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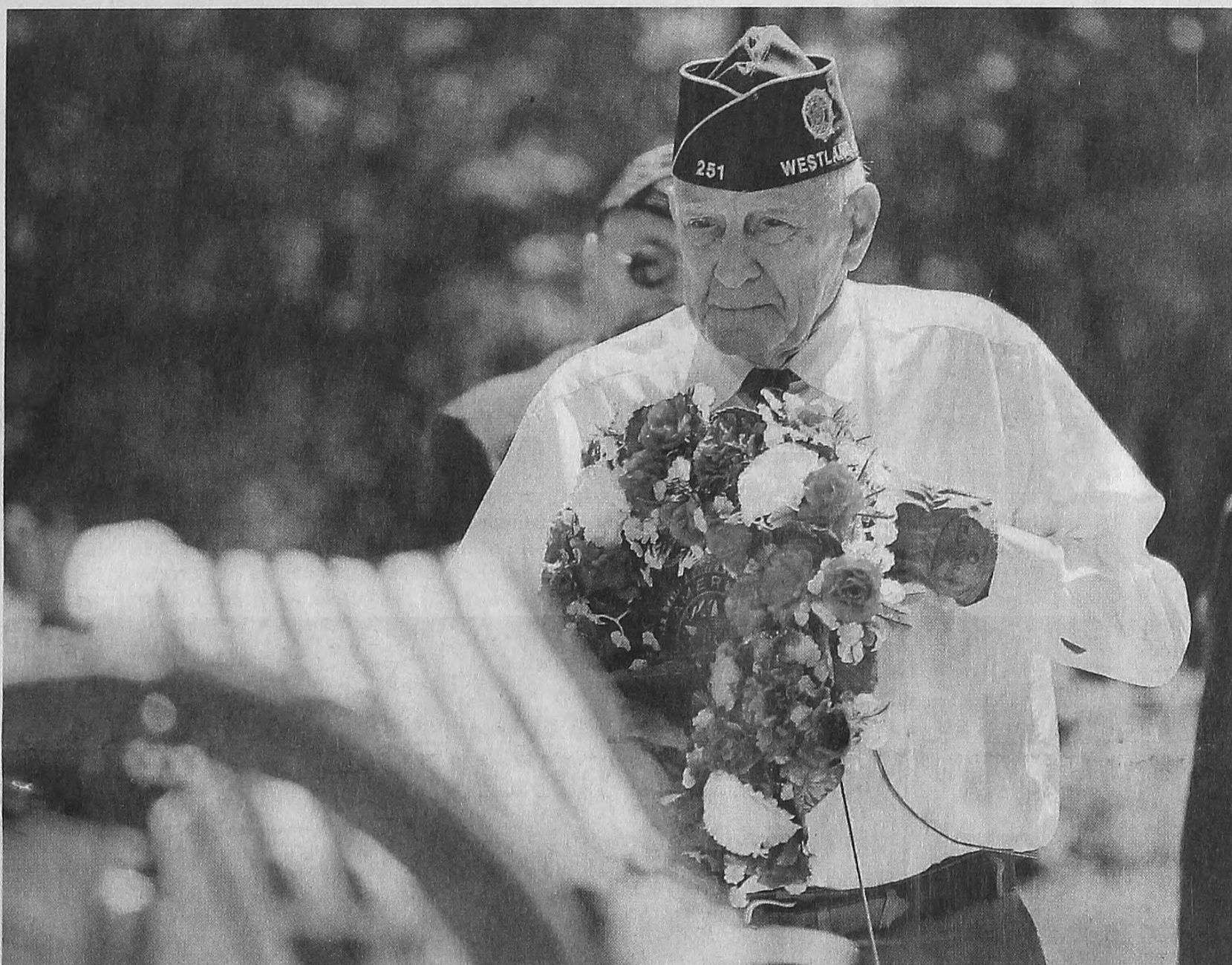
CANTON

OBSERVER

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2021 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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WESTLAND MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES, PARADE RETURN



John Grant, 90 of Westland, places a wreath at the flagpoles at the Veterans Memorial Garden in Westland. Grant served in the U.S. Marine Corps. For more coverage of Memorial Day events, see Page 2A and visit us online at HometownLife.com. DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Farmington Hills to limit home-grown medical marijuana

Shelby Tankersley HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Primary caregivers in Farmington Hills who provide medical marijuana to patients can grow up to 72 cannabis plants in their home. That might not be the case much longer.

Farmington Hills' city council appears poised to pass an ordinance that would require any primary caregivers to grow cannabis one of the city's light industrial districts. Council members took a first vote on the proposal May 24, passing a first read of the ordinance, 5-2.

The ordinance still needs final approval and would become effective 21 days after a passage. The ordinance would only affect people providing medical marijuana to others, not somebody growing their own plants for personal use, whether medical or recreational.

"This ordinance is not perfect, but I think it's a step in the right direction," Mayor Pro Tem Jackie Boleware said.

Council members Michael Bridges and Mary Newlin voted against the proposal, both saying they'd like to prohibit growth in light industrial areas near residential areas because of potential smells. According to the city's zoning map, two of the seven light industrial districts — both along 8 Mile Road — border residential areas.

"These are single streets down here; there's no homeowners association," Newlin said. "You've got individual homeowners that are going to be affected."

While council has received complaints regarding smell, energy use from extra humidifiers and air conditioning units are a significant safety concern among officials.

"The biggest thing my office heard were complaints from DTE that these houses, in order to accommodate growing, put in two, three or four air conditioning units," said Ed Gardiner, the city's planning and community development director. "They were drowning out some of the neighborhoods. That's the bigger issue."

Through complaints and permit requests, the city has identified about 30

See MARIJUANA, Page 2A

Salem High remembers students who died by suicide

Ed Wright HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The massive rock near the northeast corner of Salem High School has for decades served as a prop for celebrating athletic teams who have spray-painted it graffiti style to mark a major accomplishment (Salem LAX rocks!, etc.).

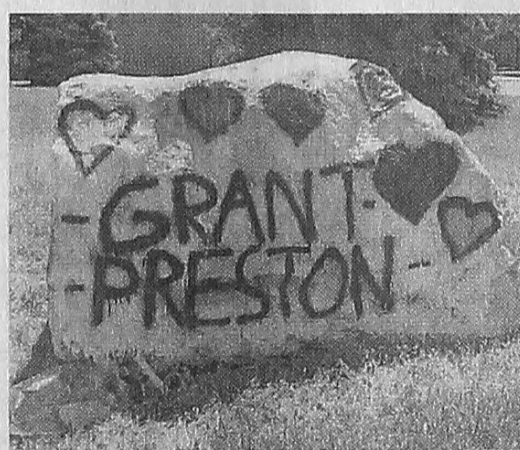
At least for a few days this week, the rock is serving as a monument for Preston Bell and Grant Waitz, Plymouth-Canton high school students who died by suicide in 2021.

How to get help

If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255), or text TALK to 741741.

Bell, who would have taken his final class with his fellow Canton High School seniors on May 27, died April 21. Waitz, who died Feb. 22 just days before

See SUICIDE, Page 2A



The rock outside Salem High School is serving as a temporary memorial to Plymouth-Canton students Grant Waitz and Preston Bell, both of whom died by suicide this year.

ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Plans for new restaurant building in Livonia move forward

David Veselenak HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Plans continue to move along to add a possible new drive-thru restaurant to the corner of Seven Mile and Middlebelt in Livonia.

The city's planning commission first saw a rezoning request earlier this winter that would change the zoning of the

parking lot on the side of the shopping center. Now, the shopping center owners have returned to ask for approval on the plans to construct a building in the same space that would contain a restaurant.

The lot's owner, Kevin Denha, said the southern part of the shopping center typically has plenty of space due to the lower-intensity businesses located

there. Having a restaurant would make good use of that area that currently goes unused.

"As you guys are aware, there are no restaurants in the center right now," he said. "There's always a ton of parking available."

The center has several businesses, including Pet Supplies Plus, Planet Fitness, Bulk Food & Smoothies and Jin

Wig & Beauty, to name a few. It also has a standalone Citizens Bank ATM on the far south side of the property, a machine recently added after the bank's branch north of Seven Mile on Middlebelt closed.

No client for the standalone restaurant has been identified yet: Denha said

See RESTAURANT, Page 3A





Students from Wayne Memorial and Westland John Glenn high schools perform in the Westland Memorial Day parade. PHOTOS BY DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Westland honors the fallen on Memorial Day

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Honoring those who gave their lives in the military returned to the streets of Westland this Memorial Day weekend.

The city's annual parade returned May 30 after the COVID-19 pandemic sidelined much of the remembrance ceremonies across the region last year. Hundreds lined Carlson and Central City Parkway Sunday to watch the parade, which featured the Wayne Memorial and John Glenn high school bands, Westland public safety officers, military veterans and Westland and Wayne city leaders.

After the parade, the community gathered at the Veterans Memorial Garden near the William P. Faust Public Library for a ceremony honoring those who have died in service to the United States.

Speaking during the ceremony was retired Army Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Cyrus, who spoke several names of those who died in the service. He talked about the issues facing those at home who have lost someone while serving and what can be done to keep their memories alive.

"Most of us will not truly understand the depths of their despair unless we have experienced it," he said. "But what we can do is offer our support and gratitude. We can speak their names. We can place flags and wreaths on their caskets and their graves. We can donate to the charities that provide for their families or a cause they were passionate about. And we can look at their surviving brothers and sisters in arms and we can say 'Thank you for your service.' But today is not that day."

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



A fire truck draped in the American flag completes the parade along Carlson and Central City Parkway.



Members of Cub Scout Pack 9885 lead the parade.



Guests recite the Pledge of Allegiance during the remembrance ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Garden.

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Suicide

Continued from Page 1A

his 17th birthday, was a junior at Salem at the time of his death.

