

Stevenson swimmer's perseverance led to Air Force

SPORTS, 1B

CANTON

OBSERVER

SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2021 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

MDOT plans public meeting for I-275 project

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Michigan Department of Transportation plans to start a major reconstruction of Interstate 275 in July.

Work will span across four years, covering 24 miles of the highway between Will Carlton Road and 6 Mile Road. MDOT plans to spend \$257 mil-

lion on the project. The project area runs through Wayne County communities including Livonia, Plymouth, Canton and Northville.

"We're very excited; we can't wait," said Jeff Horne, MDOT's project manager for I-275. "We've been thinking about this every day for the past year."

This year, crews will focus on concrete repair between Will Carlton and

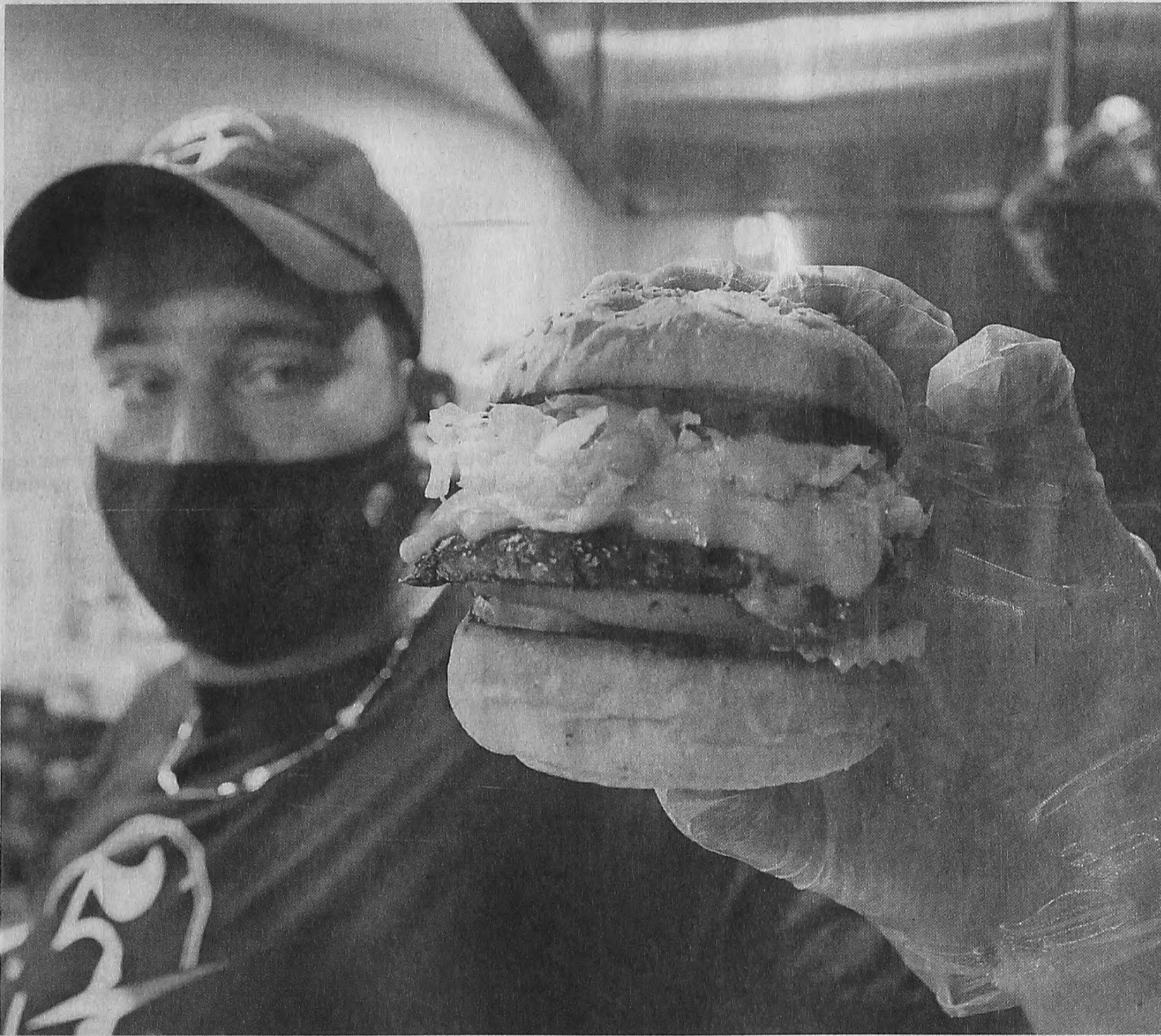
Northline roads as well as culvert replacements between Northline and Five Mile roads. Work is scheduled to start in July and will continue through November, costing about \$15 million. Drivers will have access to the stretch at all times but can expect lane and ramp closures from time to time.

Joggers and cyclists can also expect the I-275 Metro Trail, which runs along-

side the interstate, to close at M-14 and Schoolcraft for a short time this summer.

"We are going to repair the M-14 and Schoolcraft bridge, so we have to close that part of the trail for a short period of time while we work on the bridge," Horne said.

See MEETING, Page 6A



Hisham Diab, owner of the new Pump 5 Grille in Livonia, holds up a finished Pump Burger on May 18.

PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Pump 5 Grille reinvents meals from a gas station

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Hisham Diab is out to reinvent what it means to pick up lunch from a gas station.

The Farmington Hills native has teamed up with the Ali family, who owns multiple gas stations in the region, to bring a new restaurant, Pump 5 Grille, to their Mobil station on the southwest corner of Five Mile and Middlebelt in Livonia. It's a concept, he said, that has big potential.

"There's no reason why every gas station in America can't have a Pump 5 Grille, at least in my eyes," he said. "We want to make good food accessible, and we also want to make it simple enough where it can be repeated over and over."

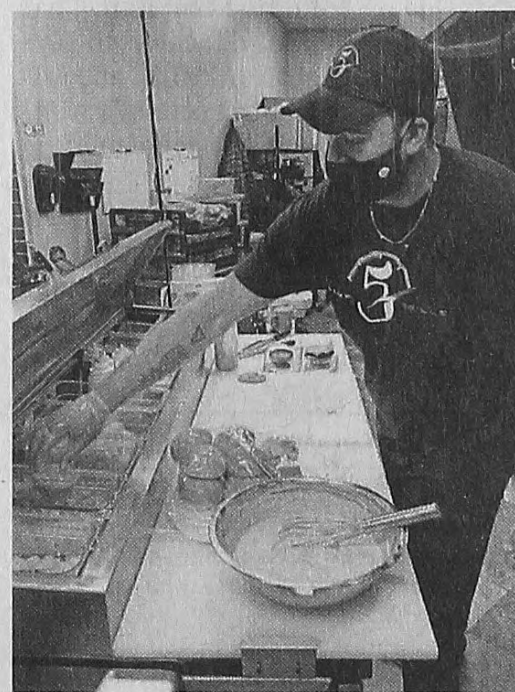
The idea has been in the works since

before the COVID-19 pandemic, Diab said. The convenience store for the station was rebuilt several years ago with the thoughts of having a kitchen. When Diab pulled into the station one day to get gas for a food truck he was working with, it caught the Ali family members' eyes. They began talking and worked to bring the concept into that space. The restaurant began selling food in mid-April.

The original discussion was more simple fare, like hot dogs. But as the space began to evolve, Diab said feedback from customers excited about having a new place to grab a bite to eat prompted him to change the direction and go a little more upscale.

"As we were working on it, people

See PUMP 5 GRILLE, Page 6A



Diab preps some food in the kitchen.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Women business owners, leaders share their experiences

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Longtime grocery store owner Lisa Pardington and relatively-new restaurateur Sasha Richaironarongsongkram have faced the same stubborn hurdle throughout the past several months: an inability to secure employees.

Pardington, who has owned Canton's Holiday Market with her husband John since 1998, said she has lost 30% of her employees since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic while Richaironarongsongkram, who opened Canton's Mhai Thai restaurant in February 2020, has been forced to employ her school-aged children and 74-year-old mother to keep her business operational.

See WOMEN, Page 4A

Wayne city councilman resigns post

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Anthony Miller loves the City of Wayne, and he says he's loved serving on its city council the last six years.

But because of an upcoming move and transition in his personal life, he needed to resign his position effective Tuesday.

"It's been amazing to have the faith and trust of so many residents of this community placed in me," Miller said. "I've seen a lot of things happen here in the last six years. I've seen a lot of good things



Miller

See COUNCILMAN, Page 6A



Greenhouse coming to Livonia Garfield school

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Students at Livonia's Garfield Community School are going to find out whether they have green thumbs.

Following recent approval from the district's school board, Garfield has the go-ahead to construct a 35-foot by 60-foot greenhouse on school property. Garfield, also called the Western Wayne Skills Center, is a work skills program for special needs young adults run by Livonia Public Schools.

"It's something that has been a long time coming," school board President Colleen Burton said at a meeting May 17.

Construction will cost just over \$133,000 and will, the district hopes, wrap up this fall. The project will be funded through grant money and donations from Healthy Livonia.

"I'm really excited about this project," school board Secretary Karen Bradford said. "I'm sure all the students ... are going to be really excited about their new greenhouse."

Like many of the school's other programs, the greenhouse will be part of curriculum and will likely have some benefit to the community. For example, refurbished furniture made in the school's Skill-ful Designs class is put up for sale.

Redford man gets 3-15 years for fatal wreck on I-275

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Redford Township man was sentenced recently to 3-15 years and about \$2,000 in fees because of a fatal Interstate 275 wreck last summer.

James Everett Hatcher, 54, had pleaded no contest to a charge of operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, causing death, when the crash happened July 23 in Canton Township.

Troopers have said he was speeding on northbound I-275 when he rear-ended a vehicle, which rolled over and killed the driver. He failed the troopers' sobriety tests.

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Academy Board of Directors, 2020-21 Board Meeting Calendar, New School High, 46250 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth MI 48170, Phone: (734) 386-6601, Website: newschoolhigh.org

Public Hearing

Time: 6:30 pm Date: Wednesday, June 16, 2021
Location: 46250 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth MI 48170

The budget under consideration is available for public inspection at the meeting. The meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. A copy of the meeting minutes is available for public inspection at the Academy office address within 8 business days for proposed minutes and 5 business days for approved minutes. The Academy shall comply with subtitle A of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336, 42 USC 12101 et seq or any successor law. Should you require special accommodations to participate in the meeting, please contact Wendi Felgner at (734) 386-6601 prior to the meeting.

