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Former GM plant land in Livonia to be redeveloped



Livonia Mayor Maureen Brosnan-Miller, fifth from left, Wayne County Executive Warren Evans, second from left, and others toss some dirt at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Ashley Capital Livonia West Commerce Center on Amrhein in Livonia, near the border with Plymouth Township, on July 21. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Industrial building expected to draw new companies to area

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Maureen Miller Brosnan could not have been more happy to participate in her first groundbreaking since becoming Livonia's mayor in 2020.

The fact that it was for a project that's expected to make a major impact in the city made it that much sweeter.

Brosnan, along with many other community and business leaders, were on hand July 21 on the property near Amrhein and Eckles near the border with Plymouth Township to celebrate the ongoing construction of a new 364,000-square-foot industrial building on part of the site of the former General Motors spring and bumper plant, which was purchased by the Revitaliz-

ing Auto Communities Environmental Response (RACER) Trust after GM's bankruptcy and then later by developer Ashley Capital.

"For all of us, this is important. Because this is an area that was a contaminated piece of property that did not see a ready opportunity to

See LAND, Page 2A

Galloway trial pushed back to 2022

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Danielle Stislicki's family must bear another annual passing of her disappearance without the resolution of a trial.

Oakland County Circuit Judge Phyllis McMillen pushed back the trial to early

2022 after defense attorney Ellen Michaels relayed that she needed more time to pursue materials that could help her defend Floyd Galloway.

She told McMillen during a July 26 hearing that she has been seeking possibly pertinent emails from the City of Farmington Hills case through the Freedom of Information Act.

"Based on my review of what I was given (and) based on my years of experience, it seemed there had to be more out there related to the investigation," Michaels said. "Because the police reports themselves seem to be more of a narrative summary than necessarily a

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Plans for Westland's Eloise site get boost

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Westland officials have given the green light for tax breaks to redevelop one of the city's most iconic properties.

The Brownfield redevelopment tax credits will allow owner John Hambrick to recoup some of the costs associated with revitalizing the closed Eloise psychiatric hospital along Michigan Avenue between Henry Ruff and Merriman former psychiatric hospital that's in desperate need of work.

The nature of the tax credits will capture of nearly \$5.4 million in remediation costs to redevelop the site, though Aubrey Berman, the city's chief business development officer, said it's more likely only \$2.7 million, because the structure is not being built onto. Because the plan's maximum duration is 30 years and the way it's structured, the developers will only be reimbursed about \$2.7 million.

"It's very, very uncommon that a property has \$5.4 million in expenses up front before you're even really increasing the value of the property at all by building onto it or doing anything additional," she said. "That's why the mathematics of this site are ideal for a Brownfield."

The council voted at its July 19 meeting at Westland City Hall to approve the tax credits for the site after holding a public hearing that saw no public comment.

Hambrick, who purchased the building from Wayne County for \$1 back in 2018, first pitched his plans for the site to the city last summer. The redevelopment will include the removal of several blighted buildings, including the bakery and power plant.

Work on the site will take several years to complete with the site expected to open sometime around 2026. The first phase will see rehabilitation done to the Kay Beard Building and the launch of a haunted attraction, escape rooms and a new café in the former firehouse.

The second phase will consist of the creation of a ghost bar and restaurant, as well as space for events; and the third phase will see the creation of a hotel on the site. Total capital invest-

See BOOST, Page 2A

New lights, benches coming to Mill Trail in Wayne

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Lori Gouin enjoys Mill Trail's place in the woods and seeing the Rouge River flowing while she walks.

"It's beautiful," she said. "You can see the river while you're walking along, and it's just really pretty."

But Mill Trail, a popular walking path in the City of Wayne, is in need of some TLC. The city recently acquired a community development block grant worth \$79,677.13 from Wayne County to install new lights, trash cans and benches along the path.

"DTE will be doing the replacement," said Gouin, the city's director of com-

munity development and planning.

The project will start in five to six weeks, and should only take two to three weeks to complete. Because of the CDBG funds, Wayne won't pay a dime from its city coffers for the upgrades.

Improvements will stretch from the park's entrance on Second Street, between Glenwood Road and Sims Street,

to Dynamite Park.

"That trail gets used quite a bit," Gouin said. "The fact that we're going to be able to replace them is going to make that trail a lot safer. ... It would be a huge safety risk for it not to be lit at night."

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



Don't wait to take financial action after divorce



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest columnist

Dear Rick:

I got divorced a few years ago and I'm just starting to get my financial house in order. I have a few questions that I hope you can help me with.

My first deals with a 401(k) plan from my ex-husband. At the time of the divorce, I received the 401(k) plan, and it was put in my name. I was told that I

should move the money, but I never have. My first question is what should I do?

In the divorce, I was able to keep my HH savings bonds. My question is what should I do with these?

My last question deals with my home. At the time of the divorce, I received a quit-claim deed for the home. The home was in my husband's name, but the quit-claim deed transferred the property to me. I was told at the time of the divorce that I should have the deed recorded; I never did. Is it important to record the deed at this point in time?

Thank you, Devon

Dear Devon:

Starting with your 401(k) plan, since you are not working for the company, I think it makes sense to have the money transferred directly into an IRA. In a company 401(k) plan, you're limited in your investment options. If you have the money in an IRA, you virtually have unlimited options.

In looking at your savings bonds, my recommendation is to cash out the bonds you purchased in 2001. HH bonds only pay interest for 20 years. Once you have received your last interest payment this year, cash out the bond and reinvest the money elsewhere.

With regards to the deed, I recommend recording it as soon as possible. Recording the deed with the county is what protects your ownership of the home.

People often get divorced and then delay in implementing the divorce settlement, as is the case at hand. I strongly recommend that if you go through a divorce or separation, you take steps to protect your ownership interest.

Good luck!

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

Land

Continued from Page 1A

redevelop," Brosnan said. "The fact that we had RACER Trust come together with Ashley Capital, it was the ideal mix."

The construction of the new building marks a significant achievement for the property: it's the final parcel to be redeveloped on the site of the former plant, which closed its operations in the early 1990s and was left mostly without activity since.

The site is now teeming with life, anchored by one of the largest companies in the world. Amazon opened a 1-million-square-foot fulfillment center on the property back in 2017, and Republic National Distributing Company, opened a warehouse on the property back in 2019.

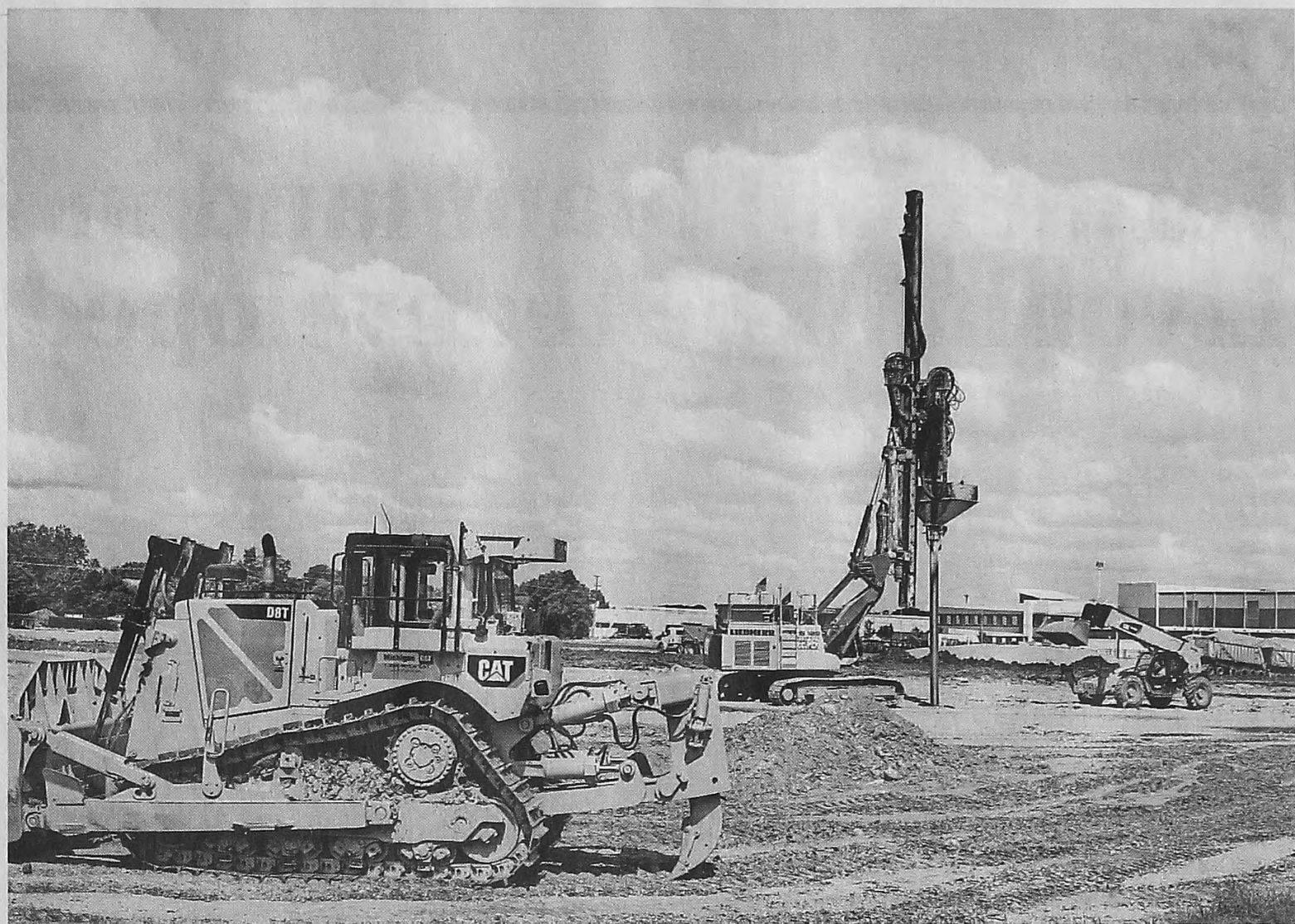
The new project was approved for Brownfield tax credits by the city council at the end of 2020.

