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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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## In from the cold



Biglora waitress Stacey Kraus brings some pizzas out to customers Feb. 1. The Plymouth restaurant welcomed back dine-in patrons Monday after several months. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Diners, restaurateurs excited as indoor dining returns

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Monday was all about supporting local restaurants. That's at least how Joy Selesko and Paul Terrill felt.

The owners of Title One title company in Livonia sat down for breakfast Monday morning at Brunch Café at 16977 Newburgh in Livonia after not being able to for several months.

The pair said they've picked up food

from Brunch Café for their employees routinely the last few months and stopped by Monday morning for breakfast and support the café in person.

"We were feeding our 70 employees every other week from here because they do such a great job," he said. "We would ask them where they want to go, and it was always here."

Diners looking to eat somewhere besides their house headed out Monday to enjoy the first day of indoor dining

across Michigan, something that hasn't been allowed since mid-November.

The state Department of Health And Human Services ordered restaurants closed in mid-November as daily COVID-19 cases skyrocketed. Since then, the seven-day average of case numbers has dropped from more than 7,000 to less than 1,500 since the order

See DINING, Page 4A

## Livonia cashier's TikTok videos go viral

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Being the closing-time store cashier can be awkward, asking customers to hurry up and leave so you and your co-workers can go home after a long shift.

But David Culliton, a cashier at Busch's Fresh Food Market in Livonia, has a little fun with that 30-minute warning closing announcement.

The 23-year-old has spoofed "The Raven" by Edgar Allen Poe and the Vincent Price monologue that appears in Michael Jackson's "Thriller" music video, and has even written an original poem informing Busch's shoppers that it's time to head home.

Culliton posts his creative closing-time announcements to TikTok. His most recent monologue, a spoof of the ending of Pixar's 2007 film "Ratatouille," has garnered more than 1.7 million views.

"It just started as something completely silly," Culliton said. "I'm a theater kid, so I just love any chance to get up and project my voice. I started asking my manager if I could do the closing announcement because I thought it would be cool."

The Livonia resident, who has long dreamed of becoming an internet influencer, said the video's success is a little mind-boggling.

What started as a silly way to end the day has become something people tell him they want to visit the store just to hear.

"It's kind of crazy and overwhelming," Culliton said. "It's more overwhelming than I anticipated. For years, I've had this dream where I wish I could be an internet personality. ... So it's kind of fun to have this dream of mine a little bit realized."

See CASHIER, Page 4A

## Farmington appoints new public safety director

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Becoming Farmington's public safety director was like the first day of ninth grade for Ted Warthman.

He'd already devoted 24 years of full-time service to the metro Detroit department, plus two years prior to that as a reserve officer.

But there was plenty of nervous energy, excitement and other emotions when he was sworn in late last month to his new leadership position.

"I think on the first day I felt similar to when I got promoted from officer to ser-

geant, sergeant to commander, commander to deputy director ... you almost feel like a kid on the first day of ninth grade," Warthman, 47, said. "Now that I've been in here for a month, I feel a lot more comfortable ... just because Frank Demers, the prior director, got me involved in a whole lot of stuff."

For example, he's been in budget details for his department of 23 sworn public safety officers, 16 paid on-call firefighters and six cadets for weeks.

"I'm real thankful that Frank included me on budget for the last six years,"

See DIRECTOR, Page 4A



Ted Warthman has been appointed the new Public Safety Director for the City of Farmington. He has worked for the department full-time for 24 years.

JOHN HEIDER/  
HOMETOWNLIFE.COM





## Teen accused in Redford fatal shooting case

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Ladonta Skinner, 19, was arraigned this week on six felonies including first-degree murder in connection to a fatal shooting in Redford.

Township police accuse the Westland resident of shooting another male the night of Jan. 17.

Police were dispatched to the 25800 block of Schoolcraft, near Beech Daly, at about 8:12 p.m. because of reports of a shooting. Upon arrival, they found the victim shot in the upper torso.

He was transported to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Police gleaned during a preliminary investigation that the shooting actually happened in the area of Centralia and Kendall Avenue. The shooter and his victim knew each other.

State troopers, who were assisting, arrested Skinner on Sunday.

Skinner also was arraigned on two counts of armed robbery and three counts of felony firearms.

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## Livonia man rescued with CPR at car wash

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Livonia police discovered another hero when they were dispatched to a Plymouth Road car wash.

According to a police report, officers were dispatched to the 33905 Plymouth Road car wash the afternoon of Jan. 9 because of a medical emergency in progress.

They found a woman saying that her husband, 57, was washing their Ford F-150 at the self-service location when he suddenly fell to the ground.

She initially thought he slipped but realized the emergency when he failed to get up.

The wife called 911 while another person, also from Livonia, began CPR on her husband at about 3:04 p.m. Livonia firefighters arrived and officially took over care about five minutes later.

The man who fell was breathing and had a good pulse while being transported to St. Mary Mercy Livonia Hospital.

Firefighters later informed dispatch that the man was alert and talking upon arrival at the hospital.

# Farmington school board fills remaining seats, positions

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Following a flurry of resignations and transfers of power, Farmington's board of education is back to being a fully seated board with all leadership positions filled.

The board selected Donald Walker Jan. 12 to fill the vacancy left by Pam Green when she resigned from her position on the board in November 2020.



Weems

Walker, one of six applicants, will serve through 2022. Walker's appointment along with newly-elected members Cheryl Blau, Mable Fox and Claudia Henrich's presence on the board means the body has a majority of new members. As new members, Walker and Henrich will serve as officers on the board as well.

At a meeting Tuesday, the board installed Walker as secretary and Henrich as treasurer.

The top jobs of president and vice president went to Terri Weems and Zach Rich, respectively. Weems has served as the board's president before and is the longest serving member among the current trustees.

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448.

## Kensington Metropark to cull deer

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A deer cull at Kensington Metropark aims to reduce the herd by nearly 50 animals, but there are plans to spare one special doe.

There are currently about 120 deer in Kensington, a number deemed too high to maintain a healthy population in the nearly 4,500-acre park.

For this reason, park employees who are trained sharpshooters will cull the herd today, resulting in a closure of the park at about 4 p.m. The cull will end around midnight.

"The carrying capacity of the land is high, and deer overpopulate in that area," said Tyler Mitchell, chief of natural resources for Huron-Clinton Metroparks. "There is a lack of hunting pressure in the area compared to other areas. It's not a big part of the sporting culture around Milford."

Huron-Clinton Metroparks has continued the deer management program in place since 1999. Kensington has had a deer cull for at least the last few years. Its necessity is based on an annual aerial survey, officials said.

The number of deer in Kensington have generally increased year-over-year, Mitchell said. There have been up to 200 deer counted in an afternoon in the 5.1-square-mile park over the years and the deer population has consistently been over 100 since surveying began. The carrying capacity for a healthy herd is 15 deer per square mile.

Deer proliferate in Kensington due to multiple factors, including a lack of natural predators. Wolves are not found in the Lower Peninsula, and coyotes seldom take on deer, preferring smaller, easier prey.

Deer also have rapid reproductive rates. A doe as young as 1½ years old is



The albino doe that has been seen at Kensington Metropark will be spared from the cull because of its rarity.

COURTESY OF DON PAVLICA

fertile, and each pregnancy often results in twins due to the area's plentiful food sources, including invasive plants such as autumn olive that provide year-round nutrition and native plants the deer have eaten nearly to extinction.

Danielle Mauter, chief of marketing and communications for Huron-Clinton Metroparks, said at the time the deer management program began in 1999, Kensington had lost more than 70 species of native plants from deer grazing. Additionally, 40 plants once classified as common have been reclassified as uncommon.

After the deer management program started, the natural resources staff has reestablished and maintained most of these plants.

However, the main reason for the deer cull is to maintain the health of the deer population.

A cull, Mitchell said, is the most efficient, and most humane way to do that, as counterintuitive as it may seem. He said the park system has received backlash about the cull.

As an alternative, birth control has been suggested as a means to reduce the

deer population, with animals captured and surgically sterilized or injected with contraception.

"Financially, that's prohibitive," Mitchell said. "Wild animals are wild. To capture and handle and operate and then release a wild animal is very traumatic."

"I know culling is too, but it's ethical and quick."

During the cull, the sharpshooters will aim for antlerless deer. About 75 percent of the herd is female.

There is one doe, however, that they are taking special precautions to spare — an albino that has gained the adoration of the public. Albinism is rare and makes an animal more susceptible to predators, but Mitchell and the parks system staff acknowledge the community's fondness for the doe.

"We recognize there is public interest in that particular animal and she is special," he said. "We respect people's desire to see and photograph that animal and we will try to stay away from her habitat. The shooting team knows they are not to knowingly take the albino deer, we have put measures in place to avoid that."

The doe may be the offspring of an albino buck that was killed in a 2015 deer cull at the park that resulted in public fury. While Mitchell noted the DNR offers no special protection to albino animals, the park system will take measures to protect Kensington's albino doe from suffering the same fate as that of her possible father.

"We respect people's interest, we serve the public and landscape and we are doing what is right for the herd and ecosystem," he said. "We have no desire to upset people."

"If we can make adjustments, and allow people to have an experience with an albino animal, that is what we would like to do."

## Lifelong Farmington Hills resident joins city council

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Having been "born and raised" in Farmington Hills, Matthew Strickfaden is the newest member of its city council.

Strickfaden, who works in architecture, was chosen from 24 applicants to fill the seat left vacant by Rep. Samantha Steckloff (D-Farmington Hills) after she was elected to the Michigan House

of Representative. He took the oath of office Monday and will finish the remainder of Steckloff's council term, which expires later this year.

"We have somebody with creative thoughts, imagination and a desire to really get his hands dirty by working with city council and making sure that this city keeps on growing," Mayor Vicki Barnett said.

Several council members said it was

hard to choose from such a large applicant pool but feel they have the right person for the job.

"I think he's a great addition," Mayor Pro Tem Jacki Boleware said. "For all those who did not make the appointment, it was such a hard decision to make."

"There were so many good people and we struggled with it. But I think our addition is a good choice."

Strickfaden said he's ready and excited to get to work.

"I promise to bring enthusiasm, endless energy, creative ideas and compassion to the issues we face and the challenges we're going to meet together," he said.

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

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Observer & Eccentric Newspapers  
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Published Sunday and Thursday by  
Observer & Eccentric Media

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#### Subscription Rates:

Newsstand price: \$1.50  
\$104 per 12 months home delivery

#### Home Delivery:

Customer Service: 866-887-2737  
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## How to pick mortgage plans as a first-time homebuyer



Money Matters  
Rick Bloom  
Guest columnist

#### Dear Rick:

My wife and I are in our late 20s and we have been renting an apartment since we got married three years ago. Because interest rates are low, we think now might be the right time to buy. We have not found anything yet; we want to be prepared when we do.

First of all, what type of mortgage should we get? Does it make sense to use an adjustable-rate mortgage?

Secondly, I'm not sure how to handle the down payment. With the price of homes that we're thinking of, I don't think we will be able to come up with the 20 percent down payment. We don't want to have to pay PMI if we don't have to. Any suggestions?

Todd

#### Dear Todd:

I think it's important to first understand the differences between an adjustable-rate and a fixed-rate mortgage. In a fixed-rate mortgage, the interest rate is permanently set for the life of the mortgage at the time you close on the mortgage. On the other hand, with an adjustable-rate mortgage, such as a 5/1 ARM, the mortgage rate is fixed for the first five years and then adjusts on a yearly basis after that.

Typically, when you use an adjustable-rate mortgage, you receive a slightly lower interest rate for the fixed period of time in comparison to a traditional fixed rate mortgage. In today's low-interest rate environment, the question is how long do you plan to be in the home?

If you plan on being in the home more than five to 10 years, then it would make sense to get a fixed-rate mortgage. On the other hand, if you knew you were going to be in this house for five years or less, then an adjustable rate may make sense.

With regards to not having the 20 percent to put down, I don't blame you for trying to avoid the PMI. PMI is private mortgage insurance, and it adds an additional cost to your monthly mortgage payment.

The first thing I would recommend is to look for a mortgage that does not require a 20 percent down payment. In addition, if you are a veteran, you also may qualify for a VA loan with zero percent down. Many lenders are also willing to eliminate the PMI in exchange for a slightly higher mortgage interest rate.

As a final reminder, don't forget to pay attention to the fees and costs. Whether you are refinancing your home or getting your very first mortgage, it is important to fully understand all the costs involved.

