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FPS superintendent, 2 board members resign

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Farmington's superintendent and two school board members have resigned due to online and public harassment.

After an hour and a half of a closed session meeting Monday, the district's school board announced the resignation of Superintendent Robert Herrera.

Herrera, who took the job in May 2019, cited apparent harassment from Board Secretary Angie Smith.

Board President Pamela Green made the announcement, noting Herrera will continue as superintendent through Jan. 22, 2021 before being placed on work leave and continuing to serve in an advisory role until June 30, 2021.

The resignation agreement, which the board approved, also bars Herrera



Herrera

from pursuing legal action against the district for Smith's alleged harassment, which, according to the agreement, claimed Herrera was prejudiced against Black staff and students.

"I really hate to see that things have come to this and it's very disappointing," Vice President Terry Johnson said.

"I think he's done a good job so far and I think it's the loss of this district."

"He's really the right man for this job."

Nearly every board member lamented the loss of Herrera's leadership, saying he has been a strong superintendent in his short time in the role.

Some board members also said that

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Families making new plans for Thanksgiving in pandemic

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Randy Webster tears up when asked about her holiday plans.

The Lyon Township resident is 69, has a medical condition and suffered through the death of her husband last year. Webster has two daughters who are doing their best to keep their mother from being lonely.

"We're trying to work it out, or we might still get together and wear masks," Webster said. "It's so hard. It's harder on my daughter; she feels so bad she can't be with me. We were getting together outside, but now it's getting colder..."

Webster has plenty of company in wondering how best to celebrate holidays and traditions in what has otherwise been a not-so-joyous year.

Ideas to spread cheer and not COVID-19 with cases on the rise vary from self-quarantines and rapid testing to garage gatherings and virtual visits.

One of Webster's daughters effectively self-isolates with her husband, who works from home, as well as their two young children, so that Webster can still see her grandchildren, whom she calls "my joy."

Webster's other daughter, a Brighton teacher, is unable to quarantine as she currently instructs students face-to-face, but is considering a COVID-19 test for the "all-clear" once the holiday break begins.

Chris and Alexandra Melekian of Birmingham are weighing the risks of getting together with family for Thanksgiving.

"I am adamant that immediate family be in our own bubble and don't see others for two weeks beforehand," Alexandra said.

Michele Stump of Lyon Township is planning for a typical Thanksgiving get-together, made even better by with a day off work at Walmart, which will be closed this year for the holiday. She plans to go to her sister's home for a gathering of between 15-20 people, which varies depending on who has a boyfriend and who doesn't and whose children show up.

Over time, she said, her family's

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Christine Roperti greets some of the thousands of Wilford white turkeys she and her family are raising on their farm.

PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Livonia family talks turkey

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

In the days leading up to Thanksgiving this year, Christine Roperti and her family will "dress" about 4,400 turkeys for customers.

By the time the actual holiday rolls around, they're all a little tired of looking at birds.

So the Roperti family, which owns Roperti's Turkey Farm, a local institution that's been open since 1948, doesn't have turkey for Thanksgiving dinner. Instead, they all sit around a table to eat filet mignon, pasta, mushrooms and stone crabs.

"You know, after those four days, my kids and my family don't want to see another turkey," Roperti said.

But, Roperti and her husband, Wesley, along with the rest of the family who work the five-acre farm at 34700 Five Mile in Livonia, including her two sons Tony and Tom, daughter-in-law Ferida and grandchildren Maverick and Merida, love what they do.

See TURKEY, Page 8A



Many of the turkeys raised at Roperti's Turkey Farm weight in at well more than 16 pounds before processing. They sell for \$3.79 per pound.



New commercial building planned at former UAW site at Canton Center

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A new building welcoming drivers entering Canton Township from the north could come on the site of a former United Auto Workers facility.

The township's planning commission reviewed plans during its meeting Monday at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill that would demolish the former UAW building at Canton Center and Joy Road and replace it with a new building anchored by Havens Orthodontics. There was no official word about what other businesses could occupy the space, but developers said they were in discussions with some brands to locate there.

The new building on the border with Plymouth Township would replace the old one and be larger than the current structure.

It would be two stories, with opportunities for businesses like fast-casual restaurants, bakeries or coffee shops on the bottom level, as well as some offices for other businesses elsewhere, including on the second floor.

"I wasn't looking for a strip mall development," Aaron Havens, who owns Havens Orthodontics, said. "I was looking for the low-touch feel of our own offices."

The commission voted unanimously to approve the planned development district for the space. It now gets sent to the township board for its review and decision.

Commissioner Nancy Eggenberger said such a concept could be very successful, depending on the kinds of businesses that go into the building. Having the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park and its three high schools nearby could result in better business but also traffic issues, she said.

"I think it's a great-looking building and I think if you add some coffee shops and a bakery in there, you'll be pretty darn busy with all the students," she said. "But that's what makes me nervous."

"It takes those kids a lot of time to get out of the parking lots."

Some commissioners expressed some concern over the building's height. It would stand at about 35 feet, about five feet more than what is usually allowed in that area, and would be one of the taller buildings in that part of Canton.

"Aside from the schools, that would be the tallest building in the area," Commission Chair Greg Greene said. "Because there's a commercial park to the south and those buildings are not nearly that high."

After some discussion, including over current trends of taller ceilings for office buildings, it was brought up that perhaps Canton needed to update its ordinance to possibly allow for taller buildings. Community Planner Patrick Sloan said there had been some discussion of changing such ordinances, but had nothing to recommend at this time.



A rendering shows the proposed new building at Canton Center and Joy in Canton Township. The building would occupy the land on the former UAW site. COURTESY OF CANTON TOWNSHIP

"Updating those zoning ordinances has gone to the back burner," Sloan said. "We had nothing really set in stone in terms of a proposal to come to planning commission."

Greene said he would have preferred simply looking at this individual project first before even discussing any major

changes to the township's height requirements for buildings.

"I would rather deal with this modification on a single project," he said.

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

Farmington Hills police arrest two in connection with break-ins

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Farmington Hills police have made two arrests in connection with a number of break-ins throughout Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

Police arrested Romelo Buggs, 23, and Andrea Dawkins, 29, on Wednesday. The two were arraigned in 47th District Court the next day. Both were charged with a five-count felony for breaking and entering a building with intent. Buggs is also charged with driving while license suspended, and Dawkins is charged with a two-count felony for breaking and entering a building with intent.

Magistrate Michael Sawicky set Buggs' cash bond at \$50,000 with 10%. Dawkins, on the other hand, was given a \$50,000 personal bond.

The two will appear in court again 9:30 a.m. Friday for a preliminary exam before Judge Marla Parker.

Authorities believe the two are connected to a number of break-ins affecting businesses in the tri-county area.

Farmington Hills police request anyone with information contact the department at 248-871-2610.



The owner of Lefty's Cheesesteak in Westland wants to put in a drive-thru window at the restaurant along Wayne Road. DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Westland cheesesteak eatery owner wants to add drive-thru

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A new cheesesteak restaurant in Westland's Shop and Dine district wants to add a drive-thru as a way to help keep serving up sandwiches during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lefty's Cheesesteak and Hoagies, 7060 Wayne, opened earlier this fall just south of Warren Road. Representatives from the restaurant group came to the city's planning commission during its meeting Nov. 4 at Westland City Hall to request adding a drive-thru around the building for the business, a move that would help them as dining habits continue to trend toward carryout.

"I would just like to add with the pandemic, having a drive-thru would be very, very helpful," said Erica Mallad, the daughter of the restaurant's owner, Allie Mallad. "It's more contactless and you aren't as close to the customer."

The restaurant is just the latest Lefty's

to open in the region. Originally launched in Livonia during the recession more than 10 years ago, Lefty's now operates in several area communities, including White Lake Township and Milford. Another Lefty's opened earlier this fall in South Lyon in the space where A Good Day Cafe operated until it closed for good earlier this spring.

Several new locations are in the works both across metro Detroit and nationwide, including in places like Texas and California. The restaurant serves up cheesesteaks, hot and cold subs, hamburgers and more.

While adding the drive-thru was unanimously recommended for approval by the planning commission during its meeting, some commissioners were slightly concerned about the amount of space the drive-thru lane would occupy. From the building to the curb, the drive-thru lane would have 17 feet of clearance, which is enough to fit a second car to pass by but the spacing would be tight.

Commissioner Sam Durante said as

he looked at the plans, as well as recalling what it looks like when he visited the building, that he didn't think there wouldn't be enough clearance for a second vehicle to drive by.

"I've been around this building several times," he said. "There's not enough room for two cars on that strip."

Mallad said she and her father had tested the site by driving their vehicles in the space and both could make it through.

Commissioner Lori Wilson said she had some concern over trying to possibly get a firetruck around the corner given their size now. Planning Director Mohamed Ayoub said while the trucks may be larger now, the city would not require a retroactive change to the building.

"Even if there was a fire department issue there, they would not ask the business to tear down a portion of the building," he said.

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

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Students can overcome the challenges of pandemic



Your Turn
Peter Provenzano Jr.

"Home for the holidays" for college students and their families promises to look different this year. While at home, conversations will likely cover a wide range of topics, but one of the most important is a discussion of the student's plans for next semester.

While words like "synchronous and asynchronous" classes have become part of the student lexicon, while attempts at offering a traditional college experience, including on-campus learning, student housing and student activities, remains a tremendous challenge. Faculty and administrators throughout Michigan and across the country are making every effort to provide this experience while students are taking great strides to learn and adapt in this remote learning format.

This environment is challenging and, for many college students, the idea of taking a semester off in the hopes that college will "return to normal" in the near future may sound appealing, but they shouldn't. Every semester, students come to us with situations that cause tremendous disruption to their academic pursuits including financial, health or family difficulties. These challenges make it difficult to continue their education without taking a break. We listen and we respect their choices but we tell them that taking a break isn't always the right answer and there are options available to support them.

The reality is, taking a break can make it more difficult to finish a degree. Research shows that there is a direct parallel to the number of credits a student completes to both student retention and graduation rates. For example, both full- and part-time students who have completed 30 or more credits are about 15% more likely to be successful in continuing on with their program.

