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Industrial building planned for former GM plant

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

More development is coming to the former spring and bumper plant on the west side of Livonia.

An additional warehouse with no named tenants has been proposed for a parcel of vacant land at the corner of

Eckles and Amrhein, sandwiched between the Amazon distribution center and Republic National Distributing Co. facilities. The building in the southwest corner of the city would occupy just less than 19 acres of property and encompass about 370,000 square feet.

It would be used for light manufacturing to warehousing and or distribu-

tion, said Mark Taormina, the city's planning and economic development director.

The Livonia City Council took up a request last month from Ashley Capital for a brownfield plan on the site to assist with costs associated with cleanup and rehabilitation. Ashley Capital, which purchased the property about a decade

ago after GM filed for bankruptcy, requested the city grant a 28-year time line for the program, which would allow for the recapture of about \$9.7 million in the cleanup costs associated with redevelopment of the site.

The 28-year duration was down from

See BUILDING, Page 6A



The Super Bowl Lanes bowling alley in Canton Township has decided to keep its 60 lanes closed despite Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's announcement Dec. 18 that lanes may reopen with COVID-19 restrictions in place. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

'Crippling' restrictions keep bowling alleys quiet

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Canton Township's massive 60-lane Super Bowl Lanes bowling alley was so quiet Wednesday afternoon, you could have heard a pin drop.

Unfortunately for owner Bill Diamond and many other bowling center

operators in Michigan, bowling pins haven't dropped in their venues since early November, despite Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's announcement Dec. 18 that allowed lanes to reopen Dec. 21 with COVID-19-related restrictions in place.

Diamond said operating within the new restrictions has proven to be as

daunting as picking up a 7-10 split.

"We would, of course, love to open our doors, but the overly-harsh restrictions Gov. Whitmer has mandated make operating futile," lamented Diamond, who is the owner of six Detroit-area bowling establishments.

See BOWLING, Page 3A

Multiple developers want former Maxfield property

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Farmington officials hope to turn the old Maxfield Training Center into something special. Officials believe the long-vacant building, near the city's historic district neighborhood, has potential to bring new residents to town.

Four developers responded to a request for qualifications, or RFQ, the city put out on the property. At 6 p.m. Thursday, Farmington City Council members will hear from the four hopefuls in a special meeting. Each company will give council a short presentation followed by a question and answer session.

"I think there's benefit in council spending a little extra time to talk with each of these candidates," Councilman Steve Schneemann said. "There's only so much information you can get from a written document or sketch."

The city bought the Maxfield property, 33000 Thomas St., in May for \$69,000. In the past, developers have proposed apartments and condos at the site, but no project has been successful since Farmington Public Schools put the building on the market in 2015.

No matter who ends up building on the site, the former training center likely will turn into a community of townhomes or an apartment complex. All four developers proposed housing of some kind. SDC Ventures and Robertson Homes are proposing townhome communities, while River Caddis Development and PVL Farmington are proposing apartments.

In their RFQ documents, all four developers see the nearby downtown and Shiawassee Park as assets that will not only bring in new residents, but help create a lively downtown environment.

After hearing from the four hopefuls, council will likely pare down its options to two candidates, with whom the city will continue to work. Mayor Pro Tem Joe LaRussa said while the city is taking steps, the process still has a long way to go.

All four RFQs proposals are available on the city's website for the public to view at www.ci.farmington.mi.us.

stankersle@hometownlife.com

Plymouth Township police crash ATM theft

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A group of ATM bandits recently struck a Chase Bank in Plymouth Township, but aborted their theft when their loud truck alarmed nearby apartment residents.

The residents called emergency dispatchers after they apparently heard

the truck at 4:45 a.m. Friday, Township Police Chief Tom Tiderington said.

Police arrived at the Chase Bank branch near the intersection of Sheldon and North Territorial roads to find a truck attached to chains preparing to yank an ATM from its foundation.

At least three people ran from the vehicle. A short chase ensued and police took one person into custody.

The truck was listed as stolen, similar to another attempted ATM theft in December at a Chase Bank branch on Ann Arbor Road in Plymouth. Chains were used in both attempts.

Tiderington said the township and city police officers are consulting with each other. A Chase Bank spokeswoman said staffers are working with investigators.



Area school districts' learning plans vary

From Staff Reports Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

When will K-12 students return to in-person learning?

The answer isn't simple or singular. All schools have state permission to return to in-person learning after MDHHS's order closing Michigan's high schools expired Dec. 20.

Yet individual districts have their own criteria for returning. Local public school districts vary in how they are teaching students in the 2020-21 school year.

Some metro Detroit school districts have offered classroom instruction virtually for the entire school year. Many other districts have offered some sort of face-to-face learning model, at least for some students.

It's been a roller coaster for educators, support staff and families alike as COVID-19 cases in ebb and flow in Michigan, prompting ever-changing decisions from local school boards and the state health department allowing or prohibiting in-person learning, sports and more.

In addition, school boards are required to update their continuity of learning plan with the state monthly in its education efforts for students.

Here is a roundup of local school districts' current plans.

Wayne County

Livonia Public Schools is expected to return to in-person classes for all students five days a week, starting Jan. 11. The district's board of education was scheduled to meet Jan. 6 to confirm the data that supports the plan. The school district has not implemented a hybrid school plan.

For **Wayne-Westland Community Schools**, in-person classes have been on pause for students since the school year began. The district currently plans to bring students back to buildings for the first time since March on Jan. 19.

When in-person instruction returns, students' schedules will likely include a mix of in-person and on-line instruction across all grade levels. When they finally head back to school, students can expect to wear a mask all day and have some schedule changes, such as eating lunch in their classrooms rather than in a cafeteria.

For **Plymouth-Canton Community Schools**, elementary school students will be in a remote-learning format until at least Jan. 15. Remote learning was set to resume Jan. 4 following a two-week holiday recess.

A plan to return middle school and high school students to in-person learning was still being developed as of Dec. 24. Middle school and high school students in the district have been in remote-learning mode since the beginning of the school year.

For **Northville Public Schools**, students were to be in full virtual learning the week following the December winter recess, from Jan. 4 through Jan. 11.

Beginning Jan. 11, Northville High School is scheduled to return to a hybrid model while middle school students will return to a hybrid/core cohort model. Elementary school students are scheduled to return to in-person Jan. 11.



People gather in Farmington on Oct. 6 to urge the school district there to bring back in-class instruction.

HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

All plans are contingent on no significant changes in the risk level for COVID-19.

Oakland County

Birmingham Community School District has all students currently remote but plans to return them to the classroom in January. The school board voted Dec. 15 to send students back in a hybrid model, with elementary and middle school students beginning Jan. 11 and high school students beginning Jan. 19.

Students in the middle schools and high schools will learn in person two days a week with virtual learning the rest of the week. Secondary education students will be split into two cohorts and split their time between virtual and in-person learning.

In **Farmington Public Schools**, students have yet to see the inside of a classroom this academic year. District officials have repeatedly stressed that new coronavirus cases in the community and county remain too high for them to send students back to class in good conscience.

For elementary students, officials currently plan to bring them back to school Jan. 11. Two weeks later, starting on Jan. 25, middle and high school students are scheduled to make their return to in-person instruction.

All students will likely see altered schedules to reduce movement in school buildings.

Students in the **Clarenceville School District** will continue virtual classes until at least Jan. 22. On Jan. 14, the district's school board will consider a number of

plans that could allow for a return to in-person instruction. That decision will depend on what the coronavirus' spread in the community is like at that time.

When Clarenceville makes a return to its school buildings, Superintendent Paul Shepich said, the district will likely initially adopt a hybrid model that includes both virtual and in-person classes rather than diving head-first back into traditional schooling.

In **Novi**, students were to return to in-person learning Jan. 4 if they are in the hybrid plan, with two days per week in-person instruction at all grade levels. Cohort A will be face-to-face Jan. 4, with Cohort B back to face-to-face on Jan. 5.

The district has mostly maintained the hybrid plan since September despite a push by some parents for more face-to-face instruction.

Huron Valley parents and students protested all virtual learning in mid-December and lobbied for an in-person return immediately following the end of the holiday break. However, Superintendent Paul Salah has said the goal remains to return elementary students to face-to-face instruction Jan. 19, and secondary students would return to the middle and high schools on Jan. 25. Until then, they will be learning virtually.

In **South Lyon**, all students were to be learning remotely Jan. 4-8 following the return from break. On Jan. 11, elementary students are set to resume four days per week of in-person instruction. Also on Jan. 11, middle school and high school students enrolled in the hybrid plan are expected to return to in-person learning two days a week.

New Year's babies a 'special gift' for metro Detroit parents

Angie Jackson [Detroit Free Press](http://DetroitFreePress.com)
USA TODAY NETWORK

After 28 hours of labor and a New Year's kiss, a Gibraltar couple welcomed their second child into the world.

Gia Rose Nicoletti was born at 12:42 a.m. Jan. 1, the first baby at Beaumont Health's eight-hospital system in 2021.

Her original due date was Dec. 21, but Gia had her own timeline.

Gia's mother, Sara Nicoletti, was induced Wednesday evening. After a long labor, Gia was born by C-section at Beaumont Hospital, Dearborn.

She weighed 10 pounds, 5 ounces and was 23 1/2 inches long — longer than any baby in her parents' families.

"That was of course the highlight of the night," said Gia's dad, Jacob Nicoletti. "And then one of the nurses let us know that we were the first baby to be born in the

health system of the New Year, and that put a cherry on top of the sundae."

What's more, Gia's birthday is one day before her mom's.

At Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital, Summer Amireh of Northville said she experienced a fairly easy labor and delivery made enjoyable by a little competition with two other women on the floor to see who would have the first baby of the new year.

At 1:04 a.m., she and her husband, Dr. Ahmad Itani, an anesthesiologist at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, welcomed their third child. Weighing in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces, Dean Itani was the first baby born at the West Bloomfield hospital and the second of the five-hospital Henry Ford Health System in 2021.

After all the challenges that 2020 brought, Amireh said their son is a blessing.

"I'm a little bit more optimistic now," she said. "It feels like he's a special gift."



Dean Itani was the first baby born at Henry Ford West Bloomfield Hospital in 2021.

