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Former Plymouth Elks property clears important hurdle

Ed Wright
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A well-organized contingent of Waverly Village subdivision neighbors showed up in full force Jan. 12 to deliver a loud and clear statement to the Plymouth Township Planning Commission: Do not green light a plan

to connect roads leading to and from a proposed 373-unit residential development connected to their dirt road-lined neighborhood next door.

"These roads are bad enough with the traffic we have now," said Waverly Village resident Nancy Tymensky, whose home sits less than a 100 yards from the site of the proposed connector. "Eastside Drive is an

ice rink in the winter and a mud bath in the spring. There are trucks getting stuck in our front yards on almost a daily basis.

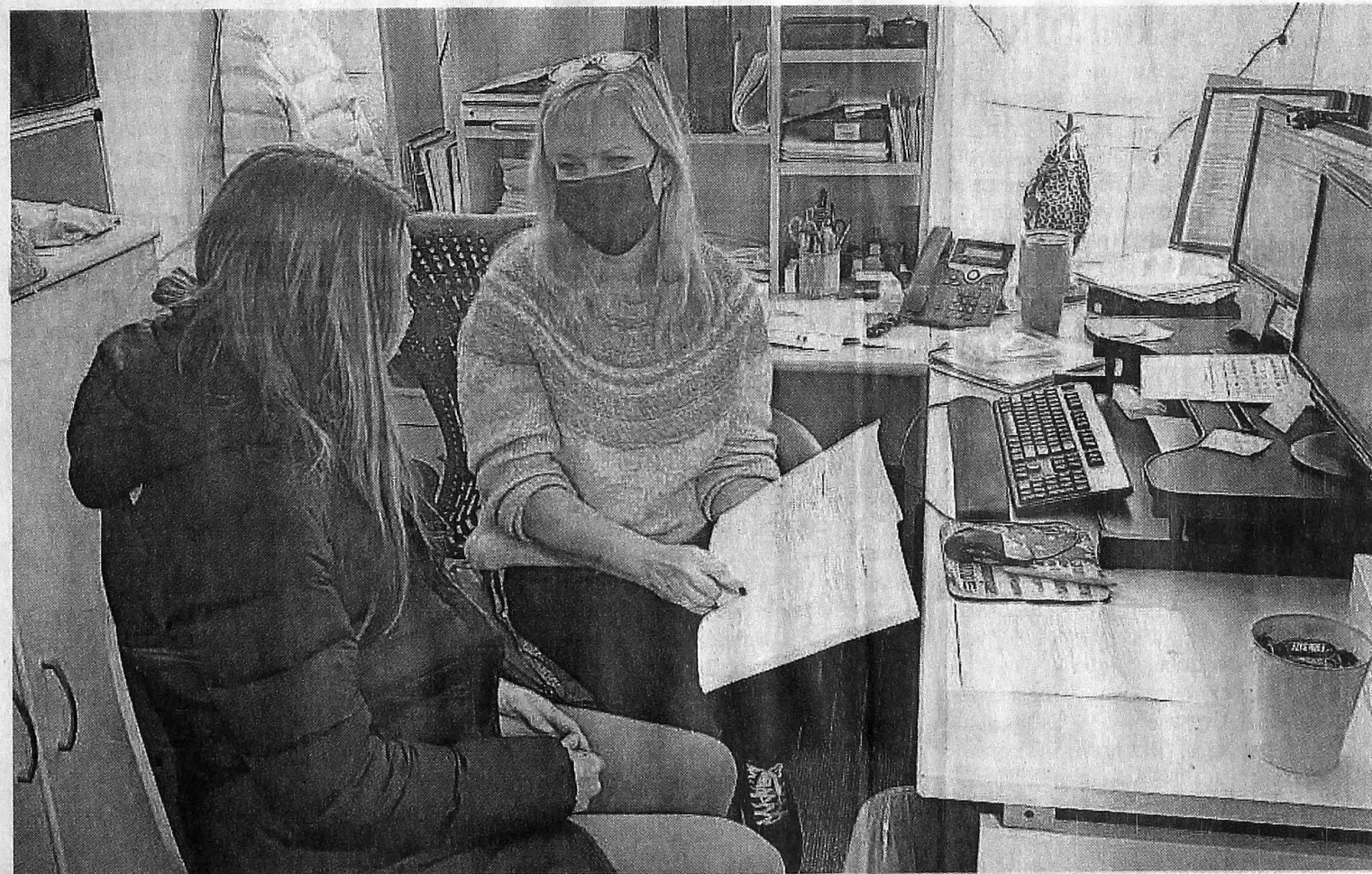
"When the developer first met with us months ago, they told us the road would be separated from our neighborhood by a locked gate and only used for emergency vehicles. Then it was just a gate, now it's simply a road with no barriers whatsoever."

James Davidson, who lives down the street from Tymensky, said the significant rise in traffic the connection is bound to create is a safety hazard for families like his, which includes an 11-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son.

Davidson argued the connector would

See PROPERTY, Page 3A

Versatility a necessity for high school counselors during turbulent times



Canton High School counselor Erin Demarest meets with Canton student Brynn Peregord Jan. 11. COURTESY OF ERIN DEMAREST

Ed Wright
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As Canton High School counselor Erin Demarest helped a student sign in for a routine planning meeting with colleague Barb Lehmann, Lehmann hustled out of the office at an urgent pace, trying to track down a student who was experiencing a social-emotional emergency.

Welcome to the new world of high school counseling, where old-school requirements (making sure seniors have enough credits to graduate, offering guidance on what extra-curricular activities

students should try, to name two) now coexist with more-pressing COVID-19/school violence-created anxieties.

"We used to have more control over our days, at least a little bit," Demarest said, harking back to pre-March 2020 times. "Now, there are more times when you try to work on something — getting graduation audits done, going through kids' transcripts — and a student will come in facing a crisis that makes you drop what you're doing and attend to their needs.

"The most important thing we do is work with the kids who are dealing with mental-health issues. I feel like we've been going down this mental-health road

for several years now, but it's definitely gotten worse (since March 2020)."

Demarest revealed her daily work apparel reflects the changing times.

"We wear tennis shoes now instead of more dressy shoes because we have to be actively ready in case we have to run to one of the other schools to help a student," she said.

Counselors outnumbered

Plymouth-Canton Educational Park counselors, who serve over 6,000 stu-

See SCHOOLS, Page 2A

Livonia Public Schools codifies procedures for police to interrogate students

Susan Vela
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Livonia school administrators will be more diligent about alerting parents before police begin interrogating their children about non-school matters on Livonia Public Schools property.



Quist

District administrators have agreed to codify the proper procedure for cooperating with on-campus police investi-

See CODE, Page 2A

This former bank building could start serving sliders

David Veselenak
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Yet another place to order a burger could come to Farmington in the near future.

Savvy Sliders, a southeast Michigan-based chain that serves a variety of slider hamburgers with an assortment of toppings, plans to locate a new restaurant with a drive-thru window at the former TCF Bank building at

See SAVVY, Page 3A

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Code

Continued from Page 1A

gations after a schools-of-choice parent lobbied school district leaders for an official policy that would guarantee parental notification.

"Since this issue addresses how situations involving police interviews with students take place, it is more appropriate to be codified as an administrative procedure," district spokeswoman Stacy Jenkins said when responding by email to Hometown Life's questions. "Our board policy already states that the district will work cooperatively with outside agencies and this administrative procedure clarifies how this is to be carried out on our end."

Jenkins said the new administrative procedure remains in draft form. It's likely to be published within the next 30 days.

The procedure will focus on keeping non-school-related police interviews away from the school setting. If police pursue questioning, school administrators must be involved in interview requests and, if they allow police to proceed, the administrator will make a "reasonable attempt" to contact parents before the questions begin.

The procedure is not applicable to school safety and emergency situations.

"This (administrative procedure) was brought forth by district administration as a formal clarification of the intended procedures that were already in place," Jenkins said. "This administrative procedure will solidify that process, and our school administrators are being apprised that the process has been added as a formal administrative procedure."

Jenkins added that the procedure was created collaboratively with the police department and is not intended to limit the ability of police to keep students and staff safe in the schools.

Parent Johannes Cawood, who requested the policy after his son was interviewed by police at school without parental consent, was pleased.

"The major points I was pushing for were adopted," he said. "I'm pretty happy with the results."

He said he learned of the interrogation related to a malicious destruction of property police report after the fact.

Cawood said he has been encouraged and moved by parents who have shared similar concerns and experiences, adding he is intent on getting more school districts to adopt administrative procedures similar to Livonia Public Schools'.