Taking a break from college can also mean students don't return to college at all, which can have a direct and adverse

impact in future earnings and job satisfaction. According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from 2019, the average weekly salary for those who earn a bachelor's degree was \$1,281 (\$66,612 annually) and \$874 weekly (\$45,448 annually) for those with an associate degree. Compare that with the \$749 weekly (\$38,948 annually) average for those with only a high school diploma and you can see that earning a college degree is a good investment that should not be put at risk.

In addition to the earning differential, those with a degree also are likely to have better career options resulting in more job security and satisfaction. We know the job market will continue to demand advanced degrees, certificates and training, and job candidates will need these credentials to get ahead.

Community colleges know how much is at stake. As mission-driven organizations, student success is our top priority. At Oakland Community College all of our student services are available virtually to ensure our students can stay safe while staying on track with their education. We also understand there are barriers to online learning and that's why we used \$1 million of the federal funds we received via the CARES Act to help supply free Dell laptops to 2,100 full-time students for fall semester and have an additional 1,400 laptops available for this next semester.

Without a doubt, learning online from home at a kitchen table or in a bedroom takes a lot of discipline. But statistics and experience show it is well worth the effort. We hope students can look at this time as a challenge they can overcome and reach out for help if they need it. They have options and we are here to provide them. Like our students, we are learning and adapting and implementing innovative new technologies. And, we are doing everything we can to ensure we have our students' backs to help them be successful now and for their future.

Provenzano Jr. is the chancellor of Oakland Community College.

Comparing plans: Medicare vs. Medicare Advantage



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest columnist

Dear Rick:

A few weeks ago, I attended a Medicare Advantage webinar. Since that seminar, I have been hounded by people trying to convince me to go into Medicare Advantage. I've also noticed a lot more commercials about it. I currently have regular Medicare, Medicare Part B and a Medicare Prescription D plan. The people from Medicare Advantage tell me that I would be foolish not to make a change. They claim that they can save me money and offer everything Medicare does and more. I don't want to make a mistake. Can you tell me if what the salesperson tells me is true? In addition, what are the downsides of Medicare Advantage?

Thank you, HC

Dear H.C.:

You are not alone in being confused. There is a lot of misinformation out there, particularly during open enrollment. Although I'm not in favor of aggressive salespeople, what you were told about Medicare Advantage is true. Many Medicare Advantage programs offer services, such as optical and dental, which are not included in original Medicare, and there are some Medicare Advantage plans that have zero premiums. Not all Medicare Advantage Plans are the same, and therefore, it is important to compare the different plans and select the one that best suits your situation.

Medicare Advantage consists of Medicare-approved plans offered by private companies. Many of these plans are an all-in-one alternative to original Medicare. These plans include Medicare Part A (hospitals) and Part B (medical) and, in most cases, Part D. In addition, many of these plans offer extra benefits such as vision, hearing and dental. When you have original Medicare, Part A is free, and then you pay for Part B, Part D and generally a

supplemental insurance plan. With Medicare Advantage, these are bundled together into one plan. Although you generally will still have to pay your Medicare Part B premiums, there are plans with no additional premiums.

Therefore, what the salesperson told you is essentially accurate. However, there are some disadvantages to Medicare Advantage.

Generally with Medicare, you're free to go to any doctor that accepts Medicare. That is not the case with Medicare Advantage. Typically, you must go to a doctor in their network. Thus, you may not be able to use your current doctors. If you go to a doctor outside your network, you may be responsible for those costs. In addition, you may find that those costs do not apply to your out-of-pocket maximum within your policy.

Another disadvantage to Medicare Advantage is that for certain types of services and procedures, you must have a referral from your primary care doctor. In addition, this could affect home healthcare, medical equipment, and other services. For example, before you can go to an ear and nose specialist, you would need to receive a referral from your primary doctor.

Typically, Medicare Advantage plans are limited to geographical areas. If you spend winters in Florida, for example, you may not have adequate coverage when you're in Florida. For Michiganders who spend a few months a year outside the state, Medicare Advantage may not be the way to go.

Is Medicare Advantage a better option? It all depends upon your individual situation. Don't let salespeople sway you. The key is to look at what works best for you. There is no one right answer with regards to Medicare original versus Medicare Advantage. Each program has its strong points, and each has its weaknesses. You need to focus on your individual situation and make the right decision for you and only you.

Good luck!

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

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Livonia still among county's hardest-hit cities

Shelby Tankersley HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Last week, Livonia recorded 358 new COVID-19 cases, its highest infection rate in a single week. On Wednesday, Nov. 10, the city recorded 78 new cases, its highest single day total.

In Wayne County, only Dearborn and Detroit have more COVID-19 infections.

St. Mary Mercy Hospital, the only hospital in Livonia, has seen a significant increase in patients who need in-patient care because of the virus.

Second wave comes to St. Mary Mercy

"We're up significantly over where we were a month ago," David Spivey, the hospital's president, said. "Whereas we may have had 10 people in the hospital who were COVID-positive and five under investigation, now we're up to 40 with another 10 under investigation."

Spivey said the hospital is nowhere near the around 170 admitted patients it had at one time in April, but cases are certainly on the rise. The hospital has been doing support-based "resiliency rounds" with staff and holding town halls twice monthly for staff to voice concerns and ask questions.

Though there's some anxiety, staff also have a sense of confidence that wasn't there in the spring.

"I think we know more about how the disease is transmitted and so there's a bit of a sense of confidence on how we can prevent the spread," Dr. Matthew Griffin, the hospital's chief medical officer, said. "I think there's frustration from a lot of staff members that the rise is coming again because many of us believe it could be controlled if we did the right things, like if everybody was wearing their mask and doing their social distancing."

Griffin added the "mortality rate affiliated with it seems to be less than it was in the early wave" and health professionals are more confident treating patients who do need hospital care.

But, Livonia Mayor Maureen Miller Brosnan said, one of her top priorities remains keeping the hospital from becoming overwhelmed.

"Livonia residents are resilient and



Matthew Griffin, M.D., St. Mary Mercy Hospital's chief medical officer, talks about the Livonia healthcare facility's changes since the pandemic began and how it's preparing for the upcoming winter season. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

we're going to do what's necessary to make sure that we don't overwhelm our hospital," she said. "That's really the most important thing."

City administration works to keep cases down

Brosnan said the city's many long-term care facilities continue to be adversely affected by the pandemic and the city is continually trying to help equip and educate those facilities through Livonia Cares.

During the summer, the city prepared for another wave.

"We've been preparing namely by stockpiling the PPE we believe is going to be necessary, and that's been one of the primary things we've been able to do," Brosnan said. "We've had some fantastic community partnerships. Ford Motor Company, for example, recently

donated masks to us."

In light of Governor Gretchen Whitmer's announcement Sunday that includes a three-week closure of schools, casinos, movie theaters and other businesses, Brosnan said those who need to do business at city hall will need to make an appointment. If possible, residents are encouraged to mail bills or use the drop box outside city hall.

Brosnan said she knows closures and restrictions can be frustrating, but keeping case numbers down and assisting St. Mary Mercy in whatever way possible is necessary.

"The entire leadership team - council, the mayor's office - we understand how difficult this is," she said. "We also know how much our city cares about the people who live here, who work here and our first responders ... I trust, knowing that, we will all do our part to make sure we don't overload our hospital sys-

tem."

On the hospital's end, Griffin said he wants people to remember "this will end." The hospital plans and hopes to continually offer all of its services, unlike in the spring, and Spivey said people who are sick with ailments other than COVID-19 can count on St. Mary Mercy for safe treatment.

"The last thing you would want to do would be to spread the virus to a loved one who is more vulnerable in their ability to fight it off," he said. "It isn't life-threatening for younger people and we understand the fatigue, but I don't think anybody would want to spread it to somebody who is more vulnerable. So, I think we have to work together as a community."

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

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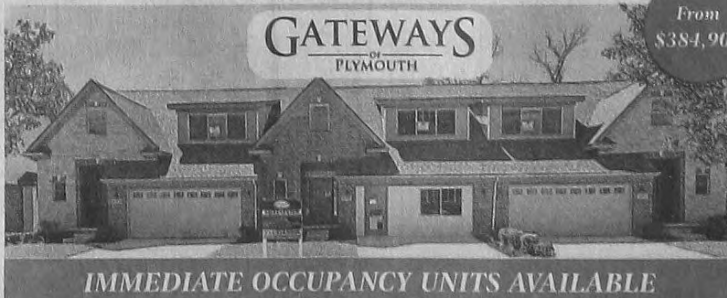
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Farmington, Westland Pet Valu stores closing

David Veselenak

HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

An area pet supplies store is set to close its doors for good, blaming the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pet Valu, which has stores across the United States, recently announced it would close all its stores as a result of economic issues caused by the pandemic, according to a news release. Those closures will impact two area stores: one at 23320 Farmington in downtown Farmington and another at 31451 Cherry Hill in the Cherry Hill Marketplace shopping center in Westland. Another store just north of Farmington Hills, at 33230 W. 14 Mile in West Bloomfield Township, is also set to close.

"The Pet Valu U.S. team is proud to have met the needs of our devoted pet lover customers in the U.S. for more than 25 years," said Jamie Gould, Pet Valu, Inc.'s recently appointed chief restructuring officer, in a statement. "However, the



Downtown Farmington's Pet Valu will soon close.
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

company's stores have been significantly impacted by the protracted COVID-19-related restrictions. After a thorough review of all available alternatives, we made the difficult but necessary decision to commence this orderly wind down."

More than 350 stores are expected to close across the U.S. Pet Valu Canada, a separate entity in Canada, will continue to operate.

Customers can still shop in-store at area Pet Valu stores using gift

cards and loyalty rewards, though the company recommends shoppers use those by Dec. 13. Online shopping has been discontinued, so customers looking to shop for their pet in-person until stores close.

More information on the company, including closing sales, can be found at petvalu.com/us.

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

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Students in the Farmington Public Schools district won't go back to in-person learning until 2021. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

FPS further delays in-person learning

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Farmington schools Superintendent Robert Herrera knows his district's decision to continue online learning while some nearby districts return to in-person classes is not a universally popular.