Combined at the three sites, the total number of jobs on the property once the new building is completed is expected to number more than 1,700, Dan West, president of the Livonia Chamber of Commerce, said.

Susan Harvey, a senior vice president of Canton Township-based Ashley Capital, said work is expected to be completed on the project by next spring. She said while there's no tenant yet for the space, they are marketing the building and expect to land a company to fill it in the future.

"We have expressions of interest in it, but Ashley Capital does almost everything we've ever built on a speculative basis. So that's not new for us and it's worked out," she said.

Seeing the redevelopment of the



Work is underway on the Ashley Capital Livonia West Commerce Center on Amrhein in Livonia. The site, part of a former GM plant property, had been unoccupied for almost 10 years until work began earlier this year on a large R&D facility.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

space isn't just a benefit for Livonia, but for all of Wayne County, said County Executive Warren Evans, who attended the groundbreaking as well.

Having attractive business opportunities is what drives people to want to locate to Wayne County, he said.

"I want the employees, when they come, to see Wayne County in a way that says, 'I want to buy a home here. I want to live here.' That's how you cycle the economy and do good things," he said. "I'll tell anybody: We have 43 different communities in Wayne County. If

you can't find somewhere that you like in the 43 communities, then there's probably something wrong with you."

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

Trial

Continued from Page 1A

step by step."

According to Michaels, the city's response has been a \$6,000 bill for 4,375 emails within the police department pertaining to "Danielle Stislicki," "Floyd Galloway" and the incident number.

McMillen advised Michaels to tighten her FOIA request or perhaps file a FOIA suit. But she granted Michael's request for more time to prepare for the high-profile murder trial concerning a body that has not been found.

Stislicki, 28, of Farmington Hills disappeared Dec. 2, 2016. The last official sighting apparently happened at the

MetLife office where she worked in Southfield.

A MetLife co-worker said during a preliminary exam that she saw Stislicki talking to Galloway in the parking lot. His car hood was up. Another said he witnessed Stislicki driving out of the parking lot with Galloway in the passenger seat.

Searches, posters, and Facebook campaigns have not worked at finding her.

Galloway, who remains in prison for sexually assaulting a Hines Park runner in Livonia, became a suspect soon after Stislicki went missing. Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel announced a premeditated first-degree murder charge against him in March 2019.

On July 26, McMillen canceled the

Oct. 12 trial and said the next possible dates are in 2022. Next year's docket is not yet available, and no decisions were made.

McMillen scheduled a pretrial conference for Nov. 15.

Prosecuting attorney Danielle Russo Bennetts said she's worried about the delays and possibility of even more delays if Michaels pursues an appeal regarding motions still to be decided.

"It just feels very last minute, up to the wire now. That kind of puts us unfortunately out of going to trial in October," she said. "I know the family was looking to get this case tried."

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



Danielle Stislicki, of Farmington Hills, has been missing since Dec. 2, 2016.

COURTESY OF THE STISLICKI FAMILY

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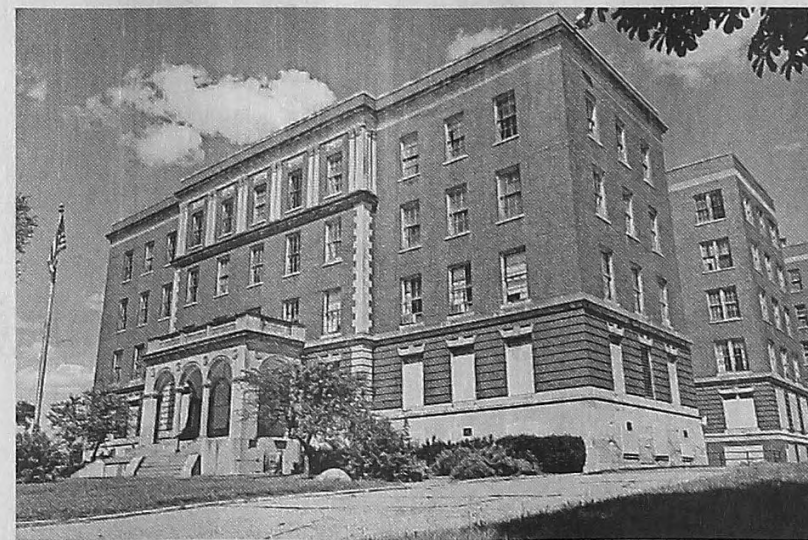
Continued from Page 1A

ment on the site will range between \$12.8 million and \$13.8 million.

Permanent jobs for the site are expected to be around 50-100 people, with additional temporary workers in the weeks leading up to Halloween each year with much of the workforce coming locally. Several dozen temporary construction jobs will also be created during the work to restore the site.

"Additional economic impact is this will serve as a regional draw, bringing tourism and traffic to the area, which can help spur some further development along the Michigan Avenue corridor," Berman said.

The Eloise property dates back to 1839, where it operated as a poor house before transitioning to medical care. It once occupied more than 900 acres with several buildings and thousands of patients. The last hospital to operate at the site, Wayne County General



The Eloise property along Michigan Avenue in Westland dates back to 1839, when it operated as a poor house before it was changed into a to medical care facility that later closed.

JOHN HEIDER/
HOMETOWNLIFE.
COM

Hospital, halted operations in 1984. Since then, it's been used for a variety of purposes, including housing some Wayne County employees up until 2016.

The site has a rich history with paranormal investigators, who have done ghost tours in the past in the buildings. A horror movie inspired by the site, entitled "Eloise," was released in 2017.

Hambbrick said they want to make the

site a destination not just for those in Michigan but market it internationally to bring guests to the region.

"This is going to be a game-changing project for Michigan Avenue," Hambbrick said. "Eloise is a phenomenal site. We didn't realize how phenomenal it was until we bought it."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com.

Westland mayoral candidates prepare for primary

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Westland's four-candidate mayoral race — originally a five-candidate race — is one of the most competitive the city has seen in a long time.

Daniel Beier, Councilwoman Tasha Green, Edward Pruett and Mayor Bill Wild have spent the spring and summer courting voters and hearing from residents. As Aug. 3, Election Day, inches closer, all are preparing to be one of the two candidates who will make the final stretch toward November elections, when the final decision by voters will be made.

Westland's clerk, who runs the election in the city, is expecting Aug. 3 to be its most engaged local election ever because of greater access to absentee ballots and the attention garnered nationwide following the November 2020 election. Residents will also vote in a council primary and on a library tax request.