The students' deaths brought the sometimes difficult-to-detect depth of mental illness that has affected high school students throughout the country to the forefront, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

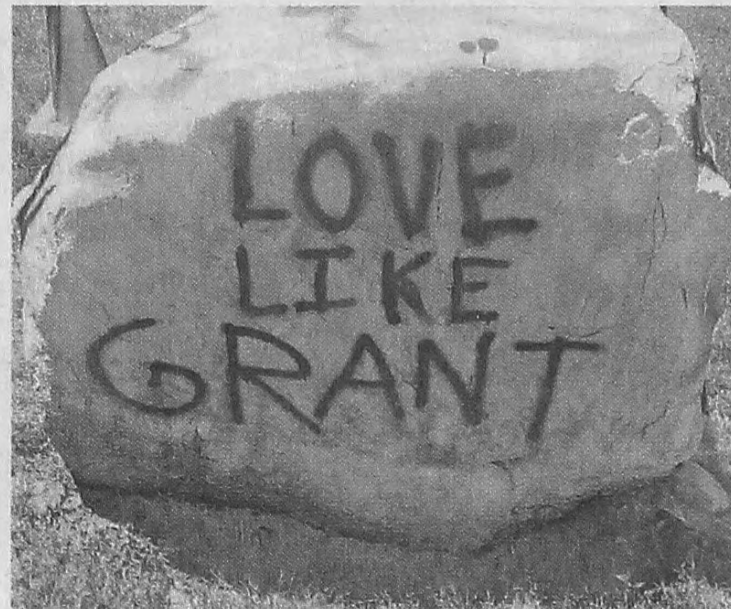
Both students' families said there were no obvious signs that their loved ones were thinking about taking their own lives, noting that they were surrounded by a loving group of friends.

The side of the rock facing Joy Road is decorated with the students' first names, with multi-colored hearts forming a frame over the names.

The side of the rock facing east says, "Love like Grant" while the side facing south says, "Laugh Like Preston." The side of the rock facing west says simply, "We Love You!"

A baggie someone placed on the north face of the rock is filled with personal mementos: flowers and snapshots of the young men.

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



One side of the rock at Salem High School is dedicated to Grant Waitz. ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

The students' deaths brought the sometimes difficult-to-detect depth of mental illness that has affected high school students throughout the country to the forefront, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marijuana

Continued from Page 1A

primary caregivers who would need to relocate their marijuana plants. But, Gardiner said there could be more.

If an ordinance is passed, violators would be subject to fines and, when necessary, court-ordered injunctions.

"If somebody is violating the ordinance and they

are growing within their home for more than just themselves, we will enforce our ordinance," Gardiner said.

Because the ordinance only relates to medical cannabis, officials are not worried the light industrial districts will see an explosion in marijuana growers. Farmington Hills currently doesn't allow recreational marijuana business of any kind.

"This is not where all the money is," Mayor Vicki Barnett said.

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

Commission to decide on sale of Newburgh Mill in Livonia

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Lots of legislative action has taken place surrounding the three mills originally put up for sale by Wayne County several years ago. Much of the work done on the county's level appears to be ending soon, with the Newburgh Mill sale now headed to the full county commission for a vote.

The mill, located at Newburgh and Hines Drive in Livonia, is the last of the three old mills in Hines Park to move through the selling process through the county commission.

If approved, the mill would be sold to developer Richard Cox, who has already purchased the Phoenix Mill in Plymouth Township and has an agreement with the county to purchase the Wilcox Mill in Plymouth. The county commission voted earlier in May to authorize the sale of Wilcox Mill to Cox after the original arrangement with Plymouth artist Tony Rokofell through.

Part of the amended sale of the Newburgh Mill, which first appeared on the committee's agenda in April before being tabled, requires Cox to construct new stables for the sheriff's mounted division, which are currently located next to the Newburgh Mill. After attempting to secure some land in Westland for the stable, another site was chosen in Hines Park in Dearborn Heights.

That stable must be completed before the county turns over the mill as a part of the purchase agreement. County officials say work on it will begin as soon as possible.

"As soon as we close, they want to start building it as quickly as possible," said Wafa Dinero, the county's executive director of economic development corporation. "And that's going to depend on the due diligence on when we close and obviously the weather has a big impact on that."

The three mills were put up for sale after they sat essentially unused for decades under the county's ownership.

The buildings were once used by Henry Ford before they became property of Wayne County, which looked to sell them to private developers to better utilize the properties.

The proposal went through the committee with little comment from commissioners during the virtual meeting May 25. The commission's committee on public service voted unanimously during its virtual meeting May 25 to move the sale of the Newburgh Mill to the full county commission. It now heads to the full commission for a vote on the sale, which will take place at a future meeting.

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

Wayne County authorizes sale of Wilcox Mill to developer

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The historic mill once used by Henry Ford along Wilcox Road has been authorized for sale again by the Wayne County Commission.

With that May 20 authorization for the mill at 230 Wilcox in Plymouth, the county can now negotiate the sale with Richard Cox, the selected buyer.

The sale of the mill to Cox came months after Plymouth artist Tony Rokopulled out of the proposed art center project, citing high costs, especially in light of the effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, the county went to Cox, who had the second-highest proposal, and extended an offer to purchase the mill to him. The contract language for the mill is the same, though does build in more time to work on the project, Commissioner Terry Marecki, R-Livonia, said.

"It's the same contract pretty much with Tony Roko, but extends the time to two years," she said.

Still to be decided is the sale of the Newburgh Mill at Hines Drive and Newburgh in Livonia, the last of the three "Mill Run" properties Wayne County put up for sale several years ago.

Formerly used by Henry Ford, the mills became property of the county decades ago and have mostly been

used for storage. The third mill, the Phoenix Mill on Northville Road in Plymouth Township, was first sold to Cox with construction almost complete.

The plans call for redevelopment of the mills with public entities as required as a part of the purchase agreement. Part of the agreement also requires the owner to approach the county if there are plans to sell the mills, as well as pursue historic designation for the structures.

The commission voted 11-4 to authorize the sale of the mills. Voting no were Commissioners Glenn Anderson, D-Westland; Tim Killeen, D-Detroit; David Knezek, D-Dearborn Heights; and Raymond Basham, D-Taylor.

Both Anderson and Killeen also voted "no" on the first agreement to sell the Wilcox and Newburgh mills when it came before the commission in 2019. Both said they opposed the sale of park land to private business.

"I've always stood against developing for private concerns and businesses to develop parkland and park property," Anderson said. "I can't see that I'll ever change with that because I think that is a trust that we have with the voters of Wayne County, the taxpayers of Wayne County, that we don't convert to commercial enterprises parkland and park property."

The sale of the Newburgh Mill continues to work through the county commission's committee on public service.

Restaurant

Continued from Page 1A

he has not yet begun the full marketing for the spot and did not have a tenant.

Commissioner Carol Smiley brought up the drive-thru atmosphere near that corner during the May 18 planning commission meeting where the project was discussed. She brought up the fact that several eateries in that area with drive-thrus already exist.

"There seems to be a lot of drive-thrus in that particular area," she said.

Dunkin', Burger King, Arby's, Wendy's and Jimmy John's currently operate near the intersection with drive-thrus.

Ben Tiseo, a Livonia architect working on the project, said despite the apparent decline of COVID-19's grip on the country, drive-thrus and pick-up windows are trends that are here to stay.

"I am seeing more and more requests from clients for drive up not just for restaurants," he said. "We're trying to stay a little bit ahead of the curve and address the demand."

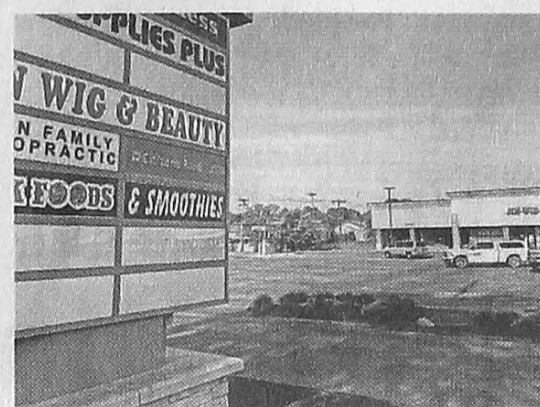
The planning commission voted to recommend approval of the plans,

which now go to the city council for its review and final decision. There was no word on when construction on the site could begin if it receives approval.

Especially given the challenges Denha said he's faced with trying to lease the center, having a desirable option will help in bringing business to that part of Livonia.

"Our challenge here has been leasing," he said. "I'm trying to attract a tenant, and the way to do that is through a drive-thru."

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



A restaurant is planned for this parking lot at the shopping center at Seven Mile and Middlebelt in Livonia. DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



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Attorneys for Altantawi plan appeals

Bond, new preliminary hearing denied

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Because he wasn't granted bond and another preliminary examination, Muhammad Altantawi's premeditated murder case seems to be headed back to the Michigan Court of Appeals.

Attorney David Steingold confirmed that he and co-counsel Michael Schiano are filing appeals in response to Oakland County Circuit Judge Martha Anderson's denials.

They had been hoping for different decisions since the Michigan Supreme Court ruled earlier this year that Altantawi's statements to Farmington Hills police were inadmissible because they were given without proper warnings from officers about his rights.

"Muhammad Altantawi is an innocent man," Steingold said during a phone interview after the May 26 hearing resulting in Anderson denying the request for a new preliminary examination, a proceeding that would have included testimony and evidence without the inadmissible statements.

Altantawi, 19, has spent nearly four years in jail since he was taken into custody after the August 2017 death of his mother Nada Huranieh, a fitness instructor divorcing Altantawi's father.

In the interrogation now deemed inadmissible, he told police she fell from an upper-story window of their Howard Road home while cleaning. Prosecutors have alleged that he actually smothered her before tossing her out the window

and framed a scene to make it look like she was washing windows when she fell.

Farmington Hills' 47th District Judge Marla Parkersaid there was enough evidence to send him to trial years ago, and Anderson backed her decision during the May 26 hearing.

"The first element has been met which is that a crime has been committed," Anderson said. "There still is enough circumstantial evidence that the defendant committed the crime. Will that hold up in trial? I have absolutely no idea. We have to wait for the proofs that the prosecution is going to put forth.