Good luck.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial advisor. His website is [www.bloomadvisors.com](http://www.bloomadvisors.com). If you would like Rick to respond to your questions, please email Rick at [rick@bloomadvisors.com](mailto:rick@bloomadvisors.com).



# Cicadas poised for periodic return this year

Keith Matheny and Georgea Kovanis

Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's an underground movement now, but it will be all the buzz this spring and summer.

This year will mark the reemergence after 17 years of Brood X, or the Great Eastern Brood, of periodical cicadas — those large, winged, kind of scary-looking but mostly harmless flying insects known for their almost deafening buzz.

"The end of May through June, it can get pretty loud — if you are in an area where they are numerous, there can be hundreds of thousands, or millions, of them," said Howard Russell, an entomologist (insect scientist) at Michigan State University.

Unlike greenish, annual cicadas, periodical cicadas are known for their black bodies and bold, red eyes. Their mass, in-unison emergence every 17 years is one of nature's great mysteries.

But the bugs haven't been in hibernation since their last mass appearance in 2004.

"They are always there, that's what people don't realize," said John Cooley, an entomologist at the University of Connecticut who studies periodical cicadas.

The cicadas live underground in wingless nymph form, about a foot or 2 down, feeding on sap from tree roots — "and that's where they feed for 17 years," Russell said.

Most cicadas — the ones Michiganders hear buzzing every summer — don't have fixed periods of development like this. When they reach adulthood, away they go, as individuals or small groups.

But with periodical cicadas, after 17 years underground, on just the right spring day, when soil temperatures reach 64 degrees, the nymphs, all together, burrow their way to the surface and make their mass emergence, Russell said.

"They climb up on the nearest thing they can find, and molt for the final time," he said. "At that time, they are white — their exoskeleton hasn't hardened yet. That takes five or six days. Then the adult is ready to look for a mate."

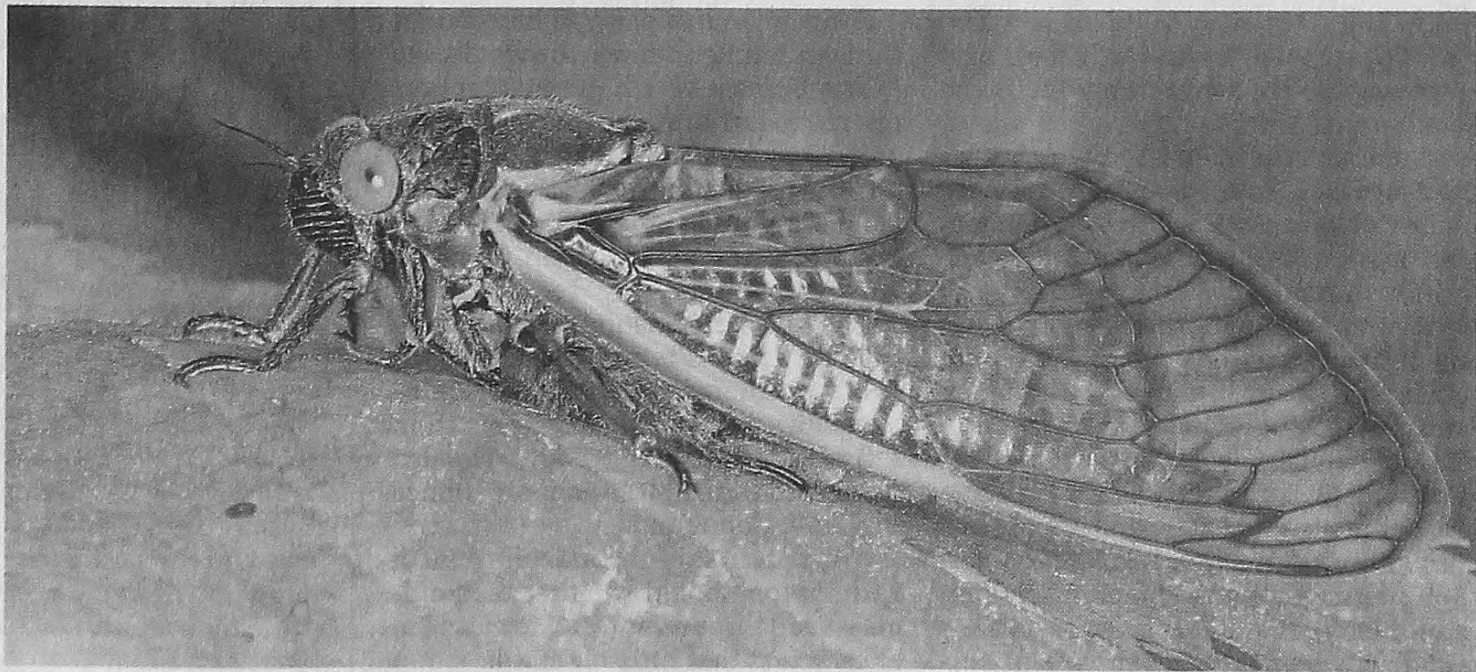
Why they aren't triggered to do this in, say, the 15th or 16th spring isn't fully understood.

"No one knows what mechanism they use to trigger their mass emergence," Russell said.

From underground, periodical cicadas have some method of counting the number of times deciduous trees — the kind that lose their leaves in the winter — regrow their leaves, Cooley said.

"The cicadas come out after the 'right' number," he said. "Whatever the specific change is, the cicadas can detect that."

The bugs will even, in unison, postpone their emergence for a day or two if the weather is rainy or otherwise uncooperative, he said.



A newly emerged Brood X 17-year cicada. The noisy insects are set to return this year. COURTESY OF PER KJELDSEN

## The invasion will hit 15 states

One of the largest broods of periodical cicadas in the nation, Brood X will emerge this spring in 15 states: Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, as well as Washington D.C.

In Michigan, Brood X only reaches into southern counties of the Lower Peninsula, particularly in southeast Michigan. Washtenaw and Hillsdale counties have been past hot spots.

"You can draw a line across the state at about Ann Arbor, and below that is as far as they get anywhere," Cooley said.

That telltale buzzing noise are the males up in trees, trying to attract a female. Michigan tends to get only one cicada species of the three that make up Brood X and it's the quietest of the three, Cooley said.

"If you go along the Wabash River Valley, on the Illinois-Indiana border, they have all three species there at the same time," he said. "The noise is just head-splitting."

After mating, female periodical cicadas will lay eggs in soft, new twigs, using a sharp organ called an ovipositor to cut into the branches and place her fertilized eggs inside. This can kill young branches, making the periodical cicada swarm more harmful for tree nurseries and orchards.

"You can't spray enough pesticide to kill them all without also wiping out everything else in the environment," Cooley said.

The solution is to put nets or bags over trees for the period of time the cicadas are active, until around the start of July, he said.

Laid eggs hatch in six to 10 weeks, with the tiny nymphs falling to the ground, burrowing in, and starting the 17-year cycle again.

Aside from being loud — their sound is a cross between a buzz and a rattle — the cicadas really won't do any major damage. They aren't drawn indoors. They don't bite.

"While they may cause cosmetic damage to trees when laying their eggs, cicadas actually provide a number of benefits to nature," Jim Fredericks, chief entomologist for the National Pest Management Association, said in a statement.

## And you can eat them, too

If you're so inclined, cicadas can even make a low-fat, high-protein snack. Dried cicadas provide a crunch with a nutty, earthy taste, according to those who've tried it. In their softer form, before their exoskeletons harden, others say the cicadas are shrimp-like. A group at the University of Maryland even published a periodical cicada cookbook entitled Cicada Dainties, featuring recipes for dishes such as Cicada Dumplings, Emergence Cookies and El Chirper tacos.

Periodical cicadas have seen some retraction of their habitat.

"They seem to be sensitive to habitat degradation," Cooley said. "I think they are going to be very susceptible to climate change."

The question Cooley gets the most whenever the periodical cicadas' reemerge is how to kill them, he said.

"The answer is, 'Don't,'" he said. "They are one of our natural wonders. Enjoy them while you have them."

# Huntington, TCF to close 198 branches in merger

JC Reindl Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The planned merger of Detroit-based TCF Financial Corp. into Huntington Bancshares of Columbus, Ohio, will result in 198 branch closures, including 97 branches that are inside Meijer stores.

Huntington's chief executive explained the branch closures late last week in an earnings call with Wall Street analysts, saying that a substantial share of the closures would happen in Michigan.

"We've been well served by the nature of the economics around the in-store branches, but there is a changing distribution, frankly, a thinning of distribution as we move forward," Huntington bank Chairman and CEO Stephen Steunour said in the call. "As we've seen over the past year with the pandemic, more and more home goods delivered, including groceries. And so store traffic, while the

volumes are up, the revenues are up, traffic is down and preference for doing banking activities in the in-stores is changing a bit."

A Huntington representative Tuesday would not say how many of the 198 branch closures will happen in Michigan, but said that all 97 in-store Meijer locations in Michigan will be closed.

"These consolidations are not driven by the performance of our Meijer in-store locations and are based solely on market overlap," the spokesperson said.

A TCF representative declined comment and Meijer did not respond to a comment request.

TCF's merger into Huntington was announced in December and is expected to close in the second quarter. The two banks have a combined 532 branches in Michigan, according to data from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

The newly enlarged Huntington would have a

\$22 billion market value, be a top-10 regional bank and rank as the second biggest bank in Michigan by deposits, behind JPMorgan Chase.

The branch closures are separate from Huntington's tentative plan to shed about \$450 million in current TCF and Huntington customer deposits, a move called a "deposit divestiture," to help ease antitrust concerns about the merger.

Overall, the Huntington-TCF bank merger is expected to result in \$490 million in cost savings or "synergies," including an unspecified number of layoffs plus money savings from branch closures.

Huntington intends to keep a significant presence in Detroit after the merger and put its commercial banking headquarters in a new 20-story downtown office tower under construction at 2047 Woodward. The tower is expected to open in mid-2022.

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## Director

Continued from Page 1A

Warthman said. "I was ready for a new professional challenge in my life, to be honest with you."

Demers, after 25 years with the department, took a job as a workplace safety representative with the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Since appointed as Demers' replacement, Warthman has established some goals for the next several years: filling vacancies, getting re-accredited through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, and taking advantage of community engagement opportunities at the Farmington Farmers Market. Long-term goals would include making sure his command staff accomplishes some new firefighting requirements.

Warthman has loved his job despite its rigorous demands.

"Growing up, this is the only thing I've ever wanted to do," he said. "It's been fabulous. It really has. There are never two days that are alike."

Warthman grew up in Novi, and a Novi police officer lived across the street. Warthman, a Novi High graduate, was attending EMU when a buddy convinced him to try paid, on-call work for the Novi Public Safety Department.

When he started working in Farmington, he knew his ties to the city were through his father, who was born and raised in Farmington.

Warthman has enjoyed his job and the community so much, he would like to stay on past his eligible 2022 retirement. Warthman wants to stick around at least until his two eighth-graders graduate from high school.

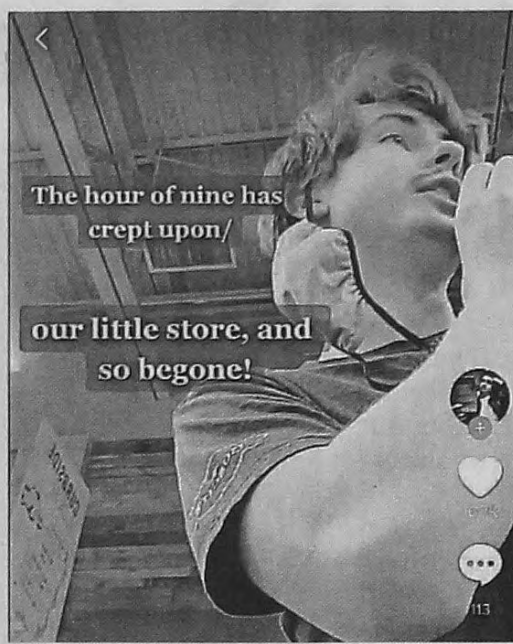
The law enforcement leader saw his salary go from \$100,397 to \$104,893 with his promotion.

He has been teaching criminal justice to Ferris State University students, and his own education includes bachelor's and master's degrees from Eastern Michigan University. He also graduated from EMU's School of Police Staff and Command.

Warthman said anyone calling 911 in Farmington should see first responders within three minutes. They also are likely to get that little bit extra.

For example, if a person calls because they've sprained their ankle while taking their groceries inside, they can expect a public safety officer's quick response and necessary attention, plus the officer hauling in the groceries.