The new administrative procedure will be added to about 600 pages that qualify as "Board of Education Policies & Administrative Procedures." The online document includes agreements to cooperate with other agencies and ways to handle all sorts of challenges including threats of violence and suicidal behavior.

"The request that came to us is that we codify how we handle situations, interactions between the police department and a student in our building," Board President Colleen Burton said. "Really nothing has changed a whole lot. It's really just a matter of writing down what the process is so that everyone is very clear on it."

Livonia police officials did not respond to a Jan. 12 request for comment.

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

Schoolcraft College hires first equity director

Jeff Majeske
Schoolcraft College

Schoolcraft College selected Christopher Hunter as its first director of equity and engagement.

Hunter previously served as CORE (Collectively Oakland Retains Everyone) program coordinator in the center for multicultural initiatives, at Oakland University in Rochester. He began his position Jan. 10 and reports to Schoolcraft College President Glenn Cerny. Director of equity and engagement (DEE) is a

new position for the college, which is committed to the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity and access across its campus.

A particular focus will be to work with Schoolcraft College faculty, staff and students to assess and develop college-wide initiatives that support the College's overall strategic plan to integrate best practices into all processes and infrastructure.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Christopher Hunter to our team at Schoolcraft College," Cerny said. "He is

eminently qualified to lead the many initiatives to ensure IDEA will be inherent in the framework of all the college does. We look forward to furthering our progress and creating an even more inclusive and equitable environment for our students, faculty, staff and community members."

Hunter holds a degree from Wayne State University in political science and government. He is working toward a master's in public administration and serves in leadership positions across a variety of organizations throughout southeast Michigan.

They contacted the seller, test drove the vehicle and identified the seller as their robbery suspect. Detectives searched the vehicle and Farhat's home.

Farhat is at the Oakland County Jail. He has been arraigned on felony charges of armed robbery and bank robbery.

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

Garden City man charged in New Year's Eve bank robbery

Susan Vela
HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Garden City man is facing the possibility of life in prison after he was charged in connection to a New Year's Eve bank robbery.

Ali Hussein Farhat, 33, was arrested Jan. 11 at a Garden City gas station because law enforcers suspect him of being the man who stole an undisclosed amount of money from a Chase Bank in Rochester Hills.

He implied he had a weapon but never produced one before he ran from the bank, deputies said. Detectives used surveillance videos from the bank and nearby businesses to connect the getaway vehicle — a black 2009 Chevrolet Avalanche — to Farhat.

He learned a few days after the robbery that someone was trying to sell the truck on social media without alerting anyone.

They contacted the seller, test drove the vehicle and identified the seller as their robbery suspect. Detectives searched the vehicle and Farhat's home.

Farhat is at the Oakland County Jail. He has been arraigned on felony charges of armed robbery and bank robbery.

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

Schools

Continued from Page 1A

dents on the three-school campus, are assigned approximately 350 students each in the wake of the recent hiring of three additional counselors (one more per school).

The 350-to-1 ratio ranks much better than Michigan's average (671-to-1), according to statistics provided by the American Student Counselor Association, but worse than its recommendation of 250-to-1.

"When we went from over 400 students per counselor to 350, I thought I was going to notice a change," Demarest said. "But honestly, I have not felt a change because even though I have fewer kids, their social-emotional needs are so much greater these days."

Lehmann, a counselor at Canton since 1998, fondly remembers her early years in the field when she was assigned to counsel roughly 250 students.

"It was nice because it was easier to get to know your students," Lehmann said. "For instance, I'd see one of my students waiting at a restaurant

and be able to strike up a conversation. Or when I'd pass one of my students in the hallway I'd hear, 'Hi, Ms. Lehmann! How are you today!' With so many students now, it's more difficult to build those relationships."

"Overall, though, I still love my job and connecting with the students as much as I can. It's more demanding now, but still a very rewarding profession."

Lehmann said the Plymouth-Canton counselors' workload increased once Plymouth High School opened in 2002.

"They relocated counselors from Salem and Canton to Plymouth, but didn't hire replacements (for Salem and Canton)," said Lehmann. "That's when our ratios went up." "I love my job," Demarest concurred. "I think we all got into this field to help students, make their lives easier in some way, and we're doing that today more than ever."

Northville may consider adding counselors

Northville Public Schools Board of Education member Lindsey Wilson raised the issue of adding more counselors

to Northville High School's staff during the board's Jan. 4 meeting, noting that its ratio of students per counselors was in the 410-to-1 range.

"The national average is 420-to-1, but our district has never settled for being just average," Wilson said, asking for the topic to be added to a future board of education agenda. "Our students have voiced concerns recently that they would like more people to talk to besides teachers and parents."

"There was also a Wall Street Journal article recently that referred to a National Academy of Science study that suggested higher-achieving districts like ours have a higher demand for counselors. I've heard that it's very hard for our high school students to see a counselor these days."

Demarest said she has met with a few students who have shared school violence-related anxieties since in-person learning resumed at Plymouth-Canton Jan. 3 following a two-week holiday break.

The holiday break was preceded by a one-week return to virtual learning following a multi-hour lockdown on the campus Dec. 9 that was triggered by a student reporting seeing a fellow student armed with a weapon. A suspect was never named by local law enforcement nor was a weapon located, but the situation heightened tensions at the campus affectionately known as "The Park."

"Having students away from school for three weeks was a good decision, in my opinion," Demarest said. "It gave them a chance to reset. I think if we would have went right back to in-person following the lockdown, we would have had more students dealing with anxieties related to the lockdown."

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, in general, and Canton High School counselors, specifically, are constantly thinking of new ways to make students' lives more manageable.

Demarest was recently given permission to periodically bring her specially-trained service dog, Dani, into Canton High School to help calm students' nerves.

"The students' response to the dog has been incredible; you can tell Dani has made a difference in enhancing the lives of the students she interacts with," Demarest said.

Plymouth-Canton also implemented a two-days-a-week, 45-minute advisory period to students' schedules, allowing them a non-graded segment of the day when they can discuss issues with teachers and counselors, or simply give their minds a break from the real-world problems that seem to accumulate on a weekly basis.

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

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Property

Continued from Page 1A

also conflict with No. 6 on the PUD criteria list: (The planned unit development must) not generate traffic that adversely impacts adjacent properties or conflict with the normal traffic flow of the general area, including the flow of pedestrians and at major intersections.

"We have eight families with children who live on Eastside, and they have a total of 13 children," Davidson said. "If there is not enough access out onto Ann Arbor Road, then the developer should reduce the number of units in the development."

"I always figured something would go on that property, right? But that doesn't mean my neighborhood has to serve as a potential shortcut for 900 people."

After close to three hours of stirring testimony from Tymensky, Davidson and a wave of fellow Waverly Village residents — most of whom voiced displeasure with the density of the development and how its potential for 900-plus residents would disrupt the small-town feel of the area — the planning commission voted 3-2 to recommend that the township's board of trustees approve a Planned Unit Development option offered by Toll Brothers and Pomeroy Living.

Chairman Dennis Cebulski, Vice Chairwoman Kendra Barberena and Commissioner Gail Grieger voted in favor of the recommendation, while commissioners Bob Doroshewitz and Tim Boyd voted no. Commissioners Keith Postell and John Itsell were absent.

Cebulski said his yes vote "was a difficult decision," but he felt the developers met the eight criteria required for the option's approval.

The approval included a recommendation that the board of trustees study a potential improvement plan for Waverly Village's rugged roads.

When asked during the meeting if the developers would be willing to help finance road improvements for Waverly Village, Toll Brothers representative Alex Martin said his company could not make a commitment at this time.

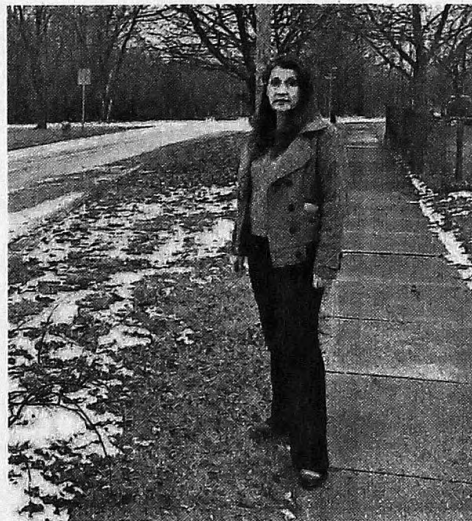
Tymensky said she fears the subdivision's residents will face a road improvement tax assessment in the future. A similar assessment that failed six years ago would have cost her just under \$12,000, she said.

