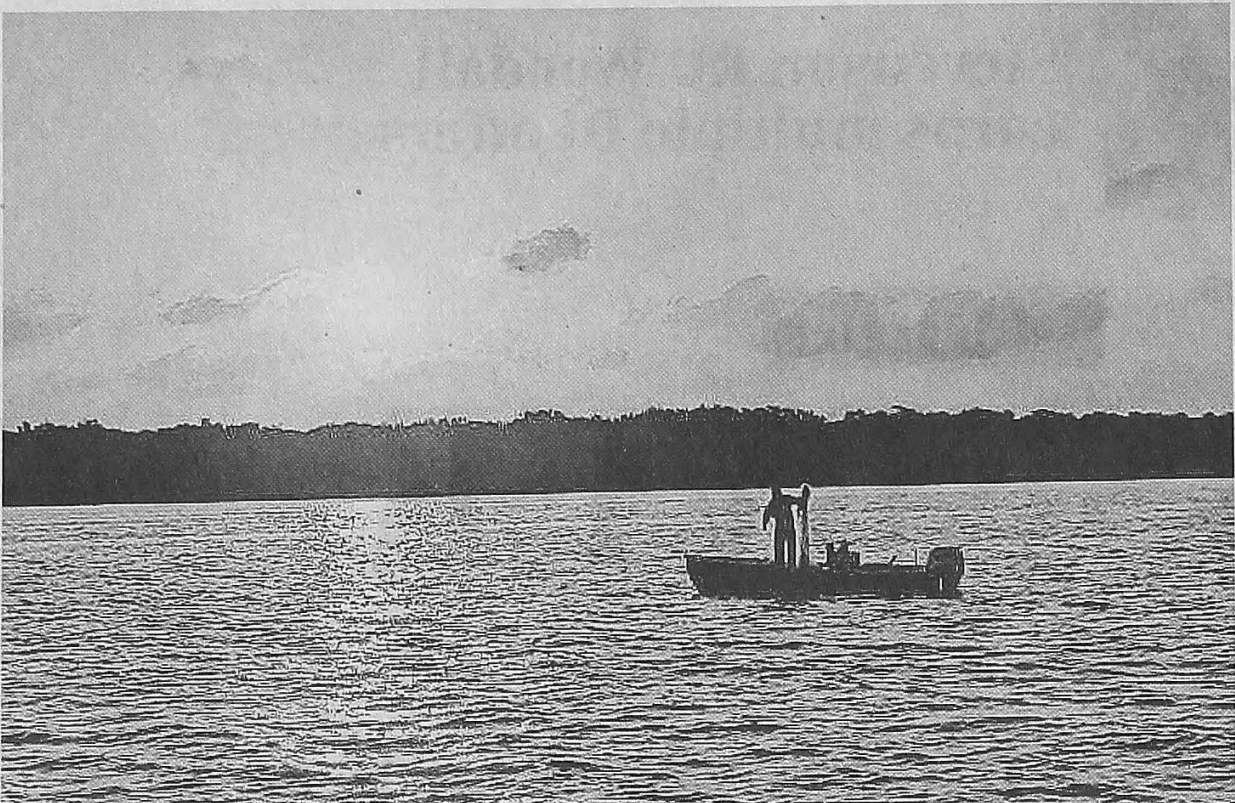
Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at stankersle@hometownlife.com or 248-305-0448.

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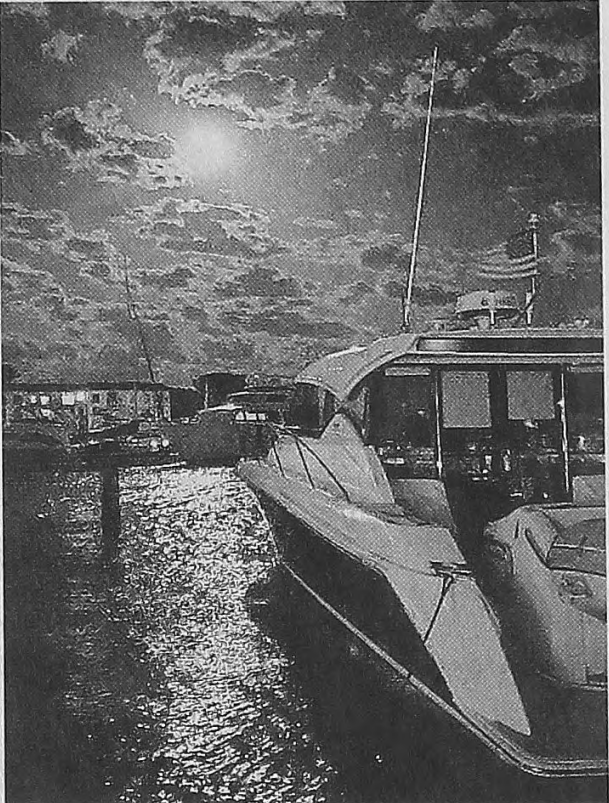
Councilman  
Mike McDermott



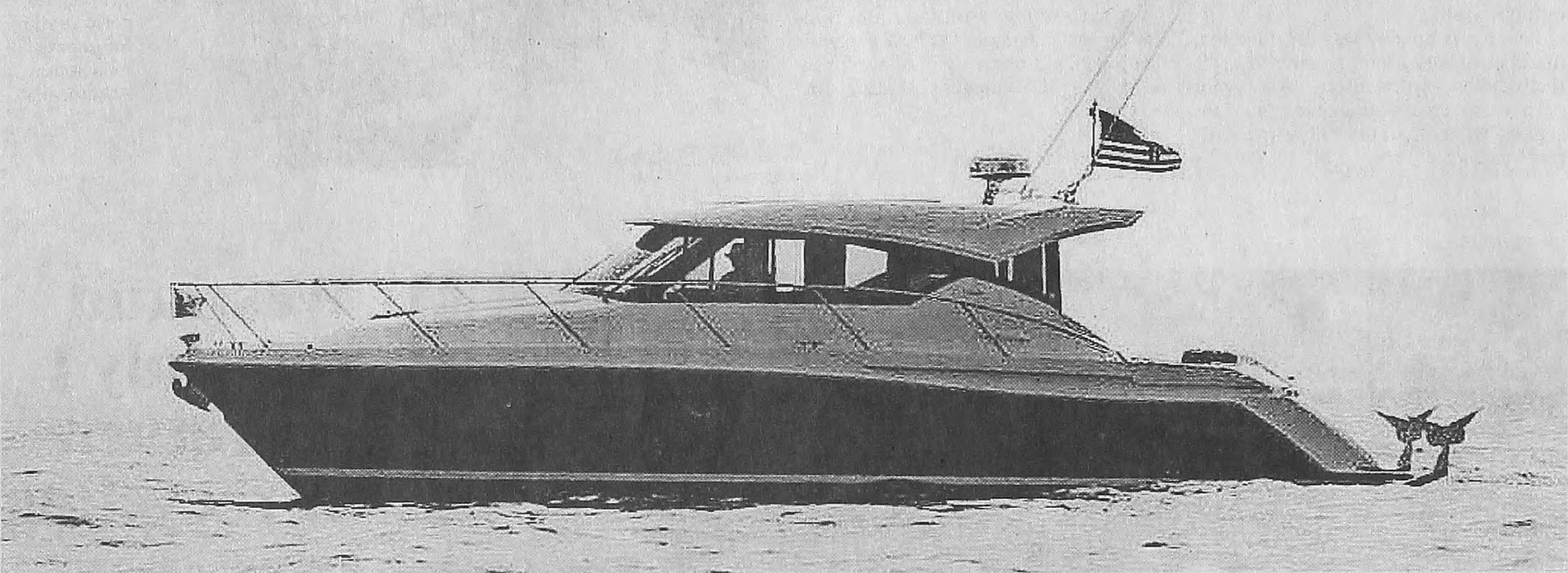




Sunrise in North Palm Beach. Dave and Valerie Mamo are in the midst of America's Great Loop, a boat adventure trip they began last July, leaving from Lake St. Clair. The pandemic has left them stranded.



The Mamos prepare to head for Charleston, South Carolina, aboard their boat, the Sea Major.