He also knows the health safety of his students and staff is really important.

As the district's board of education unanimously voted to delay sending elementary-age student back to in-person learning until Jan. 11, 2021, Herrera said it's because the administration believes it's the safest course for its students and staff. Previously, elementary schools were scheduled to return to buildings Nov. 16.

"Our board has been very clear to us that safety is clearly first," he said. "We

don't want to expose people if we don't have to."

Herrera said had Oakland County maintained its C coronavirus spread rating and not jumped to an E rating, the highest risk level, Farmington elementary schools would be in session. But, he fears community spread would needlessly endanger students and staff and, in the end, just result in another closure. Several nearby districts, like West Bloomfield, Huron Valley and Livonia, have had to withdraw some or all in-person learning because of outbreaks.

"We felt pretty good that we could bring everybody back and keep everybody safe with some in-person instruction," Herrera said. "Then what happens is that (Oakland County) moves from a C to an E in about two weeks if that. So now the concern isn't that we're worried

about spreading the virus within the school system. The lens we have to consider now ... is the impact of the community spread on the schools."

Herrera noted if 10% of his teaching staff got sick or needed to quarantine, the district wouldn't have the staff needed to hold in-person classes for every grade. While substitute teachers are an option, Herrera said he worries students having a substitute for the two-week quarantine period may not yield the best results. Many districts are struggling to find substitute teachers regardless.

"Do we really want to bring them back now knowing that we're just going to have to quarantine teachers and students, close schools to clean buildings and go through all that?" he said. "You're going to have a lot of disruption."

The superintendent noted the staffing issue is one administration is and has been working to fix.

Though the risk factors are significant, Herrera said the district's delays are not for lack of planning. When the county returns to a C rating, Farmington is "good to go." The district currently plans to stagger in-person return, with elementary starting Jan. 11 and secondary students starting Jan. 25.

But if community spread continues to grow, Herrera said students might be waiting even longer.

"There are realities to even meeting those deadlines," he said. "Unless the community spread significantly changes, we're going to be reviewing the Jan. 11 and Jan. 25 starts again."

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at stankersle@hometownlife.com.

Plans

Continued from Page 1A

views on social distancing changed.

"We didn't see my parents until July; we wanted to keep them safe," Stump said. "They finally said, 'Come up to Clare, we want to see you and the kids.'"

What does Dr. Russell Faust, Oakland County medical director, advise about all these holiday plans? The risks of each vary.

Quarantine qualified

Quarantines aren't doable for most families who work outside the home or who have children attending in-person school, but if it can be managed, it will require at least 14 days of not seeing anyone outside your household.

Faust said that 14-day quarantine is based on the incubation period of the coronavirus as determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and chances are good you will be virus-free if you haven't had any exposures for a full two weeks. But there are still a few cases of coronavirus that have developed outside of the 14-day period.

Tests aren't foolproof

Novi residents Dana and Karen Katinas said most of their family lives out of state and they usually celebrate Thanksgiving with their kids, two of whom are in college and one who is in high school, as well as some friends. They are considering getting a COVID-19 rapid test.

Rapid tests have issues with reliability, however, and even a more precise test for which results take longer has its downsides.

Not all COVID-19 tests are created equal. Families may rush for an antigen or "rapid" test which can return faulty



Ideas to avoid spreading COVID-19 vary from self-quarantines and rapid testing to garage gatherings and virtual visits.

GETTY IMAGES

results, but even the "gold-standard" PCR molecular test is not a guarantee, Faust said.

If it returns negative, it only means that person was not shedding virus at the time of the test. The virus could be laying dormant in the blood. It is not an indicator of exposure and the person who tests negative could still develop COVID-19 in the days following, he said.

"It doesn't matter that we test them, unless we test them every day," he said.

"Negative today doesn't mean negative tomorrow."

Masks, distancing, gathering place

Gathering at a family member's home? Plan on wearing a mask. N95 are the greatest protection, but difficult to come by as they are rightfully reserved for hospital workers. KN95 is the next best thing, but airborne particles can still get through.

Sitting six feet apart is good, but 12 feet is better, and plenty of ventilation is best.

Outside is best, but Michigan weather isn't expected to be a willing partner for comfortable conditions in November and December. If you can't be outside, a well-ventilated garage (with the door open) is a better option than a crowded living room.

See PLANS, Page 8A

Resign

Continued from Page 1A

improper conduct among other board members has been an ongoing issue for years.

"I truly believe that he was the person," Green said. "His skill set was nothing like we've ever seen in this district. So, this is painful. Very painful."

The board also censured, or publicly disapproved of, Smith's actions.

Smith, due to some technical difficulty and a personal conflict, moved in and

out of the virtual meeting. She was not present for the 5-1 censure vote.

Board Treasurer Terri Weems cast the lone dissenting vote.

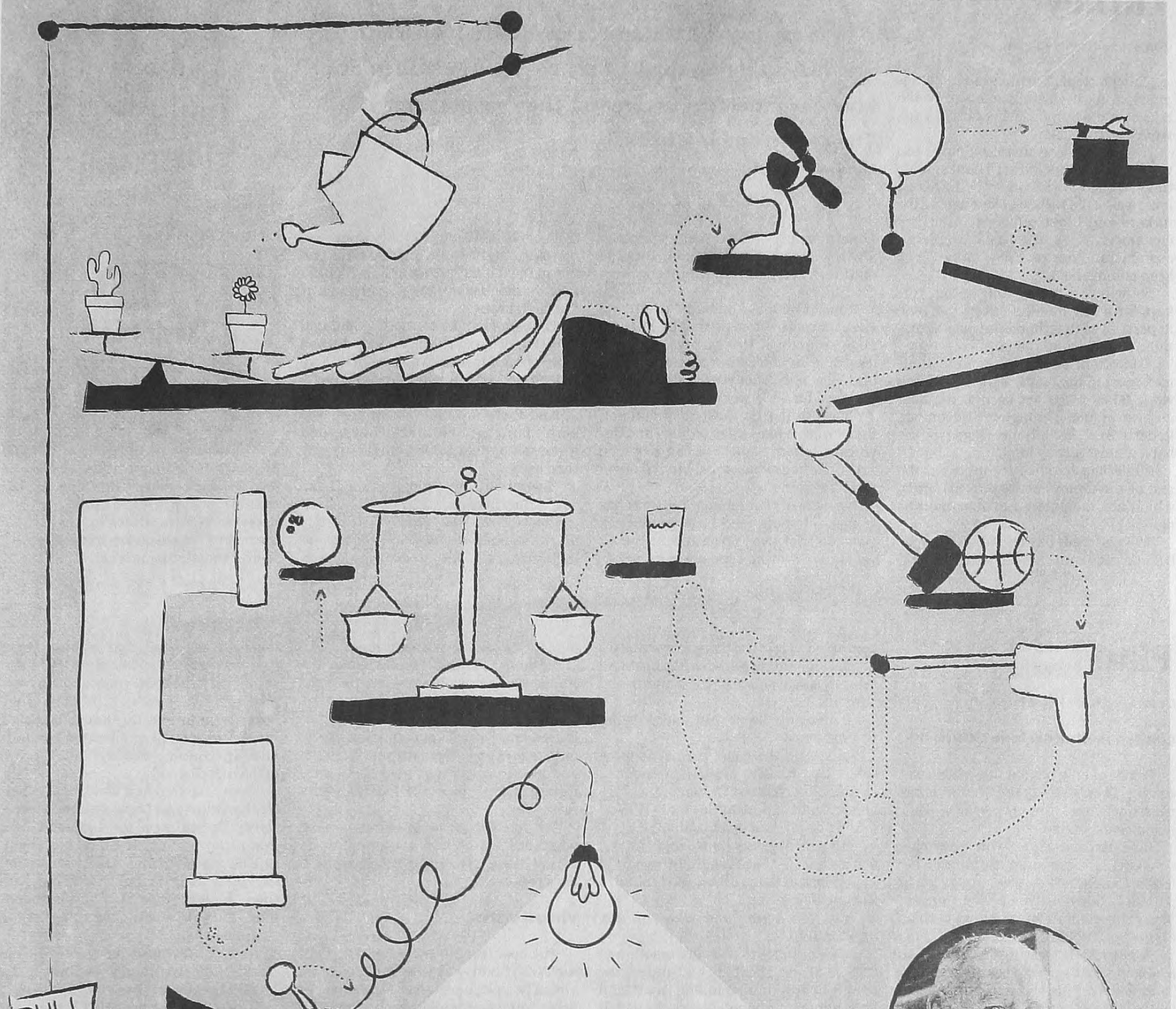
At the meeting's end, Johnson announced his resignation from the board effective Saturday.

Green followed suit, and her resignation

is effective Friday.

Both noted consistent improper conduct by other board members as their reason for stepping down.

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



Goldberg

SPOTLIGHT ON

Rube Goldberg

Crazy contraptions appeal to those stuck mainly at home with time to fill

Mike Malone Special to Rockland/Westchester Journal News | USA TODAY NETWORK

For a man whose name suggests convoluted machinery stretching across vast expanses to perform elaborate tasks, Rube Goldberg's gravestone is a bit understated. • Goldberg was buried at Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Hawthorne, New York, 50 years ago in December, yet his name and his legacy are being bandied about like never before. • The pandemic has seen numerous families, stuck at home and sick of Zoom meetings, construct wonderfully complicated Rube Goldberg machines – think of the board game “Mousetrap” with its swinging boot and cascading marble and diving man each playing a part in catching the mouse – and sharing their creations on YouTube.

Rube Goldberg enjoyed a 13% rise in online mentions from the pandemic's beginning to midsummer, according to Rube Goldberg Inc. Legacy Director Jennifer George, as measured by the organization's advertising agency.

“Everyone is at home, sequestered in little bubbles,” said George, who is Goldberg's granddaughter.

“To have an all-ages family project to get you away from screens, all you need is a pile of junk. It's a fun way to pass the time, do something educational and do something with your kids.”

Rube Goldberg Inc. defines a Goldberg machine as “a crazy contraption which accomplishes a simple task in the most complicated and funniest way possible.”