"I'm not worried about me; I can handle it," Tymensky, a teacher at Ann Arbor



A rendering of the apartments that would be built on the Elks Lodge property.

COURTESY OF POMEROY LIVING



Nancy Tymensky's Plymouth Township home is less than a football field north of where a proposed entrance/exit road will be placed if the 373-unit Elks Property development comes to fruition. She is worried the increased traffic will further erode the dirt road she lives on. ED WRIGHT | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Huron High School, said. "I'm worried about all of my retired neighbors who don't have a lot of extra money at their disposal."

"I understand you're a business and you're trying to make money," Waverly Village resident Chelsea Lawson said. "But you're doing it at the expense of our quality of life. I live in Plymouth Township because of the quaint surroundings. If I wanted to live near a development like this, I'd move to Birmingham."

Several residents said large trucks and semis navigate through the subdivision daily — despite the presence of "No trucks allowed" signs — while dropping off cargo at a scrap yard located on General Drive, just west of Eastside. Resident Anna Steele said she's seen semi trucks stuck in a neighbor's front yard.

"This is a perfect illustration of the problems with the camber of this road," Steele said.

The planning commission previously voted unanimously to postpone a decision on the PUD option following its Oct. 20 meeting so that the builders could take the feedback they received and return with a revised plan.

A segment of the revised plan was the design of the barrier-free northern egress to mitigate exiting and entering traffic off Ann Arbor Road and to make it easier for emergency vehicles to access the development.

Pomeroy Living purchased all of the acreage except for the Elks property in 2015 (it purchased the Elks property in February 2021) with an eye on building senior-living housing, said Nick Peraino, the company's president.

"But there has been over-building in the senior-housing market the past four to five years and the industry is facing challenges with staffing, so we settled on residential housing because it is the highest and best use for a site like this," Peraino explained during the Oct. 20 meeting.

The developers' plans now go to the board of trustees for final approval.

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

Savvy

Continued from Page 1A

22420 Farmington.

The restaurant would require renovations on the building, including the removal of the bank drive-thru lanes to accommodate a drive-thru for food service.

"The drive thru will be a window on the side of the building in approximately the same location as the existing bank drive thru," said Kevin Christiansen, the city's economic and community development director. "But the bank canopy and the pneumatic tube drive thrus will be removed and in its place a reconfiguration of the parking lot and then a window alongside the building and stacking accordingly."

The development was presented before the city's planning commission during its meeting Jan. 10 at Farmington City Hall.

Savvy Sliders has opened several shops across metro Detroit, including in communities such as Westland and Redford Township. The restaurant specializes in sliders, though boasts a wider variety of toppings and patties than many traditional slider places across metro Detroit.

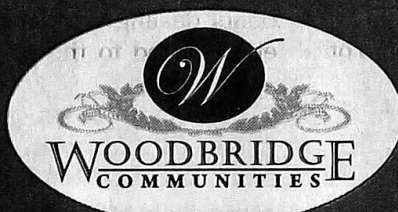
"Really what they specialize in is fresh sliders, fresh ingredients, different from what you would see with your typical White Castle," said Mitchell Harvey with Detroit-based Stonefield Engineering, representing the petitioner at the planning commission meeting. "You order a meal, they give you a box and there's two decent sized sliders in there."

The commission voted unanimously to approve a special land use, which is needed due to the drive-thru.

Commissioner Steven Majoros said the concept was discussed at the December planning commission meeting and that it was something that appeared to be able to work in that part of the community.

"As noted, it seems like a pretty good reuse. This is unlike some of the things we've seen before where perhaps drive-thrus are neighboring residential etc.," he said. "It looks like a good addition to the town."


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



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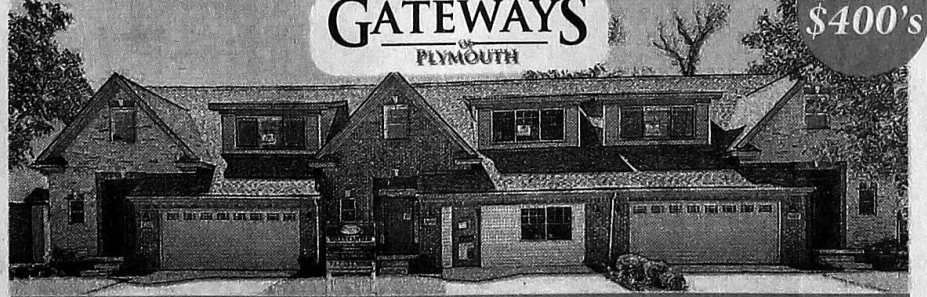
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Rat poison cause of death for eagle found in Northville

Ed Wright
 Hometownlife.com
 USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A bald eagle found in a distressed state on a Northville Township bike path Nov. 20, 2021, died the same day from rodenticide poisoning, a Department of Natural Resources necropsy revealed.

"At some point the bird ingested a prey item that was likely poisoned by brodifacoum," said Hannah Schauer, a communications and education coordinator for the DNR's Wildlife Division.

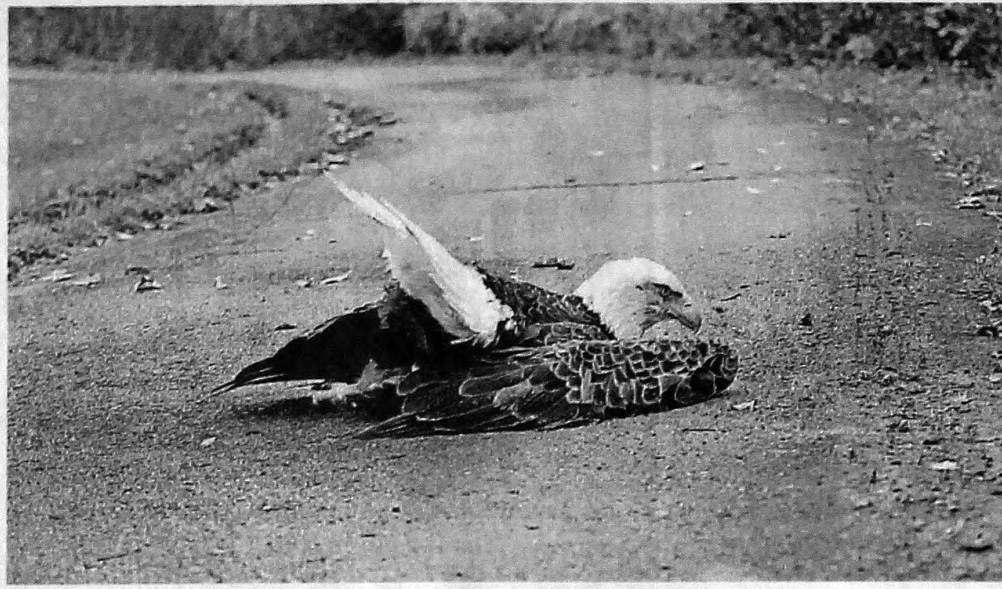
"Brodifacoum, which is a rodenticide, was found in the liver analysis of the bird. The gross examination findings showed the bird had pulmonary congestion and pulmonary edema as well as hemorrhages on the surface of the lungs and the heart, and congestion of the liver and the kidneys."

Schauer said the final diagnosis is labeled brodifacoum toxicosis.

Due to the toxicology results, the bird's carcass was incinerated per the federal Eagle Repository's request, Schauer added.

Normally, once a bald eagle's cause of death is determined, its carcass is transported to the National Eagle and Wildlife Property Repository in Commerce City, Colorado. Native American communities often submit orders for pairs of wings, tails, heads, pairs of talons or the bird's trunk, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website states.

Because the bird found in Northville



A stricken bald eagle lays on a walking path near the Northville Ridge subdivision. PROVIDED BY LYN ONDRUS

Township died from rodenticide poisoning, its body parts cannot be used by Native American communities.

Anticoagulant rodenticides like brodifacoum are a type of rodent poison that kills by preventing blood from clotting normally, resulting in fatal internal hemorrhage or bleeding, according to a wildlife-centered website based in Massachusetts, where two eagles have succumbed to rodenticides since March 2021.

"Birds of prey can be poisoned by anticoagulant rodenticides in two ways: 1) primary poisoning when an animal directly eats the bait and dies several days

later; or 2) secondary poisoning when a predator or scavenger eats prey that has consumed the bait," a post on the website said. "While bald eagles primarily eat fish, they are opportunistic foragers and will scavenge or prey on a variety of animals."