Sea Major serves as the Mamos' mode of transportation and their living quarters on America's Great Loop.



The Mamos visited Bob Wilson, Valerie's father, from a safe distance in Titusville, Florida.

**"To read everyone's Facebook posts about how hard it is to live together at home (under quarantine), we've been doing it in a space the size of a master bedroom for 10 months."**

**Dave Mamo**

**hometownlife.com**

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# Pandemic throws boaters for a loop

**Susan Bromley** [hometownlife.com](http://hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

For one Milford couple, the coronavirus pandemic is a storm that has stranded them on a year-long boat journey.

Dave and Valerie Mamo are in the midst of America's Great Loop, a boat adventure which they began last July, leaving from Lake St. Clair.

Now they are doing the ultimate in social distancing while stuck on Sea Major, their boat, in a Charleston, S.C., marina, and pondering their next move.

"We wanted to be back by July 4 or earlier, now we are in a dilemma," Dave Mamo said. "We are stuck in not being able to complete our Loop. We have 2,000 miles more to go."

The coronavirus pandemic, he explained, is keeping the Erie Canal closed as maintenance was delayed by two months. The canal is an essential part of their route home to complete America's Great Loop.

The loop is a trip that, depending on route, spans 5,200 miles to 6,000 miles through eastern U.S. waterways including the Great Lakes and Atlantic and Gulf intracoastal waterways, as well as the Mississippi and Tennessee-Tombigbee waterways.

According to the America's Great Loop Cruiser's Association, only about 100 boats complete the journey per year. How many will complete it this year, including the Mamos, remains in question.

The Mamos began their journey July 27 from MacRay Harbor on Lake St. Clair. Dave, 60, retired as a union electrician one week before they left. Valerie, 61, retired as a nurse a few years prior.

As they left on the 39-foot Sea Major, a "go-fast" boat that can travel up to 40 mph, they headed north to the Mackinac area and enjoyed the Beaver Island Music Festival in which Valerie's violin coach played.

Music also featured in other stops on their journey as they traveled south on Lake Michigan, stayed in Chicago for about a week and then continued to travel rivers and took a two-week detour to Nashville, where they visited the Grand Ole Opry.

As they continued south down the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, hitting logs twice and pulling the boat from the water to use spare propellers, Dave said the muddiness of the rivers really struck him.

"I have a new respect for how clean the Detroit River is," he said. "As well as white sand in the Gulf and any civilized Walmart. ... We hit Orange Beach, Alabama, and it was like coming to civilization."

Crossing the Gulf of Mexico to the western shore of Florida also had its challenges. Two-foot seas were predicted for the 170-mile crossing and instead they were greeted with double that: 4-foot waves with 8-foot swells.

Upon arrival in Tarpon Springs, they enjoyed a more relaxing part of their journey, spending Thanksgiving and Christmas in Florida, including a visit with Valerie's father. Following was a month-long stay in the Bahamas.

"When we did the crossing, the ocean was more than 9,000 feet deep, I was worried about a submarine

coming up under us," Valerie said. "We saw a lot of sea turtles, dolphins, pelicans. ...

"Whoever does the trip and doesn't go to the Bahamas misses out big time."

They planned to stay six weeks in the Bahamas, but it was there they first heard of the coronavirus. The undercurrent of the pandemic was rolling, and in the third week of March, the wave was about to overtake them. They left the islands a week ahead of schedule when the U.S. issued a level 4 travel advisory, telling all Americans to come home.

"We were hearing about things changing, temperatures being taken, you had to wear armbands and they limited the amount of food and the kind you could buy," Valerie recalled.

On March 22, they docked at a marina in North Palm Beach. Valerie noted that within three days of their departure, the Bahaman government was rationing fuel and water and those who had stayed were stuck.

The Mamos planned to visit Valerie's dad again, but instead only saw the 84-year-old for an hour, while socially distanced.

"All the things we thought we could do, we couldn't, and that is the way it has been since we got back to the U.S.," Valerie said. "Everything is closed."

"Docktails," a social event among Loopers and other boaters at marinas, has been non-existent. The whole trip, she added, has been going downhill, despite 80 degree weather and sunny skies. They described St. Augustine as a "ghost town." Now they are left in Charleston.

They are wondering if they should continue up the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to Baltimore and Chesapeake Bay and wait for the canal system to open, or leave the boat in Charleston and come home, then return in the fall for another winter down south. Or they could put the boat on a trailer and truck it home.

Valerie is leaning toward coming home. The couple misses their sons and young grandson.

Dave notes that if they bring the boat home, they could do the remainder of the Loop when the canal opens and go backwards the final 2,000 miles, but then they wouldn't cross their own wake.

The trip has been full of unforeseen challenges, like the lock closures on the Illinois River that forced the couple to wake at 3 a.m. to lead other boats through fog at the only time that was open for pleasure craft.

Still, Dave said it was more enjoyable than he expected, too, and they've made a lot of friends.

"To read everyone's Facebook posts about how hard it is to live together at home (under quarantine), we've been doing it in a space the size of a master bedroom for 10 months," Dave said.

Valerie summarizes it a little differently. "We haven't thrown each other overboard yet," she joked.

To follow along on the Mamos' Great Loop journey, visit their blog at [seamajor.net](http://seamajor.net).

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at [sbromley@hometownlife.com](mailto:sbromley@hometownlife.com) or 517-281-2412. Follow her on Twitter @SusanBromley10.

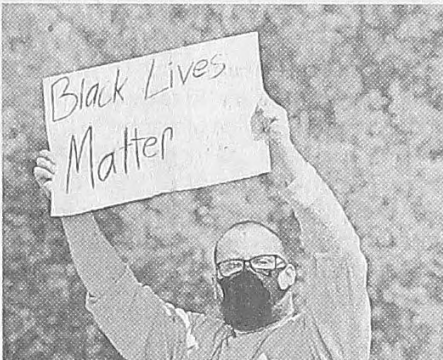




Protesters returned to Livonia on Tuesday to continue their demonstrations against police brutality and racism outside city hall. PHOTOS BY SUSAN VELA/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



A group of protestors sits on the lawn outside Livonia City Hall, holding up signs that decry racism and police brutality.



A protester in Livonia on Tuesday holds up a Black Lives Matter placard.



Protesters hold up placards while standing near the Livonia city hall sign.

# Protesters in Livonia decry racism

Susan Vela [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Young demonstrators made a second showing in Livonia on Tuesday, once again holding signs to protest the death of George Floyd last week.

Floyd was an African-American man who died after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for several minutes.

They posted themselves along Five Mile Road outside Livonia City Hall. Their signs expressed messages like “Black Lives Matter” and “Am I Next?”

Protests against racism and police brutality have been happening across the nation in both big and small cities.

Protesters also picketed the sidewalks surrounding the city’s police station and city hall May 31 in Livonia.

There also have been protests in Westland and Birmingham.

Jaylen Flowers, a 21-year-old Livonia resident, organized the Tuesday gathering in Livonia. About 20 people stood by him early in the evening. More were expected.

“I’m very glad people came out and supported us today,” he said.

Chloe Grisa wanted to support her “best man Jaylen.” She wore a mask that said, “I can’t breathe,” which were some of Floyd’s last words.

“This is just a movement that I think is very important, that I’ve always supported,” Grisa said. “We need change.”

“I’m glad that this is getting spread to more than just the big cities. A lot of people have been saying, ‘Well, it didn’t happen in Livonia so why are you doing this in Livonia?’

“That’s not the point. The point is that we need to get the message spread.”



A group of young protesters hold up signs, one of which reads, “All Lives can’t matter until Black Lives do too!”

She emphasized that sharing anti-racism messages is important in a community like Livonia, where most residents are white.

Protesters also have been recognizing the death of Grand Rapids native Breonna Taylor, 26, an EMT who was fatally shot by police officers inside her

home in Louisville, Kentucky, in March.

One Livonia sign on Tuesday read, “Say Her Name: Breonna Taylor.”

Contact reporter Susan Vela at [svela@hometownlife.com](mailto:svela@hometownlife.com) or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susan-vela.

“A lot of people have been saying, ‘Well, it didn’t happen in Livonia...’ That’s not the point. The point is that we need to get the message spread.”