Crazy contests, video game partnership

Every year for the past 33 years, Rube Goldberg Inc. hosts the Rube Goldberg Machine Contest, laying out the purpose of the machine, be it putting toothpaste on a toothbrush or sliding money into a piggy bank, and challenging makers to come up with creative hardware to complete the task. The

winner is crowned in April.

But the 2020 contest, building a machine designed to turn off a light, was blown up due to the pandemic.

COVID-19 did spark a spontaneous online Rube Goldberg contest: fitting of the times, it involved crafting a machine that drops a bar of soap into a person's hands. Around 450 teams entered, representing 12 countries. A Toronto family, whose creation ventured into just about every room of their home, across multiple floors, won top prize.

“It was kind of a sensation,” said George of the soap-dropping derby. “It was more successful than we dreamed it could be/would be.”

The current Goldberg contest seeks out machines that shake and pour a box of Nerds candy. (Goldberg Inc., which has 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status, has sponsors such as Nerds to help cover its expenses.) George announced the Nerds contest in early October, and the winner will be crowned in April 2021.

For the first time, Rube Goldberg is venturing into the videogame space, partnering with Minecraft on a contest that involves building a Goldberg machine within the game. Goldberg Inc. offers free online Minecraft building tutorials every other Wednesday.

Goldberg was born in 1883 and grew up in San Francisco before moving to Manhattan. An inventor and a cartoonist, he received the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning in 1948.

Goldberg died Dec. 7, 1970. Living on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, he had picked out a spot at Westchester's Mount Pleasant Cemetery in which to be buried. “He said, this is nice, it has a tree,” said George. “It's a beautiful spot.”

George did not realize the 50th anniversary of her grandfather's death is approaching. “I think we have to do something to acknowledge the 50th,” she said.

Rube would be fascinated, she said, to see how most every human has a complicated machine buried inside their pockets, and would be disheartened to think about how none of us really know how the gadgetry within our mobile phones executes its mission.

He would probably be shocked to learn that Rube Goldberg remains a household name 50 years after his death. “He'd be so happy that people are talking about him,” said George. “He liked to be talked about.”

Mike Malone is a Hudson Valley freelance writer. Contact him at metro@lohud.com

Turkey

Continued from Page 1A

Though Roperti had several siblings growing up, it was obvious she would take over the farm from her father, Tom, when the time came.

"I was always there helping and would take orders during Thanksgiving time," she said. "I just loved being here. I love raising the turkeys, I love selling the turkeys and I love talking to all of my customers. You know, I have wonderful customers. They're like family. They keep coming back."

Though the family only raises turkeys for a few months out of the year, Roperti loves that there's "always something to do around the farm."

Aside from selling corn in the summer, most of the family's turkey-related work takes place between September and November. Throughout November, Roperti said her phone rings off the hook almost all day long.

While she handles the phones, the rest of the family focuses on the birds, which are slaughtered at four months old.

"We get them in the end of September and they come here at 10 weeks old,"

"I love raising the turkeys, I love selling the turkeys and I love talking to all of my customers. You know, I have wonderful customers. They're like family. They keep coming back."

Christine Roperti Co-owner, Roperti's Turkey Farm

Roperti said. "We feed them every day and my husband and my son, Tony, go out there every day and they check on the turkeys."

Roperti said it's the birds' youth and sweet corn-fed lifestyle that make them taste so unique. Her turkeys also take less time to cook than a store-bought bird, she said. This year, a Roperti turkey goes for \$3.79 per pound.

"They're fed the best they can eat, that's what makes mine so juicy and flavorful," Roperti said. "You can go get an Amish turkey all day long, but it'll never taste like mine."

Because of that quality, the farm has some customers who have come back every fall for over 50 years. In the 72 years the farm has been open, it has be-

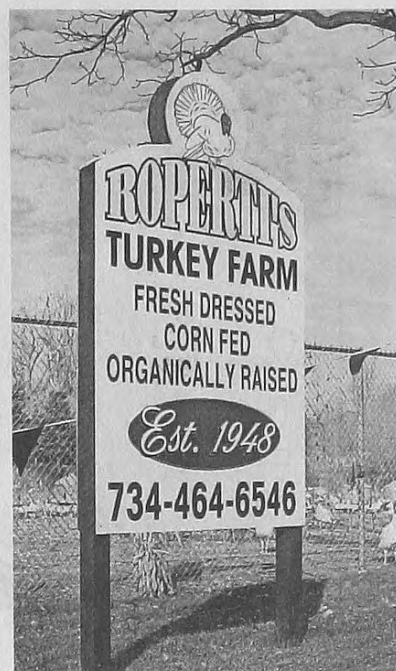
come one of Wayne County's few remaining agriculture destinations as metro Detroit has grown and residential neighborhoods have taken over much of the landscape.

Though Livonia is more populated now than it was in 1948, Roperti doesn't mind spending her days along busy Five Mile Road. After all, more people passing by means more customers.

And there are more customers. Roperti's farm has a faithful following, and it doesn't appear to be going away any time soon.

"Everybody loves me, that's all I can say," Roperti joked.

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



Roperti's Turkey Farm at 34700 Five Mile Road in Livonia is finishing up raising more than 4,000 broad breasted Wilford whites for the upcoming Thanksgiving day dinner. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Plans

Continued from Page 6A

Limited invites exclude COVID-19

Senior people having fun while celebrating Thanksgiving together at home over traditional dinner, taking a selfie using smart phone

Julie Rutkowski, a Lyon Township resident, is a nurse educator, and her mother and aunt are also nurses, all at St. Mary Mercy in Livonia. Their current plan is to celebrate the holidays with an exclusive "bubble."

"COVID-19 is starting to creep up again and that's what's scary," she said. "It stabilized (this summer) and people let their guard down."

In a normal year, her extended family would have a gathering of 35 people with aunts, uncles and cousins. But this year, it will be a fraction of the size —

contained to just the three nurse households — including Rutkowski's husband and two small children, her parents and her aunt.

"It's not the same, but you do what you have to do."

Faust said the guest list needs to be selective with a minimized number of households, thereby "reducing the diversity" and opportunities for COVID-19 to intrude on your celebration.

"It should be two households or less at a gathering," Faust said. "People from your house and one other, and limited to 10 people or fewer."

Who you invite, and who you are, also matters.

Susceptibility to a severe reaction to COVID-19 is affected by underlying health conditions including heart and lung ailments, diabetes and obesity. It also increases with age.

"The older you are, the greater the risk," Faust said. "In the 60-70 age range, with COVID in general, it's a 10

percent mortality risk right there.

"If you're 70 to 80, the risk goes up. Above 80, the risk is significantly higher."

The risk is also compounded by the flu season. Faust is encouraging everyone, regardless of age, to get a flu shot and also to wash hands regularly, sanitize surfaces, and quit touching your face.

No one should be going anywhere, whether it's a holiday gathering, work, school or even the store for groceries, if they feel ill.

Virtual visits

The best recommendation he has for the 2020 holiday season is to celebrate virtually, perhaps via FaceTime or Zoom, a recommendation that may deflate some spirits now, but one that makes future gatherings with everyone present more likely.

"People will be frustrated and ignore

much of this, and that is sad," Faust said. "We are losing our most loved and respected and wise generation by exposing them. This is a problem... We struggle because we are a social species. We want to get together with friends and family at the holidays, but this is a global pandemic."

Tami Lenoir, 60, of Novi, knows better than most what is at stake as a respiratory therapist in the intensive care unit at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. She has seen firsthand the devastation COVID-19 has wrought, working with those patients everyday and is scheduled to work with them again on Thanksgiving.

As for Christmas? She wants to avoid having her own family be among the hospital patients.

"Christmas is canceled," she says simply. "We'll revisit it in March to celebrate because of COVID."

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at sbromley@hometownlife.com.

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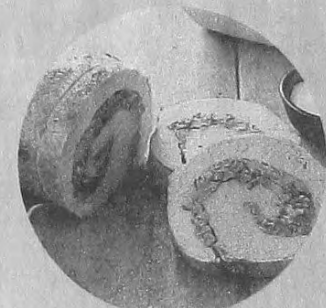
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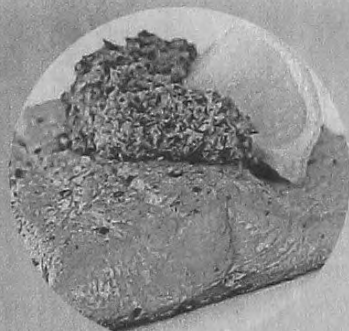


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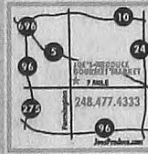


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SPORTS

State issues '3-week pause' on HS sports

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Sunday evening that all high school athletics have been postponed due to the rising number of coronavirus cases in the state.