The four say recreation, lower water bills and honesty are what Westland residents say they want from their next mayor.

Beier, a 29-year-old Navy veteran, is a newcomer to politics. He said he's met more people this summer than he ever has before.

He's primarily engaging with people through door knocking, social media and helping people clean up after the city experienced flooding earlier this month.

"I never thought that I would meet this many people," he said. "The other day I was shopping at Heartland Market and five people came up to me and started talking to me. It's pretty interesting to be going shopping and getting stopped by residents."

Beier said residents have told him they want lower water rates, a good school district and more amenities for young people. Westland's mayor does not oversee Wayne-Westland Community Schools.

"Seniors have an issue with their grandchildren not wanting to come hang out in Westland because there isn't much for them to do," he said. "With the dying mall, that's been an issue for the seniors I've talked to."

Green, a 45-year-old councilwoman in her first term, said she's optimistic about her campaign so far. Green said she's spent time engaging people through social media and knocking on doors.

"I'm really excited about the campaign," she said. "I think the community is ready for change — they've been receptive. I feel good going into the primary."

Green said residents tell her they want lower taxes, lower water bills and transparent government officials at every level.

"The biggest thing I've been hearing from residents — and these are their words — is that they're tired of the corruption," she said. "They say there needs to be new people in office ... I've always been a candidate for the community and one who's been loyal to the residents."

Pruett, a 39-year-old pastor, said he's spent a lot of time of social media, knocking doors and meeting



Westland mayoral candidates, from left: Daniel Beier, Edward Pruett, Tasha Green and Mayor Bill Wild. COURTESY PHOTOS

The four Westland mayoral candidates say recreation, lower water bills and honesty are what Westland residents say they want from their next mayor.

business owners.

He's a newcomer to politics and feels that's a good thing.

"What I've noticed is a lot of community members are enthused about having candidates who aren't politicians running," he said. "I'm able to be one of those, and the community is receiving it well."

Pruett said many he speaks to have similar concerns. He said the most popular include feeling ignored by local government, wanting to play a bigger role in the decision-making process and having leaders that manage their finances well.

"The community has entrusted their elected officials to manage the finances, and people feel like they aren't benefiting from all that they've invested into the community," Pruett said. "They feel the investments are prioritized incorrectly."

Wild, 53, is seeking a fourth term as Westland's mayor. He's the longest serving mayor in the city's history. Wild said he engages with people on social media and is speaking to residents daily.

"We've been kind of overwhelmed with the support we're receiving," he said. "This'll be my fourth term and you never know where people are at with you, but the outpouring of support has just been humbling."

The mayor said recreation and redevelopment of unused space are popular requests among residents he speaks to.

"The biggest thing we get when we're knocking on doors is a want for recreational opportunities ... I think our vision of Marshall lines up with that well," he said.

"The other thing is split between redeveloping the former city hall site and the future plans for the Westland Mall."

To critics of his level of transparency, Wild said open government is something he values.

"Transparency has been a core value of my administration since day one," he said. "Look at the transparency pages we've made for the police department, the open government portal on the city's website, we've made the FOIA process more simple. I don't think there's another city that asks for as much public engagement as Westland has."

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

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Mary Margaret Rorabacher

Her Legacy... Mary Margaret Rorabacher, 91, passed away July 22, 2021. She was born on October 29, 1929, in Detroit, Michigan to Frank Knittle and Margaret Mary (Kuhn) Knittle. Mary married the love of her life, Robert Rorabacher, on September 13, 1947, at Our Lady Gate of Heaven



Catholic Church in Detroit, Michigan. Mary and Bob met while roller skating, where he shook her hand while holding a lit cigarette which burned her hand. It made for a lasting memory and a love story lasting 73 years. Mary was an avid reader, keeping a reading journal for each book she read. She also was a terrific baker who enjoyed baking Christmas cookies with her granddaughters. Mary was the ultimate bargain hunter, a trait she passed on to her daughter, and she loved to share stories about her bargain finds. She was a long-time resident of Plymouth, Michigan, then retired to Pinckney, where she enjoyed her secluded home in the pines for 30 years. Mary will be remembered as a loving wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt.

Her Family... Mary will be missed by her husband, Robert; her daughter, Sheila (David); sister, Kathleen Wright; Granddaughters, Rebecca (Michael) Dworakowski, and Sara Wortmann; nieces Lynn (Bill) Barnes, and Laura (Russ) Waldo. She is preceded in death by her parents Frank and Margaret, and her sister Clara Seeley. The family would like to thank the Hamburg Fire Department lift team and the staff of Arbor Hospice for their compassionate care.

Her Farewell... Mary's family and friends will gather on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 from 5:00pm - 8:00pm at Borek Jennings Funeral Home, Hamburg Chapel. Her Community Farewell will be held on Thursday, July 29, 2021, at 11:00am (10:00am gathering) at Borek Jennings Funeral Home, Hamburg Chapel. Deacon Tyler Arns will serve as celebrant. Memorial contributions are suggested to the Hamburg Library. Please leave a message of comfort for Mary's family at 1-877-231-7900, or sign her guestbook at www.borekjennings.com.



Anthony (Tony) Fonseca

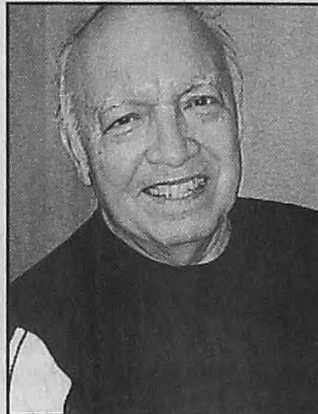
Born December 21, 1932 and raised in Detroit, Michigan, passed away Tuesday June 8, 2021 after enduring a long yet courageous battle with Alzheimer's Dementia.

A proud US Marine, a Korean War Veteran and recipient of the Purple Heart Medal of Honor.

Tony is the son of the late Mark and Louisa Fonseca. He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 48 years, Sophia Fonseca, 5 sisters; Caroline Zalewski (Tony), Alvira Moreno (Marcus), Augustine Gonzales (Blackie), Delores Chakur (Willie), Amelia Rodriguez (Richie) and grandson; Thomas Compton. He leaves behind sister; Lucy (the late Joseph) Gomez, brothers; Alfonso (Ester) Fonseca, Mark (MaryJane) Fonseca and Nicolas (Georgette) Fonseca and children; Michael (Pat) Fonseca, Lois (the late Marshall) Field, Nancy (Tom) Smith, Melissa (Tim) McAteer, Melinda (Pete) Brewis, 14 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Tony dedicated his life to working hard and raising a family. After dedicating his working years to one company, Hawthorn Metal Company in Royal Oak Michigan, he retired in 1996. Tony spent his last years in Port Charlotte Florida.

A celebration of life is being planned for Saturday August 21, 2021 in South Lyon Michigan.



Clara M. Simpson

FARMINGTON - 95, retired Farmington Public Schools transportation supervisor, passed away July 22, 2021. Beloved mother of John Simpson and Jane Lavine. No services are planned. Arrangements by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington. (248-474-5200) heeney-sundquist.com

HEENEY-SUNDQUIST



Phyllis Gay McCaffrey

June 9, 1939 - July 21, 2021

Phyllis G. McCaffrey, 82 of Livonia, passed away peacefully with family members by her bedside on Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at Henry Ford Hospital West Bloomfield Hills.

Born June 9, 1939, in Grundy Virginia, she was the daughter of Henry and Myrtle (Stacy) Wolford. She married the love of her life, John McCaffrey in 1957 in Washington D.C. Together they would raise two children and they spent many years traveling around to all fifty states and Canada in their RV. Phyllis was a second mom to Sandy, Steve's wife. They grew very close, having a mother daughter relationship.

When Phyllis was not traveling, she enjoyed sitting on her front porch visiting and drinking coffee with her dear friends. She would always tell them stories from her experiences and her life. She always enjoyed a good card game with family and friends. She had a natural ability for performing Reike and Tapping on her family and close friends. Phyllis was a long-time resident of Livonia as well as a member of Unity of Livonia Church, where she was an interictal part of the healing ministries. Most importantly family was everything for Phyllis. Her primary passion was spending quality time with family.

Phyllis started her career working for the Federal Government in the Mapping department in Washington D.C. Later she went on to work for the Defense Department at Williams International as a secretary to the Chief of the Contracting Department. She would end her career working with the Department of Defense as a Packing Specialist.