COURTESY OF HENRY FORD HEALTH SYSTEM

CANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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AMOUNT	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	COLOR	VIN
\$1,595.00	2004	DODGE	DAKOTA	BROWN	1D7HG12K24S556247
\$1,535.50	2009	YAMAHA	MOTORCYCLE	BLACK	JYAVP19E09A006616
\$1,275.00	2006	CADILLAC	DTS	SILVER	1G6KD57Y16U252611
\$1,295.00	1998	FORD	F150	BLUE	2FTZF072XWCB04798
\$1,375.00	2005	PONTIAC	GRAND PRIX	BLUE	2G2WP522351280904
\$1,180.00	2013	DODGE	AVENGER	BLACK	1C3CDZCB1DN692589
\$1,085.00	2003	PONTIAC	BONNEVILLE	TAN	1G2HX52K134125245
\$945.00	2012	MITSUBISHI	GALANT	WHITE	4A32B2FFXCE015555
\$1,045.00	2001	FRIEGHTLINER	MT45	WHITE	4UZAAPBW71CJ17503
\$865.00	2004	FORD	FREESTAR	BLUE	2FMZA51634BB27071
\$855.00	2012	DODGE	JOURNEY	SILVER	3D4PG4F6AT182305
\$795.00	2006	GMC	ENVOY	GRAY	1GKET63M162164180

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Bowling

Continued from Page 1A

"For example, mandating that only family members can bowl together means that 100% of our league business evaporates. That is all of our Monday through Friday business.

"Then, eliminating all food and beverage (sales) absolutely degrades the overall experience. Essentially, these are rules you would mandate if you wanted to cripple the industry and make absolutely sure no one goes bowling. It's like allowing amusement parks to open their front gates, but keeping all of the rides closed."

Super Bowl Lanes, along with many peer businesses across Michigan, operated with closer-to-normal attendance from September through early November, while making sure its patrons followed COVID-19-related protocols, and implementing stringent equipment-sanitizing measures.

"So many of our league bowlers are anxious to return," Diamond said. "When we opened in September after the initial shutdown, we quickly ramped up to about 70% of our regular business."

Diamond said his establishment's safety protocols to reduce the spread of the virus were beyond thorough.

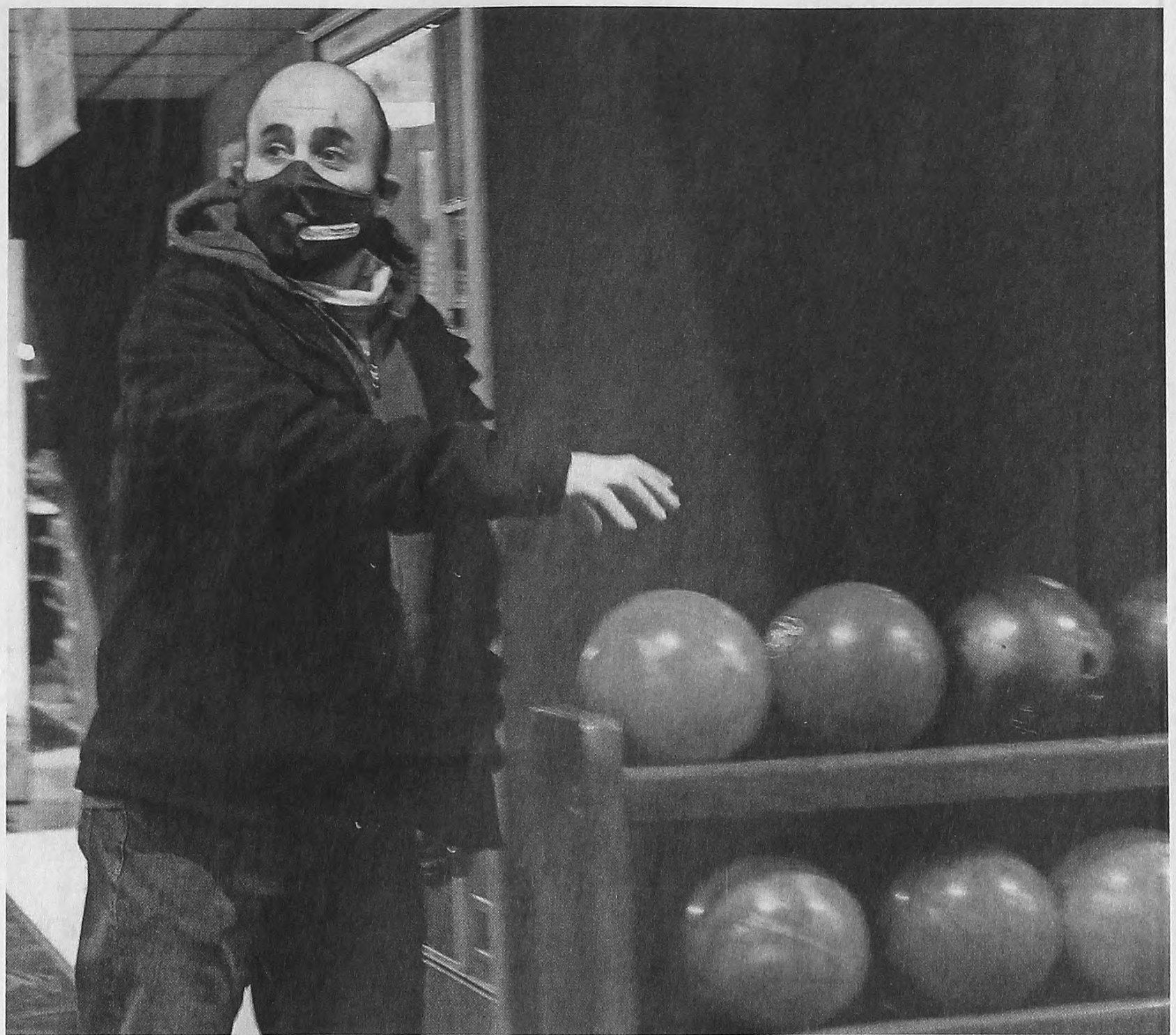
"We were skipping lanes in between bowlers, we have sanitizing stations throughout our venue, balls are being sanitized after each use, seating areas were sanitized after every use," he said. "In addition, we also developed our own UV bowling ball cleaner."

The pre-Thanksgiving COVID-19-induced shutdown, however, left many stress-release-seeking bowlers feeling like they'd just been pushed into the gutter.

"My husband and I both compete in two bowling leagues each. It was our one way to connect with friends during these difficult times," Canton resident Janeen Foreman said. "The shutdowns have been devastating.

"I felt incredibly safe in September when we were allowed to bowl at Super Bowl and Town & Country Lanes in Westland. Everybody followed the rules because they didn't want it taken away from them again."

Super Bowl regular Kenneth Tifhof echoed Foreman's sentiments.



Super Bowl Lanes manager Mo Ammar explains some of the precautions the bowling alley would have to take to reopen.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"Oh man, I never knew how much I would miss bowling till now," Tifhof posted on the Super Bowl Lanes Facebook page. "It's truly depressing. (These are) truly trying times. I pray we open back up for all families' sake ... we all need an escape from this."

Diamond has had to lay off all of his employees, saying the stress related to the shutdowns is "sometimes overwhelming."

"When this second round of mandatory shutdowns was announced, we laid off over 100 staff in the Detroit area," Di-

mond said. "It's horrible to think that we had to lay off 100% of our team just before the holidays.

"We should keep in mind that businesses that have grown desperate are often small second- and third-generation family-owned businesses where the owners simply can't hold on any longer."

Diamond, who owns bowling-related businesses in several states, said Michigan is the only state that mandates "crippling" restrictions.

Two other local bowling alleys, West-

land Bowl and Novi Bowl, will also remain closed until restrictions are lifted or lessened.

Most local bowling alleys, including Merri-Bowl Lanes and Woodland Lanes in Livonia, Vision Lanes, Oak Lanes and Town N Country Lanes in Westland, Country Lanes and Perfect Game in Farmington Hills, Mayflower Lanes in Redford, Plaza Lanes in Plymouth, and Pinz Bowling Center in South Lyon have reopened in some fashion.

See BOWLING, Page 6A

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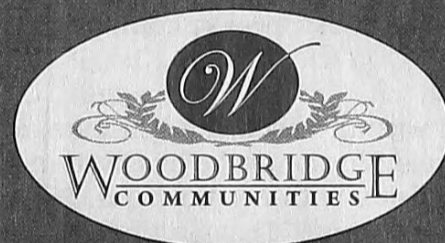


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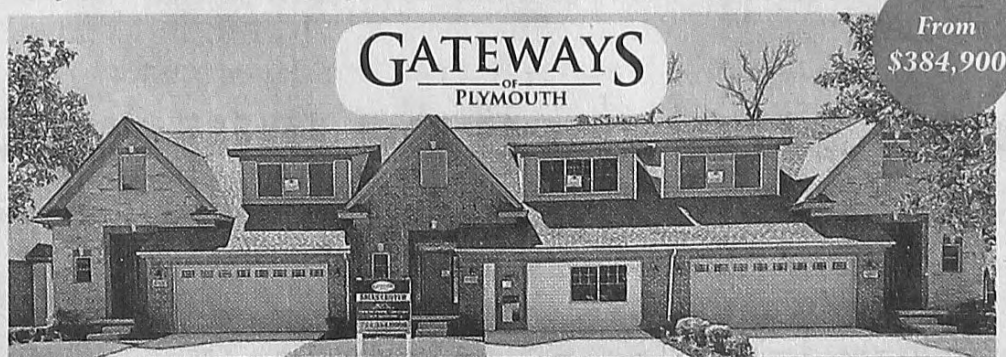
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Emergency responders work outside a New Hudson home Jan. 2 after a small plane crashed into it. COURTESY OF JOHN BRADY

Plane crashes into Lyon Township home, killing 3

From Staff Reports Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A small plane crashed into a Lyon Township home Saturday, killing the pilot and two passengers.

Lyon Township firefighters said the crash caused the Dakota Drive home in the Orchards of Lyon subdivision to erupt in flames.

Neighbors began calling 911 soon after the crash happened at 4 p.m. and helped the family escape from the home, which caught fire and suffered extensive damage from the crash. A neighboring house was also damaged in the crash.

The home's residents escaped safely, but lost their pet cat, Lyon Township Fire Chief Ken Van Sparrentak said. To Van Sparrentak, the home seemed severely damaged but not a total loss.

The Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board are investigating.

"It'll take some time," the fire chief said about determining why the plane crashed.

The small plane may have clipped a tree before striking the home.

David Compo, 60, his wife, Michele, 55, and their 18-year-old son, Dawson, were headed to Oakland/Southwest Airport when their Piper PA 24 crashed.