"That's what the community in Farmington has come to expect, and that's the kind of services we provide," Warthman said. "That's not going to change."



Busch's Fresh Food Market employee David Culliton's closing-time announcement videos have gone viral on TikTok. His most recent monologue, a spoof of the ending of Pixar's 2007 film "Ratatouille," has garnered more than 1.7 million views. IMAGES COURTESY OF DAVID CULLITON

## Cashier

Continued from Page 1A

Culliton said he'd like to use his time on Earth to make it a happier place, so he's glad the TikTok videos and closing-time announcements have brought smiles to people's faces. He also has a podcast and said he

wants performing to remain a part of his life.

"I'd like to do a little bit of performing, a little bit of philanthropy and just doing whatever I can do to entertain people and, hopefully, make the world a little bit of a better place," he said.

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

## Dining

Continued from Page 1A

was put in place. The state has eased up on restrictions as case numbers and positive test rates have decreased for the next three weeks: indoor dining rooms are capped at 25% capacity, tables must be six feet apart; and customer names and phone numbers must be collected for contact tracing purposes. A 10 p.m. curfew is also in place for restaurants.

Despite the conditions, restaurateurs are happy to have some semblance of normalcy. That couldn't be more evident than at New Mandarin Garden, a Chinese/Korean restaurant at 31539 W. 13 Mile in Farmington Hills.

Executive Chef Jerry Che said Monday afternoon he already heard from regulars waiting to resume a weekly tradition at the restaurant just west of Orchard Lake Road.

"We have a family that comes in every Monday at 6:30 p.m.," Che said. "It's a standard reservation."

### Adjusting to conditions

Brunch Café owner Edvina Cekorja, who's owned the restaurant for four years, said she's hoping to at least break even now that indoor dining is allowed. Her restaurant south of Six Mile can hold just under two dozen patrons under the current regulations.

Continuing carryout, she said, helps keep her business afloat with the addition of in-person dining. She used some of her savings to keep her doors open for carryout, and had a steady crowd of regular customers during the last few months that helped keep the restaurant serving breakfast and lunch every day.

"I have my regulars and the people who support us a lot, and of course they want to come back to sit down and eat," she said.

The restaurant marked off several booths and set up QR codes at each table for customers to scan and access the menu. Having that option, Cekorja said, has been a blessing: it's saved money by not reprinting menus and reduced touch points in the restaurant between customers and waitstaff.

Bigalora Wood Fired Cucina, 777 W. Ann Arbor Trail in downtown Plymouth, also uses QR codes for menus and takes the technology a step further: for guests who arrive are asked to scan a QR code at the hostess table up front and input their information for contact tracing purposes.

General manager Jon Prusak said it's been easy to do and helps the tracing more organized.

"They scan that, they put their name and phone number in and they're good to go," he said. "That way we don't have to keep paper records."

### Outdoor dining remains popular

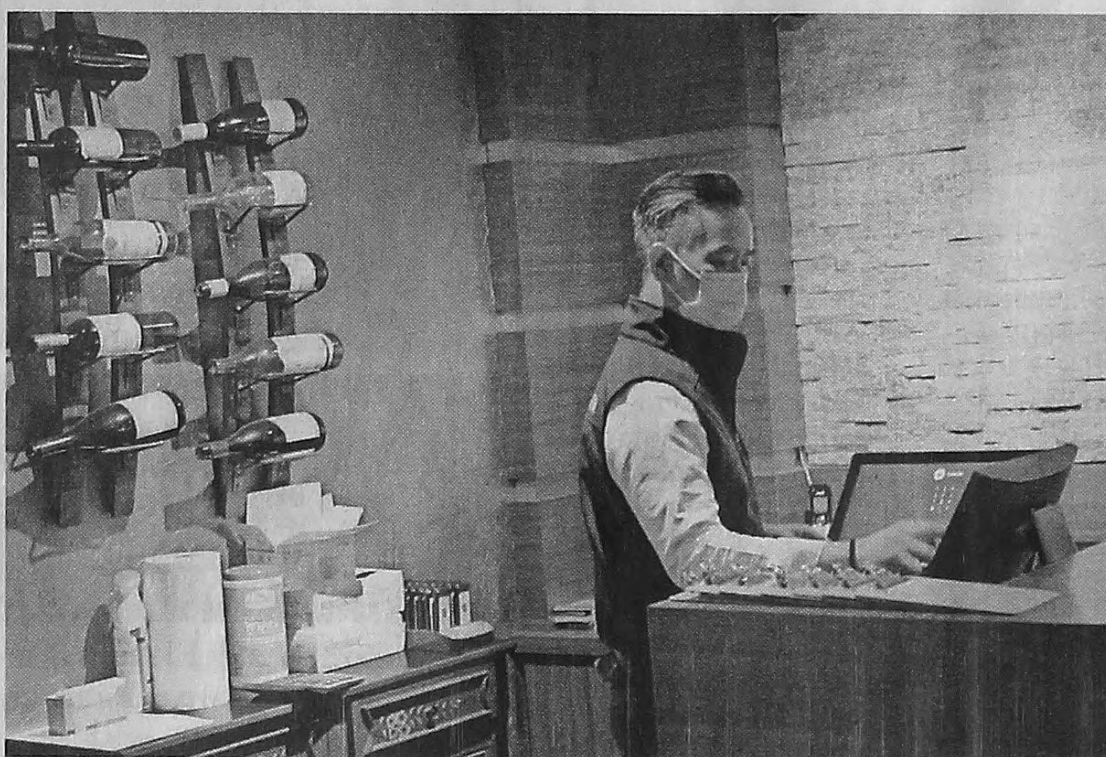
The closure marked the second lengthy shutdown for dining rooms in the past year since COVID-19 was first detected in Michigan. The state shuttered restaurant dining rooms last March and kept them closed until early June.

Dining rooms opened under reduced occupancy throughout the summer and fall with many eateries getting creative to allow for outdoor dining. Some pa-



A few well-spaced out patrons enjoy a lunchtime meal in the dining room at Bigalora restaurant in Plymouth on Feb. 1.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



New Mandarin Garden executive chef Jerry Che gets ready to open the Farmington Hills restaurant for indoor dinner service Monday afternoon.

DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## The state Department of Health And Human Services ordered restaurants closed in mid-November as daily COVID-19 cases skyrocketed. Since then, the seven-day average of case numbers has dropped to less than 1,500.

trons have opted to take advantage of outdoor dining, which is seen as less risky to contract the coronavirus than dining indoors.

Bigalora offers outdoor dining this winter. The restaurant, along with the neighboring Arbor Brewing Company taproom also owned by the Bigalora ownership, offers 10 heated igloos throughout the winter as it reopened its dining rooms Monday.

While the igloos remain popular, Prusak said they looked forward to reopening the dining room for patrons to come inside. The challenges of trying to keep everything clean allowed the two restaurants to rotate its duties among the staff to help out and make sure both spaces are clean and safe for guests.

"It's making us more cohesive as a family," Prusak said.

That interest in the igloos was reflec-

tive for lunchtime at the Italian bar and restaurant: for lunch, Bigalora saw four or five indoor tables occupied and eight igloos occupied. Prusak said while indoor dining is available on a first-come, first-serve basis, the igloos require reservations that can be made two weeks out. So far, he said, they've sold out most days, a testament that outdoor dining is a staying power, even during cold Michigan winters.

Challenges also come with menu items served with reduced capacity dining rooms. That's been the experience at New Mandarin Garden, Che said. He said he opted to wait on ordering more exotic offerings until more customers can dine at the restaurant west of Orchard Lake road.

"It's a little difficult now. Things like the duck and the whitefish, it's hard to get," Che said. "It doesn't last more than two, three days in my coolers, things like that. Unique things I'm not trying to sell until we go 100% (capacity for indoor dining)."

Che said they were fortunate to keep all their staff working during the closure, converting the Chinese/Korean restaurant into a full takeout operation. Carryout will continue at the restaurant, which can fit just less than 30 guests inside under the state's new guidelines.

Prusak said he hopes the closures are finished and restaurants can start moving forward, especially since they've been affected so much as a result of the pandemic. But he said he's happy to finally open the doors and allow for the dining experience to return.

"We've been doing everything we can this whole time to keep everyone safe," he said.

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com) or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.



# Fitness buffs 'relieved' indoor group exercise is back

Ed Wright [hometownlife.com](http://hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

There is no vaccination yet for the "Pandemic Blues," but a temporary cure was shaking out in vivid colors in a second-floor exercise studio at Life Time Canton last week.

Led by master Zumba instructor and Canton resident Shayam Thakker — and fueled by rhythmic Bollywood-themed music and colorful, flashing lights — close to 25 people sweated out their worries Jan. 27, just a few days after group exercise workouts were allowed to continue after the lifting of a three-month ban by the Michigan Health and Human Services Department.

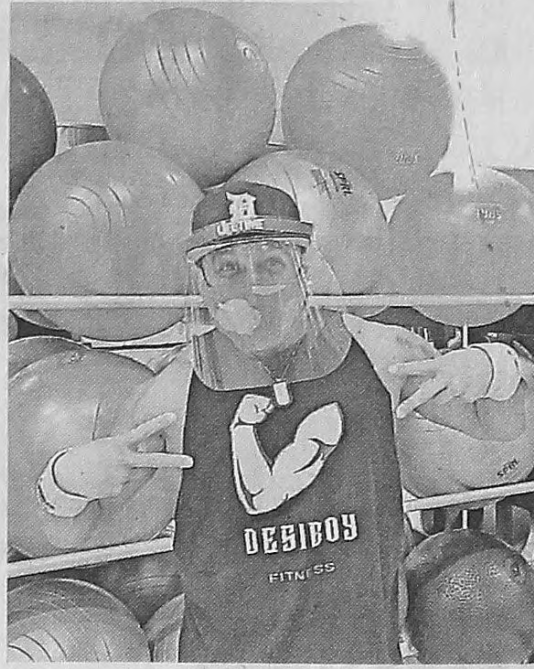
Thakker, the owner of Desiboy Fitness, offered free outdoor group workouts in metro Detroit parking lots during the summer when the spread of the coronavirus led state health officials to pull the plug on indoor group workouts to help contain the spread of COVID-19.

Group fitness was again allowed later in summer 2020 until a second ban, was instituted in November during a surge in COVID-19 cases across the state.

For Melissa Rakovitis, the return of group-fitness classes arrived just in time.

"Oh my gosh, I am so relieved," Rakovitis said, moments before Thakker's class commenced. "Nothing compares to being here, exercising with other people. Working out at home is nice, but the energy Shayam brings to the class is amazing."

Thakker said group exercise classes provide therapy for participants' minds and bodies.



**Rumba class instructor Shayam Thakker of Canton said the return of group exercise programs is good for people's mental and physical health as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.**

ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"It's a proven scientific fact that exercise boosts your immune system, there's no doubt about it," said Thakker, whose day job is as a science teacher for the Redford Union School District. "Exercise helps you sleep better. Exercise is a stress reducer."

"When your immune system is stronger, it can better fight off infections, like COVID."

Thakker shared a series of daunting statistics that outlined how the pandemic — and the closure of exercise centers — has cut into the time people ded-

icate to fitness.

"I've seen studies that show physical activity has been decreased by 32% since the pandemic started," Thakker said. "Add to that, 58% of people said their mental health is worse than it was before COVID. Organized group classes like this motivate people to get up and move."

Group classes at Lifetime — Thakker hosts classes at sites in Canton, Novi and Commerce Township — follow stringent COVID-19 protocols. In the studio Thakker's class took place Jan. 27, small, strategically-placed numbers were affixed to the hardwood floor, representing spaces where participants should remain during the hour-long session.

Maximum attendance levels for indoor classes were reduced from 75 to 26, Thakker added.

Mask-wearing is also mandatory for the duration of the often-intense workouts.

"At first, wearing a mask while working out was challenging," said Allison Schramm, who has been working out at Lifetime Canton since 2005. "When Lifetime was closed, I wore one on my elliptical at home so I could get used to wearing a mask while I was working out. Once you get used to it, it's not too bad."

"If you tell yourself you can do it, you can do it."

"I've tried different styles of masks for exercising, including the cloth ones," Rakovitis added. "Personally, I've found that the disposable ones are the best. They make it easier to breathe."

Thakker encourages class participants to take a break if they're strug-

gling due to mask-wearing during a class.

"I tell them to listen to their body," he said. "It's the same for me. I have asthma. Every now and then I'll have someone else come up on stage and take over for me for a minute while I walk around the room to motivate people."

Thakker said all Lifetime employees were required to read a 500-page booklet that explained the new pandemic protocols.