"I feel that the district court judge did not make a mistake and, even if removing the statements of the defendant, there was sufficient proofs submitted to prove the probable cause that the crime was committed and that the defendant most likely committed the crime."

During the hearing, Altantawi appeared. He is residing at the Oakland County Jail, where he was moved to from Children's Village after turning 19 on June 7. He has shoulder-length hair and a thick beard.

Attorneys argued over the evidence with Steingold emphasizing the several details that he considers questionable:

*Claims by Farmington Hills Police Sgt. Richard Wehby, now a lieutenant, that he could tell from security camera footage of shadows cast on an outdoors berm that the person who tossed Huranieh, 35, out an upper-story window



Altantawi

was a male.

"I don't think that's science at all," Steingold said. "There's no way anyone can determine looking at this shadow whether it was a male or female."

*Autopsy implications that Huranieh died from asphyxia and smothering.

"How was she smothered?" Steingold asked. "Where was she smothered? Where's the evidence? If she was smothered, then she was overpowered.

"My client was 16. He weighed substantially less than his mother and his mother was in exceptional shape She was a trainer. She weighed, I believe, 135 pounds."

Steingold said there was no evidence of a struggle that would have lasted for more than a few seconds.

"You would expect if my client allegedly smothered his mother, who is bigger and stronger than him, that there would have been a struggle," he said.

Steingold said there's been speculation that the smothering happened on the home's first level but that Huranieh was tossed from a window on the third level.

"They're also claiming that now my client must not only have smothered her (but) somehow overcome his mother," Steingold continued. "(He) somehow avoided a struggle, but carried 135 pounds of dead weight up several flights of stairs, down the hallway and (tossed) her out the window without anybody being alerted to the noise you would assume would have been made."

He also mentioned no motive plus

normal disagreements between Altantawi and his mother. There was no evidence, he said, that Altantawi threatened his mother or she seriously assaulted him.

Prosecuting attorney John Skrzynski focused on a prior court ruling that, according to him, means "the introduction of incompetent evidence is harmless if probable cause is established by other competent evidence."

He said he has already presented "a big blow up" that showed Huranieh had apparent smothering trauma to the mouth area.

He also mentioned already-presented evidence that Huranieh was hoisted out the window.

"You see the person hoisting the body. It is not an easy lift. It is a hoist," Skrzynski said. "I don't think you have to be necessarily a scientific genius to be able to look at even a shadow to determine whether it's a man or a woman."

Steingold was given another chance to speak and the defense attorney returned to the security camera footage revealing the shadows.

"There's absolutely no way to determine the sex of the person who was there," he said. "It's apparently a big person. You can't tell because the shadows might make somebody appear larger than they are. I challenge Mr. Skrzynski to tell us what feature could be picked out from which you could conclude or even presume that it was a male."

For now, Altantawi's is scheduled for trial by the end of the year.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com.

Westland woman admits to defrauding veterans' families

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Westland woman pleaded guilty to several felony charges that she defrauded veterans' families of thousands of dollars.

Melissa Flores, 54, faces the possibility of more than a decade in prison when she is sentenced in August. She may also have to pay about \$110,000 in restitution, according to a proposed plea agreement.

Her co-defendant Steven Decker, 33,



Melissa Flores, left, and her attorney, Murray Duncan.

SUSAN VELA/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

of Wyandotte is scheduled for a July trial. As part of an alleged 2013-2019 get-

rich strategy, he is accused of receiving money from the scheme and using some of these proceeds to conceal property used to conduct the fraud.

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel initially said the duo's teamwork had defrauded veterans' families of nearly \$500,000. Nessel claimed they created aliases and obtained or created fraudulent documents to make it seem like they were legal heirs.

Flores pleaded guilty May 27 to six counts of false pretenses and one count of forgery.

Westland police kick off neighborhood safety program

The Westland Police Department has developed a new community policing initiative called the Westland Police Neighborhood Safety Program.

"Our police department recognizes that every neighborhood has different concerns and public safety needs," Mayor Bill Wild said in a release. "The goal of this program is to meet directly with the residents of specific neighborhoods to discuss their concerns."

Working in partnership with neighborhood residents, the Westland Police Department will identify and resolve specific quality of life problems or concerns.

In addition, this is a great opportunity for neighbors to meet each other while also meeting their City's police officers.

"Neighbors working in partnership with each other (and) neighbors working in partnership with officers, is how we strengthen the community," Police Chief Jeff Jedrusik stated.

With the cooperation of Westland residents, the Westland Police Department will be able to identify:

- Neighborhood Traffic Concerns
- Neighbor Disputes
- Vandalism
- Potential Drugs
- Thefts
- Safety Concerns

Police will provide neighborhood specific crime stats and safety tips

The first Neighborhood Safety meeting will take place in Rotary Park with a specific focus on the businesses and homes between Marquette/Cherry Hill and Wayne/Radcliff.

Wild, Jedrusik and Westland's Community Police Team will attend the 10 a.m. June 5 event at the park, 601 Hanlon St.

There will be regular meetings scheduled throughout the year in order to specifically focus on our Westland neighborhoods individually.

Further information will be available at www.cityofwestland.com and the Westland Police Community Partnership Facebook page.

Flames destroy historic Canton barn

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Cady-Boyer Barn — a historic structure known to host community events at Canton Township's Preservation Park — burned down over the holiday weekend.

Firefighters were dispatched just before 5 p.m. May 30 to the 500 N. Ridge Road address and arrived to find a fully-engulfed fire.

Fire Marshal John Oltman said the barn wasn't insulated and had little inside. Oxygen flowing through the cracks of the siding fed the flames.

"It just took off," Oltman said of the blaze. "There was nothing to slow it down. It just kept going."

No one was hurt.

According to the township's website, the barn was built before the Civil War and later was enlarged and remodeled.

It eventually became Plymouth-Canton Community Schools property, serving as the Rotary School Farm 1970-1981.

In 2006, the barn moved from its original location at McClumpha and Joy roads to Preservation Park because of a donation from Bob Boyer, a local businessman and community supporter.

Amish craftsmen dismantled the barn and rebuilt it at the park.



Beer, Brats & Bands at the Barn at Preservation Park in Canton was one of many community events to take place at the historic Cady-Boyer Barn. The barn was destroyed in a fire May 30. HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

Officers evacuate Plymouth High School after bomb threat called in

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Plymouth High School was evacuated because of an early afternoon May 27 bomb threat, according to Canton public

safety officers.

They said an unknown person called and made the threat.

Canton officers evacuated the 8400 N. Beck Road building of the students and staff inside.

They then investigated and gave an "all-clear" for the high school and the rest of the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park campus.

There was no cancellation of afternoon or evening athletics and activities.

Those with information are asked to call the public safety department, 734-394-5400.

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

Plymouth's Workout Wednesdays resume after pause for pandemic

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A long-overdue wave of serenity flowed through Plymouth's Kellogg Park May 26 in the form of more than 200 people executing calming yoga maneuvers as part of the city's "Workout Wednesdays" program — a weekly summer staple that was wiped out in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic.

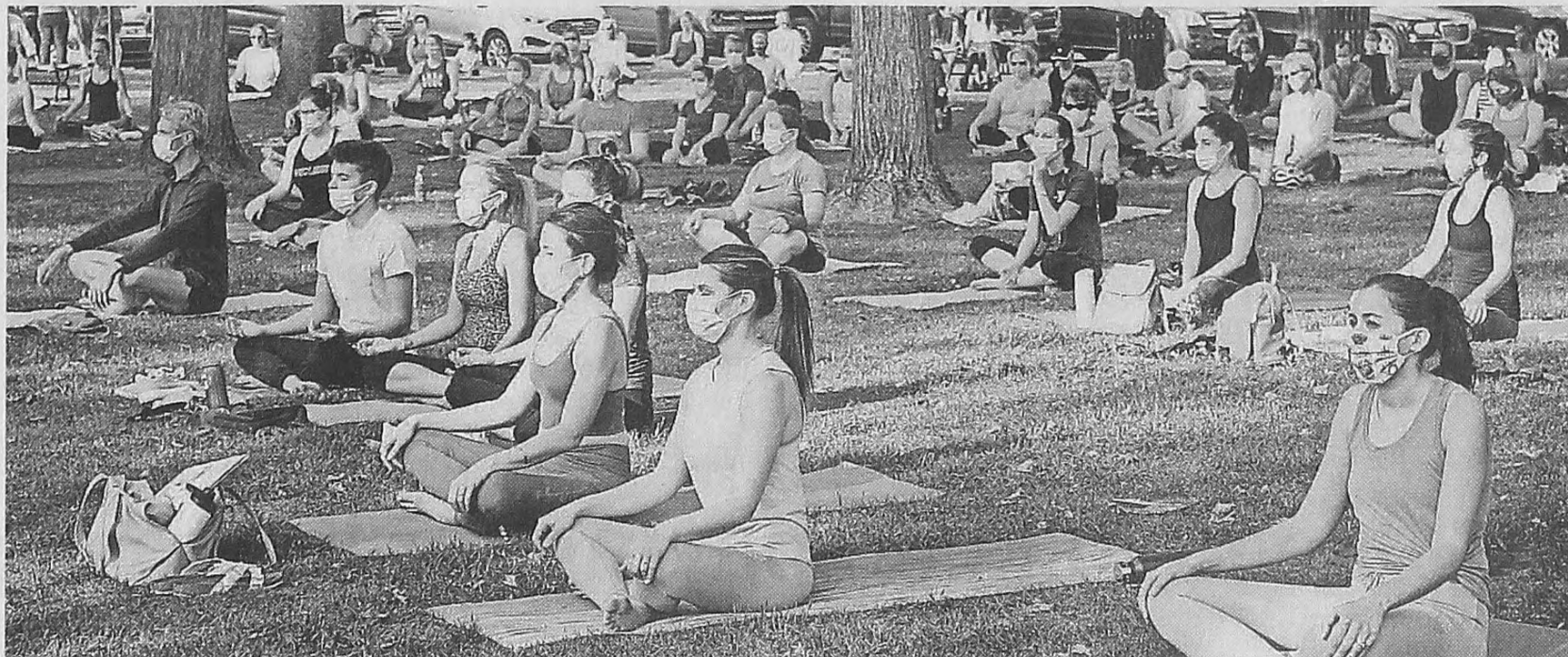
With the park's massive trees providing a cooling shade and easy-listening music adding to the stress-relieving vibe, a mix of longtime yogis and first-timers, too, welcomed back the social interaction they missed since the last Workout Wednesday was held in summer 2019.