National Transportation Safety Board spokesman Peter Knudson said Sunday that the plane "had been cleared for an approach to land, and shortly after that we had one witness who saw the plane come out of the clouds and strike a tree before coming to land in the house."

The plane's wreckage was moved to a secure site Monday.

Knudson said Compo was in contact with air traffic control before the crash. Investigators said they are not aware of any distress call. They will review Compo's conversation with air traffic control as part of their investigation. Small planes typically do not have flight data recorders, commonly known as black boxes.

"To the investigators' knowledge, there was no indication of a problem at this point," Knudson said.

In her 85 years of life, neighborhood resident Doranne Bloxson said, she has never heard a sound like the one made Saturday afternoon when the plane crashed one door down from hers.



The charred remains of a single-engine airplane lie on a flatbed trailer from AMF Aviation Aircraft Recovery and Transport of Clarksville, Tennessee, on Jan. 4 in Lyon Township just north of the Oakland/Southwest Airport.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"It was an absolute nightmare, awful," said Bloxson, who has lived in the subdivision with her husband, Bill, for nearly 20 years. "The minute we walked outside, people were just coming from every place."

Neighbor Hannan Mansour was watching TV when she heard a loud boom, which she described as similar to the sound of two cars crashing, only much, much louder.

Without grabbing her coat or shoes, Mansour ran out to her porch to see what was happening, only to be met with the sounds of her neighbors' panicked screams.

After putting on her outerwear, Mansour ran toward the smoke and chaos, praying that everyone was OK.

Neighbors rushed toward the crash site, hurrying to rescue the family with two young children living in the home the plane had hit. The family was able to leave their home seemingly unscathed.

"It was scary, I was shaking the whole time I was down there," Mansour said. "All of us were just hugging each other. It was a very traumatic experience."

A 2020 Detroit Catholic Central graduate and his parents have been identified as the three individuals killed in a Lyon Township plane crash Saturday, Jan. 2.

Detroit Catholic Central posted a message to Facebook noting their deep sadness over the loss of Dawson and his

parents.

According to the post, Dawson had participated in cross country and band at DCC and had a bright future.

"As a member of the Class of 2020, Dawson helped set an incredible example of how to persevere through challenging times, and we will continue to lean on our faith and each other for support in this tragic time," the post read, continuing that DCC's prayers are with the family and all impacted by the loss.

Dawson's father, David Compo, was the immediate past president of the Home Builder's Association of Michigan, with his term ending just two days before his death.

The association released a statement mourning the loss of Compo and his wife and son.

According to the statement, David Compo was an experienced pilot who had flown to Canton, Georgia, Dec. 29 and was nearly home with Michele and Dawson when the plane went down.

"We were fortunate to have David leading our team for 2020," Michael Stoskopf, HBA's CEO, said. "His involvement, professionalism and experience over the years have been great assets to our organization and he has been a true friend to me as we faced challenge after challenge during this past year."

Plymouth Roc fights to keep its liquor license

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Plymouth Roc fans should be able to order drinks from the restaurant's cozy patio once it complies with Michigan's outdoor dining standards.

During the holidays, state and local authorities agreed the restaurant's fully-enclosed patio was an indoor venue and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services would not approve of such dining there.

A hearing Dec. 30 resulted in Administrative Law Judge Michael St. John saying the restaurant's suspended liquor license could return if the 1020 Ann Arbor Road venue follows the state's indoor-outdoor orders.

"My order is going to say you can't reopen to outdoor service with your liquor license until you get that section fully in compliance," the judge said. "Just notify the commission that you're in compliance."

However, that potentially means chillier conditions. According to Plymouth Police Chief Al Cox, who also was part of the hearing, the outdoor patio can keep its roof, but then no two walls can touch, and tables must stay six feet apart.

"There is an info-graphic that is attached to the order that is clear as a bell," Cox said.

Plymouth police, Plymouth development officials and Wayne County health officials have been critical of Plymouth Roc's patio.

The liquor commission said in its complaint that it has been working with the state's definition of indoors as "a space enclosed fully or partially on the top, and enclosed fully or partially on more than one side."

According to the complaint, a police officer conducting an inspection for the liquor control commission in early December noticed that the outdoor patio continued to fit the indoor definition, "completely enclosed by a clear, tarp-like material and which had a roof."

Restaurant officials agreed to remove the roof and east wall. A Wayne County health inspector said they could retain the front and west wall as wind breaks since "they are not directly connected to the building and sufficient air circulation was provided."

But the changes weren't done more than a week later.

During the hearing, attorney Miles Gerou and Plymouth Roc manager Eric Alderton emphasized that a second Wayne County inspector visited the restaurant for a COVID-19 compliance report and never said the patio setup was in violation of the state's orders.

"Why would they think at that point that they need to do anything else?" Gerou said. "Furthermore, you have the local police coming in. You have other people coming in and not one person says another word to them that they're not in compliance at that point. They're not coming in and writing them additional citations."

"The right hand is not knowing what the left hand is doing, and my client had to pay the price."

Assistant Attorney General Mark Sands disagreed.

"They have this conflicting information," he said. "... They just decided to blatantly violate the rules as they're set down in the (MDHHS) order."

For now, a sign hangs on a door saying the restaurant's license has been suspended. The website says carry-out is available but no one picked up the phone at 6 p.m. Wednesday.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com.

Teen arraigned on murder charges in South Lyon shooting

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Fadi Jesus Zeineh was arraigned Monday in the armed robbery and shooting death of South Lyon teen Dylan Stamper.

After turning himself in and spending days in the Oakland County Jail, Zeineh was arraigned in Novi's 52-1 District Court on 10 felony charges.

Those charges include homicide-felony murder, armed robbery, and assault with intent to murder.

Zeineh, who has a Washtenaw County address, also faces five felony firearms charges.

His attorney Edward Bajoka requested a \$250,000 bond but court Magistrate Victor Zanolli denied bond for Zeineh because of the severity of the charges.

Zeineh, 19, only spoke when pronouncing his name for Zanolli, confirming he could hear the proceedings and agreeing that he understood bond was denied.

An internet search shows Zeineh once played football for South Lyon East High School. He also has pleaded guilty to misdemeanor retail fraud in Washtenaw County.



Zeineh

He is scheduled to return to court Jan. 13 for a probable cause conference.

South Lyon police said they are searching for a second suspect who drove Zeineh from the Stamper home in a 2011 Ford Escape after the shooting. The license plate number is EFH6360.

Zeineh is accused of shooting Dylan Stamper, 17, and his father, Kevin Stamper, 43, in their East Liberty Street home the night of Dec. 30.

First responders arrived after a woman called 911 to say someone was trying to break into her residence and that she heard gunshots.

Police and firefighters found both Stampers lying in the living room.

Dylan was unresponsive and suffering from blood loss. He was pronounced dead at the scene. His father was last reported to be in critical but stable condition at a local hospital.

A GoFundMe page has been set up, and donations can also be made through Phillips Funeral Home, which is handling arrangements.

South Lyon police are asking anyone with information about the night of the shooting to call Crime Stoppers of Michigan at 1-800-SPEAK-UP. Anonymity and a \$2,000 cash reward are possible.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Twitter: @susanvela.

Aldi adds online shopping option for SNAP recipients

Nushrat Rahman Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Michigan SNAP recipients can now use their benefits to purchase groceries online and have them delivered to their home or pick them up without a fee for their first three orders by mid-March, through a partnership between Aldi chain stores and online grocery platform Instacart.

Customers can pay online using the Electronic Benefit Transfer and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (EBT-SNAP) — more commonly known as food stamps — at nearly 1,000 more Aldi stores across 23 states, including Michigan, according to a news release.

Last year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture added Michigan to a SNAP pilot program allowing customers to purchase food online with their benefits. In Michigan, Aldi joins retailers like Amazon and Walmart also providing grocery delivery services to SNAP recipients.

“As the country continues to grapple with COVID-19, we recognize the important role Instacart and its retail partners play in making same-day grocery delivery and pickup available to more people nationwide,” said Andrew Nodes, vice president of retail at Instacart, in a news release.

More than 1.2 million people in Michigan receive SNAP benefits, according to the state health department. Michigan extended extra food stamp benefits to 350,000 Michigan families for December in response to the pandemic.

The state plans to continue requesting these extra benefits each month and issue them to families so long as the federal government approves them, Bob Wheaton, a spokesperson for the state’s health department, said last month.

The latest federal stimulus bill signed into law Dec. 27 expands food stamp benefits, with \$13 billion — of the \$900 billion package — earmarked for food assistance. The bill includes a 15% increase in SNAP benefits and provides additional funding for food banks, senior nutrition programs, and adding more retailers to online SNAP.

Michigan was added to Instacart and Aldi’s most recent expansion of its pilot program to allow online customers to use food stamps. In November, the program began in Georgia and in December, expanded to more than 570 stores across the country.

Here’s how it will work:

SNAP participants can shop at Aldi via Instacart’s website and mobile app. Once they create an Instacart profile, customers can enter their food stamp information as a form of payment. They will need another form of payment for taxes, tips and fees.

Customers can enter their ZIP code to find participating Aldi stores and select items that are EBT-SNAP eligible. Once products are in their cart, they can choose how much of their benefits they want to allocate to their order. Aldi delivery and pickup through Instacart will be available daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Instacart is waiving delivery and pickup fees on customers’ first three EBT-SNAP orders for a 90-day period which started Dec. 16. According to Instacart’s website, delivery fees start at \$3.99 for same-day orders of more than \$35. There will be a notification of the delivery fee when choosing the delivery time and day. As for pickups, there is a “pickup fee” that is typically \$1.99 for what it calls non-Express members, according to Instacart.

New year means time to take care of personal finances



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest columnist

Happy New Year! I don’t remember ever wanting to say goodbye to a year as much as I want to say goodbye and good riddance to 2020. We have all gone through an incredible journey, and although that journey is not yet over, it appears that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

The vaccine is being distributed worldwide, and it seems we’re finally getting a handle on this deadly disease. Although, during this crisis most of our focus has been on keeping our family and friends safe and making sure their needs are taken care of, it is important as we enter the new year that we remember to allocate time to taking care of our personal finances.

Governments can print money, raise taxes and do all sorts of things that aren’t available to you and me. We are responsible for our own personal finances, and the new year is a great time to see how you are doing financially.

Just like corporations have financial statements, so must individuals. I believe there are two financial statements that are critical to help you make better decisions with your money. The first of these statements is nothing more than a net-worth statement, and the second is your own income and expense report.