Phyllis leaves behind two sons, Steve (Sandy) McCaffrey and Mark McCaffrey; two loving grandchildren, Crystal and Bailey McCaffrey; siblings, Robert (Lucy) Wolford and Betty Smith.

Sadly, Phyllis is preceded in death by her husband, John; an infant daughter, Rhonda; siblings; Hydrith Duaghten, Pauline Goff, Christen Reber, Bill Wolford, Dorothy Runyon, and Scotty Wolford.

A celebration of life to remember Phyllis will be held on Saturday, August 28, 2021, at Unity of Livonia Church, 28660 5 Mile Road Livonia, MI, 48154, at 10am.

In lieu of flowers the family wishes donations would be made to COC, Community Opportunity Center 14147 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI, 48154, and Unity of Livonia Church.

Words of comfort and condolences to the family may be made through www.ruppfuneralhomeinc.com.



Train fatally hits Wayne pedestrian, 26

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A train fatally struck a 26-year-old pedestrian near the intersection of Winifred Street and East Michigan Avenue in Wayne.

Wayne police said they were dispatched to nearby railroad tracks at about 11:53 p.m. July 20 in response to reports of the collision.

They found a Wayne resident dead from his injuries.

Anyone with information is asked to call Sgt. Robert Amore, 734-721-1414, ext. 1576.

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

Judge: State rep. violated bond again

Kayla Daugherty LivingstonDaily.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Livingston County judge found Michigan Rep. Jewell Jones, D-Inkster, violated his bond by not paying for his court-ordered alcohol monitor.

The violation will cost Jones a \$1,000 fine. Livingston County Circuit Court Judge Michael Hatty did not revoke Jones' bond.

Jones is on bond after he was charged with operating a motor vehicle with a high blood alcohol content, operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, possession of a weapon while under the influence of alcohol and reckless driving.

Jones is also charged with four counts of resisting and obstructing a police officer.

He is required to undergo alcohol testing as part of his bond conditions. Last month Livingston County District Court Judge Daniel Bain ordered Jones to have an alcohol monitor placed on his ankle.

As part of an agreement with JSG Monitoring, Jones is required to pay for his tether every Thursday, Emily Shelton testified during the hearing July 23.

Jones failed to pay the July 8 invoice, Shelton, a Livingston County probation officer, said.

She said the monitoring company sent text message reminders of the outstanding balance on July 6, 9, 13 and 14.

On July 7, Jones replied to a text message reminder with, "No worries. I see the email. Thank you! I don't get a discount???" Shelton testified.

Due to the lack of payment, Jones' tether was deactivated at 5 p.m. on July 14.

Shelton received an email from the company informing the Livingston County probation department of the shutoff early July 15. Later that morning she received another email stating Jones had paid the outstanding balance and his tether was turned back on, she testified.

Jones had "a rough week," and was helping at a church following flooding in metro-Detroit, Ali Hammoud, Jones' attorney, said.

Livingston County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Christina Richards argued Jones' bond should be revoked.

"He received multiple text messages warnings that he was going to be shut off for failure to pay, if that was not paid by end of business Wednesday (July 15)," Richards said. "Rather than paying by end of business Wednesday he made a text message that the people can only guess was meant as a joke asking for a discount."

Hatty told Jones "if you violate any other orders, you will be looking at jail."

Last month Jones pleaded guilty to a bond violation after he left military training without notifying his attorney or court officials.

Jones is subject to random drug and alcohol testing as a condition of his bond in the case. He is a member of the Michigan National Guard.

He had previously been granted an exception from drug and alcohol testing to participate in National Guard training at Camp Grayling from June 12-26.

On June 16, Jones tagged himself on Facebook at Planet Fitness in Wayne, Richards said.

"He did not go to any place he shouldn't have," Hammoud said. "I know there is a picture of him at the gym on Facebook. There was an assessment test, an Army Combat fitness test the next morning, that's one of the reasons he went to the gym."

Records show he attended state House committee meetings in Lansing on June 15 and June 22, and prosecutors learned from Camp Grayling officials that Jones received a special pass to leave the camp to attend the Legislature, she said.

Bain ordered Jones to test for drugs and alcohol following the hearing. Jones will have to undergo random drug testing twice a month. Bain also ordered an alcohol monitor to be placed on Jones' ankle.

"I'm going to make alcohol testing real easy for you from this point forward. I am going to order for you to immediately have an alcohol monitor placed on your ankle," he said.

"We are taking this thing seriously, it's time that you start," Bain said.

Jones is scheduled to appear in front of Hatty next month for a pretrial hearing. He faces a minimum of two years in prison if convicted on the resisting and obstructing charges.

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Judge sends Plymouth Twp. arson case to trial

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A former Northville firefighter left a New Year's Eve party, telling his girlfriend he wanted to visit her Canton home to check on their dogs soon after they rang in 2019.

That may have been Patrick Nolan's intent, but his truck's infotainment system placed him outside his Plymouth Township home on Sheffield Court between 12:30 and 12:34 a.m.

He would return to the party, where his truck was at about 2:15 a.m., when someone called 911 to say Nolan's township home was an inferno.

35th District Court Judge Ronald Lowe testified that he knows from watching the courthouse burn in 1997 that a building can burn for some time before anyone sees evidence of a blaze.

After listening to prosecutors present that timeline information in the courtroom, Lowe sent Nolan's arson case to the higher Third Circuit Court for trial. If convicted on the two arson charges, Nolan could spend the rest of his life in prison.

"At best, the state has a circumstantial case," Lowe said. "The difficulty for you, Mr. Nolan, is that they put that many pieces together."

His decision concluded an all-day July 23 preliminary exam that included several witnesses and plenty of photos. The photos, in the judge's opinion, proved arson burned down Nolan's home.

Predicting that any jury will be disappointed to learn there's no obvious smoking gun, he noted that Nolan had



A fire on Sheffield Court in Plymouth Township on Jan. 1, 2019, destroyed this home. Homeowner Patrick Nolan has been accused of arson in the case.

ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

the incentive, opportunity and expertise to burn down his insured home for financial gain.

An insurance representative who investigated Nolan's fire claim testified that the former firefighter told her he had cashed out a 401(k) account and had maxed out credit cards.

Kim Campbell of Citizens Insurance said in court that he told her he worked as a Northville firefighter for about a year and a half before the city terminated him in September 2018. He became self employed and worked as a snow plow contractor

While attending a Christmas concert,

Nolan also allegedly approached a personal acquaintance who works for another insurance company about who would get the insurance money and how would the payout happen if a house burned.

Those who investigated the case also testified that Nolan was living with his girlfriend in Canton when his township home burned. The home had spent a few months on the market.

Nolan told at least two of those testifying that he had returned to his township home briefly at about 6:45 p.m. New Year's Eve, just to check on a basement sump pump.

His truck's infotainment system placed him there between 6:52 and 7:20 p.m., a window of opportunity if he wanted to prepare the home for arson, prosecutors asserted.

Michigan State Police investigator Jason Mercier testified that he smelled gasoline when he visited the destroyed home. He found evidence of gasoline in several places, including on carpeting, a couch, and a basement shelf.

Gregory Lotoczky of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive testified that he was talking to Nolan inside the home's kitchen area when the former firefighter led him to a landscaping brick that suggested a forced entry.

Nolan appeared for his preliminary examination in a jail jumpsuit. He seems to be having medical issues, with Lowe at one point asking if he needed to lay on his back.

The case against Nolan has involved Michigan Attorney General investigators who emphasize that fire ignited in three separate unconnected areas of the home, gas vapors were ignited with an open flame, a human caused the fire and Nolan's truck was outside the residence less than two hours before a neighbor called for help.

Defense attorney Adam Clements said during his closing statements that, given the duration of the investigation, there should have been more evidence against his client.

"A reasonably cautious person would say, 'Nope, that's not enough,'" he told Lowe.

Lowe lowered Nolan's bond from \$250,000 to \$50,000.

svela@hometownlife.com

Canton teen pleads guilty to role in fatal 2019 crash

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Canton Township teen has pleaded guilty to an involuntary manslaughter charge in the May 2019 collision that killed a 64-year-old Van Buren Township resident.

Micaiah Minor's original second-degree homicide charge was dismissed July 21 as part of a plea deal agreement for the lesser charge.