"This feels wonderful, being able to do yoga with so many people again," Isabella Ciuffetelli said. "To be outside sitting on grass breathing in fresh air, it's pretty awesome. It's so much better to be surrounded by members of the community compared to doing it alone."

The seed for the weekly workout program — which, in addition to yoga, includes a variety of low to moderate workouts on a weekly basis throughout the summer — was planted in 2011 by Rob and Heidi Parent, owners of Sun & Snow, a recreational-sports equipment store that has facilities in Plymouth and Ann Arbor.

"We started the events as kind of a meet-up, to get people to take that first step toward a more active lifestyle," Rob Parent said. "Initially, we did it once a month with about 20 to 25 people. It quickly grew to the point where pre-pandemic the weekly workouts would draw around 350 people."

"There was a huge demand for it in 2020, but we couldn't do it due to the pandemic protocols. We were going to limit tonight's event to 150 people but



An estimated 220 people gathered in Kellogg Park in Plymouth for the first "Workout Wednesday" since before the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020. Participants wore masks and practiced social distancing. ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

after studying the area and the social-distancing we could provide, we came up with a limit of 220."

Participants were required to pre-register online to reserve a space in the workout. Attendees wore face masks for the workouts' initial return but with state pandemic orders ending, masks won't be required at future gatherings.

"We received so many positive comments from people when they found out this was coming back," Parent said. "Before we got the green light from the city, we were getting calls and emails asking, 'When is it coming back? When is it coming back?'"

"The city has been super supportive of the program and we reached out to a Plymouth resident who is an emergency room nurse in Detroit to give us advice on how we can return safely."

My Yoga Room instructor Kristen B.

said the return of large-group outdoors workouts brings a lot of people back to their happy place.

"It's not just a relief for these people," she said, gesturing toward the 200-plus participants minutes before the May 26 event started, "it's like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders. It's a sign that more normalcy is coming back after such a long time. It's really incredible."

Parent said he sees several regulars on a weekly basis, but it's the new faces that make the event even more fulfilling.

"What makes it cool for me is that one week you'll see people sitting on a park bench eating an ice cream, relaxing and watching the workouts," he said. "Then one or two weeks later, you'll see some of those same people out there with a (yoga) mat or whatever the workout may be. That's how it's grown so much; it's so organic."

Livonia resident Madison Merzlyakoz and her sister, Aubrey Ziems of Detroit, were trying yoga for the first time.

"We'd come down to downtown Plymouth a lot before the pandemic because we love the area," Merzlyakoz said. "When we saw this going on, we always thought it looked cool. I'm not going to the gym any more since the weather is nice, so we decided to give this a shot. We don't know anything about yoga, so hopefully they explain everything really well."

Merzlyakoz smiled as she settled back on her newly-purchased yoga mat, ready to clear her mind of any built-up pandemic stress and prepare to enjoy her newest hobby.

Plymouth's Wednesday Workouts are free to the public. Pre-registration information can be found on the Sun & Snow website.

Contaminated stormwater pond near Salem landfill worrisome

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The nature that has flourished for centuries in western Northville Township has a steadfast army of allies determined to protect it from the towering threat of a neighbor known as the Arbor Hills landfill.

In early May, the Northville Township Board of Trustees voted to authorize Supervisor Mark Abbo to file a lawsuit if Green For Life — the owner of the mammoth landfill that looms in neighboring Salem Township — does not clean up the landfill's act.

Under the watch of former owner Advanced Disposal, the sprawling dump was notorious for racking up odor violations — a habit that has been curtailed but not completely erased, watchdogs note, since GFL bought the site in fall of 2020.

A report obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request by David Drinan of the Northville Township-based The Conservancy Initiative revealed that an unlawful level of potentially hazardous PFOS (perfluorooctanesulfonic acid) was found in a stormwater pond that empties into Johnson Creek, the only designated trout stream of the Rouge River.

Drinan's FOIA request unveiled that two samples of the main stormwater detention pond located near Napier Road taken on April 2, 2020, contained 94 ng/l and 400 ng/l of PFOS. Michigan Rule 57 limits the PFOS in surface water (non-drinking water) to 12 ng/l.

The stormwater pond where the samples were obtained regularly drains to Johnson Creek.

Studies conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency indicate that PFOS can cause reproductive and developmental, liver and kidney, and immunological effects in laboratory animals. Both chemicals have caused tumors in animals, according to the EPA website.

Matt Konieczki, an environmental analyst for The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) said the state is monitoring the Johnson Creek situation.

"A second sample needs to be collected from the pond stormwater pond so we can get a better idea of what's going on," Konieczki said. "Looking at the report, we're not sure what the exact cause of the PFOS is; it could be a num-



The Johnson Drain meanders slowly through the Coldwater Springs Nature Area. The park and stream are about a half-mile to the east, and down in elevation from the GFL Environmental landfill at Six and Ridge. Elevated PFAS levels have been found in the Johnson. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

ber of things."

PFOS is found in food-packaging materials and commercial household products, namely non-stick Teflon, according to the EPA.

If future samples of the water sources near the landfill continue to show the presence of PFOS, fines and other levels of enforcement could be in order, Konieczki said.

EGLE said seven private residential wells near the landfill were sampled for PFOS and all were below the criteria for drinking water.

PFAS results for the seven residential wells and one Type II well were below the Part 201 criteria for drinking water.

Drinan, a Northville Township resident and the vice president of The Conservancy Initiative, said the presence of PFOS in a storm-water pond adjacent to the creek is worrisome.

"I'm not a toxicologist, so I'm not exactly sure of the damaging effects the PFOS has on fish in Johnson Creek, but if the levels are higher than what the state allows, it can't be good," Drinan said. "The odor complaints are down since GFL bought the site, but it's only been a few months."

GFL General Manager David Seegert said his company is working toward remedying the environmental issues related to the landfill.

"We understand the community's concerns of PFOS and how it relates to the Johnson Creek," Seegert said. "Our environmental consultants have conducted recent PFOS testing of the sur-

face water, are evaluating results, and are proposing additional testing be conducted.

"Our environmental consultants attribute the presence of PFOS to historic, not current, issues. The primary cause of the PFOS presence is believed to be due to the use of foam to fight the recycling facility fire in November 2016."

Abbo said the resources needed to file a formal lawsuit against GFL are in order.

"But I'd really prefer to negotiate to find a resolution to this," he said. "I could file a complaint tomorrow if necessary. This has been going on for too long and (GFL) needs to convince us that these problems are going to be fixed, sooner rather than later."

The Conservancy Initiative said it supports Abbo's hard-line stance.

"From day one, Supervisor Abbo and the Board of Trustees have stressed strict compliance with environmental regulations at the landfill as the means to eliminate the odors and protect Johnson Creek," said Drinan. "While meetings with the township and GFL have provided some improvements, a lot more needs to be done."

"The Conservancy Initiative is standing with the Board of Trustees as they fight to protect our community and our natural resources," Drinan said.

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

Unemployment claims in state declined last week

Adrienne Roberts and Kristi Tanner
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Michigan declined last week compared with the week prior, the U.S. Department of Labor said Thursday.

New claims, which are an indicator of layoffs, dropped to 11,079 in the week ending May 22, down from 13,806 the week before, the Labor department said.

There were 64,574 new claims in Michigan at the same time last year.

U.S. unemployment claims, meanwhile, dropped to 406,000 last week, down 38,000 claims from 444,000 the week prior on a seasonally adjusted basis.

U.S. claims dropped more than economists expected last week, and fell to a new pandemic low. Claims on a seasonally adjusted basis have now declined for four straight weeks.

"With businesses less constrained by restrictions, filings should ease further and hiring should pick up as the economy moves closer to normal capacity," Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, said in an email.

Farooqi noted that new claims are still elevated. In the months leading up to the pandemic, there were about 200,000 new claims on a weekly basis. New claims peaked in the pandemic with more than 6 million claims in early April, and have slowly fallen, with some bumps along the way, since then.

Even as new claims fall, unemployment remains high in the U.S. There were 15.8 million weeks claimed in all unemployment programs, according to the latest report from the Labor department. That's compared with 2.1 million weeks claimed in early February 2020, before the pandemic, said Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Bank.

New Hampshire saw the largest percentage increase in weekly claims, with claims jumping by 92.5%. South Dakota, meanwhile, saw the largest percentage drop in new claims, with claims dropping by 51.8%.

The USA TODAY Network is publishing separate versions of this article with localized statistics on its news sites across the country.

What to do about the tick boom in Michigan

Emma Stein Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Pull out the bug spray, Michiganders, there are more ticks than ever in Michigan right now and this increase is showing no signs of slowing down.

Ticks may seem like innocent, pesky little insects but they can carry diseases that lead to serious health concerns.

Here's how to deal with the insurmountable of ticks without letting it ruin your summer.

How do I prevent ticks?

- Perform tick checks on yourself

and your pets after coming in from outside, whether it's a hike or playing with your dog in the backyard. Thoroughly check your hair, your clothes and every small crevice. Check your pets, too!

- Take a shower after being outside.
- Use EPA-certified insect repellent (but avoid ingesting it, and make sure to check with a veterinarian before spraying your pet).

I found a tick, now what?

The first thing to do is take a deep breath, there's no need to panic. Some ticks do not carry any diseases, and even if they do, it usually takes at least

Ticks may seem like innocent, pesky little insects but they can carry diseases that lead to serious health concerns.