Publish: June 6, 2021

LO-000359008 3x2 5



Dave Richardson talks about some of the many energy-saving features of the Farmington Hills City Hall on May 4. The photo-voltaic panels at right send electricity to the grid. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

The energy-saving story of Farmington Hills City Hall

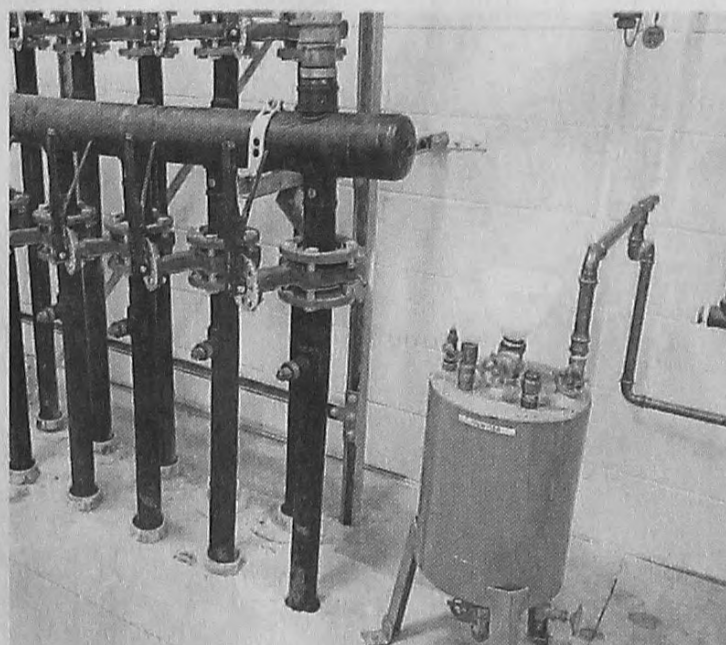
Shelby Tankersley
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

Farmington Hills has a very, very pretty city hall building.

But it's also an energy-saving building that cut the city's energy bills in half since it was remodeled in 2010 for about \$8 million.

Dave Richardson, a partner at Lindhott Associates who worked on the remodel, has overseen many projects similar in scale to Farmington Hills' city hall. But he speaks about this project with a certain level of fondness.

Farmington Hills City Hall, at Orchard Lake and 11 Mile, has a gold LEED certification, and Richardson is a LEED-certified professional. LEED, meaning leadership in energy and envi-



Some of the dozens of heat pump lines that carry water from 300-foot-deep wells below the city hall.

ronmental design, is used worldwide and promotes green energy.

One of Richardson's favorite aspects of the building is the way it's heated.

"Tubes are put in the

ground and they get the heat from the ground into the building as water and that runs to the heat pumps. You use that to heat the building," he explained. "We used this concept of a sunflower

where the geo-roots are like a flower and the translucent panels are like the petals of the flower ... We thought that was a great concept."

Use of recycled materials, improved insulation, occupancy sensors and natural lighting are other eco-friendly aspects of city hall.

Even though the building is more than 14,000 square feet larger than it was 11 years ago, its energy use is about half. In 2007-08, the building used 4,668.4 MMBtu, a unit of energy measurement. In 2011-12, it used 2,142.5 MMBtu. Because of that, the building is well on its way to recuperating the cost of the remodel, he said.

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at stankersley@hometownlife.com or 248-305-0448. Twitter: @shelby_tankk.

Auto sales return to Farmington Hills lot

David Veselenak
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

A now-vacant building is expected to revert back to its former automotive use along Grand River in Farmington Hills.

The vacant building at 30250 Grand River Ave., is tentatively planned to become a car dealership once again after it had previously served as the facility for Steppingstone School for gifted children. That school relocated to Plymouth in 2018, according to the school's website, leaving the building empty.

Now, a Farmington Hills developer plans to resurrect the property back to its car dealer-

ship days, though with a twist: the lot would be for online sales instead of in-person sales.

Those changes have required the petitioners for the project to come to the city for approval of the site plan, since the use is technically changing.

"This property has always been developed as a car dealership with the exception that intermly it was used as a charter school," Arie Leibovitz, the petitioner representing the project, said to the planning commission. "At the time, there were no requirements to make any changes to the site plan and we are now coming back to put it back for the property to be intended to use... Because of the technically that they make sales online, we got into this situation."

Some of those changes, especially when it comes to landscaping, were discussed during the planning commission's May 20 meeting held virtually. The commission discussed the project at a previous meeting back in March and gave it tentative approval then, though with several conditions.

Some of those conditions required approval



Formerly an auto dealership before hosting a school, the property at 30250 Grand River Ave. in Farmington Hills is set to go back to auto sales, albeit online.

DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

for landscaping items placed in the right-of-way with the Michigan Department of Transportation. The plan presented May 20 showed the landscaping on the property instead of in the right-of-way.

"One of the conditions of the motion would be they needed to get MDOT approval for those to locate those trees in that right-of-way," said Mark Stec, the city planner. "I'm not sure if there is an issue ... the proponent can maybe explain better why they are choosing, whether they couldn't get the approval from MDOT or if they're electing to just not pursuing that ap-

proval through MDOT but they have submitted this plan now showing the landscaping on their land.

"The revised plans that are included in here did meet the conditions of approval from the previous motion to approve."

The planning commission voted to recommend approval of the revised site plan during its meeting. There was no immediate timetable for when the site could reopen as the online dealership.

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

Why Canton Cup went on, Liberty Fest did not

Ed Wright hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Canton welcomed an injection of thousands of youth soccer players and fans who converged on the township for the 38th Canton Cup Memorial Day Soccer Tournament May 28-30.

Lines of waiting customers — many still wearing soccer uniforms — snaked outside of eating venues — long-anticipated sights given the social-distancing restrictions inflicted on businesses since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in March 2020.

Making sure the 2021 event took place was instrumental for the Canton Soccer Club, which saw its top fundraising event canceled in 2020 by the pandemic.

The tournament, which drew the largest crowds at Independence Park — the hub of the event — was held three weeks before the township's annual Liberty Fest was scheduled to take place June 17-19 at Heritage Park.

Established in 1991, Liberty Fest typically welcomes thousands of individuals each year, but was canceled for the second year in a row in mid-April due to pandemic-related concerns.

Township Leisure Services Director Greg Hohenberger said there are clear-cut reasons why one event went on while the other was scrapped until 2022.

"The soccer tournament was able to go on because they were able to control the size of the event," Hohenberger said. "The Canton Soccer Club ensured us that it would hold the number of teams to 50% of what it normally has. With Liberty Fest, there are no exit or entrance controls, especially for the fireworks when people congregate in parking lots and the golf course, so crowd sizes are more difficult to keep in check."

"Timing worked against Liberty Fest, too. If we would have known in January, February or March that there would be no COVID-related restrictions in June, we could have held at least a smaller version of what we normally have. But there are so many components to put in place — food vendors, bands, restaurants and community groups — and we just didn't have enough time. We waited as long as we could (April 15) to officially



The Trapp family enjoys an afternoon of Canton Cup soccer at Independence Park. COURTESY OF JOHN KEMSKI/EXPRESS PHOTO

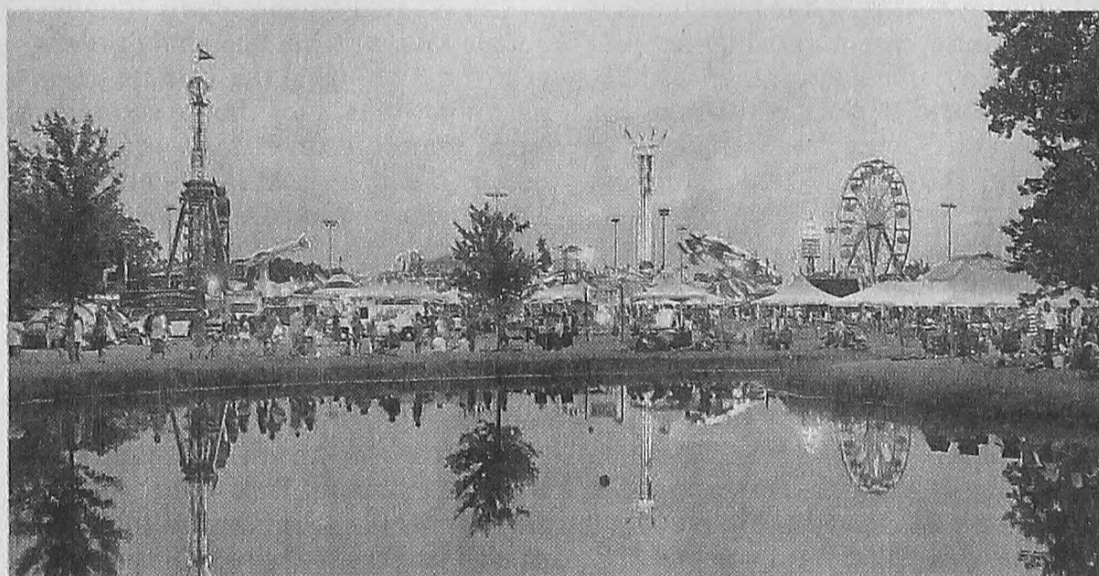
cancel the event."

Hohenberger said the township is planning on orchestrating some type of fall event that will help compensate for the loss of Liberty Fest for the second consecutive year.

"The fall or late-summer event, or even a series of events, wouldn't be the size of Liberty Fest, but we're working on creating some type of community get-together," Hohenberger said.

"And unless something totally unforeseen happens between now and then, the 2022 Liberty Fest is going to be more awesome than ever."

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



Typically, Liberty Fest draws thousands of people. HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

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Women

Continued from Page 1A

Labeling the problem a workforce shortage would be deceptive, the two business owners agreed during the May 26 "Women Owned Wednesday" event at Jacob Matthew Jewelers in Canton. Representatives from the Canton Chamber of Commerce as well as several female community leaders and small business owners, including host Tammy Haggerty, joined U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens, D., whose staff orchestrates the weekly events throughout Michigan's 11th Congressional District.

Finding employees has been a struggle, the business owners said, with the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency including \$300 weekly Pandemic Unemployment Compensation payments in addition to regular unemployed benefits.

The additional payment comes from an extension of the federal COVID-19 relief package passed in December, meaning unemployed people could make as much as \$662 a week, depending on how much was earned while employed.

