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Igloos could be part of winter dining scene

Farmington officials consider tent-like structures to help restaurant business

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Like many cities, Farmington officials are trying to help local businesses stay afloat during what's expected to be a difficult pandemic winter.

One tool the city is looking to use is allowing dining tents, better known as igloos, and other temporary structures outside restaurants during the winter. At a meeting Monday, city council unanimously approved a first reading of an ordinance amendment that, if ap-

proved, would allow these structures in the city through April 14.

"This would offer relief to restaurant owners ... It's essentially an expanded blueprint they have," Councilman Steve Schneemann said. "I want to support this. We've already lost one business in our downtown."

Since the pandemic began, Brown-dog Barlor has closed because of lost business. The restaurant and ice cream parlor has another location in Northville

that remains open.

Since March, the city's downtown has also seen two new restaurants: Masa Mexican Street Food and Motown Philly Cheesesteaks and Fries.

"I think a lot of the efforts we've put forth and the initiatives we've been supporting have been moving us forward slowly but surely," Mayor Sara Bowman said.

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A pile of Callebaut chocolate will be melted and used to make hot cocoa bombs. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Hot cocoa bomb craze keeping area shops busy

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The latest confectionery craze has blown up for bakers like Catrina Staats.

The owner of Homestead Kitchen, 8036 N. Wayne in Westland, is one of many shop owners across the region who are creating the holiday season's biggest treat this year: hot cocoa bombs.

It's become such a huge craze, Staats said, she has had difficulty finding the ingredients to make them.

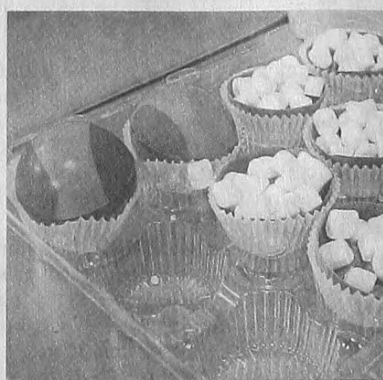
"It's getting harder to find chocolate," said Staats, who lives in Carleton and opened the Westland bakery in April. "The shelves are empty."

The indulgent balls of chocolate have become stars on social media, becoming popular on platforms like TikTok and Instagram earlier this fall.

The concept is simple: hollow balls of chocolate are packed with chocolate powder, marshmallows or other tasty treats. Drop the ball into a mug, pour some hot milk over it and the chocolate melts, "exploding" and revealing the treasures inside.

The trend has hit many suburban bakeries and confectioneries, whose owners work around the clock to restock the holiday goodie.

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Partially-completed hot cocoa bomb molds at Homestead Kitchen.

Westland woman works last election after more than 50 years of service

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Westland resident Nancy Ruby has been a volunteer at the polls on Election Day since the 1960s.

For election workers, the day is incredibly long and comes with little pay. But, her father's daughter through and through, Ruby has always believed it was her duty to help the community.

Ruby's father lived in Italy during the reign of former Prime Minister Benito Mussolini. The prime minister ruled as a dictator and is known as the founder of the National Fascist Party. So, Ruby's father fled Italy's police state and landed in America.

"He really stressed to us children how good we had it here in the United States," she said. "When he got off the boat, he kissed the ground in New York. He kept stressing to us how lucky we were to be able to give our opinion and do things for the government to help."

Her first election day as a poll worker was so long ago that she isn't sure what year it was. She does know it was the same year her son started kindergarten — somewhere between 1967 and 1969. Over the years, she coerced her husband, daughter and two of her grandchildren to participate as election workers as well.

"It's my civic duty," Ruby said. "I have the privilege to help. I think so much of my dad."

But, as the long days took more of a toll on her, Ruby decided the 2020 presidential election was a good stopping point. That means Westland Clerk Richard LeBlanc is losing one of his longest-serving and most loyal poll workers.

"I think we've really done our civic duty," she said. "So I think it's time to relax and let somebody else go in and do the job. But if Richard needs help with something, I'd be more than happy to help him."

Ruby has been working elections a lot longer than LeBlanc, who became clerk in 2015 after holding a variety of

See WOMAN, Page 3A



Case for man who dropped sandbag on driver heads to trial

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Livonia woman whose car was hit by a sandbag as she drove on Interstate 96 and the man who drove her alleged sandbagger home that night gave enough testimony Friday for a judge to send the case to trial.

Novi's 52-1 District Judge Travis Reeds bound over the case to Oakland County Circuit Court after hearing less than a half-hour of testimony.

Reeds also ordered home confinement for David Vincent-Charles Garcia, 41, of Brighton while he awaits further resolution on felony charges of throwing objects at cars causing serious impairment, assault with intent to do great bodily harm and malicious destruction of personal property.

He can leave home for work and other specific purposes.

Prosecuting attorney Jessica Blanch had asked the judge for an increased bond because, as she saw it, Garcia had committed a random act of violence in a fit of anger and is a danger to society.

The attorney noted that authorities tested Garcia's blood alcohol content at .089% - a smidge over the legal .08% limit - when taking him into custody.

"I tend to agree with you conceptually that this is a very serious crime," said Reeds, who called the details of the case horrific. "If proving beyond a reasonable doubt and the defendant is convicted and if I were the sentencing court, I would not hesitate to send this man to prison. That's not my role, though, today. He's not convicted as he sits here today."

Investigators have said Garcia crashed his truck along I-96 in Lyon Township the night of Oct. 4 before heaving several 40-pound sandbags from an overpass and seriously injuring Cindy Eckley.

Eckley was driving home at 11 p.m. after a reunion with the women in her family and dropping off a daughter-in-law.

Moving at 73 mph in the center east-bound lane, she saw a larger-sized man facing her on the Old Plank Road overpass.

Something large crashed through her windshield. Blinded from the blow to her face, Eckley drove to the side of the road, retrieved her phone and called 911.

Sand, gravel and glass were lodged in her eyes. Once at the hospital, her vision was restricted to "a little bit of light and some outlines," Eckley testified Friday. "I still have glass in my eyes. Even with corrective glasses, I only have 20/40 vi-



Cindy Eckley was injured by a sandbag thrown from an overpass while she was driving on I-96. COURTESY OF CINDY ECKLEY



Garcia

sion in this eye. There is a shard that cut my cornea that is directly in my field of vision.

"I own an art gallery in custom picture framing. I cannot see well enough to measure materials or to see if anything is warped or damaged. I can't run the saw. I can't read the scales. I can't see well enough to run the equipment."

Hometown Life had the option of attending Garcia's preliminary examination in person but opted to attend virtually as a precaution due to COVID-19. Over Zoom, only Reeds and his assistant were visible unless the attorneys moved into the camera's range.

Also testifying was David Masters, who said he was driving to his New Hudson place of business when he saw a man walking and then almost running toward his truck with a flashlight.

Masters swerved to avoid him and then pulled over. The man said he wanted a ride home because his Chevrolet Silverado had broken down on the interstate.

They chatted during the ride. Garcia also shared his name, age, phone number and said he was trained in siding and roofing work.

He also talked about "that bridge back there." Garcia told Masters he saw sandbags there after his truck broke down. He told the driver he walked up to the bridge and threw the sandbags onto the highway.

"I asked him if he had hit any cars. He said, yeah, he did. He hit one," testified Masters, saying the other man did not seem remorseful. "He seemed very calm and collected."

Masters called 911 with the information once he returned to his place of business. Police made their arrest.

Pedestrian dies after crash in Farmington

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A fatal car-pedestrian collision happened late Friday afternoon in a CVS parking lot in Farmington.

Public safety officers said on Facebook a 25-year-old Farmington resident was backing out of a spot outside the Farmington Road store when she placed her foot on the accelerator instead of the brake.

The vehicle reversed quickly and

struck a pedestrian walking behind the vehicle.

The pedestrian, who remains unnamed, died at the scene from their injuries.

The driver is cooperating with investigators, and alcohol and drugs do not appear to be factors.

An investigation continues.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susan-vela.

Canton Township's serial burglar gets probation

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Facing decades in prison, a Clinton Township man who also recently lived in Wayne pleaded guilty to several charges tied to a string of Canton Township break-ins over the summer.

A Third Circuit judge sentenced David Edward Miller, 58, earlier this month to nearly \$1,000 in fines and three years of probation for each of the four breaking and entering charges and a larceny charge.

Miller also pleaded guilty to a habitual offender charge.

According to Canton police, Miller broke into two Biggby Coffee locations,



Miller

a Subway store and a tanning salon in August.

Each of the breaking and entering counts was a possible 10-year felony. The habitual offender charge carried the threat of life in prison.

Michigan Department of Corrections records indicate Miller was discharged from a state prison in March.

He had been imprisoned for multiple charges then, including breaking and entering.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susan-vela.

Livonia police investigate trailer theft

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

At least three people recently participated in the theft of a trailer outside Wayne Craft, Inc. in Livonia.

Livonia police shared surveillance video that shows the trio's vehicle approaching the Wayne Road parking lot south of Interstate 96 shortly before noon Nov. 26.

In the surveillance video, two passengers get out and use tools to open the fence. Their vehicle sidles up to one trailer and then another before they drive off with the stolen item.

Anyone with information is asked to call Livonia police at 734-466-2470.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susan-vela.



Livonia police are investigating a November trailer theft from a Wayne Craft, Inc. parking lot.

COURTESY OF LIVONIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Detroit arrested in Farmington Hills home invasion

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Farmington Hills police arrested a Detroit resident allegedly tied to a recent home invasion that erupted in gunfire when the residents returned.

Kasci Santana Patterson-Perry, 26, was arraigned on a first-degree felony home invasion charge.