24 hours for the pathogen to transmit.

- Remove the tick with tweezers at an even, steady rate to ensure it does not break off. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns against using your bare hands or methods of burning

it off, as the goal is to keep the tick intact and remove it as quickly as possible.

- Clean the bite area with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- Dispose of the tick by wrapping it carefully and putting it in a sealed container or flushing it down the toilet.

Why does it matter?

Ticks can be vectors for a variety of diseases, from Lyme disease to Rocky Mountain spotted fever to the deadly meat allergy. If you notice any symptoms — including fever, headache, muscle aches or a rash — after removing a tick, call your doctor immediately.

Do I need to keep paying for life insurance policy?



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest columnist

Dear Rick:

I have an issue with a life insurance policy I hope you can help me with. About 25 years ago when I was still married, my then husband and I bought life insurance policies. After we were divorced, he kept his policy and I kept mine. Since that time, I continued to pay the premiums.

I have been divorced for nearly 10 years and it has finally dawned on me that I don't need the life insurance, and it is a waste to keep paying the premiums. I contacted the insurance agent and he told me it was a bad idea to cancel the policy and that instead I could convert the policy into a paid-up policy using the cash surrender value. The agent said there would be severe tax consequences to canceling the policy.

I don't need the life insurance as I have no one to leave the money to. I just don't want to keep paying the premiums for something I don't need but, of course, I don't want to pay a lot of money in taxes. What should I do?

Yours truly, C.D.R.

Dear C.D.R.:

I agree with you that there is no reason to pay premiums for a life insurance policy you don't need. I have always felt that life insurance is not an investment; it is a means of covering risk. If you no longer have that risk, you don't need the insurance.

For example, someone who owned a boat would likely need boat insurance. However, if they sold their boat, they would not need that coverage. The risk when it comes to life insurance is not if you are going to die or not; but rather, if when you do, will people who are financially dependent upon you be protected. If they will or if you do not have anyone financially dependent upon you, you do not need life insurance.

Therefore, I do not see any reason for you to retain the policy. The only question is, what is the best way to dispose of it.

Contrary to what your insurance agent told you, typically, when you cancel a life insurance policy, the tax consequences are not significant. The reason for this is that you have a basis in your life insurance policy. Just like you have a basis in stocks and bonds that you buy, the same thing applies to a life insurance policy. The basis in your life insur-

ance policy is the total amount of premiums that you paid.

The only tax consequences would be if your cash surrender value is greater than your basis. For example, if you paid \$1,000 a year in premiums for 25 years, your basis would be \$25,000. If the cash surrender value of your policy was \$27,000, you would only pay tax on \$2,000 (\$27,000 - \$25,000). In many situations, people find they have a loss when they cancel their life insurance policies. In those situations, there would be no tax consequences.

Unfortunately, you cannot deduct a loss when you cash out an insurance policy. I think you will find that cashing out your policy no matter the tax cost is a good economic move.

The other option you can consider is what is known as a life settlement. There are many companies that will buy your life insurance policy from you. They take over your policy and continue to make the premium payments. When you pass, since they own the policy, they are the beneficiaries.

If a life settlement company offers you more than your cash surrender value, then it makes sense to sell through them. After all, if you can make more money, why not. On the other hand, if the life settlement offers you less than

the cash surrender value, it makes no sense to deal with them. In many situations, selling a life insurance policy through a life settlement company allows you to put more money in your pocket, exactly where it belongs.

There are many legit life settlement companies but there are also ones that are not. Do your homework ahead of time and only deal with companies you can trust.

I always recommend people evaluate their life insurance coverage and consider if they still need it. There may have been very good reasons why you bought a life insurance policy 30 years ago, but the real issue is if you need it today. My philosophy is you shouldn't pay for something you don't need. Therefore, I recommend that you spend time looking at your current life insurance coverage, and if you find that you have policies you do not need, why not get rid of them.

Whether you cash out the policy or do a life settlement, the money you save always looks better in your pocket.

Good luck.

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

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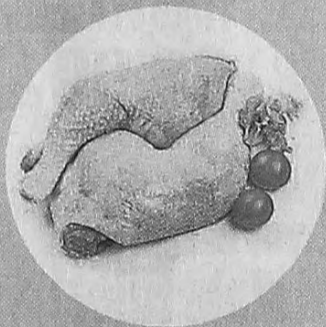
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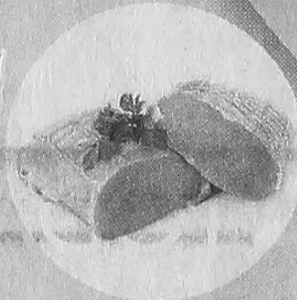
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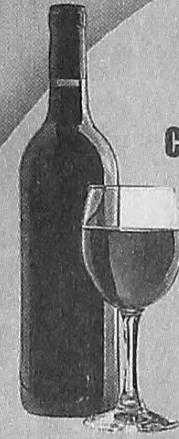
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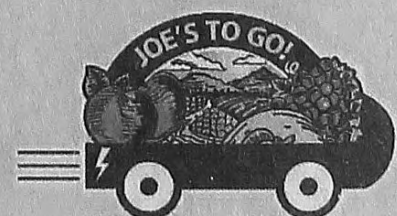
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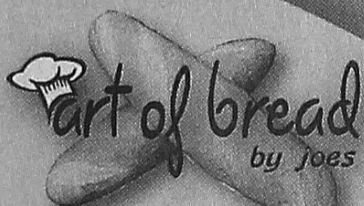
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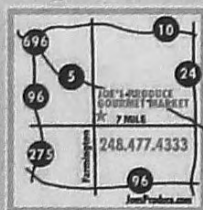
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SPORTS

Northville rowing makes history, wins three state titles

Contributed Content

At the Division 1 state championship regatta in Grand Rapids, the Northville rowing team took home some hardware.

For the first time in state history, the Mustangs took home all three champi-

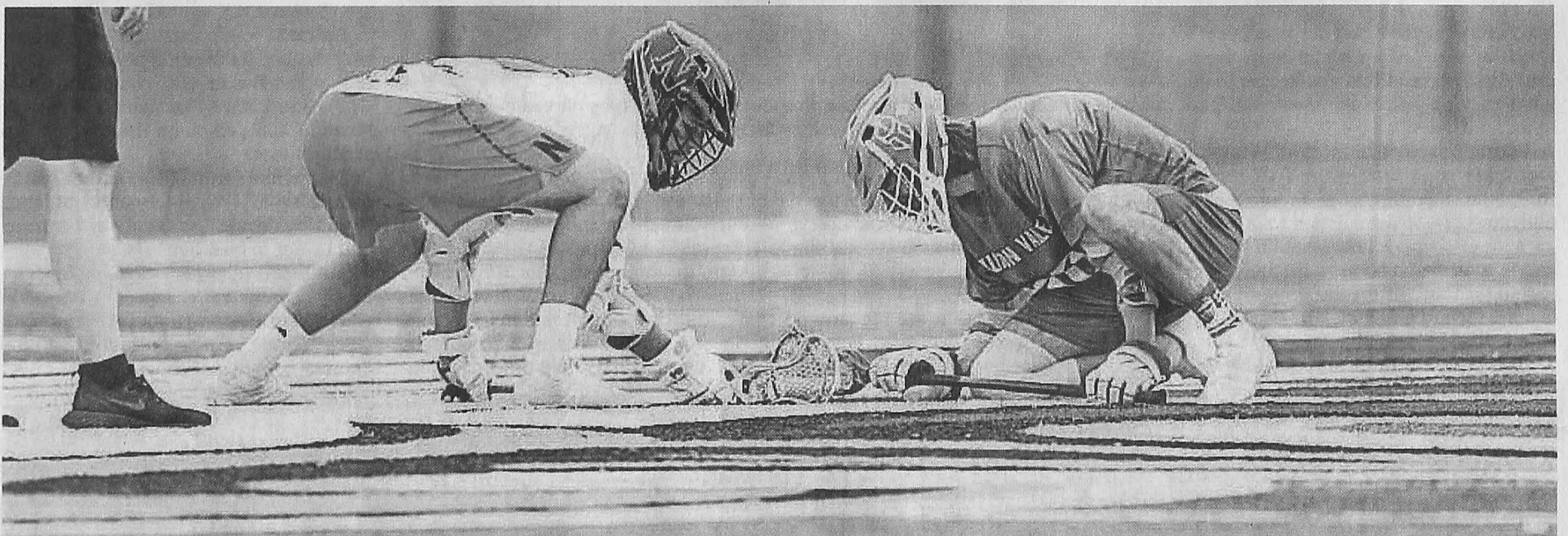
onships: the overall team state title, the overall girls state title and the overall boys state title.

Northville earned gold medals in three events: the Men's 2V/JR 8+, in which Radhika Ajmera, Leyton DeMeo, Shivang Kapoor, Drew DeFrancesco, Will Mack, Kareem Abbasi, Daniel

DeAlmeida, Ben Kemnitz, Aaron Kimnitz earned the win; the Men's freshman 4+, including Lillie Gregory, Avery DiFrancesco, Daniel DeAlmeida, Kareem Abbasi, Joe Siddall; and the Women's 2V/JR 4+, which included Hannah Sondreal, Elizabeth Hartigan, Natasha Kobelsku, Riley Finn, Brigita Sumskas.

Northville's Ava Kehoe finished as a runner up in the Women's 1x, while Kianna May and Makala Hande earned silver medals in the Women's 2x. May, Hande, Kehoe and Annika Zaar also finished second in the Women's 4x.

See ROWING, Page 4B



Northville senior Nick Lauderback faces off against Huron Valley United. DAVID DONOHER / SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

NORTHVILLE LACROSSE STORMS BACK, BEATS HURON VALLEY UNITED IN REGIONAL SEMIFINAL

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Northville took awhile to find its groove in the regional semifinal.

Facing a Huron Valley United team they had beaten already once in 2021, 16-10 on May 7, the Mustangs boys lacrosse team came out slow in the game that counted most.