"Whenever someone walks through the door, an employee takes their temperature," he said. "Team members like myself go through additional protocols every day. We are required to fill out a questionnaire every day."

"I understand that there will always be people who are worried about coming to a place like this during the pandemic, but I'd like to reassure them that, with all the protocols we are following, it could not be safer."

When asked how he maintains his positivity and energy during a time when most people's spirits are consistently subdued, Thakker smiled.

"This helps me," he said, gesturing toward the exercise studio, slowly filling up with fitness buffs. "Exercise is an adrenaline rush. It makes me happy."

"I'm a teacher, teaching with Zoom. I can't be with my students, which stinks. At the end of the day, I'm tired, but instead of just going home and sitting down, I come here. Exercise releases your positive and negative energy. It makes you feel better."

Contact reporter Ed Wright at [edwright@hometownlife.com](mailto:edwright@hometownlife.com) or 517-375-1113.

## Interact Club raises money to send relief packages worldwide

Rotary Club is a community service-oriented club that has been a part of Livonia since 1945. In the past, it has run the annual blood drive at Churchill and the city-wide Touch-a-Truck event.

This year, Churchill's Rotary Club decided to raise \$5,000 for ShelterBox, a global organization that has partnered with Rotary International. It focuses on creating relief packages for places hit by disaster, including Malaysia, Fiji and Texas.

With the support of the community, anything is possible. Visit the GoFundMe page at [gf.me/u/y8vw5s](https://gf.me/u/y8vw5s) to help them reach their goal by spreading the word and donating.

"Every year, Churchill's Rotary Club raises funds for ShelterBox. This year, we decided to amp it up and set an even higher goal for ourselves," Harish Jai-

sankar, one of the club's co-presidents, said. "Due to COVID-19, we have chosen to use GoFundMe as our fundraising hub in an effort to support this great organization while remaining safe and physically distant."

The Churchill High School Rotary Interact Club is headed by co-presidents Jaisankar and Maddy Bezzina. So far, they have collected more than 180 canned food items for the Livonia Goodfellows and rang bells for the Salvation Army at Joe's Produce. Despite being so well established, Rotary has faced quarantine-related hurdles as well.

"The biggest challenge over quarantine has been communicating with people," Bezzina said. "It is very difficult to get in touch with the members that do not know about meetings since we do not see them and cannot remind them."



**Livonia Churchill Rotary Club members are raising money for ShelterBox.**  
COURTESY OF THE CHURCHILL ROTARY CLUB

## Obituaries

### Eva Barany

FARMINGTON HILLS  
- May 20, 1927 -  
January 28, 2021

HEENEY-SUNDQUIST

*Eternal Rest be Granted*

### Lillian May

Lillian May, born Lillian Ruth McLean, was a farm-girl from Harrow, Ontario, Canada turned big-city working girl in Windsor and as far west as British Columbia; then a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a friend to so many. Lillian passed away on Sunday, January 24, 2021 at the beautiful age of 92.

Lillian was born to Mary Elisabeth Sweet McLean McKenzie and Vern Fenton McLean on August 16, 1928. On November 3, 1951, she married Walter Llewelyn May. Together, they had five children, (Barbara Childress [Charles], Karen May Anastasiow, Karl May [died at birth], James May [Laurie], and W. J. Scott May [Joan]), 10 grandchildren (Zachary Dubs [Nikki], Demetrios Anastasiow, Brandon Childress [Brittany], Amanda Salefske [Sean], Kelsey and Kaitlin May, Justan May [Brooke], and Jordan, Austan, and Makayla May), and six great-grandchildren (Dradyn Ray, Beau Childress, Emily May, Lillian [her namesake] and Daphne Dubs, and Scarlett Salefske).

Lillian grew up in a cement-brick home; a home that never had electricity or running water only wood stoves. Along with her six siblings, she shared in the farming-type chores inherent with the 1930's Depression-era farming. After graduating from Harrow High School in 1945, Lillian moved to Windsor to attend and later graduated business school at W.D. Lowe. She then went on to work for the Union Gas Company. In 1950, she followed Norman, her brother, to British Columbia where she stayed and worked for the Canadian Pacific Airlines on Sea Island. Lillian returned home later that year and worked at Dominion Office Supply. She boarded with Lou and Irene Brown in Windsor where she met Irene's nephew, Walter, and the rest is history!

Walter and Lillian married and moved to Detroit, MI. Lillian obtained her



green card to live and work in the U.S. She worked for Link Belt Company until she became pregnant with her first daughter. As told in her many stories, "you couldn't work after you got pregnant in those days (1954)." In October 1955, the family of three moved to South Redford into a brand-new home where they lived until the early '70s. They owned, operated, and sold the Pepper Tree restaurant in Novi and the Mayflower Book and Card Shoppe in Livonia before moving to Hudson where they bought another restaurant, May's Country House. After some time, they returned to South Redford for a few years prior to Walter's job taking them and their two boys to Findlay, OH for 12 years. Jim and Scott are still Ohioans today.

Lillian and Walter returned to Michigan living in Monroe and Livonia. They traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and Canada. Lillian's favorite locale was the Rocky Mountains in Colorado as well as a once-in-a-life-time trip to England and Switzerland. Together, they were a force and were generous to a fault with their time and expertise in helping their children and families.

Her beloved Walter passed in March 2013 and was missed terribly over these last years. Lillian kept active with her church, tending to her garden, bible study, book club, bowling, cards, and bingo as well as driving her beautiful, white Buick Park Avenue until she was 88.

Lillian had an unbelievable memory for names, dates and places and loved recounting stories of her life and family; and what an incredible life she lived. Lillian Ruth McLean May, a proud Canadian citizen until her death, something she insisted be put on their combined headstone, will be missed, but forever loved by so many. A memorial service will be held on a future date at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Livonia. Memorial donations may be made to the church.

The end of an era, Lillian is preceded in death by her entire family — a generation that spanned 126 years from their mother, Mary Elisabeth Sweet McKenzie, born in 1895 to Lillian's death in 2021.



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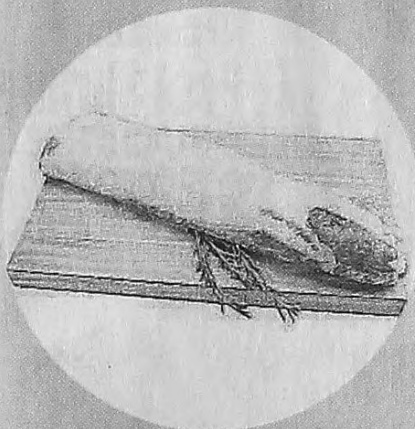
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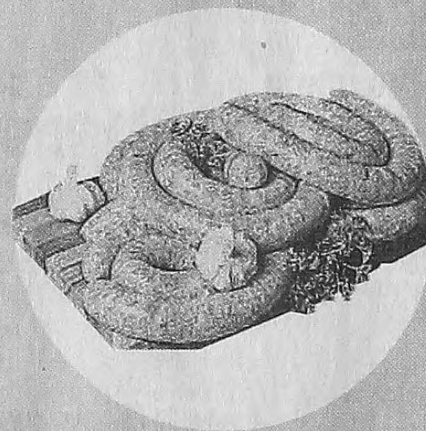
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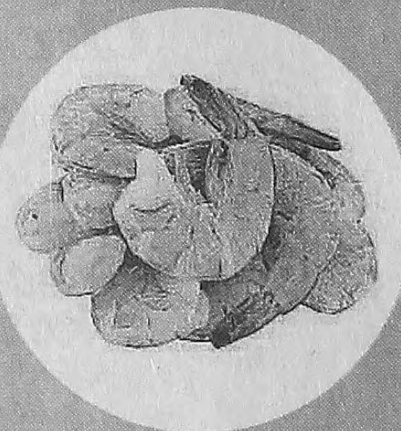


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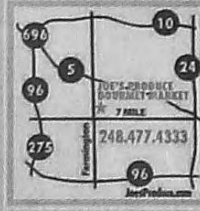
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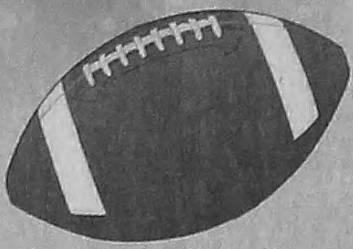
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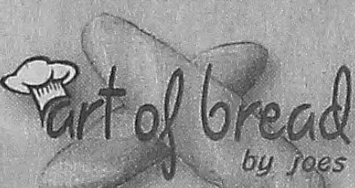
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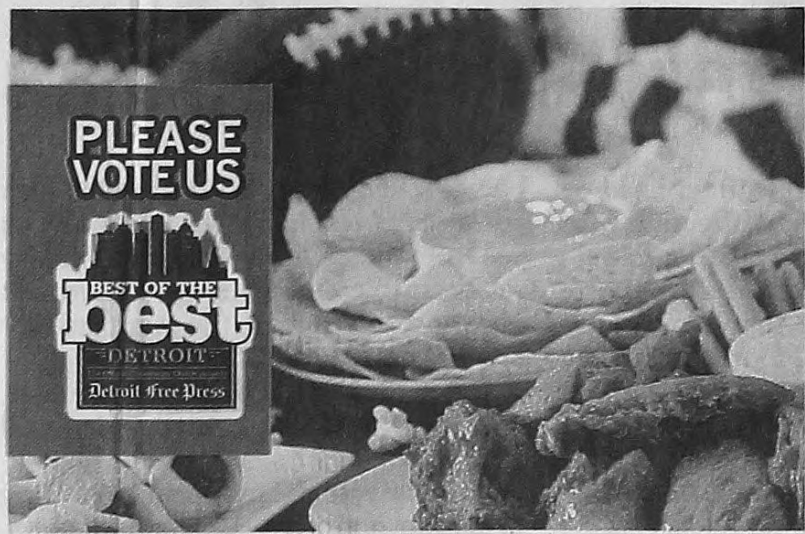
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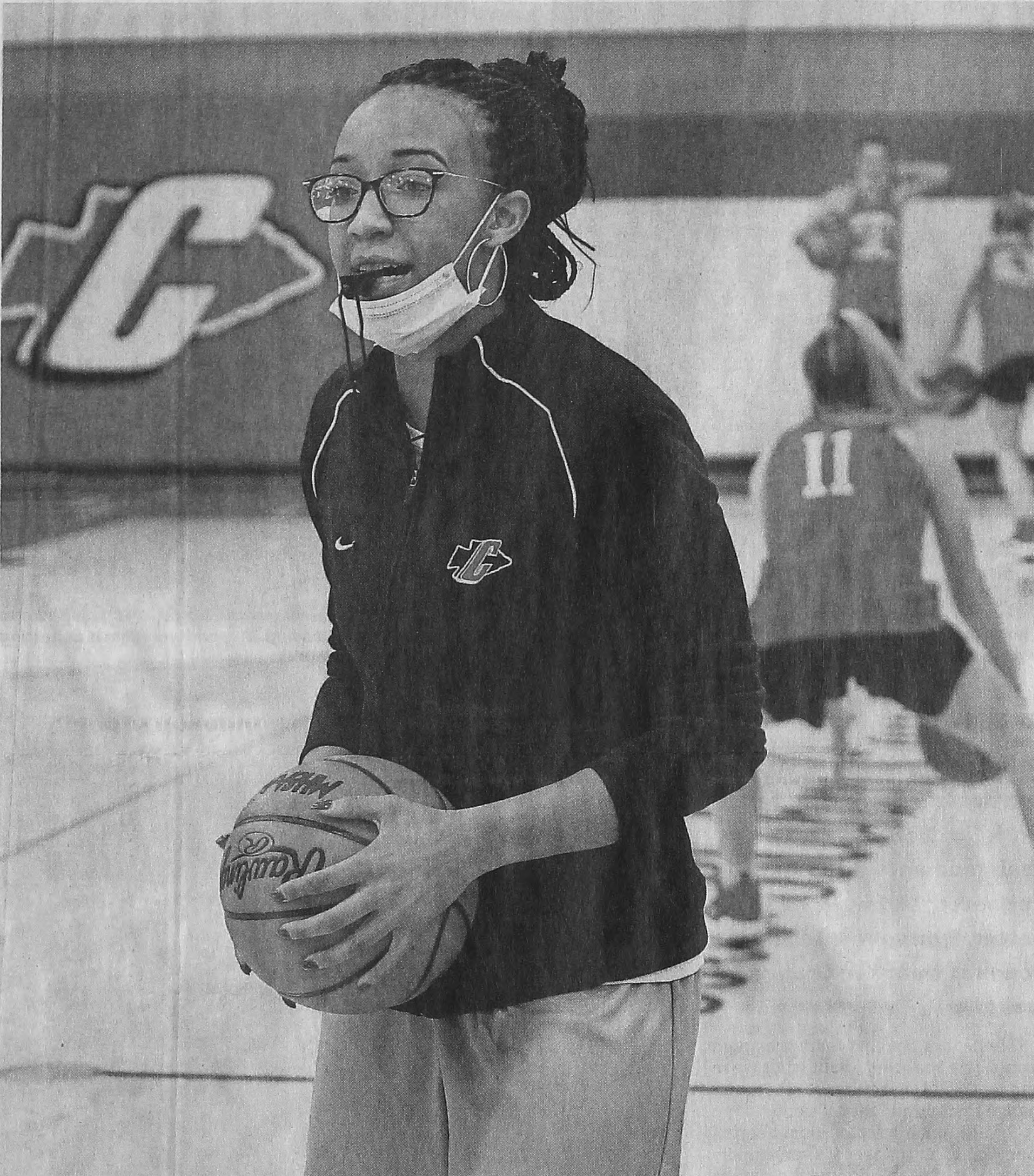


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# SPORTS

## GIRLS BASKETBALL



Canton girls basketball coach Kayla Bridges instructs her team during practice Jan. 29. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

# New-look Canton team preps for unusual season

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Kayla Bridges has an idea of what she wants Canton to look like.