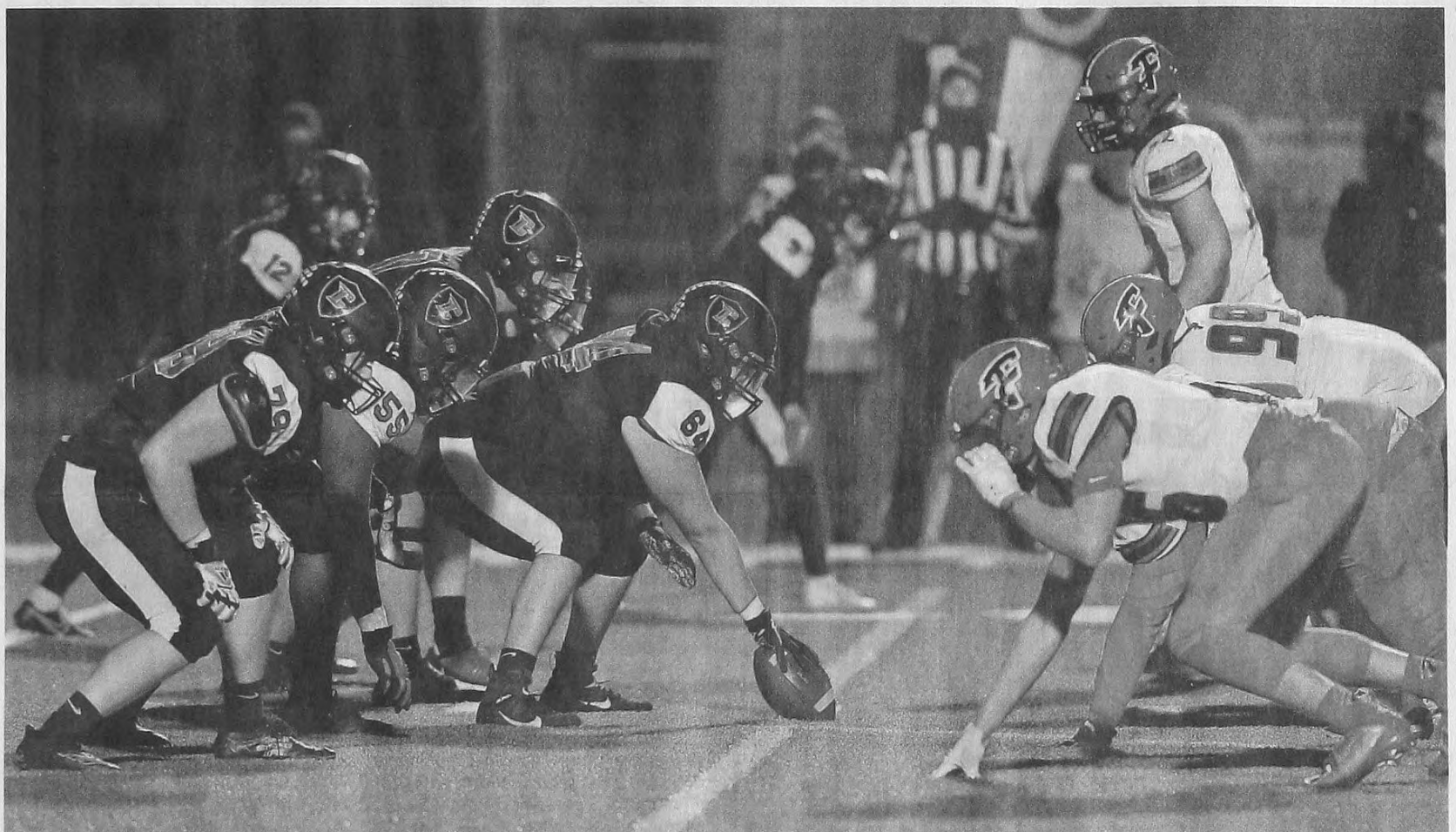
The Michigan High School Athletic Association announced, in a statement, that the high school football, volleyball, and girls swim and dive playoffs are currently on hold, along with the start of the traditional winter sports.

"We understand the need for action, and we will explore all options to com-

plete our Fall tournaments when restrictions are lifted," MHSAA executive director Mark Uyl said in a statement. "We will assess everything over the next three weeks relative to Fall and Winter sports and come up with a plan that keeps us connected to our goal, for months, of having three seasons that

are played to their conclusions." Michigan high school football's season will be halted in the regional final round, the volleyball season has been stopped prior to the state quarterfinal, while the girls swim and dive season

See PAUSE, Page 2B



The Churchill Chargers, left, host the Franklin Patriots on Nov. 13. The state and the MHSAA announced Sunday that the football, volleyball, and girls swim and dive playoff tournaments would be postponed, along with all winter sports, for three weeks to combat the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

What's next for high school football?

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Livonia Churchill football remained alive another week, beating rival Livonia Franklin for its second-straight district title Friday night. So head coach Bill DeFillipo was in his office 9 a.m. Sunday to begin the process again: to start the installation of schemes for the regional final against Oak Park.

He knew the state of the world outside of his office — with positive COVID-19 cases on the rise throughout the state with the highest rate of the pandemic. But in the time of playoffs, DeFillipo rarely had time to think about anything else other than his teaching job and football, finding time to rest and relax once the season is officially over.

"You kind of hear it and you see it once in a while, but really, we were fired

up to play Oak Park this week," DeFillipo said. "Everybody was pretty energetic and ready to go."

As Sunday continued, a coach saw the message come across his phone that Gov. Gretchen Whitmer would hold a press conference that night regarding policies to respond to the heightened COVID-19 numbers. Soon after, the coaching staff saw the Michigan High School Athletic Association respond, saying it would release a statement when Whitmer's address was complete.

In other words, DeFillipo knew it was not good. The state and the MHSAA announced Sunday that the football, volleyball, and girls swim and dive playoff tournaments would be postponed, along with all winter sports, during the

See FOOTBALL, Page 2B



Churchill players raise their district title trophy.

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Detroit Catholic Central continues win streak

Defeats Lakeland for district championship

Colin Gay HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Heading into each season, Detroit Catholic Central football has a list of goals. First on the list: a Catholic League title, which the Shamrocks secured with a perfect regular season and a dominant win against Detroit Loyola in the Catholic High School League Prep Bowl.

Catholic Central (9-0) recorded its second goal Saturday afternoon against Lakeland (7-1), beating the Eagles, 45-17, and earning the team's first district title since 2017 — the team's 14th since 1999.

"It means a lot to us," Catholic Central head coach Dan Anderson said. "I mean, last year we didn't even make the playoffs last year. This year, it means a lot to us. It always does."

The Shamrocks will travel to Davison next weekend to take on the reigning Division 1 state champions in the regional final.

Lines help for Catholic Central

Compared to dominant 30-plus point performances in its past three games, the Catholic Central offense started off a bit slow against the Eagles.

Taking possession from their own 35 after an interception by senior defensive back Sam Dersa on the first drive of the game, the Shamrocks slowly moved down field, using a nine-play, 65-yard drive — which ended with a 3-yard touchdown run by junior running back Conner Bell — to get on the board first.

After keeping Lakeland to a 33-yard field goal after a 12-play drive, Catholic Central opened the second quarter with a bang, with senior quarterback Declan Byle finding junior wide receiver Owen Semp for the 33-yard score, but slowed down again, being hindered by an illegal forward pass penalty and a false start on its next drive.

The Eagles answered with a touchdown of their own, as junior quarter-

back Tate Farquhar found senior Mike Sherrill for a 27-yard score to bring the deficit to four.

But the Shamrocks made sure Lakeland did not come that close again.

Bell entered the end zone as the second quarter winded down for his second touchdown of the day. On the second drive in the third, Byle found senior tight end Michael Ramirez for a 30-yard gain, immediately answered with a 33-yard touchdown run by sophomore back Spencer Lyons.

Adding a 39-yard back shoulder fade touchdown from Byle to Semp — who finished with 90 receiving yards, taking in four receptions on five targets — and a 5-yard touchdown run by sophomore Brady Blakita, the Shamrocks ballooned their lead to 32 before the end of the third quarter.

Byle, who completed 15-of-22 passes for 283 yards and two touchdowns, credited the offensive line, which allowed one play of lost yardage the entire game.

"I think people had a lot of doubts about our offensive line to begin with," Byle said. "But Coach (Ryan) Bell and Coach (Terry) Sawchuk have worked so hard. I think the biggest thing is their chemistry. They communicate often and that really goes to their benefit."

As a former offensive lineman, Anderson said his focus is to make sure his players maintain the line of scrimmage both on offense and on defense. While the offensive line did its job, the defensive line stepped up too.

The Shamrocks limited the Lakeland offense to 4.1 yards per carry in the first three quarters, recording 16 plays of three yards or less on the ground.

Pressure led to a second turnover in the fourth quarter, as junior safety Jackson Ewald recovered a fumble off an errant pitch from junior quarterback Kenny Hagle, which led to a 35-yard field goal from Shamrocks senior kicker Charlie Mentzer.



CC running back Conner Bell records one of two touchdowns against Lakeland.
TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Lakeland junior running back Evan Percin added a 23-yard score late in the fourth quarter.

Looking ahead

Despite the coronavirus pandemic and the stop and start of the 2020 season, Lakeland head coach had high expectations for his team.

"Obviously to play for a district championship against a team like Catholic Central, I mean, you look at the teams left in Division 1 football, there's some pretty heady names there," Woodruff said. "We aspire to be in that group."

But throughout the season, with Lakeland recording its first perfect regular season since 1982, recording a seven-game win streak for the first time since that season and winning the Lakes Valley Conference for the first time, Woodruff saw his team show up, no matter what it had to face.

"It's very tough to do what these kids did this year," Woodruff said. "I don't think people understand how tough it is what we went through this year as a football program."

Catholic Central, on the other hand, knows what it is about to face: an undefeated Davison team that averages more than 36 points a game and has allowed only 66 points all season.

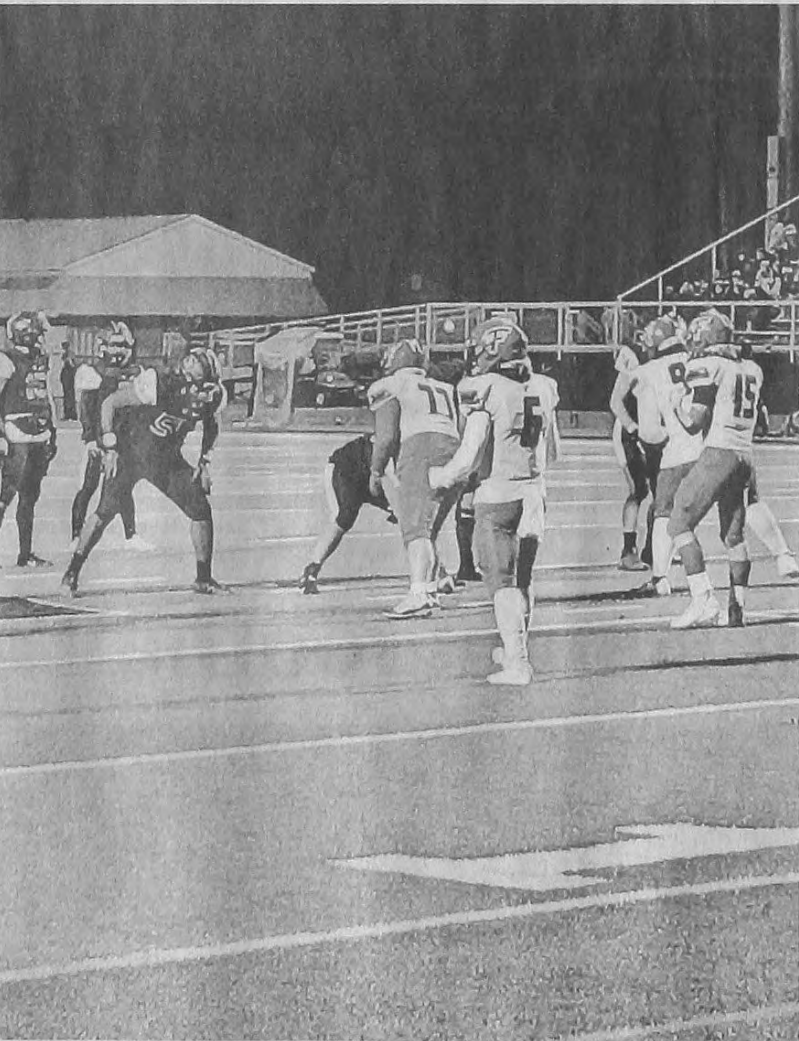
Anderson said the same mentality applies in the regional final as it did in each of the nine games prior.