A personal family net worth statement lists all your assets and liabilities. Assets less liabilities equal your net worth. I generally recommend people do a net worth statement twice a year. After all, how do you know if you have progressed year to year unless you have something to compare it to?

In creating your net worth statement, it’s easy to value your investments because most of you will soon receive year-end statements. What is a little more difficult is to value your home or collectible assets that you may have. Always remember that when it comes to valuing your home or any collectible, the value is not what you think it is worth, but rather, what is it worth on the open market.

Remember, you’re using your net worth statement to help yourself; there’s no reason to overvalue your assets.

The other side of the equation on your net worth statement is debts that you owe. Once again, you will be receiving statements on these items, so it’s easy to know what you owe. How-

When you underestimate your true cost of living, it can cause you problems, particularly when it comes to retirement.

ever, I would go one step further and make sure you understand the interest rate you are paying, the term of the loan, and if you are deducting the interest.

There is nothing wrong with taking pencil to paper and handwriting out your net worth statement. On the other hand, there is also nothing wrong with taking advantage of technology. The bottom line — whatever is easier for you is the method you should use; the key is just doing it.

The second statement that I believe is important is the income and expense report. In other words, a cash-flow statement, which is nothing more than a report of what comes into the family and what goes out.

A cash-flow statement is important in helping you understand what it costs you to live a month. In addition, by doing a cash-flow statement and comparing it to past years, it allows you to determine your individual inflation rate.

The official inflation rate for the country is immaterial to you and me. What is important is our own individual inflation rate, and by doing a cash-flow statement on a regular basis, you will be able to determine that number. A cash-flow statement is also important in helping someone plan for their retirement and to make sure people are living within their means in retirement.

One of the benefits of a cash-flow statement is that it allows you to understand what your actual cost of living is. Most people have no idea what it costs them to live; rather, they guess.

My experience has been when people guess what it costs them to live they almost always underestimate their true cost. When you underestimate your true cost of living, it can cause you problems, particularly when it comes to retirement. It is important to be accurate when you do your cash-flow statement.

2021 will bring its fair share of twists and turns, financial challenges and opportunities. One of the best ways to face the challenges is to have your financial house in order, and doing a family net worth statement and a cash-flow statement is a great first start.

Good luck.

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



Lyon Township’s Fire Station No. 2 sits along Ten Mile Road near Milford Road.
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Lyon Fire Station opens Jan. 8 for COVID-19 tests

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

Lyon Fire Station #2 will open as a COVID-19 drive-thru testing site next week, after a delay as county officials focused on administering vaccinations to fend off the disease.

Beginning Jan. 8, COVID-19 tests will be administered by county health employees at the fire station located at Lyon Fire Station #2, 56675 Ten Mile Road.

Tests are by appointment only and can not be made the same day.

The fire station was named the county’s fifth COVID-19 testing and vaccination location earlier this month under a year-long agreement by county and township officials and was scheduled to begin testing on Dec. 18. However, priorities shifted as shipments of Pfizer vaccines began arriving.

“It was really important to us to shift to vaccines and get those done right away,” Bill Mullan, Oakland County communications director, said. “Setting up a new location requires a little extra work and we wanted to dedicate personnel to that when we had those in hand. It was so important with front line workers, healthcare workers, those who are especially vulnerable, to get those vaccinations going.”

While the Lyon Fire Station will be a drive-thru COVID-19 testing site, offering tests on Fridays, it is also authorized as a site where COVID-19 vaccinations will be given to the general public. A date for when the vaccinations will start there is not yet known, but they will not be administered on days when COVID-19 tests are taking place there.

Currently, Oakland County is antici-

pating weekly shipments of COVID-19 vaccinations, which are separate from follow-up doses for those who have already received the first dose.

In their first shipment, the county received 1,950 doses, and have been administering about 120 shots per day to EMS personnel in the county, which have been “well-received.”

As of Dec. 26, 56,686 cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Oakland County residents, and the deaths of 1,458 have been attributed to the disease.

Mullan said when the county began testing for COVID-19, it was not unusual to administer 500 tests in a day. He anticipates about 270 appointments to be taken for the launch day of the Lyon testing site, fewer appointments would be scheduled than what capacity allows for to ensure everything runs smoothly.

“We continually respond to the demand for appointments and expand them as needed,” Mullan said, noting that if an uptick in cases occurs as a result of holiday gatherings, it may not be seen until the middle of January.

Mullan is grateful for the opportunity to have a free testing and vaccination site in Lyon Township.

“Our goal with the CARES Act money was to have a response accessible to all Oakland County communities,” he said. “Southwest Oakland County is a growing area and we are very appreciative local municipalities are working with us to provide a facility to do testing, and ultimately vaccinations, for residents in the area.”

To schedule a COVID-19 test at Lyon Fire Station #2, call the county at 800-848-5533.

Obituaries

Joan Keller

ANN ARBOR — Joan Keller passed away peacefully in Ann Arbor, MI on December 9, 2020, with family by her side. She was born in Detroit on June 13, 1931, to Rosabel (nee Rivett) and George Frederick Brush. After graduating from Southeastern High School in Detroit, Joan attended the University of Michigan, where she received her BA in education in 1953 and was a member of Alpha Chi Omega. While teaching elementary school in Ann Arbor she met Charles ‘Charlie’ Keller who was attending the University of Michigan Law School. They were married at Eastminster Presbyterian Church on August 11, 1956.

A long time resident of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills, Joan was very active in her community. She was heavily involved in the St. James Church, a Board Member of the Rehabilitation Institute of MI and Detroit Country Day Board of Trustees, and Director of Development at Sacred Heart Academy. Joan was an active member of the Village Women’s Club and Orchard Lake Country Club, PEO, Nomads, a patron of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and a passionate advocate for her local libraries in Bloomfield Hills and Sault Ste. Marie. Joan thoroughly enjoyed traveling, gardening, playing bridge, reading, cooking, and most of all, spending time with family and close friends at her summer cabin on Neebish Island.

Joan was predeceased by her husband, Charles, and longterm friend, Edward McCallum. She is survived by her three children, Katherine and husband David, Matthew and wife Joy, and Charles Jr.; her beloved grandchildren, Zachary, Samuel, and Micaela; her brother Tom (Sally) Brush, sister Judy (Joan Roarke) Mann; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

We are grateful to the staff of Brecon Village, Saline for their care and love of Joan, and to Arbor Hospice for their kindness and caring until the end of her life.

A celebration of life will be held in the future when all can gather in a safe and healthy manner. In memory of Joan please consider a donation to one of the following public libraries which held a special place in her heart and life. Bloomfield Township Public Library (248-642-5800) or the Bayliss Public Library in Sault Ste. Marie (906-632-9331).



Building

Continued from Page 1A

the original 30-year length and almost \$12 million originally recommended for approval by the city's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority last October.

Several members of the city council at first appeared hesitant to approve the 28-year time line, which would be about 14 years more than previously-approved plans by the city for brownfield credits.

"It seems a little long. Is there a good reason for that?" Councilwoman Laura Toy said. "I'm just concerned that it's almost double than what we've ever granted. Then again, the site is quite large. I'm struggling with what is the appropriate number, but perhaps we have it right."

Some council members expressed interest instead in a 25-year tax credit instead.

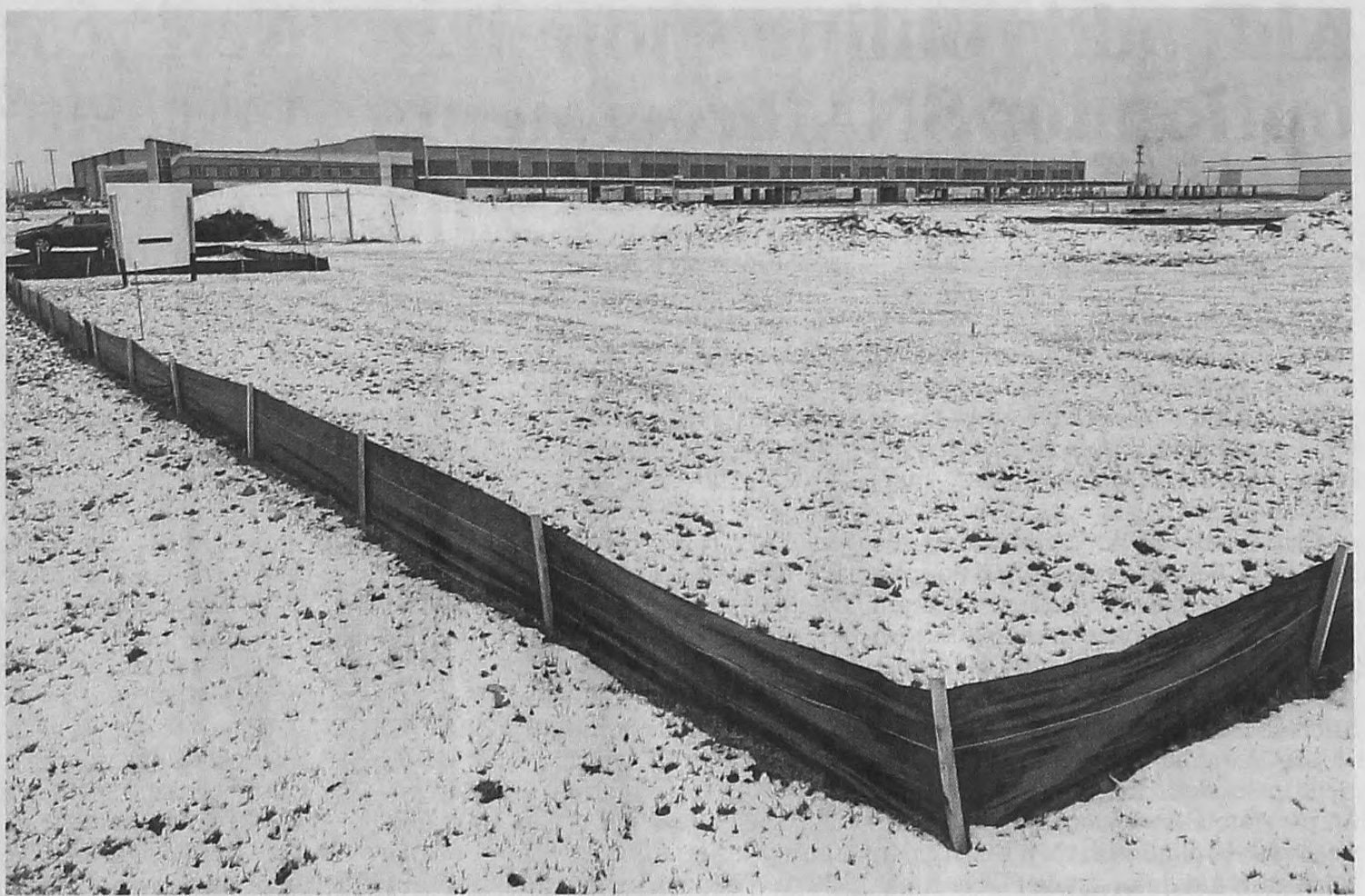
Susan Harvey, a senior vice president at Ashley Capital, said the price the company is paying for the property from RACER Trust is "de minimis" and does not leave a lot of room to negotiate a different price. Because of that, there isn't much room to shift funds over to dedicate to cleanup.