Police continue to look for three Black

male suspects, all around age 25. According to an updated report, one wore a black beanie. The two others were at least 6 feet tall.

One of the tall suspects was thin and wearing a dark-hooded sweatshirt. The other was heavy with a medium-length beard.

Police have said the home invasion and multiple 911 calls about shots fired at the Diamond Forest Apartments hap-



Patterson-Perry

pened at 11:30 p.m. Dec. 7.

Three men apparently broke into one of the apartments at the Halsted Road complex between Nine Mile and M-5 and stole several firearms.

They were confronted by residents, one of whom fired shots at the suspects before they escaped.

The getaway vehicle was a silver or gray sport utility vehicle that could have been a Chevrolet Blazer or Traverse.

Police said a preliminary investigation indicates the incident was not random. There were no apparent injuries.

Anyone with information is asked to call the police department's command desk, 248-871-2610.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com.

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Mother of boy missing since 1994 dies

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The mother of a boy who went missing from the Wonderland Mall in Livonia in 1994 has died.

Dwana Wiggins died Dec. 7 in her new hometown of Durham, North Carolina, according to online media and obituary reports.

Her death happened four days shy of the 26th anniversary of her son's disappearance. A service is being planned at a church where Wiggins was known as a ministry chair.

Her son, D'Wan Sims, remains in the federal database of missing children. A picture of the grinning 4-year-old is attached to information about Dec. 11, 1994.

"He disappeared while shopping with his mother at the Wonderland Mall," the NamUs.gov report states. "D'Wan was last seen wearing a blue winter jacket over a multi-colored

windbreaker, dark blue sweat pants and low top FILA brand tennis shoes."

Wiggins became a suspect in her son's disappearance but maintained her innocence.

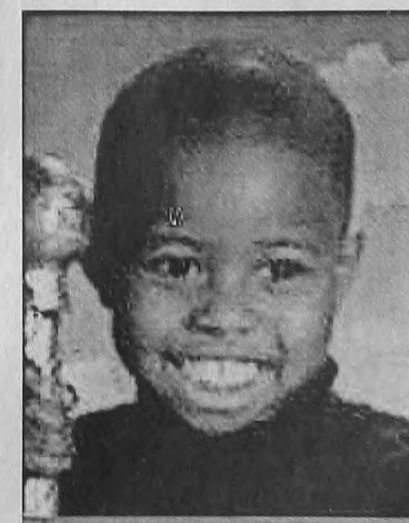
She claimed she was treated unfairly because of the Susan Smith case in South Carolina. Smith told police in October 1994 her children were kidnapped in a carjacking. She soon after admitted to drowning them.

A man submitted a DNA sample because he thought he might be D'Wan Sims about a year ago.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, Livonia police are still waiting for the results from that sample.

Lt. Charles Lister said the investigation into Sims' disappearance remains open and Wiggins' death should not hinder its progress.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susan-vela.



D'Wan Sims disappeared while shopping with his mother at the Wonderland Mall in 1994, according to a NamUs.gov report. COURTESY OF NAMUS

Assault might be used in Stislicki murder case

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Floyd Galloway's attack on a Hines Park runner may be used against him if the Michigan Court of Appeals sides with state prosecutors.

Via Zoom, defense attorney Ellen Michaels and the state's Assistant Attorney General Scott Shimkus stated their positions Wednesday during a 20-minute hearing.

"The petitioner is trying to use their speculation of what happened in this case to argue why these prior acts should be allowed in," Michaels said. "They don't know what happened."

Galloway, a 33-year-old from Berkley, is accused of murdering Danielle Stislicki, whose body has never been found.

The 28-year-old Farmington Hills woman was last reported seen with Galloway on Dec. 2, 2016.

A suspect in her disappearance, Galloway was sentenced about a year later to up to 35 years behind bars because of a Sept. 4, 2016, unrelated Hines Park assault to which he pleaded guilty.

State prosecutors charged him with Stislicki's murder in March 2019.

Shimkus argued that evidence gathered in the Hines Park investigation should be used in Galloway's trial because it implies motive and intent.

"The evidence on the attack (at Hines Park) goes certainly towards motive because it shows why Mr. Galloway wanted to get Danielle to his house and what he intended to do with her while she was there," Shimkus said.

The deliberating panel consisted of judges Mark Cavanagh, Kathleen Jansen and Douglas Shapiro.

Shimkus petitioned for the following connections:

Both crimes happened during Galloway's work hours on days when he called in to report that he wouldn't be in and needed someone to cover for him. Shimkus proposed that Galloway created a "manufactured opportunity" that he then used as a false alibi.

Galloway selected locations for his attacks. In September 2016, he picked the park. Months later, he picked Stislicki's place of work, the MetLife offices

in Southfield. In both situations, he moved the women to places of isolation.

"He faked car trouble to get her to take him home that (Dec. 2, 2016) day even though we know from his car moving later on that he wasn't actually experiencing any car trouble," Shimkus said.

Galloway apparently choked the Hines Park runner. Testimony during a preliminary examination indicated Stislicki and Galloway knew each other because he once worked as a MetLife building security guard.

Stislicki's DNA was found in Galloway's bedroom. A medical examiner shared details about what happens when a person is strangled and how that could explain Stislicki's death and the lack of blood found in Galloway's home.

"The other very strong parallel in this case is the appearance of the two victims," said Shimkus, adding that both female victims were Caucasian, petite, dark-haired and wore glasses.

Shimkus wants the panel to overturn Oakland County Circuit Judge Phyllis McMillen's opinion that the similarities should not be used for trial.

Jansen challenged the possible use of the similar evidence and how jurors would judge it to determine if Galloway murdered Stislicki.

"You have about the best evidence that you could have: that someone actually saw the defendant in the victim's car," Jansen said. "That's pretty irrefutable evidence I would suggest."

Michaels supported McMillen's 12-page opinion, calling it a thorough analysis of proper case law and the real facts known about the case.

"In our case, Judge McMillen went through and showed all the ways that these incidences are not identical," she said. "For example, the woman in the prior case was a stranger."

There are other explanations for Stislicki's disappearance besides murder, she said, including getting caught in a sex trafficker's net.

"Young women disappear all the time. There are just so many other explanations why a young woman would go missing," she said.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com.

Woman

Continued from Page 1A

other elected positions in the city. Ruby graduated from high school alongside his father. He said her knowledge has been invaluable to him.

"Institutional knowledge is a valuable thing," LeBlanc said. "When you find somebody who can fill in blanks and add to conversations, it's very helpful. ... It was very cool that she stuck it out for all this time."

Ruby, who served as the precinct chair at Hamilton Elementary School for years, has a lot of experience indeed. She said she'll long remember this year's presidential election, for which over half of her precinct came to vote in person. She also recalled one year when nobody showed up at all.

"One time, when I worked at the Towers in Inkster, I guess they couldn't find another place for us to have elections, so

they rented out the Towers on Inkster Road," she said. "It was so funny. We didn't get one person to come and vote because we were Westland and it was in Inkster so nobody came there."

Ruby likes working with LeBlanc and thinks he does a "fabulous" job. But, she'll most miss seeing all of the voters on Election Day.

"My favorite is seeing the same people come in and vote," she said. "And, they're so happy to see you when they come in. They say, 'Oh! You're here again. It's nice to see you.' It's just very pleasant."

LeBlanc, on the other hand, isn't completely convinced Ruby has said goodbye to elections for good.

"I think she'll find it unique, odd, interesting or whatever," he said. "She will visit on Election Day to vote or check it out or whatever. I think she'll miss it."

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



Nancy Ruby has gotten very familiar with Precinct 33 in Westland, as she has helped with every election there since the 1960s. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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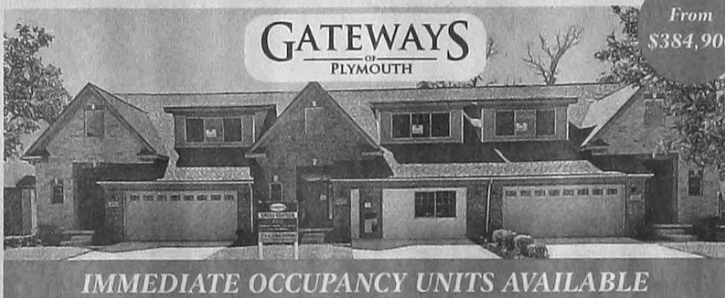
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Outdoor dining igloos may be coming to Farmington. COURTESY OF HI-WIRE

Igloos

Continued from Page 1A

The dining igloos likely would include space heaters of some kind and would be allowed in the expanded outdoor seating areas council allowed restaurants in June and September. Because of current health guidelines prohibiting indoor dining, City Manager David Murphy said any potential structures built upon the amendment's passing would likely need to keep a flap open at all times.

Schneemann and Councilwoman Maria Taylor both spoke of their desire to make sure the structures were properly ventilated between uses so one party is not breathing in the same air as the party that preceded them.

"I want to make sure we have provisions in place for ventilation between uses, whatever that looks like. ... I want to make sure we address that before we (take a final) vote on this," Taylor said.

Council will likely take a final vote on the amendment at its next meeting, which is currently slated for 7 p.m. Dec. 21. From there, the city will determine the steps needed to keep in line with state guidelines.

"By making these efforts, we're hopefully touching enough businesses to get

"This would offer relief to restaurant owners ... It's essentially an expanded blueprint they have. I want to support this. We've already lost one business in our downtown."

Steve Schneemann Farmington city council

out the other side of this," Bowman said.

The temporary structures are not the city's first effort to help downtown businesses survive the pandemic.