Chloe Grisa Protester



# Wayne-Westland renovates technical high school

**Shelby Tankersley** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

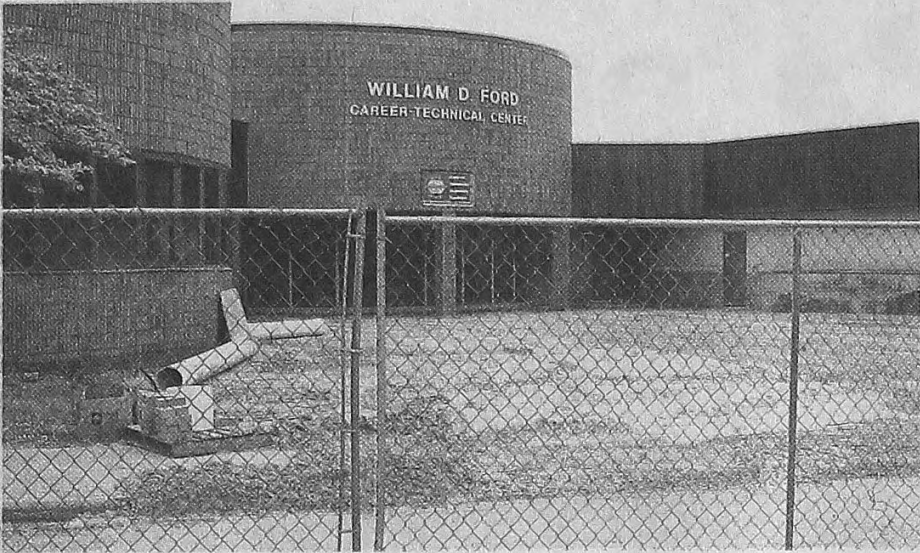
By the time renovations finish at the William D. Ford Career-Technical Center in Westland, it will look like a different school.

The Wayne-Westland school district broke ground May 11 on the project that officials expect to wrap up in late November or early December.

“Every room is getting touched,” said Tony Spisak, the district’s executive director of maintenance and operations. “So paint, flooring, lighting, heat – basically the entire building – is getting a face lift.”

One of the biggest changes coming to the school, located at 36455 Marquette just west of John Glenn High, is a complete redesign and expansion of the culinary arts space. The district aims to make the program resemble culinary centers at community colleges.

“The existing culinary kitchen, the Marquette Room and the fast food line they have now is going to be completely redesigned,” Spisak said. “We’re going to take over the old office for counseling and a tech room to turn into a culinary kitchen and banquet hall. So it’s going to



The William D. Ford Career-Technical Center on Marquette is being renovated.  
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

be quite an expansion to the culinary arts program.

“It’s really going to be nice. That program is growing. It grows and grows every year.”

Rooms housing the construction technology and health occupation pro-

grams will also see major changes. In all, the school offers 19 technical training programs ranging from early childhood education to firefighting.

While certain program areas are under construction, students will be moved to another district facility to con-

tinue their educations.

Spisak said another major change is additional security at the building’s entrance. Visitors will have to be let into the building by staff and will only have access to the front office, avoiding situations in which visitors can gain immediate access to students. Other changes will address safety, energy efficiency, accessibility and technology.

This is the district’s first project related to the 2018 bond passage, which provided \$158 million for various improvements throughout the school district. Though efforts have been delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic, the district plans to get renovations for Wayne Memorial out for bid in the fall and John Glenn’s project out for bid in spring 2021.

From there, Spisak said the district will work its way down to the middle and elementary schools. Most funds for these projects will come from the bond. Other funds, like boiler replacement and parking lot repairs, will be drawn from the district’s sinking fund.

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## Teen faces murder charge after fatal crash in Westland

**Susan Vela** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

A Southgate teen faces felony second-degree murder and reckless driving charges after police said he was involved in a fatal crash near the Westland/Garden City border.

Wayne County prosecutors said Gerelle Rhan, 19, has been arraigned on the charges tied to a 7:53 p.m. May 20 crash that killed Chris Tina Ward, 48, of Dearborn.

Westland and Garden City officers were dispatched the day of the crash to Merriman and Cherry Hill roads, where they found two damaged vehicles.

Medics found Ward’s body and

transported it from the scene. They also transported Rhan to a local hospital for treatment of his injuries.

Prosecutors allege Rhan was speeding and driving aggressively on southbound Merriman Road when he ran a red light and struck Ward’s eastbound vehicle.

“The alleged actions of the defendant will drastically alter his life, but it will forever and profoundly affect the lives of Ms. Ward’s family and friends,” Prosecutor Kym Worthy said in a statement.

Rhan is scheduled for another court appearance this month.

Contact reporter *Susan Vela* at *svela@hometownlife.com*.

## AG: Woman illegally claimed nearly \$500K meant for veterans’ families

**Susan Vela** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

A Westland woman faces accusations that she defrauded veterans’ families of nearly \$500,000 by claiming she and a co-conspirator were rightful heirs to certain monies.

Melissa Flores, 53, has been arraigned on six counts of felony pretenses and one count each of forgery and conducting a criminal enterprise.

Steven Decker, 32, of Wyandotte, faces a criminal enterprises-racketeering charge. He allegedly used proceeds from the scheme to conceal property necessary for the fraud.

Michigan Attorney General Dana

Nessel said they created aliases and obtained or created fraudulent documents to make it seem like they were heirs of people who had died.

Between 2013 and 2019, they apparently bilked more than \$40,000 in “unclaimed property” from the Michigan Treasury Department and more than \$430,000 from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

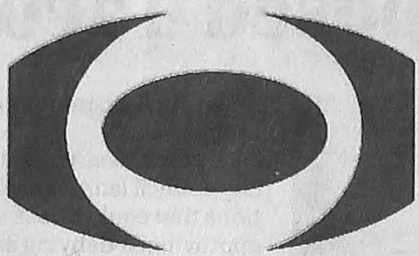
“Committing fraud against our state or federal agencies that directly give back to their communities will not be tolerated,” Nessel said in a statement. “... For someone to take advantage of the public benefits set aside for their families is a slap in the face to servicemen and women across the country.”

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# Neighbors speak out against proposed Taco Bell

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Some residents of Livonia's Burton Hollow neighborhood aren't ready to "live más."

Several have spoken out against the proposed development of a Taco Bell restaurant at a lot on Farmington Road just south of Six Mile. The development would construct the restaurant closer to Farmington Road, leaving a medical office building in the back.

Brad Casper said having such a development would reduce the quality of life for several of his neighbors in the subdivision.

"These people are going to have a drive-thru where (residents are trying) to enjoy their pool," he said. "It's going to be slammed right into our neighborhood."

The development is still in the early stages. The city's planning commission recommended a denial of the rezoning of the property in April, and city council is expected to take up the rezoning request at its regular meeting Monday.

The development – overseen by John Pastor, a developer with Livonia-based George H. Pastor and Sons and a former Livonia city councilman – is one Taco Bell wants to pursue in that area, Pastor said.

The current plan would have those going to the medical office building behind the proposed Taco Bell travel through the restaurant's parking lot. However, Pastor said he is working on finalizing an agreement with another building owner adjacent to the site on Six Mile to purchase that site that would allow direct access to the medical build-



A property on Farmington Road near Six Mile in Livonia is the site of a proposed restaurant, but some neighbors are against it. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

ing off Six Mile.

He said he has a written agreement to purchase the medical building on Farmington and hopes to bring more tenants into the building.

Pastor said during the planning commission meeting in mid-April a restaurant there will not increase traffic in the region, an issue residents had expressed concern about.

He said such restaurants typically attract those who live close by, and wouldn't attract others who would have to drive several miles just to get a Cheesy Gordita Crunch.

"They're not destinations. People only go 2-3 miles out of their way to go to

a restaurant," Pastor said. "You're not going to get increased traffic."

If approved, the site would become Livonia's fourth Taco Bell. Others currently operate on Eight Mile just east of Farmington Road, on Middlebelt south of Five Mile and on Merriman north of Plymouth. Also operating nearby is a Taco Bell at Inkster and Grand River in Redford Township, right across the street from Livonia.