"This is a very challenging property. We are not paying hardly anything for this property," she said. "There just isn't any room there."

She also said the length is comparable with other major brownfield developments in metro Detroit.

"This is a large project that is in line with some of the largest brownfields that have been done in Michigan, and this is consistent and the terms are consistent with that, even though I know if you just look at it through a Livonia lens, and you say this is the biggest one we've ever done, that's true, but until this one ... there was a precedent before this one as well," she said.

Other projects in Livonia that receive brownfield credits include the redevelopment of the former Farmer Jack supermarket on Seven Mile that was demolished and an LA Fitness built in its place, as well as the Livonia Commons shopping center at Schoolcraft and Middlebelt that currently houses shops such as Dick's Sporting Goods and Party City.



Ashley Capital, which owns this proposed development site in Livonia, will receive a brownfield tax credit.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Harvey said the company looked at their costs after the 30-year proposal and determined it could complete its work in 28 years instead.

The discussion convinced several members of the council, which voted unanimously for the 28-year brownfield plan and reimbursement agreement during its Dec. 14 meeting.

The third development in the site would help continue the resurrection of industry on the corner. The former GM plant operated with thousands of employees before closing in the late 1990s. The buildings were removed in 2001 and the property was eventually acquired by RACER Trust following the automotive com-

pany's bankruptcy in 2009. The site was sold to Ashley Capital in 2014, which crafted plans to turn it into an industrial park. Amazon opened its distribution center at the property in 2017, with RNDC opening in 2019.

Councilman Jim Jolly said he was pleased to be a part of the cleanup efforts of the site, as his father worked at the former facility.

"In my opinion, this brownfield development plan is quite literally the reason why these types of plans exist," Jolly said. "This will clean up a very polluted site in Livonia, a site that, without such a plan, would have very little chance in being cleaned up anytime in the immediate future."



Bowling

Continued from Page 3A

One proprietor said his center reopened Dec. 21 to help give senior bowlers something to look forward to.

"For a lot of these guys, it's their social event of the day," he said. "They're all very good about wearing their masks and following the rules."

As of Dec. 30, the target reopening date for Super Bowl Lanes was Jan. 16.

"I believe strongly that all of our leagues and bowlers will return," Diamond said. "The challenge, of course, is surviving until we reach that point. Bowling centers generate roughly 75% of their revenue between September and April, so shutting us down during our peak season will be catastrophic for many operators."

Numerous GoFundMe pages and social media sites have been set up to help bowling alley proprietors whose centers have been forced to close their businesses, at least temporarily.

eawright@hometownlife.com

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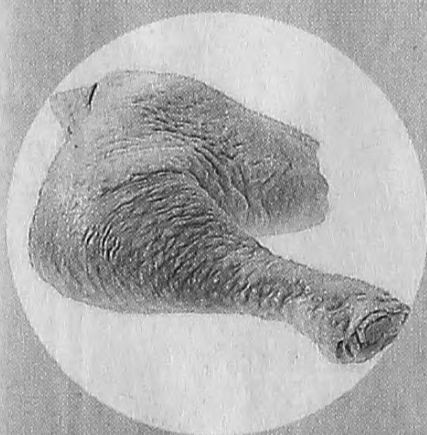
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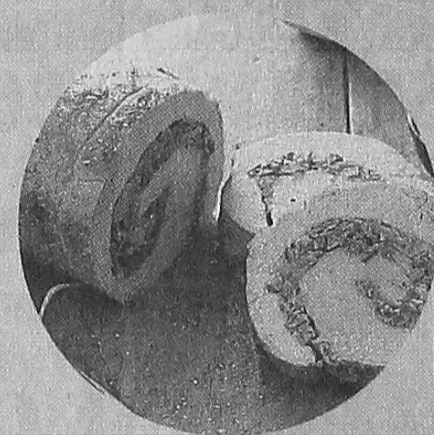
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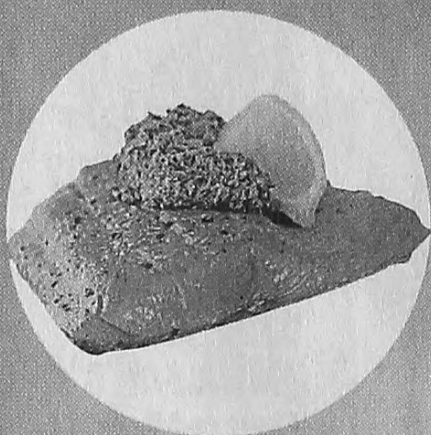


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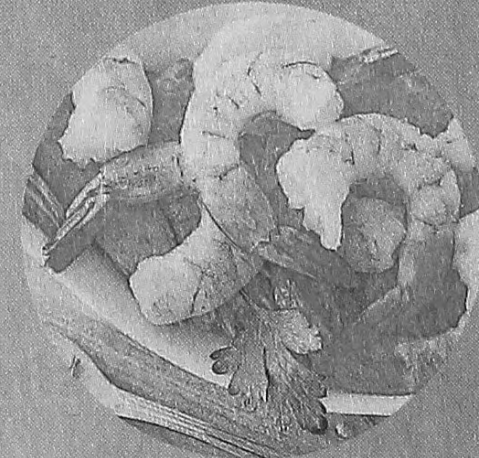
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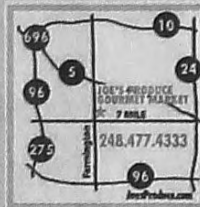


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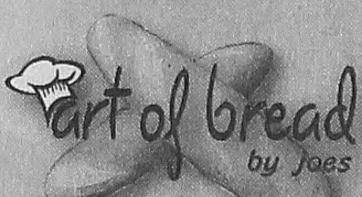
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SPORTS

High hopes in 2021



Milford ski team member Max Wilkerson passes through some gates as he practices at Alpine Valley on Dec. 22.
JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Milford skiing back on the slopes

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Milford junior Maddie Melody first started skiing when she was 1½ years old. As soon as she could walk, she said, her father had her on skis.

Joining a race team when she was 5 and developing into a better racer through more competitions in northern Michigan, Melody developed a love for that feeling each time she started down a slope.

"It's so freeing like when you are just going down the hill and you are by yourself entirely and nobody can talk to you and you don't really have any thoughts besides the snow in your skis and how to get down," Melody said.

Marty Neighbors, who has been the head coach for the Milford boys and girls ski team for 34 years, is used to skiers like this in his program.

Despite being smaller the smaller of Huron Valley Schools' two high schools, the Mavericks have found a level of success, sending at least one team member to the state meet for the past 18 years. In 2019, Milford finished seventh in the boys meet and eighth in the girls meet. This season, hopes are high in Mil-

ford. Both teams will bring back the majority of their starters. All the Mavericks were hoping for was a chance, and the Michigan High School Athletic Association gave them one.

The MHSAA permitted boys and girls skiing as the only winter sport to begin practice Dec. 21 prior to the end of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' COVID-19 restrictions limiting high school athletics and the start of a winter season.

Prior to the approval from the MHSAA, Neighbors was expecting to be able to ski, coaching the only sanctioned winter sport held outdoors.

See MILFORD, Page 2B

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

MHSAA regional final games to watch

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The calendar has flipped to 2021, but many Michigan high school football teams have not yet finished its 2020 season.

The Michigan High School Association partnered with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to introduce a pilot rapid COVID-19 testing program, allowing teams that were initially stuck in the regional round of the playoffs to have a chance at a completed season, along with a return to playoffs for girls swim and dive, and volleyball.

The regional round will be held Jan. 9, the state semifinals are scheduled for Jan. 16, and the state finals are scheduled to be played Jan. 22-23.

Here's a look at the teams left competing for a state championship in the Hometown Life area.

Detroit Catholic Central at Davison

Detroit Catholic Central (9-0) has been hard to stop this season.

After finishing 2019, 4-5, and missing the playoffs for the first time since 2014 — only the fourth time since 2004 — the Shamrocks exploded, coming into the regional final with nine-straight wins.

As of late, the Shamrocks have found their stride. Offensively since its Catholic League Prep Bowl win against Detroit Loyola, junior quarterback Declan Byle and company have scored 37 points or more in four-straight games.

The defense, with senior defensive tackle and Central Michigan signee Bruno Guberinich and junior defensive end Sean Field, has allowed 81 points all season, including only 34 in its past four games.

But the Shamrocks will have to contest with a Davison (9-0) offense that has not been stopped much this season.

The Cardinals have averaged 46.6 points per game in seven games, earning two forfeit wins this season. However, Davison will be without its starting quarterback Brendan Sullivan, who left Monday as a Northwestern early enrollee.

Defensively, Davison has been stingy, allowing 66 points in seven games, including only two games in which they have allowed double-digit point totals.

The Shamrocks will face Davison at 1 p.m. Saturday at Lapeer.

See GAMES, Page 2B

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Milford

Continued from Page 1B

With ski hills such as Alpine Valley Ski Resort — Milford's home base — open, he knew skiers, including his own, would be out there taking advantage.

"I think it's critical, to be honest with you, that young people get out, exercise, have a purpose in mind, something to drive them as opposed to sitting behind a ... computer screen or watching Netflix ad nauseum," Neighbors said. "Hopefully it would be a little bit of a return to the way the world used to spin."

But to the members of the Mavericks, those solo practices are not the same of what they would have in years past.

Different preparation

Constant training is what made Milford junior Max Wilkerson know over time that he was going to be one of the area's top skiers, finishing as a freshman third on the team among the seniors.

At each practice, Wilkerson would get tips and pointers from coaches and teammates, technical skills that would help him improve and make better times, along with making cleaner and sharper turns in his boots.