"We don't even worry about who we are playing," Anderson said. "We prepare for who we are playing, but we have to worry about ourselves. We have to look at us, take care of ourselves first. Whoever they put in front of us, they put in front of us, we got to perform."

But Byle still has that list of goals on his mind. With two already checked off, he is eager to try and check off a few more.

"Our first goal of the season is to be Catholic League champs. We did that. The second is to be district champs," Byle said. "Two down, but we have our eyes on the big one."

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.



Livonia Churchill hosts cross-town rival Livonia Franklin on Nov. 13.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Pause

Continued from Page 1B

will not have its state meet as scheduled, Nov. 20 and 21.

The Michigan high school hockey season was set to begin Monday, while practices were underway for winter sports such as girls basketball and girls competitive cheer. The girls gymnastics season was already underway.

State finals were held and completed in boys soccer and boys and girls cross country.

According to the "three-week pause" order limits indoor gatherings of no more than 10 people is permitted, while outdoor gatherings will be limited to 25 people or less.

The guidelines have halted in-person

learning in high schools for the three-week period, while preschool through eighth grade learning remains to the school district's discretion.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association announced Sept. 3 that all fall sports — including football, boys soccer, volleyball, and girls swim and dive — were reinstated after a brief hiatus in the middle of August.

As of Saturday, Michigan has 251,813 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 7,994 confirmed deaths.

Oakland County has 29,363 confirmed cases and 1,193 deaths as of Saturday. Wayne County, excluding Detroit, has 30,031 confirmed cases and 1,390 deaths as of Sunday.

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

Football

Continued from Page 1B

state's "three-week pause" to combat the coronavirus pandemic, closing high schools for in-person learning from Nov. 18 to Dec. 8.

Four high school football teams from the area remain in the hunt for a state title: Detroit Catholic Central in Division 1, Churchill and North Farmington in Division 2 and Detroit Country Day in Division 4.

Prior to the start of the playoffs, DeFillipo was honest with his players about the rising case count, saying it could be a real question as to whether or not the state would make it to the finals.

But as the weeks continued, the focus turned inward, with the team focusing its attention on what could have been history.

"We're down to the final eight teams," DeFillipo said. "We have a great group of kids. And obviously you have to play and execute and not screw things up, but we felt if we played well, we had as good a shot as anyone to get to the finals and even win it."

"We said, as a staff, if somebody beat us, then it is what it is. But when you are alive and well, to get it removed when you are this close to the final, it is pretty tough to deal with."

Jon Herstein, the head football coach at North Farmington, had a similar approach to DeFillipo, saying the Raiders were focused on what they could control, preparing for what they could do in a stretch where the team had found a level of rhythm on the field.

"The guys are figuring things out and coming together as a team and just learning more and more about football," Herstein said. "You think about it, they missed a lot of 7-on-7, a lot of summer camp, starting and stopping. We really try and work a lot with our guys throughout the year, so they had missed so much that I think they were starting to find their stride and coming together."

But as soon as the announcement from the state and the MHSAA was released, DeFillipo quickly turned to his calendar.

If football is permitted to return Dec. 8, a Wednesday, the Churchill head coach said the regional final would likely not be played until Dec. 18 or 19, leaving the state semifinals to be played the weekends of Christmas and New Year's Day — the time when stu-

dents are off for a holiday break.

With that schedule coming out of the three-week hiatus, as scheduled currently, DeFillipo doubts that football will be played in December.

Instead, he said, his thoughts turned more toward what the MHSAA originally planned when the football season was initially canceled Aug. 14: using four weeks in the late winter and early spring months to get the final three games in.

Detroit Catholic Central head coach Dan Anderson did not respond to a request for comment.

But with a three-week period seemingly separating teams that remain alive for a state title and an answer as to whether it would be played, the uncertainty brings back familiar feelings from July and August.

"We don't know when they will move it back or if they will move it back," Herstein said. "It's, I guess, kind of go back to the part where you are just kind of like, 'All right, this is where we are at. We're going to focus on the things we can control right now and just take it in those steps as it comes.'"

Football teams will now turn toward virtual training and learning, resorting to Zoom meetings to allow players to treat injuries and remain physically and mentally sharp ahead of a possible return to the field.

The suddenness of the change sparked frustration from DeFillipo.

"I get the situation, I'm not complaining about the situation, I understand that," DeFillipo said. "But it would be really, really nice to be able to get our kids together and be able to take care of them and say 'OK, we don't have all the answers, but here's the deal. Here's what we are going to do from now on.'"

"Now we are just going to be looking at our kids in a little square of a computer screen."

Now the football teams that remain in contention are in a holding pattern. Both DeFillipo and Herstein remain confident that their teams will be ready to pick up where they left off in the post-season, regain that momentum and fire when the players touch the field again.

The waiting game has begun. But Herstein knows his players will be ready to go at a moment's notice to take on Traverse City Central in the regional final.

"For us, we will go from taking a coach bus to Traverse City to taking snowmobiles," Herstein said with a laugh.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17.

Marian upsets rival Mercy for regional title

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Coming off the court after the team's warm-up, Marian was collected, yet confident as the team of seven sophomores, four freshmen and four juniors gathered around a portable speaker and screamed along to "Shallow" from the film "A Star Is Born."

The Mustangs volleyball team held a one-game win streak against the No. 1-ranked team in the state, beating the Marlins in five sets in the Catholic High School League championship game Oct. 27 — Mercy's first loss in 2020.

When the first serve came, Marian knew it could do it again.

It took five sets, but the Mustangs (34-5) came off the Troy Athens volleyball court Thursday night regional champions, beating Mercy (34-2), 25-22, 19-25, 25-20, 20-25 and 15-11, and earning their first regional title since 2017.

Mayssa Cook, who took over as Marian's head coach after that 2017 season, said the message starting immediately after her team's five-set loss to Mercy in the 2019 regional semifinal was, "We will see them again."

"We knew three months ago, we knew this summer, we knew last year, at the end of last year, that we weren't going to come back here and lose in five like we did in regional finals," Cook said.

After Mercy senior Kaylin Collins gave the Marlins a quick 4-3 lead in the fifth set, Marian saw its chance to take over.

Starting with a kill from junior Sophia Treder, the Mustangs began a six-point swing, using kills from sophomore Ella Schomer and junior Ava Brizard, along with another from Treder, to take what proved to be an insurmountable five-point lead.

Mercy tried, using kills from junior Leah LaFontaine and junior Lizzie Kitchen to bring it back to within three, but Schomer secured the fifth set with an emphatic kill, set by sophomore Ava Sarafa, to advance the Mustangs to the state quarterfinals.

"We came into this match, I told the girls, 'Hey, we have to trust each other. We're all in this together. One point at a time,'" Brizard said. "And I think that



Marian volleyball won its first regional title since 2017 by handing Mercy its first loss of 2020. COLIN GAY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

really calmed us down, especially when we were up, 14-11.

"We're such a tight-knit team. We trust each other and love each other so much, and that's what gets us through those tough moments."

Those tough moments came up for Marian throughout the back-and-forth battle against Mercy — the teams' fourth meeting of the season.

After the Mustangs took the first-set with the help of two separate four-point runs, Mercy, using starter Ellie Tisko sparingly due to a sprained ankle, answered in the second, using an early 7-1 run — helped by two aces from senior Charli Atiemo — and a 9-1 run late in the set to secure the six-point victory.

And when Marian took the third set,

proving a 4-1 run to start was enough to take the set, 25-20 — without a single run of more than two points for the remainder of the set — Mercy responded yet again, as Atiemo and senior setter Julia Bishop led the Marlins on a 8-2 run early, helping lead to a five-point fourth-set victory to tie the game at two.

"I felt that was the state finals," Mercy head volleyball coach Loretta Vogel said. "I'd bet on it. It went five, and it's just too bad everyone couldn't have watched that game."

But all season, Marian felt it had been counted out due to its age. Cook said her team had been hearing all season, "You don't have any seniors. You got next year."

But Brizard was reminded of 2019:

the same season Marian lost to Mercy in five sets in the regional semifinal. The junior said, with a lineup primarily of sophomores and freshmen, the Mustangs proved they were one of the best teams in the state.

In 2020, when they came out on top, ending Mercy's season as the only team to have beaten the Marlins all year, Brizard said Marian proved something to the rest of the state:

"You don't need seniors to win a match," Brizard said. "You just need some dedicated players."

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.