The 19-year-old man returns to Third Circuit Court on Sept. 29 for a sentencing. Involuntary manslaughter carries a potential imprisonment of 15 years.

Minor's attorney David Cripps did not respond to a request seeking comment.

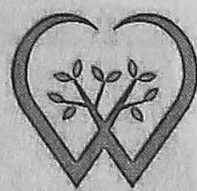
According to prosecutors, Minor was an unlicensed driver when he sped southbound on Belleville Road in the early morning hours of May 7, 2019.

He allegedly disregarded a red light,

crossed over the double yellow line and struck a northbound vehicle near the Ecorse Road intersection in Van Buren Township.

John Robert McElreath died from his injuries.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com.



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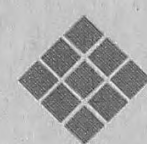
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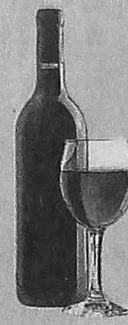
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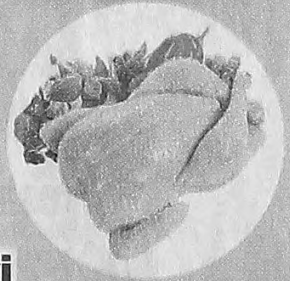
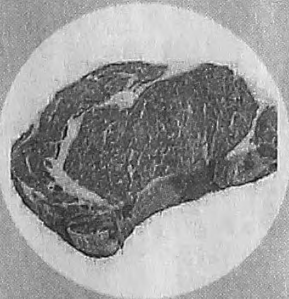
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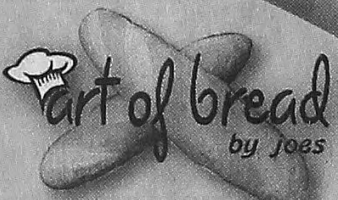
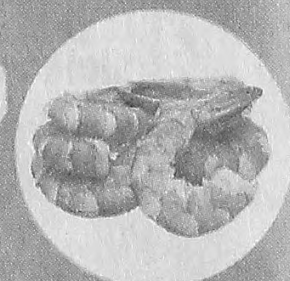
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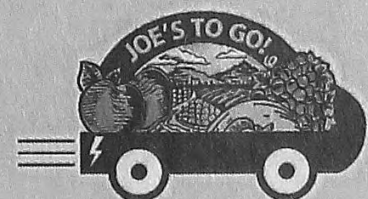
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SPORTS

Underdog mentality



Farmington High School cross country runner and upcoming senior Peter Baracco, right, talks to his father, Tony, who is also the team's assistant coach, after a run July 21 at Drake Park in Farmington Hills. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Farmington senior sets sights high, remains grounded

Colin Gay HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Peter Baracco made his final turn, running toward the parking lot at Drake Park in Farmington, completing his July morning workout. He admitted he was a bit tired, regaining his breath as sweat beaded on his forehead.

It's the name of the game, he said with a smile.

The Farmington senior always had confidence, whether it was evading taggers on the playground or using his God-given, high-endurance speed on the soccer field or basketball court. It's a confidence that boiled over into accolades from the first time he stepped onto a cross-country course in seventh grade to now, heading into his senior season with the Falcons.

But there's a clear distinction between confidence and settling. Ahead of his final races as a Falcon, there's no way Baracco's lining up already satisfied.

"I still want to be the underdog going at it, nothing to lose," Baracco said. "I kind of like that feeling."

As a junior, there weren't many times Baracco was an underdog.

After finishing second to Salem's Talha Syed in the first dual meet, he did not lose a cross country race until the state final, finishing fourth behind Hartland's Riley Hough, Ann Arbor Skyline's Hobbs Kessler and Plymouth's Patrick Byrnes.

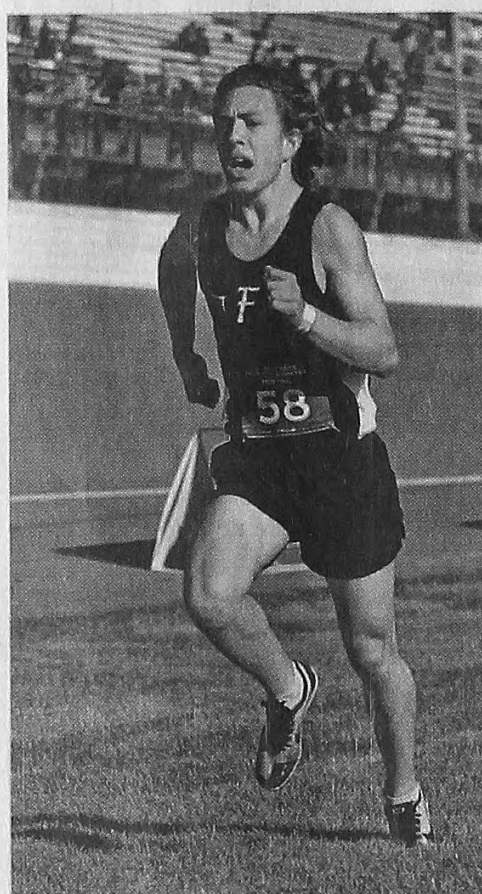
That momentum continued to build in the spring, capping off his first full track season with a second-place finish in the 3,200-meter, finishing less than a second behind Hough in the final, confirming his position as one of the top returners in the state as a senior, something he never thought he would get to.

"Even in sophomore year, top 10 in the state was scary to me," he said. "But in the back of my mind, I knew I wanted to eventually, possibly (be) a state champion and stuff. It seemed very far away until now."

What was once unfeasible is now Baracco's goal, setting his eyes on two Farmington school records — the 3,200-meter, which he is one second behind; and the one mile, which he's within three seconds of breaking.

But the ultimate prize is a state title,

See UNDERDOG, Page 2B



Peter Baracco finishes his race at the MHSAA finals at MIS on Nov. 6, 2020.

Vintage base ball sends Cornshuckers back in time

Colin Gay HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Mike Fini's hobby is basically time travel.

Each weekend, the 27-year-old — donned in a green jersey with "Canton" blocked in yellow lettering across his chest — goes back 154 years with the "Marbles" nickname persona to play the game he loves: base ball; set up in an open field without ball counts or gloves.

It's America's pastime set in America's past time.

"Civil War reenactments are really cool, but the outcome is always predetermined," Fini said. "Where here, we are recreating the game as it was played but people are taking the field are still trying to win that baseball game."

Fini was introduced to vintage base ball at an early age, being dragged to games at Greenfield Village in Dearborn each summer when he was 7. He later took the field himself, simplifying the game to its pure essence: just playing a game with his closest friends.

But it was even more than that. Each time he took the field, Fini was learning something. He was gaining an idea of how such a beloved game originated, something incredibly different than the modern game.

Fini's goal was bringing this closer to home, establishing the Cornshuckers Base Ball Club of Canton in 2016, facing teams around the East Coast and Midwest with players between the ages of 22 and 50, united by a pure love of the game.

The idea of vintage base ball seems simple.

"Oh yeah, we play this game that's the 1860s version of baseball," Fini introduces. "They are like, 'Oh that's cool. I'll come out.'"

Then the changes start to happen.

Players leave their batting and fielding gloves at home, catching a lemon-peel baseball — a half an inch bigger and a half an inch heavier than a normal baseball — with their bare hands. Without the stipulation of strikes or balls, pitchers slowly underhand the ball to the hitter at about 20 mph, playing full nine-inning games that usually time out in less than two hours.

"On one hand, it's like baseball and it looks similar," Rob "Who" Stolz said, who's been playing with Fini on different teams since 2014 before joining the Cornshuckers. "There definitely is a huge adjustment of keeping just the basic fundamentals of fielding a ground ball or catching a fly ball."

Playing without a glove, Stolz feels vintage base ball gives you more chances to improvise, especially in the

See BASE BALL, Page 2B

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Lions near bottom in ESPN Future Power Rankings

Kirkland Crawford Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's pretty well known at this point: the Lions are in the beginning stages of a rebuild.

New general manager. New head coach. New quarterback. The reset button has been pressed in Allen Park.

And so, fans will be looking toward the future, which isn't exactly a new concept for Detroit sports fans these days.