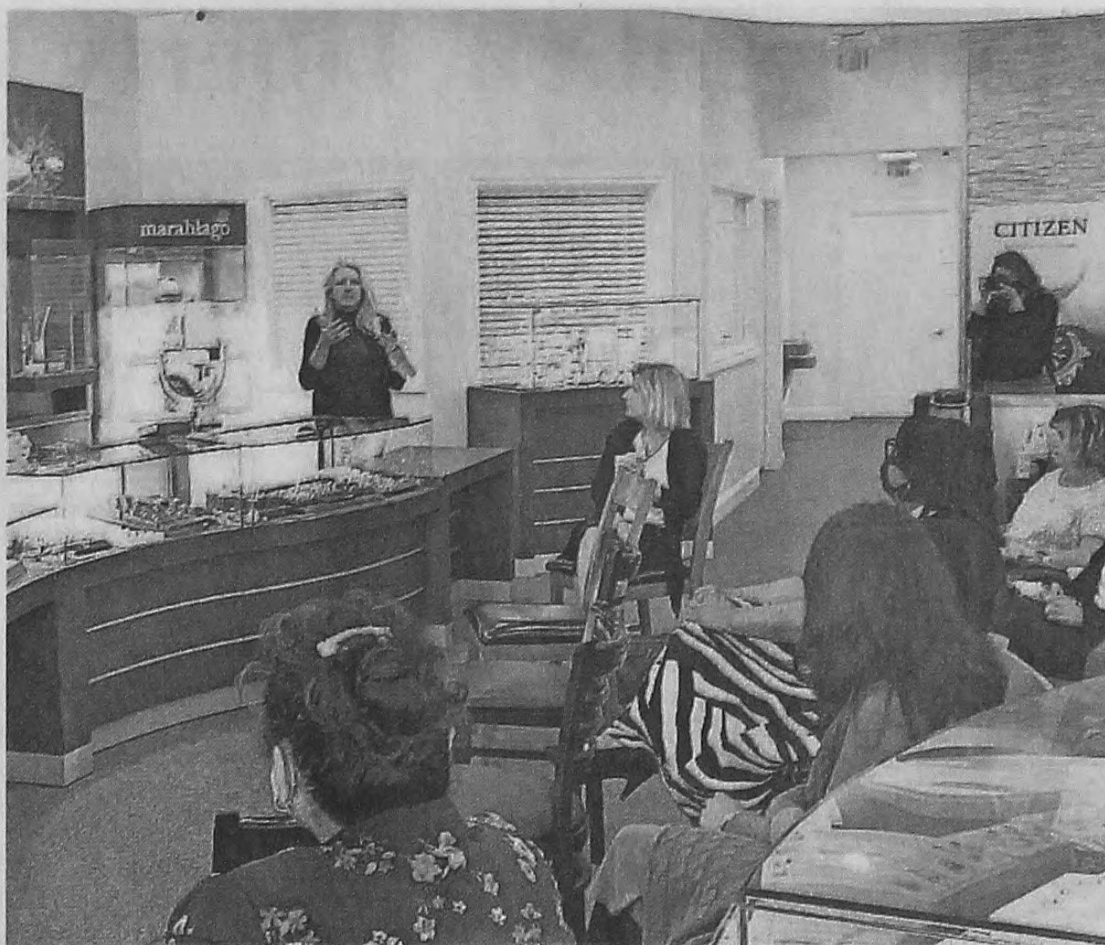
The PUC payments have erased incentive to work for a high percentage of people — not a shortage of capable employees — Pardington asserted.

"I have a stack of employee application forms that people came in and filled out just so they could go to the state and say they applied for two jobs that week," Pardington said, holding up a handful of forms. "Not only are people deciding to collect unemployment instead of working, I'm losing employees to the big-box stores that can pay \$25 an hour."

"I will say that students from the Plymouth-Canton community high schools have been amazing. When adults haven't wanted to work because of the unemployment they're getting, I've been able to hire 18-and-under students for jobs they wouldn't be able to get during a normal economy."

Richaironarongsongkram said applicants have revealed their motivation for filling out job applications with no intention to actually work at her restaurant.

"Shortages of products and produce are making it even harder to make a profit," she said. "I used to be able to get a case of chicken for \$48; now it's \$97. The price of (cooking) oil has increased



Jacob Matthew Jewelers owner Tammy Haggerty recently hosted a forum for women business owners and community leaders. U.S. Congresswoman Haley Stevens answered questions and listened to concerns from the women.

PHOTOS BY ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

from \$16 to \$48.

"I pick my kids up at 3 p.m. from school and bring them to the restaurant to work. It's sad, but at the same time I'm proud of them because they want to help their family succeed."

"You're my hero," Stevens said.

It became clear early in the discussion that the mounting issues for small businesses far outweigh the solutions.

Laurel Hess, who owns Canton's Jungle Java with her husband Eric, suggested a plan using the various unemployment dollars for those who take a work opportunity instead of staying home to collect unemployment — an idea Stevens planned to pass along.

"I work at the federal level, so I can't change this situation because these laws are made at the gubernatorial level," Stevens said. "But I can try to talk to people on the state level and share your concerns."

Medina Atchinson of Belleville-based Atchinson Ford said self-employed people like landscapers and small-business owners are unable to pay their automotive services bills be-

cause of pandemic-related financial struggles.

"They can't hire adequate staff, so the amount of work they can do is down," she said. "When the vehicles they need to do their job break down, they bring them in to us. We do what we can, but there's only so much we can do because we have bills to pay, too."

Atchinson added that computer-chip shortages for vehicles have made it so her dealership doesn't have enough inventory to match demand.

"There are a lot of people struggling," she told Stevens. "We need help."

Merritt said school districts will need more financial resources from the government to help them deal with long-term social/emotional issues their students are likely to face after having to endure the adversarial conditions created by the pandemic.

Merritt said her school district has lost two students who died by suicide since February, a sobering reminder of how serious the mental-health crisis is for young people.

Kunjan Patel, owner of Primrose



Lisa Pardington, the owner of Holiday Market, said finding employees these days is challenging.



Mhai Thai owner Sasha Richaironarongsongkram, pictured with her daughter Tasha, opened her Canton restaurant in February 2020.

School in Canton, said her business has dealt with a myriad of issues since opening its doors in June 2020.

"We've faced a workforce shortage that has led me to hiring family to help us out," she said. "Then you have the ever-changing mask mandates for kids as young as 2 years old and whether or not vaccinated teachers need to wear masks."

"It's a struggle. We're going to get through it. I'm not sure how yet, but we will get through it."

Atchinson said the country needs to return to the core values that she said made it so successful for decades.

"The United States was built on hard work," she said. "People who work feel better about themselves. We need to get back to that; the sooner, the better."

Stevens pledged to reach out to state-level decision-makers with the roundtable attendees' list of problems. She also suggested forming a Canton-based coalition for small business owners.

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

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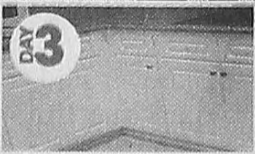
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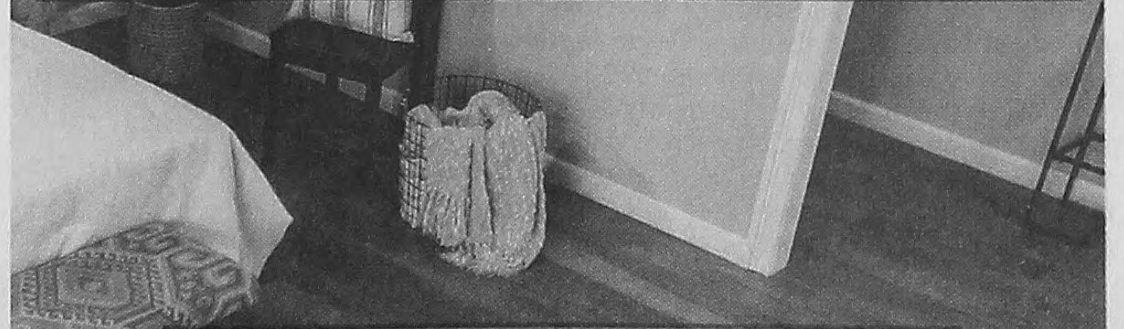
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Cady-Boyer Barn fire destroys event plans

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Canton Township's historic Cady-Boyer Barn was slated to be the perfect setting for graduation parties, baby showers and other events in 2021.

Years in the making, a new nearly \$300,000 pavilion with restrooms was supposed to make the Preservation Park barn an even more popular venue for special moments and charmed memories that nodded to the township's agricultural past.

But the big ol' red barn kissed by plenty of sunrises and sunsets is gone.

Police and fire officials are investigating why flames destroyed the Preservation Park landmark on Sunday, over the Memorial Day weekend, while others scramble to replan parties, reunions and annual gatherings.

"Unfortunately, we have graduation parties scheduled for that barn over the next several weeks," Greg Hohenberger, Canton's leisure services director, said. "I have one that's supposed to be happening this Saturday and we're trying to figure out what we can do for them. It's really unfortunate."

Emergency dispatchers called him to find out what was inside the barn as it burned. The pre-Civil War structure burned quickly at the 500 Ridge Road North address.

Hohenberger arrived to find the barn gone. There were just a few standing beams left, which he found "sad" and "surreal."

"Long term, we're just starting those discussions about what we're going to do," Hohenberger said. "I'm sure that we will do something. I just don't know exactly what that plan will be. We're so early in the process. I just don't know."

He noted that township residents can participate in the master plan process by suggesting uses for the space once home to the Cady-Boyer Barn. The park should be able to continue hosting the Canton's farmers market.

The barn has invoked a lot of sentiments for a lot of people over the decades.

As the township developed, the barn became Plymouth-Canton Community Schools property. During the 1970s, the Rotary School Farm was used to teach



Flames destroyed the Cady-Boyer Barn at Preservation Park in Canton Township on May 30.

COURTESY OF CANTON TOWNSHIP

children about farm animals and the typical life of those who once farmed for a living.

Then district officials began talking about razing the barn for new tennis courts. Canton resident and businessman Bob Boyer stepped in, agreeing to pay the bulk of a \$75,000 bill in 2006 so the Amish could move the barn from Joy and McClumpha roads and rebuild it at Preservation Park.

"It's a big loss. There's nothing I can do," Boyer said. "That (barn) was Preservation Park. That was the main attraction to it."

David Curtis, a Canton Historical Society director, worked to preserve the barn when the school district

was considering demolishing it for tennis courts.

"I'm feeling pretty devastated right now," he said. "So much work and effort went into saving it. It was such a nice place for events."

He and his wife celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the barn.

When Curtis visited the fire site Memorial Day morning, he encountered a woman who had scheduled a July baby shower at the barn.

"It was getting a lot of activity," Curtis said. "The township had just built a pavilion so they could rent the barn out more. Now they've got bathrooms, but there's no barn."



Pump 5 Grille is located inside the Mobile Mart at Five and Middlebelt. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Pump 5 Grille

Continued from Page 1A

were getting really excited, it's like, 'Whoa, you guys are going to have a restaurant in here, that's really cool,'" Diab said. "I started seeing that the audience would allow us to do something a little more extensive and a little more chef-driven."

Today, customers can walk up and order a handful of items, including burgers, chicken sandwiches, wraps and some desserts. Everything is prepared in the kitchen, with Diab creating his own sauces and dishes, with ingredients hand-selected by him.

