



Madonna football's Foos steps down as head coach

SPORTS, 1B

CANTON

OBSERVER

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Big money raised for state House seats

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Campaign donors paid for the mailers people received this fall ahead of the Nov. 7 election, for the ads on Facebook and television, and for the signs posted in yards and on street corners.

No matter how big or small those do-

nations were, the donors' names end up in campaign finance reports. Candidates for the Michigan House of Representatives submit financial disclosures to the secretary of state.

"It can give you some indication of a candidate's support," said David Dulio, a professor of political science at Oakland University. "I would say that in a

couple of different ways. For one, it can to some extent give you an indication of breadth of support.

"If a candidate has thousands of people giving them small contributions, I think that's an indication of support in the community."

Locally, Democratic candidates collected a significantly larger amount of

money than their Republican challengers. In each race, those candidates were incumbents or were seeking to replace a term-limited Democrat.

Here's a look at some of the notable contributors to local state house candidates this November.

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Detroit Popcorn Co. CEO Ken Harris, left, and COO Reggie Kelley are excited for the future of their Redford business.
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Meet the new owners of the Detroit Popcorn Co.

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

It's been a long year for the Detroit Popcorn Company. But its new owners believe they've got the legacy business moving in the right direction and poised to become a major player in everything fun in 2021.

Pontiac-based Harris Financial Group closed on the Redford Township business in early November, completing a sale announced earlier this summer that took several months to complete.

But now that the paperwork is signed, CEO Ken Harris and COO Reggie Kelley are ready to show Michigan — and the rest of the country — the magic

of caramel corn and other treats.

"So many people have called and given me a wonderful congratulations, because I'm blessed to know a lot of people," said Harris, who lives in Birmingham. "In their calling, they tell me about how they were kids, they used to

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Wayne extends outdoor dining through March

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Wayne City Council voted Dec. 1 to extend outdoor dining in the city until March 31 to help local restaurants as dining rooms remain closed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The change comes just weeks after

the state Department of Health and Human Services closed indoor dining across the state until at least Dec. 8. That closure, along with other restrictions, is due to rising COVID-19 cases nationwide.

"Based on the current order and suspicion that it very well could be extended throughout the winter ... it probably

would be best for us to ask you to reinstate the guidelines for outdoor dining and retail sales," Lori Gouin, the city's director of community development and planning, said at the meeting.

Under the guidelines approved by the council, restaurants could extend

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New hotel offering themed rooms for holidays

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Families looking for an escape to the North Pole don't have to head very far for the experience this year. They can find it at the new hotel in Farmington Hills.

The Delta Hotels Detroit Novi by Marriott opened its doors at 37529 Grand River near the Halsted/M-5 interchange earlier this fall. To help mark the holidays, it is offering two rooms decked out with holiday-themed decor and gifts.

Dubbed the "Jingle Bell Inn," the rooms are the perfect place for families looking to celebrate the holidays away from home. It could be a welcome getaway for families who have been cooped up since March due to the coronavirus pandemic, said Shawna Fleming, the hotel's director of sales.

"The nice thing is, it's a different four walls and a different experience," she said.

The decorated rooms are available until Dec. 30 for overnight stays. Each comes decked out with decorations, a tree and several goodies for guests to enjoy. Cookies are served when guests check into the rooms, and there are further offerings of hot chocolate and candy canes once guests are settled in one of the double-king rooms.

"When guests arrive, we'll have holiday music playing and then we'll have some fresh cookies," she said. "Each family gets gifts. I have a few wrapped under the tree."

The holiday-themed rooms can be booked for \$299 per night through the hotel's website.

Fleming said she is also in talks to donate a night in the rooms to a family in need to help bring some additional Christmas cheer.

The hotel opened its doors in November after the facility had been closed for nearly a year. The hotel was previously a Crowne Plaza and before that, a Holiday Inn.

Fleming said the 139-room hotel was originally scheduled to open this spring under the Delta brand, but was delayed because of COVID-19-related shutdowns.

She said while the hotel was fairly up to date when Marriott took over, the

See HOTEL, Page 6A



Do I have to pay taxes on unemployment, stimulus check?



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest columnist

Dear Rick:

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, my wife has been unemployed and has received unemployment benefits. In addition, earlier this year my wife and I each received a \$1,200 government stimulus payment.

At the time, I was under the impression that the \$1,200 we each received was not taxable. Now I'm told that I have to pay tax on the stimulus money as well as on my wife's unemployment. Is that correct?

My second question deals with my 2019 tax return. I filed my return in June and I have still not received my refund. Is that normal, and if not, what suggestions do you have? I really don't want to contact the IRS.

Thank you, Chris

Dear Chris:

With regards to your taxes, I have some good news and some bad news. First, the bad news: Your wife's unemployment benefits are taxed as ordinary income to you. Just like wages are taxed, unemployment benefits are also subject to tax from the State of Michigan and the federal government. Therefore, your wife's unemployment benefits are considered taxable income for you.

When it comes to unemployment benefits, many people are under the mistaken belief that they are not subject to tax; that is not true. That is why in many situations, I recommend that people receiving unemployment benefits should have taxes withheld from their check.

By completing IRS Form W-4V, you can authorize the withholding of 10 percent of your benefit for tax purposes. Particularly, in cases such as this, where one spouse is continuing to work and the other is collecting unemployment benefits, it makes sense to consider having taxes withheld.

After all, you don't want to find that you have a significant tax liability when you complete your 2020 tax return. On top of the tax, you could also owe interest and potentially, an underpayment penalty.

It's important to remember that our system of taxes is really a pay-as-you-go tax system, which means that you're supposed to pay taxes as you receive income throughout the year. Most people accomplish this either through their withholding by their employer, or by making estimated tax payments. If you end up not paying enough tax throughout the year, you may have to pay interest as well as the underpayment penalty, which is currently 3 percent.

With regards to the stimulus money you received, the good news is that money is not subject to tax.

With regards to your refund, I do believe an inordinate amount of time has gone by and you need to take action. Typically, the IRS pays refunds within a two- to three-week period. I would recommend you visit irs.gov, click on the refund tab and check on the status of your refund. If that does not resolve your issue, you should contact the IRS. You're entitled to your refund, and you're entitled to an answer as to why you haven't received it.

Good luck.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial advisor. His website is www.bloomadvisors.com. Email Rick at rick@bloomadvisors.com.

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Plymouth-Canton Schools adopted a policy Dec. 8 that it hopes will help transgender students. USA TODAY

Plymouth-Canton Schools adopts transgender policy

Ed Wright hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Plymouth-Canton Community Schools Board of Education adopted a policy Tuesday that it hopes will ease tensions felt by students who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming.

Implementation of the new policy — titled 5517.03 transgender and gender nonconforming students — was applauded by an overwhelming percentage of people whose comments were read during the four-hour meeting's citizens comments segment.

The policy was adopted without a vote or discussion among board members, only by the routine approval of the meeting's consent agenda.

None of the six board members present (trustee Leonardo Savage was absent due to health issues) voiced opposition to the policy during Tuesday's final reading or during the first reading in November.

"This policy was designed to provide safety and a sense of belonging to our students, especially those often marginalized, bullied and assaulted at higher rates than general-ed students," Plymouth-Canton Board of Education President Patti McCoin said. "It will not allow predatory sexual behavior, harassment or bullying. That behavior has been and still is prohibited. Engaging in those behaviors will result in disciplinary action."

Opponents of the policy — the majority of whom voiced their opinions on social media leading up to Tuesday's approval — shared concerns regarding the section of the new guidelines that will allow students access to restrooms and locker rooms based on their gender identity.

Canton resident Kristy Eldredge, whose 10th grade daughter and middle school-aged son are students in the district, said the thought of a biological male sharing a restroom or locker room with her daughter raised serious safety concerns.

Eldredge also disagreed with the timing of the policy's implementation.

"The PCCS board of education forced a controversial policy down the throats of parents during the middle of a pandemic two weeks before Christmas," Eldredge said. "No public forum. No discussion. Welcome to Plymouth-Canton Community Schools."

McCoin attempted to address Eldredge's and other parents' concerns by asserting that access to female facilities by biological males would not be easy.

"Identifying as a transgender student in the district is a process," McCoin said. "This policy will not allow males to claim they are female on a day-to-day

basis in order to gain entrance into women's facilities."

The policy is similar to those adopted by other Michigan school districts, including Ann Arbor, and municipalities, including Canton Township.

"Ann Arbor Schools and Canton Township have reported zero instances of inappropriate behavior in regard to their policies," McCoin said.

The adoption of the policy means that all Plymouth-Canton K-12 students will be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics "in a manner consistent with their gender identity, under the guidelines established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association."

MHSAA spokesperson John Johnson said it is the responsibility of the school district to notify the association of potential eligibility issues regarding transgender student-athletes.

"After the school provides a request, the MHSAA will determine eligibility for MHSAA tournaments on a case-by-case basis after being provided at least 30 days prior to the opt-out due date for that tournament," Johnson said.

The vast majority of citizen commenters said the policy will help alleviate transgender students' fears regarding pronouns used by teachers and peers to address them, attire, the facilities they use while on school grounds and bullying and harassment.