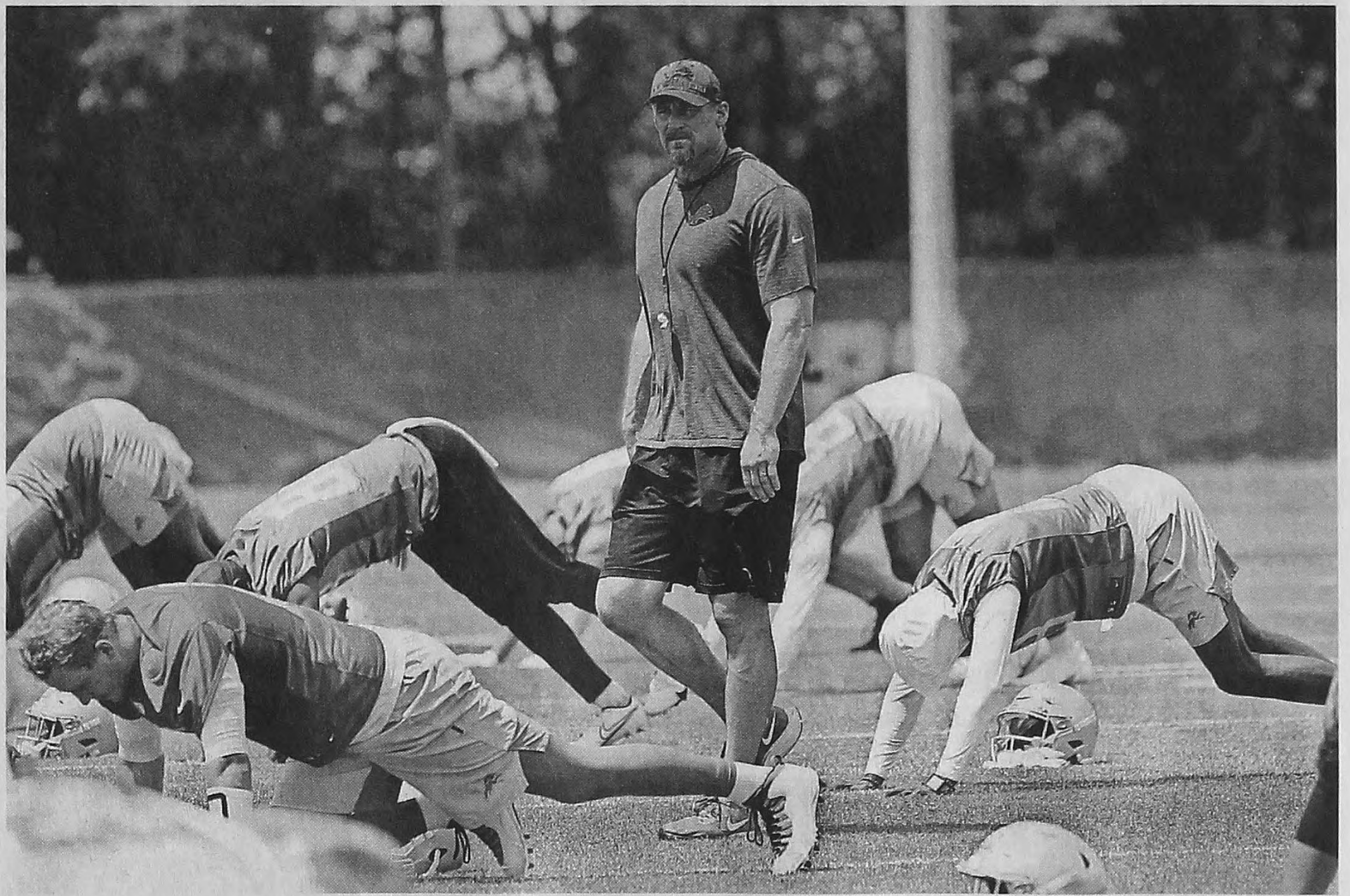
ESPN provided a bit of a road map for all 32 NFL teams, providing their "Future Power Rankings" which takes into account roster, drafting ability, front office and coaching skill.

According to ESPN's panel of experts — writer Jeremy Fowler, analysts Louis Riddick and Field Yates and sports analytics specialist Seth Walder — Lions fans will need plenty of patience.

The Lions were ranked second-to-last, 31st, in the power rankings, with a score of 65.1 on a 100-point scale.

They ranked lowest in overall roster (minus the quarterbacks) at 59.3, also 31st in the league. So yeah, there is work to do.

"Perhaps no franchise is positioned to play the patient game more than Detroit, as new general manager Brad Holmes and coach Dan Campbell have little pressure on them this season or likely even next," Yates wrote. "Detroit has extra draft capital ahead with much better cap flexibility starting in 2022; it plans to build the roster through the trenches, as was evidenced through its 2021 draft class. This is going to take a while, but there appears to be a blueprint."



Lions coach Dan Campbell watches players stretch during minicamp practice June 9 at the Allen Park practice facility.
KIRTHMON F. DOZIER/DETROIT FREE PRESS

And speaking of Campbell, he presents perhaps the team's biggest worry. The coaching staff graded out to a 66.8 (impressive considering they've coached zero games together, but those little details only make these rankings

harder), good for 25th in the league.

Riddick, who interviewed for the Lions' GM job last year, is impressed with Campbell's staff.

"Now, the question for me is how players will take to his leadership style.

This is an intense guy who talked about biting kneecaps at his introductory news conference. Leadership comes in many different forms, and only time will tell if his style will pay off," Riddick wrote.

Base ball

Continued from Page 1B

field: making plays by using either hand, using a heightened athletic ability and creativity that rarely comes into effect in modern baseball.

"It's more of a blank slate to kind of just feel it out and play it as you go along," Stolz described.

Fini first started playing for vintage base ball teams in 2014, starting his own league closer to home two years later. Canton never had an actual team over 150 years ago — something many vintage base ball teams base their teams around the country — but established a club based on the area's history of agriculture, formally being known as a sweet corn capital.

The Cornshuckers Base Ball Club joined a group of 20 teams in the state of Michigan, 30 teams in Ohio and numerous throughout the Midwest and the East Coast, traveling around, establishing themselves to the vintage base ball community, what many say is the biggest pull of this game.

"It's really a reputation-based thing where everybody's just a big family," Stolz said. "You just get to meet so many different people from all over every time that you play. You might talk to them for 20, 30 minutes after a game, but it's like you're best friends."

There's a level of camaraderie that's different in this game. It's a group of players united on the nostalgia of what was, playing a competitively, yet laid back and friendly, getting together afterwards with a beer in hand and reminiscing on the evolution of baseball with people of all ages.

All Fini wants to do is to continue that camaraderie, to bring more people in the Canton area into the community.

No matter the age, the Cornshuckers founder hopes that history will still con-



Vintage base ball is played without batting or fielding gloves, along with no strike or call counts at the plate.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIKE FINI

Cornshuckers schedule

July 31: Greenfield Village Lah De Dahs at Walnut Grove.

Aug. 14-15: World Tournament at Greenfield Village.

Sept. 4-5: Ohio Cup.

Learn more about the team at facebook.com/cornshuckersbaseball.

tinue to be remembered and made.

"I just want to be able to play as long as possible," Fini said.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17.



Members of the Cornshuckers Base Ball Club of Canton play 1867-style base ball.

Underdog

Continued from Page 1B

something Farmington head coach Jeremy Auer thinks is attainable for his senior, especially after the leaps Baracco made as a junior.

"He got to a spot where felt he could compete with just about anybody," Auer said. "In track season, he pretty much showed it."

"Nobody ran away from him, even a state champion and one of the fastest guys in the country, lost to him by a second and he had the lead until 30, 40 meters to go. He controlled the race late."

Despite all the success, Baracco's personality has remained intact, keeping the energetic, fun-loving personality that Auer first saw when they first met.

"There's big stuff coming down the road, no mistake about it... but he doesn't feel he has to do something or show he's worthy of that," Auer said. "His confidence comes from within."

It's a confidence that rubs off on those around him.

No matter the time Baracco personally runs, he's out on the course cheering for his teammates, keeping them engaged in what they are doing for the team as a whole.

Even before the state meet, Baracco remembers encouraging his teammates that a certain level of nervous energy is good before races.

"I keep telling them, 'It's OK to be nervous. That's what makes a race a race and not just practice,'" Baracco said. "There's a point where you can be too nervous and be scared. That's really what you don't want. It's OK to be nervous."