If the council recommends approval of the rezoning request, a site plan would be reviewed by the planning commission and the city council before work could begin. Pastor said if all approvals come on schedule, he would like

to have the restaurant open by the end of the year.

A public hearing held in May by the city council led to three separate resolutions that could be voted on Monday: an approving, a denying and a recommendation to send the issue to Wayne County to look at potential traffic issues, since the restaurant would be built on a county road.

"Council has heard from many residents who live in Burton Hollow who unanimously disapprove of the rezoning of the property," said Council President Kathleen McIntyre. "That's currently zoned OS. It would be rezoned C-2."

Susan Gannon, president of the Burton Hollow Civic Association, said she has kept a petition posted outside her home for neighbors sign against the proposal. In less than 24 hours, it garnered more than 100 signatures.

She said she anticipates a big showing online at the city council's regular meeting, which is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday on Zoom.

"The outcry has been significant that this is a bad idea," Gannon said. "I cannot think of any other proposal that has stirred up so much anger in this neighborhood until this."

Pastor said he is attempting to listen to the neighbors and their concerns, but believes the proposed restaurant is still a better use than another building that could end up at the site.

"If I made a bigger building there, they wouldn't be happy," he said. "I'm trying to listen what they're saying, listen to what their major concerns are."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com).

## Chick-fil-A near Twelve Oaks Mall set to open June 18

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

It's perhaps the best news anyone's heard since the coronavirus pandemic shut everything down: the Chick-fil-A in Novi is opening in a few weeks.

The restaurant, 27750 Novi Road, will hold its grand opening June 18, according to a post on its Facebook page.

"Here at Chick-fil-A, we are excited to announce our grand opening date!! Novi are you ready?! June 18th we will be opening our drive-thru and mobile app ordering!!!" was posted May 27.

The announcement comes at a time when local restaurants are only offering carryout, delivery or are closed altogether due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The restaurant has been in the works for more than a year and received approval from the Novi City Council last spring, even after some discussion surrounding traffic issues. The chicken fast-food joint enjoys cult status in the area, drawing large crowds to new openings and clamoring online from metro Detroit residents begging for more locations in the region.

Once open, it would become the first Chick-fil-A to open in western Oakland County. A location in Allen Park opened earlier this year.

In addition to the Novi location, Chick-fil-A plans to open a restaurant along Haggerty Road between Seven Mile and Eight Mile in Northville Township, though there's no word on when that eatery will open its doors.



Livonia Franklin High School senior Maddy Reynolds, center, stands with her parents, Karyn and Jim, on May 27 after receiving a \$5,000 Community Choice Foundation scholarship in a drive-by ceremony. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Winners

Continued from Page 1A

While applications were due in February, interviews did not take place until after Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency due to the coronavirus pandemic. In-person interviews morphed into virtual ones.

"It was difficult, but we made it work," said Danielle Strachan, the member center manager at the branch at 34930 Ann Arbor Trail in Livonia.

Moore and Reynolds both plan to attend Central Michigan University in the fall, and Prowse plans to attend Grand Valley State University.

Reynolds, who currently plans to ma-

major in event management, said the scholarship came at the perfect time.

"It was really relieving because ... I've been applying to a bunch of scholarships and I haven't really heard back from anything," she said. "When (the credit union) called me, it was really exciting that I actually received the scholarship."

Moore hopes to major in either communications or recreation and event management at CMU, and will be a part of the university's Leader Advancement Scholar program, a cohort program with other students from across the state.

"It was such an honor to apply for the scholarship and such a good opportunity," she said. "I'm super excited."

Prowse is expected to major in nursing, according to a news release from

the credit union.

To have 20% of the credit union's scholarship awardees come from Livonia Public Schools is a testament to the education and drive of the students in the district, said Superintendent Andrea Oquist, who attended the drive-by ceremonies.

Oquist said much has been done to recognize the hard work of the seniors across the school district.

"I truly wish we could honor and recognize our class of 2020 in our traditional ways, but I have to say, so many people have come together to make these events as special as they can be," Oquist said. "These kinds of events are such a highlight for us."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com).

## Seating

Continued from Page 1A

"I think this is a wonderful idea," said Councilwoman Cathy White. "Whatever we can do to support our restaurants in this town, I fully support. I want to see them successful."

Farmington and Milford have announced similar directives.

Applications for outdoor seating, available through the city's inspection department, will be expedited so restaurants can be prepared when restrictions lift. The directive won't allow for music or television outdoors and alcohol will have to be consumed in a designated area.

Council members said the inspection department, which will approve or deny applicants, will not necessarily deny applicants who have previously been denied outdoor seating. But, they cautioned, not every applicant will get a green light.

Several council members said they have heard from restaurants asking for additional seating and hope this will help business owners and employees recoup some lost revenue.

"A lot of local small businesses in particular have been greatly damaged and hurt because of the lack of (business)," Bernier said. "Restaurants in particular are slow to reopen and haven't reopened yet. The only thing they're open for still is carryout business."

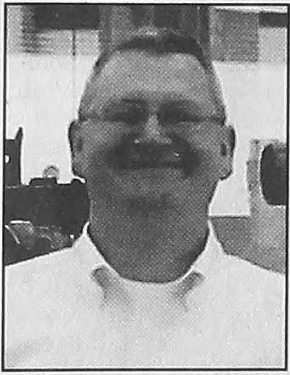
The directive allows for additional outdoor seating until Oct. 31 or whenever the restrictions fully lift, whichever comes first. Bernier said approved applicants will have to acknowledge they understand the additional seating will not be permanent.

"It's a time that we need to pay attention to these small businesses and expedite as quickly as possible in a safe manner as has been described however we can help," Councilwoman Laura Toy said. "And not only for restaurants, but any other small businesses. It's important, as we all know, that they stay in business."

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448. Follow her on Twitter @shelby\_tankk.



# Obituaries



**Bobby Edward Bell**

Bobby Edward Bell, 54, passed away May 31, 2020. Beloved husband of Sabine. Adored brother of Rainer (Virginia) Bell, Tina Bell and Donna Bell. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. He was currently employed with Fruedenberg Automotive. He was a very likeable, good hearted person and was a huge advocate for animals. A memorial service is being planned for the future. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Michigan Anti-Cruelty Society and/or the Michigan Humane Society. Please visit [www.Turowski-FuneralHome.com](http://www.Turowski-FuneralHome.com) for further details.



**David William Washenko**

CANTON - May 18, 2020 age 46. Beloved son of Bob and Barb. Loving father of Nicholas. Dear brother of Timothy and Daniel (Cristy). Cremation services were arranged by Vermeulen-Sajewski Funeral Home, Plymouth. A public Memorial Service will be held at a later date at Ward Presbyterian Church. To share a memory, please visit [vermeulenfh.com](http://vermeulenfh.com)



**Patricia Cantrick (Morley)**

Age 94, passed away Sunday May 24, 2020. Born with a wonderfully giving spirit, Pat was very involved in all aspects of her family's life in Birmingham, Michigan and Bayfield, Ontario Canada where she tirelessly volunteered her time and outgoing personality to many civic organizations at both locations. Pat was a proud graduate of University of Michigan. She leaves behind an enduring legacy of love, wisdom, unending patience and humor that will be forever remembered by many. We are all blessed to have had her in our lives. Survived by her four sons; Kip (Sherry), Jeff (Cheryl), John (Holly) and Chris (Susie); 7 Grandchildren; Brandy, Dylan, Stephanie, Jennifer, Courtney, Emma, Olivia and Great Granddaughter Isabelle. She now leaves us to join her husband George, sister Barbara Erb and grandson Colin. No immediate plans for a memorial due to the current COVID restrictions.



**Theodore J. Potok**

Ted Potok passed away peacefully in his sleep on May 19, 2020, at the age of 96. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Jane (Przekota), their 4 children Felicia (Patrick), Michelle (Eric), Tim (Andrea) and Steve, sister Virginia, nine grandchildren, and many other family and friends.