"If the student has previously been known at school by a different name, the school administration will direct school personnel to use the student's chosen name and appropriate pronouns," the policy states.

Longtime Plymouth-Canton Educational Park counselor Erin Demarest offered her support for the policy during the comment section.

"I have seen first-hand the pain and embarrassment transgender kids feel over something as simple as a substitute teacher calling them by their legal name in MyStar," Demarest said. "Adolescence is hard enough for straight kids."

"These difficulties are intensified exponentially for many transgender students."

Approximately 2 percent of high school students in the United States identify as transgender, according to data published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Washington Post reported in 2019.

"We passed this policy to provide a safer, more welcoming environment for all of our students," McCoin said. "If anyone has questions regarding this policy, they can direct them to members of the school board, whose contact information is on the district's website."

Contact reporter Ed Wright at ewright@hometownlife.com or 517-375-1113.

When condo collection fees appear out of line



Robert Meisner
Guest columnist

Q: I am a former board member of a condominium association. I had to resign because I had some financial difficulties and was not able to pay my assessments.

The newly-elected board of directors has retained a collection company that is coming after me for collection fees, and I am seeing that their charges greatly exceed the attorney fees that were being charged to our association when the association's legal counsel was handling collections.

What can I do about these fees?

A: While I don't know the specific amounts involved, I think you may have a legitimate basis to contest the reasonableness of the fees being charged by the collection agency, which may or may not even be using an attorney, if they seem to be exorbitant.

I've seen various situations where the fees being charged by the collection agency are well in excess of legal fees being charged by law firms that do the same work of writing letters, recording liens, etc.

It would appear that collection agency fees should

not be as much as, and certainly not in excess of, those fees charged by law firms who specialize in this area. Indeed, the fees that you are being charged may be in excess of what other collection agencies charge for the same work.

I would also write to the board of directors and tell them that the members of the association are being penalized because the board has hired a collection company to do the collecting as opposed to a reputable law firm, which results in the delinquent co-owner paying unreasonable fees.

While the board of directors may not care much about what you are being charged since it expects that most of the time co-owners will pay the collection fees, the board should realize that sometimes the association will be on the hook for those fees if, for any reason, they are not collectible from the co-owner. Plus, any money going to excess fees cannot be used to pay assessments.

Therefore, the board of directors needs to realize that exorbitant collection fees will affect the association as a whole, and the board has a fiduciary duty to ensure that collection fees are reasonable and within the limits of common practice in the industry.

Robert M. Meisner, Esq. is the principal attorney of The Meisner Law Group, which provides legal representation for condominiums, homeowner associations, individual co-owners and developers.

Family fights to raise mental health awareness

Susan Bromley hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Eric Domanico had a promising future.

"He was destined for greatness," Matt Smith, band director at South Lyon East High School, said of his former student who graduated in 2019. "Eric was such a brilliant student ... there was no stopping him and what he wanted to talk about and how he wanted to create community around him."

But Domanico, who earned a full-ride scholarship to West Virginia University, where he played saxophone this past year, will never meet that destiny.

The talented musician, who had depression and anxiety, ended his own life July 11. He was 19.

But it is another date - Dec. 14, Domanico's birthday - that his family will focus on. Their launch of the Eric Domanico Foundation will celebrate what would have been his 20th birthday with musicians from around the world performing a special composition.

"He was a talent that could have been egotistical, but he never let his talent get bigger than him," Smith said. "He was grounded, down to earth. But his talent, he could have played anywhere, he was a big-league player. ...

"He was always asking for me to help, but he had more talent in the tip of his pinky than I have in my entire body."

A promising life cut short

What Domanico needed help with most was not his music, but his mental health, Smith said. They had long conversations and communicated frequently.

But this summer, Domanico left family and friends grieving in the wake of his death by suicide.

The next day, dozens of Domanico's friends came to see his parents, Frank and Claire Domanico at their home to pay their respects.

For the funeral, St. Joseph Catholic Church in South Lyon was full for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Frank said, and the service was televised to friends across the world.

Frank believes the pandemic, and resulting quarantine and isolation, exacerbated Eric's depression, although he doesn't blame it for his son's death.

Now, he and his family are focusing on celebrating Eric's life, making sure his musical legacy lives on, and working to help other musicians through their own mental health battles.

Eric was the youngest of five children and took part in the magnet program for gifted students during his years in South Lyon Schools.

He was reading by the time he was 4 and spoke multiple languages, including French, his mother's native language. He played soccer as a child and took up saxophone in sixth grade. He made friends with ease.

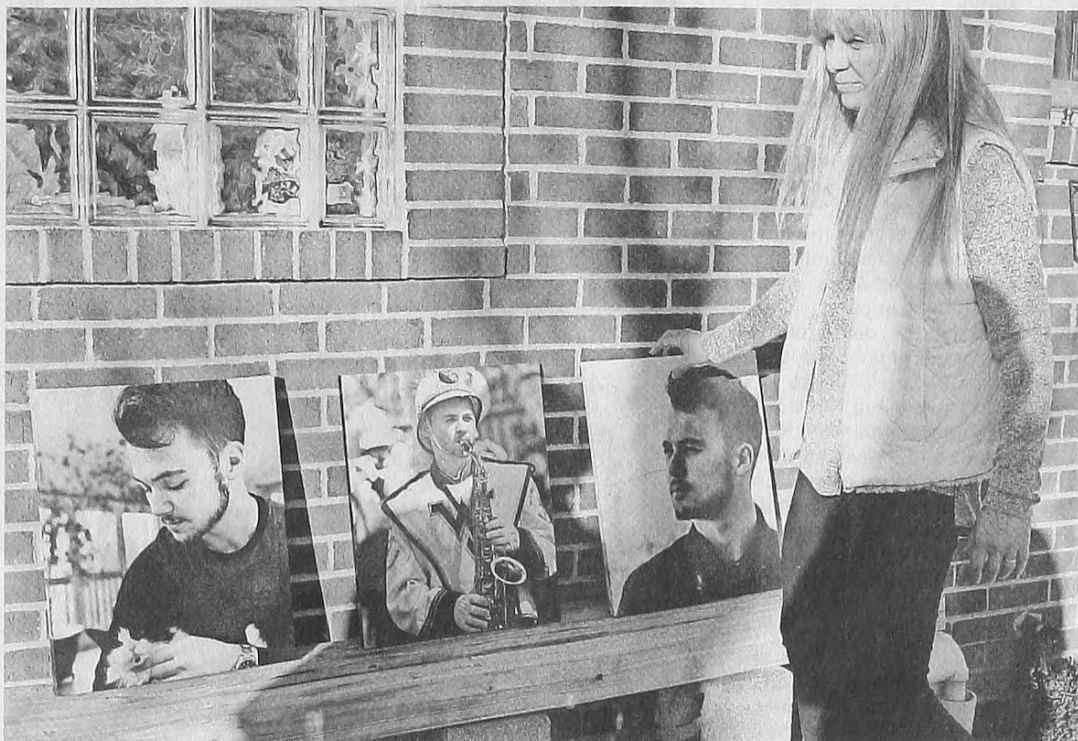
Willem Swartzinski was one of those friends, connecting with Eric on the playground in kindergarten for a friendship that would evolve from tag and hide and seek constant conversation on a variety of topics through high school.

"We talked about the stupidest, goofiest things," Swartzinski said. "He was fascinated by everything."

"If you got him on the right topic, he would not stop talking. He was a very sweet guy and we always had a special bond."

Struggles with mental health

Swartzinski said the friends didn't always see eye to eye, but Eric was always the same - a genuine person, and the same person, regardless of his mood.



Claire Domanico places photos of her late son, Eric, outside her Salem Township home. Claire and her husband, Frank, have started the Eric Domanico Foundation to honor him. Eric, a 2019 South Lyon East graduate, died by suicide in July. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Changes in Eric's mood became more evident by his freshman year of high school. Swartzinski said by their senior year, his friend seemed to have an awful week or so at least once a month.

He recalled a particularly frightening conversation with Eric, after which he reached out to Smith for help.

Eric's parents also were notified. Frank and Claire had started noticing the stress and anxiety in their youngest child when he was about 16, which seemed to manifest from a need to be perfect at everything he did.

Frank said one of his frustrations is that parents are kept in the dark too often regarding their children's mental health.

"It was hard to manage, he wanted to take control of his own health and didn't want to share with us," Frank said. "We don't teach (kids) enough how to manage anxiety and stress, and parents are not allowed to know what they talk about with therapists. ...

"We hide these things, we send kids to doctors and they tell us the mental health system is messed up and we prescribe to treat symptoms. We don't have enough to manage the stress."

Since losing his son, Frank said other parents have come to him to talk about mental health issues their children have struggled with.

He said he wants to keep that conversation going "so not one more child is lost."

Keep the conversation going

The Eric Domanico Foundation has a goal of supporting young musicians and artists by providing resources to treat the underlying causes of depression and anxiety, with a focus on prevention. The foundation aims to provide grants and scholarships and provide for physical, socio-emotional and educational needs.