Last October, the city council approved the creation of a social district in its downtown. The district includes Riley Park, Gazebo Park and an alley off Farmington Road next to Page's Food and Spirits.

The ordinance allows customers to purchase to-go food and alcoholic beverages that can then be consumed in the designated social district. The city already allows to-go alcoholic beverages for shoppers to take home.

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

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Cocoa

Continued from Page 1A

Billy Earles, owner of So Delish bakery in Livonia, said he brought two employees in last weekend to make them. He said they spent 15 hours crafting the bombs to help keep up with demand.

"That goes to show you how many people are ordering," he said. "Somebody's making them all day, every day. We could sell more, but we can't make them fast enough."

Fun and interactive

The interactive nature of the bombs is perhaps their biggest draw, said Chef Lois Hennessey, an adjunct instructor who teaches cake decorating at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

Having something that's fun to look at and share with others is a recipe for success, especially because hot cocoa bombs are an at-home experience.

"I personally think the reason they take off is it's an interactive experience. This is something fun, edible, consumable," said Hennessey, who formerly owned The Home Bakery in downtown Rochester. "You can get super creative with what you put inside it."

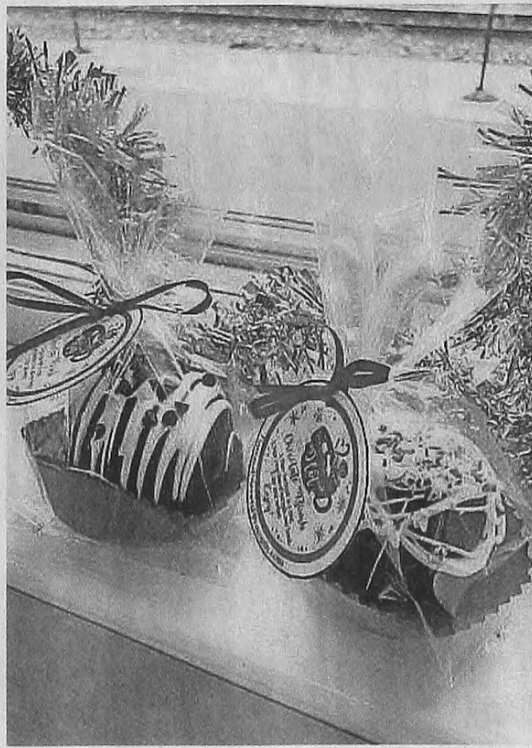
While Earles has sold hot cocoa bombs in his shop at 33825 Five Mile since October, other area shops have just begun adding the item to their menus. That includes Sweet Retreats Chocolate Shoppe, 314 N. Main St., in downtown Milford.

Owner Colleen LaClair said she began making the bombs the week after Thanksgiving and began selling them quickly.

"I tried to find them so that I could purchase and sell to my customers and I couldn't find any," she said. "We sold 36 of them in the first day we had them made."

Eats and Sweets in Plymouth jumped on the bandwagon this past week as well. The shop at 900 Starkweather in Old Village, which opened this year, just began offering the hot cocoa bombs.

Owner Bonnie Butler said she's happy she made the move to sell them. After making six hot cocoa bombs



A pair of hot cocoa bombs being sold by Eats and Sweets in Plymouth. COURTESY OF BONNIE BUTLER

for a test run, she immediately sold them last weekend. Orders began coming in so rapidly that she ended up selling about 160 at \$5.50 apiece.

Offering them to customers may have helped keep employees in her shop, she said: with it being a slower month, Butler said she was worried about making sure employees could get hours. The influx from the trendy chocolate balls and other new goodies is helping keep business in the former train station chugging along.

"I think that's why I did this," she said. "This and I'm doing chocolate-covered pretzels."

Other shops have echoed her success with hot cocoa bombs. Staats said the items accounted for a major part of her shop's sales this month.

"Saturday, we had record-breaking sales, which is a big deal for us," Staats said. "It was a third of our sales. I think we sold close to 140 bombs just on Saturday."

Making the move to offer trendy products like the hot cocoa bombs helps independent shops keep their doors open, Hennessey said. Keeping up with competitors in offering the products can bring customers in, and once inside, they may discover their new favorite baked good or set up an appointment for a cake.

"I feel like it might be a ticket to get people in the door," Hennessey said. "This is something that can not only keep (the) employees busy, but be profitable at the same time."

Plenty to pick from

Hot cocoa bombs come in a variety of flavors. Most places sell a traditional bomb, which is made with a chocolate shell and packed with hot chocolate powder and marshmallows. Some add festive touches like peppermint to the center.

LaClair said she is sticking to a more classic approach with her hot cocoa bombs, using high-end Swiss chocolate along with Ghirardelli chocolate powder and marshmallows in the middle. Those are \$8.50 apiece at the Milford shop.

Homestead Kitchen has three varieties, including the traditional, a Christmas-themed one with tree-shaped marshmallows, a peppermint and a "Grinch" style made with white chocolate that sports the Dr. Seuss character's signature green. They sell for \$6 apiece or four for \$20. Gift options that include items such as mugs with the hot cocoa bombs are also available at the Westland shop.

Earles offers traditional chocolate and white chocolate peppermint hot cocoa bombs at So Delish. Those sell for \$6 each at the store, though he recommends people call ahead to order, as the items are being sold as fast as they can be made.

He said he's gotten some interest from customers about custom hot cocoa bombs, including for baby showers. Those offerings may extend the bombs' popularity past Christmas, he said.

"They can be customized for baby showers, birthdays, whatever," he said.

In addition to the traditional flavors, Butler has crafted a hot cocoa bomb unlike many others: one made with spiced chai and marshmallows.

"It's my favorite right now, because it's just different," she said. "The flavor is definitely unique."

For those seeking the hot cocoa bombs as gifts, retailers have recommended contacting stores ahead of time.

Staying power

There's no telling how long the hot cocoa bomb trend will keep up, but if customers seek them, shops will continue to deliver. Hennessey said she envisions they will probably decrease in popularity, but sees them as potential mainstays for special events.

She hopes to make some with her students in the spring and sell them at the campus off Orchard Lake Road, perhaps theming some of them for St. Patrick's Day or Easter.

"I do think that people are just more in tune with what's out there. The creativity is just off the charts," she said. "I see it being something that will stick around for a while."

That's the plan for Staats at Homestead Bakery. "As long as people want them, we'll keep making them," Staats said. "We'll ride the wave."

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



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Detroit Archdiocese restructures parishes

Plan is to share priests, avoid closings, for now

Niraj Warikoo Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

In one of its biggest restructurings in years, the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit announced last week it is grouping its 216 parishes in southeastern Michigan into 51 families — each made up of three to eight parishes sharing priests.

The changes have been approved by Archbishop Allen Vigneron, according to a statement. A spokeswoman for the Archdiocese of Detroit, Holly Fournier, said the changes will not result in the immediate closings of individual parishes. But some are concerned that changes could eventually lead to future reductions.

The restructuring will mean that individual churches and parishes will be grouped together, usually with parishes nearby. For example, a family known as “West Wayne Vicariate Family 1” that is part of the first wave will include five churches in Dearborn and Dearborn Heights: Church of the Divine Child Parish, Sacred Heart Parish, St. Anselm Parish, St. Linus Parish and St. Sabina Parish.

A noted Catholic expert, Rocco Palmo, said the new Detroit plan to create 51 families “is drastic, quite possibly the most drastic I’ve seen” among dioceses in the U.S. who are doing similar reorganizations.

Usually, the consolidation in a diocese leads to a number of families that is about half the total number of parishes, Palmo said. In Detroit’s case, it’s about one-fourth, 51 families out of 216 parishes.

“The notion of the AOD (Archdiocese of Detroit) eventually having all of 51 parishes is staggering,” said Palmo, editor of Whispers in the Loggia, a Catholic news site.

The changes will take place in two waves, the first to launch in July 2021 and the second in July 2022. The families will be part of various geographic groupings, such as Northeast, Northwest, South, and Central regions.

The announcement comes as Catholic dioceses in Michigan and across the U.S. are facing challenges with priest shortages, finances and membership declines, according to experts. The Archdiocese of Detroit has more than 1 million Catholics over six counties in southeastern Michigan: Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Lapeer, Monroe, St. Clair.

Some pastors and others have raised concerns about the process of creating families of parishes, saying that it was too top-down driven.

The Rev. Timothy Pelc of St. Ambrose parish in Grosse Pointe Park wrote in a Nov. 15 bulletin that he had some concerns about the process, saying that “other parish changes in the AoD’s (Archdiocese of Detroit’s) past moved similarly, but at least there was time for a modicum of community consensus building.”

Pelc said this new restructuring “will produce quick results, but at the cost of



Chancery offices of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit, 12 State St., Detroit. COURTESY OF GOOGLE MAPS

minimal parishioner buy-in.”

The Archdiocese of Detroit said the new structure is part of their overall effort to “Unleash the Gospel” by making parishes “radically mission-oriented.”

“Our goal is to make our parishes places where individuals and families can encounter Jesus anew, grow as disciples, and be equipped to be witnesses the Risen Christ,” the Archdiocese said in a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the new families.

“In drafting the groups, clergy were urged to consider what makes most sense for the future of the Archdiocese when there will be fewer priests, people and resources in many parts of the Archdiocese of Detroit,” the Archdiocese said in a statement.

“Our mission hasn’t changed, but how we approach that mission must shift in response to our circumstances,” said Deacon Michael Houghton, missionary strategic planning director and

Families of Parishes project manager. “We must move forward with greater collaboration and better stewardship of our resources.