The biggest hit on the menu? The chicken sandwich, made with shredded lettuce, pickles and homemade sauce. Given the demand from restaurants for chicken these days and the demand from customers, it's not uncommon for Diab to sell out of the sandwiches on a regular basis.

"We're just lucky that the people here were very welcoming and very open-minded, ready to try whatever we made," Diab said. "It's cool to see people are willing to go the extra mile to try food, even if it's in a gas station."

"We let each ingredient speak for itself."

Diab has at least one customer who will seek out a chicken sandwich if he can get one: Dr. Tarik Ali, one of the owners of the station. Ali said he'll sometimes call ahead to Diab to ask about prepping a sandwich on his way to the station; they're that good.

Breaking a stereotype about food found in a gas station, Ali said, is what Pump 5 Grille does, a step that is needed in the new era the world is in.

"The food is fantastic, the presentation is elegant and the taste is exquisite," Ali said. "The world is changing. COVID hit and the retail industry has just changed dramatically."

The Farmington Hills Harrison High School and Oakland Community College alumnus eventually found himself enrolled at The Culinary Institute of America in New York. Since returning to the area, he's done consulting work and has launched Pump Preps, a meal prep service. The culinary arts have become a passion of his, with Diab spending time continuing to learn.

"If I'm not cooking, I'm either watching a video on cooking or reading a book on cooking," he said.

The space is carryout only, though Diab said he hopes they may be able to put some picnic tables out on the grass for people looking to eat onsite.

The menu is expected to change occasionally, including a rare item planned for the coming days: Diab plans to offer a soft-shell crab Nashville Hot sandwich as a limited-time special, something he's excited to bring.

"When we get them, they're super fresh," he said. "You're getting a live crab from a gas station from live to on your sandwich in an hour."

The restaurant is currently open on weekdays typically beginning at 11 a.m., though hours have fluctuated depending on inventory. More information, including a menu, can be found at pump5grille.com.

Councilman

Continued from Page 1A

happen and some not so good things happen. But for the most part, it was to move the city forward."

Council unanimously accepted Miller's resignation Tuesday, and all wished him well in his post-Wayne life.

"I've truly appreciated getting to know you as a neighbor and as a peer," Councilman Kevin Dowd said. "You are a passionate individual and you have already achieved so many milestones in your life. And here you are, opening up a new book."

Miller represents Ward 4 on council and is serving his second term. In 2020, Miller unsuccessfully challenged Mayor John Rhaesa for the city's top job.

"I've got a lot of incredible memories here," Miller said.

Council will appoint someone to serve the remainder of Miller's term, which is set to expire in November 2022.

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

Meeting

Continued from Page 1A

The rest of the 24-mile area will be repaired over the next three years:

- 2022: Road rebuilding on the southbound lanes between Northline and Five Mile roads.
- 2023: Road rebuilding on the northbound lanes between Northline Road and M-14.
- 2024: Road rebuilding on the northbound lanes between M-14 and Five Mile Road.

The department is hosting a public webinar June 8 where people can hear Horne speak about the project and ask him questions. People can visit revive275.org for details on how to log in.

"We want to have public engagement, we want to notify our stakeholders and we want everyone to be well-informed of this project," Horne said. "A way to do that is have a public meeting and answer questions people may have."

The public is encouraged to visit revive275.org, where MDOT will organize the project's details. Drivers can direct questions to MDOT by calling 248-275-8375 or emailing MDOT-275feedback@michigan.gov.

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

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Obituaries

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Lois Moynahan Haefner

Lois of Birmingham, Michigan came to the end of her remarkable life on May 27, 2021 at the age of 94. Lois was the eldest daughter of Louise and Roy ("Mike") Moynahan. She spent her early years in Pleasant Ridge. At age 10, Lois and her father and sisters moved to Birmingham following the death of her mother. Lois graduated from the University of Michigan and was a lifelong fan of the UM football team. She was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. Lois and her husband, J. Robert Haefner, were married for 52 years before his death in 2002, which also occurred on May 27. Lois and Bob raised their family in Birmingham, retired to Keowee Key, SC, and later moved to Bonita Springs, FL. She loved northern Michigan, especially her teenage years on Northport Point and, later, almost 50 summers on Torch Lake. Lois is survived by her children: James R. Haefner, Jr., Gail H. Straith (James), and Hope K. Haefner M.D. (Michael Fitzsimmons M.D.). She is also survived by her grandchildren, of whom she was very proud: Erin Henderson (Kerwin), Kevin Fitzsimmons, Jessica Haefner, Grant Haefner, and Lauren Lang (Peter). Lois lived long enough to enjoy five great-grandchildren. She is survived by one sister, Joyce Wilson. She was greatly saddened by the death of two sisters, Mary Louise Dostal and Kathryn Fowler Bungay. Lois spent many decades playing duplicate bridge to her heart's content. Lois shared her opinion frequently with her family members and bridge partners, at times unsolicited. She instilled in her children and grandkids her conviction that they could do anything to which they put their minds. Lois's death marks the end of an era for all who loved her. Her family plans to celebrate Lois's life in a private ceremony on Torch Lake this summer. Memorial gifts may be made to Residential Hospice Foundation, 5440 Corporate Drive, Suite 400, Troy, MI 48098, or a charity of your choice (except Michigan State Athletics!). A.J. Desmond & Sons, (248) 549-0500. Sign tribute wall at AJDesmond.com



Helen Judith Murphy

HARBOR SPRINGS - Helen Judith Murphy, 84, of Harbor Springs, Michigan died peacefully in her home on May 21, 2021. Known to all as Judy, she was born on June 23, 1936 in Detroit, Michigan to Robert and Helen Essig. Judy attended Birmingham High School and Michigan State before beginning her life adventure of work, marriage and children. Proceeded in death by her husband Lou, Judy leaves behind 3 sons, Marc, Chris and Peter, along with 5 grandchildren (Meghan, Michael, Max, Holland and Eva). Judy was a treasured friend to all who knew her. Kindness, humor and compassion were just a few of her noted qualities. In all the best ways, Judy was a true lady. As a mother, a grandmother, a friend, a relative and much more she will be dearly missed.

A Celebration of Life is planned for Monday, July 12 from 2-4pm at the Inn at Bay Harbor in Petoskey, MI.

In lieu of flowers donations are encouraged to The Parkinsons' Foundation.

Arrangements are in the care of Stone Funeral Home, Inc. of Petoskey, Michigan.

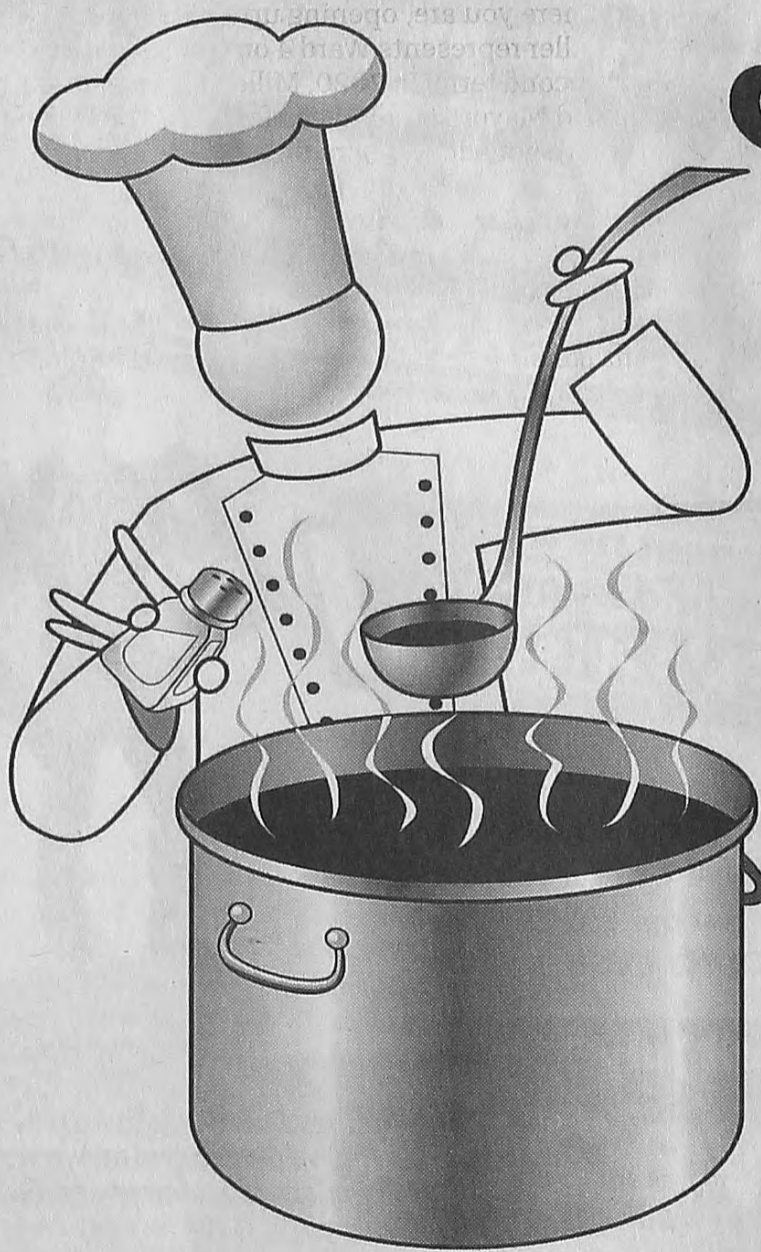
Mary Cimmino Talamini

FARMINGTON HILLS - Mary Cimmino Talamini, age 79 of Farmington Hills, passed away May 30, 2021. She was the beloved wife of Robert for 55 years. Cherished mother of Stacy (Dale) Elenbaas and Rory (Kurt) Talamini-Kelemen. Devoted grandmother of Alexander and Anthony Elenbaas and R.J., Christopher, Cassandra and Elizabeth Talamini-Keleman. Dear sister of Luci Loori. Predeceased by her siblings Florence Ferrante, Samuel Cimmino, Anthony Cimmino, Louis Cimmino, Camille Cosentino, Connie Schwerdtfeger and Antoinette Buonrosa. Memorial Mass Saturday, June 12th, 11am with gathering beginning at 10am at St. Fabian Catholic Church, 32200 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. In lieu of flowers, donations are appreciated to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