To raise awareness for the cause, the foundation is hosting a technological feat Dec. 14, in which dozens of saxophonists from around the world will #playwithEric.

Future collaborators are invited to join the ongoing video project, in which the foundation hopes that "Someday, Eric may perform with a choir of a thousand strong to continue providing inspiration and hope."

"The reason why you follow your passion is ultimately to give you happiness," Swartzinski said. "Through the money we raise and mental health awareness, we show young musicians that they should keep going for their aspirations and nothing is too big to accomplish."

"I think Eric would be fascinated by the foundation and blown back by us really showing how people care about him."

Smith said mental health is among the biggest struggles for anyone in the arts with a constant struggle for perfection that is never attained and seeking approval.

"Eric was destined for greatness," Smith said. "Music came so natural to him."

Eric never reached his destiny and the journey for his listeners might have ended as well without the foundation, but with it, it can continue, as well as the conversation, which Smith hopes people will be ready to hear.

"Listen to the hard conversations," he advises. "It's not easy, but an open ear is the best thing we can do for someone who is struggling."

Join the conversation and learn more about how to #playwithEric at www.ericdomanicofoundation.com. Contributions are also accepted for the foundation through a GoFundMe campaign linked to the foundation website.

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at sbromley@hometownlife.com or 517-281-2412.

Money

Continued from Page 1A

\$645,000 raised in Livonia

Throughout their campaigns, state Rep. Laurie Pohutsky (D-Livonia) and her challenger, Republican Martha Ptashnik, knew the race for the 19th district would be close. They were right - Pohutsky won by a slim 258 votes.

With Pohutsky being the first Democratic candidate to hold the Livonia seat, it's no surprise the two candidates raised the most campaign money in the Hometown Life coverage area.

By Election Day, Pohutsky had raised \$382,622 and Ptashnik brought in \$262,027. Those figures do not include in-kind donations, which are the transfer of an asset rather than cash contributions.

Both candidates took hundreds of thousands from their parties' house funds, all of which are classified as in-kind contributions.

"More money buys more campaigning," Dulio said. "In a state house race, it's probably mail."

Some of Pohutsky's top donors included Lasinski For MI PAC, Emily's List Michigan, Building Bridges PAC and the Michigan Education Association PAC. Pohutsky accepted at least \$10,000 from each of these donors.

On her website, Pohutsky's donation page is run by ActBlue, a fundraising platform for Democrats. Consequently, she raked in small contributions from a swath of donors all over the country.

Ptashnik did not match Pohutsky in sheer number of donors, but brought in a fair share of cash. Her top donors included the Chatfield Majority Fund, Building Experience Now PAC, MI Strategic Leadership Fund and the Wentworth Majority Fund. She accepted at least \$10,000 from each of these donors.

Ptashnik also accepted donations of \$1,050 from six members of the DeVos family, who are Republicans from Grand Rapids. The family's most well-known member currently is U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, who did not donate to Ptashnik.

Ptashnik also drew support from local politicians, including the committee to elect Livonia City Council

President Kathleen McIntyre, Livonia council Vice President Scott Bahr, Livonia Treasurer Lynda Scheel, Livonia Councilman Rob Donovic and Farmington Hills Councilwoman Valerie Knol.

Canton, Northville, Plymouth

Incumbent Rep. Matt Koleszar (D-Plymouth) soundly won reelection against Republican challenger John Lacny by about 6,000 votes. He also out-raised his opponent financially. Before Koleszar's election victory in 2018, the district had leaned right since 2010.

Koleszar raised \$218,096 by the end of the election season, not including in-kind donations. His top donors included Lasinski For MI PAC, Building Bridges PAC, MEA Political Action Council, Future Now Fund - MI and the UAW Michigan Voluntary PAC. He took at least \$10,000 from these donors.

He also drew donations from local Democrats including Livonia Mayor Maureen Miller Brosnan, State Rep. Kevin Coleman, State Rep.-elect Ranjeev Puri and Westland Councilman Mike McDermott. Like Pohutsky, Koleszar also had a large base of small donors from across the country through ActBlue.

Lacny, on the other hand, brought in \$65,150 over the cycle. His top single donation was Huck PAC, which gave him \$2,500. Lacny also had financial support from Northville Supervisor-elect Mark Abbo and Canton Supervisor Pat Williams.

The bigger the race, the more likely the candidates will have larger contributions coming from political action committees, better known as PACs. Those big-ticket donations may raise eyebrows, but it doesn't necessarily indicate the candidate is beholden to a particular special interest.

"I think it's really simple. Those candidates agree with the agenda of those interests," Dulio said. "I don't think it's any more complicated than that. But that's not a bad thing, right? The police union wouldn't give money to a candidate for office if they weren't convinced that they already agreed with them on certain things."

"They're not going to spend their scarce resources on a hunch that they're going to be able to 'buy' somebody off."

Belleville, Canton and Van Buren

Democrat Ranjeev Puri outraised his opponent, Republican Laurel Hess, and ended up with nearly 9,000 more votes on Election Day. The 21st state house district has traditionally had a left-leaning tilt.

Puri's largest single donation came from the UAW Michigan PAC, which gave him \$10,000. According to his post-general election financial report, he raised \$195,210.76 throughout the cycle.

In comparison, Hess raised \$5,910 by Election Day. Her largest single donation was \$600 from the Wayne County Republican Committee.

Hess also received multiple donations from Canton Supervisor Pat Williams and his committee to elect.

Westland and Wayne

State Rep. Kevin Coleman (D-Westland) is just one of many left-leaning politicians to represent the 16th district over the years. So, it comes as no surprise he outraised and received more votes than Republican challenger Emily Bauman.

By Election Day, Bauman brought in \$8,018. Her largest donations were around \$1,000 from Colette Rosati, Nick Rosati, Eric Ladwig and Tony Partin. Wayne Councilwoman Kelly Skiff and Richard Graham, who runs the Move Westland Forward Facebook page, were also among her donors.

Coleman raised \$95,611 throughout the cycle. His largest donor was Lasinski For MI PAC, which gave him \$10,000. Westland city councilmen McDermott, Jim Godbout and Peter Herzberg also donated to his campaign, along with Graham.

Farmington and Farmington Hills

Democrat Samantha Steckloff's election as representative for the 37th district was just one of many times voters went to the left over the years. Her opponent, Republican Mitch Swoboda, did not submit any financial disclosures to the state.

Steckloff raised \$84,293. Like other local Democrats, her largest donor was Lasinski For MI PAC, which gave her \$10,000. Farmington Councilwoman Maria Taylor and Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner Jim Nash also donated.

Popcorn

Continued from Page 1A

come by and get popcorn and sno-cones and cotton candy. It was part of the cycle.

“My vision ... is to recreate that childhood story again.”

Harris and Kelley were announced as buyers of the business this summer after it was reacquired by former owner David Farber. Farber took the business back from former owner Evan Singer after Singer made remarks on social media appearing to support police brutality following the death of George Floyd at the hands of police in Minnesota. Farber immediately began looking for minority ownership. Several days later, the company announced that Harris Financial Group was the intended buyer, and negotiations began.

Now that the sale of the business is complete, Harris and Kelley can focus on moving the business forward while simultaneously returning it to its roots: providing quality snack foods. The company, which began in 1923, is known for its sale of popcorn via concession stands, as well as cotton candy and other snacks associated with events.

“For us, the legacy and the tradition, as we see it, is invaluable to us,” Kelley said. “We want to build on that legacy.”

They hope to make the Detroit Popcorn Co. facility at 14950 Telegraph a destination.

“We’re going to set this facility up so there can be actual school visitation,” Harris said. “The kids can come and actually walk through, like Better Made Potato Chips.”

They hope to grow regionally — including attempting to regain clients such as the Detroit Zoo and Quicken Loans — and to make their brand known nationally. They’ve even got a new commercial trumpeting the comeback of the brand.

They’ve also been in talks with groups for charitable causes in places like Canton, Ohio — where Kelley grew up — and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There, they’ve connected with Yesterday’s Negro League Baseball Players Foundation as a way to help educate people about Negro League Baseball and its history. They’ve also pledged to donate a portion of their profits to the Detroit Public Schools Foundation.



Party supplies at the Detroit Popcorn Co. are available to the public for purchase. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



The Detroit Popcorn Company sits at 14950 Telegraph in Redford Township.

The company’s tins of popcorn, a major seller right now as the holidays get closer are filled with caramel, cheese and buttered popcorn and can be shipped anywhere in the continental United States.

“It’s starting to pick up,” Kelley said.

Those looking to order Detroit Popcorn Company products can do so by visiting the business 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, though hours are subject to change. Online orders are accepted at detroitpopcorn.com.

Harris and Kelley expect to keep the business in Redford for the foreseeable future, especially given the infrastructure already in place, but they hope to someday open a small shop in Detroit to sell their products as well.

Harris said they’ve managed to keep much of the same staff on board, whose time of service averages between 10 and 20 years. Having that wealth of experience and knowledge, Harris said, helps keep the corn a-poppin’.

“We’re going to try to make an atmosphere where it’s fun,” Harris said. “This is a fun business.”