Last year, 32 dead bald eagles were turned in from New York alone. A total of 21 birds or bird parts (from both bald and golden eagles) were returned to the state from the federal repository for use by Native Americans for religious/ceremonial purposes.

More than 3,000 orders were filled last year by the repository, and the cur-

rent backlog for orders exceeds 6,000, the website said.

Northville Township resident Bob Ondrus spotted the distressed bald eagle on a bike path that runs behind his home in the Northville Ridge subdivision, about a half-mile east of the Arbor Hills Landfill at Six Mile and Napier roads in Salem.

"I heard a whoosh sound," Ondrus explained. "When I looked over at the bike path that runs behind our backyard, I saw a bald eagle sitting there. It was very unusual because I've never seen an eagle anywhere close to this area."

"I thought it was odd, too, because eagles usually don't land near humans. It was almost as if she saw me out there and was telling me she needed help."

When Ondrus grabbed his camera and walked over to the spot where the eagle landed, he realized the situation was dire.

"It looked kind of dizzy when I got close to it," Ondrus said. "Then it put its wings out and I knew it was not good. There was no blood visible, but you could tell something wasn't right."

The eagle was transported to the Howell Nature Center before being transferred to the Eaton Rapids-based Wildside Rehabilitation & Education Center, which is capable of testing for lead poisoning in birds of prey. The eagle died a short time after arriving in Eaton Rapids.

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

Bird watchers walking in a wing-ter wonderland

Junfu Han
 Detroit Free Press
 USA TODAY NETWORK

Standing outside of the nature center at Kensington Metropark in Milford, photographer John Campbell puts bird feed on his palm.

Within seconds, several tufted titmice, black-capped chickadees, and downy woodpeckers have visited and taken food. Some even walked along his arms.

Campbell taught biology at the Plymouth-Canton schools for over 38 years and has been coming to Kensington Metropark for over 20 years.

"It has been great to be outside, connect with nature, do what I like and be safe (from the pandemic)," he said.

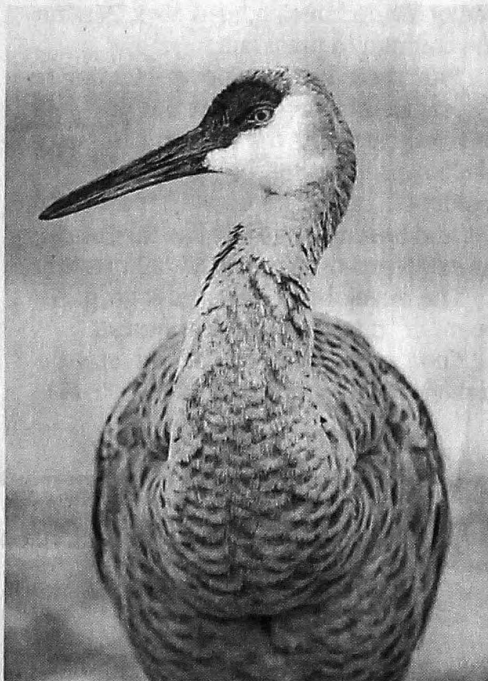
There are a lot of fun outdoor activities for winter in Michigan. A popular one in metro Detroit is bird watching at Kensington, which offers almost 4,500 acres of wooded and hilly terrain right off Interstate 96.

Its nature center is surrounded by lakes and miles of hiking trails, where lots of nature lovers come here to hike and photograph birds.

The nature center also runs several educational programs for visitors, including one called Chickadee Chow Down. It runs from late December through February. The hourlong guided walking tour is aimed at helping visitors identify songbirds and learn how to properly feed them.

Victoria Sluder, the western district interpretive supervisor of Huron-Clinton Metroparks, said attracting songbirds with food is tricky.

"Aside from black-capped chickadees and downy woodpeckers, other birds that will come in to investigate and potentially land on one's hand for seed



A sandhill crane at the Kensington Metropark in Milford on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. JUNFU HAN, DETROIT FREE PRESS



Canadian geese fly over Huron River at the Kensington Metropark in Milford on Monday, Jan. 10, 2022. JUNFU HAN, DETROIT FREE PRESS

include tufted titmice (a relative of the chickadees) and white-breasted nuthatches," Sluder noted. "Occasionally red-bellied woodpeckers and even northern cardinals will come in close, but they rarely land and feed."

Sluder explains, "A songbird, sometimes identified as a passerine, is typically thought of as a perching bird that has a 'song,' which is why woodpeckers don't actually fit this category. Really, they are seed-eaters that are just small enough to perch on a hand."

The Kensington Metropark wants visitors to be respectful of nature.

As Danielle Mauter, chief of marketing and communications, said, "Keep our wild things wild."



A red-headed woodpecker and a dove at the Kensington Metropark in Milford on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. JUNFU HAN, DETROIT FREE PRESS



ABOVE: Naomi Cataldo, 4, of Highland, next to her mother Beth, feeds a woodpecker from her hand at the Kensington Metropark in Milford on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. JUNFU HAN, DETROIT FREE PRESS

LEFT: Nature photographer John Campbell of Northville feeds birds from his hand near the nature center at the Kensington Metropark in Milford on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. JUNFU HAN, DETROIT FREE PRESS

Find a great gift at Plymouth's newest boutique

David Veselenak

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK -
MICHIGAN

Plymouth was the natural spot for Vitrine to locate its second metro Detroit shop.

Knowing the type of community Plymouth is made the store's ownership look seriously at the city. The shop's ownership began looking and found the property at 772 S. Main last year. It opened in mid-December.

"I love this town and the people in it," said Rachel Britts, the manager of the store. "We were looking and this popped up and we were like, 'Oh my gosh, we love it.'"

The Plymouth location is the second for the Vitrine brand after it opened one in Berkley in 2019. Inside, customers can find a wide range of gift-like items such as art, food, clothing and other fair trade items.

Most of the items in the Plymouth shop right now focus more on women and children, though Britts said more men's items are coming: she hopes to get the building's basement prepped in order to hold more merchandise.

"We do have an ample amount of men's stuff, we just don't have room for it right now," Britts said.

The store's ownership spent several weeks renovating the space after purchasing the building. Britts said they added on to the front porch, encasing a mature tree that will provide shade during the warmer months. That porch, she said, could be used for different types of events or used by different groups.

The shop is currently open Thursday through Sunday, though those hours are expected to expand after the shop's grand opening takes



Rachel Britts strolls through her Vitrine on Main home goods shop on Jan. 6, 2022. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

place during the Plymouth Ice Festival Feb. 11-13. Britts said she hopes the shop can also open for Tuesdays and Wednesdays after that, though she said it will depend on

the demand.

"We're always going to adapt to our surroundings," she said. "But we do want to open up for more hours."

More information on

the shop can be found at shopatvitrine.com.

She said they've seen plenty of customers familiar with their Berkley store wander in and peruse the products in the

second shop. Britts said Plymouth was always a place the company wanted to expand into.

"I love Plymouth," she said. "I can't think of anywhere else that's more

perfect."

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

Obituaries

To place an ad, call 586-826-7171 or visit mideathnotices.com/place.php

Angelo A. Pentolino

(1918 – 2021)

WW II veteran, Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor

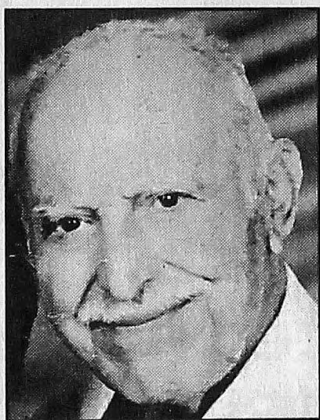
The family of Angelo A. Pentolino announce his passing in November 2021 at 103 years of age.

Born of Italian immigrant parents, Angelo graduated from Detroit's Northern Senior High School. He served in World War II under the Caribbean Defense Command which was protecting the Panama Canal.

Following the war, he met his future wife, Grace, at the Graystone Ballroom in Detroit. They would be married 70 years. While starting a family, Angelo completed his law degree and graduated from the University of Detroit. He worked in criminal law for Wayne County for 28 years, becoming their Assistant Prosecutor. In 1978, he was appointed a Federal judge under the Health, Education, and Welfare agency (now called the Department of Health and Human Services).

Throughout his life, Angelo volunteered time and was active in charitable and church-related organizations. He was a member of The Alhambra and a fourth degree of the Knights of Columbus. As a former parishioner of Redford Township St. Valentine Parish, he served in the Men's Club and Usher's club.

He is fondly remembered for the love of his family and is survived by his four children, Kamala Carol Quale of Eugene, OR; Mary Grace Ash of Plymouth, MI; Jim Pentolino of Brea, CA; and John Pentolino of Laguna Niguel, CA. Along with 7 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.