www.pancan.org/donate
www.mccabefuneral-home.com

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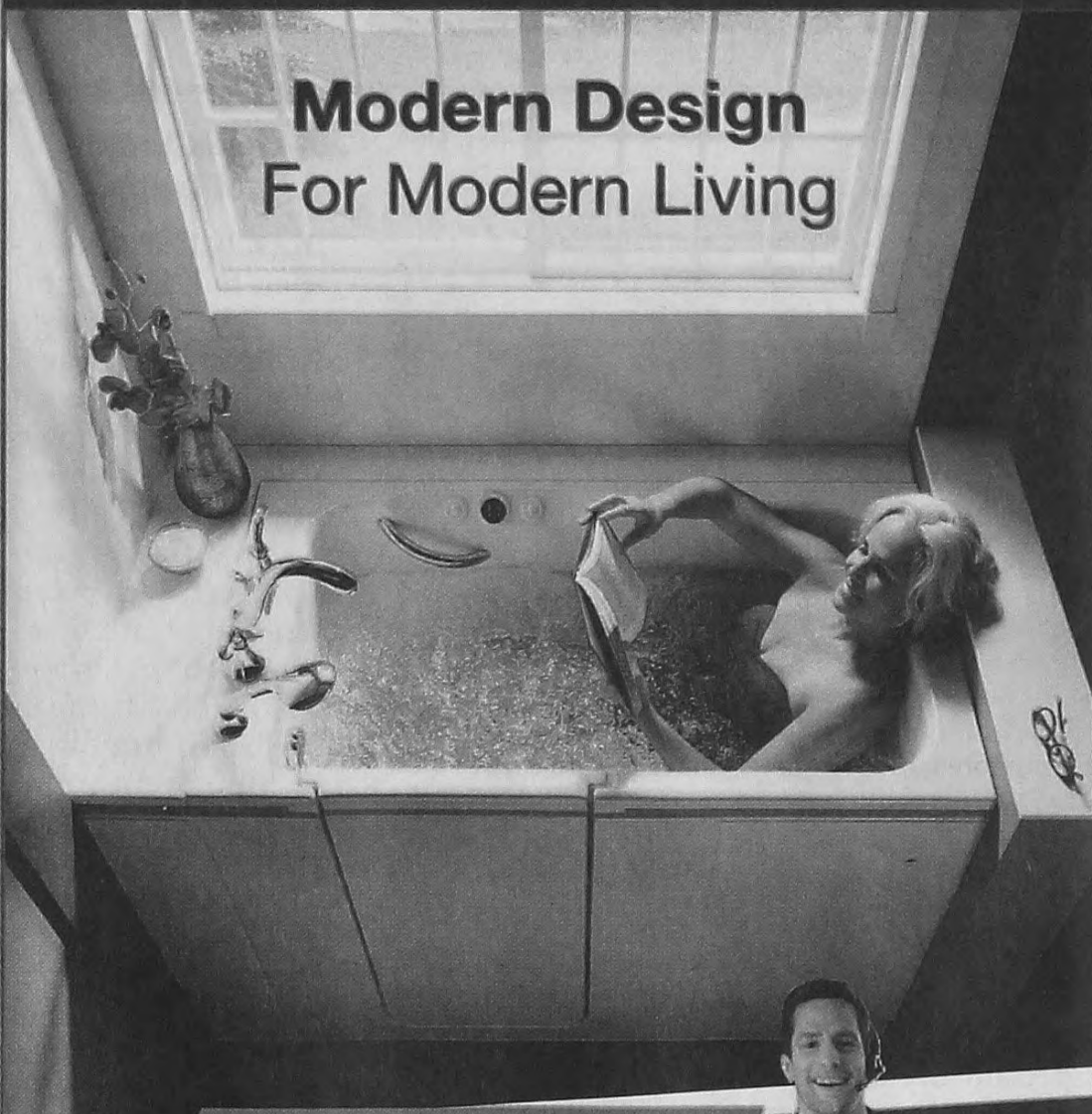
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SPORTS

Novi soccer halts Mercy in district semifinal

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Playoff soccer is a whole different animal.

Novi's seven seniors know this to be true, knowing what it feels like to not only win a win-or-go-home game, but to hoist a state title trophy. The Wildcats had to find a way to get that feeling into the sophomores and freshmen: players who had never been a part of that atmosphere.

The Wildcats' playoff opener against Farmington was that adjustment period, as they squeaked by with a two-goal shutout win, a game head coach Todd Pheiffer said was his team surviving and advancing.

In the district semifinal against Mercy, with every player knowing what playoff soccer felt like, Novi (9-6-4) stepped up, earning the 2-0 victory against the Marlins (8-9-2) to advance to the District 8 final.

Novi advances to the district final for its fifth-straight season, a game it has not lost in each time the Wildcats have played in it since the start of the streak in 2016.

"You really don't understand the magnitude until you play the game," Pheiffer said. "Seniors get it. Seniors have been there, done that. The seniors here, they have been a part of the state championship."

See **NOVI**, Page 2B



Novi girls soccer head coach Todd Pheiffer speaks to his team after the Wildcats' 2-0 victory against Mercy in the district semifinal. COLIN GAY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Stevenson senior Zane Peecher swam for the Spartans for all four years of high school, while also playing football and running track. In the fall, he will attend the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado, joining the Class of 2025.

PHOTOS BY COURTESY OF ZANE PEECHER

Perseverance leads Stevenson swimmer Peecher to Air Force

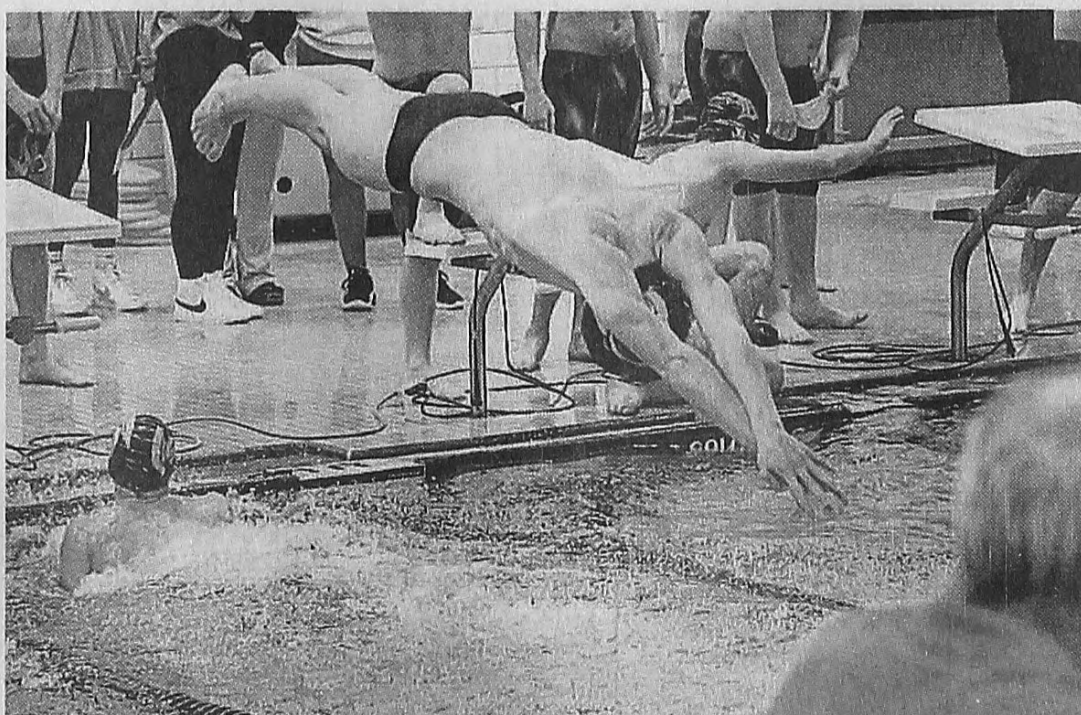
Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

When he was in seventh and eighth grade, Zane Peecher lived in Dearborn with his grandmother, close to a military recruiting station. He consistently saw members of the Army and Marines training at a park near his home, each time thinking it would be cool to follow in their footsteps.

Peecher found something to shoot for, but he remembers his father taking those aspirations a step further: encouraging his son to shoot for a service academy, leading toward a path of becoming an officer.

While the Livonia Stevenson senior said those aspirations seemingly faded to the back of his mind at the start of high school, Peecher said it developed

See **SWIMMER**, Page 2B



Peecher earned his state cut in the 500-yard freestyle while also participating in the team's state 4x400-meter relay.

Northville soccer roars back against Stevenson

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Northville found its stride late in the 2021 regular season.

The Mustangs girls soccer team won four of its last five games, seeping into the first round of the playoffs with a shutout win against South Lyon. In that time, Northville has become healthier than it's been all season, finding a stable and consistent lineup to turn to.

Head coach Eric Brucker still doesn't think the Mustangs have played a full 80 minutes yet this year. In this streak, the moments where his team has seemingly disappeared has lessened and lessened, but it showed up in the first 10 minutes of the District 8 semifinal against Livonia Stevenson.

Luckily for him, Northville didn't need a full 80 minutes to beat the Spartans.

Two goals in the final 20 minutes of the first half allowed the Mustangs (12-8) to get the best of Stevenson (11-3-2), 2-1, to advance to their first district final since 2015.

But the way that Northville beat Stevenson was something the Mustangs have not done all season: coming from behind.

Five minutes into the game, Spartans senior Mikayla Waranauck found an opening from the middle of the field, slicing the deep ball into the top left corner of the goal to take the lead.

But confidence flipped on one single free kick.

With 20:58 left in the first half, Northville junior defender Jessie Belknap lined up for a free kick. Instead of firing at the goal, she passed it to the open midfielder Emma Bowman, who fired and scored to tie the game.

When Bowman tied it, she knew coming back was possible, especially with the level of comfort she had in her teammates in the weeks leading up to the postseason tournament.

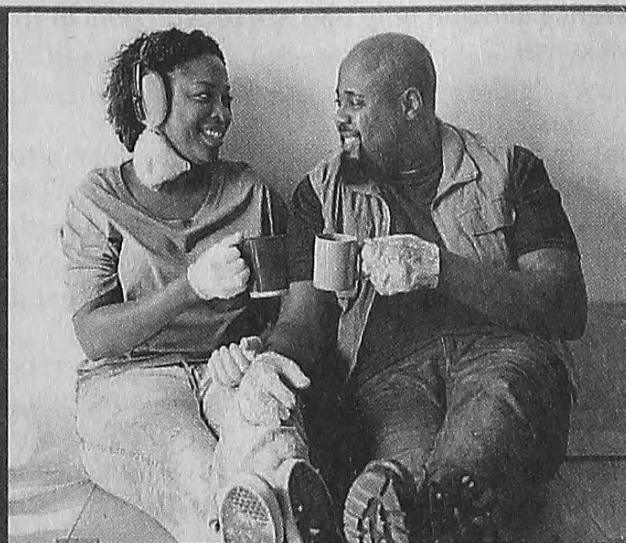
"I think we have just been able to really bond as a team," she said. "I think we have done a better job at

See **NORTHVILLE**, Page 2B

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Lefty's star power exactly what RMC needs

Carlos Monarrez Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Phil Mickelson is exactly what the Rocket Mortgage Classic needs.