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

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For more holiday safety tips, visit oakgov.com/covid.

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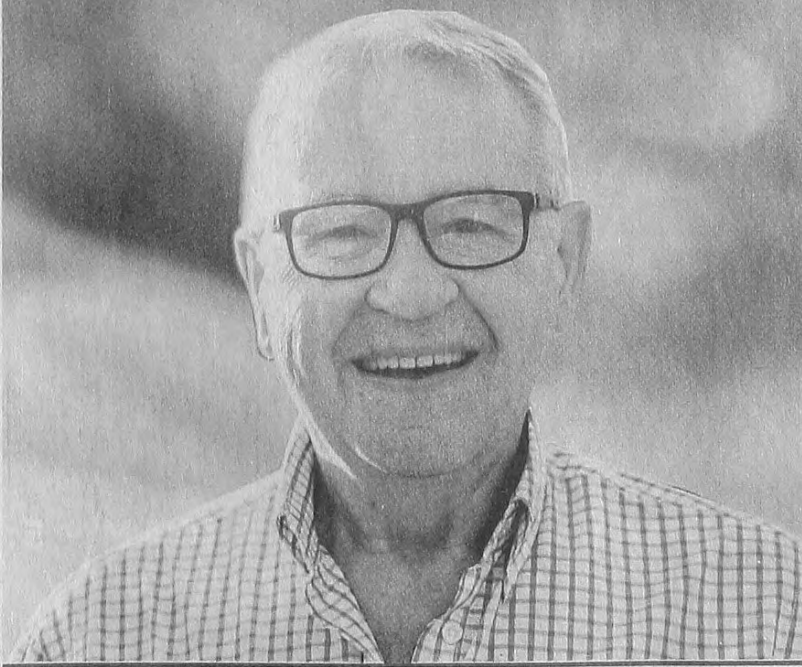
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5-hour Energy founder to give away \$1B worth of water purifiers

Adrienne Roberts Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Michigan billionaire Manoj Bhargava, founder of 5-hour Energy, said he's giving away, over the next decade, \$1 billion worth of a water purification system his company developed.

The HANS Premium Water device, a dishwasher-sized machine, removes contaminants from water and is capable of supplying an entire home or building.

"Globally, at least a billion people are running out of fresh water, and most of the water in the U.S. is contaminated," Bhargava said in a news release. "There's actually no shortage of water, just a shortage of clean water."

The announcement marks the latest invention from Bhargava's Stage 2 Innovations laboratory in Farmington Hills, and another piece of the Giving Pledge, a commitment he announced in 2012 to give away the majority of his wealth.

The HANS Premium Water device emerged after Bhargava wanted to find a way to address the lack of sustainable fresh water.

"Brackish (salt-contaminated) wells and polluted water sources are pretty much everywhere," he said.

The device aims to solve that problem, recycling and filtering water at a rate that can supply a household, or can be linked together to supply a village or farm with clean water, the release said.

Details about where and to whom the water filtration systems will go haven't been figured out yet, but Bhargava hopes to work with government agencies and nonprofits to figure out where they're needed most, a spokesperson said.

The filtration system will also soon be available for purchase in the U.S. The water treatment company Culligan will market, install and service the systems.

The two dozen employees at Stage 2 Innovations are also working on other projects such as providing free electricity to poor people, a therapy for Alzheimer's and a free system that allows farmers to make their own fertilizer, the release said.

Dining

Continued from Page 1A

dining outdoors, adding between 25 percent and 50 percent additional seats.

Retailers are also permitted to use space outside of their shops.

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Porter asked whether instead of setting a hard date for allowing outdoor dining, the city should tie-bar the allowance to expire when the state allows indoor dining again.

"We need to be bending over backwards for our businesses now," he said. "I just wanted to find a way to tie it to a time where we don't have to worry about."

Gouin said keeping the outdoor dining allowance throughout the winter will allow greater certainty for local restaurants, even after indoor dining is once again allowed by the state.

Adding seats outside allows restaurants to expand their seating capacity in a time when fewer people are dining out.

"There are some restaurants that probably will continue to have outdoor dining just for the simple fact that peo-

"We need to be bending over backwards for our businesses now."

Tom Porter

Wayne mayor pro tem, on extending outdoor dining allowances through March

ple don't feel comfortable crowded inside and it gives them extra capacity," she said.

Many area communities have relaxed their rules related to the pandemic when it comes to winter outdoor dining.

Plymouth is the most recent area community to extend its outdoor dining season. Northville and Birmingham extended that season some time ago.

Gouin said she also has begun working with small businesses in the city to apply for newly-established grants from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Those grants would allocate up to \$15,000 for small businesses.

She said she has set up at least one appointment with a business to work on a grant and hopes to see more interest from within the city.

"We are doing everything we possibly can to help," she said.

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

Hotel

Continued from Page 1A

company still put about \$3 million into renovations and furnishings.

Those renovations included the new provisions space serving snacks and coffee, a new fitness center and some new furniture in each room, including brand-new 55-inch smart televisions.

The hotel also has a small banquet space for corporate events and weddings, when such activities are viable again.

A restaurant serving casual American fare called Founder's Tavern will operate when indoor dining is deemed safe again. Fleming said Marriott planned to open the restaurant, but with the state temporarily shutting down indoor dining right around the hotel's opening, the tavern will remain closed.

"We had all of our bartenders trained

on crazy craft cocktails that are delicious," she said. "We had some good things going."

The Delta brand is fairly new to metro Detroit, Fleming said: one operates in Romulus near the airport and others are located on the west side of the state. The Farmington Hills location is the brand's first in Oakland County.

Opening a new hotel concept in the midst of a pandemic that has significantly reduced travel has been challenging, but Fleming said she believes the staff and amenities are ready to serve business or leisure guests once traveling picks up again.

"It's a leap of faith," she said. "We just have to trust that things are going to get better and that we have the right people in place, then when things do get better, people will come."

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



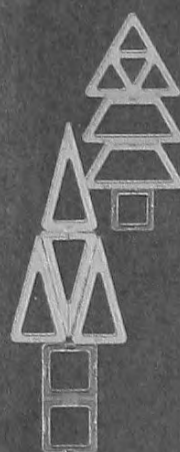
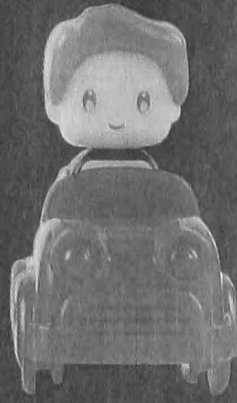
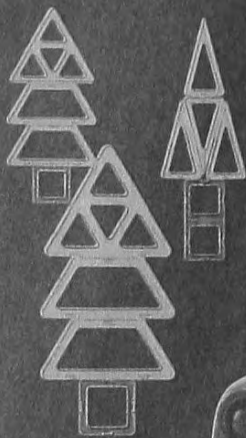
Shawna Fleming, director of sales for The Delta Hotels Detroit Novi by Marriott, gives a tour of the new Farmington Hills hotel's Jingle Bell Inn room Dec. 8.
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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Obituaries

Robert Erlenbusch

On Tuesday, December 2, 2020, Robert James Erlenbusch lost his life to Covid at age 69.

Bob was born on January 24, 1951, in Detroit, MI, to Christian and Dorcas (Root) Erlenbusch. He served honorably in the U.S. Navy, then returned to live out his life in Plymouth, retiring from National Set Screw.

Bob loved fishing trips to Shupac Lake. He loved to cook and jokingly called himself "The Stumbling Gourmet." Family time and traditions were precious to Bob, especially during the holidays. Bob loved Star Trek, The Beatles, slapstick humor, helping his parents, teasing his sisters, and being a Mason. But above all he loved being a grandpa. Bob was known for his silly jokes, his sentimental kindness, and his funny tee shirt collection.

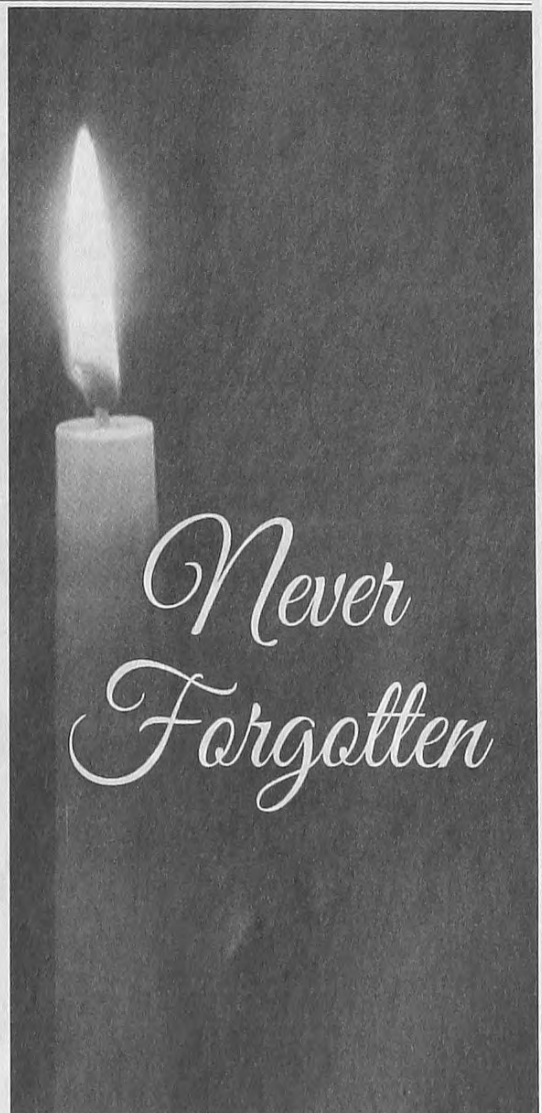
Bob was preceded in death by his parents and survived by his son Christian, daughter-in-law Emily, grandchildren Aurora and Gideon, sisters Janet, Susan, and Marian, and a large extended family. He is mourned and missed by his companion of 24 years Vicki Moak, and his kitty, Elsa.