“With this new model, our priests, deacons, religious and lay staff will be empowered to share their gifts and talents with the whole Family of Parishes, to the benefit of the entire community.”

One challenge is deciding who will lead the families.

The Archdiocese said that Archbishop Vigneron has endorsed two models of governance, what it calls the “One-Pastor Model” and the “In Solidum Model.”

On its website, the Archdiocese said the One-Pastor Model is where “one priest serves as pastor of the Family and others serve as associates.”

It said this is “the best model for us to be on mission.”

The “In Solidum Model,” parish pas-

tors will become “Family Pastors” to all parishes within the family. They will rely on the help of vicars and deacons. One of the family pastors will be chosen as a “Moderator,” defined as a servant-leader.

Palmo said that it’s interesting “that it’s being left to the pastors to decide whether they’ll share responsibility for all the parishes in the respective family or just stay focused on their individual assignment.”

Palmo added that what’s happening in Detroit fits into a pattern in other areas, “a constant for dioceses in the Northeast and Upper Midwest over the last 30 years.”

In the past, the Archdiocese of Detroit would close parishes abruptly with little consultation, which upset many. The new model may help ease dioceses into new arrangements, but could eventually lead to fewer parishes long term, he said.

The archdiocese’s new families

First wave

Northwest Region

Lakes Vicariate Family 3

- Our Lady of Refuge Parish, Orchard Lake
- Prince of Peace Parish, West Bloomfield
- St. Benedict Parish, Waterford

South Region

Downriver Vicariate Family 1

- Our Lady of the Angels Parish, Taylor
- SS. Andrew and Benedict Parish, Detroit
- St. Alfred Parish, Taylor
- St. André Bessette Parish, Ecorse
- St. Constance Parish, Taylor
- St. Frances Cabrini Parish, Allen Park
- St. Mary Magdalen Parish, Melvindale

Downriver Vicariate Family 2

- Christ the Good Shepherd Parish, Lincoln Park
- Our Lady of the Scapular Parish, Wyandotte
- St. Pius X Parish, Southgate
- St. Vincent Pallotti Parish, Wyandotte

Downriver Vicariate Family 3

- Our Lady of the Woods Parish, Woodhaven
- Sacred Heart Parish, Grosse Ile
- St. Cyprian Parish, Riverview
- St. Joseph Parish, Trenton
- St. Roch Parish, Flat Rock
- St. Timothy Parish, Trenton

Monroe Vicariate Family 2

- St. Anne Parish, Monroe
- St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Newport
- St. John the Baptist Parish, Monroe
- St. Mary Parish, Monroe
- St. Michael Parish, Monroe

Northwest Wayne Vicariate Family 2

- Our Lady of Victory Parish, Northville
- St. Colette Parish, Livonia
- St. Edith Parish, Livonia
- St. Kenneth Parish, Plymouth

West Wayne Vicariate Family 1

- Church of the Divine Child Parish, Dearborn
- Sacred Heart Parish, Dearborn
- St. Anselm Parish, Dearborn Heights
- St. Linus Parish, Dearborn Heights
- St. Sabina Parish, Dearborn Heights

West Wayne Vicariate Family 4

- SS. Simon and Jude Parish, Westland

- St. Mary Parish, Wayne
- St. Mary, Cause of Our Joy Parish, Westland
- St. Richard Parish, Westland
- St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Garden City

Second wave (July 2022)

Northwest Region

South Oakland Vicariate Family 7

- Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Farmington
- St. Andrew Kim Parish, Northville
- St. Fabian Parish, Farmington Hills

South Region

Monroe Vicariate Family 1

- Divine Grace Parish, Carleton
- St. Gabriel Parish, Ida
- St. Mary, Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish, Rockwood

Monroe Vicariate Family 3

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Temperance
- St. Anthony Parish, Temperance
- St. Joseph Parish, Erie

Northwest Wayne Vicariate Family 1

- Holy Family Parish, Novi
- St. James Parish, Novi
- St. Joseph Parish, South Lyon

- St. William Parish, Walled Lake

Northwest Wayne Vicariate Family 3

- Our Lady of Loretto Parish, Redford
- St. Aidan Parish, Livonia
- St. Genevieve – St. Maurice Parish, Livonia

- St. Gerald Parish, Farmington

- St. John XXIII Parish, Redford

- St. Michael Parish, Livonia
- St. Priscilla Parish, Livonia
- St. Valentine Parish, Redford

Northwest Wayne Vicariate Family 4

- Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Plymouth

- Resurrection Parish, Canton

- St. John Neumann Parish, Canton
- St. Thomas a’Becket Parish, Canton

West Wayne Vicariate Family 2

- St. Aloysius Parish, Romulus
- St. Anthony Parish, Belleville
- St. Stephen Parish, New Boston

West Wayne Vicariate Family 3

- St. Alphonsus – St. Clement Parish, Dearborn
- St. Barbara Parish, Dearborn
- St. Cunegunda Parish, Detroit
- St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish, Dearborn
- St. Sebastian (St. Maria Goretti) Parish, Dearborn Heights

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One double-blind, placebo-controlled study (the "gold-standard" of research) involved a group of 70-year-old men.

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Despite the billions men spend annually on older nitric oxide therapies, there's one well-known problem with them.

They don't always work.

A very distinguished and awarded doctor practicing at a prestigious Massachusetts hospital who has studied Nitric Oxide for over 43 years states a "deficiency of bioactive nitric oxide... leads to impaired endothelium-dependent vasorelaxation."

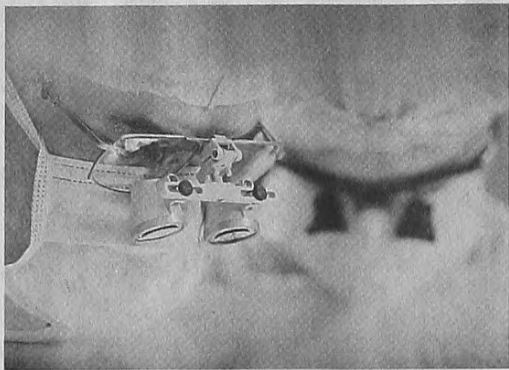
In plain English, these older products may increase levels of nitric oxide. But that's only half the battle. If it's not bioactively available then your body can't absorb it to produce an erection.

Experts simply call it the nitric oxide "glitch." And until now, there's never been a solution.

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Upon further research, America's No. 1 men's health expert Dr. Al Sears discovered certain nutrients fix this "glitch" resulting in 275% better blood flow.

He's combined those nutrients with proven nitric oxide boosters in a new formula called *Primal Max Red*. In clinical trials, 5,000 mg is required for satisfying



A new discovery that increases nitric oxide availability was recently proven in a clinical trial to boost blood flow 275%

sexual performance. *Primal Max Red* contains a bigger, 9,000 mg per serving dose. It's become so popular, he's having trouble keeping it in stock.

Dr. Sears is the author of more than 500 scientific papers. Thousands of people listened to him speak at the recent Palm Beach Health & Wellness Festival featuring Dr. Oz. NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath recently visited his clinic, the **Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine**.

Primal Max Red has only been available for a few months - but everyone who takes it reports a big difference. "I have the energy to have sex three times in one day, WOW! That has not happened in years. Oh, by the way I am 62," says Jonathan K. from Birmingham, AL.

HOW IT WORKS

Loss of erection power starts with your blood vessels. Specifically, the inside layer called the endothelium where nitric oxide is made.

The problem is various factors THICKEN your blood vessels as you age. This blocks availability causing the nitric oxide "glitch." The result is difficulty in getting and sustaining a healthy erection.

How bad is the problem?

Researcher shows the typical 40-year-old man absorbs 50% less nitric oxide. At 50, that drops to 25%. And once you pass 60 just a measly 15% gets through.

To make matters worse, nitric oxide levels start declining in your 30's. And by 70, nitric oxide production is down an alarming 75%.

Primal Max Red is the first formula to tackle both problems. Combining powerful nitric oxide boosters and a proven delivery mechanism that defeats the nitric oxide "glitch" resulting in 275% better blood flow. There's not enough space here to fully explain how it works, so Dr. Sears will send anyone who orders *Primal Max Red* a free special report that explains everything.

MORE CLINICAL RESULTS

Nutrients in *Primal Max Red* have logged impressive results.

In a *Journal of Applied Physiology* study, one resulted in a 30 times MORE nitric oxide. And these increased levels lasted up to 12 hours.

"I measured my nitric oxide levels, you can buy a test kit from Amazon," reports 48-year-old Jeff O. "Monday night I showed depleted."

Then he used ingredients in *Primal Max Red* and, "The results were off the charts. I first woke around 3 a.m. on Tuesday very excited. My nitric oxide levels measured at the top end of the range."

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Every order also gets Dr. Sears testosterone boosting formula *Primal Max Black* for free.

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HOW TO GET PRIMAL MAX

To secure free bottles of *Primal Max Black* and get the hot, new *Primal Max Red* formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at 1-800-659-4586 within the next 48 hours. "It's not available in drug stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer."

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about *Primal Max*, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back," he says.

The Hotline will be open for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number will be shut down to allow them to restock. Call 1-800-659-4586 to secure your limited supply of *Primal Max Red* and free bottles of *Primal Max Black*. You don't need a prescription, and those who call in the first 24 hours qualify for a significant discount. Use Promo Code NP1220MAX147 when you call in. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered.