Burial and celebration of life will be determined at a later date and coordinated through Modetz Funeral home in Rochester, MI. [www.modetzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.modetzfuneralhomes.com) Donations can be made to the Livonia St. Aidan's choir or [www.FightingBlindness.org](http://www.FightingBlindness.org)

May  
you find  
*comfort*  
in family  
& friends

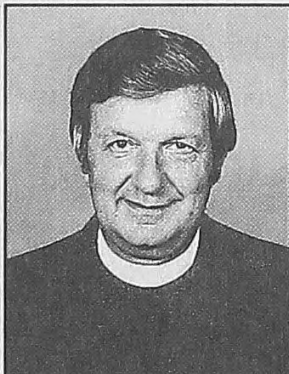
**Margrit Brüggmann Getsinger**

ORINDA, CA - Margrit Brüggmann Getsinger, age 100, of Orinda, CA formerly of West Bloomfield, MI - 10/8/19 - 2/4/2020.

Preceded in death by her husband, Ralph Getsinger (1995) & son-in-law, Peter Cassidy (1996).

Survived by children, Joan, Pierce & John; granddaughters, Kyna, Brie, Liza & Leah and 6 great-grandchildren.

A Memorial Service will be held at Christ Church Cranbrook with a tea to follow at the Village Women's Club on June 13th.

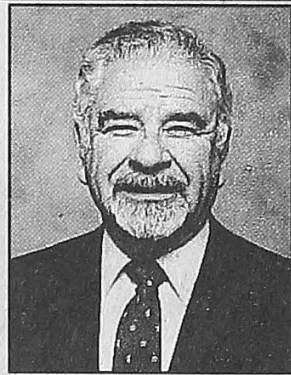


**Pastor William Charles Lindholm**

LIVONIA - Age 88. May 9, 2020. Beloved husband to the late Patricia Lindholm for 65 years. Loving father to William Jr., Jana (Carleton) Britt and the late Jonell Lindholm. Dear Grandfather of Rachel and Lauren Britt. Brother to John Lindholm, Mike Ivey and the late Mary (Lindholm) Goeth. He is also survived by his sister in law Jean Johnson and nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be held at Harry Will Funeral Home, 37000 Newburgh Road, Livonia, MI 48152 on Friday, June 5, from 3 to 8 p.m. Instate at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, 14175 Farmington Road, Livonia, on Saturday, June 6, at 11 a.m. with funeral at 12 p.m. Please share a memory at [www.harrywillfuneralhome.com](http://www.harrywillfuneralhome.com).

Harry J Will Funeral Homes



**John Joseph Villa**

- - John Joseph Villa, of Beverly Hills, died at age 102 with family by his side on Sunday, May 24. John had an immutable sense of service to his community and a deep and steadfast love for his family. His first wife, Susie Hoogasian Villa, preceded him in death in 1978. John is survived by his wife Marylin Jean, five children, eleven grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and his sister, Adela Cerna Murray. Contributions in John Villa's memory may be made to Wayne State University's Institute of Gerontology: [giving.wayne.edu/donate/iog](http://giving.wayne.edu/donate/iog) or to Leader Dogs for the Blind in Auburn Hills, MI: [leaderdog.org/ways-to-give/giving-options/donate-in-honor-or-memory](http://leaderdog.org/ways-to-give/giving-options/donate-in-honor-or-memory). A.J. Desmond & Sons, (248) 549-0500.

View obituary and sign tribute wall at [AJDesmond.com](http://AJDesmond.com)



**Marjorie Bethene Smith**

Marjorie Bethene Smith (Wolfram) was born on June 20, 1930 and went home to be with her Lord Jesus Christ on May 24, 2020. She was preceded in death by her husband of 49 years, Rodger and her three sons, Rodger Jr., Ron, and Rodney. Marge was loved dearly by her son, Rock Smith and his family (Tammy, Tyler, and Hayden) and her daughter Roxanne Wilson (Smith) and her family (Ron, Ravae, and Scout). As a long time Canton resident, she was active in her church Calvary Baptist on Joy Rd for many years and loved serving there. She was "Aunt Bess", "Aunt Marge" and "Grandma" to many and her large extended family will miss her greatly. Arrangements entrusted to the Schrader-Howell Funeral Home, Plymouth, Michigan. Share memories at [www.schrader-howell.com](http://www.schrader-howell.com)



**Norma Jean Lynch**

LIVONIA - Norma Jean Lynch, age 85 of Livonia, died Sunday, May 31, 2020. She was born in Highland Park on July 4, 1934 to the late Florence and John Shimpach. Norma is survived by her husband of 64 years, Donald Lynch; her brother, James Shimpach, and his wife, Barbara; her daughter, Kirsten; her son, Brent, and his wife, Tasia; and her grandchildren, Sofia and John.



Raised in Royal Oak, Norma graduated from Western Michigan University and received her Masters degree in education from the University of Michigan. She taught for 30 years in various school districts in southeast Michigan. She was a member of the AAUW and the League of Women Voters.

Norma's wishes were to be cremated. Her arrangements have been entrusted to the Harry J. Will Funeral Home. A memorial service will take place at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made in Norma's name to the Detroit Institute of Arts or the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

**Louise Wetstein Simpson**

Louise Wetstein Simpson age 93, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. Louise was born March 1, 1927 in Detroit, Michigan the daughter of Edward and Sarah Wetstein.

Louise graduated from Denison University in 1949 and worked at Harper Hospital in Detroit as head lab technician. She married Dr. John R. Simpson in 1955. Louise was a coveted member of St. James Episcopal Church in Birmingham MI, where she devoted endless time, spirit and energy. She was an active member of Kappa Alpha Theta, including past president of the Birmingham alumni chapter. Louise was a devoted member of the Village Club of Bloomfield Hills, MI, including president from 1992-1994 and was current club historian. She was also an active member of P.E.O. Womans Organization, BQ, including past president.

Louise spent many of her summers since 1927 at Point Nipigon resort on the Straits of Mackinaw in northern Michigan, a place where she found peace and endless beautiful sunsets.

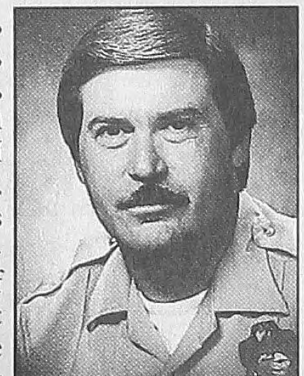
Louise is survived by her loving daughter and son, Mary Lou Brown and Reid Simpson. Her grandson Ian Simpson and her great-grandson Nolan Simpson. She is predeceased by her former husband John R. Simpson, her parents, Edward and Sarah Wetstein and her sisters Suse Guttormsen, Mary Trimble and Sarah Arthur.

A memorial service and related celebration of life will be announced at a later date, given the current pandemic situation.

Contributions can be made in lieu of flowers to The Village Club Foundation, Bloomfield Hills, MI and St. James Episcopal Church, Birmingham, MI.