The family will have a private memorial service. A celebration of Bob's life for extended family and friends is being planned for 2021.



Geraldine Tunison "Geri"

FARMINGTON - age 81, passed away November 24, 2020. She is preceded in death by her husband Harold; loving mother of Katherine Tunison-Wright (Thomas), Wendy Tunison (Roberto Gutierrez) and Michele Tunison (Dave Myers); a beloved grandmother of Dylan and Grant Gutierrez; dearest sister of 5. There was nothing Geri wouldn't do for her daughters, grandsons, or her many friends. Walking into her home ensured lively conversation, laughter and leaving well fed. She had a love for country music, late night telephone chats with her friends, and bragging about her grandsons. She was always in the middle of a book and passed on her passion for reading to her family. She will be forever in our hearts. A memorial service will be held for Geri at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, downtown Farmington (248-474-5200), at a later date. www.heeney-sundquist.com



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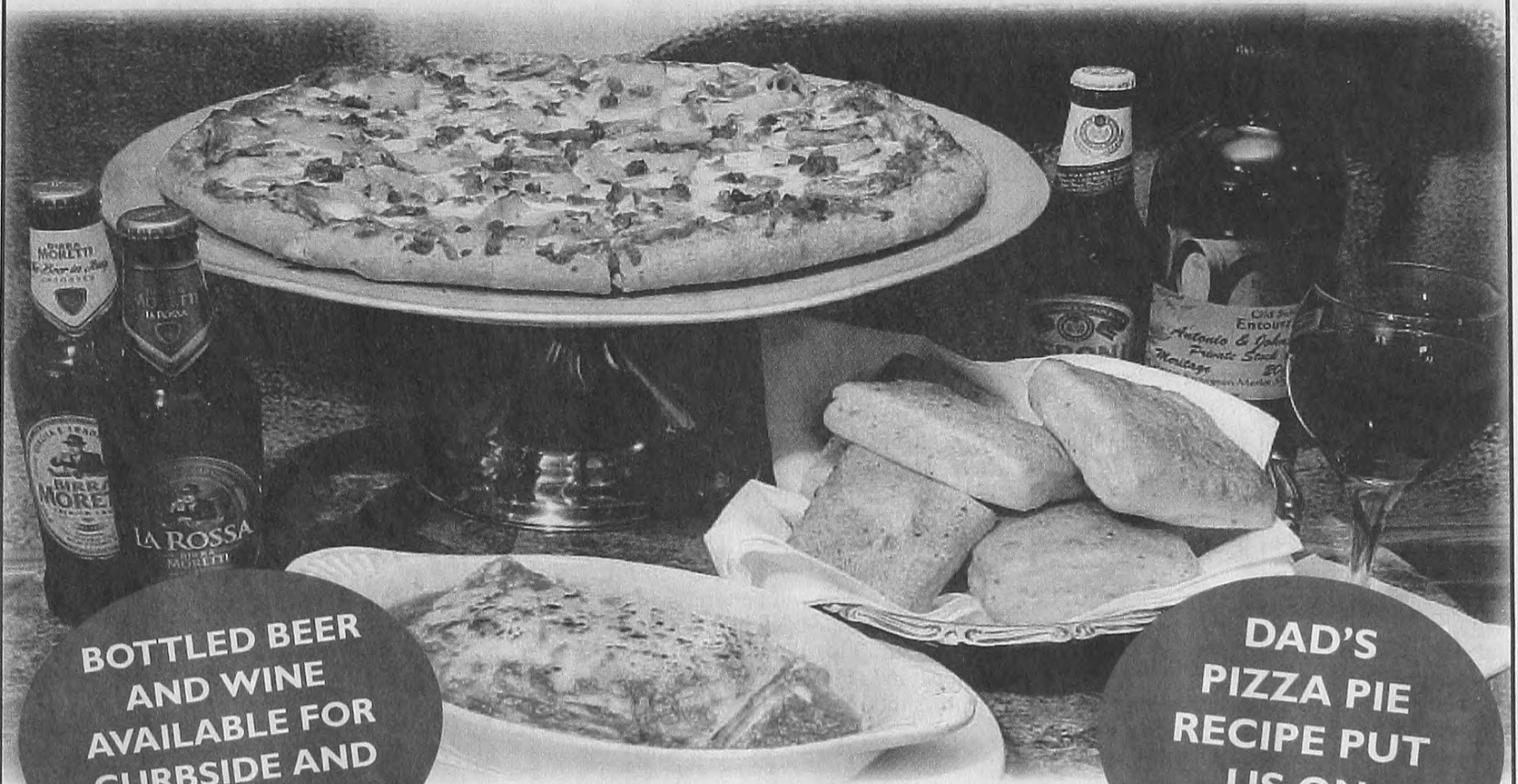
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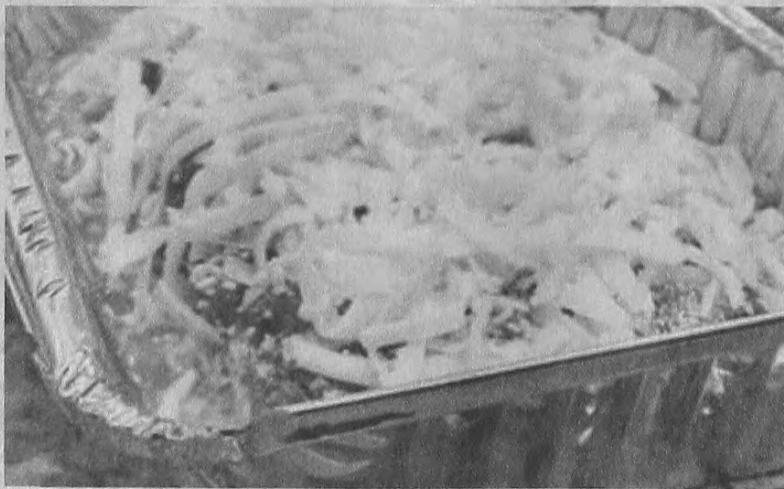
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SPORTS

Foos steps down as Madonna's head coach

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Madonna football program announced Tuesday that head coach Brian Foos left the program Monday to pursue other professional opportunities.

Offensive coordinator Herb Haygood will take the place of interim head coach.

"Herb has been an integral part of the recruiting process and has coached both sides of the ball in his time here," Madonna athletic director Scott Kennell said in a release. "We feel Herb is the



Offensive coordinator Herb Haygood, right, will be Madonna's interim head football coach after Brian Foos, left, departed Monday to pursue other professional opportunities. Madonna is scheduled to open its inaugural NAIA season Feb. 13.

best candidate to lead us forward this spring and we are excited for what the future holds."

Haygood is a former Michigan State captain at wide receiver and is the only kick returner to be named to the Walter Camp Football Foundation All-America team. He was drafted in the fifth round

of the 2002 NFL Draft by the Denver Broncos, and played with the Indianapolis Colts, the Kansas City Chiefs, NFL Europe's Scottish Claymore, Canadian Football League's Montreal Alouettes, and the Tampa Bay Storm in the Arena Football League.

Haygood previously coached at Oli-

vet College, Saginaw Valley State University, Miami (Ohio), Indiana and Eastern Michigan, having coached four All-Americans, 11 all-conference, and 22 academic all-conference selections along with 13 players who have been drafted or signed as free agents in the NFL.

Haygood was hired as Madonna's defensive coordinator in spring 2019 before switching to offensive coordinator after the departure of Matt Wright.

"I would like to thank President Michael Grandillo and Director of Athletics

See MADONNA, Page 3B



FALL SEASON LINGERS

Livonia Churchill's Ryan Hutchinson, left, upends a Livonia Franklin ball carrier. Churchill is one of four local football teams still vying for a state championship. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE PHOTO

Michigan high school teams react to latest postponement

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

"We can only control what we can control." This has been Cranbrook Kingswood girls swim and dive head coach Paul Ellis' message to his team throughout the 2020 season.

This is the message that continued the Cranes' trajectory toward a Division 3 state title, the team's second in the past four years.

Ellis can't make a prediction regarding the remainder of the 2020 season, neither can his players. All they could do was prepare for what could be.