She was a four-year varsity player for the Chiefs girls basketball team from 2007-11, making two final-four appearances under then head coach Brian Samulski her junior and senior seasons while losing only nine games in those final two seasons combined.

Spending the last six seasons in the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park working as the junior varsity coach at Salem in 2015 before taking an assistant coach job with Plymouth in 2016, Bridges watched Canton crumble: going from a 17-win team in 2015-16 to winning only two of its past 42 games.

Bridges took the Canton girls basketball head coaching job, after six seasons under Robert Heitmeyer, with the goal of re-instilling those lessons and stan-

dards that were expected from players when she was a student.

"I know how much work it takes to get to those points and the little steps, the little goals you have to set for yourself and your team in order to get to that finish line," Bridges said.

Bridges took her first head coaching job in August, anticipating a normal season after a summer filled with

See CANTON, Page 2B

## High school athletes rally in Lansing to 'let us play'

Brian Calloway Lansing State Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

LANSING - Ethan Dunn should be gearing for the stretch run of his junior season on the court for the East Lansing basketball team.

Charlotte freshman Lyndi Miller and Fowlerville senior Brendan Young should be doing the same right now.

Cole Riedel would normally be getting ready for the wrestling postseason with his St. Johns teammates.

All instead are waiting for current COVID-19 restrictions to be lifted to allow for their seasons to actually get started.

They were among hundreds gathered from all across Michigan at the Capitol building Saturday afternoon as part of the latest "Let them play" rally fighting for all winter high school sports to get going.

"It's very important to me," Dunn said. "It's very painful for myself and everyone else, I'm sure - especially the seniors to have their season taken away like this and not have the opportunity. Some use it as a coping mechanism, others want to play at the collegiate level and others might not get a chance again to play this sport. It's very important to me to come out here and show support."


Basketball and wrestling join hockey and competitive cheer as the contact winter sports not being allowed under the latest COVID-19 orders that were released by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on Jan. 22. Those sports are currently stuck in a non-contact state until Feb. 21, which has added to the frustration to those in attendance.

"It's been hard to practice and not have anything to work for," Miller said. "Everyone is losing their momentum to want to get better and want to do better. Everyone is losing hope for things to change."

Saturday's rally was part of an intensified effort over the last week for high school sports to be played. Since the MDHHS announcement, the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan, Michigan Wrestling Association and Michigan High School Hockey Coaches Association have written letters to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and state officials pushing for their sports to get back in action.

The Senate took action Thursday, passing a resolution urging Whitmer

See RALLY, Page 2B



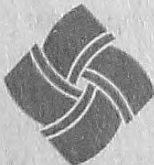
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# MHSAA hopeful for return of winter contact sports

Colin Gay [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Two weeks into non-contact practices for wrestling, basketball, hockey and cheer teams throughout the state, Michigan High School Athletic Association Executive Director Mark Uyl said he thinks winter sports teams should immediately be able to return to contact practices and competitions.

"We've got the data from the pilot program, we've got the data from the other states," Uyl said in a press conference Friday. "Now we have the actual data from our winter sports over the past 14 days, and we firmly believe that now is the time to take the next step to allow those four winter sports, to allow

those contact practices to begin immediately and for winter competition to also begin immediately."

On Jan. 22, the state announced non-professional contact sports would remain shut down until Feb. 21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Uyl said working with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Elizabeth Hertel, who took over the position after former director Robert Gordon resigned Jan. 22, has been "a very clear change," catching her up to speed on data accumulated by the MHSAA.

While MDHHS has not provided any specifics as to where the numbers have to be for a return for winter contact sports, Uyl said the fact that Hertel and

her team are communicating ahead of time is a step in the right direction.

"The previous four days of communication this week with the health department has been better than it probably has been over the past four months," he said. "We're hoping for some new information and answers from the decision makers very soon. Certainly, the entire community's work is hopefully going to bear fruit very soon."

Since the extension, the MHSAA community has been extremely vocal about its desire for contact sports' return to action.

Uyl said he has been encouraged by the public's response to the extension.

"When it's all said and done, our MHSAA community numbers about

half-a-million people," Uyl said. "It's been very reinvigorating this week to see so many within that community really speak out, to really ask direct question of 'What are the numbers that are preventing us from playing?'"

Since the start of the postponement, Uyl has been frustrated. He said MHSAA member schools have had accountability and have been following epidemic protocols. However, to him, teams not regulated by the MHSAA have been like the "Wild West," not following protocols to a tee and leaving the state for competition.

"We have been naïve to think folks are going to stay in their basement and they are not going to seek that activity," Uyl said.

## Rally

Continued from Page 1B

and the MDHHS to allow for all winter sports to be played.

And athletes from across the state have pleaded their cases on social media with the #LetUsPlay and #LetThemPlay tags in the last week.

"Sports are a lot bigger than just playing," Young said. "It's what we all grew up playing and we have all these friendships that we've built through sports and especially being my senior year, I want one last chance to play with my friends and the guys I've been growing up with my whole life. I'm sure all these kids feel the same way."

The rally Saturday was the third at the Capitol building fighting for high school sports and included former Detroit Red Wings player Darren McCarty speaking and ex-NFL standout Andre Rison calling in to lend their support to the movement.

"I played basketball, football, I ran track," Rison said in his message via phone to the crowd. "I know how much sports means to our communities across the state of Michigan, and I know how much it means in a household, especially during these times. Sports can change a lot of things for the better."

The first rally took place in late August when football, soccer, girls swimming and volleyball were among the sports still sidelined in a majority of the state. Those seasons were eventually cleared to play. Football, girls swimming and volleyball finished their seasons this month after a two-month COVID-19 related pause.

The second rally took place in December - nearly a month into a pause in activity ordered by MDHHS that put all sports activity on halt. A week following that rally, the MDHHS announced the fall sports tournaments in football, volleyball and swimming could resume under a pilot rapid testing program.

Earlier this month, the MDHHS provided clearance for the non-contact winter sports - boys and girls bowling, boys swimming and gymnastics - to start their seasons.

People in attendance Saturday hope the latest rally further gets their message across and action is taken to allow all athletes to play.



A large group participates in the "Let Them Play" rally on Saturday at the Capitol in Lansing. The rally was aimed at getting high school athletes back in action for winter sports. PHOTOS BY NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

**"It's been hard to practice and not have anything to work for. Everyone is losing their momentum to want to get better and want to do better. Everyone is losing hope for things to change."**

Lyndi Miller

"I hope they see that there is enough people here that care about what we're here to do and that they see (that) and change their mind," Riedel said.

"Sports touch a lot of kids' hearts," Young said. "You can see it's very important to a lot of people around the state of Michigan and I just hope they rethink the decision."



From left, basketball players Tori Briggs of Fowler, Lyndi Miller of Charlotte, Grace Pribble of Grand Ledge and Megan Zeitz of Dansville listen to speakers.

## Canton

Continued from Page 1B

restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But as the calendar turned from 2020 to 2021, Canton is still in the same predicament as it was when she first started: working on skill development in non-contact settings, with the state barring any contact practices or competition until at least Feb. 21.

As a new coach, Bridges said, the team needs time to adapt to what she is bringing in, whether it's new offensive game plans or practice structures. They need time to understand and learn these things before buying into the system, something really Canton has not had the luxury of doing.

"The girls have some doubts about the certainty of the season and what it's going to look like going forward," Bridges said. "You don't know if the risk is going to pay off in the long run if we don't end up having a season."

"It's really up to us to kind of take advantage of the time we're given and be grateful we even have that."

But Bridges does have the luxury of having experience on her side.

Of the team's six seniors heading into the 2021 season, three - Kate Burns, Emerson Kilgore and Noel Blain - have

been with the varsity team for the past three seasons.

Blain, who has been a four-year varsity player for the Chiefs and has signed to play college soccer at the University of Dayton next fall, knows that the varsity style of basketball is not something that can be mastered in practices, especially in non-contact settings.

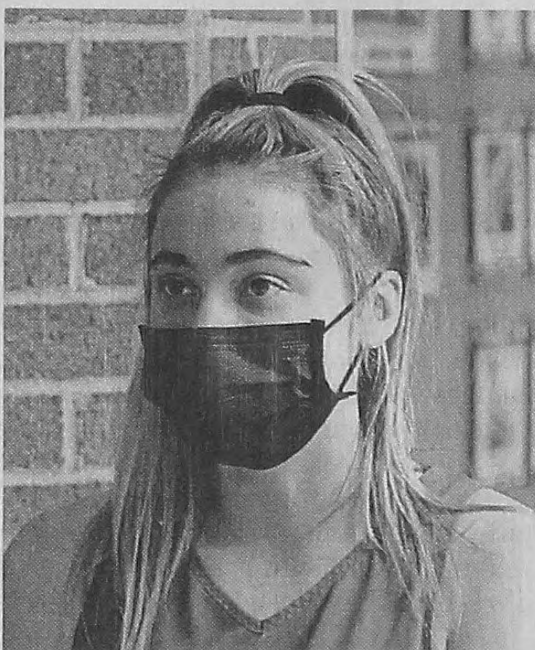
"It's super fast," she said. "The girls are all up on you all the time, like you just have to be ready. There's no free shots or easy makes, scores, anything like that."

Since Bridges arrived, Canton's practices have been focused on speed: practicing sprinting into shots, getting players basketball conditioned, something that, with the lack of time scrimmaging and actually playing the game itself, many teams are turning toward.

"You can't really scrimmage, practicing things as hard on defense," Burns said. "So if we are the faster team, coming off of non-contact practice more in shape, it could be huge in a game."

Along with the process of just getting in shape, Bridges has players model different offensive and defensive sets in her playbook, walking through possibilities of what players can do in a given play and how teammates can respond to their decisions.

With this, Bridges hopes that Canton will have an idea of what to do when a specific situation comes in game action.



Blain



Kilgore

"I think there is going to be some sort of learning curve, just a growth period once we do return to full contact and we are able to play some games," Bridges said. "I think it's one of those things where every team has to deal with it right now, so we can't pull the 'Woe is me.'"

To Kilgore, who will play soccer at Madonna starting next season, Bridges has a different approach than the program's previous coach had.

Even though the practice style may be different, Bridges is the example of

what a successful player can be coming out of Canton: having played four years at Wayne State while earning a bachelor's degree in exercise science and a master's degree in public health.

"I think she's a very big role model for all the girls who are hoping to play college basketball, knowing you can come out of the Canton basketball program and still make it to the college level if you try hard," Kilgore said.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at [cgay@hometownlife.com](mailto:cgay@hometownlife.com) or 248-330-6710. Twitter: @ColinGay17.



# DeWitt's Zimmerman named Free Press Coach of the Year

Mick McCabe Special to Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

As each football season approaches, Rob Zimmerman is always optimistic. But this past August he was downright giddy when speaking about expectations for this DeWitt team.

"They had an unbelievable offseason even though it couldn't be through us," he said. "The leadership on this team — I've never seen anything like it. They were working like crazy on their own at different kids' houses in their weight rooms. And the communication with our captains, I just knew that we had a great shot to be really, really good. They were so driven.