**Ralph Edward Smith**

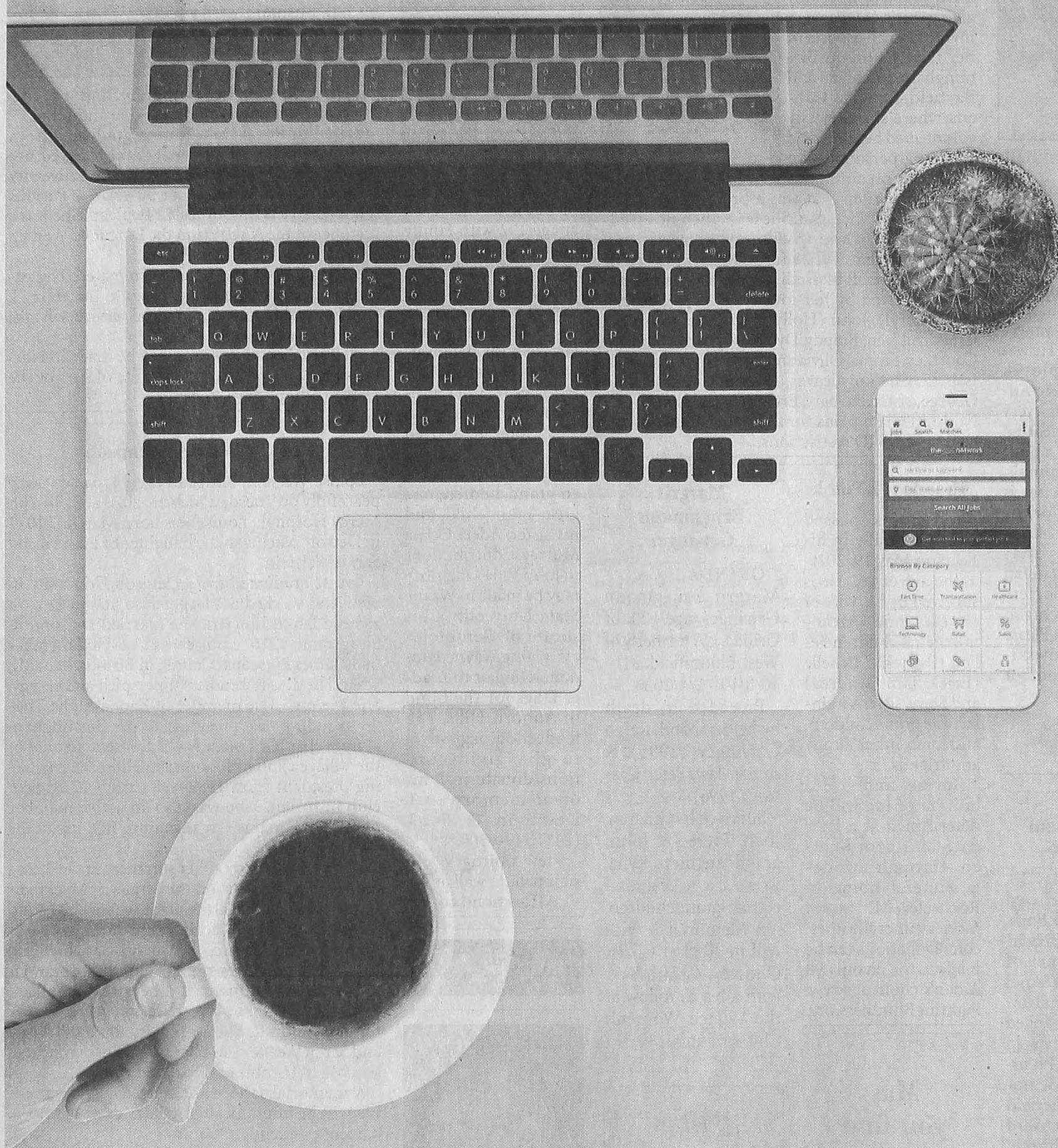
Ralph Edward Smith, formerly of Westland, MI, passed away May 18, 2020 in Tawas, MI. Ralph was born in Detroit, MI on September 28, 1940. Ralph is survived by his wife of 59 years Rose-Marie Smith (Wade) of Oscoda, MI; his son Eric Smith and wife Laurie (Wong) of Gloucester MA; daughter Nicole King (Smith) and husband Steven W. King of Oscoda, MI; 3 grandchildren Alexander Smith and wife Brittney (Fracassa) of Seabrook, NH; Chelsea Hensley (Smith) and husband Justin of Fremont NH; and Matthew Smith of Gloucester MA; 1 great grandson Connor Smith of Seabrook NH. Ralph is also survived by his sister Beverly Beasley (Smith) and husband Norman Beasley. Ralph is also survived by many other family members that he loved dearly.



Ralph was a proud U.S. Army veteran who served with the 101st Airborne Division and served honorably for 26 years with the Westland Police Department before retiring in March of 1993. Ralph will be forever in our hearts and missed by all who knew and loved him. Due to Covid - 19 we are unable to hold a memorial at this time. In lieu of flowers please send donations in his memory to Merriman Road Baptist Church, Garden City, Michigan; <http://www.mrbcc.us/>. Ralph will be laid to rest in the Cadillac Memorial Gardens West Cemetery in Westland; <https://www.cadillacmemorialgardenswest.com/>. An online guest registry is available to leave a message of love and support to Ralph's family at [www.bureshfuneralhomes.com](http://www.bureshfuneralhomes.com).







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# SPORTS



Livonia Stevenson running back Caden Woodall (34) ran for 1,100 yards and 16 touchdowns as a junior.

## Stevenson RB Caden Woodall earns multiple Div. 1 offers

Andrew Vaillencourt  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Caden Woodall's high school football career has certainly been filled with ups and downs. The Livonia Stevenson junior made varsity as a freshman only to suffer a broken ankle six games into the season. His sophomore year, he broke his arm and only made it through a quarter of his team's third game. Finally, as a junior, he was able to stay healthy and dominated as the Spartans running back, rushing for 1,100 yards and 16 touchdowns on 159 carries. "It was quite obvious when he was healthy all last year how special of a player he is," Stevenson football coach Randy Micallef said. "We saw it as a sophomore before he got hurt in the Fordson game, he rushed for over 100

yards in the first quarter against them. We knew that he had the ability to do great things." For Woodall, it was a breath of fresh air to be healthy for a full season. His standout performance was enough to catch the attention of football programs around the country. He now has five college scholarship offers, including two from Division 1 programs. Those five are from Central Michigan, Army, Davenport, Lawrence Tech and Saginaw Valley State. He added that's been heavily in contact with both Harvard and Air Force. As a student with a 3.98 GPA, academics will certainly play a role in his decision. "I've always been raised that academics takes the highest priority," Woodall said. "I'm not sure what I want to do yet, so I think once I find out what I want to do, I can compare what the

Academy will offer with what Harvard can offer." His first offer came from CMU in mid-April. "It was very surreal," Woodall said. "I've been dreaming of playing D1 football since third grade so it was unreal to think that it was actually a possibility and could happen." A power running back, Woodall is a rare combination of size and speed at 6-foot-1, 225-pounds. He routinely broke long runs and left defenders behind in the fall. He also starts at linebacker on defense and is the team's long snapper, which college coaches love. "I'm very unrelenting and tough," Woodall said. "I've always been taught from a running back's stand point to never stop moving your legs, never

See WOODALL, Page 2B

## MHSAA revises reopening guidelines

Colin Gay  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

With Gov. Gretchen Whitmer ending Michigan's stay-at-home order June 1, the Michigan High School Athletic Association revised the guidelines released last week Tuesday to reopen high school sports in the state after they were halted due to the coronavirus pandemic. Schools in the MHSAA may begin summer activities at school facilities outdoors if both the school and the school district has declared that school facilities are open to the students and staff, and that the academic school year is complete.

Based on the executive order released by the state government, schools are allowed to have outdoor groups of 100 people or fewer, but with a safe social distance of six feet between participants. With this, competition may not begin, but outdoor practices and workouts are permitted. Indoor facilities, such as weight rooms and swimming pools, remain closed. "We were excited and encouraged by Governor Whitmer's announcements Monday," MHSAA executive director Mark Uyl said in a statement. "The opportunity for outside gatherings of up to 100 allowed us to rework a number of guidelines that we had pub-

lished Friday as part of the MHSAA/NFHS reopening document. "Our schools have been cautiously eager to take this long-awaited first step. We will continue to provide updates in accordance with the Governor's directives for reopening the state, always prioritizing safety for all involved in school sports programs." As the guidelines released Friday state, all coaches and students should be screened daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Contact reporter Colin Gay at [cgay@hometownlife.com](mailto:cgay@hometownlife.com) or 248-330-6710. Send game results and stats to [LivSports@hometownlife.com](mailto:LivSports@hometownlife.com).

## Madonna football continues patience

Colin Gay  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

On the Madonna University athletics website, there is a timer that is continuing to tick down to Aug. 29 at 12:30 p.m.: the start of Crusader football. Ever since the idea became reality in August 2018, ever since athletic director Scott Kennell hired Brian Foos as Madonna's first head coach in January 2019, the timer has continued to tick down, anticipating the start of a new chapter in the school's history. But heading into the summer before the start of the Crusaders' inaugural season, Madonna players have still yet to put pads on. The coronavirus stopped spring practice and delayed the start of summer preparations for the 2020 season indefinitely. Kennell said the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, the conference Madonna is a member of, will have a meeting to discuss plans for the fall in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic on July 1. While there remains a level of uncertainty as to what actions will take place, Kennell remains optimistic, insisting that Madonna is prepared no matter what the announcement will be on July 1. "We're hoping to go full-throttle with the schedule, as long as it's a good situation with the health of our student-athletes, coaches and staff," Kennell said. Foos said the players are itching to get out onto the field to show what they can do, having waited during the "red-shirt" year of the program to play with a full team in 2020. The head coach praised his group, saying they have been great at being flexible. However, the head coach is anxious too. Foos said he is tired of coaching on-field speed and agility training, tired of leading players in weight room workouts. He is ready to see pads on his players. "I haven't coached football in about 20 months," Foos said. "I'm ready to get back out on the field."