But when he goes out to Alpine Valley alone, he has to stay accountable to try and make the tweaks himself.

"It's harder for me because I enjoy having that person there giving you things to do (and) knows the things I am doing wrong," Wilkerson said. "When you are on your own, you kind of have to notice it on your own and truly realize 'Huh, I am doing this wrong and (I) have to fix that mistake before it develops into a bad habit.'"

Due to the combination of COVID-19 and warmer weather, Milford spent much of its preseason preparation — when it was allowed to gather as a team — outside in dryland training, running on the bleachers at the high school as opposed to setting courses and being out at Alpine Valley.

Milford senior Riley Watts said over the Thanksgiving holiday many of her teammates traveled to Colorado to get training prior to the start of the winter season.

Milford practiced together for the first time Dec. 21, taking the hills at Alpine Valley. But up to that point, Melody, a co-captain, had to put her trust in her teammates that they were doing their jobs.

"We just kind of have to trust the fact that kids are going to be out there skiing by themselves and not really getting that race training that they normally would in a regular year," Melody said. "Even though our practices are delayed,



Milford ski team coach Marty Neighbors, right, talks to a team member on the slopes at Alpine Valley on Dec. 22.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"We just kind of have to trust the fact that kids are going to be out there skiing by themselves and not really getting that race training that they normally would. ... Even though our practices are delayed, I am still very confident that people are doing their job and will pull through."

Maddie Melody Milford skiing co-captain

I am still very confident that people are doing their job and will pull through."

Hoping for normalcy

Neighbors expects and hopes for as normal of a season as possible.

As long as Alpine Valley remains open and his team remains healthy, Milford will be out on the hills performing competitively, hoping to continue that state meet streak with a lot of the same faces from 2019.

"The kids who are there will be able to run pretty much with anybody in the state," Neighbors said. "Every night that we come out ... we are going to bring our

best. I'm quite certain that we will be able to show."

Melody and Watts serve as Milford girls' co-captains, while junior Makayla Woolhiser — the Milford head coach said she "has an extra piece of hardware in her" after suffering a broken femur prior to the regional meet last season — is hard-nosed, driven and determined to regain form and compete with the Mavericks in those races she did not get to run.

On the boys team, Wilkerson, junior Carson Chamberlain and junior Jack Hannert, who each competed for the Mavericks at the state meet last year, will serve as the team's "triple-threat"

along with Joe Antrim, the lone senior on the team.

Personally for Watts, going into her final season with the team, she does not have many expectations.

"I kind of just want to have fun and make the most of my senior year," Watts said. "But I did really well last year, like all throughout the season, so I just want to keep that up. I want to get more firsts at the local races at the hill and continue to improve..."

"I just want to continue to improve and have a really solid and consistent season."

Even uncertainty remains surrounding the 2021 winter season, Wilkerson is confident in what his team will do, encouraging classmates to come be a part of something special.

"If anybody wants to try something different and try out for the ski team, it's a lot of fun," Wilkerson said. "They should not be afraid to come out because they are not the best because you get better over time."

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

Games

Continued from Page 1B

Livonia Churchill vs. Oak Park

Livonia Churchill head coach Bill De-Fillippo has been sitting on Oak Park film for weeks.

Ever since the initial pause of the postseason, the Chargers (6-2) coaching staff continued the tradition of meeting Sunday afternoons, refining the game plan against the Knights each week.

No matter what the game plan is like, senior quarterback Gavin Brooks — the leader of the Chargers offense that averages 32.5 points per game — knows what to expect.

"Obviously they have a lot of kids that are going to play big time Division 1 football, so we know we are going to have our hands full," Brooks said. "I think if we just do what we do and play a clean game, we could come out on top."

The Chargers offense will potentially face an Oak Park (4-5) defense including four-star defensive tackle and Michigan State commit Rayshaun Benny, three-star linebacker and Miami (Ohio) commit Marlon Dawson and three-star safety and Toledo commit Jaylin Mines.

Starting the season with six-straight losses — with one loss turning into a forfeit win due to eligibility issues on the Birmingham Groves team — Oak Park has shown up in the playoffs, winning each of its first three playoff games, two of which were by one score. In three playoff games, the Knights have averaged 29.7 points per game after scoring 45 points in six regular-season games.

This season, Churchill, anchored by defensive lineman Demarius Gibson-Wells, linebacker Boston Clegg Jr. and safety Jimmy Targosz, has allowed 25.1 points per game.

Churchill will host Oak Park 1 p.m. Saturday.

North Farmington at Traverse City Central

North Farmington (7-2) found its stride late in the season.

In the first two playoff games against Waterford Kettering and Fenton, the Raiders outscored opponents, 88-35, using senior running back Justin Whitehorn for 470 yards rushing and six touchdowns.

In the regional final, North Farmington will face a defense that has not allowed much offensive success. Other than allowing 42 points in their only loss of the season to Macomb Dakota, Traverse City Central (8-1) has failed to allow more than 22 points in a game, using its two All-State defenders — junior defensive back Carson Bourdo and junior linebacker Josh Burnham — to find success.

Burnham also serves as the team's quarterback, leading the Trojans to 30 touchdowns and 1,953 yards of offense this season, with the team averaging 48.4 points per game.

"They want to do something special with their quarterback; they want to get the offense done through him," North Farmington junior split back and safety Aaron Rice said. "I think if we stop their offense, our offense can handle them."

The Raiders defense has allowed only seven touchdowns since Oct. 9 after giving up 111 points in its first three games of the year.

North Farmington will travel to Traverse City to take on the Trojans 2 p.m. Saturday.

Detroit Country Day at North Branch

Detroit Country Day (6-2) had a season to remember in 2019, using a 13-game win streak to propel the Yellow Jackets into the Division 4 state title game before losing to Grand Rapids Catholic Central. But 2020 has been a bit more low key.



In two playoff games, North Farmington senior running back Justin Whitehorn has rushed for 470 yards and scored six touchdowns. COURTESY OF JUSTIN WHITEHORN

Through eight games, Detroit Country Day has lost twice: a forfeit loss to Armada Oct. 9 and a 10-point loss to Brother Rice Oct. 23 prior to the start of the playoffs.

But since then, the Yellow Jackets have been on fire. The offense, including four-star offensive tackle and North-western commit Caleb Tiernan, has nearly half of its total season points in the past three games, helped by a 41-point performance against Henry Ford in the playoff opener.

The defense has been stout too. Led

by first-team All-State defensive back Danny MacLean, the Yellow Jackets have allowed more than 20 points only once all season, and have given up an average of 12.6 points per contest.

Detroit Country Day will face North Branch (9-0), who has dominated opponents from the first whistle, averaging 43.2 points per game and allowing only 76 points all season, including five shut-outs.

Detroit Country Day will take on North Branch on the road 1 p.m. Saturday.

MHSAA sets return for postseason girls swim and dive and volleyball

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Michigan High School Athletic Association announced that it would restart its volleyball, and girls swim and dive postseason competitions starting Jan. 4 with championships to conclude by Jan. 16.

The volleyball tournament will begin in the state quarterfinals Jan. 12 and will follow with the state semifinals Jan. 14 and 15 with the state finals Jan. 16. The state semifinals and the finals will be held at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek.

Novi and Marian are the only two teams in Hometown Life's coverage area left alive in the postseason volleyball tournament.

The girls swim and dive finals will be

held Jan. 15 and 16 at three sites: Division 1 at Hudsonville High School, Division 2 at Grand Rapids Northview High School and Division 3 at Lake Orion High School.

Spectators will not be allowed at postseason events.

Participants must participate in the rapid COVID-19 testing program curated by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Athletes, coaches and those directly affiliated with the team will be tested three times per week.

The MHSAA announced Saturday that its high school football postseason will resume with the regional finals Jan. 9, with the state semifinals Jan. 16 and the state finals Jan. 22 and 23 at Ford Field.

MHSAA releases winter schedule

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Michigan High School Athletic Association approved its regular season calendar for indoor winter sports to begin Jan. 16.

Indoor practices for boys and girls basketball, bowling, competitive cheer, gymnastics, boys swim and dive, hockey and wrestling may begin Jan. 16. Basketball, bowling, hockey, and swimming and diving may begin competitions Jan. 22, while competitive cheer, gymnastics and wrestling will start Jan. 25.

This season, the MHSAA is permitting hockey teams to play two games on one school day twice — with four games total during that two-week period. Wrestling teams are allowed two dates of competition per week with competitions limited to four teams per site.

Also, the MHSAA changed the dates of the winter postseason. The start of spring sports will not be affected.

MHSAA winter schedule - Basketball

Girls districts - March 8, 10 and 12; boys districts - March 9, 11 and 13; girls regionals - March 16 and 18; boys regionals - March 17 and 19; girls quarterfinals, semifinals and finals - March 22 (QF), March 24 (semifinals - two sites) and March 26 (finals); boys quarterfinals, semifinals and finals - March 23 (QF), March 25 (semifinals - two sites) and March 27 (finals)

Bowling

Regionals - March 19-20; finals - March 26-27

Competitive Cheer

Districts - March 5-6; regionals - March 13; finals - March 19-20

Gymnastics

Regionals - March 20; finals - March 26-27

Hockey

Regionals - March 15-20; finals - March 25-27

Boys Swimming and Diving

Dive regionals - March 18; finals - March 26-27

Wrestling

District week - March 1; regional week - March 8; team finals - March 19-20; individual finals - March 26-27

Statly turns passion for fishing into college success

Bill Khan Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Fishing was always something Ben Statly did as a hobby. He knew that some people made a living fishing, but he had no idea it was a sport in which he could represent his high school and college.

That changed when Hartland High School added a bass fishing team his sophomore year.

"I jumped at the opportunity when the high school team came about," he said. "I fished all the way through my senior year. I found out about Adrian when I was a junior at Hartland. I started talking with the coach there, found out about the process and that it was a sport in college."

Statly was recruited to the bass fishing team at Adrian College the same way any other athlete is courted to join a college program. Joining the team is what attracted him to Adrian, where he majors in business management. He played football and baseball as a freshman at Hartland before switching over to bass fishing for the school.

"We're a D3 school, so technically there are no scholarships," said Statly, a 2017 Hartland graduate. "They do provide grant money. Fishing is a var-

sity sport, fully funded. They'll pay for travel, gas money, food, lodging, all that stuff. It definitely takes a lot of pressure off the students."