"We can't tell the Governor to let us finish," Ellis said. "We can't be upset if she doesn't lift the pause because we are trying to take care and qualm this pandemic. Is that the answer that we want? No. We want them to say, 'We can finish, we can get this season done and we can move on.' But at this point with them, it's only we can control what we can control."

The outcome Ellis, Cranbrook Kingswood and the rest of the fall teams still in the hunt for a state title throughout the state was pushed back again, as the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services extended its guidelines to slow the spread of COVID-19 by 12 days to Dec. 20 - further postponing the high school football, swim and dive, and volleyball postseasons.

In a Monday press conference, Gov.



The Novi volleyball team won its sixth district final in the past seven seasons. Normally, a high school season would end in the fall, and many players would play a club season from January to the end of June. According to current MHSAA rules, players are not allowed to practice for club and high school teams at the same time. COLIN GAY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE PHOTO

Inside

- Michigan high school sports remain paused. 2B
- Some coaches miffed by extension of Gov. Whitmer's order. 3B

Gretchen Whitmer was asked about the possibility of a return for high school athletics, but she shifted her answer to focus on the academic side of in-person schooling.

"I believe that our first priority should

be getting students back into the classroom safely," she said.

Michigan High School Athletic Association Executive Director Mark Uyl said in a statement that he was disappointed in the announcement made by the state but that he and the MHSAA will chart out a plan to complete fall and winter seasons.

Livonia Churchill head football coach Bill DeFillippo knows he does not have any answers that can fix the overarching

See FALL SEASON, Page 2B

FOOTBALL

MHSFCA releases all-region honors

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Postseason football awards are continuing to flood in.

Here's a look at the members of the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association All-Region teams from the Hometown Life coverage area.

Division 1

Region 2

Detroit Catholic Central offensive lineman Bruno Guberinich
Lakeland wide receiver Mike Sherrill
Lakeland defensive lineman Mark Tingle

Detroit Catholic Central defensive back Sam Dersa

Lakeland defensive back Shane Ells
Lakeland head coach Joe Woodruff

Region 3

Canton offensive lineman Josh Martin

John Glenn tight end Justin Hart
Livonia Stevenson running back Camden Woodall

Canton running back Zack Badger

Canton quarterback Kaleb Burg
Canton defensive lineman Jacob Davis

Canton linebacker Aran Patrick

Canton defensive back Caleb Williams

Canton head coach Andrew LaFata

Division 2

Region 6

North Farmington offensive lineman Jai'Lun Hampton

South Lyon wide receiver Quinn Fracassi

North Farmington wide receiver Aaron Rice

North Farmington running back Justin Whitehorn

South Lyon running back Jordan Singleton

North Farmington quarterback Jacob Bousamra

South Lyon defensive lineman Gus Taylor

North Farmington defensive back Jasper Beeler

South Lyon defensive back Dakota Blackwell

Region 7

Livonia Churchill offensive lineman Lawrence Hattar

Livonia Franklin offensive lineman Kyle Fugedi

Livonia Churchill wide receiver Jordan Garcia

Livonia Churchill quarterback Gavin Brooks

See HONORS, Page 2B

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Mich. high school sports remain paused with state order extension

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

With the state's three-week "pause" coming to a close Dec. 9, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Monday that the order will continue until Dec. 20 during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

On Nov. 19, the pause halted all Michigan High School Athletic Association-sanctioned sports, including the remaining fall sports: high school football, volleyball, and girls swim and dive.

In November, MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said if the three-week

pause would be extended, he would sit down with the MHSAA Board of Directors and "go ahead with Plan B and Plan C," tweaking and changing plans if need be.

The high school football season will remain halted in the regional round for the next 12 days, the volleyball season will remain at the state semifinals and the girls swim and dive season will remain at the state meet.

Prior to this announcement, the MHSAA announced its initial schedule to complete the 2020 fall season.

The football season was scheduled to continue with the regional round, Dec. 15 and 16, the state semifinal round

Dec. 21 and 22 and the state finals Dec. 28 and 29 at Ford Field.

The volleyball state semifinals and finals were scheduled to be played at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek Dec. 17-19, while the girls swim and dive state finals will be held at multiple venues across the state Dec. 22 and 23.

Teams in winter and fall sports were scheduled to begin practice Dec. 9, while winter sports seasons were scheduled to start Jan. 4.

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

Fall season

Continued from Page 1B

problem that caused the halting of the Chargers' postseason. He only knew he wanted to play.

"I'm just, selfishly, I'm disappointed because we had such a great group of kids," DeFillipo said. "That's speaking personally, not just our on-field performance. We really have a great group of high-character kids that you love being around. If there was any year you wanted to see how far you could go and see how you could finish, it was with this group."

Will teams finish?

As the MHSAA decides a schedule to finish its fall postseasons, questions are already coming up regarding what it would look like and how it would be put into practice.

Normally, for volleyball players a high school season would be complete in the fall, and many would play a club season from January to the end of June. According to current MHSAA rules, players are not allowed to practice for club and high school teams at the same time.

Novi head coach Kacy Moran, who also coaches at the club level, said this presents a predicament for many of her players Without a rule change or a waiver made by the MHSAA.

But Moran knows what many of her players would want to do.

"I think if you make the players choose, then you get into a sticky situation," Moran said. "On the one hand, I can guarantee that every player that is playing in the Elite Eight right now would want that last-game finish, whether it's in the Elite Eight, final four or final."

For some football teams, including Churchill, rosters could face high school seniors leaving in January to enroll early for either spring training at the Division 1 level or for a spring season at one of many other schools, including the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

"It's nice that people are trying," DeFillippo said. "I just don't know how they can do it in March and expect kids who have plans to go to college in January, try to maybe come up with the decision of 'Should I stay?' And who knows if the numbers are going to be any better in March?"

'I think we can do this'

With the latest postponement of the playoffs, many coaches are focusing their attention on what they had the



Detroit Catholic Central junior running back Conner Bell scores one of his two touchdowns against Lakeland. Catholic Central was scheduled to take on Davison in the regional final. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

chance to do in 2020.

At Detroit Catholic Central, who was scheduled to take on Davison in the regional football final, head coach Dan Anderson focused on the team's two mantras: "Adapt and overcome" and "faith over fear." Both, he said, were character traits those on his roster took this season.

"Everything those kids have been through. The kids are just so resilient," Anderson said. "They take it in stride, there's disappointment, for sure, but they are thinking, 'OK, this is the next curveball you are throwing us? This is what we need to do to stay on track to get to our goal.'"

North Farmington head coach Jon Herstein said it came down to an old cliché: "playing every rep like it's your last," equating this to the fact that it would not necessarily take an injury for a player to be sidelined in 2020.

Moran, who was not surprised by the latest postponement, said there are life lessons that her players at Novi are learning, even if they may not be in the most traditional way.

"I think that they have demonstrated a lot of resiliency and we know that if you are resilient, you are going to be more successful in life," Moran said. "I think they have proved to go with the flow and be flexible.

But to Moran, knowing what the Wildcats have done this season on the volleyball court, knew this season was more than she or the rest of her team could have expected during a pandemic.

"I think they are very much appreciative right now that we got as far as we did and we were able to have a season," Moran said. "I think that if you asked any of them, they would much rather have this situation right now than no volleyball at all the entire fall."

While this is the mindset many coaches are taking, looking back at what they accomplished in the midst of uncertainty, Anderson uses it to fuel his view of the future.

To him, he's confident. He thinks a season is still within reach. Not for him, but for those Shamrocks on his roster.

"Hopefully we move forward, just for the kids sake," Anderson said. "I'll get other years to coach - I've done this for 29 years and, Lord willing, I can do it for another 20 if I can."

"I think we are going to be able to do this. I do. Maybe that's just me being positive and trying to stay positive, but I think we can do this."

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



Lions Insider

Dave Birkett
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Final 4 games matter - for draft position

A record six quarterbacks were taken in the first round of the 1983 NFL draft, including three future Hall of Famers: John Elway, Dan Marino and Jim Kelly.

The 2021 draft could yield similar depth at the position, with Trevor Lawrence and Justin Fields all but guaranteed to be the top two picks and as many as four other quarterbacks - Trey Lance, Zach Wilson, Mac Jones and Kyle Trask - earning first-round interest.

That should make for an interesting final few weeks to the regular season as teams jockey for draft position, and it could aid the Lions and other quarterback-needy teams who don't end up with top-10 picks.

While the New York Jets and Jacksonville Jaguars are locks to take Lawrence and Fields at the top of the draft, a number of the other teams currently slotted in the top 10 either do not need a quarterback or seem unlikely to roll the dice on the position.

The Cincinnati Bengals (at No. 3), Los Angeles Chargers (at No. 4) and Miami Dolphins (No. 9, via the Houston Texans) all have rookie quarterbacks who have impressed. The Dallas Cowboys (No. 5) are a wildcard given Dak Prescott's injury and contract situation, though owner Jerry Jones insists Prescott remains in the franchise's long-term plans. And the Philadelphia Eagles (No. 6) have two young quarterbacks on their roster in Carson Wentz and Jalen Hurts.