Titans junior Ryan Davis passed the ball over the heads of each of the Mustang defenders, landing directly into the stick of Logan Gillis, who fired for the score, the first of four for Huron Valley United in the first 12 minutes.

Northville head coach Shaun Dicken knows success comes from the effort shown, something that Huron Valley had the advantage in.

"It has to be obvious that we are putting out the best effort," Dicken said. "At the beginning of the game, it was Huron Valley without a doubt. We just made that effort to pick up every single ground

ball and that's what turned around the game."

Northville (9-4) outscored the Titans, 9-3, in the final three quarters of play, beating Huron Valley United (7-9), 10-7, in the Region 4 semifinal and advancing to the regional final for the first time since 2018.

"We came out, I think our nerves got the best of us in that first quarter," senior Luke Wierengo said. "We huddled as a group, picked the things we had to work on and we worked on it."

Eighty-eight seconds into the second half, Northville shifted the momentum for good.

Trailing by three goals, senior attackman Luke Tardich found senior Colton Kuehl for the Mustangs' second goal of the game. The one goal opened the seal for the Mustangs, scoring five goals, including two by Tardich, to hold onto a 6-6 tie heading into halftime.

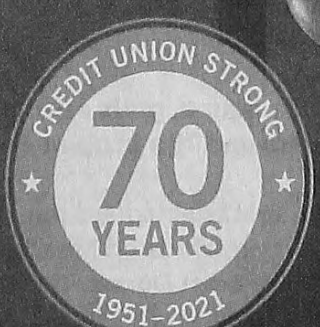
See NORTHVILLE, Page 4B




Huron Valley United junior Brendan Dale tries to find an opening against Northville. DAVID DONOHER / SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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Livonia Churchill soccer passes rival Franklin, advances to district semifinals

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Christopher Burnette is a Livonia Franklin alum, coaches the Patriots boys soccer team in the fall and has a daughter, Reagan, on the Patriots girls soccer team in the spring. But when he arrived at the high school, clad in black and red, he knew he had a job to do: stop Franklin's playoff run.

In the first round of District 11 play, though, there was no guarantee. Burnette, the Churchill girls soccer head coach, had not lost to Franklin in 2021, but held only a one-goal advantage against the Patriots over two meetings.

That one-goal advantage was all Churchill (8-8-2) needed to get the job done on the road, beating Franklin (6-10-1), 2-1, for its first playoff win since the 2015 season.

"I knew it would be a tough game," Burnette said. "No matter what, we play each other hard. It depends who's the better team really at the end of the game."

After holding onto a two-goal lead for the majority of the game - accumulated through goals from junior Kate Heston and sophomore Rebecca Rohmfeld, who was called up from the junior varsity team for that game - Churchill nearly lost it in the final 10 minutes.

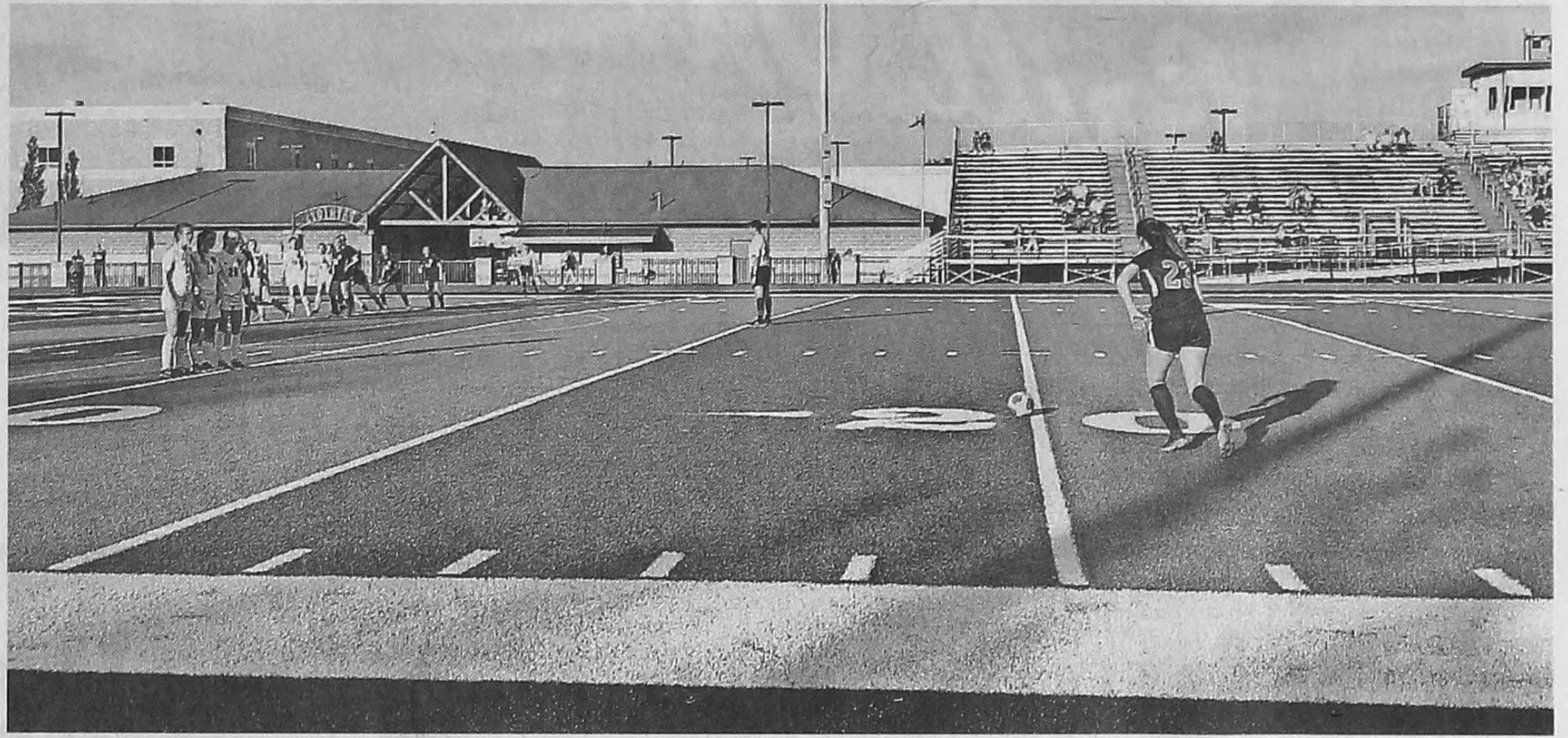
Franklin had been trying to claw its way back throughout the game. Freshman Alyssa Simmons-Dindelley and sophomore Leah Kuhn formed multiple chances in the first half of play, each either stopped by a crossbar or by the hands of Churchill goalkeeper Trinity Vallejo.

"Trinity has been key for us all year," Burnette said. "When we do make those mistakes, we need that goalkeeper to do what they do and make those extreme saves."

Patriots senior Madison Marano found her opportunity with 8:27 left in the game, recording a goal across her body to cut her team's deficit to one.

With 45 seconds left, Franklin saw itself in a prime position to tie the game, earning a foul within the 40-yard line, leading toward a free kick by Grace Distrlath.

"I've seen her do it all year. She has



Livonia Franklin junior Grace Distrlath tries a free kick late in the first round of District 11 play against Livonia Churchill.

COLIN GAY / HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Livonia Churchill head coach Christopher Burnette addresses his team after its 2-1 win against rival Franklin.

COLIN GAY / HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

multiple goals from that spot. That's her spot. Stars aligned," Franklin head coach Dean Kowalski said. "And the second she hit it, my assistant coach goes, 'It's going. It's in.'"

"I've been doing this a long time. I really thought it went in."

The ball sailed over the head of Vallejo,

but also over the top of the goalpost to secure Churchill's one-goal victory.

Kowalski had high expectations for his group coming into its first playoff game. The team was young, yet confident, knowing what it had in its arsenal could put the Patriots in a position to beat Churchill for the first time in his ten-

ure.

To him, this playoff game was the "fork in the road" for the program, what could prove to be the turning point for Franklin soccer.

"If we want to take that next step where we are mentioned with the Churchill's and the Stevenson's... and not just the third high school... it's going to take performances like this and an offseason to build on it," Kowalski said.

At Churchill, Burnette advances, earning his first playoff win of his time with the Chargers.

Burnette was honest. He would have been excited for his daughter to advance in the postseason. He's coached her his whole life. But they had a mutual understanding that, when on the field, it was strictly soccer.

"She's like, 'It could go either way,'" Burnette said. "When we come out here, it's all business. She wants to beat me and I want to beat her."

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

MAY SPRING HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCOREBOARD

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Baseball

May 25

Lakeland 4, South Lyon 2: Tate Farquhar earned the win on the mound going 6.1 innings giving up one earned run. Kevin Krill has a three-run home run while Trey Rowley added a solo home run.

Lakeland 9, South Lyon 2: Matthew Hanneman earned the win on the mound. Dom Slone had a two-run home run and scored three runs while Nolan Hull, Tyler Moore and Kevin Krill each had hits.

May 22

Clarkston 6, Lakeland 4: Gavin Meehan went 3-3 with an RBI. Tate Farquhar was 1-2 with an RBI. Caden Duryea, Kevin Krill and Matthew Hanneman each had hits.

Lakeland 15, Clarkston 5: Andrew Potter earned the win on the mound. Brandon Abrey was 3-4 with an RBI. Kevin Krill, Matthew Hanneman and Tyler Moore all had two hits in the winning effort.

May 19

Lakeland 12, Walled Lake Northern 7: Gavin Meehan earned the win on the mound in relief, giving the Eagles a gutsy 4.2 shutout innings. LHS pounded out 18 hits led by Kevin Krill who was 3-4 with five RBI including a home run. Tate Farquhar was 3-3 with a walk, Ryan Abrey was 3-4 while Caden Duryea, Andrew Platt and Dom Slone each added two hits.