The main showroom of Plymouth's Vitrine. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

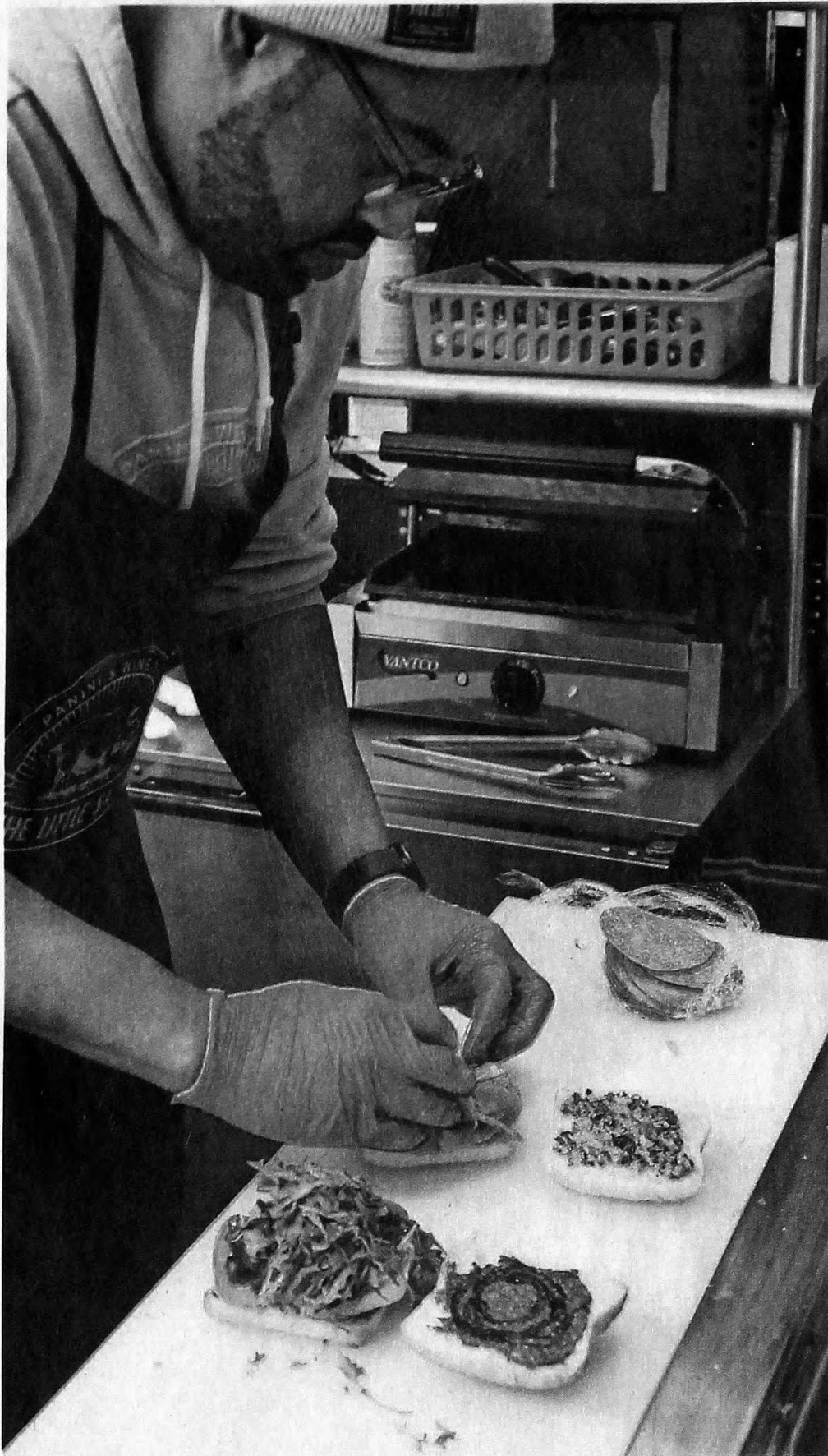


Plymouth's Vitrine on Main home goods shop at 772 South Main. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Vitrine sells fashions and accessories for both women and men. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

New panini shop opens in downtown Northville by longtime restaurateur



Corey McPherson preps a muffaletta and caprese panini on Jan. 7, 2022 at Little Salumi. McPherson is the fiance of Little Salumi owner Jessica Poole. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

David Veselenak
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A well-known name in Northville's restaurant scene has made a return to her hometown.

Jessica Poole, whose family ran the former Poole's Tavern downtown, has spent plenty of time away from Michigan in recent years. But after time in California and New York, she's returned to her hometown to open a restaurant of her own.

Coming home just a week before state officials shut down dining room operations at bars and restaurants back in March 2020, she began exploring options. She test-ran part of her idea utilizing some of the space at another one of her family's restaurants, the Lake Street Tavern in downtown South Lyon.

"I was just trying to figure out where my place was going to be here," she said. "I kind of did a dry run of this at our restaurant in South Lyon. We took the dining room and turned it into a grab-and-go market, kind of similar to this."

The concept born from that run is The Little Salumi, a takeout panini shop with other items available such as salads, sides and bottles of wine, opened at the end of 2021 at 137 E. Main St. in the space formerly occupied by Urge Juice.

The shop's idea comes from Poole's experience working in the restaurant industry in several facades, from corporate chains to small shops such as Poole's Tavern, which transformed into Exchange Bar & Grill last year under new

ownership. The restaurant is designed for takeout only; no tables are set up inside. Customers can enter and order a handful of sandwiches, including a caprese classic and the muffaletta, made with hot capicola, mortadella, salami, provolone cheese and olive salad.

"Some are family recipes and some are influences from places I've worked at," she said.

The shop also sells a variety of wines from all over, including some local brands. Poole said they've sold plenty of wine for patrons to enjoy with their sandwiches.

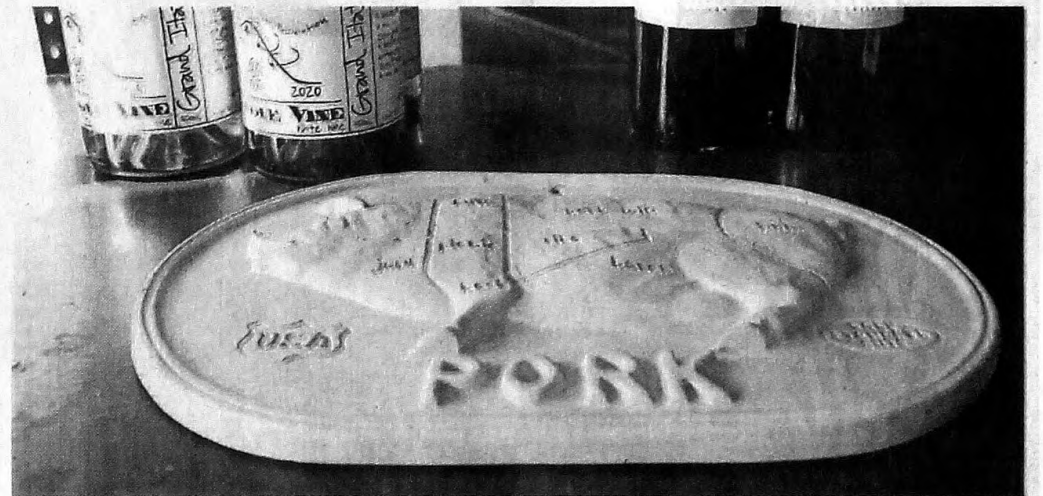
It's the first time Poole has worked in a strictly to-go setting. Getting into that model is something she wanted to do, but especially after the pandemic began. With more people opting for carry-out and with the challenges the sit-down restaurant industry has faced for nearly two years, takeout is a model Poole expects to last a long time.

"People are changing their habits and doing things differently," she said. "If they weren't changing the way they did things, this is still a concept that works everywhere."

"I know it's a tiny space, but we have so much room to grow in this space."

The restaurant is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. More information can be found on its website, thelittlesalumi.com.