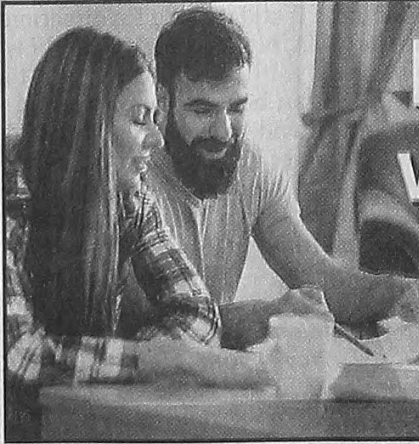
### Anticipating the start

Having previously been a part of two start-up football programs at the collegiate level — at Ohio Dominican and Lindsey Wilson College, respectively — Foos knows what it is like to wait. Knowing nothing about Madonna or

See MADONNA, Page 2B



New Madonna football coach Brian Foos (center) and offensive coordinator Matt Wright (left) are greeted along with mascot Crusader. COURTESY OF BRAD EMONS



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Stevenson's Caden Woodall runs to the end zone for his second touchdown of the game against Novi on Aug. 29, 2019. HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

## Woodall

Continued from Page 1B

stop pushing, never stop fighting. I can offer the ability to always give it my all no matter what."

Of the schools he currently has offers from, he said Army is sticking out the most. The opportunity to play as a full-back/running back in the triple option offense the Black Knights run while also receiving a top education at West Point is very appealing.

"Army is really pushing for me and I've been in close contact with their coach," Woodall said. "They're probably at the top of my list right now, but I haven't made any decisions."

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, he hasn't been able to go on a visit, but plans to as soon as he is able.

"I really enjoyed the brotherhood that Army brought to the table after watching some of the videos they sent me," Woodall said. "That's one of the main things, if I go somewhere, that's one of the main things I want, a very tight-knit group of guys. After watching videos about them, you can tell that they're all

one unit."

In the meantime, he plans to continue working on his lateral quickness and doing whatever he can to help lead Stevenson to the playoffs in 2020. The Spartans went 4-5 and just missed out on the postseason last season.

"He has a strong work ethic and internal desire to be great," Micallef said. "He's one of the hardest workers in the weight room, on the field he's a tireless worker. It all translates to his success."

Micallef said Woodall reminds him of former NFL fullback Mike Alstott, who ran for more than 5,000 yards and scored 58 touchdowns in 12 years with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

College coaches are eager to see more film of Woodall, who is likely to raise his profile even more with a strong senior season. Micallef said the future is bright for Woodall no matter where he chooses to sign.

"He's going to excel no matter where he goes because of his work ethic," Micallef said.

Contact reporter Andrew Vaillien-court at [availlien@hometownlife.com](mailto:availlien@hometownlife.com) or 810-923-0659. Follow him on Twitter @AndrewVcourt. Send story ideas to [Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com](mailto:Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com).



Seaholm runs onto the field prior to its regional match against Port Huron TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## MHSAA sets guidelines for return of high school sports

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Michigan High School Athletic Association released updated timelines and recommendations May 29 to guide the return of high school sports after it suspended the remainder of the sports year on April 3.

According to a release sent by the MHSAA, there will be no use or any organized on-site athletic activities at schools until the "Safer-at-Home" order is lifted by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

The MHSAA teamed up with the National Federation of State High School Associations' Sports Medicine Advisory Committee to come up with a three-step process to returning to full athletic participation, taking actions in five major areas: pre-workout/contest screening of athletes and coaches for sickness, limitations of the number of participants who may be involved in a gathering, proper cleaning for facilities and the use of equipment during activity and

best practices for keeping participants safely hydrated.

Also, the plan designates sports into different categories based on risk for transmitting the coronavirus with adjusted steps based on the level of risk.

According to the guidelines, wrestling, football, boys lacrosse and girls competitive cheer are listed as having higher risk. Basketball, soccer and volleyball are listed as examples of moderate risks, while golf and cross country are lower risk.

"The MHSAA and its Representative Council believe restarting school sports is essential to the physical and mental well-being of students, and the guidelines outlined for schools today provide the 'How' for schools to return to athletics when they've received the go-ahead from state and county health officials," MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said in a statement. "We are thankful for our state government, state education and health departments, our medical partners and the NFHS for their guidance these last few months, and we will

continue to follow and pass on their recommendations as we prepare our schools to bring back this part of student life that's been sorely missed."

As for social distancing, individuals are grouped into tiers from essential to non-essential in terms of who is allowed at an event. Athletes, coaches, officials and other event staff are in the first tier, media is in the second tier, and spectators and vendors coming in the third tier.

School district administrators will be the ones to determine which steps in the MHSAA/NFHS plan their schools are operating under based on the number of people allowed to gather by state medical rules and regulations.

"The MHSAA and its Representative Council believe restarting school sports is essential to the physical and mental well-being of students, and the guidelines outlined for schools today provide the 'How' for schools to return to athletics when they've received the go-ahead from state and county health officials," Uyl said. "We are thankful for our state

government, state education and health departments, our medical partners and the NFHS for their guidance these last few months, and we will continue to follow and pass on their recommendations as we prepare our schools to bring back this part of student life that's been sorely missed."

The guidelines state the MHSAA will also prepare for periodic school closures and the possibility of teams being forced to isolate during their respective seasons, due to the expecting recurrent outbreaks in the fall and winter.

With this, teams are expected to schedule contests that require less travel when possible.

Until the executive order is lifted, the only activity allowed by the MHSAA is individual outdoor activities like walking and running in groups of 10 or fewer people with social distancing involved.

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

## Madonna

Continued from Page 1B

Livonia, Foos immediately saw potential for success when he took the job, equating the team construction as similar to what he helped build as a graduate assistant at Ohio Dominican: Madonna was in the suburb of a major city and talent was everywhere.

"Our potential is through the roof," Foos said. "Now, it's going to take some time to get there, but we've got the makings of something very special here. As a football coach, you look for things that are special like that. It was very clear to see there is something very special going on here at Madonna."

For Kennell, football was not some-

thing on his radar when he took the Madonna athletic director job in 2016.

First dabbling in the thought of adding men's and women's ice hockey, Kennell, who spent five years as the head of athletics at Penn College, saw what other universities were doing, and saw the potential of what football could do for the university as a whole.

"Football, in my opinion, completes the total experience for the college student, brings more energy to any other sporting event on campus," Kennell said. "It helps engage the community surrounding the campus as well. Football, I think, is a good sport to bring on to unite everyone around the Madonna University area and community."

From the start, Kennell said he expects football to be the driving force of the athletic department, creating a

bond between Madonna and the rest of the Livonia community.

In the year-and-a-half between taking the head coaching job and the start of the first season, Foos said his focus has been on being welcomed in the Livonia community before welcoming the city into its games starting Aug. 29.

"I want people involved in our program because it is in their city," Foos said. "Hopefully it becomes a part of, 'Hey, what did Madonna do this last weekend?'"

Players are waiting for the start of that process. Kennell said players have been reaching out to him and the coaching staff wanting answers to, "When can we get to campus? When can we work out?"

Foos said that close to immediately after Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer

ended the state's stay-at-home order, his quarterback texted him with the news, anticipating the soon start to practice.

"I'm just like, 'Hold on,'" Foos said with a chuckle.

Madonna is still waiting for direction from the NAIA, but will be ready to show the university, to show Livonia and to show Michigan how the hard work already put in will look like on the field when that timer hits zero.

"I see us as Livonia's team," Kennell said. "We are Livonia's team, and I think that's something that everyone can be proud of."