May 18

Lakeland 9, Walled Lake Northern 2: Tate Farquhar picked up the win on the mound going six innings scattering five hits and striking out six. Ryan Abrey went 2-2 with two RBI and Nolan Hull also had two hits.

Walled Lake Northern 3, Lakeland 1: Kevin Krill, Caden Duryea and Trey Rowley all had hits.

May 15

Lakeland 7, Northville 6: Jake Held earned the win on the mound in relief. The Eagles scored five runs on the top of the seventh to take the lead. Dom Slone was 2-4, Matthew Hanneman recorded one hit with three RBI. Kyle Zavinsky had the big two-RBI single for the go-ahead runs.

Novi 4, Lakeland 1: The Wildcats handed the Eagles its second loss of the season,

scoring four runs in the bottom of the third inning. Freshman left-hander Brendon Bennett threw six innings, allowing one run on four hits, four walks and seven strikeouts. Dom Slone took the loss on the mound for Lakeland. Caden Duryea recorded two hits.

May 14

Lakeland 7, Milford 1: Tate Farquhar earned the win on the mound, throwing a complete game scattering just four hits and striking out nine. He also scored two runs and hit a triple at the plate. Kevin Krill was 2-4 on the day while Gavin Meehan hit a huge two-run homer off the tree over the left-field fence.

Lakeland 4, Milford 2: Caden Dureya earned the win coming on in relief. The Eagles scored all four of their runs on the top of the seventh inning for the come-from-behind win. Andrew Platt has the big blow with the two-out, two-RBI triple to plate the go-ahead run. Mason Brown added two hits in the victory.

May 12

Lakeland 8, Waterford Kettering 0: Matthew Zaremba picked up the win on the mound, throwing five innings. Caden Duryea pitched the final two scoreless innings to combine for the shutout. Andrew Platt, Ryan Abrey and Brandon Abrey each had two hits. Tate Farquhar had an RBI triple in the first inning to start the scoring and Kevin Krill and Gavin Meehan each had two RBI.

May 11

Lakeland 10, Waterford Kettering 0: Tate Farquhar picked up the win on the mound throwing five shutout innings including six strikeouts. Gavin Meehan and Nolan Hull each recorded two hits at the plate while Tyler Moore added a hit.

Lakeland 13, Waterford Kettering 3: Kyle Zavinsky picked up the win on the mound going four innings. Kevin Krill was 3-3 with four runs scored and Caden Duryea was 2-2 with two walks and five RBI. Andrew Platt also had two hits in the contest.

May 8

Lakeland 10, Chippewa Valley 2: Andrew Potter earned his first varsity win on the mound. Kevin Krill had four hits in four at bats with three RBI, Tate Farquhar was recorded two hits with three runs scored and Brandon Abrey had two hits in two at bats with an RBI.

Lakeland 13, Livonia Franklin 3: Dom



Northville golfer Griffin Blackman participates in an event at The Loop at Forest Dunes. COURTESY OF KURT BRAUN

Slone earned the victory on the mound. Caden Dureya and Mason Brown each recorded two hits and an RBI while Kevin Krill, Matthew Hanneman, Brandon Abrey and Jake Werth all had hits in the victory.

May 5

Lakeland 12, Walled Lake Western 0: Tate Farquhar threw a complete-game shutout on the mound striking out seven in the six-inning mercy-shortened contest. The Eagles banged out 16 hits including three each by Andrew Platt, Kevin Krill and Nolan Hull. Matthew Hanneman contributed with a double and three RBI. Lakeland 5, Walled Lake Western 0: Kyle Zavinsky and Matthew Hanneman combined for the shutout on the mound. Kevin Krill and Tate Farquhar each had two hits while Trey Rowley had a hit and RBI.

Boys golf

May 1

Northville splits squad, golfs events at Huron Meadows and The Loop at Forest Dunes

The Mustangs split their squad this past Saturday for events at Huron Meadows and The Loop at Forest Dunes. The Mustangs posted a team score of 323, led by Mason Sokolowski's seven-over par 77 at

The Loop, an event that featured some of the State's top teams.

All four of Northville's remaining players (Greg Braun, Michael Gallagher, Ryan Gallagher, and Griffin Blackman) carded scores of 82 on the day. Catholic Central captured the team title by 20 strokes, shooting an impressive 289.

At The Highest Honor Invitational at Huron Meadows Golf Course, Northville finished seventh out of 19 teams, posting a team score of 320. Jack Thallman continued his solid play, carding a teamObest 78. Nathan Blazo finished with an 80, and Nick Tokarz and Ashrith Mummadi capped the scoring, each recording an 81. Novi won the event with a score of 305.

Softball

Girls soccer

May 13

South Lyon East 0, Waterford Kettering 0: Despite several injuries, the Cougars could not connect on any of its offensive opportunities, earning their third tie of the season.

See SCOREBOARD, Page 4B

Samantha Maday learns lessons from three Novi varsity sports

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The start of Samantha Maday's spring season was not normal.

As a junior, she was one of the only Novi girls soccer players that came in with any varsity playing experience, working with a group getting its first taste of the top level of action.

Maday didn't play much her freshman year. She was called up late in the year after goalkeeper Abbey Pfeiffer was shut down due to an injury, starting for the Wildcats at goal for the remainder of their 2019 state championship season.

But as a freshman, she gained some varsity experience, not something most freshmen can say. And she knew what was expected of her at that level, playing for the Novi girls basketball team in the winter.

These were the lessons that went through her mind each time she took the soccer field in 2021, lessons she learned from the players that came before her no matter what sport she was playing.

"Being that freshman on varsity basketball and freshman on varsity soccer, it was kind of an eye-opener to see how they treated me, how they were welcoming, how all of that played out in my freshman year," Maday said. "I have been able to take what I have learned from the older kids that came before me and use it and just help the younger kids, help them get better at whatever sport I'm doing."

The junior said it starts and ends with communication. No matter what sport she's in, she wants her and her teammates to be in each other's heads, to know each other's strength and weaknesses on and off the court.

Maday knows better than anyone that this doesn't change in each of the three sports she plays at Novi: basketball, soccer and, for the first time this past season, football as the Wildcats' starting kicker.

Football was not originally in the cards for the Novi junior, but a close relationship with her physics teacher -



Junior Samantha Maday has been one of Novi girls soccer's main veterans in 2021. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SAMANTHA MADAY

former Novi head football coach Jeff Burnside - and the logic of "I can kick a soccer ball, I might as well try to kick a football," placed Maday on the field for the Wildcats in the fall.

At first, it was a weird and uncomfortable experience for Maday, not because it was a team filled with guys, but being treated a bit differently as the only girl. However, the outcome was the same when she stepped up to kick each extra point: the focus was there and the support was there from the sideline.

"Eventually, everyone was cheering me on, everyone was doing the same thing my other two sports teams do: making me a better player for that sport," Maday said.

On the soccer field, that means knowing that no one can play as an individual. Instead, it's a team-focused sport - more so, Maday said, than football and basketball - and that everyone has to do their specific job in order for the whole team to play well.

This is what has kept Maday involved in sports since she was young. No matter the season, the Novi junior is playing two sports, juggling high school and club athletics at the same time.

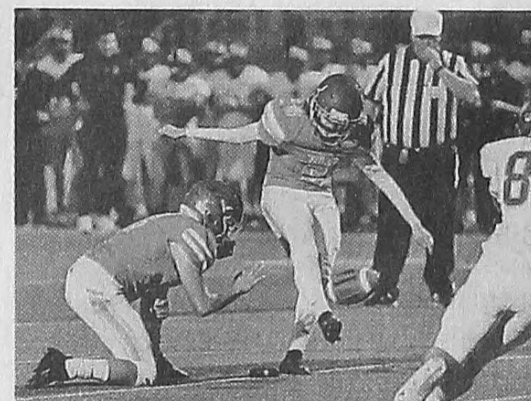
Heading into her final year of high school and approaching college, Maday doesn't know what relationship she will have with her sports in the future. As she looks into potential college homes, Maday is making sure each has an opportunity for her to continue playing basketball or soccer, whether it's for the school or for a club team.

The idea of being a normal student appeals to Maday, of watching football games in the stands with her friends as a senior. But she knows the impact Novi soccer and basketball have made on her, and that's not something she plans to give up any time soon.

"As much as I love being an actual student sometimes," Maday said, "I don't think I could leave any of my sports behind."



Maday has been a four-year player for Novi's girls basketball team.



Maday joined the Novi football team in 2020 as its kicker.

Athlete of the Week results

Maday won the Hometown Life Athlete of the Week poll the week of May 17, earning 11,451 (35.29%) of the 32,450 total votes cast.

Northville lacrosse senior Colton Kuehl earned 9,410 votes (29%) for second place, while Northville track and field senior Yasmine Mansi finished third with 7,106 votes (21.9%).

Livonia Stevenson softball player Janie West finished fourth and Novi track and field senior Miles Brown finished fifth.

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The Northville rowing team took home three championship trophies in all three state competitions. COURTESY OF CHERYL PHILLIPS

Rowing

Continued from Page 1B

The Mustangs placed second in

three more events: the Women's 2C/JR 8+ (Email Guan, Nora Bhandari, Paige Bobak, Olivia Spradlin, Allison Phillips, Mahita Parulekar, Abigail O'Connell, Taylor Zeimen and Kayl), the Women's Freshman 4+ (Adriana Rudolphi, Mahita

Parulekar, Allison Phillips, Olivia Spradlin and Claire Collyer) and the Men's 1V8 (Emily Walker, Adam Bis, Michael Jeromski, Russell Kobelsky, Thaddeus Felosak, Nathan Bennett, Charles Hud- dy, Seth Sharples and Kyle Walter).

Jacob Mallabo earned a bronze medal in the Men's 1x, while Charlie Huddy, Kyle Walter, Seth Sharples and Nathan Bennett finished third in the Men's 4x. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Northville

Continued from Page 1B

The Mustangs held its ground against the Titans in the second half, keeping Huron Valley United scoreless in the third quarter, while adding two scores by freshman Kaili Hayami and senior Nick Salamone, who scored Northville's final two goals of the first half.