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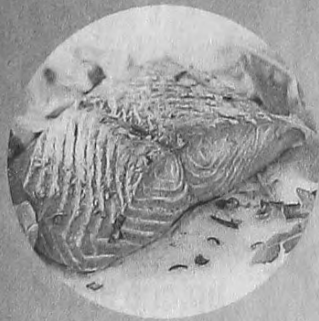
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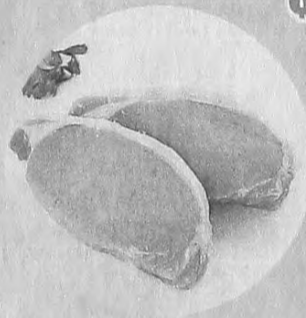
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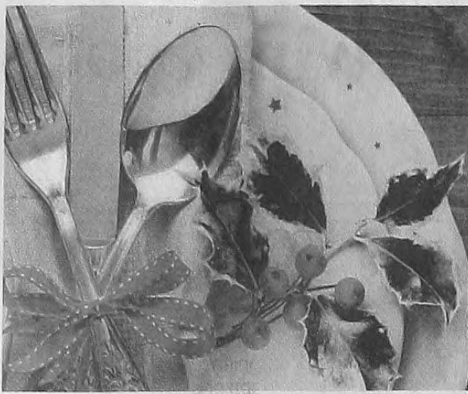
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SPORTS



Churchill senior QB Gavin Brooks eludes a Wayne Memorial defender. PHOTOS BY TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Churchill QB has choice to make after football pause

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

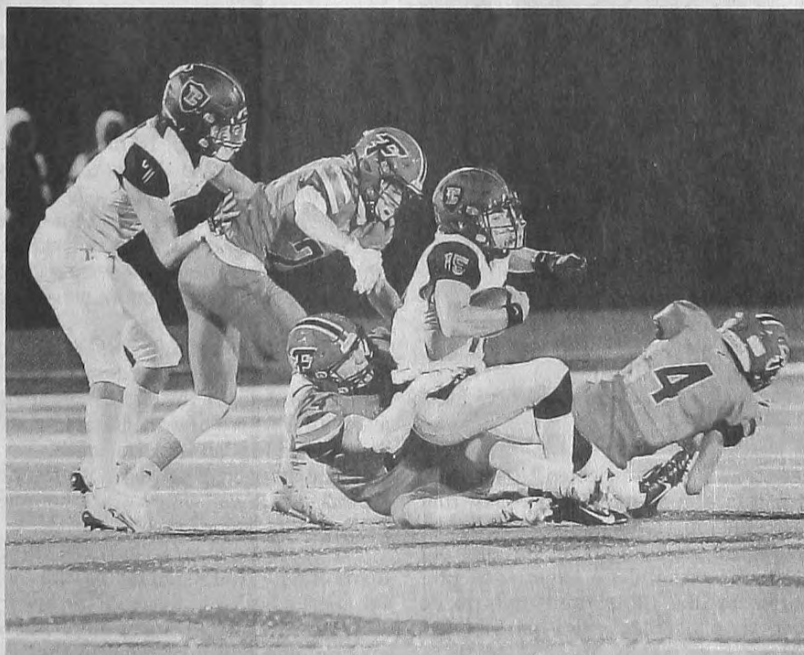
Gavin Brooks knew early on that Concordia would be his college football home.

He attended camp on campus prior to the start of high school, instantly falling in love with the atmosphere of the Cardinals football team. To Brooks, Concordia was with him from Day 1, and Oct. 5 he chose them, signing to join the Cardinals in 2021.

From then on, the plan seemed to be set: the Livonia Churchill senior quarterback could focus on the remainder of the 2020 season with the Chargers while finishing up the required classes to graduate by the end of the fall semester, allowing him to enroll at Concordia in January for its seven-game regular season in the spring.

And then the pause happened.

Two days after Churchill beat area rival Livonia Franklin in the district



Franklin junior linebacker Trevor Alexander brings down Brooks.

See WB, Page 4B

John Glenn's Hart achieves college dream

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Justin Hart has always been around football. He started to play at age 7 and went to every game his nephew Mike Hart played in when he was a running back at Michigan.

Justin remembers running around in the backyard with a football in his hands, anxiously awaiting his chance to play.

He remembers his father being at each practice, game and event to cheer him on when he first started playing. But one year later, when he was 8, Hart's father died.

"Throughout my whole football journey, he's been my motivation factor, the thing that keeps me going," Hart said.

After the ups and downs of four years of football at John Glenn, using his father as his motivation every step of the way, Hart will continue the family football tradition at the college level, signing to play at Wayne State next season.

The John Glenn senior said the Wayne State staff showed how much it wanted him, communicating with coaches over the phone every day. The school also stood out with him wanting to major in biology, leading to a path of becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

Hart, a Detroit native, said what sealed the deal was talking with players on the team, feeling like he could fit into the culture.

"I felt like those are the guys I should be playing with," Hart said. "They just made me feel like I was already a part of the team. I think that played a big role."

John Glenn development

When Hart was a sophomore at John Glenn, the varsity football players made him feel he was a part of the team.

He saw a group of players that had been together since they were kids, using their chemistry to lead to the Rockets' best season since back-to-back playoff appearances in 2013-14.

"I really learned how to play as a team," Hart said. "I was like the little brother, I guess, of the team, so I learned how that felt, what role that was."

"That's probably the year that I learned to have fun playing football, like bring the energy. They would always be at practice bringing the energy."

Hart had high hopes for his junior season. He was planning on playing both outside linebacker and tight end

See HART, Page 5B

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South Lyon East mourns assistant swim coach

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Kacie Van Buskirk was not someone with a lot of words. The South Lyon East assistant coach didn't give big pump-up speeches to her team before big races.

Her messages were simple. "She was just like, 'I don't want to lose today,' or 'Just swim fast,'" South Lyon East head swim coach John Burch said.

But Van Buskirk left a large impact on the South Lyon East girls swim program as an assistant coach, years after competing for the Cougars herself as a 2011 graduate, a four-time All-State swimmer and former state champion.

South Lyon East announced Monday that Van Buskirk, an assistant coach with the team for the past five years, died over the weekend. She was 27.

"Kacie connected with her athletes by establishing trusting relationships," South Lyon East Athletic Director Greg Michaels said in a statement. "She assisted Coach Burch within the swim community by creating a positive program culture. I will remember Kacie for her positive attitude, passion for coaching and her loyalty to East. I feel extremely fortunate that Kacie was a coach at East — if she ever wanted to pursue being a head coach, she was ready. More importantly, she was a person who was great for our kids. These are just a few of the many amazing qualities Kacie exemplified each and every day."

'She reached a whole lot of kids'

Burch first met Van Buskirk when she was in his eighth grade class during the 2006-07 school year. She remembers, even at that point, that she was a hard-working athlete, translating both in the classroom and into the pool.

Van Buskirk joined Burch's team in 2007.

"She was an elite athlete in general," Burch said. "She had a lot of talent, but she combined that talent with a great work ethic and practice. I could count on her to always work as hard as she possibly could in practice. She is one of the toughest athletes I have ever coached. I could give her practice sets that were just incredibly difficult and I've had maybe three or four kids in my entire career that were able to do the same sets she was."

"That work ethic led me to realize that she was going to put that forth in

everything that she does."

Along with earning state runner-up honors at the 2010 state meet in the 500-freestyle — earning a school record that has yet to be broken — Van Buskirk, along with Corrine Caldwell, Rachel Green and Paige Drazga, earned a first-place finish in the 200-yard freestyle relay and set a Division 1 state record, which has since been broken.

Van Buskirk was a swimming All-American and an academic All-American, swimming collegiately at the University of Denver, leaving South Lyon East with six school records.

Van Buskirk returned to South Lyon after four years with the Pioneers and with an environmental sciences degree, and took the job as Burch's assistant.

She spent the past five seasons coaching with the South Lyon East girls and unified boys swim teams, doing what Burch thought she did best: building relationships and getting the best out of her swimmers.

"She was able to have that personal connection that a coach needs to have with their athletes, so it wasn't just about performance in the water," Burch said. "It was also about, 'Hey, how are you doing? How's life going?' Just having that inter-personal relationship with the athletes was just something she was really good at."

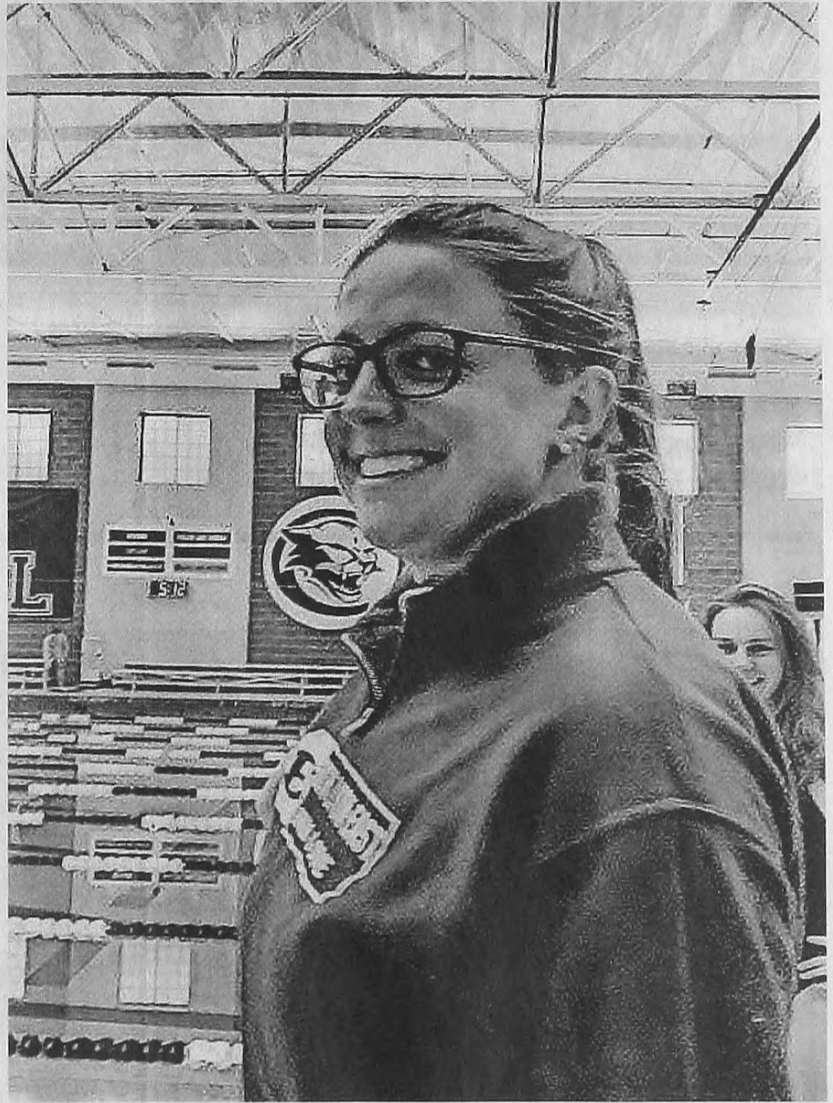
"She reached a whole lot of kids."