"Our team in 2013 that lost in the finals, their mindset was: 'We are playing in the state finals.' These guys were saying: 'We're going to win it.'"

They did win it — the Division 3 state championship, the first in school history, earning Zimmerman, 54, the Free Press All-State Coach of the Year award.

Hired just six weeks before the 1999 season began, Zimmerman's first season on the job produced a 4-5 record.

DeWitt has had 21 consecutive winning seasons since then and it culminated this season with the state title.

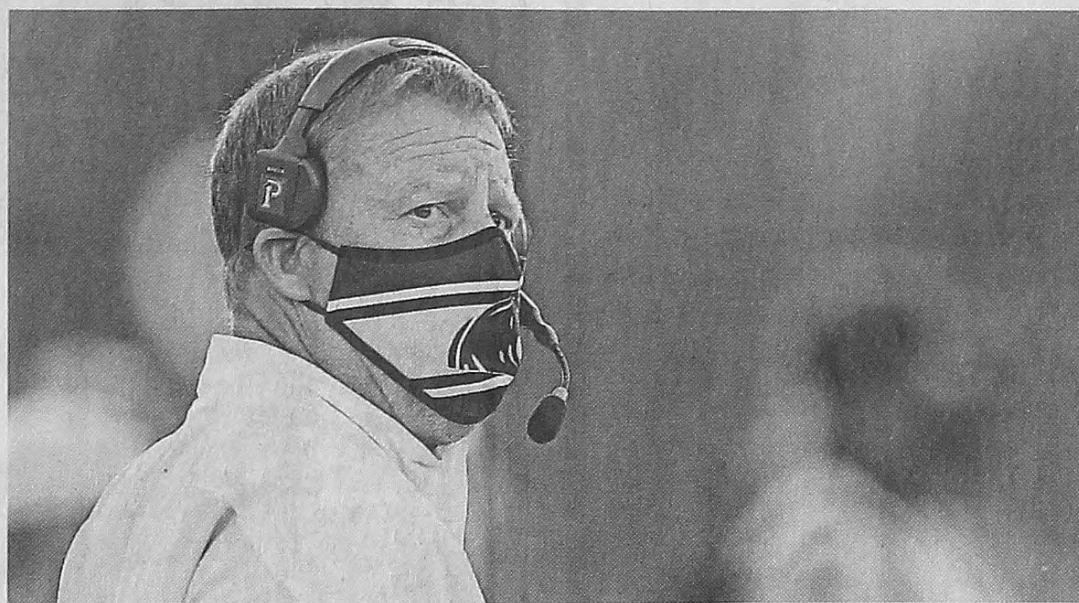
"Obviously they had had a great deal of success prior to me getting here," Zimmerman said. "So the kids still expected to win. I just came in and we tried to work as hard as we could."

There are several reasons for Zimmerman's success and No. 1 on the list is pure determination and hard work.

"I was driven to be a successful coach," he said. "I think my work ethic is probably the thing that has got me to where I'm at."

Zimmerman has a career record 229-65 overall and he is 222-45 at DeWitt, including 18 conference championships with 15 district and 13 regional titles. The Panthers have been to 12 semifinal games and have five appearances in the state finals.

Perhaps the most amazing aspect to Zimmerman's career at DeWitt is he is coaching in a closed district. Every play-



DeWitt coach Rob Zimmerman coaches his Panthers against Grand Ledge.  
MATTHEW DAE SMITH/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

er on the DeWitt team lives in DeWitt.

In this day and age of schools of choice where many of the most successful programs have players covering five or six zip codes, that is not the case at DeWitt.

"To me, that's the that's greatest accomplishment for us for what we've done without having school of choice kids," Zimmerman said. "We have very few move-ins because DeWitt, socio-economically, it's expensive enough that it makes it more difficult. You can't go run and rent an apartment in here."

Zimmerman has been able to turn that into a positive. There is a unique kind of pride the DeWitt players have in their program. As youth league players, they idolized the varsity players. It is important for them to eventually play for DeWitt's varsity.

That feeling is evident in the coaching staff that continually features former players as assistant coaches.

"There's a ton of guys across the state that played for us that have a huge amount of pride in the program," Zimmerman said. "The ones that go into education or even have jobs around here, so many have wanted to come back and I'm just so proud of that. They understand the expectations.

They went through it and they want it to continue."

The biggest expectations are the ones Zimmerman places upon himself. He attends clinics and watches film of a variety of teams.

"I took trips all over to go see different college programs that I had an interest in learning what they were doing offensively," he said. "I try to work harder every year, if it's possible, to get better."

It all culminated this season, a season unlike any other in the history of high school football in Michigan. There were starts and stops on this roller coaster season, attempting to play games in the midst of a pandemic.

Following the championship game, Zimmerman looked relieved more than anything. He finally had his state title and the postgame celebration was something he will never forget.

"There were two things for me," he said. "Seeing the joy in the kids' faces, knowing how hard they had worked. And for me individually, my dad (Bob) never missed a game I've coached. He doesn't move around very well anymore, but we were able to get him and the family down on the field for afterward."

## Milford ski teams finish regular season undefeated

In the final head-to-head contest of the season, the Milford ski team was able to capture a perfect season for both its boys and girls teams.

Facing the Walled Lake Central girls team, Milford, beat the Vikings, 24-59, while also earning a 26-52 win against Walled Lake Northern. Maddie Melody helped the Mavericks with a pair of second-place finishes, while Riley Watts finished fifth in each meet. Ellie DeYong finished eighth and ninth, respectively.

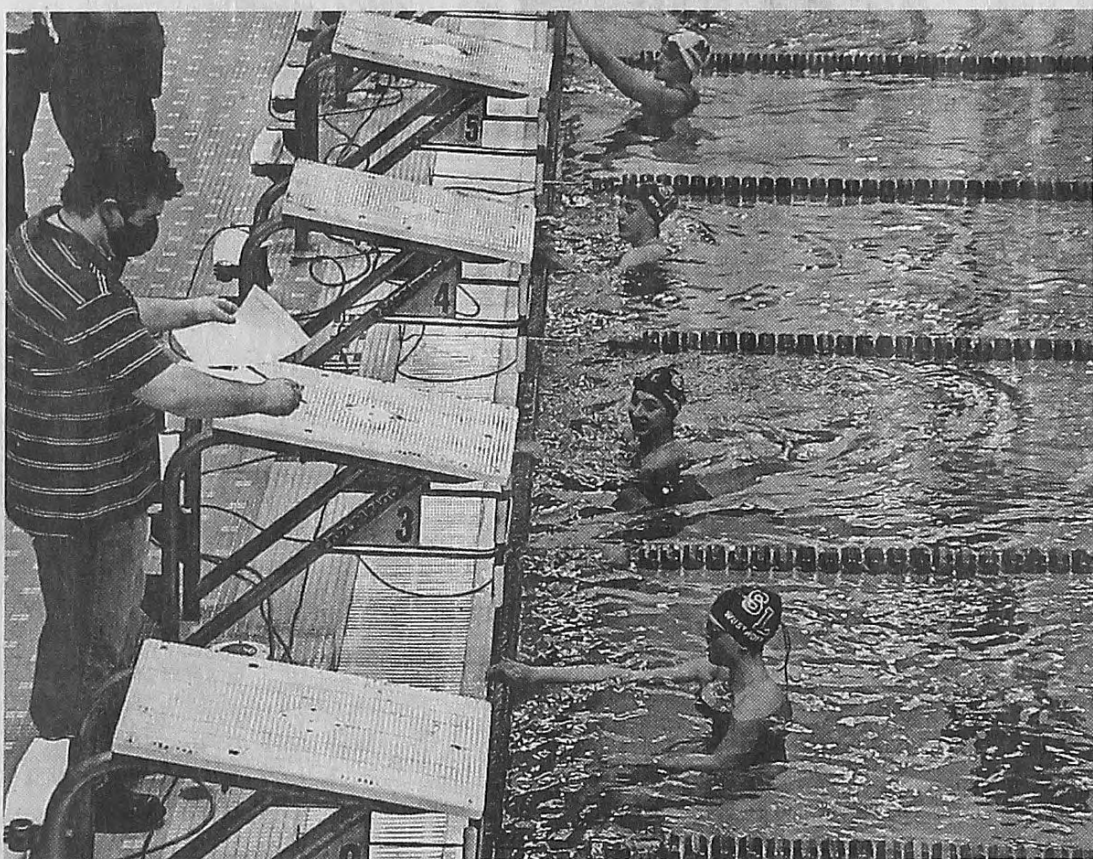
"It is great to see the young ladies go after a trophy, that makes you 'Queen of the Mountain,'" head coach Marty Neighbors said. "They know what they have to do in divisionals and it will be up to each one, doing their part to make that happen."

Earning 27-57 and 32-48 wins against Walled Lake Central and Walled Lake Northern, respectively, the Milford boys ski team goes into the divisional round undefeated as well, helped by a sixth and fourth-place performance by Carson Chamberlain, a 10th and third-place performance by Max Wilkerson and an eighth and 17th-place performance by Peyton Chamberlain.

Along with the help of key finishes by Joe Antrim, Jack Hannert, Ben Youngblood and Spencer Blaz, Milford placed all seven of its skiers in the top-24 in the giant slalom.

"They to are also heading into divisionals, knowing full well, the task in front of them," Neighbors said. "Consistent finishing, with a competitive touch are required to maintain their record and shoot for the 'King of the Mountain' honors."

Send game results and stats to [Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com](mailto:Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com).



Sierra Newton and Sabrina Oliveira each made Division 2 state cuts for the South Lyon swim team. COURTESY OF CARRIE HANSHAW

## South Lyon swim and dive finishes season at Division 2 state meet

The 2020 Michigan high school girls swim and dive season was long and full of uncertainty, but swimmers from across the state were able to find closure at the Michigan High School Athletic Association state meet.

For South Lyon, the season saw the rise of three seniors to the state team who had never made it to this level in their high school career. The team also accomplished its goal of being repeat Lakes Valley Conference champions for the fourth-straight year — something no other South Lyon team has done in recent history.

At the Division 2 state meet at Northview High School, South Lyon divers, Molly Younkin and McKenzie Valencia finished 12th and 14th overall in the state, competing with teammates Reese Linton and Ellie Peitz. Each of these divers will return to the team next season.

In the swimming competition, seniors Meghan Bandy, Melanie Hesterman

and Emily Sherry all made their first appearances at the state meet, helping the Lions to a 15th-place finish.

Hesterman, Bandy, Emma Cusumano and Sierra Newton finished in 10th place in the 200-Free relay with a 1:41.12, while Bandy, Cusumano, Sabrina Oliveira and Sierra Newton finished in 12th place with a 3:43.04.

Newton, a sophomore, earned All-State honors in two events, finishing eighth in the 100-Free and tied for sixth in the 50-Free. Oliveira placed 18th in the 100-back, while Cusumano placed 17th in the 200 IM.

"The swimmers and divers from all schools did an amazing job at this competition," South Lyon head coach Bob Crosby said. "Although the results may not have been what everyone had hoped to achieve, it was great to see everyone compete and get some closure to an unusual season."

## South Lyon pompom team wins Mid-American title

The South Lyon pompom team won the 2020 Mid-American Large High Kick championship with its performance "Fire and Ice" Nov. 7 at South Lyon East.

In their first time competing in the same competition, the South Lyon junior varsity team came in third place, dressed as bees dancing to hip hop music.