The Bulldogs traveled to Edgewood, Maryland, in September for a tournament on Chesapeake Bay. Statly teamed with Grant Gallagher of Fremont, Ohio, to win the tournament and earn a spot in the College Fishing National Championship March 3-5 in Oklahoma.

Statly and Gallagher had a five-bass limit that weighed 18 pounds, 2 ounces. They won by 15 ounces over Adrian teammates Caleb Dachenhaus and Hayden Scott.

"You've got to have some type of chemistry with your partner," said Statly, a senior. "Grant and I tried to fish together when we were sophomores. We had some slight success when we were sophomores and juniors. We've always been really good friends. We've been able to turn that into a good partnership when fishing competitively."

The top 10 two-man teams in Maryland qualified for nationals. Adrian had four teams qualify, including the third-place team of Howell's Zach Manneback and Fenton's Gunner Wilson.

Statly began fishing with his dad when he was 4 years old, despite not growing up on any of the lakes in the area and not having a boat.



Hartland High School graduate Ben Statly (right) teamed with Adrian College teammate Grant Gallagher to win a bass fishing tournament in Maryland and qualify for college nationals. COURTESY PHOTO

Bates at Ypsilanti Prep: Is it a 'real' school?

Tyler J. Davis Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

If Ypsilanti Prep Academy is anything, it's unique — at least to Michigan.

While the name suggests a school, Ypsi Prep is a basketball training house for top teenagers, playing against the best high school teams in the country.

Instead of switching classes several times a day and sweating prom dates, these young men finish their core courses one at a time through a first-of-its-kind program, and spend the rest of their time preparing to play at the next level.

It opened this year but has already played on national television and was nationally ranked by Max Preps, primarily because of Emoni Bates, its star player and son of its founder, Elgin Bates.

Emoni Bates, a hoops prodigy and five-star Michigan State commit, is projected to be the No. 1 pick in the NBA draft whenever he is eligible. For now, he and about a dozen other teenagers, seven of them Division I prospects, comprise a roster that has played in Michigan, Texas and Ohio against some of the top-ranked players in the country.

No. 1-ranked senior Chet Holmgren and several of his Minnesota high school state champion teammates beat Ypsi in Ann Arbor on Nov. 12 in the academy's first game. Then Duncanville (Texas), which rosters one of the nation's best sophomores, Ronald Holland, topped Ypsi on Nov. 28 in Texas. Ypsi has since beaten Ohio's ISA and Texas' Legacy School of Sport Sciences, each of which feature multiple Division I prospects.

Bronny James, son of four-time NBA champion LeBron James, and Amari Bailey, a top-five junior guard, are next for Ypsi on Jan. 9.

The formation of Ypsi Prep and its ability to play games elsewhere has prompted questions about how it started and how it works. Here's what we know:

Is Ypsi Prep a school?

No, and it doesn't market itself as one. Elgin Bates was not specific this summer about the organization, regis-

tered as an LLC in July. He hasn't since publicly talked about the team, which had a game broadcast on ESPN2 and has its games streamed via a third-party subscription service.

"Ypsi Prep is an academic-based basketball academy that provides its student-athletes an NCAA certified core curriculum while providing athletic and life skills training in preparation for college," Bates said via email.

Bates, who played Division II basketball and professionally overseas, has trained his son and others on the team through the AAU program Bates Fundamentals. The head coach for Ypsi Prep is Corey Tucker, who coached in Ohio for more than 15 years, according to his LinkedIn resume.

When asked if Ypsi receives taxpayer money, Bates said it does not, and that team expenses are paid by a nonprofit foundation and local and regional sponsors.

Nike and Gatorade, along with a host of small businesses, sponsor the team.

Ypsi Prep partners with a separate entity, Arbor Valley Academy, to provide its education services and has no relationship with the Michigan Department of Education. Nor does Ypsi have a relationship with the NCAA's eligibility center — the body that reviews each high school's or educational organization's courses for approval at the next level of athletics.

What does MHSAA say about all this?

Nothing, really. Ypsi Prep plays outside of Michigan High School Athletics Association sanctions.

That means Ypsi Prep is not subject to the travel restrictions of MHSAA member schools — but it also cannot compete for a state title. Ypsi Prep has yet to play a team from Michigan, but has planned to play home games.

Emoni Bates won an MHSAA title with his local public school, Ypsilanti Lincoln, as a freshman in 2019. Among 10,000-plus schools with athletics, only a few dozen, mostly small parochial schools and homeschools, play outside of MHSAA rule.

And none of them do it quite like Ypsi Prep.

Will Ypsi Prep players qualify for Division I competition?

If they complete courses at an approved institution, yes, but Ypsi alone doesn't provide that education. Each player must meet NCAA's "core" standards and provide transcripts from an approved entity; public school, private school, charter school or otherwise.

But the NCAA isn't in the business of authorizing an educational institution, per se. It tries to verify the institution can provide the required courses that high school athletes need to qualify for initial eligibility under NCAA rules. Then it can accept that student's transcripts.

"It's not an accreditation process, because the NCAA doesn't have authority over high schools," said Tim Nevius, an attorney who regularly spars with the organization on behalf of student-athletes. "The NCAA is a college and university member association that sets rules that determine the eligibility of its players."

The NCAA's eligibility center assesses each high school or education organization's curriculum and can give it a variety of designations, with periodic reassessment to follow. Arbor Valley was approved for the first time in September.

As a former NCAA employee, Nevius is well-versed in investigating misconduct on behalf of the institution. Now he has his own firm that represents players, but has no connection or knowledge of Ypsi or Arbor Valley.

He said it's possible for a school or educational outlet to be cleared in a matter of months if their paperwork is right. As of now, it appears if students who play at Ypsi pass courses at Arbor Valley Academy, they would be eligible to play in college. They would have to meet the eligibility center's amateurism requirements as well.

What is Arbor Valley Academy?

Arbor Valley Academy is one of dozens of educational organizations in the state known colloquially as charter schools, but in Michigan state code known as public school academies. Global Education Excellence, Arbor Valley's parent company, has 20-plus years

of history starting schools in Michigan, Ohio and the Middle East.

GEE runs more than a dozen public school academies — mostly brick-and-mortar locations, though some are online only — in southeast Michigan. The Free Press has previously reported on concerns about the charter school system because the academies can be started by anyone with the capital, and can receive per-pupil taxpayer money.

Marwan Issa, chief technology officer of GEE and son of its founder, said the schools have a glowing reputation in the education world. GEE's website says it serves 4,500 students across its campuses.

Issa said he founded Arbor Valley in 2019 to provide students with a specialized online-only education. About 30 pupils, including Ypsi Prep players, are enrolled at Arbor Valley; Issa expects that to grow to over 100 within a year or two and serve everyone from children with elite talent in athletics and arts, to those who just don't want a conventional high school experience.

"When it comes to the education, no matter what these kids are my responsibility," said Issa, who doubles as GEE's educational strategist. "I have a focus on making sure those kids get the best educational experience and make sure they get to their next goal."

The AVA schedule is year-round and tailors each student's plan to the courses that child needs.

He said AVA was in the works before he met Bates, but the two were connected by acquaintances and saw a fit. Then he set out to be cleared by the NCAA — the first time any GEE school went through that process.

Unlike other GEE institutions, AVA does not receive taxpayer money, Issa said. He created it as a private academy funded by donations, tuitions and, for now, his own money.

"The reason I took it one step further and made it private was because we were dealing with international students, and we're dealing with students who may not be from Michigan," Issa said. "... I needed that complete autonomy and flexibility to be able to work with these kids without worrying about potentially if this money is earmarked for this child or not."

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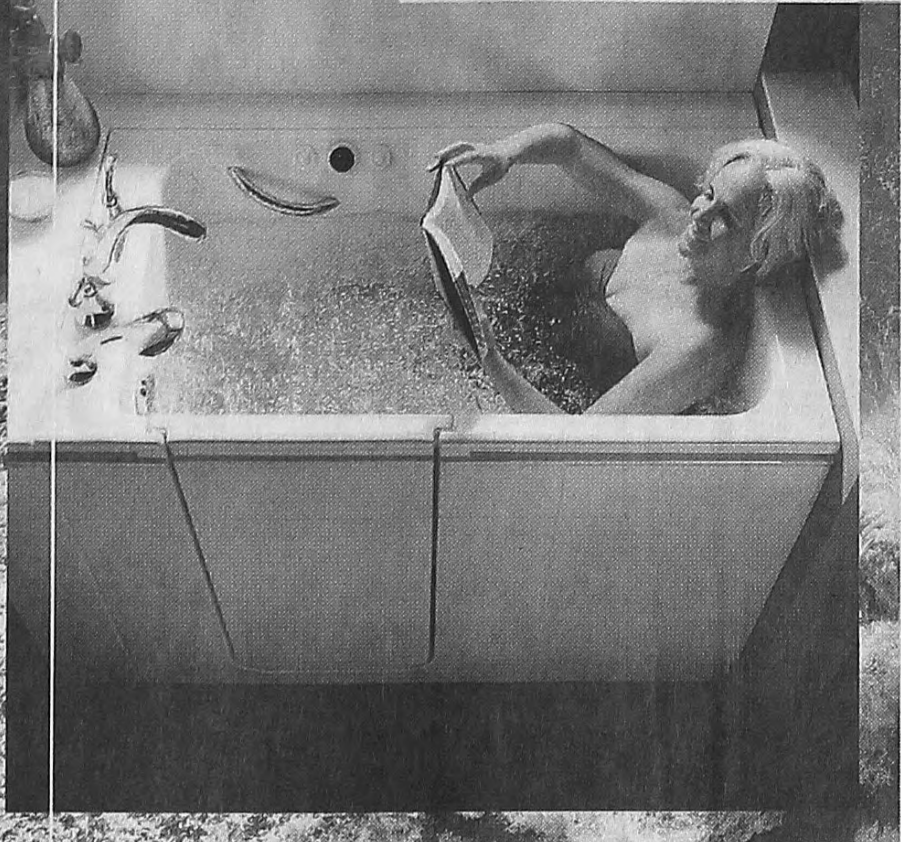