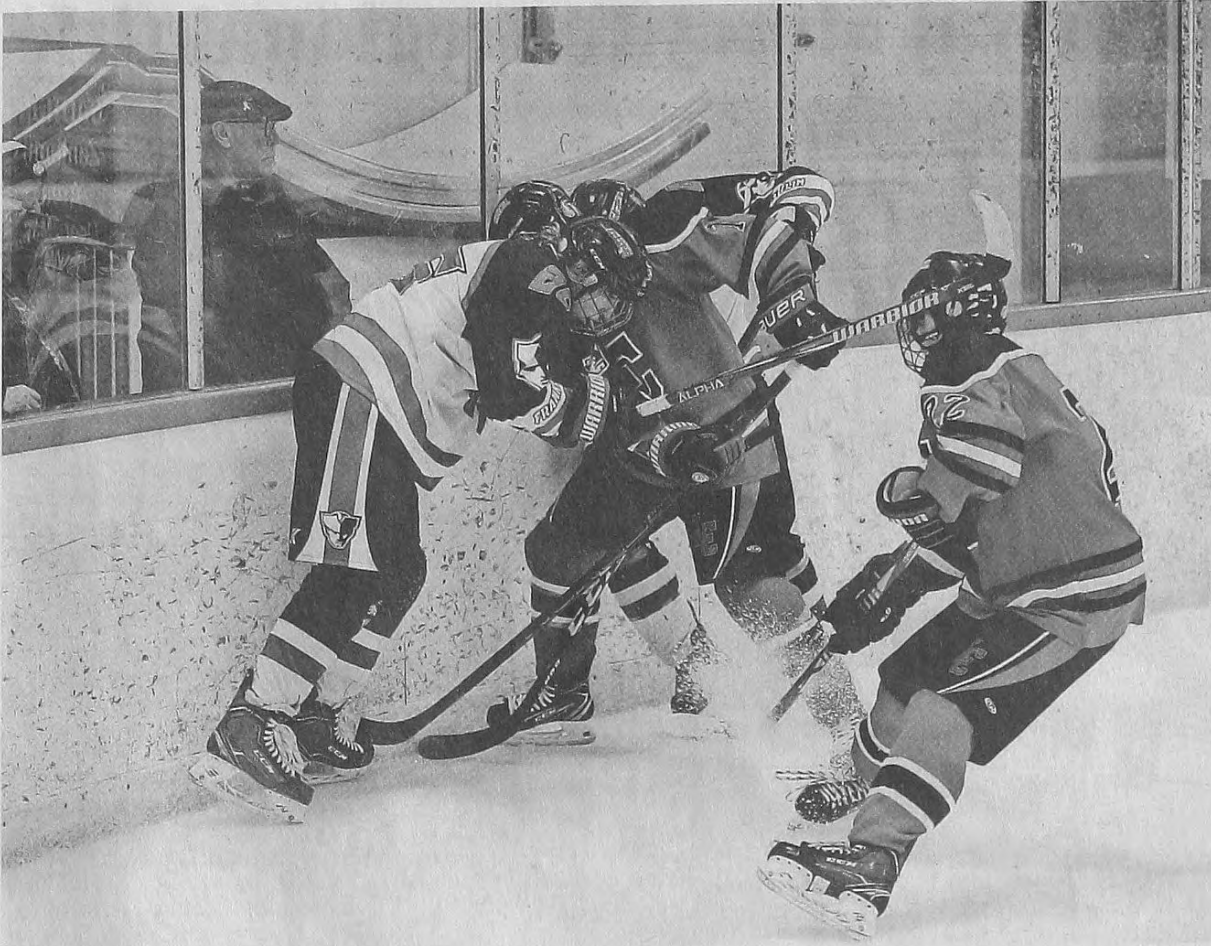
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Churchill and Franklin players fight for the puck in a scrum. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Churchill delays start of hockey season due to COVID-19 cases

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Livonia Churchill athletic department announced Friday that its hockey season will be suspended until at least Nov. 27 after two players tested positive for COVID-19.

The Chargers will postpone each of its first games of the regular season — Nov. 18 vs. Brighton, Nov. 20 vs. Farmington and Nov. 25 against Livonia Franklin — with hopes to reschedule these games at a later date.

According to a letter sent to parents from Athletic Director Marc Hage, all games, practices and in-person activities for the hockey team has been suspended for the next 14 days. However, other than the two who tested positive, the letter states, "Unless your family has been notified, this is not a quarantine of individual student athletes."

"We apologize for this recent turn of events and the timing of it," Hage writes. "Every single coach and player in this program has worked diligently here at the start of the season. Not one of us

could have predicted this scenario and no one is at fault.

"However, the safety and health of our student athletes is the number one priority for us at this time. This will not be compromised or jeopardized for an athletic competition."

The Michigan high school hockey season is scheduled to begin around the state Monday.

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

South Lyon East withdraws from volleyball playoffs due to COVID-19

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The South Lyon East volleyball team was forced to withdraw from the Michigan High School Athletic Association postseason volleyball tournament on Nov. 10 due to "COVID-19 related circumstances," according to the school.

South Lyon East finished its season 19-2-2 and won eight of nine contests in Lakes Valley Conference play, coming into the playoffs as LVC co-champions and LVC tournament champions.

After earning straight-set victories against Brighton in the first round and against Pinckney in the district semifinal, South Lyon East earned the five-set win against rival South Lyon in the district final, the team's first in school history.

The Cougars' three wins in their 2020 playoff run were their first since the 2012 season.

"Starting the season with tryouts on a grass practice field, the team has overcome the challenges of the pandemic all season long," South Lyon East athletic director Greg Michaels said in a statement. "The East volleyball community will come together and take on this latest challenge."

"This team truly exemplifies the meaning of our mantra: Be East."



South Lyon East's Laney Czajkowski attempts a kill. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

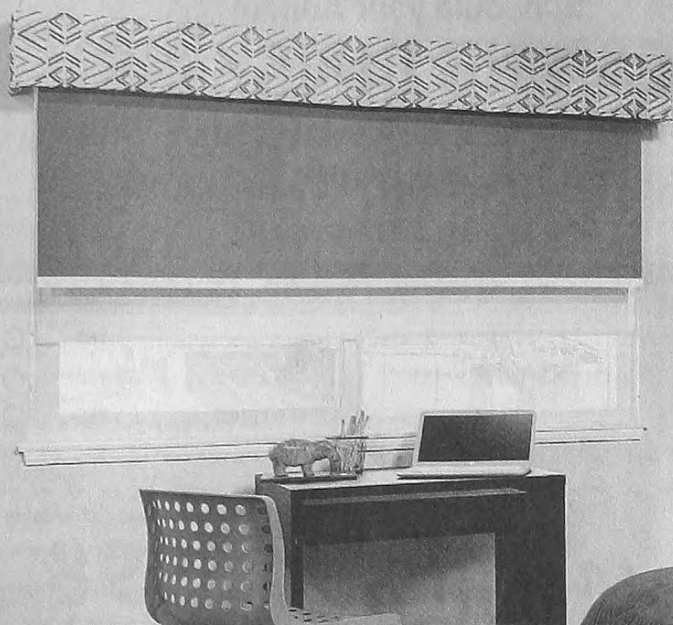
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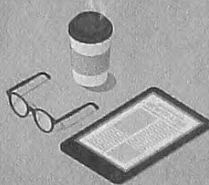


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**City of Plymouth
Zoning Board of Appeals Notice**
Thursday, December 3, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.
Online ZOOM and/or Plymouth Cultural Center 525 Farmer,
Plymouth, MI 48170

Check City website for frequent updates on location

201 S. Main Street Plymouth, Michigan 48170

Website: www.plymouthmi.gov Phone: (734) 453-1234 ext. 232

A regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be held on Thursday, December 3,
2020 at 7:00 P.M. online via Zoom and/or in person to consider the following:

Z20-10 Non-Use Variance Requests for 606 Maple

1. Fence exceeding 6.5 feet
2. Garage height exceeding 15 feet
3. Habitable space in an accessory structure.
4. Garage height exceeding 1½ stories

Zoned: R-1, Single-Family Residential District

Applicant: William Lincoln

Z20-11 Non-Use Variance Requests for 933 Church

1. Lot Coverage
2. Floor Area Ratio
3. Front Yard Setback
4. Side Yard Setback

Zoned: R-1, Single-Family Residential District

Applicant: Randal Balconi

All interested persons are invited to attend.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Plymouth will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting/hearing, to individuals with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids or services may be made by writing or calling the following:

Maureen Brodie, ADA Coordinator

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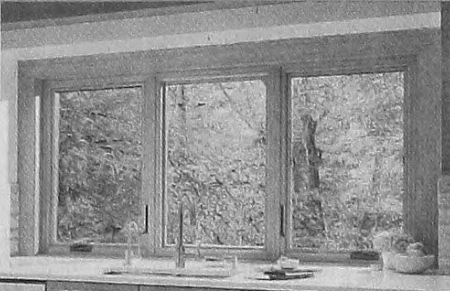
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THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