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



# Seaholm celebrates 2020 college-bound athletes

**Colin Gay**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

Seaholm High School announced that 10 athletes would be signing to play their respective sports at the collegiate level next year.

Four of the 10 signees were members of the 2019 football team that finished its season in the Division 2 state semifinal.

Here is a look at the members of Seaholm's 2020 signing class:

**Will Bournias:** Football at Albion College

**Scott Clippert:** Baseball at Albion College

**James DeWald:** Football at Western Michigan

**Nick Lamb:** Lacrosse at University of Detroit Mercy

**Carly Mixon:** Track and Field at University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Sydney Pickell:** Golf at Kalamazoo College

**Sathya Siddapureddy:** Football at Pomona College

**Chaz Strecker:** Football at Kalamazoo College

**Spencer Whittington:** Golf at Hope College

**Mark Wischmeyer:** Soccer at Otterbein University

Contact reporter Colin Gay at [cgay@hometownlife.com](mailto:cgay@hometownlife.com) or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to [LivSports@hometownlife.com](mailto:LivSports@hometownlife.com).



Birmingham Seaholm running back Chaz Strecker heads into the Groves line on Nov. 8. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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# ADs, coaches: MHSAA brings path to restart athletics

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

After the suspension and the cancellation of Michigan high school sports April 3 due to the spread of the coronavirus, no one really knew when they would be back, and what they would look like.

Friday, the Michigan High School Athletic Association gave member schools an idea of what a return would look like with a set of guidelines and rules that would bring athletics back safely.

Even without a distinct timetable — with executive director Mark Uyl pointing to the “Safer-at-Home” deadline of June 12 as a starting point — area coaches and athletic directors view the guidelines as a step in the right direction.

“What it means for us is, the same sense of hope we have been pushing this whole time now has some validity to it,” Detroit Catholic Central athletic director Aaron Babicz said.

The MHSAA, along with the National Federation of State High School Association, has released a three-step process to return to full athletic participation, taking actions in areas such as screening athletes and coaches at practices and games for sickness and proper cleaning of equipment used.

Babicz said this is something the Shamrocks have been planning for, with him talking to fellow athletic directors around the country, getting safety measures and plans in place to best protect students and families when the process starts.

Despite purchasing cleaning equipment and setting contingency plans in place, Babicz said he really does not know when this plan will be put into motion, citing some key dates, such as the deadline for the “Safer-at-Home” order and the MHSAA’s next meeting on June 15.

“As we get closer to those and get through those, I think we will have a clearer idea,” Babicz said. “But do I think we can return to activity with fall sports? Yes. Do I think they will look the same? No, but I think with the proper regulations and paper trails and things like that to keep everyone safe, I think we can get back to that sense of normal-



Livonia Stevenson sophomore forward Reece Brown and junior defender Alec Alaouieh celebrate a Spartans goal. Livonia Stevenson ties Dearborn Fordson 1-1 on Sept. 17. COLIN GAY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

cy.”

While the MHSAA has started the process, Livonia Franklin athletic director Ron Hammye believes there is a lot more information that is needed that is not provided.

“Certainly going into this thing, we knew there would be a lot more prep going into practice and after practice,” Hammye said. “But still, so many things remain vague: What are we going to do about spectators? When will we be able to start?”

“There are still more questions than answers in the document.”

## Higher risk means longer path

For North Farmington head football coach Jon Herstein, the plan given is what he expected it to be.

The MHSAA separated each of the high school athletics into three categories: lower, moderate and higher risk. The start of practices and competitions depend on which category the sport is in.

For football, the process still seems daunting. Higher risk practices, also including boys lacrosse and wrestling, may only begin in Step 3 of the association’s three-step plan. Competition can only resume after “reassessing the epidemiology data, experiences in other states and government or health department directives.”

Herstein has been realistic, saying that he does understand it will take time to get back to where the sport was before the pandemic.

“We don’t want to see anybody get sick, from our players to the coaches to family members,” Herstein said. “We want to make sure we are doing this the right way.”

Herstein is focused on making preparations for a safe return, looking into team masks, and utilizing space to enforce proper social distancing measures during weight and physical training. The program has also purchased sanitizers and soaps to clean equipment after use.

However, his main focus during the

time of uncertainty has been on the state of his players mentally, making sure each one is contacted and heard during the pandemic.

“This is an obstacle that we are all facing,” Herstein said. “We can come together and come out of this even stronger, even more together, and we can take the opportunity to grow in different ways than we might have been growing when we were together.”

## A sense of hope

Stevenson soccer head coach Ken Shingledecker said he is more in a “wait and see” mentality, waiting for direction from Livonia Public Schools as to what to do based on the information given by the MHSAA.

According to Hammye, the district is putting together committees for discussion of every aspect of the start of high school athletics, including after school activities, such as athletics.

However, Shingledecker said, the release does provide a level of progress.

“I think today was an important day to get these guidelines out there so that everyone can start to head down the right path,” Shingledecker said.

Right now, he is focused on preaching to his players to “Stay ready,” to do what they can to better prepare themselves for what could happen.

“If it does come back online, we want to make sure we are not behind the curve,” Shingledecker said. “You are sitting on the couch for six weeks going, ‘This isn’t going to happen,’ and suddenly it happens and you’re not ready. So stay ready I think has been a major message to all the kids.”

To coaches and athletic directors, this release showing the “how,” even if it may not say the “when,” is a message to their kids that says there is a level of hope for a return.

To them, these guidelines make high school athletics more tangible.

“If I’m a kid and I know that document came out, and I know there is going to be stuff all over the place, I’m so excited,” Babicz said.

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

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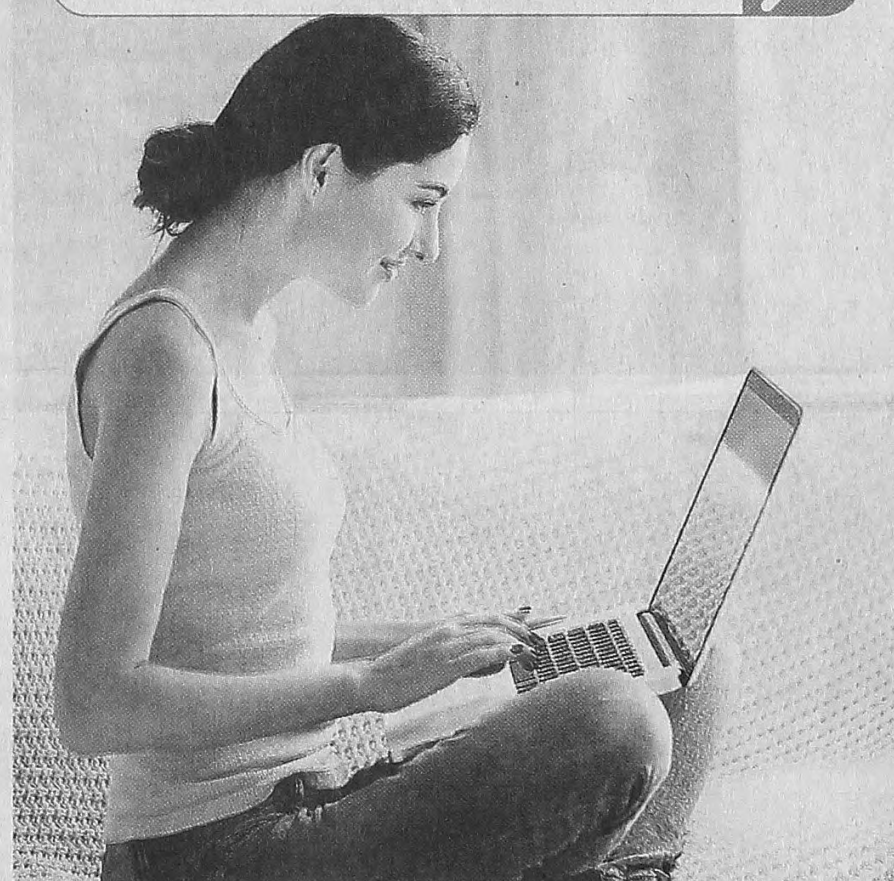
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