The PGA Tour event at Detroit Golf Club needs what only a handful of players can bring: Star power.

There's no doubt that when news broke Thursday that Mickelson committed to make his debut at the July 1-4 tournament, interest spiked and ticket sales soared.

Nate Lashley was a great story as the tournament's inaugural champ in 2019.

But he was a great story only because he was a highly unlikely winner as an obscure underdog who was able to win wire-to-wire. Last year, Bryson DeChambeau, who is now ranked fourth in the world and has a major, gave the tournament a memorable winner.

But now we get Mickelson. We get to see if he can deliver more of that senior magic and win one for the ages — and the aged — in Detroit.

"As evidenced by his record-breaking performance last weekend at the PGA Championship, Phil is one of the best to ever play the game, an electric perform-

er and continues to be a huge draw for fans attending PGA Tour events," tournament executive director Jason Langwell said in a statement.

But this isn't even about tickets. This is about the fans in Detroit, because many (if not most) probably have never seen Mickelson play a PGA tournament in person. He hasn't played in Michigan since the 2008 PGA Championship at Oakland Hills.

Fans were supposed to be able to watch Mickelson play in Detroit last year. He committed to the RMC early, but pulled out when COVID-19 scram-

bled the schedule and the tournament was moved from May to July.

If you've never seen Mickelson play, you've missed out. Of course he's a great player and a wizard around the greens. At the wide-open birdie-fest that is Detroit Golf Club, you should expect Mickelson to attempt some wild and fun shots.

And he's also a great ambassador for the game. He's lively and smiles, and acknowledges the fans. He signs countless autographs after his rounds, so be patient and you'll get that souvenir signed.

Swimmer

Continued from Page 1B

an underlying drive to succeed in everything he did, whether athletically or academically.

In the fall, Peecher will attend the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, joining the Class of 2025.

"I always had the Air Force goal in the back of my head," Peecher said. "I wanted to push myself now so that pushing myself becomes a habit and I may not have to push myself later just to dominate the standard I have to meet."

Through that pushing, Peecher learned about competition and how to deal with the stress and nervousness it brings. He was taught how to be a winner, something in his final year with the Spartans he had to relearn.

Peecher's initial return to the pool at the start of the 2020-21 winter season was extremely frustrating for him.

The Livonia Stevenson senior had set a precedent for himself as a junior: making the state cut in the 500-yard freestyle at the KLAA conference meet; the

only swimmer in Livonia schools to earn a state cut. But he didn't get a chance to see what he could do at the state level, watching as the meet was canceled due to the emergence of COVID-19.

Returning to swim practices in football shape — 200 pounds without a lot of cardio work — Peecher found himself defeated since the times of his first swims were not close to where they were.

"In the first meet, I saw my time. I was like, 'This sucks,' he said.

"My junior year was my biggest year with time drops. So senior year, seeing times not anywhere near what they were was a big letdown. It was a lot of thanks just to not being able to swim at all."

When he was in the pool, Peecher was pushing himself, slowly but surely getting back to the same interval times he had before the pandemic. He used those opportunities to encourage his teammates, taking initiative in his second season as a team captain.

"If I'm pushing myself, I'm pushing everybody," he said. "I made sure that what I was telling myself, everyone knew."

The senior earned his state cut, even-

tually placing third in the 500-yard freestyle at the conference meet, while also racing at states as a part of the Spartans' 4x400-yard relay.

In his state performance, Peecher said he had trouble pacing himself in the 500-yard freestyle, coming out too fast and finishing five seconds slower than he wanted, placing 21st out of 22 participants. But in the 4x400-yard relay, in which Stevenson placed 19th, the senior posted a state time and a personal record in his 100-yard leg.

Overall, Peecher credits Stevenson swimming and specifically his head coach Jeff Shoemaker for helping him develop the persevering attitudes he has now, especially compared to where he was when he first joined the team.

"Getting out of those practices alive was my only goal my first day," Peecher said. "In the end, my only goal was to die every set and make sure I could barely get out of the pool at the end of the day. That four-year shape of my attitude's really going to put a mark on my next four years."

It's that same persevering attitude Peecher has brought to his life outside of the pool too.

With a minimal acceptance rate,

Peecher said the Air Force Academy was looking for leadership qualities and the athletic prowess and academic success of a well-rounded student. In his four years at Stevenson, the senior has done that, maintaining a 4.45 GPA along with swimming and football for four years and track for his first three.

When Peecher found out about his acceptance to the Air Force Academy, he was relieved and excited, but immediately went to his bedroom to find the Air Force merchandise he hadn't worn since eighth grade when he first visited the campus, and has started to wear it to school ever since.

To him, it represents all that it has taken for him to get to that point, but also signifies what he wants to do when he gets to Boulder: planning to join the Swim Club team and the Battlefield Airman Club, with aspirations to become a special tactics officer.

"It was something that really changed my mindset," Peecher said. "I'm not working anymore. I'm here, which didn't give me complacency, but rather it made me try harder. I want to be at the top of this now. Not just the top of Stevenson, but I need to be at the top of the line of where I'm going next."



Northville junior defender Jessie Belknap sets up a play against Livonia Stevenson. COLIN GAY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Northville

Continued from Page 1B

switching the ball more, which has been opening up so many more opportunities for us. We have also kind of found our set lineup, which is good because we have kind of meshed as a team."

This approach paid off before the halftime buzzer sounded, as senior forward Dana Clifton found senior forward Sophia Jeromsky to give Northville the one-goal lead, a lead that would stand.

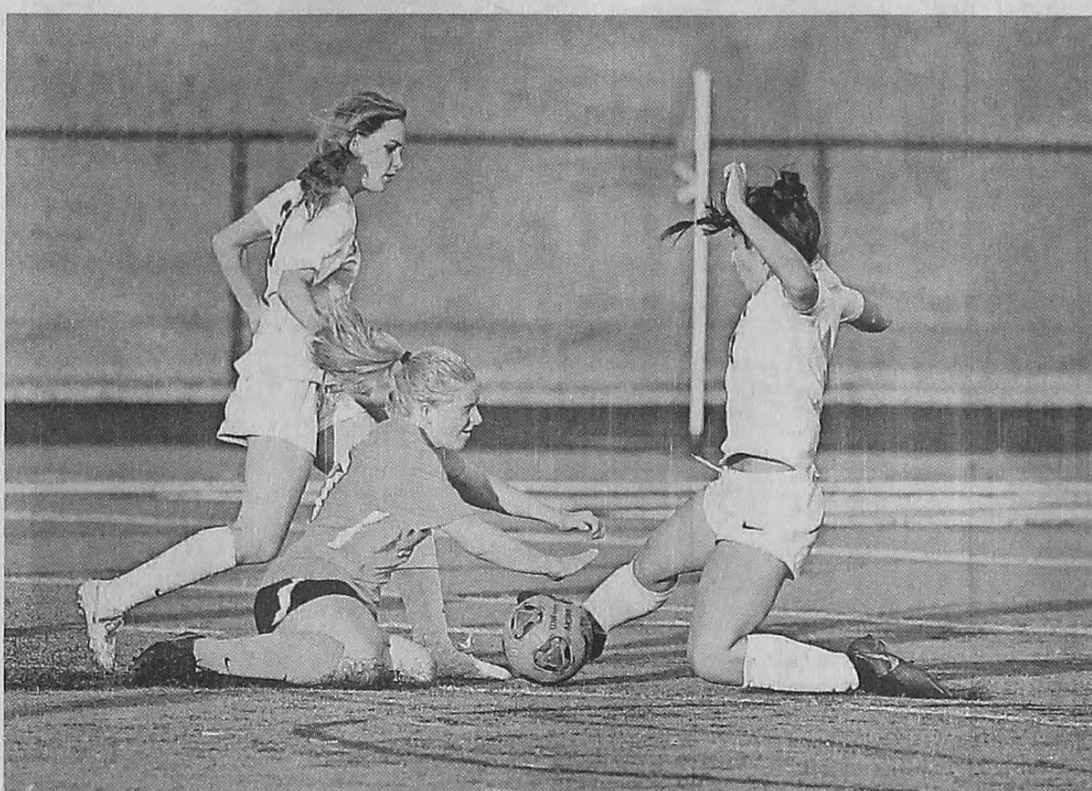
Stevenson ended its 2021 season having not won a game in which it allowed more than two goals.

"I thought we were going to be just fine," Stevenson head coach Ken Shingledacker said. "We score an early goal and we made two big errors and got ourselves in all types of trouble and really could not break them down. They really set in at the end of the game, and we really couldn't break them down."

Brucker said Northville has had difficulties executing game plans throughout the season, but he saw a team that persevered and found a way to come out on top for the first time when it had previously trailed.

"That goal early made us nervous, but they persevered, they found a way and they listened," Brucker said. "Things happen when we are on the same page."

Northville will see a familiar oppo-



Northville's defense allowed only one Stevenson goal in the district semifinal. COURTESY OF JOHN KEMSKI

nent in the final: facing a rubber match against KLAA West rival Novi. The Mustangs beat the Wildcats, 1-0, April 8, ending their win streak that started May 21, 2018. Novi returned the favor nearly a month later with a 1-0 win.

Brucker isn't intimidated. The gauntlet of scheduling in the KLAA West has prepared him for games like this, he said. He knows what's coming in the district final, and knows what it will

take to hoist a trophy.

"They don't have anything that we don't have and vice versa," Brucker said. "It's who's going to execute and make the least amount of mistakes is going to win."

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.

Novi

Continued from Page 1B

"They know what it takes. It kind of builds up more confidence in the team when an underclassman, a freshman, steps up in the biggest game we have played so far this year."

Michella Tortelli stepped up when it mattered most.

The Novi freshman took initiative in the first 10 minutes, taking a pass from junior Samantha Maday from the middle near goal and pushing it past Mercy senior goalkeeper Laura Boesch for the first score of the game.

Tortelli found the back of the net again in the second half, stealing the ball from Mercy senior defender Reily Behm and, playing one-touch soccer with fellow freshman forward Lindsay Dahlinger, found the back of the net for her second goal of the day.

"She's getting more confident up there," Pheiffer said. "We talk about the difference between 'I'd like to score,' and want to score. Today she wanted to score."

Tortelli picked up the offense as Novi's defense, according to its head coach, played as well as it has all season.

The Wildcats only allowed three Mercy corner kicks and one significant scoring chance — a fast-break strike toward senior goalkeeper Abbey Pheiffer that she halted with a dive.

Novi senior Avery Kasanic played a major role, stopping most fast breaks with her speed, racing in front of each ball and slowing the Marlins offense, which has averaged 2.2 goals per game and recorded two shutouts all season before the playoffs.