"We have each other, so that makes it easier to get through."

No matter where Baracco's at, Auer sees someone doing the best for both himself and his team, keeping himself level-headed and engaged with large goals looming at the end of each season.

"Obviously his low stick helps us but in terms of executing and doing all the little things they need to do to get better, he's helped more than I can," Auer said. "He's an ambassador for his coaches. They want to be more like him and he wants to spend more time with them."

The cross country seasons is coming. But Baracco's training remains the same.

He'll run with his teammates at Drake Park four days a week, working toward a better finish than the 16th-place the Falcons had a season ago; something Auer feels is possible, extending the hope even to the top-10.

Baracco has plenty to think about outside of Farmington, whether it's the state title he's pursuing — likely facing off against Hough for the top spot — or the start of his recruitment, visiting Michigan and Michigan State then broadening his search outside of state borders.

But right now, all Baracco wants to do is compete and have fun running, putting in the work now to prepare for the future, whatever that may entail and however far away that may feel.

It's worked for him in the past. He's counting on it working again starting this fall.

"That's what I'm hoping for," Baracco said.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Tucker has 'now' plan for MSU

Rainer Sabin Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

INDIANAPOLIS — It's safe to presume Big Ten media days was not on Mel Tucker's bucket list. The event can be a tedious exercise for any coach, let alone one with the kind of high-wattage tunnel vision Tucker has for all things football.

Tucker would prefer to keep his focus on roster building, Xs and Os and recruiting. After all, his Michigan State program, as he likes to say, is the "aggregation of marginal gains."

In Tucker's universe, every second, minute and hour should be devoted toward making the Spartans bigger, stronger, faster and better.

But Tucker found himself relishing his time on the dais Friday inside Lucas Oil Stadium.

His appearance at the conference's media junket was a benchmark experience and yet another reminder that some things are still new for a coach 17 months into his tenure.

"Lots of people tell me, 'It's like Year 1 for you,'" Tucker said.

Tucker rejects that notion because it suggests Michigan State remains at a standstill as a victim of its unfortunate circumstances — the most obvious being the pandemic that gripped the nation a month after Tucker arrived in East Lansing.

No one would dispute the coronavirus crisis more adversely affected the Spartans than other teams because it coincided with a regime change in East Lansing. The transition from Mark Dantonio to Tucker was ill-timed, clumsy and protracted.

But Tucker sees positive momentum everywhere he looks, which is why he vehemently disputes he is still in his rookie season at MSU.

"No, it's not Year 1, it's Year 2," Tucker said at his first Big Ten media day. "We gotta get this thing moving."

When Tucker was hired, he promised he'd sleep fast and burn the midnight oil. The Spartans have since been in a constant state of activity.

The team is the definition of a work in progress, exhibiting the kind of permanence of an Etch-a-Sketch drawing.

"We do have a chip on our shoulder. We really do. We have got to lot to prove. ... There is a sense of urgency."

Mel Tucker Michigan State football coach

Change has been continual since Tucker introduced the competitive culture he believes will revive Michigan State.

There are 34 new scholarship players, including 15 transfers from other college programs. Tucker has spent the past eight months turning over the roster with the goal of infusing MSU with better talent. After Dantonio built the Spartans into a national contender, he watched his proud program quickly deteriorate.

This past April, no Michigan State players were selected in the NFL draft for the first time since 1940 and preliminary grades from two major scouting services indicate only two upperclassmen on the current team are positioned to be chosen in 2022 ... as late-round picks.

It's no surprise then that Michigan State went 2-5 last fall and is predicted in one media poll to finish last in the East Division for the second straight year.

"We do have a chip on our shoulder," Tucker acknowledged. "We really do. We have got to lot to prove... There is a sense of urgency."

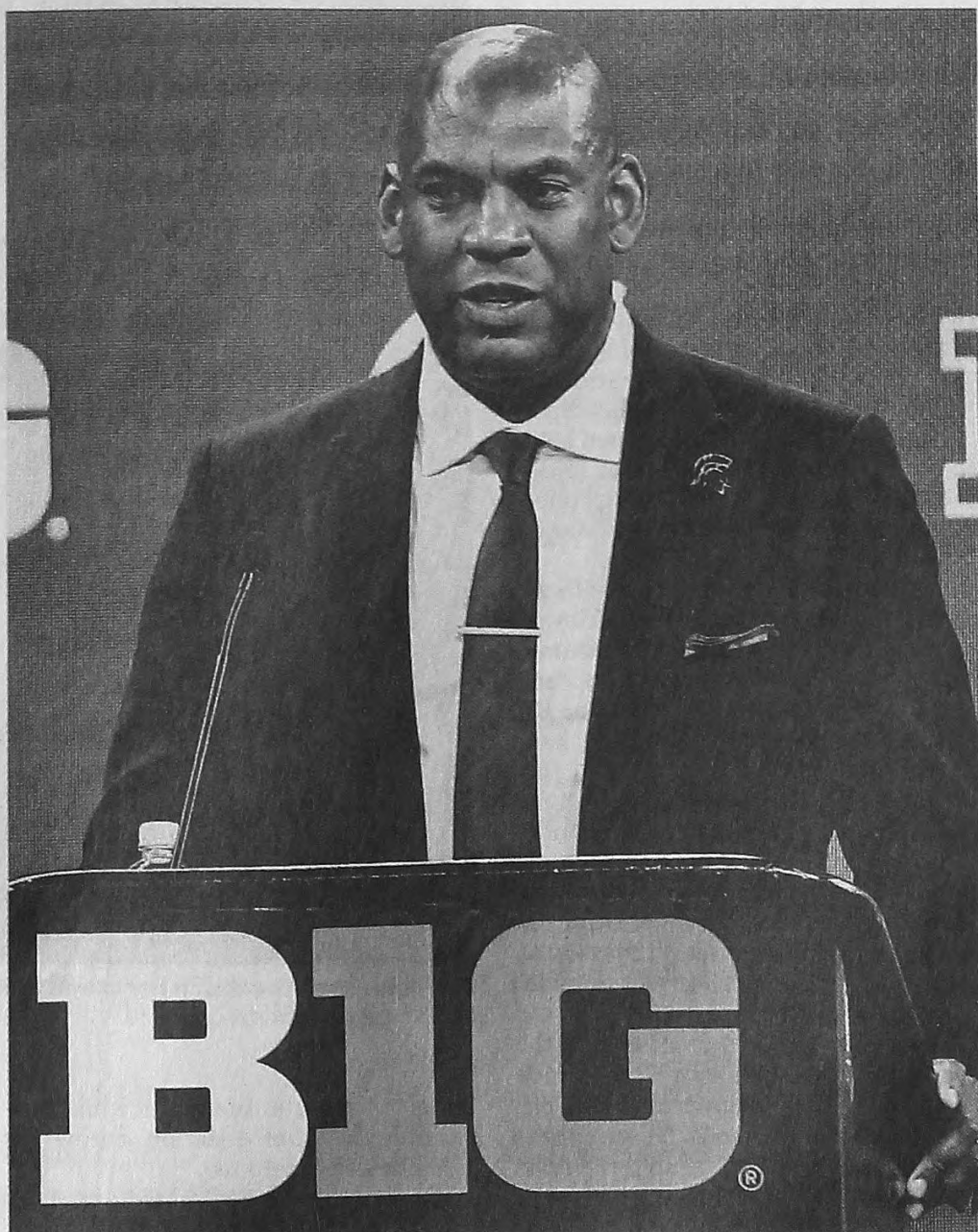
Receiver Jalen Nailor said Tucker calls it the "now" plan.

"This is the year that he really sees us doing these the big things that he has in mind and we have the guys who can do that," Nailor explained.

But Tucker will be afforded time to accomplish his mission.

Despite a "rough" 2020 season, as one young journalist termed it Friday, Tucker earned plenty of goodwill for beating rival Michigan as a 24-point underdog.

Around these parts, the shot of him masked up in a three-piece suit pointing at the Paul Bunyan trophy by his side



Michigan State football coach Mel Tucker speaks to the media during the Big Ten media days in Indianapolis on July 23. ROBERT GODDIN/USA TODAY SPORTS

became one of iconic sports images from last fall.

The win in the second week of his inaugural season showed he was ready to seize the moment on the grand stage and could make his first major impression without the Big Ten media days platform.