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



Besides offering sandwiches and panini and snacks for sale Little Salumi offers a catered selection of wine to go along with their food. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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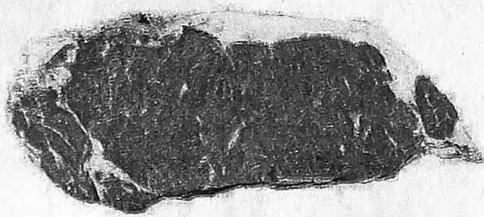
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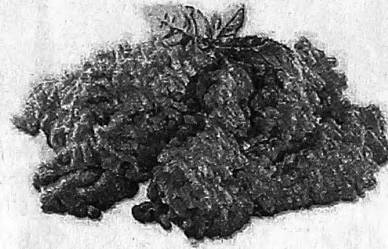
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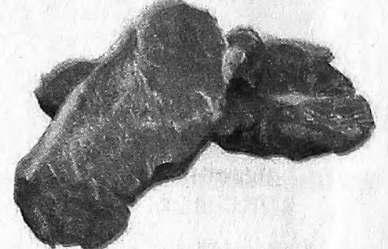
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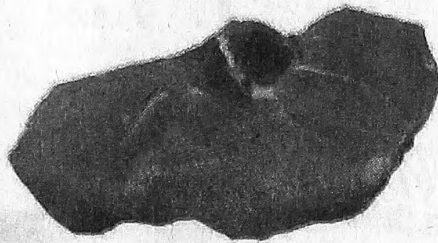
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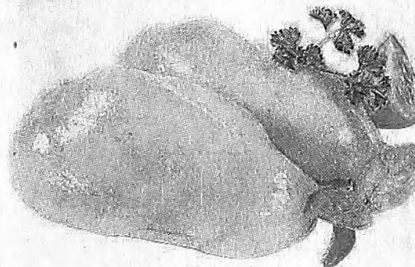
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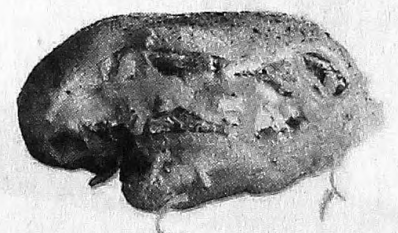
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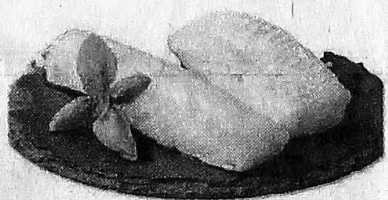


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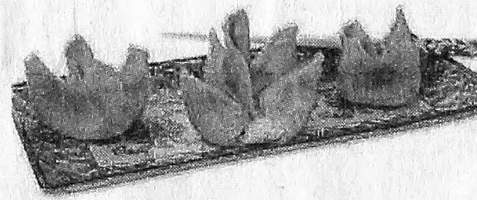


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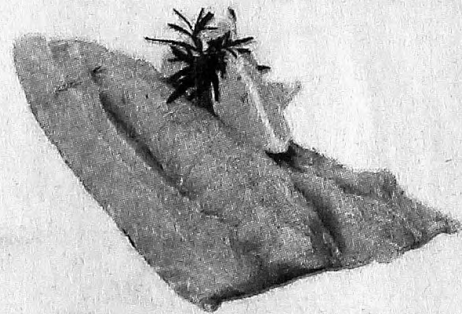
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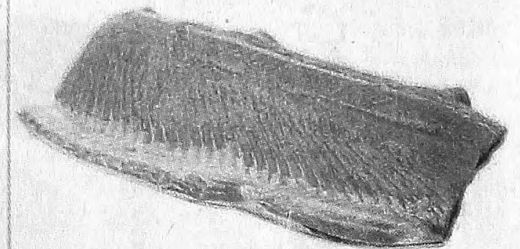
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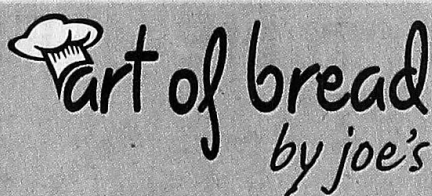
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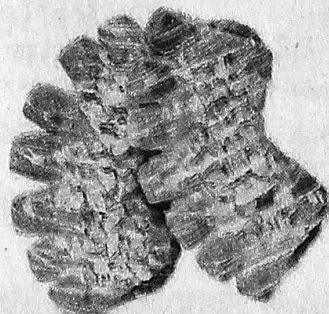


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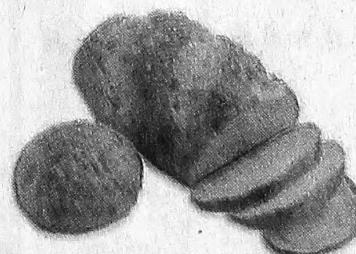


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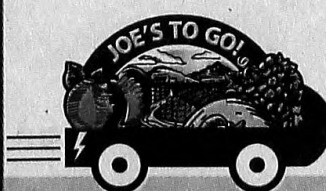
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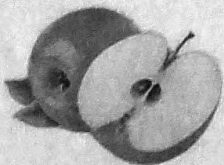


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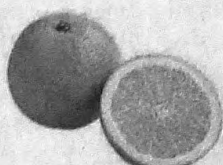
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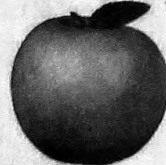
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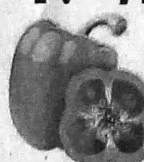
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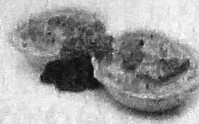
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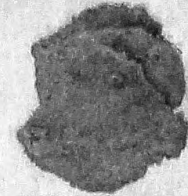
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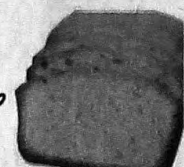
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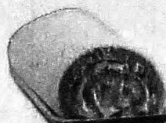
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SPORTS

From embarrassed to impressive, Mustangs bounce back

Northville used its grind-it-out offense to outlast Salem

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Friday night was much more than a mid-season Kensington Lakes Activities Association game for Northville. It was about redemption.

It was about licking its wounds and finding a way to bounce back.

It was about proving it wasn't as bad as it had looked earlier in the week.

The Mustangs (6-2, 3-2) got pummeled by Canton the previous Tuesday, losers of a 52-22 lopsided matchup against a Chiefs' squad that was ranked in the top 25 of The D Zone's 100 poll earlier this season.

It should've been a test to see where they were at as a program. Instead, they embarrassed themselves.

Northville didn't embarrass itself at

Salem, though.

It got the redemption. It licked its wounds. It earned the bounce back.

And it picked up a 48-42 comeback victory while playing its style of grind-it-out basketball.

"I'm really proud of how our guys responded," Northville coach Todd Sander said. "It's been a tough week. Canton made us look awful on Tuesday, or we made ourselves look terrible. So we've had a lot of ups and downs over the last seven days. I'm so happy with how our guys hung together and came together

to fight today.

"They really did a great job."

Salem put together an 18-point second quarter to take a four-point lead into halftime. That included 6-foot-4 forward Ashton Wheeler scoring eight of his team-best 17 points in the eight-minute span.

The Mustangs didn't panic. Instead, it got back to work in the second half.

They scored eight of the final 10 points of the third to knot the score at

See **MUSTANGS**, Page 3B

Meet North Farmington's new secret weapon

Lee Hardy is providing a Dikembe Mutombo-like attitude to the Raiders' lineup

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Seeing Lee Hardy play, you'd think he spends his free time binge-watching highlights of former Detroit Pistons stars Ben Wallace and Dennis Rodman on YouTube.

"Nah, I be watching like Michael Jordan and LeBron play," the 6-foot-6 North Farmington junior said. "I've been watching they highlights and seeing what they do."

Jordan and James wish they could withstand the knee scrapes that Hardy is currently exiting games with.

Right now, Hardy is the Raiders' Mr. Do-It-All, as witnessed in their 80-26 victory at rival Farmington.

He dove on the floor for loose balls. He strong-armed opponents for jump balls. He packed the paint and grabbed rebounds.

He had a dunk, a handful of buckets down low, a put-back and a jumper, totaling 16 points in all. Only West Bloomfield transfer Ryan Hurst finished with more points (scoring 21 of his game-high 22 points in the first half).

Now here's the catch: Hardy hasn't been providing this kind of effort for the Raiders for very long.

"He's really coming into his own about the last 10 days, two weeks," coach Todd Negoshian said. "He's starting to play more comfortably, and he's only played basketball for about the last few number of years. The more he plays, the more comfortable he's getting and the more confidence he's getting."

See **BASKETBALL**, Page 4B



North Farmington's Lee Hardy (front) boxes out Farmington's Bassiru Jallow (back) during an Oakland Activities Association-Red boys basketball game on Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Panthers edge rival Eagles 52-50 to win 3rd-straight City rivalry

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

It took quite the effort, but the game crew finally got the music going.