It remains to be seen if Lance, Wilson, Jones or Trask emerges a premium first-round talent, but if you're a Lions fan hoping to land one of that quartet come April, you'll need to keep an eye on the four- and five-win teams that populate the bottom of my power rankings.

Currently, the Carolina Panthers (No. 7) and Atlanta Falcons (No. 8) seem like threats to draft quarterbacks, though both have veterans under contract for 2021 at the position (Teddy Bridgewater in Carolina, Matt Ryan in Atlanta).

The Denver Broncos (No. 10) could have a new general manager with no ties to second-year quarterback Drew Lock calling the shots, and Washington (No. 11) may already have moved on from Dwayne Haskins.

The Lions currently sit 12th in the draft order, a spot that should give them options but probably not their choice of that second group of quarterbacks. In the most recent mock draft by CBS Sports, Lance and Wilson joined Lawrence and Fields as top-10 picks, Jones went 13th to the Chicago Bears and Trask slipped out of the first round.

Two four-win teams, the Broncos and Panthers, play this week, and in another draft pick-position game, the Falcons visit the Chargers.

Neither of those games is as attractive as Bills-Steelers or Chiefs-Dolphins in Week 14, but from the Lions' standpoint, they may be more important.

Contact Dave Birkett at dbirkett@freepress.com. Follow him on Twitter at @davebirkett.

Birkett's power rankings: Week 14

Records updated after Tuesday's game.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Chiefs (11-1) | 18. Giants (5-7) |
| 2. Steelers (11-1) | 19. Washington (5-7) |
| 3. Saints (10-2) | 20. 49ers (5-7) |
| 4. Bills (9-3) | 21. Bears (5-7) |
| 5. Packers (9-3) | 22. Lions (5-7) |
| 6. Browns (9-3) | 23. Falcons (4-8) |
| 7. Seahawks (8-4) | 24. Texans (4-8) |
| 8. Titans (8-4) | 25. Panthers (4-8) |
| 9. Colts (8-4) | 26. Broncos (4-8) |
| 10. Buccaneers (7-5) | 27. Cowboys (3-9) |
| 11. Dolphins (8-4) | 28. Eagles (3-8-1) |
| 12. Rams (8-4) | 29. Chargers (3-9) |
| 13. Ravens (7-5) | 30. Bengals (2-9-1) |
| 14. Raiders (7-5) | 31. Jaguars (1-11) |
| 15. Vikings (6-6) | 32. Jets (0-12) |
| 16. Cardinals (6-6) | |
| 17. Patriots (6-6) | |

Honors

Continued from Page 1B

Livonia Franklin quarterback Zac Olesuk
Livonia Churchill defensive lineman Demarius Gibson-Wells
Livonia Franklin defensive lineman Aaron Mass
Livonia Churchill defensive lineman Khalil Ford
Livonia Franklin linebacker Evan Pittenger
Livonia Churchill linebacker Boston Clegg Jr.
Livonia Churchill defensive back Jimmy Targosz
Livonia Churchill defensive back Josh Brown
Livonia Churchill head coach Bill DeFillipo
Region 8
Seaholm offensive lineman Caden DeWald
Groves offensive lineman Ben Simmons

Seaholm running back Will McBride
Seaholm defensive lineman Jake LaBarre

Division 3

Region 11

Garden City offensive lineman Hunter Ohman
Brother Rice wide receiver and defensive back Rocco Milla
South Lyon East quarterback Zander Desentz
Garden City defensive lineman Chazz Tennant
South Lyon East head coach Joe Pesci

Division 4

Region 15

Redford Union offensive lineman Spencer Wallace
Redford Union running back Dawaune Strickland
Livonia Clarenceville defensive lineman Justin Dorsey
Redford Union linebacker Alonzo Wil-

son
Livonia Clarenceville defensive back Sean Brian Craig
Redford Union athlete Parker Kennedy III
Region 16
Detroit Country Day offensive lineman Caleb Tiernan
Cranbrook Kingswood defensive lineman Bryce Hall
Detroit Country Day defensive lineman Will Leggon
Detroit Country Day linebacker Joe Miller
Detroit Country Day defensive back Danny MacLean
Cranbrook Kingswood specialist Chase Paulus
Detroit Country Day head coach Dan MacLean

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

Some coaches miffed by extension of order

Football may not be able to finish until spring



High School Insider
Mick McCabe
Special to Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

If nothing else, the Michigan High School Athletic Association knows where it stands with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

It doesn't.

In announcing a 12-day extension to the latest health order of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on Monday, the governor effectively ended any chance for the MHSAA to complete its football, volleyball and girls swimming and diving championships until the new year.

While volleyball and swimming can finish their seasons in January, football may not be able to complete the three remaining weeks of playoff games until March or April because of weather conditions.

The most surprising aspect of the governor's news conference is she didn't even mention high school athletics in the body of her remarks. It took a reporter's question for her to broach the subject.

"As a parent of a high schooler, I believe, and as the governor of Michigan I believe that our first priority should be getting students back in the classroom safely," she said. "That, I believe, is paramount."

In making her ruling, Whitmer disregarded the data the MHSAA had compiled for her office showing that high school athletics could be handled in a safe environment and that it has not been a super-spreader of COVID-19.

"We realize the crisis our medical caregivers and first responders are navigating and understand the need to continue the pause," MHSAA Executive Director Mark Uyl said in a statement. "However, the MHSAA had provided a detailed plan to both Governor Whitmer and MDHHS that would have completed fall tournaments with no spectators as safely as possible during the month of December along with allowing winter sport practices to resume."

The MHSAA had also warned the governor that even if she shut down MHSAA athletics, kids would find alternatives to keep playing. The MHSAA sent her two dozen fliers from organizations inviting kids to join club volleyball and AAU basketball teams where safety for the athletes may not be a top priority.

Whitmer failed to address that issue at all.

"It's just a lack of transparency is what bothers me," said Davison football coach Jake Weingartz. "I've got a couple buddies whose kids play AAU basketball. They're in the eighth grade and they're still doing that. I drive by a middle school on my way to work every day and there's 300 kids out on the playground playing soccer, playing football, doing what kids do."

"That's OK, but playing 22 guys on a 120-yard field is unsafe?"

In its statement, the MHSAA said it is determined to find a way to complete the fall season and the representative council was to meet Wednesday to devise a plan to finish the three sports and a timetable to begin winter sports.

What that will look like for football is anyone's guess. If football resumes, it will resume without some of the state's best players.

West Bloomfield running back Donovan Edwards, who has not yet committed to a school, has repeatedly said he will enroll in college in January.

West Bloomfield coach Ron Bellamy also expects to have defensive back/wide receiver Maxwell Hairston enroll at Kentucky and safety Gavin Hardeman go to Air Force, and they will leave with his blessing.

"I respect the fact that these kids have high school sports and high school edu-



ERIC SEALS/DETROIT FREE PRESS FILE PHOTO

"I drive by a middle school on my way to work every day and there's 300 kids out on the playground. That's OK, but playing 22 guys on a 120-yard field is unsafe?"

Jake Weingartz
Davison football coach, shown holding the Division 1 state championship trophy on Nov. 30, 2019, at Ford Field in Detroit

cation," said Bellamy. "But this is just a step forward to other things that these things are going to accomplish."

Bellamy isn't excited about the possibility of continuing the season in April, facing Romeo in the regional final without those three players.

"It's not the same football team," he said. "Then let's cut our losses and call it a season. I know I'm speaking for the minority when I say this because not many schools have kids leaving school early, but we play a really good Romeo football team that I don't know if any of their kids are leaving early."

"Now all of a sudden two or three of our kids are leaving early. That puts us at a competitive disadvantage versus a really good football team."

No. 3 Cass Tech is scheduled to play No. 1 Belleville in the regional finals and it will be missing six players, including the King twins - Kobe and Kalen - who will be enrolling at Penn State.

"We're just preparing for college now, we'll be out of here," Kobe said. "It's not really disappointing. We kind of expected it all year with it being canceled in the first place. I'm just going with the flow, that's it."

The season was originally postponed until the spring before Whitmer changed her mind and permitted the season to begin, three weeks late.

So the latest delay wasn't a surprise to many coaches.

Cass Tech coach Thomas Wilcher said half of his defense will be enrolled in college when the MHSAA resumes the season, and he doesn't know how the restart will go over with the players.

"In my opinion I don't think the kids are going to want to play after that," said Wilcher. "They're going to be off all this time and then say go practice for two weeks and then go out and play a good game? I don't think that's going to happen. I don't think you'll get a good product."

But Wilcher may have also been talking for the minority. Most coaches would welcome an opportunity to play for a state championship.

Ithaca coach Terry Hessbrook had a Zoom meeting scheduled with his players Monday night and was going to tell them they were going to make history by being part of the first Ithaca team to ever play a game in March or April or whenever the playoffs resume.

"I'm being optimistic," he said. "We're trying to sell them this is a bowl game like they do in college. You take four or five weeks off, have exams and the holidays. The only difference is we won't be playing in a warm weather site."