- ACROSS**
- 1 Acquire a wintry glaze
 - 6 Ending for Rock
 - 10 Dollars and cents
 - 14 Woodard with four Emmys
 - 19 Many a Jamaican believer, informally
 - 20 Canine pain
 - 22 "Yes, —!" ("Definitely!")
 - 23 1936 film sequel with William Powell and Myrna Loy
 - 25 Utter words
 - 26 — Boys (hit rap trio)
 - 27 "Lenore" poet
 - 28 Suffered
 - 29 Abbr. on a naval vessel
 - 30 A wide physical variety
 - 37 Stretch (out)
 - 38 Oscar winner Jared
 - 39 Seattle baseball team
 - 40 Possible reply to "Who's there?"
 - 43 Debater's platform
 - 44 Model Klum
 - 46 While lead-in
 - 47 1997 James Bond film
 - 51 — trial basis
 - 52 Mess up morally
 - 53 Locale of Ali's "Rumble in the Jungle"
 - 54 Immune response trigger
 - 59 Mess up
 - 61 Canine coat
 - 63 Scarf site
 - 65 "Yay, me!"
 - 66 Question about a weak effort
 - 72 Woman on the throne
 - 73 Designer Cassini
 - 74 Father
 - 75 LA-to-IN dir.
 - 76 Apply via an aerosol
 - 79 Rockabilly singer Chris
 - 82 "Send help!"
 - 84 Epoch
 - 86 Influential Brian Eno album of 1975
 - 90 Peter of "Columbo"
 - 94 Dark beer
 - 95 Rock guitarist Lofgren
 - 96 No-brainer class
 - 97 Cut across
 - 99 "Le Roi d'Ys" composer Édouard —
 - 100 Sun. church oration
 - 101 Fifteen minutes of fame
 - 105 Triceps' place
 - 108 Quick snacks
 - 109 Intense anger
 - 110 Electrical resistance measures
 - 112 Shrink back
 - 113 Novel and film whose last line is formed by six key words in this puzzle
 - 118 "— Is Born"
 - 119 Came to an end
 - 120 Finnish architect Alvar —
 - 121 Comes to an end
 - 122 Je ne — quoi
 - 123 Bullets, e.g.
 - 124 Hair lock
- DOWN**
- 1 Ex-Yankee Hideki —
 - 2 Snug eateries
 - 3 "Cómo —?"
 - 4 Rugged trucks, briefly
 - 5 Ones sharing in meals, e.g.
 - 6 Jazz singer Waters
 - 7 "Little piggy"
 - 8 Young child
 - 9 Verb suffix in the Bible
 - 10 Olympic craft
 - 11 Top points
 - 12 "— Na Na"
 - 13 She cackles
 - 14 Home of St. Francis
 - 15 Contour of one's kisser
 - 16 Coldest refrigerator part
 - 17 Bookworms
 - 18 "Oh no, micel!"
 - 21 River giant, informally
 - 24 Floor square
 - 28 Actor Brody
 - 31 Deli side dish
 - 32 Ketchup brand
 - 33 Befuddled
 - 34 Surrounded by
 - 35 Gymnast Comaneci
 - 36 JFK jet, once
 - 37 Angsty music genre
 - 40 Skater Midori
 - 41 Gets rid of some flab
 - 42 More brainy
 - 43 Dunkable treat
 - 44 "— mud in your eye!"
 - 45 Put up
 - 48 Rock fissure
 - 49 Pickling liquid
 - 50 Clic — (Bic brand)
 - 55 Persia, now
 - 56 Artillery unit members
 - 57 Aged
 - 58 Prefix with classical
 - 60 Actress Perlman
 - 62 Pi follower
 - 64 Early English dramatist Thomas
 - 66 Mental figs.
 - 67 Novelist Seton
 - 68 Peace
 - 69 Surrounded (by)
 - 70 Springs in deserts
 - 71 Japanese wheat noodle
 - 77 Beginnings
 - 78 Tally mark
 - 80 Strain at — (fuss over trivialities)
 - 81 Shrimplike crustacean
 - 83 Sugary delicacy, old-style
 - 85 Org. for periodontists
 - 87 Carry along
 - 88 Race in "The Time Machine"
 - 89 Rowing tool
 - 90 Bouquet-bringing co.
 - 91 Middle East studier
 - 92 Let have it
 - 93 Ski mask, e.g.
 - 98 Villains' looks
 - 99 Lerner's partner in musicals
 - 100 "Quiet down"
 - 102 Moses' mount
 - 103 Hunts quarry
 - 104 Reached
 - 105 Moving spryly
 - 106 Fees for flats
 - 107 Old PC platform
 - 111 Wage — of words
 - 112 Used to exist
 - 113 Motorist's navig. aid
 - 114 Ending for Rock
 - 115 Boise is its cap.
 - 116 Actor Hanks
 - 117 Fan sound

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				
26									27				28					
29				30			31	32	33			34	35				36	
			37									39						
40	41	42				43					44	45				46		
47					48					49					50			
51				52				53				54		55	56	57	58	
	59		60		61		62		63		64			65				
66				67			68	69			70	71						
72							73				74			75				
76					77	78	79		80	81		82		83		84	85	
					86		87				88			89				
90	91	92	93		94					95				96				
97					98					99			100					
101								102	103				104			105	106	107
	108									109				110			111	
112							113	114				115	116	117				
118								119									120	
121								122				123						124

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

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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!

GETTING WED

Can you find all the words hidden in the grid? Read backwards or forwards, up or down, even diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

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

- AISLE
- ALTAR
- BEER
- BELLS
- BEST MAN
- BOUQUET
- BRIDE
- BRIDESMAIDS
- BUFFET
- CAKE
- CARDS
- CARS
- CELEBRANT
- CEREMONY
- CHURCH
- CONFETTI
- DRESS
- FAMILY
- FINERY
- FLOWERS
- GOWN
- GROOM
- GUESTS
- HAIRDO
- MOTHER-IN-LAW
- MUSIC
- NUPTIALS
- ORGAN
- PAGE BOYS
- PARTY
- RECEPTION
- RICE
- RINGS
- SPEECH
- SUIT
- TAXI
- TOASTS
- USHERS
- VEIL
- VICAR
- VOWS
- WEDDING
- WINE
- WITNESS

GETTING WED

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

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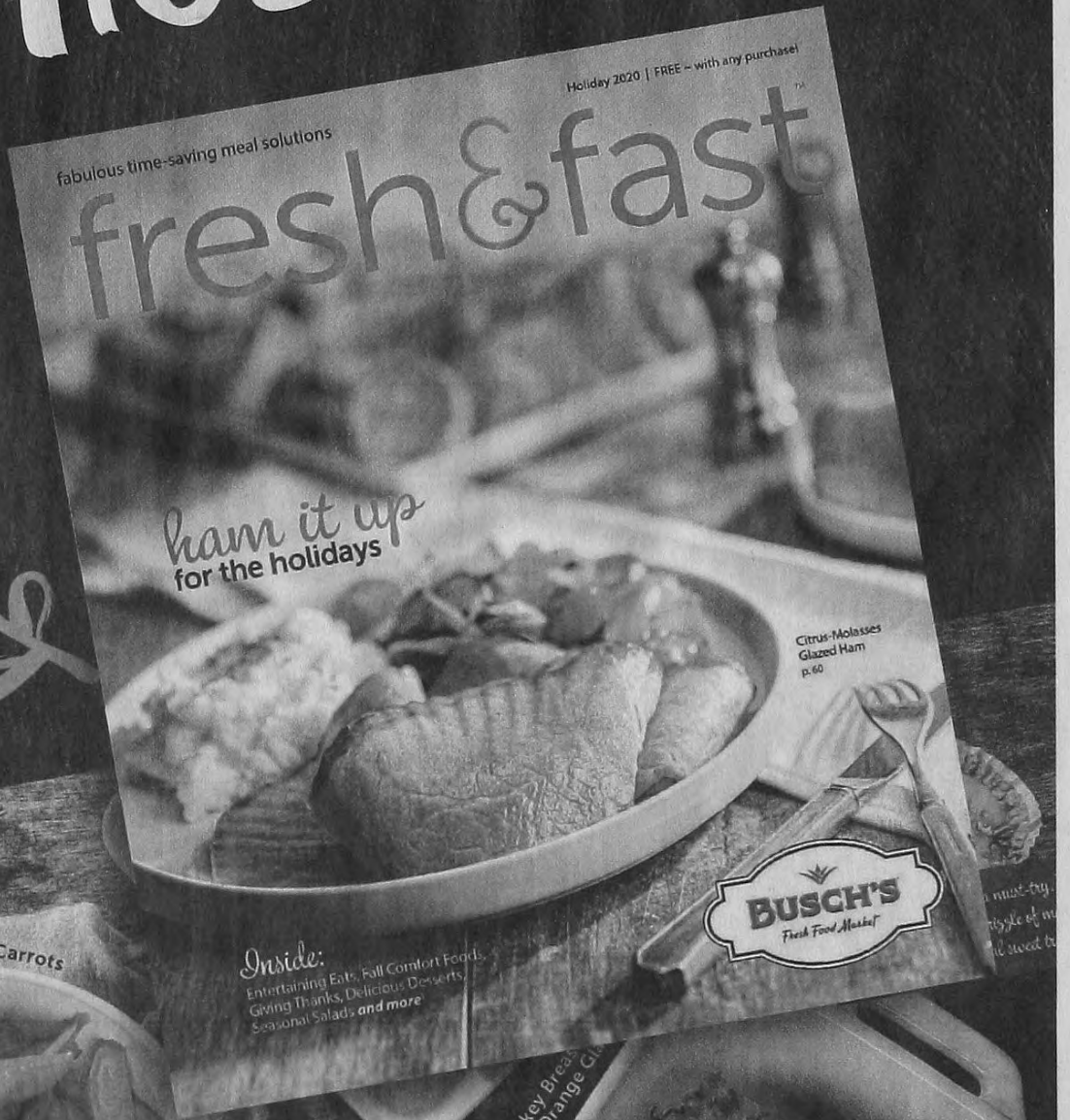
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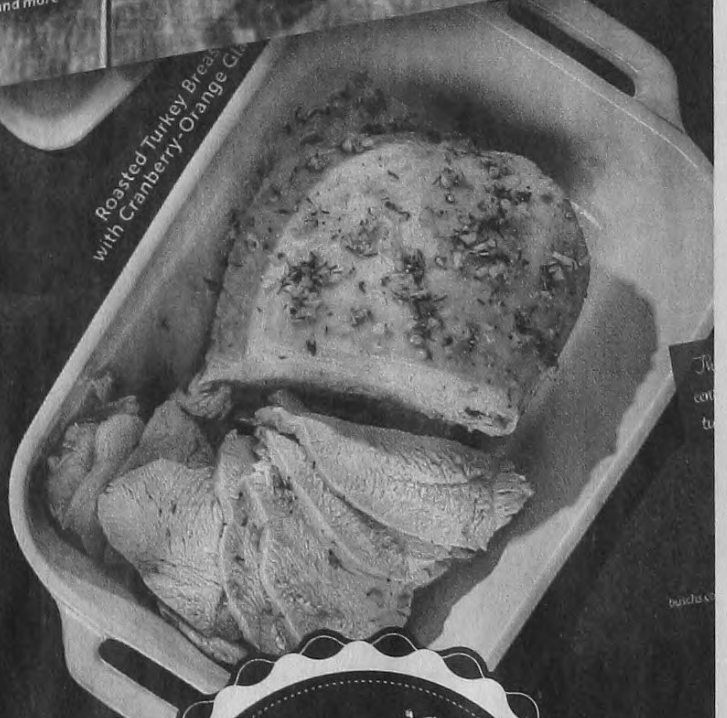
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