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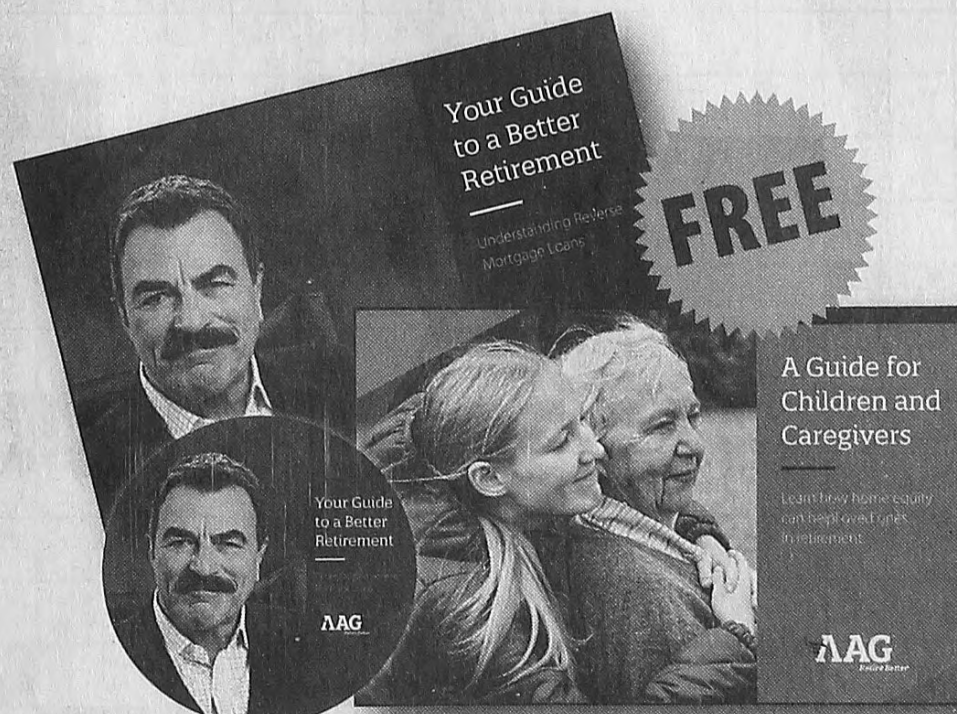
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THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

**UNTHEMED #3:
 PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo STACKED CENTER**

ACROSS

- 1 Like photons and gluons
- 9 Exercise machine with steps
- 21 Part of Turkey in Asia
- 22 Money from work
- 23 Getting wider
- 24 Three-under-par scores
- 25 Actors Epps and Sharif
- 26 Scrape (out)
- 28 Prefix with monthly or annual
- 29 Refrain bit
- 30 Distant
- 31 Gives voice to
- 34 Study of visual imagery
- 39 Angler using artificial bait
- 42 Suffix of sugar names
- 44 Feels fretfully discontented
- 45 Looking for
- 47 Dog pest
- 48 Geezer
- 51 Rival of Gmail
- 52 Gridiron player recruitment event
- 56 Pit- (heartbeat sound)
- 57 "Etc." for "et cetera," e.g.
- 60 Kerfuffle
- 62 Vetoing vote
- 63 Start of a question in a Snow White story
- 71 Influence of a country in other countries
- 72 Explanation of a text based on its exact wording
- 73 Mauna —
- 74 After taxes
- 75 Letters after pis
- 76 Apple debut of 2005
- 77 Charming
- 82 "... boy — girl?"
- 84 Truck fuel
- 86 Prefix with monthly or annual
- 87 Some hairless felines
- 91 Mafia initiate
- 94 China's Mao — -tung
- 95 Maestro's group
- 99 Area with a pond and fountains, perhaps
- 101 Attack
- 103 Partakes of
- 104 Trot quickly
- 105 Conger, e.g.
- 107 "Listen up!"
- 108 Rises quickly
- 110 Vehicle tag
- 116 War prisoner
- 119 Not merely figuratively
- 120 Quality of being close
- 121 Like a certain branch of geometry
- 122 Schmoozing sessions
- DOWN**
- 1 Financial scammer Bernard
- 2 Zoo resident
- 3 Wage
- 4 Polaris or Sirius
- 5 Oodles
- 6 Gin inventor Whitney
- 7 Evil deed
- 8 Certain steeped herbal drink
- 9 Passover meal
- 10 Chinese "way"
- 11 In — (stuck)
- 12 For short
- 13 Saintry artifact
- 14 B-F link
- 15 Recline
- 16 Pig — poke
- 17 Director of 2000's "Charlie's Angels"
- 18 Ballad singer Michael
- 19 Materialize
- 20 States again
- 27 Deborah of "The King and I"
- 31 Pre-'91 empire
- 32 With 66-Down, Mr. or Mrs. Right
- 33 Arty NYC district
- 35 German composer Carl
- 36 "Little" Dickens girl
- 37 Pundit's paper piece
- 38 Fibster
- 40 Source of Adam and Eve's leaves
- 41 Suffix with Carol
- 43 Linked collection of photovoltaic panels
- 46 Redheads
- 48 Composer Saint-Saëns
- 49 Personal view
- 50 Once-popular Nerf game with blasters
- 52 Amateur player
- 53 38-Down in the Bible
- 54 "Enough Said" actor Ben
- 55 Alevite rival
- 57 Human rights lawyer Clooney
- 58 Chomping down on
- 59 Ocean water
- 61 Actor Lundgren
- 64 Hockey legend Bobby
- 65 Stranded cell stuff
- 66 See 32-Down
- 67 Very, to Yves
- 68 In a tizzy, with "up"
- 69 That, in Chile
- 70 Liquid quality
- 78 On the ocean
- 79 Pricey stones
- 80 Apple debut of 1998
- 81 Ship of 1492
- 83 Ostrich kin
- 84 Writer Roald
- 85 Ending for Bronx
- 87 Strengthened
- 88 Sniffing organ
- 89 Getting an inside look at?
- 90 Roman 201
- 91 Florida major-leaguer
- 92 Mother-or-son president of the Philippines
- 93 Big name in yo-yos
- 96 Macbeth and Macduff
- 97 Most scarce
- 98 Take stock of
- 100 Coke rival
- 102 Glossy look
- 106 Alleyway
- 108 Feudal peon
- 109 Writer Sarah — Jewett
- 111 Poetic "prior to"
- 112 Modern, in Germany
- 113 Plant pouch
- 114 Building addition
- 115 Airport screening org.
- 117 Org. for teachers
- 118 Indenting key

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

SUDOKU

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/07

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!

ONE TO ONE

Can you find all the words containing ONE? 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.

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

ANSWER KEY

ALONE ANYONE BALLOONED BARITONE BARONESS BONES CLONE COLONEL CORONET CRONE CROONER CYCLONE DRONE EXPONENT FALCONER GONE HONEST HONEY HORMONE IRONED LIONESS MONETARY MONEY ONEROUS OUTDONE OZONE PHONED PHONETIC PIONEERS PRISONER PRONE SCONE SHONE SOONER SPOONERISM STONED SWOONED TELEPHONED TONES UNDONE

ONE TO ONE

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

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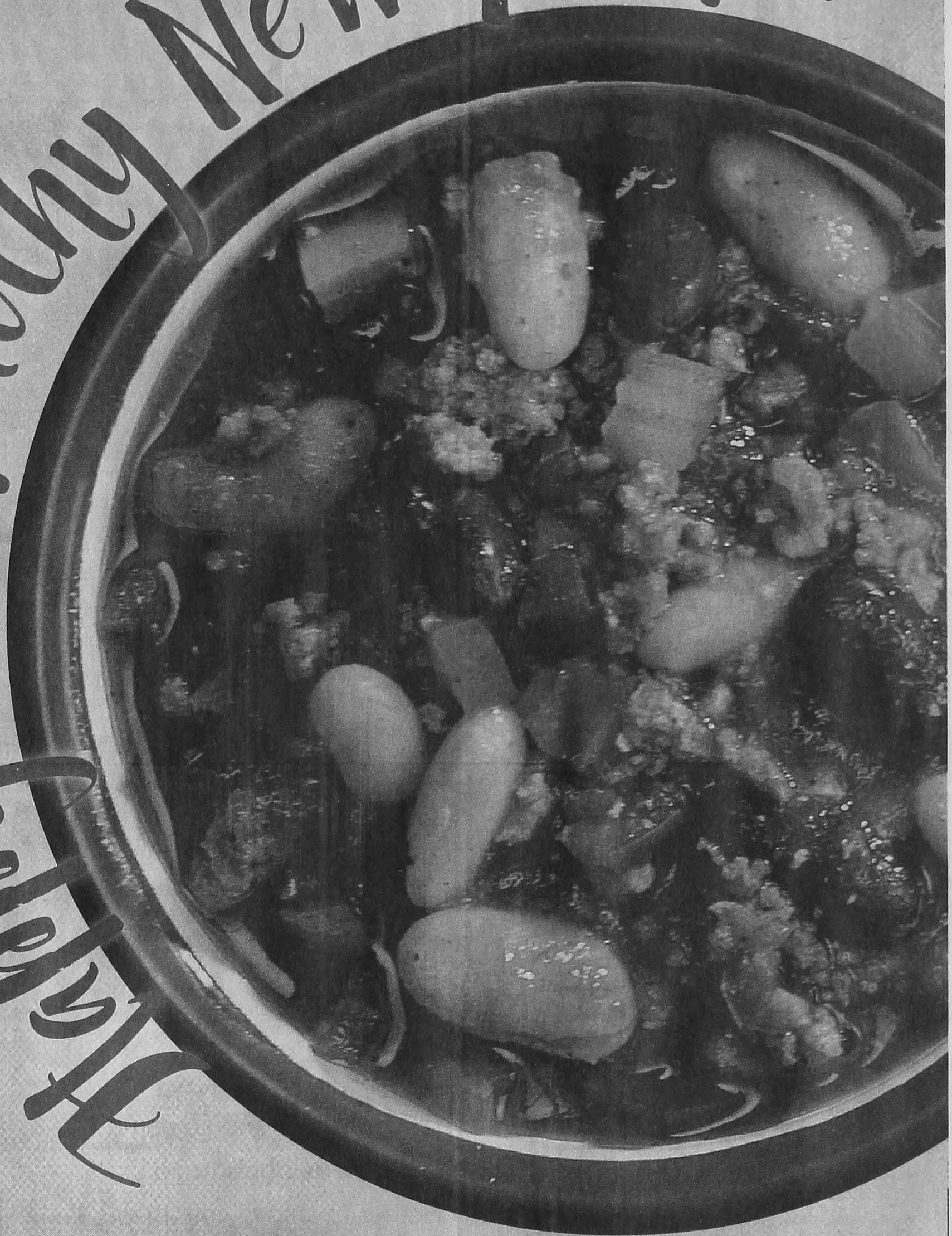
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