Division 2 state champ Muskegon Mona Shores isn't losing any players to college, and coach Matt Koziak is hoping to finish the season.

"I don't know how that's going to work

out," he said. "Whatever the seniors want, we'll do it. I don't know what it will look like, but we'll see."

Belleville will lose receivers Deion Burks to Purdue and Darrell Johnson to Grand Valley State, but coach Jermain Crowell has other things on his mind.

"We'll be fine, at the end of the day we've got other people who can play receiver," he said. "But I'm paranoid. I don't know if it will be that much safer. But I figure it will at least warmer. Maybe it will just be better."

Crowell tested positive for the coronavirus a few weeks ago, and it still worries him despite being well on his way to recovery.

"Anybody who's had any kind of contact with it and it's affected their family members, they've got a different perspective," he said. "Trust me, before I wanted to play the season all the way out. But that was before I got sick. I don't want to go through that again."

He does, however, feel better about finishing the season in the spring.

"Give us 10 or 12 days of practice, and we'll be OK," he said. "It would be around the time you would have spring ball in Michigan. But everything is a first with COVID; we'll see how it goes."

No. 2 Davison will be attempting to defend its Division 1 state title without all-state quarterback Brendan Sullivan, who reports to Northwestern on Jan. 4.

That is why Weingartz desperately wanted Whitmer to allow the MHSAA to finish the season before the new year.

"I thought the MHSAA did a great job putting out all the data to show her how safe it actually is for our high school kids," he said. "Three games left. Let's just finish it."

Mick McCabe is a former longtime columnist for the Detroit Free Press. Contact him at mick.mccabe@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter at [@mickmccabe](https://twitter.com/mickmccabe). His new book, "Mick McCabe's Golden Yearbook: 50 Great Years of Michigan's Best High School Players, Teams & Memories," can be ordered at McCabe.PictorialBook.com.



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Madonna

Continued from Page 1B

Scott Kennell for entrusting me with this opportunity to lead this football program," Haygood said in a statement. "I'm humbled and looking forward to inspiring our student-athletes to be men of character, motivate them to be their best, and support them in their academic, athletic, and life goals. Madonna University has a wonderful campus with outstanding people and a lot to offer our students. I'm excited to get on the field this spring."

Foos was hired as Madonna's first football head coach in January 2019, and was initially slated to lead the team's inaugural season starting Aug. 29. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics pushed the football season, along with all other fall sports, to the spring July 31.

Madonna is scheduled to open its first season of NAIA play Feb. 13 on the road against Missouri Baptist University.

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

Howell woman, 63, completes 100-mile run

Bill Khan
Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

What possessed Connie Nunham of Howell to run 100 miles at the age of 63, despite undergoing five foot surgeries and having screws in her hip because of a stress fracture?

"I'm kind of nuts, but intensely driven," she said. "I'm stubborn."

In a year in which nearly all races are virtual, Nunham ran 5.25-mile loops of Settlers Park in Hartland in early November until she'd completed 100 miles. It took 40 hours to complete the distance, running day and night.

Trying to eat after hours of running was the most difficult part.

"You can't put food in you," she said. "You have to take so much nutrition in. It was horrid. That part was horrid. I couldn't walk for a day afterward. My feet were swollen."

"Probably 20 miles in, I got a side ache; it was a muscle. It plagued me through the whole event. At times, I was bent over sideways. I had to stop and do cat-and-cows (a yoga stretch) in front of the fire department. I couldn't get rid of it. The waves of nausea, yeah, it wasn't pretty. People were force-feeding me. 'If you want to finish, eat it!'"

Remember, this is what she does for fun.

Nunham attempted a 100-miler last year, but dropped out after 56 miles because of an injury.

"I quit, but that dream is still there," said Nunham, who began running 10 years ago. "I'm not a quitter. I had to try again."

This year she signed up to do the virtual Hennepin Hundred, which typically takes place in early October in Illinois, because of its generous time limit. The race was run as a virtual race this year.

To ensure a more successful attempt this time around, Nunham enlisted the help of a coach, accomplished ultrarunner Loretta Tobolske-Horn of Brighton. Tobolske-Horn not only came up with a training plan and offered tips in the three months leading up to the run but also turned Nunham's race from a solo venture into a community event.

Anticipating it would take Nunham 36 hours to complete the race, Tobolske-Horn put out a request on social media to have runners accompany her in one-hour blocks throughout the run. Within an hour, there were more volunteers on board than were needed for the 36 slots.

When it appeared Nunham's run would take longer, Tobolske-Horn sent out another message for pacers to accompany her over the final four hours.

When Nunham finished at 1 a.m., about 15 people cheered for her at a makeshift finish line. She was presented with a belt buckle, the customary award for 100-mile finishers.

"It was incredible to see all the people come out," Tobolske-Horn said. "People from her church, people from Running Lab, people from the Hope Water running group. It was just a neat day. Especially during this pandemic, things have not always been fun. It was great to see the community come together and be able to be outside."

"Our running community is absolutely amazing. It's just so neat to see it all come together. A lot of us hadn't seen each other for months. Because of COVID, running groups have been canceled. That probably made it more special."

Nunham didn't want to be in the spotlight but appreciated the support she received, in some cases from total strangers.

"I was in awe," she said. "I had music downloaded to all my iPod shuffles, iPods, you name it. You know how many times I played that music? None. I had the best playlist ever. I had people, I had nature. No app or musician could ever recreate those sounds."

"At the end, I cried. All those people from Running Lab and other running communities I'm part of, friends, family, my church, strangers came up to me. They said, 'I don't know you but, man, you're awesome!' In the midst of all we're going through right now, to have that support and encouragement, there are kind, warm loving people still there."



Nunham

White Sox team to beat in AL Central



Bob Nightengale
Columnist
USA TODAY

While most of the baseball world is sitting back this winter, lamenting their financial losses, and shedding their payroll, the Chicago White Sox are sending out a completely different message to their fanbase.

Their rebuild is officially over. In a span of 12 hours, the White Sox traded for frontline starter Lance Lynn of the Texas Rangers and signed right fielder Adam Eaton.

Just like that, the White Sox have thrust themselves as the favorite to win their first AL Central title since 2008 with visions of being a World Series contender, too, last winning it all in 2005.

It's hardly as if the White Sox are blowing up their payroll. Lynn costs just \$8 million this season in the final year of his three-year, \$30 million contract and Eaton will earn \$7 million this year with a club option of \$8.5 million or a \$1 million buyout.

If there was an open checkbook for the White Sox, Trevor Bauer would be pitching for the White Sox and George Springer would be in the outfield.

Yet, with every other team in the AL Central either rebuilding like the Detroit Tigers and Kansas City Royals, or cutting payroll like Cleveland and the Minnesota Twins, even with the White Sox's inexpensive moves, the division is falling right into their lap.

The White Sox are suddenly poised to create the same energy and excitement the Cubs had on the north side of town.

Lynn should be the missing piece, becoming the No. 2 starter in the rotation behind Lucas Giolito and ahead of Dallas Keuchel. They formulate a powerful 1-2-3 punch with young starters Dylan Cease, Michael Kopech and Reynaldo Lopez filling out two of the final three spots in the rotation.

Lynn, who was with manager Tony La Russa with the St. Louis Cardinals on their 2011 World Series championship team, is the perfect fit. He's old school. Forget pitch counts. He wants to pitch

deep into games and anything less than seven innings is considered a disappointment. He has pitched 200 or more innings three times in his nine-year career, and no pitcher has faced more batters or pitched more innings the last two years.

Lynn has been one of the most underrated starters in baseball the past two seasons, going 22-14 with a 3.57 ERA, striking out 10.3 batters per nine innings. Fangraphs ranked Lynn fifth in WAR [wins above replacement] since the 2019 season, trailing only Jacob deGrom, Gerrit Cole, Shane Bieber and Max Scherzer.

The move cost the White Sox young right-handed starter Dane Dunning and lefty Avery Weems, their sixth-ranked pitching prospect, but for the chance to be a World Series contender, it was well worth it. Lynn has finished fifth and sixth in the AL Cy Young balloting the last two seasons.

So just like that, the White Sox have three starters who finished among the top seven in the AL Cy Young voting last season with Kopech having the most talent of the bunch.

They still need to find a closer if they don't re-sign Alex Colome, and have their sight set on Liam Hendriks. He would be an ideal fit for the White Sox, yielding a 1.79 ERA the past two seasons, striking out 161 batters over 110 1/3 innings.

Yet, Hendriks or not, the White Sox appear set now that they have their frontline starter and right fielder. If truth be told, they would have preferred to have Michael Brantley, the Houston Astros' free agent. Yet, he didn't fit their budget, leaving Eaton, who departed the White Sox during the 2016 winter meetings with ace Chris Sale when the White Sox began their fire sale.

Eaton, who won a World Series with the Nationals, could be a force atop the lineup. Yet, he has to stay healthy. He missed 236 games in his four-year career with the Nats, staying injury-free only during their championship year in 2019.

Certainly, nothing is guaranteed with Hot Stove moves, but in a winter that has kept most baseball teams frozen in place, the White Sox are declaring that the future is now.

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