Instead of the momentum shifting back toward the Titans at the beginning of the fourth quarter when junior Brendan Dale found the back of the net 34 seconds into the period, Northville kept the Titans offense at bay, scoring twice — one by Tardich, who ended the game with three goals and an assist, and one by senior Evan Surman — and beating the Titans by three.

"The biggest thing honestly was just keeping our heads in it," senior Nick Lauderback said. "We knew that everything we worked on in practice, our

game plan was good. We just had to get the game under control. It really came down to settling down into the game, letting our skills take over. I thought we were the better team towards the end of the game."

Dale finished the game with three goals and an assist for the Titans.

To Wierengo, Northville is finding its groove at the right time, getting rid of the nerves early in games and firing when necessary.

But only after 13 games played together, the senior said that there is not a group he would rather be playing with at this point.

"Every single guy is a part of the team," Wierengo said. "We've really found ourselves and meshed together as a team and win big games and battle hard next to all the guys."

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

Scoreboard

Continued from Page 2B

May 11

Novi 2, Canton 1

May 6

South Lyon East 3, Milford 2

May 4

South Lyon East 5, South Lyon 2: Trailing 1-0 after a penalty kick by South Lyon, the Cougars recorded three goals in the span of 20 minutes, adding two more in the second half to remain undefeated.

Boys track and field

May 6

Novi 78, Northville 59: Despite winning three of the four relays, the Mustangs managed to take first place in just two other events. Connor Lee easily won the long jump with his leap of 18-11.00, leading a Northville sweep in the event. Arthur Zhao (17-6.00) and Brian McCallum (17-0.75) also scored. Northville finished first in the 400, 800, and 1,600 relays

while Novi won the 3,200 relay.

Girls track and field

May 6

Northville 88, Novi 48: The Mustangs remain undefeated after their 40-point win against Novi, winning all four relays and sweeping the 400, 1,600, shot put, and high jump. Freshman Abby Byers took first in the 100 hurdles in 18.10. Yasmine Mansi led the way in the 1,600 in 5:18.84.

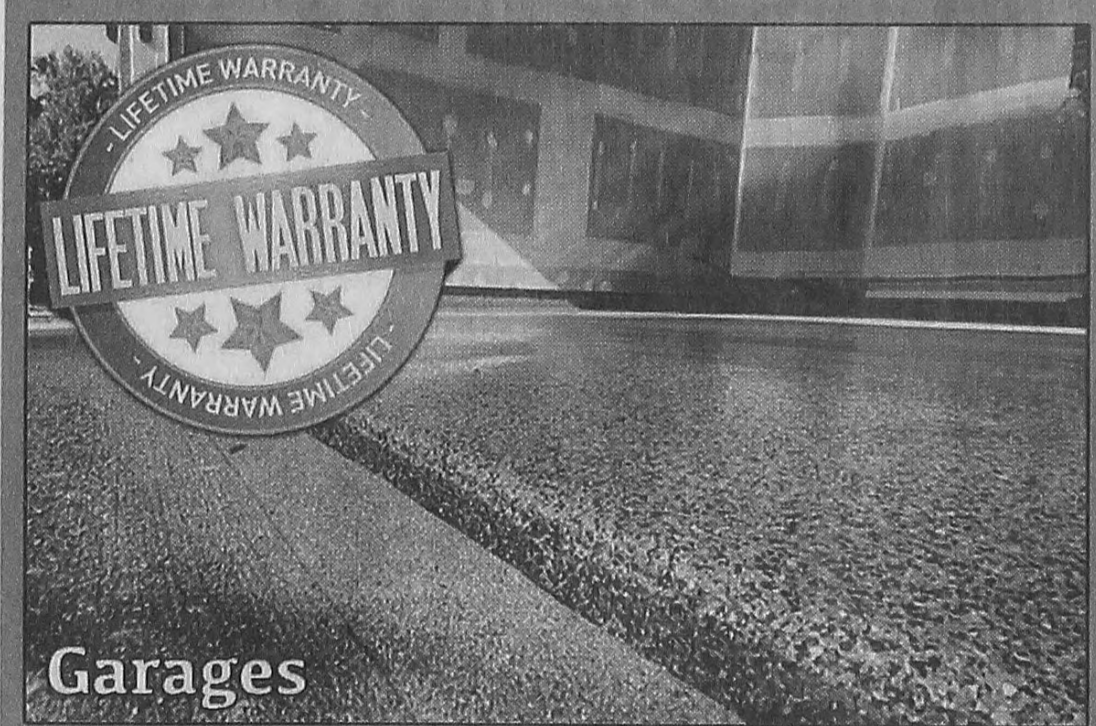
Girls lacrosse

May 20

Birmingham 19, Grosse Pointe South 10: Abbie Caza led Birmingham with five goals, while Gwyn Wineman and Grace Hupp each added three, giving Birmingham its first playoff win and advancing the team to the second round of the MHSAA tournament.

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

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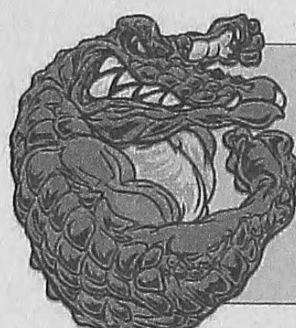
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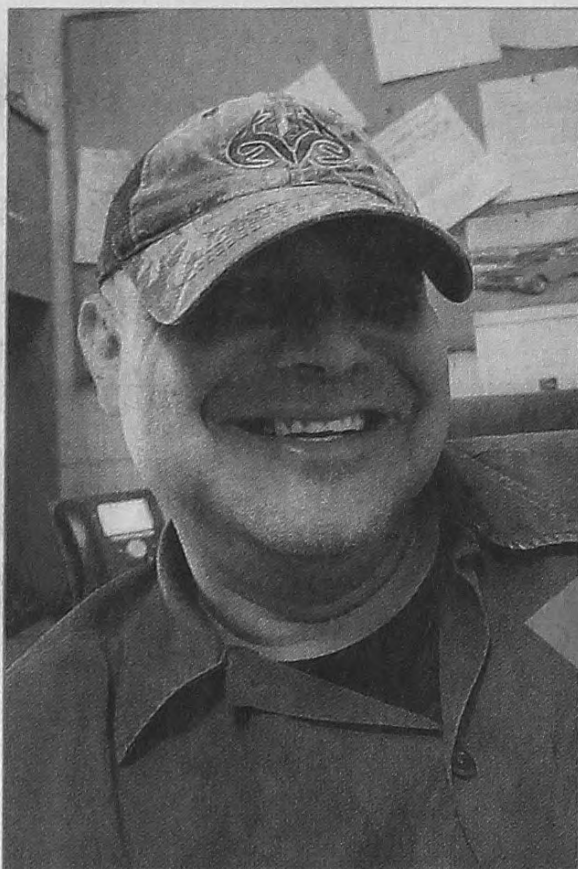
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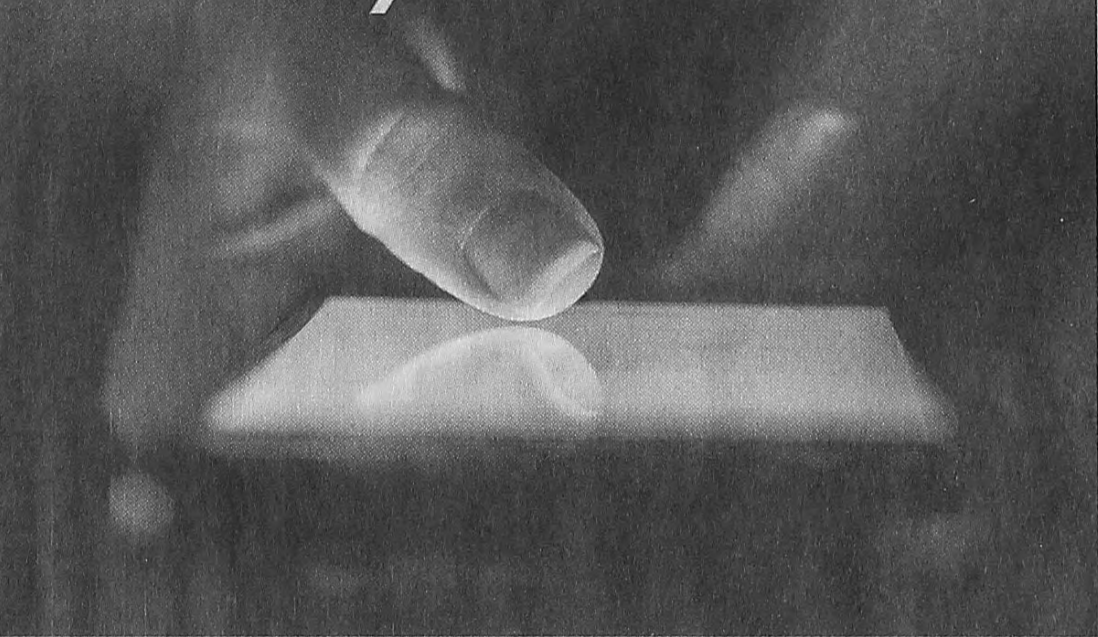
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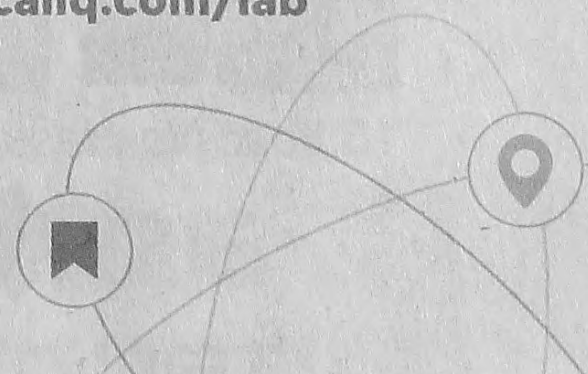
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