Almost seven minutes of pre-game warmups had already ticked off the scoreboard by the time "Is You Ready?" by Migos started playing on the loudspeakers in Redford Union's gymnasium.

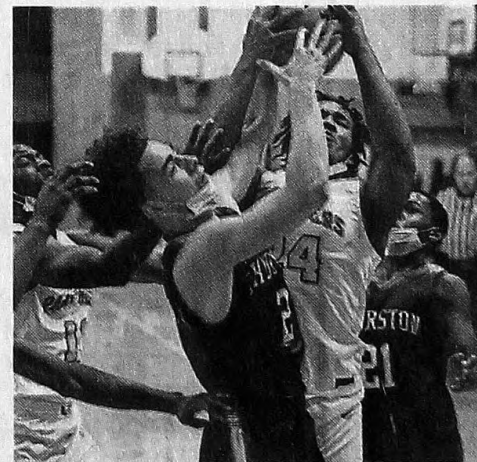
Whatever the snafu was, the fans and players didn't care. It was fixed. Almost everybody started bobbing their heads. The music came on just in time to get everyone hyped for the start of the City rivalry game.

Which is funny because it took about seven minutes for the Panthers themselves to get going.

After a sluggish start, which saw Redford Thurston go on a 10-2 run and grab an early eight-point lead, Union fought its way back into the game in the second quarter. The Panthers (3-3) used a 14-2 run of their own to take the lead.

They kept the Eagles (1-5) at arm's length the rest of the way, even escaping a late comeback by Thurston, to pull out the 52-50 victory.

See **PANTHERS**, Page 4B



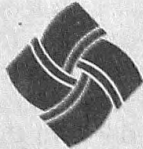
Thurston's Cameron Williams, center, fights for a rebound. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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Hartland wrestling falls in Brighton rivalry match

Bill Khan
Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

BRIGHTON — Any time Quaylon Newton is laying on the wrestling mat grimacing with back pain, there's cause for concern beyond the outcome of his match or the team's dual.

Back issues are a sensitive issue for Newton, an all-stater for Brighton two years ago who missed his junior season while recovering from two back surgeries.

His back was repaired well enough for him to resume wrestling, but it's not bullet proof.

After getting thrown to the mat and twisted by Hartland's Patrick Wlodyga, the sharp pain in Newton's back was so acute that it took his breath away. The match, which was pivotal in the dual between state-ranked rivals, was stopped midway through the second period while Newton was looked at by Brighton's trainer.

"Last year I had spine surgeries," Newton said. "The kid just kept twerking it. It hurt really bad and I had trouble breathing."

The pain didn't go away, but neither did Newton. He continued a 119-pound match he was trailing 7-6 and eventually won 10-8 in overtime to help give eighth-ranked Brighton momentum in a 46-29 come-from-behind victory over third-ranked Hartland Wednesday night at Scranton Middle School.

"I could still feel it," Newton said. "I still had a hard time breathing. I just knew I had to push through it for the team."

Knowing what Newton has endured in the last year, Brighton coach Shawn Scott was unsure he would be able to resume the match.

"I'm not going to push a kid like that who had a major surgery," Scott said. "He got up and found some grit and finished the match out."

Newton is the second-ranked 112-pounder in Division 1 with a 14-6 record. He was fifth in the state at 103 as a sophomore, one place behind Wlodyga. Wlodyga is ranked No. 5 at 119 this season.

Newton was one of two Brighton wrestlers who won close battles after being injured during their matches.

Freshman Easton Hardesty suffered a calf cramp in the first period of a match that was tied 2-2 against Michael Cappellano. Hardesty pinned Cappellano shortly after the match resumed to give Brighton a 31-29 lead.

"My calf cramped up a little bit, but you fight through the pain and finish up,



Brighton's Quaylon Newton (top) won in overtime against Hartland's Patrick Wlodyga in a 119-pound match during the teams' dual meet on Wednesday at Scranton Middle School. TIMOTHY ARRICK/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

finish strong," Hardesty said. "I guess I'm not drinking enough water. I've got to stay hydrated. That put us in the lead, and we needed to keep working and finish strong and win the dual."

Seeing Newton and Hardesty battle through pain to win key matches was one of the most encouraging signs in the victory for Scott.

"Mental toughness is something I preach in the room every day," Scott said. "It doesn't matter if you get poked in the eye, it doesn't matter if you get cut. You just push through it, you push through it, you push through it. Good things will happen."

Brighton got a spark from the biggest upset of the dual when freshman Nate Stark, who was 8-10, pinned third-ranked 145-pounder Justin VanVaerenbergh (19-2) with three seconds left in a 160-pound match.

"They weren't going to wrestle (VanVaerenbergh) at 52," Scott said. "We had to show at 52, so Travis (Richardson, No. 2 at 145) went out there. It was a hard six minutes of wrestling going nonstop, not getting pinned, then getting a pin, that changes the whole dual."

Brighton (11-2) won the final seven matches after Hartland built a 29-12

through seven bouts.

The Eagles (14-1) had won 45 straight regular-season duals since losing 69-9 to Brighton on Jan. 15, 2020.

"Today a couple swing matches didn't go our way," Hartland coach Kyle Summerfield said. "That's how a dual works. We talked to the kids. The big message is, 'This is supposed to burn, this is supposed to sting. You can only get better from this.'"

"No one wants to lose, but if you're gonna lose, I'd much rather lose now than when it really counts at the state meet. The hardest part obviously with this is it's pretty hard to win a division title but, with that being said, we're going to go to work."

Hartland beat Howell, 69-12, in the other dual.

Brighton 46, Hartland 29

152: Travis Richardson (B) d. James Butzier 1:17; 160: Nat Stark (B) d. Justin VanVaerenbergh (H) 5:57; 171: Nick Rochowiak (H) d. Sabrina Nauss :22; 189: Brayden Bobo (H) d. Drew Hutcheson 5:34; 215: Avery Dickerson (H) d. Cade Riddle 1:07; 285: Chase Kern (H) void; 103: Jake Gillespie (H) d. Sean Henry 1:31; 112: Jackson Johnson (B) d. Ty Biggart :55; 119: Quaylon Newton (B) d. Pat-

rick Wlodyga 10-8 (SV-1); 125: Colin Jewell (B) d. Liam Wiitanen 13-4; 130: Easton Hardesty (B) d. Michael Cappellano 1:56; 135: Zak Knapp (B) d. Gavin Kern :48; 140: Aiden Smith (B) d. Vinnie Abbey 12-7; 145: Antonio Nauss (B) d. Gabe Cappellano 1:23. Hartland -1 for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Hartland 69, Howell 12

145: Gabe Cappellano (Hartland) d. Drake Blazevski 2:21; 152: James Butzer (Hartland) d. Dylan Perkins 4:28; 160: Nick Rochowiak (Hartland) d. Brady Butcher :56; 171: Brayden Bobo (Hartland) d. Will Stewart :37; 189: Nathan Hardy (Howell) d. Luke Whitehouse :59; 215: Avery Dickerson (Hartland) void; 285: Chase Kern (Hartland) d. Noah Nelson 2:18; 103: Chase Utley (Hartland) d. Connor Wallace 12-3; 112: Jake Gillespie (Hartland) d. Jake Lynn 1:25; 119: Patrick Wlodyga (Hartland) d. Grant Stewart 1:42; 125: Michael Cappellano (Hartland) d. Abdurhid Abdurasulov 1:38; 130: Gavin Kern (Hartland) d. Zach Newstead 7-6; 135: Vinnie Abbey (Hartland) d. Cruz Coloma 2:43; 140: Zac Egan (Howell) d. Ryan Kantola 1:57.

Contact Bill Khan at wkhan@gannett.com.

Howell ends Hartland's 33-game winning streak

Bill Khan
Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

HOWELL — Sophie Daugard was coming off a career-high 25-point performance, but there was a complete shift in priorities for the Howell junior Tuesday night against Hartland.

Her primary task wasn't to fill the net this time around. It was, instead, to keep Hartland senior guard Amanda Roach from doing so, a role that would require every ounce of Daugard's energy.

Executing a role that didn't show up in the scorebook, Daugard helped Howell pull off a 37-31 upset of second-ranked Hartland, ending the Eagles' 33-game regular-season winning streak.

Daugard scored only four points, but one was a key basket with 2:59 remaining in the game after Hartland cut a 10-point deficit to two. On the defensive end, she helped hold Roach to five points.

"My biggest role this time was defense," Daugard said. "Amanda, she's a good player. I don't think she scored much. That was a really big piece. She's a big piece of that team."

In the past, Howell put junior Molly Deurloo on Roach, with Daugard occasionally guarding her.