"We all have worked so well together just building the ball up and using our strengths," Kasanic said.

In 2021, Novi has had experience with close contests. Fourteen of the team's 19 games this season have been decided by two goals or less.

But when it came time for playoff soccer, Todd Pheiffer knew he had to rely on where his experience was on the field. That came with a defense that has not allowed a goal since May 20, and has allowed more than two goals in a game four times all season.

"When it comes to state tournament time... we tell our seniors, the ones who lead you, they have to step up and they did," Pheiffer said. "They stepped up today."

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.

From the neighborhood to major league

Brighton grads turn passion for wiffleball into a profession

Kayla Daugherty Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Ten years ago Kyle Schultz and Tommy Coughlin decided to play a game of wiffleball with their brothers and record it using one of their family's camcorders.

Now the Brighton natives run Major League Wiffleball and share their love of the game with hundreds of thousands of followers on YouTube.

"We were just bored kids with really no responsibilities in the world so we decided to play wiffleball and take my family's camcorder," Schultz said. "We didn't think anything would come of it, but that's how it all started."

The games continued "from one summer to the next" as more friends asked to play, Coughlin, 22, said.

"That kind of continued over the years until you had three teams; four teams; five teams; six teams," he said.

Originally composed of just some neighborhood kids, the league now boasts eight teams, complete with an annual draft.

"Since we have such a high demand to get into the league, we actually hold a draft before every season," Schultz, 22, said.

During the summer, teams play at Huron Meadows Metropark in Brighton on wiffleball fields designed for smaller teams and game play. In the winter, the league moves its games to the Legacy Center in Brighton.

Wiffleball is a variant of baseball played with a plastic perforated ball and thin plastic bat. Played on a scaled-down baseball field, each team has three players on the field at a time.

Major League Wiffleball

Major League Wiffleball officially became an LLC in 2018 but that doesn't mean the league is any less fun, Coughlin said.

"It's rooted in friends having fun and it's always been that way. That's really the core of it," he said. "Do we have to make tougher decisions now and is money now involved? Sure. But the core of it is just friends having fun with one another."

The league has an avid following on YouTube with more than 200,000 people subscribed to its channel.

This year's draft video was viewed more than 500,000 times, Schultz said.

The league makes money through sponsors, merchandise and advertisers on its YouTube channel.



Chris Cheetam pitches a wiffleball to Andy Durand during a game in 2020. PHOTOS COURTESY OF KYLE SCHULTZ



Jimmy Knorp pitches a wiffleball to Daniel Schultz during a game in 2020.

Because of their growing notoriety among the wiffleball community, the friends were asked to help promote an \$11 million addition at the Shangri-La resort in Oklahoma.

The resort is building an activity center, complete with a scaled down replica of Boston's Fenway Park — wiffleball style, Coughlin said.

As a way to kick off the new field, the resort is flying Coughlin, Schultz and two of the teams in the league to play a game there.

While promoting a resort is new for the men, traveling for wiffleball isn't. The pair has hosted tournaments both in Michigan and out of state.

This year the pair is hosting a tourna-

ment in Illinois.

"We opened it up all to all age divisions. You have 8 year olds and 50 year olds playing; everyone is having a good time," Schultz said. "It's a great mix of competitiveness and still fun. We try to make it as fun as possible while playing the game we all love — wiffleball."

The future

Schultz said he gets a mix of responses when he tells people about the league.

"Some people find it hard to believe, other people think it's the coolest thing ever," he said.

"We are going to keep doing what we are going, putting our professional content for people to enjoy and welcome whatever happens next with open arms," Coughlin said.

While neither expected to turn a neighborhood game into a business, the pair is excited to see what the future holds for Major League Wiffleball and the sport itself.

Schultz runs the league full time from his Brighton home, focusing on producing videos and scaling the league to eventually hold regional and national tournaments.

As for the future, Schultz and Coughlin plan to take MLW as far as they can. Considering the pair still live two houses apart, who knows how far that will be.

Hartland pushed by Brighton in lacrosse final

Bill Khan Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

LANSING — Brighton did a huge favor for Hartland, its biggest rival in most sports, certainly in boys lacrosse.

That, of course, wasn't the Bulldogs' intention Tuesday night.

Their goal was the same as Hartland's, to win the regional championship and advance to the state Division 1 quarterfinals.

The season would end for one of the top teams in the state in the regional final at Lansing Catholic, adding to the intensity and sense of urgency displayed by the Bulldogs and Eagles.

In the end, it was Hartland which pulled away in a game that was tied late in the third quarter to win, 14-10, and capture its fourth consecutive regional championship.

Brighton provided the first real test for the Eagles, who won their first two postseason games by a combined score of 46-1.

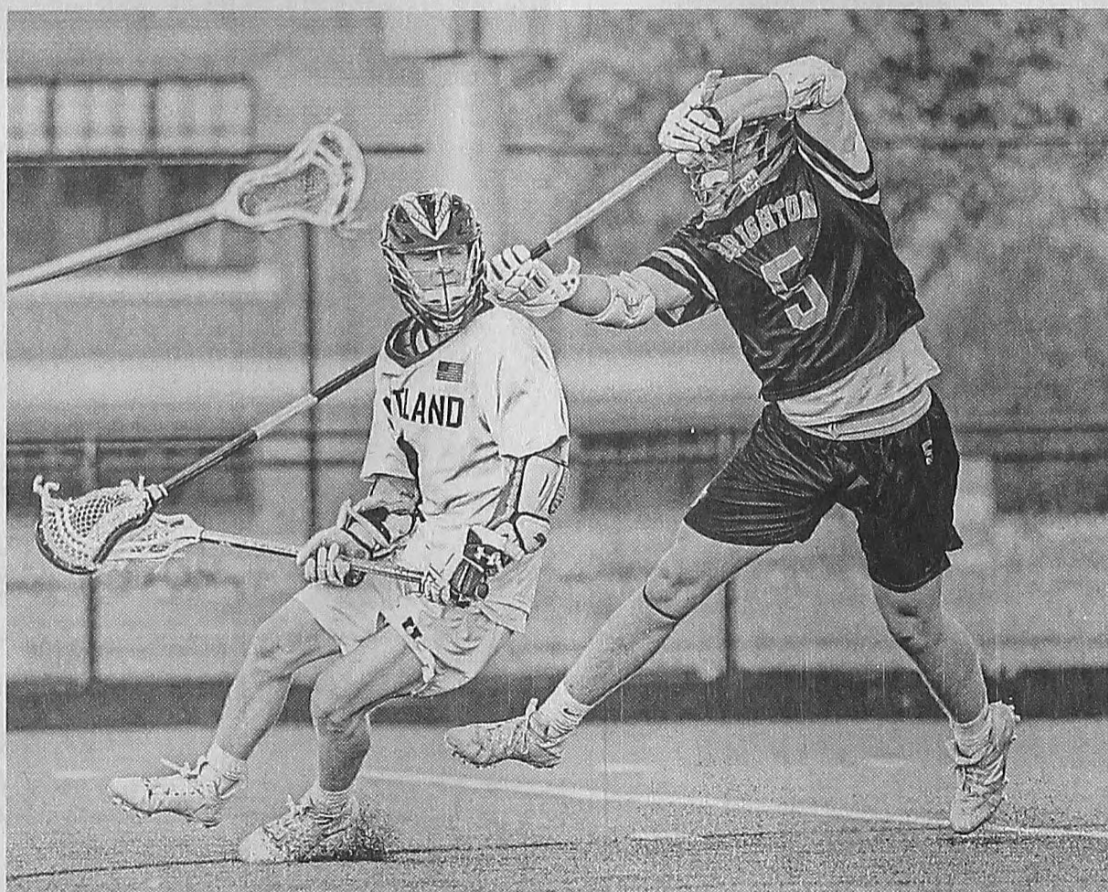
That could serve Hartland (20-1) well as it faces Saline (13-3) in the state quarterfinals at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Brighton and possibly perennial powers Detroit Catholic Central and Birmingham Brother Rice in the final two rounds.

"We're thankful to play a tough Brighton team twice this year," Hartland coach Nick Levanti said. "It'll help us get a little bit better here down the stretch."

Of Hartland's 20 victories, the winning margin has been less than seven goals only four times. Two of the more competitive games have been against the Bulldogs, who lost 16-10 to Hartland on May 12.

The Eagles' average margin of victory has been 15.6 goals.

So, battling their Livingston County



Hartland's Bo Lockwood had five goals and five assists, but was defended well by Brighton's Ryan Doyle in the Eagles' 14-10 regional championship victory.

TIMOTHY ARRICK/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

rival with playoff survival at stake was a welcome change for the Eagles, even if it was stressful at times.

"Games like last week where we played Howell, it doesn't get us ready for the big games," said Hartland junior Bo Lockwood, who scored five goals and five assists. "Today was an excellent getting-ready game. We can't wait for the future."

"It's really nerve-racking. Anyone can lose at any time, because you're not ready all the time."

Brighton, led by Ryan Doyle on de-

fense and Ridge Boehmer in goal, kept the clamps on a high-powered Hartland offense in the first half. The game was tied 2-2 after one quarter. Brighton took a 4-2 lead early in the second and Hartland fought back to grab a 5-4 advantage at halftime.

The Bulldogs tied the game twice in the third quarter, the last time coming with 5:53 left in the period on a goal by junior Carson Billig.

"After seeing them the first time, we kind of adapted," said Billig, who scored five goals. "We knew what was going to

happen. We played to what they do. We played well. Obviously, you have to leave that last one on the field, leave your heart out there and just battle down to the wire as best you can."

Hartland couldn't be contained the entire night. A goal by freshman Drew Lockwood with 3:08 left in the third broke an 8-8 tie and ignited a 5-0 run by the Eagles.

Brighton chipped away at the lead, as John Aurandt scored on a breakaway with 5:33 remaining and Billig scored with 4:30 to go, making it a 13-10 game.

After getting a defensive stop, Hartland called timeout with 1:28 remaining and began to work the clock. Bo Lockwood spotted an opening and fired the ball in the net with 54 seconds left to end the scoring.

Lockwood boosted his season totals to 85 goals and a state-record 114 assists, putting him within one point of becoming Michigan's first 200-point scorer, according to MHSAA records.

"When you get into a game like this, it's kind of hard, because I'm not facing the top defenders every single game," Lockwood said. "When I get out here and play a better defender, it's different, so I've got to get used to it and struggle in the first quarter sometimes."

Charlie Anderson had three goals, while Noah Luck had two goals and one assist for Hartland.

Brighton finished 16-3, with its only losses in the final 18 games coming against Hartland. Aurandt had three goals and one assist.