"These girls have worked so hard to get here," head coach Emily Thomas said. "Showing up every practice having to wear their mask through three-

hour practices was not easy, but they never complained and were just so happy to get to perform at football games and prepare for the competition"

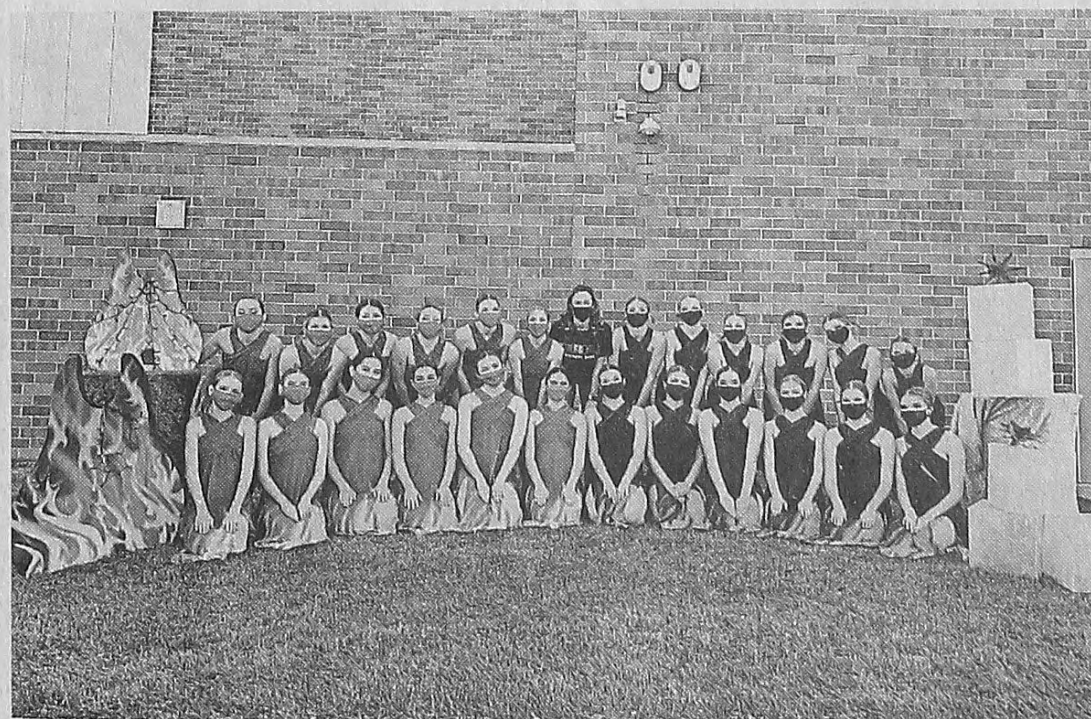
Competing during the COVID-19 pandemic, each coach, spectator and team walked in one at a time to watch their respective team at South Lyon East, with masks required.

Next, both teams are preparing for the state competition in March.

Send game results and stats to [Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com](mailto:Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com).



The South Lyon junior varsity pompom team came in third place at the 2020 Mid-American Large High Kick Championships.



The South Lyon varsity pompom team finished as 2020 Mid-American Large High Kick champions. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHELLEY THOMAS



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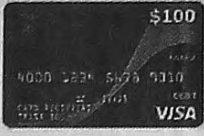
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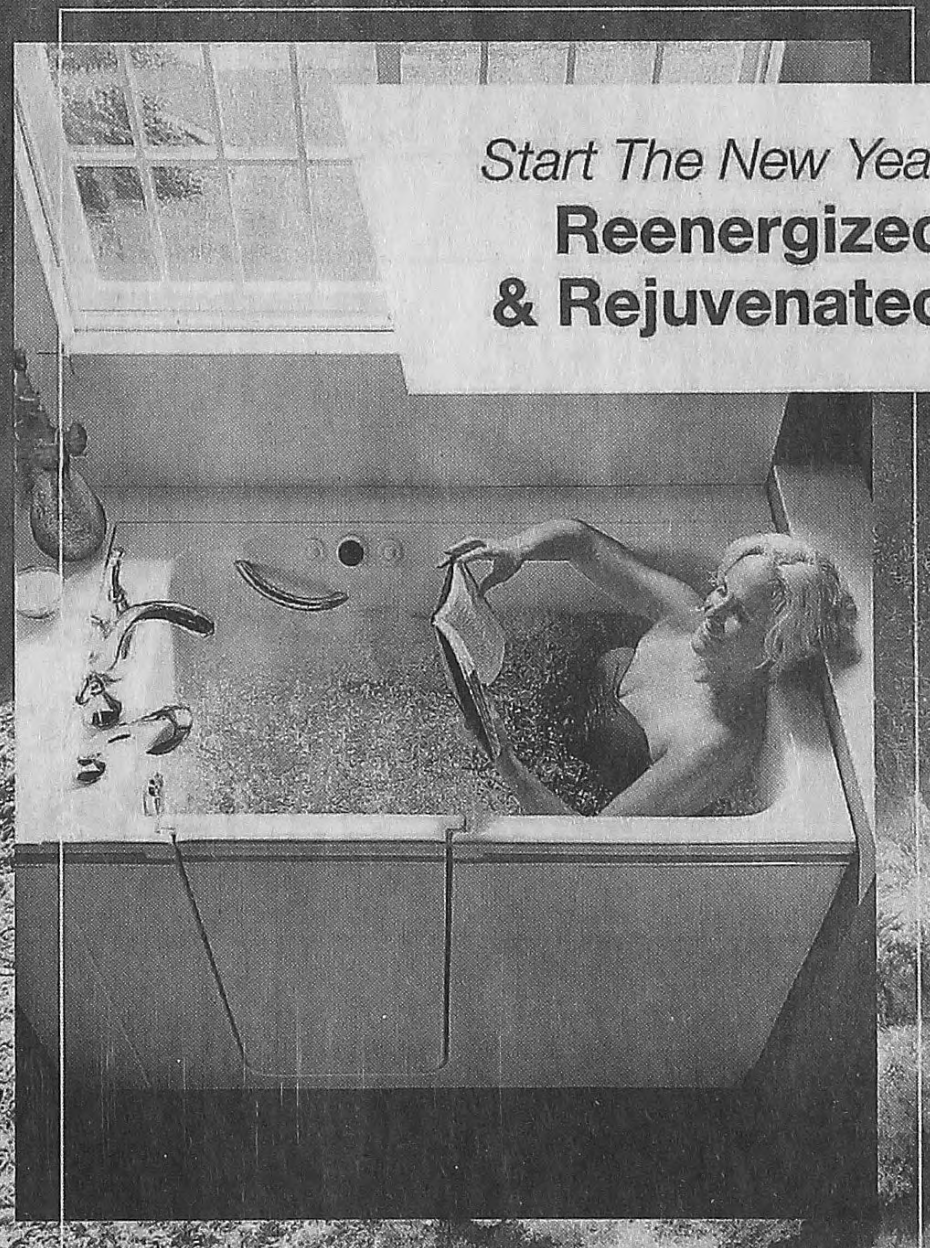
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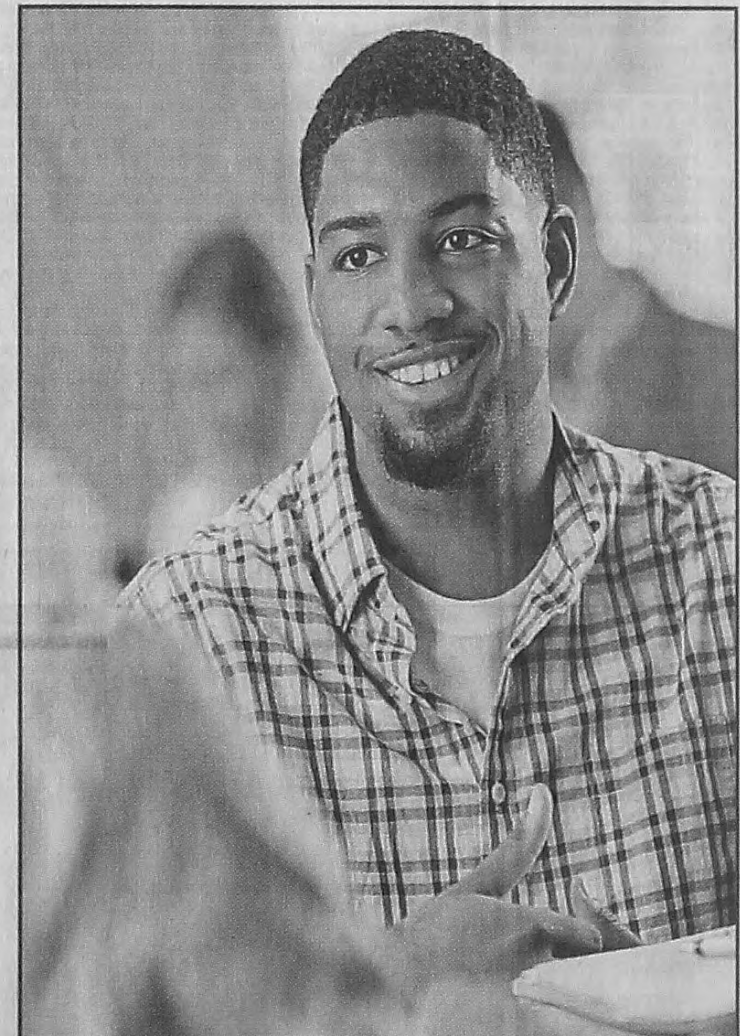


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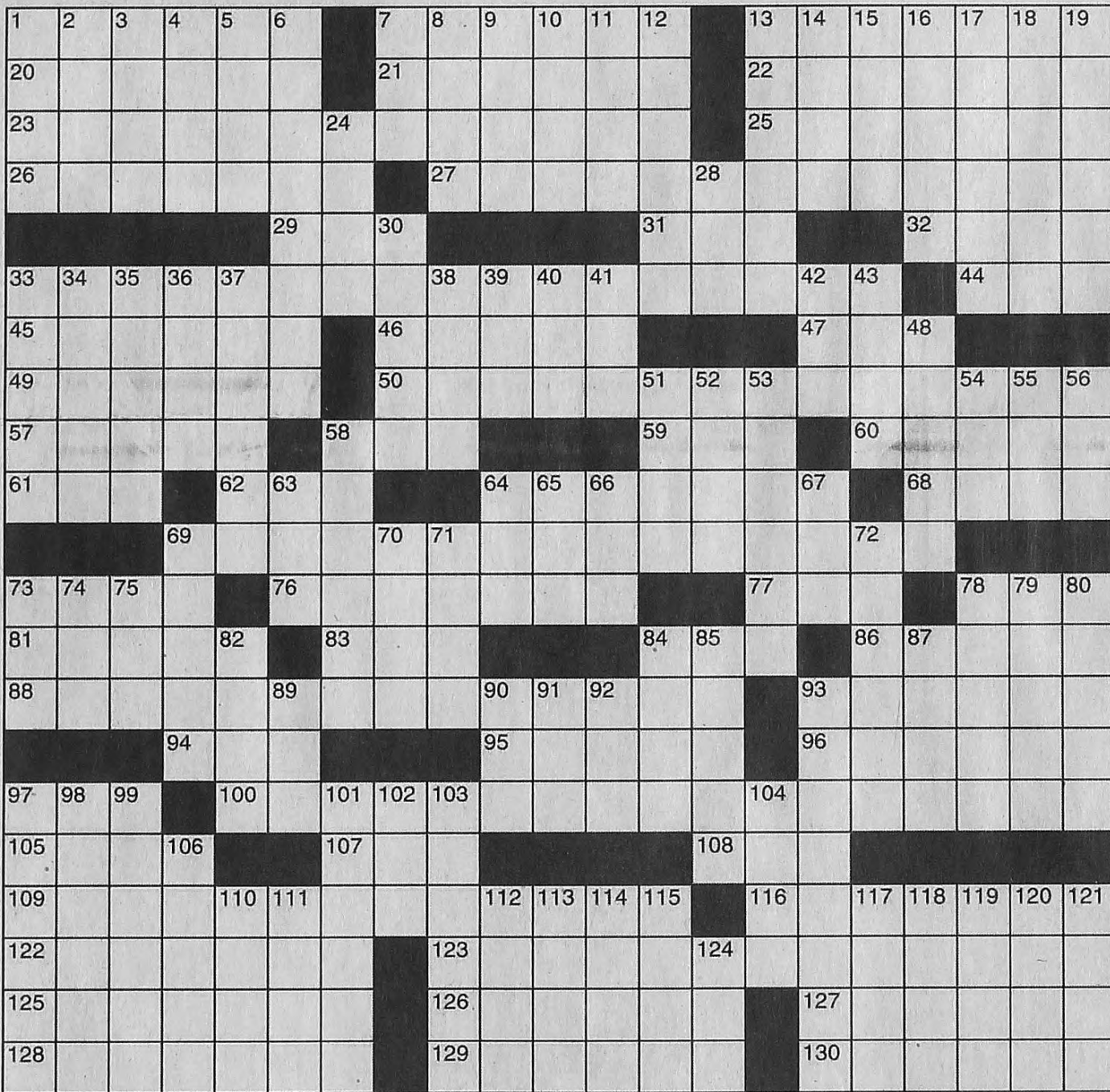
# THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

### PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

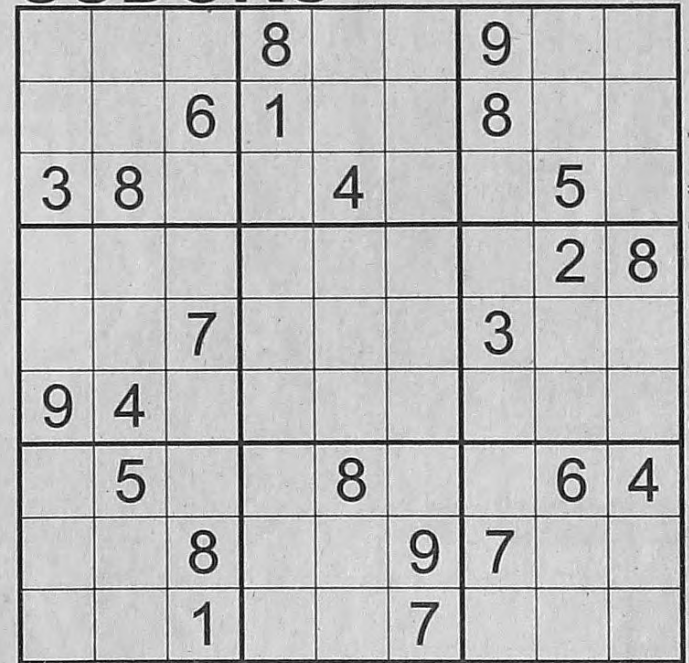
### WHAT IN THE WHAT?