Senior Maria Mayorga, a second-year South Lyon East student, who came to the program after moving from Illinois, said she was pretty shy when she first joined the team, but that Van Buskirk helped her feel comfortable and "I came out of my shell."

Van Buskirk served as an environmental scientist, testing sites for pollution and chemicals in the ground water — Burch said her swimmers used to joke with her that, "She was playing with dirt all day long."

But with her job and the amount of travel that was required, Van Buskirk never had the ability to become a head coach, even though Burch said she has everything to be a successful one.

"I was more than willing to work with a coach who was going to miss practice a few days here or there because I knew the quality of coach that she was," Burch said. "If it was any coach, I wouldn't necessarily want a coach that ... would occasionally have those days she was going to miss. But it was fine with Kacie because I knew that she would come back and be ready to go."



Kacie Van Buskirk served as an assistant coach for the South Lyon East girls swim team and the South Lyon boys unified team for five years. COURTESY OF JOHN BURCH

Just swim fast

When Burch got the call Sunday morning from Julie Cippola, Van Buskirk's cousin and best friend, he was stunned.

He felt for those swimmers she was close to, somebody who they loved and they trusted as a coach and as a leader.

"Everything that's going on with COVID, you are like, 'How do we do this?'" Burch said. "Normally, you are like, you want to give every single one of the kids a hug, you want to support them, you want to be there for them. It made a very

difficult situation even worse.

"I've never had to go through this as a coach before and I certainly don't ever want to do it again. She just meant so much to all of us."

With the end of the girls swim and dive season on hold, with the state meet in limbo, Burch said Van Buskirk's message to her team would be the same as it would be in those short, simple speeches: "I don't want to lose today."

"I think she would want them to keep going," Burch said. "I really do."

Obituary information was not yet available.

Legendary Detroit King coach James Reynolds dies

Mick McCabe Special to Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Detroit King's James Reynolds was nearing the tunnel at Ford Field in November 2007 when he looked up into the stands and in the first row was a slew of Detroit Public School League football head coaches.

The coaches were yelling congratulations to the first PSL coach to win a state championship.

"He was our mentor, he was our leader, he was our advisor," said former Denby coach Drake Wilkins. "All of us bumped heads with him, but he was the pinnacle. You got a stripe on your sleeve if you knocked off King."

"You wanted to beat him simply because he was the best. But that particular day we all sat down there and supported King. That was a big treat for all of us."

Reynolds died Saturday morning. He was 75.

He is survived by his wife, Joann, and daughters Ranae and Rhonda Reynolds-Williams (Gaylon) and grandson Jeremiah Tramon Williams.

It is no exaggeration to say that Reynolds was the best football coach in PSL history. He was the winningest PSL coach (253-112), guiding the Crusaders to nine PSL titles and six runner-up finishes from 1974-2009.

Over the years he coached some of the PSL's best players: Darnell Dickerson, Anthony Adams, Deon Johnson, Nick Perry, Clarence Thompson, Herb Gibson and Kerwin Moore.

Under Reynolds' direction, King was the first PSL school to reach the state football finals (1989 and 1990) and then the first team to win the state title.

Former Michigan coach Lloyd Carr first met Reynolds in 1980 when Carr joined Bo Schembechler's staff as an assistant.

King was one of Carr's frequent recruiting stops and him and Reynolds quickly established a friendship that lasted for 40 years.

"By the time we met, Jim was estab-



Detroit King head coach James Reynolds gives the state championship trophy to his players after beating Midland, 47-21, in 2007.

RASHAUN RUCKER/DETROIT FREE PRESS

lished and well-respected," Carr said. "He was a gentleman and a guy that loved his job. He loved his kids, but he was tough. He wanted them to come out of the whole athletic experience prepared for life. He wanted them to do more than just play with a ball for a few years."

Reynolds changed the way PSL teams played. For years PSL schools had the biggest offensive and defensive lines in the state. But Reynolds determined guys that big weren't of much use by the time the fourth quarter rolled around so his interior linemen were often smaller — but much quicker.

King was struggling when Reynolds took over and he built his program by recruiting. He attended King's basketball practice the day cuts were made and promised the players if they came out for football he wouldn't cut them.

With the addition of former basketball players, the Crusaders became more athletic. It worked out well for some of the former basketball players, too.

In his senior year, former basketball

player Herb Gibson signed a National Letter of Intent to play football at Notre Dame.

The King players adored Reynolds because they knew football was a means to an end for him. He worked hard to get his players into college.

"Being an inner-city kid and not being a product of my environment, he taught me more about life than about football and I respected that," said Anthony Adams, who played at Penn State and nine seasons in the NFL. "When you think of coaches you always think they just want to win and that's it ... But Coach wasn't worried about that. He was worried about you as an individual. He was worried about you getting good grades. He was worried about you being respectful."

Jeff McCall was King's quarterback in 1997 and was also a Free Press Top 10 scholar-athlete in the state. Reynolds asked him where he was going to go to college and McCall said Tuskegee.

Reynolds asked him why there and McCall said it was where his father and Reynolds had gone.

"You're not going to Tuskegee," Reynolds said. "You're going to the Ivy League."

When McCall told him he didn't know anyone who had ever gone to the Ivy League, Reynolds replied: "That's why you're going to the Ivy League."

McCall became the first African-American quarterback at Columbia. He was a three-year starter and was captain his senior season.

A few years after graduating from Columbia, McCall earned his MBA at the Harvard School of Business.

Today, McCall is the CEO of Great Lakes Dental Partners in Chicago, a private equity-backed company.

"I don't say this to toot my own horn, but two Ivy League degrees later, that's because of Coach Reynolds," said McCall. "He saw something in his kids that we didn't see in ourselves. He tried to pull the best out of us. ..."

"My life is forever different because coach Reynolds was in my life."

It was important to Reynolds that his players play the right way and act with a degree of class.

"There was a level of discipline, of focus and high expectation," McCall said, "that not only got the best out of his players on the field but also prepared them off the field."

"He was really preparing us for life."

Tyrone Spencer graduated from King in 2003 and played at Grand Rapids Community College and Wayne State. Whenever he spoke with Reynolds they never talked football, it was always about how Spencer was doing in college.

"Honestly, it was how he just cared, he always cared," Spencer said. "He'd come see my spring games and that meant everything to me. He was a true educator. He was a football coach, but he was about teaching us and making sure that we had what we needed to be successful in life."

Spencer is now King's head coach, succeeding Dale Harvel, who died suddenly in 2016.

"Coach Reynolds is my motivation; he's the reason I do what I do," Spencer said. "He's our foundation. He's what the program is. He started it; he established it."

Reynolds was a bear of a man. At 6-foot-3, he seemed unapproachable at times because he didn't say a lot.

"He really was a bit intimidating type of guy, but his heart was as big as his size," said Wilkins. "He was the gentle giant. I truly believe that Reynolds was the guy that everybody respected. He was that type of guy."

King won a state championship under Harvel and two under Spencer. Yet, the person whose name is on the program is Reynolds.

"To me, when you go to see Martin Luther King play or when you competed against Martin Luther King, Harvel or Spencer may have been on the sidelines, but that's Reynolds' teams," Wilkins said. "Even though physically he may not have been on the sidelines, that's what you were looking at — James Reynolds' team."

South Lyon Unified hockey team brings holiday cheer to community

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The South Lyon Unified hockey team knew December was going to be rough.

With an inability to unite the community on the ice until 2021, members of the hockey team, both from South Lyon and South Lyon East High Schools, came up with a way to spread a bit of holiday cheer from the back of a pick-up truck.

South Lyon Unified's two co-captains, J.D. Michaels and Mitch Skamiera, along with assistant captains Dominic Dudek, Brandon Heffernan and Tyler Hinkson, dressed up as Santa and his elves and passed out candy canes to local families in a South Lyon subdivision.

"We were saying how, over the years, all my neighbors when I was young, everyone did cool things in the sub for me," Michaels, who dressed up as Santa, said. "I think it would just be good for us captains to take leadership because right now, everybody is in a dark spot, and to see joy and get everything going would be pretty cool to do."

As the hockey players wait for an answer on if they will be able to play this winter, Michaels said this act of kindness for the community gives members of the team an excuse to see each other outside of workouts, connecting off the ice and making the most of the situation.