But all these months later Tucker seemed to appreciate finally being here Friday.

As he was about to be whisked away

by a media relations staff member during the afternoon, he interjected.

"It's not me," he said. "It's him. Blame him."

He then beamed a big mischievous smile.

Minutes later, Tucker's last session with the media did, in fact, end. His attention would soon shift again to football and the project 17 months in the making. The career coach was eager to get back on the job.

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Can Harbaugh, UM recapture football buzz?

Rainer Sabin Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

INDIANAPOLIS — When Jim Harbaugh returned to Ann Arbor almost seven years ago, his name rolled off the tip of everybody's tongue.

He was the talk of the college football universe, sparking intrigue as soon as he grabbed the reins of his alma mater's struggling program.

The buzz around Harbaugh and Michigan football was deafening. Wherever he went, he attracted attention. Whenever he spoke, he made headlines.

But now Harbaugh has slipped below the radar. His Twitter account is dormant. His podcast is defunct. His public appearances have been few and far between.

As Harbaugh has slipped into the shadows, his peers in the coaching industry have eclipsed him. Alabama's Nick Saban is abundantly more successful. Mike Leach is zanier. Lane Kiffin is a better instigator. Ryan Day has a higher trajectory.

Harbaugh's diminished status was reinforced when the Big Ten sent out an information packet on the eve of its media days spectacle. Included on Page 5 was a pronunciation guide for the Michigan coach's famous surname.

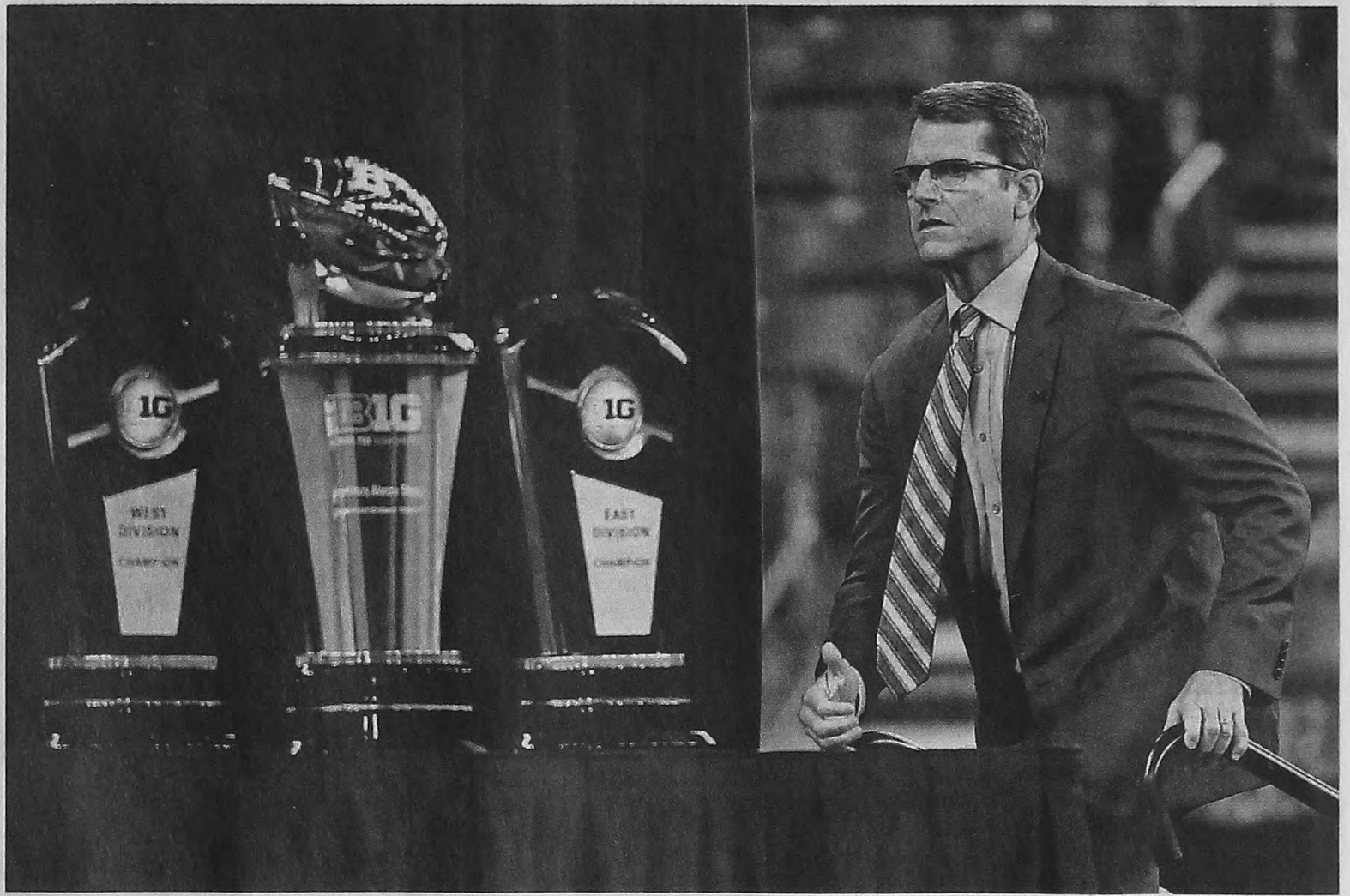
It's HAR-baw, just in case it wasn't clear after all these years.

And Harbaugh still resonates in this swath of football country. Here in Indianapolis, he was finally back in the city where he starred as an NFL quarterback and earned the name Captain Comeback for an uncanny ability to wiggle his team out of jams.

His Wolverines now find themselves in one of those challenging situations — deep in a hole after a damaging 2020 season that shook the program's foundation. The 2-4 slog through a truncated schedule last fall included embarrassing losses and a string of cancellations, leaving Michigan mired at its lowest point in Harbaugh's tenure.

Months later, not much has changed. The outlook is dim and the odds are as long as ever that this will be the year he achieves a breakthrough and makes it to Indy for the Big Ten's real showcase event: the league championship game.

A reporter eventually reminded Har-



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh walks to the podium prior to speaking during Big Ten media days in Indianapolis.
ROBERT GODDIN/USA TODAY SPORTS

baugh of his shortcomings while presenting the final question during his main news conference.

"You win a lot of games, but you haven't beaten Ohio State. You haven't won a Big Ten championship game," he said. "Where do you think the program stands right now?"

As Harbaugh meandered through a response, he likened U-M to a climber aiming to scale the highest of mountains. Making it to the top is the only goal, Harbaugh said, and the benchmarks along the way include wins over the Buckeyes and Michigan State.

"We're going to do it or die trying," he added.

It was a good quote and once upon a time that kind of quip would have reached all corners of the internet.

But it rippled briefly before everyone

quickly moved on to something else.

The rhetoric from Harbaugh has grown stale. The grand statements don't have the same grist behind them. The big promises induce eye rolls instead of enthusiasm.

The doom and gloom surrounding the program are pervasive, edge rusher Aidan Hutchinson explained.

"You can't find a good thing on Michigan football on social media anywhere," he said. "And I love it. This is the first year in Michigan football that we have been seen as underdogs. We're usually ranked top 15, top 10 sometimes. This year we're not even ranked."

While Hutchinson seems to relish the idea of the Wolverines being discounted, it's doesn't say much for Harbaugh and Michigan that they find themselves in this position at this advanced stage of

his tenure. By now, Harbaugh should have made his alma mater into a perennial championship contender. The reality, however, is that Michigan is rebuilding.

The coaching staff has been reconfigured. A new defense has been installed. The program has initiated a culture change.

Combined, these developments would spark excitement under normal circumstances, in a more forgiving environment.

But it's Year 7 and the fan base has tabled its enthusiasm until the results improve on the field.

Even the media corps has grown weary. As Harbaugh sat at a table during the late afternoon, the large crowd of reporters that gathered in front of him had thinned substantially.

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BUDGET WORK STUDY SESSION
August 7, 2021
10:00 A.M.

HELD AT THE
PLYMOUTH DISTRICT LIBRARY
223 S Main Street, Plymouth, MI 48170

A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 7, 2021 at 10:00 am at the Plymouth District Library at 223 S. Main Street, Plymouth, Michigan 48170. It will be a Budget Work Study Session.

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Publish: July 29, 2021 LO-0000359825 3x3

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