- |                                       |                                   |   |                                   |                                |   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                         | 61 Hobbit enemy                   | 122 Afternoon show                            | 13 Went without food              | 52 Little branch               | 90 "Anna and the King" actress — Ling   |
| 1 "Pet" annoyances                    | 62 Actress Lupino                 | 123 GRcreaseIT                                | 14 Novelist Sholem                | 53 One listening               | 91 Suffix with southeast                |
| 7 Dance click                         | 64 Tabriz native                  | 125 One going in                              | 15 Oxford, e.g.                   | 54 Reproductive gametes        | 92 Fate                                 |
| 13 Extreme right-wing doctrine        | 68 Thin iPod                      | 126 "Hakuna —" ("The Lion King" song)         | 16 — latte (espresso variety)     | 55 Wildcat's lair              | 93 "Caught you!"                        |
| 20 Polio vaccine developer            | 69 LAcobraWN (Mexican peninsula)  | 127 Vindicate                                 | 17 Extreme disrepute              | 56 Lead-in to cone or Caps     | 94 Fate                                 |
| 21 2008 presidential campaign coinage | 73 — California                   | 128 Little puzzles                            | 18 Doll who is Barbie's 96-Across | 58 Reach a goal                | 95 "Caught you!"                        |
| 22 Caine/Ustinov adventure film       | 76 The Jordan River flows into it | 129 Stage whispers                            | 19 Bishops' headwear              | 59 Pappy                       | 96 Fate                                 |
| 23 SKILgIntLET                        | 77 CPR expert                     | 130 Neatens up                                | 24 Peaceful "Avatar" race         | 60 Elected group               | 97 Fate                                 |
| 25 Scorn                              | 78 Pas' counterparts              | <b>DOWN</b>                                   | 28 Outlaw Kelly                   | 61 U.S. Hwy., e.g.             | 98 Gas in fuel                          |
| 26 Poem with six stanzas              | 81 Kafka or Liszt                 | 1 Shareable PC files                          | 30 Gives the cold shoulder        | 62 "Caught you!"               | 99 Ray of "GoodFellas"                  |
| 27 PUsmackSS                          | 83 Freezer cubes                  | 2 Writer — Stanley Gardner                    | 33 Many, informally               | 63 Pappy                       | 101 Westerns, in old slang              |
| 29 Boob tubes                         | 84 "I'm freezing!"                | 3 Those, to Juanita                           | 34 "Time is — side"               | 64 U.S. Hwy., e.g.             | 102 Univ., e.g.                         |
| 31 Born, to Luc                       | 86 Fully grown                    | 4 Enormous                                    | 35 "Girlfriend" boy band          | 65 "Caught you!"               | 103 Louise's film cohort                |
| 32 Arab ruler                         | 88 TUBlazeMMY                     | 5 For grades 1-12, in brief                   | 36 Lace snarl                     | 66 "Rambo" setting, for short  | 104 Over 50%                            |
| 33 COsimianRE                         | 93 Napoli's land                  | 6 Factor influencing a dermatologic treatment | 37 Has dinner at home             | 67 "More reasonable"           | 106 Hogs' homes                         |
| 44 "Certainly"                        | 94 Retrovirus material            | 7 Blaster's stuff                             | 38 Less — stellar                 | 68 "Concept, in Cannes"        | 110 Concerning                          |
| 45 Open with a click                  | 95 On — to nowhere                | 8 Circusgoers' cries                          | 39 Central area                   | 69 "Very close pal, for short" | 111 — -do-well                          |
| 46 "Star Trek" crew woman             | 96 Member of a sorority           | 9 Swiss watch brand                           | 40 Prior to, in poetry            | 70 Onassis or Fleischer        | 112 "Buenos —" ("Good day," in Granada) |
| 47 43rd U.S. pres.                    | 97 Kenan's sitcom mate            | 10 Spanish appetizer                          | 41 — tai                          | 71 Jam holder                  | 113 Prefix with tank                    |
| 49 Prairie preyer                     | 100 DEVspiritICE                  | 11 "Do I need to draw you —?"                 | 42 Size above med.                | 72 Prefix with task            | 114 Enjoy a novel                       |
| 50 FORchildEST                        | 105 "— to laugh!"                 | 12 Grilled sandwiches                         | 43 "How icky!"                    | 73 Non-earthling               | 115 Toy flown on a windy day            |
| 57 Pursues prey                       | 106 German cry of vexation        |   | 44 "Stranger Things"              | 74 Gawk rudely                 | 117 — Strauss                           |
| 58 ISP with a butterfly logo          | 108 Column's counterpart          |   | 45 "Quick sprint"                 | 75 Pizazz                      | 118 Exercised                           |
| 59 Be in the hole                     | 109 NIBlastGHT                    |   | 46 "Helpful things"               | 76 Unexciting                  | 119 Child's plea                        |
| 60 Like wickerwork                    | 116 Caribbean island nation       |   | 47 Nada                           | 77 Winona of William           | 120 "Bus Stop" playwright               |
|                                       |                                   |   |                                   | 78 "Fruit-flavored drinks"     | 121 "One Mic" rapper                    |



For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702-4247 or smccllellan@michigan.com.

## SUDOKU



Difficulty Level ★★★

2/04

### Here's How It Works:

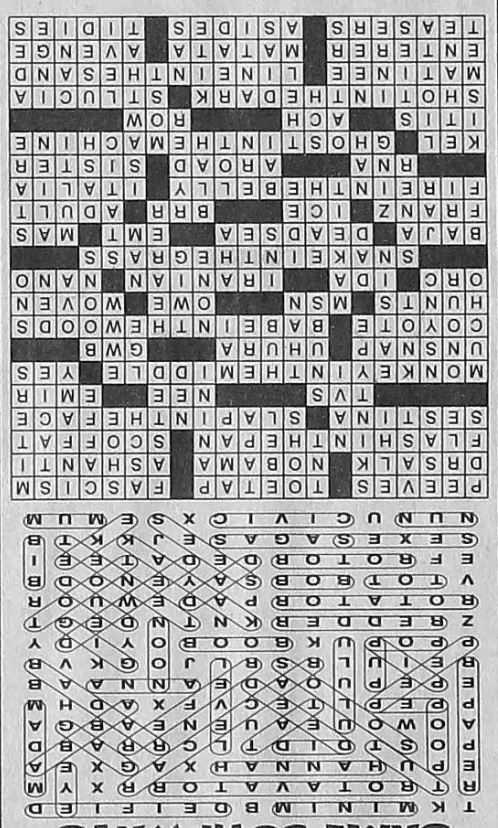
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

## SAME BOTH WAYS

Can you find all the palindromes hidden in the grid? They are hidden horizontally, vertically and diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

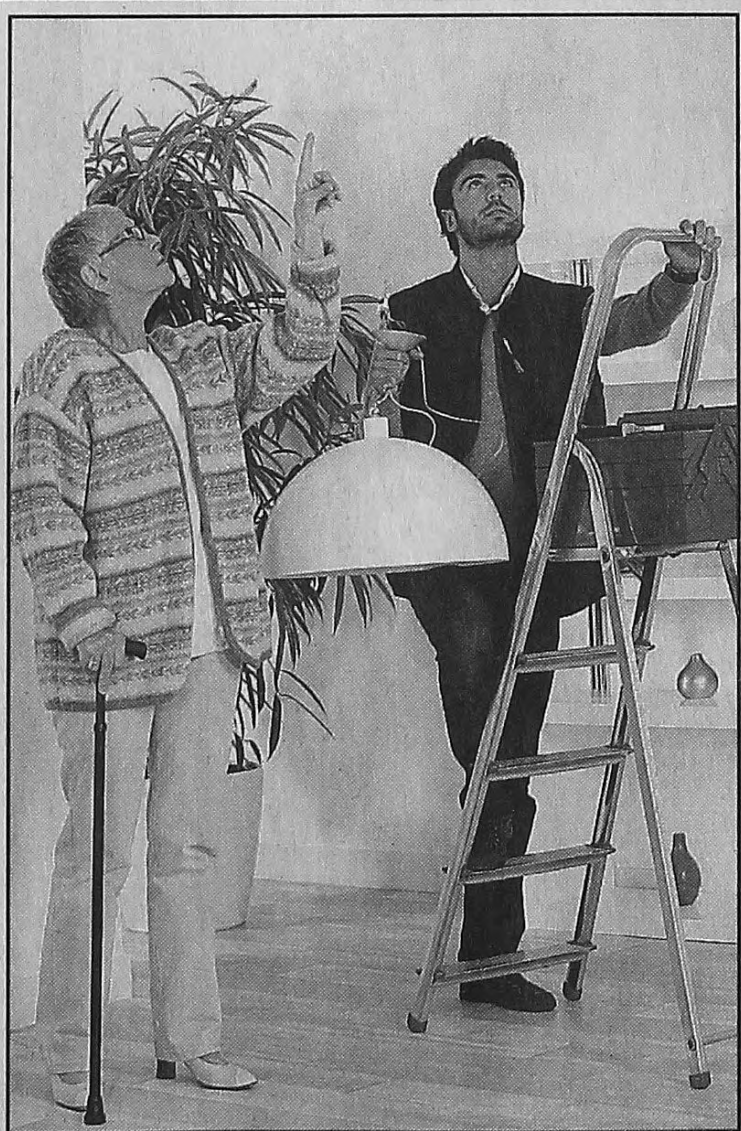
T K M I N I M B D E I F I E D  
 R T R O T A V A T O R R X Y M  
 E P U H A N N A H X A G X E A  
 P O S T D I D T L C R R A B D  
 A O W O U E A U E N E A B G A  
 P P E P L T E C V F X A D H M  
 E P E P U O A D E A N N A A B  
 R E I U L R S R L J O G K V R  
 P P O P U K B O O B O Y I D Y  
 Z R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

- ABBA
- ANNA
- BIB
- BOB
- BOOB
- CIVIC
- DAD
- DEED
- DEIFIED
- DEWED
- DID
- DUD
- EKE
- EVE
- EWE
- EYE
- GAG
- GIG
- HANNAH
- KAYAK
- LEVEL
- MADAM
- MINIM
- MUM
- NOON
- NUN
- PEEP
- PEP
- PIP
- POOP
- POP
- PUP
- RACECAR
- RADAR
- REDDER
- REFER
- REPAPER
- ROTATOR
- ROTAVATOR
- ROTOR
- SAGAS
- SEES
- SEXES
- SOLOS
- TAT
- TENET
- TOOT
- TOT
- TUT
- ULULU



**SAME BOTH WAYS**

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



**SELL YOUR CAR**  
**ADOPT A PET**  
**GET A JOB**  
**FIND A HOUSE**  
**BUY A BOAT**  
**FIND A TREASURE**  
**GET A MASSAGE**  
**HIRE A HANDYMAN**

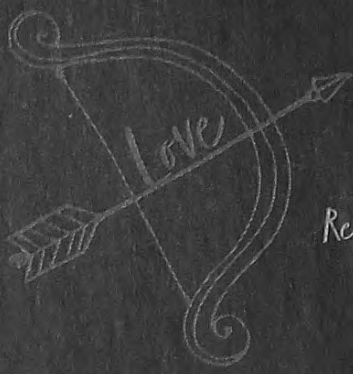
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## - Love Overboard -



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PRIME RIB  
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Dinner for Two

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