In March, this is something Michaels is used to. He said he dresses up as the Easter Bunny and, due to COVID, sat in the back of a truck taking pictures with area kids.

To forward and short-term elf Dominic Dudek, South Lyon Unified is showing its impact on the community that is usually made on the ice.

"I think it shows you are more than a sports team," Dudek said. "You want to help out the community and just be the best group you can to show off."

But South Lyon Unified remains hopeful and ready for the season ahead if given the chance.



Members of the South Lyon Unified hockey team exchanged their jerseys and skates for Christmas favorites recently. COURTESY OF GREG MICHAELS

After the season was postponed, the captains came up with an idea they coined as the COVID Cup. Each captain drafted a team, and head coach Bill McCreary and the rest of the coaching staff came up with a spreadsheet full of workouts, with each team getting a point once a player completes it — from puck shooting to running.

"I think it's very important to just keep being involved with one another because team chemistry, it's huge in

success," Michaels said. "When we get lazy, as soon as we go back things won't start to click again."

South Lyon Unified had an idea that a postponement was likely on its way. Despite getting through eight preseason practices, they watched as hockey teams and football teams from across the state were forced to isolate due to COVID-19 cases.

But despite the uncertainty, Dudek knows how important high school ath-

letics are to him and the community.

"High school is much more than school," Dudek said. "You have something to play for, just playing the sport you love, just doing what you do. You put everything aside and just play the sport that you love."

Until they can get back onto the ice, the South Lyon Unified hockey captains geared up Sunday in an attempt to unite the community in a different way than they were used to.

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QB

Continued from Page 1B

championship, the state of Michigan announced guidelines to combat the spread of COVID-19 for three weeks, shutting down in-person schools and high school athletics. The pause was then extended until Dec. 20, all but cementing the chance for the Michigan High School Athletic Association to complete its football season in the calendar year, which was its initial goal.

"It was tough. It was a blow and I wish it didn't happen," Brooks said. "But at the same time, you have to realize it is what it is and you can't be surprised by anything that has happened this year."

This leaves Brooks with a choice to make: remain at Churchill for the spring semester with hopes of the Chargers finishing its three possible games for a Division 2 state title, or leave for Concordia and start the next chapter of his life.

Churchill is not the only team in metro Detroit that will have this problem if the season continues into the spring. And the Chargers are not the only ones that could be losing their starting quarterback.

Churchill head coach Bill DeFillippo knows the three-game completion of the playoffs in 2021 will be completely different than it would have been had the postseason continued this fall.

"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?'"

Brooks has not decided what he will do. He knows he's in a tough position, but he's trying to stay in the moment, not overwhelming himself with what could be.

That is what the senior quarterback said he learned in 2020: that you can't look too far ahead.

"You have to handle things one step at a time and one day at a time," Brooks said. "If you get ahead of yourself, it can be gone at the snap of a finger."

"We have learned that more than ever this year."

'Thrown into the fire'

Jonathan Coddington first saw

Brooks as an underclassmen never shying away from competing with older players.

From his first camp on campus in Ann Arbor, the Concordia offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach saw a driven and motivated quarterback who loved football. He saw potential.

Then when he saw Brooks as a senior, leading the Chargers offense to a regional final appearance, Coddington saw Concordia's possible future.

"The very first game, I could tell the difference," Coddington said. "Just with the velocity of the ball coming out of his hands, just the power that he had behind his throws. Between the end of his junior year and the start of his senior year, you could really tell."

As an early enrollee in January, Coddington said Brooks would be "thrown into the fire" during the team's spring season, soaking in the offense and getting to know the team around him.

If he were to enroll in the spring, Brooks, who is planning on entering the nursing school to become a CRNA, said he would not only learn the offense, but "know the offense" heading into the fall season with hopes of taking over the starting quarterback job.

But Brooks also knows what he has with the Chargers. With the group he has, the quarterback thinks Churchill has what it takes to appear in its first state championship in school history, that they have all the tools they need to win it.

No matter the decision his son makes, Michael Brooks, Churchill's linebackers coach and a former college football player at Ferris State, will back him up 100%.

"I tell him all the time, 'You have to do what's best for you. If what you really want to do is enroll early and to get that season and to go away to school, that's what you should do,'" Brooks said. "You can't put your life on hold for the hopes of something that may never come."

"As much as he's loved his time at Churchill and as much as he loves his teammates, I don't know if it's the best decision to put college on hold for the hopes of playing another couple games."

Coddington said Concordia will back him up as well, knowing Gavin's initial decision to enroll early was made prior to the halting of the fall season. He said the decision is up to his incoming freshman quarterback.



Churchill quarterback Gavin Brooks lofts a pass against Franklin.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Gavin Brooks knows what he has done at Churchill. Taking over in 2019 — what many perceived as a rebuilding year for the Chargers — he led the team to a district title and a regional final. He did the same thing in 2020, with aspirations to go further.

Churchill got Brooks to where he is today, and no decision would change that.

"Churchill has really been everything I hoped it would be," Brooks said. "They have been nothing but the best for me."

"No matter what happens with possibly enrolling early at Concordia and all the stuff having to do with the season, that I'm always going to be there for those guys."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com.

WINTER WEATHER IS HERE!

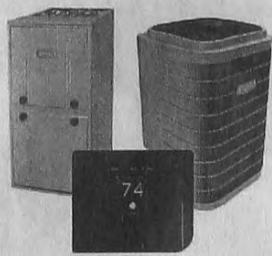


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Hart

Continued from Page 1B

for John Glenn, trying to bring that energy from his sophomore year back. But during the first week of practice, he suffered a high ankle sprain.

Throughout the season, Hart was sitting out practices, but playing in each game because the team did not have anyone to fill his position. The Rockets finished the season 1-8, scoring 70 total points all season.

"Sitting out, I hate sitting out," Hart said. "That's probably why it got so bad because I didn't sit out. It was a real bad time for me."

Hart's high ankle sprain never fully healed throughout the 2019 season, and took two months to heal during the off-season. But when fully healthy, Hart said he felt faster and stronger, gaining 30 pounds after focusing on lifting during his injury.

Despite being limited on the football field due to the pandemic, Hart soon found that his game would shine when head coach Calvin Griggs took over the team in July.

The senior said the combination of Griggs' energy and his offensive play-book would him in a position to succeed.

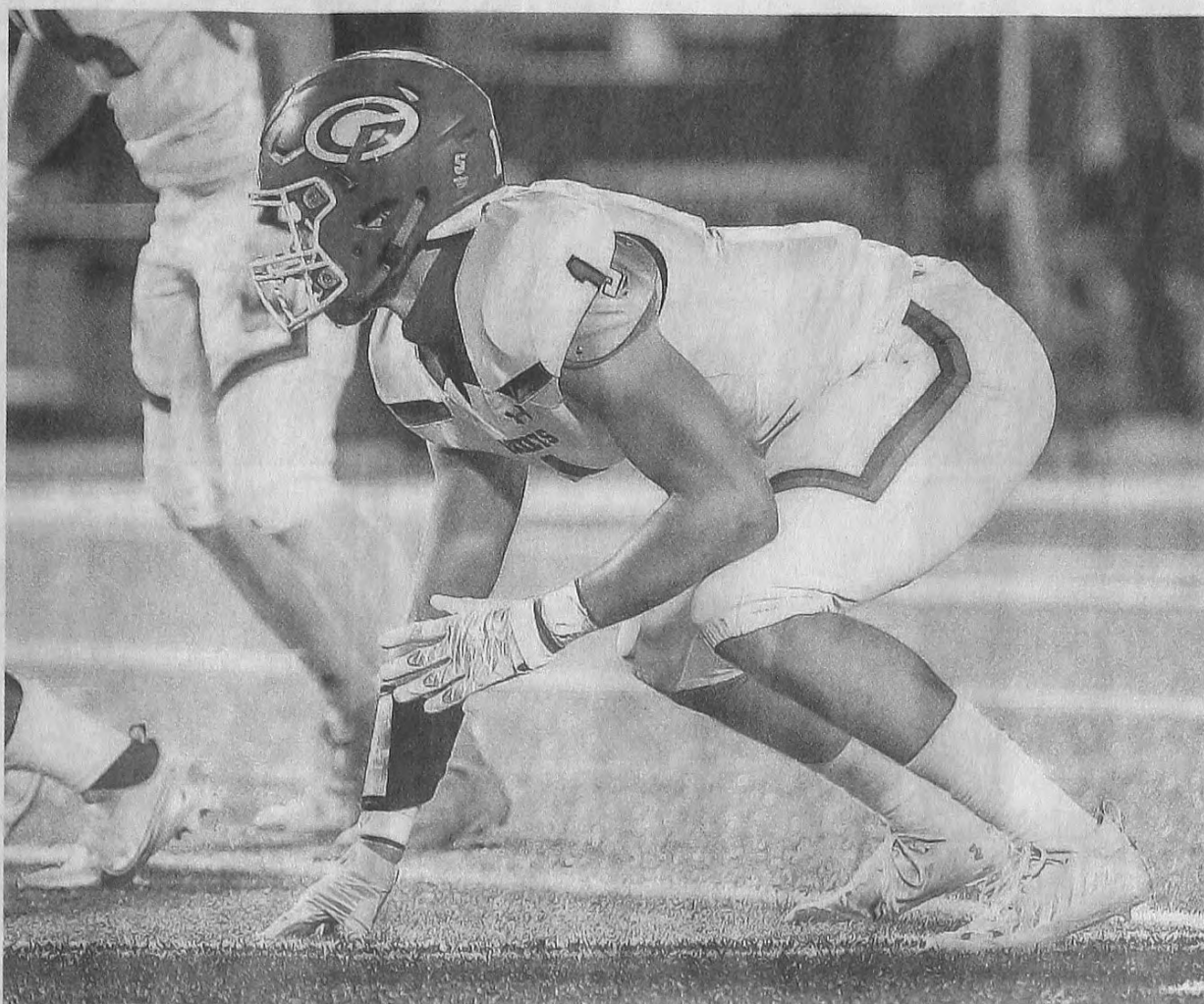
"He would run the short routes for me to get open," Hart said. "He would run routes where it was just designed for people to get open. We had blocking plays, easy blocking plays to set it up easy. It just all worked together for our team."