"This team had so much potential," Billig said. "We knew that from the start. We knew we had Hartland at least once and now we had them twice. It was nice to have them at least twice and bring both games close."

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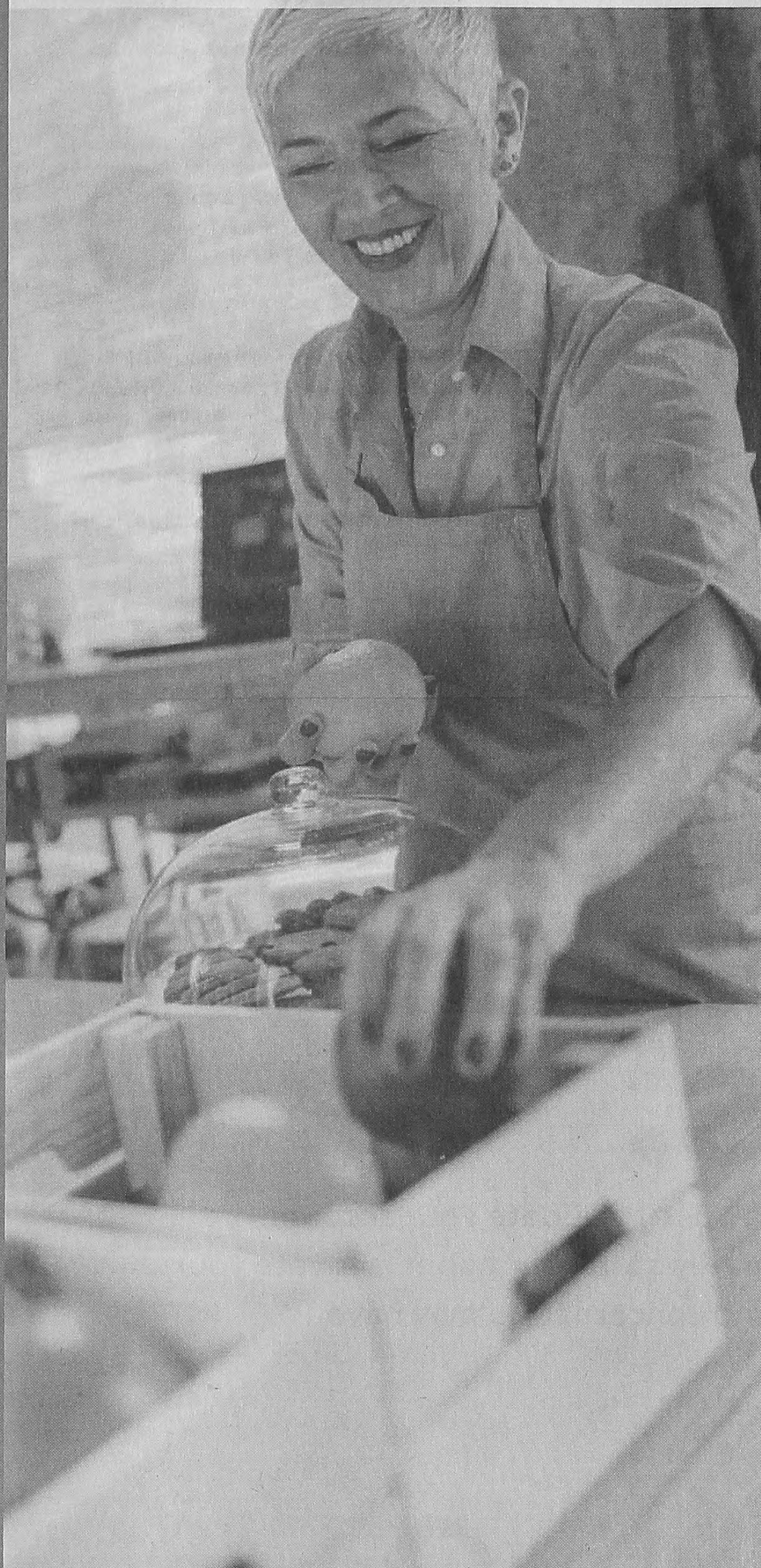
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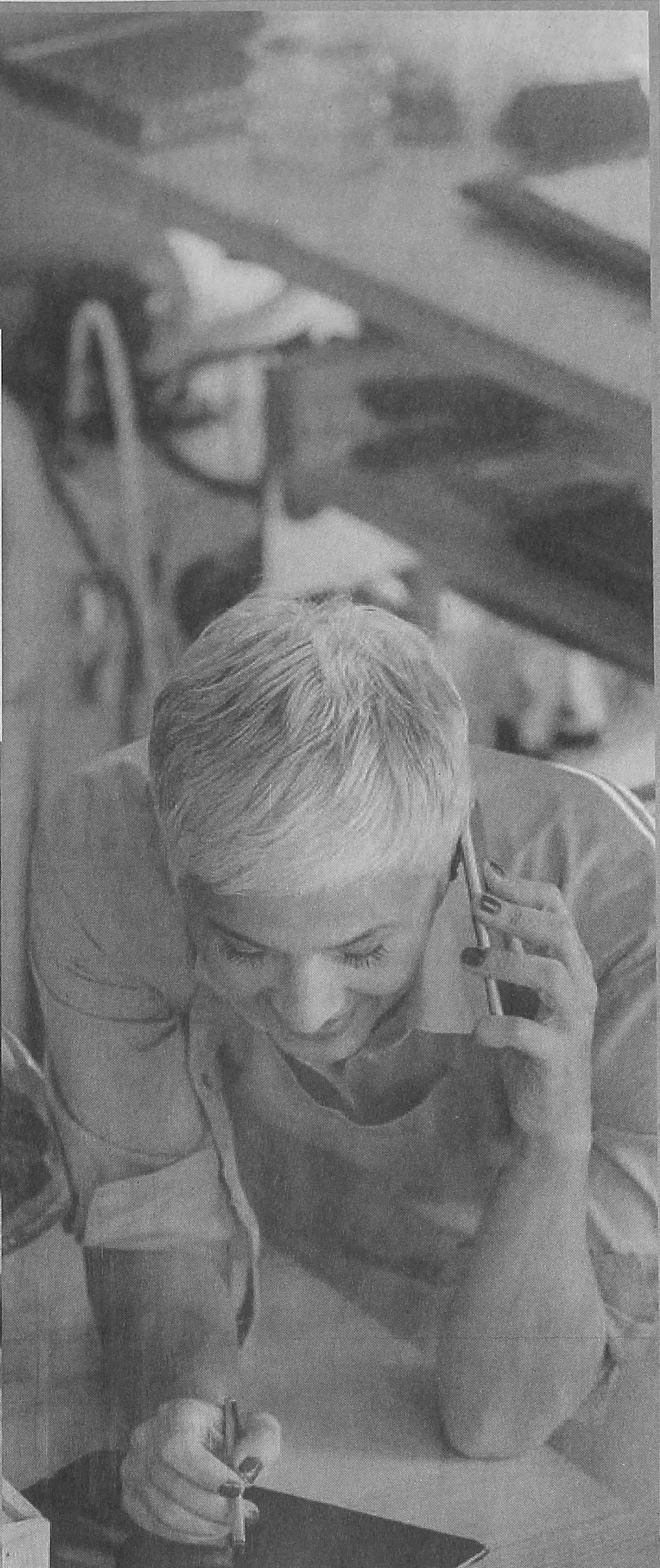
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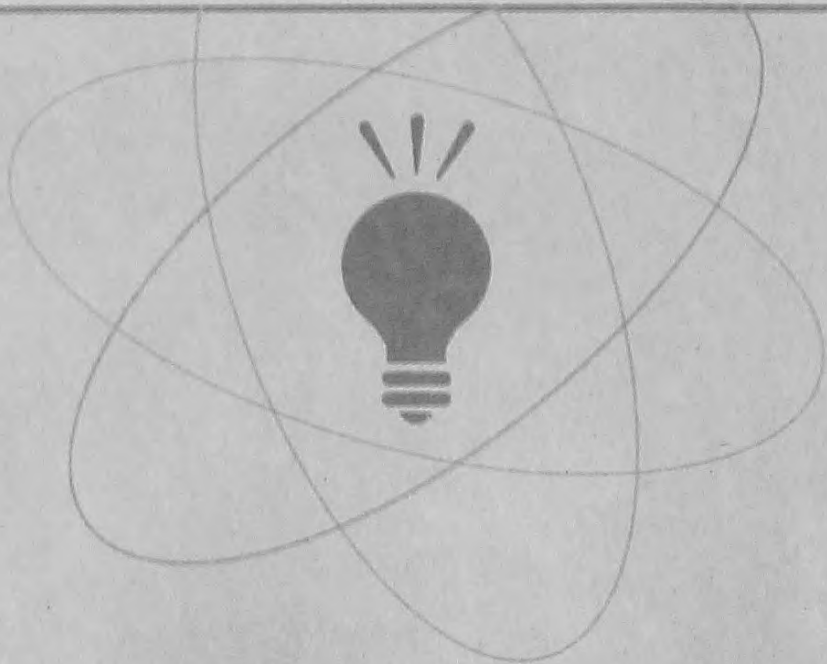
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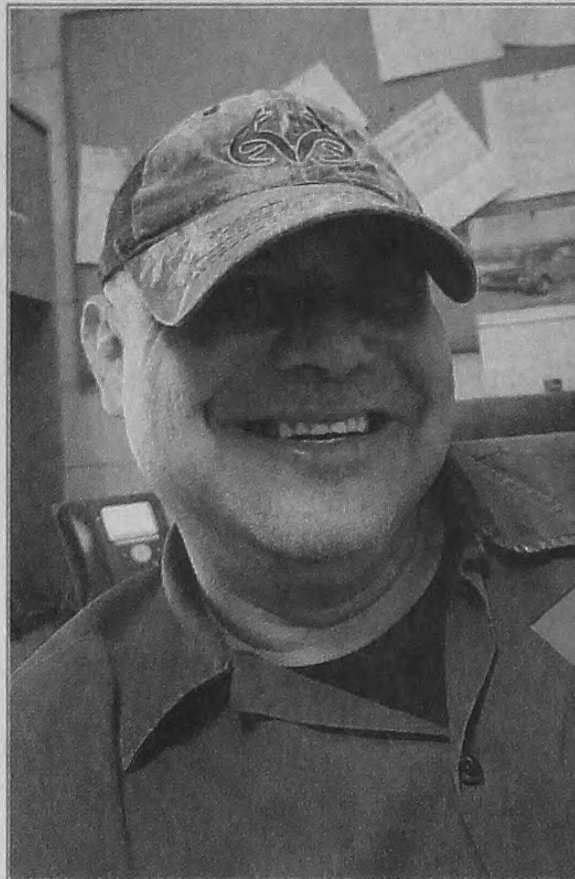


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