Hart also had the ability to have a better idea of what his opponent would do, playing both ways.

"Playing tight end, I know what the d-end does, what the outside linebacker does," Hart said. "I was able to hook them, block them easy. On the defensive side of it, I was able to read their keys, especially if it was something I would do, like look to where I was going to block, I would pick up on that type of stuff."

While his team finished with only two wins in 2020, losing to Livonia Stevenson in the first round of the playoffs, Hart knows that success is ahead for John Glenn.

"This new group, they are going to be good," Hart said. "Like I think we had two sophomores on varsity, three freshmen on varsity. They are going to be



Justin Hart proved to be a major factor in both John Glenn's offensive and defensive game plans his senior year.

COURTESY OF JUSTIN HART

great, especially with Calvin Griggs coaching them. They are going to be a special group of guys."

Playing for something

Hart knew he wanted to play college football when he first took the field. But it became a realistic possibility, he thought, when he was in eighth grade.

After playing evenly with the older players when he joined the Dearborn Heights Raiders junior football team in seventh grade, Hart was a self-described "monster," running people over at guard, running back and defensive end.

His confidence, from that point forward, was sky high. He knew he could get to the collegiate level.

For Hart, defense has always been his priority, but, he said, playing offense had brought him more opportunities in his recruitment.

"It was different for me (being recruited as a tight end)," Hart said. "But I came to the realization that since it was my first year playing offense, that I have the ability to grow at that position a lot."

Hart got the attention of a few Division 1 schools, including an offer from Valparaiso and a preferred walk-on spot at Central Michigan.

Hart told each school he did not care where he played. He just wanted to play football. He wanted to live out his motto, something he created when he was only a freshman: "I Do This For My Angels."

Heading into college, he will have a chance to continue their legacy at Wayne State.

"I lost a lot of family members growing up, and I just feel like it's my job to make them proud," Hart said. "That's why I keep trying to be the best at everything I do."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17.

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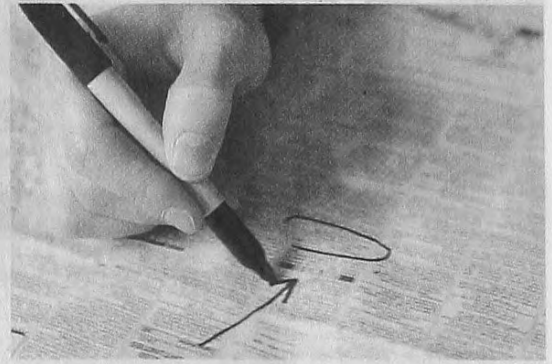
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THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

ACROSS

- 1 Motion detector, e.g.
- 7 Portion out
- 13 Person sleeping next to you, often
- 20 Like many nuclei
- 21 Surprise attacker
- 22 Nero or Napoleon
- 23 "Hello, Dolly!" star
- 25 Capital of the country Georgia
- 26 Doe's dear?
- 27 Alley- —
- 28 Sousing sort
- 29 TV's Cheers, for one
- 30 Top pilot
- 31 Ice sheets
- 33 1960s-'70s talk show host
- 37 She played Bree on "Desperate Housewives"
- 42 Al Bundy portrayal Ed
- 43 Nebraska city
- 44 Jekyll's bad side
- 45 She played the mother on "Lassie"
- 49 Football's Joe
- 51 Country next to Georgia
- 53 — a soul
- 54 "Like — not!"
- 55 Suffix of beliefs
- 58 Ending for serpent
- 59 Microscope component
- 62 Her first Vogue cover was in 1986
- 66 Green and Gore
- 67 — matter of fact
- 68 Japanese dog
- 69 Video game pioneer
- 72 — glance
- 75 Music genre for brooders
- 76 Co-author of the 2006 bestseller "Three Cups of Tea"
- 81 Like low-fat mozzarella
- 86 Eggs, in labs
- 87 Pro's vote
- 88 Dot in the sea, to Jorge
- 89 Actor Baldwin
- 90 Tunneling rodents
- 93 What to do after hiding, in a kids' game
- 95 "M" star
- 98 Big snakes
- 101 — Gras

DOWN

- 102 Perfectly
- 103 "Blue Velvet" singer
- 105 "The Color Purple" novelist
- 109 In — (irritated)
- 110 Habited sister
- 111 Slip — (some shoes)
- 112 Links peg
- 114 Boatload
- 115 Pod veggies
- 119 Affluent Rio neighborhood
- 122 Sitcom associated with nine featured first names in this puzzle
- 125 Hand-held filming equipment
- 126 Soviet statesman Gromyko
- 127 Lost lady in "The Raven"
- 128 Stinging-tentacle reef dweller
- 129 "Already?"
- 130 Got lippy with
- 1 Pouches
- 2 Coup d'—
- 3 Comic Dunn
- 4 Air pollution
- 5 Iraq export

THAT '70s SHOW

- 6 32-Down brand since the early 1900s
- 7 Curtain
- 8 Actor Holm
- 9 French wines
- 10 Linguistic expressions
- 11 Teeth: Prefix
- 12 Work unit
- 13 Process by which an electron is emitted
- 14 Involve in contention
- 15 Print resolution abbr.
- 16 Baseball's Ott
- 17 Popular font type
- 18 Puccini opera
- 19 Iroquois tribe members
- 24 Liquor, slangily
- 29 Elton John's — and the "Jets"
- 31 Italian car
- 32 Soft drink
- 34 Zen master's question
- 35 Suffix with form
- 36 Tony-winning actress Johns
- 37 Tennis' Seles
- 38 Very valuable violins
- 39 "Pest" of kiddie lit
- 40 Beet variety
- 41 Letter stroke
- 45 Scoff
- 46 — kwon do (martial art)
- 47 Tolkien brute
- 48 TV "Science Guy" Bill
- 50 Frontiersman Wild Bill —
- 52 L-P linkup
- 56 — Lankan
- 57 Tumbler's surface
- 60 Wildlife-tracking ID
- 61 Balletic bend
- 63 Thanksgiving side servings
- 64 Joking type
- 65 Water barrier
- 70 Tot amuser
- 71 Add up to
- 72 State as fact
- 73 City in Ohio
- 74 Luke and Leia's father
- 75 "And on and on": Abbr.
- 77 Architect Ludwig Mies van der —
- 78 Eden dweller
- 79 Actress Greta
- 80 Jewish month after Adar
- 81 Baby food
- 82 Malted quaff
- 83 No longer in the mil., e.g.
- 84 1973 Jim Croce hit
- 85 Gourmet mushrooms
- 91 Class for tots, for short
- 92 Buckwheat noodle of Japan
- 94 Fail to put in
- 96 Caviar source
- 97 The Doors song with a Calif. city in its title
- 99 Refrain from imbibing
- 100 "Holy" council
- 103 Gives rise to
- 104 Shiny plastics
- 105 Jungian inner personality
- 106 Fictional sleuth Arsène
- 107 Pointless
- 108 Prefix meaning "people"
- 113 Spanish river
- 115 Bits of wit
- 116 Baseball's Slaughter
- 117 Farmland unit
- 118 Shanty
- 120 Pick-up-sticks math game
- 121 Prefix with car
- 122 Classroom aides: Abbr.
- 123 Antique Olds
- 124 Actress Arthur

SUDOKU

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

Difficulty Level ★★

12/17

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!

MELLOW YELLOW

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.

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

- AMBER
- BANANA
- BEE
- BIRDS
- BRASS
- BUTTER
- BUTTERCUP
- CANARY
- CHAMOIS
- CHEESE
- CRAYON
- DAFFODIL
- DAISY
- DOG
- FEVER
- FLAG
- FLAMES
- GOLD
- HAIR
- HAY
- LEMON
- LUPIN
- MAIZE
- MARGARINE
- MARIGOLD
- MUSTARD
- OCHRE
- PAGES
- PENCIL
- PINEAPPLE
- RIVER
- SAFFRON
- SAND
- SEA
- SKY
- STAR
- STRAW
- SULPHUR
- SWEETCORN
- TOPOZ
- TULIP
- WASP
- YARN
- YOLKS

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

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



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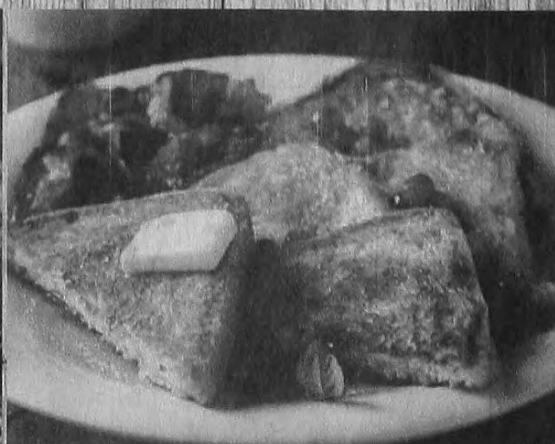
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