"We decided to switch up defensively a little bit and contain Amanda, because she can distribute," Howell coach Tim Olszewski said. "She kind of runs the show. We wanted to slow her down a little bit and contain her as best as we could and make them go to other options. I thought Sophie did a phenomenal job on her defensively."

Fittingly, Daugard's only other basket was a breakaway layup off a long inbounds pass from Maeve St. John to put the exclamation point on a program-defining victory.

Hartland had beaten Howell 11 straight times since the Highlanders won 48-42 in overtime on Jan. 9, 2018. St. John, a four-year varsity player, was 0-9 against the Eagles. Daugard, in her



Howell's Sophie Daugard (3) takes a shot while defended by Hartland's Lauren Sollom (25) and Kate Jacobs (20) on Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. GILLIS BENEDICT/LIVINGSTON DAILY

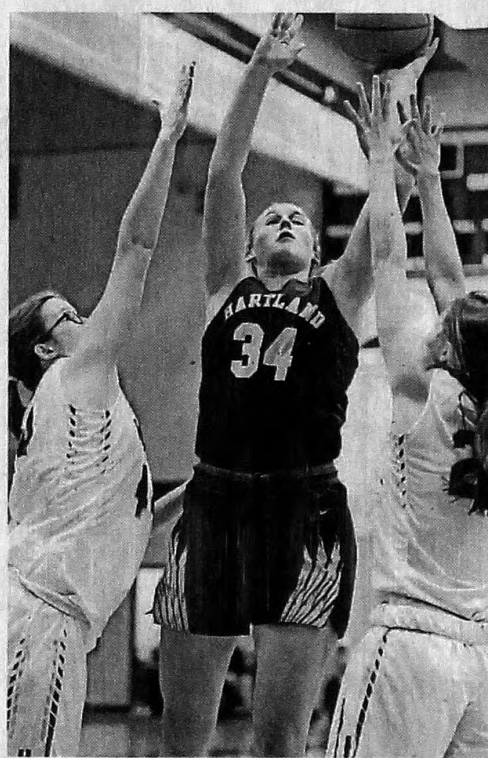
third varsity season, was 0-6.

Hartland won the three meetings between the teams last season by an average of 24 points.

"Oh, my gosh, it means everything," Daugard said. "I was looking over at my coach the last few seconds of that game. You could just feel the energy was so different than it's been in past years. Even coming into the game, Hartland's energy felt different. Everything felt like the pieces were there."

The Highlanders held the Eagles to their lowest point total in 53 games since a 44-24 loss to Saginaw Heritage in the state quarterfinals on March 19, 2019.

"They're a great offensive team," St. John said. "They're obviously a great defensive team, as well. We stuck together on the defensive end and were just hustling. I felt like a lot of those



Sarah Rekowski of Hartland shoots for two in the game against the Howell Highlanders Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2022. GILLIS BENEDICT/LIVINGSTON DAILY

loose balls were ours. If it took a bounce, we were going to get it. We were just working really hard."

Hartland's last regular-season loss was 41-33 at Brighton on Jan. 24, 2020. The Eagles won their final 10 regular-season games that season, were 16-0 last season and won their first seven games this season.

Howell is in sole possession of first place in the KLA West at 4-0. Hartland and Brighton are 3-1.

"We missed a lot of shots we normally make, but I also think they had a lot to do with it," Hartland coach Don Palmer said. "We felt coming into this game, watching them on tape, they were probably as good a defensive team as we were going to come across."

"They've lost some games, but look at who they've lost to — Midland Dow and Birmingham Marian. We didn't

overlook anybody. They played very, very good. Maeve had to have a great game; she did. Their supporting cast had to contribute, and they did."

St. John scored 16 points, hitting four 3-pointers. Deurloo had 10 points.

Lauren Sollom had eight points and Sarah Rekowski seven for Hartland.

Howell never trailed after scoring 12 straight points to turn a 5-1 deficit into a 13-5 lead. During that run, the Eagles were scoreless for a span of 10 minutes, 5 seconds. The Highlanders led 18-9 at halftime and expanded it to 25-15 midway through the third quarter.

Hartland battled back to within two points when Sollom scored off a missed free throw to make it 29-27 with 5:27 left in the game.

After a stretch in which there were more timeouts (three) than points (zero), Daugard drove to the basket, scored and was fouled with 2:59 remaining. She missed the free throw, but got the rebound to give Howell a possession that led to a basket by Amelia Storm with 2:47 left.

Two free throws by St. John with 1:00 on the clock made it a 35-27 game. Gracey Metz scored back-to-back baskets for Hartland to make it 35-29, but Daugard put it away on the long inbounds pass from St. John.

"It's a great win for us," Olszewski said. "Hartland's a great team and they're coached extremely well and we always battle. The first couple years, we had their number. Then Don and Hartland's had us for a while. For us, it's a big win. You get the feeling we can compete at that level with them."

Hartland will host Brighton at 7 p.m. Friday in the second game of a varsity doubleheader. The schools' boys basketball teams will play at 5:30 at Hartland.

"I just said, 'Hey, you've got to get over this tomorrow,'" Palmer said. "You've got two days to get ready to play Brighton."

Contact Bill Khan at wkhan@gannett.com.

Mustangs

Continued from Page 1B

34. Sam Barnhart's put-back attempt with 2:06 left in the period gave them their first lead, 34-32, in over 10 minutes.

The two squads briefly traded leads early in the fourth before Northville stepped up and put away the game.

It went on a 10-2 run that essentially put a comeback out of reach for the Rocks, who dropped to 4-2 overall and 2-1 in the league. That scoring spree was started by Matt Gorski, who buried a jumper and then converted on a tough drive to the basket to total four of his game-high 19 points.

Salem had plenty of opportunities to keep pace with Northville, but it looked gassed for most of the fourth.

The Rocks were playing in their first game in 17 days because of a COVID-19 layoff.

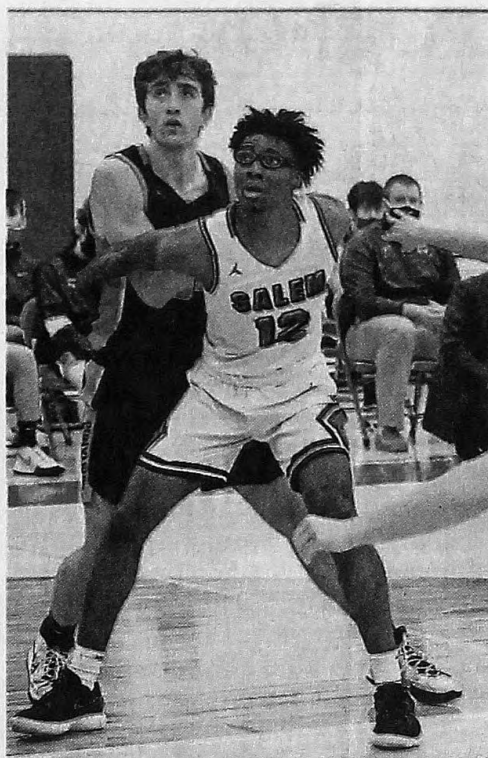
Once Northville grabbed a brief lead, its offense passed and dribbled out possessions for 30-45 seconds, looking for the best shot it could get while also tiring out Salem's defenders.

Salem couldn't cash in on the offensive end when it got wide-open shots. Six-straight possessions ended with rimmed-out jumpers or turnovers late in the fourth.

Wheeler scored down low, and Ryan Peters buried a 3-pointer with 9.4 seconds remaining. The Rocks just didn't have enough time to erase the full deficit.

"They put a little run on us to finish the third quarter," Rocks coach Ryan Nimmerguth said. "Northville's very tough. They're a tough team. They're very tough when they got the lead, and they'll grind you out defensively and keep moving the ball. They do a great job of taking care of the ball, moving the ball and being patient. So they started to do that, and we started to press on the offensive end and maybe not take the best shots. We missed a couple of open shots, and you could see frustration with our guys."

"They kept battling, but we missed some shots that we probably could've made, and that's a big difference, especially against those guys. Once they get the ball, they're going to run it for 30, 45 seconds to make sure they take a good shot, so you'll spend a lot of energy on defense, and it's tough to turn them



Salem's Ashton Wheeler (front) boxes out Northville's Sam Barnhart (back) during a Kensington Lakes Activities Association boys basketball game on Friday, Jan. 14, 2022. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

over. They're well-coached and they do a good job of running their stuff."

Carlos Adamson helped Northville with six points, while Cullen Foley and Nolan Thomson scored four apiece.

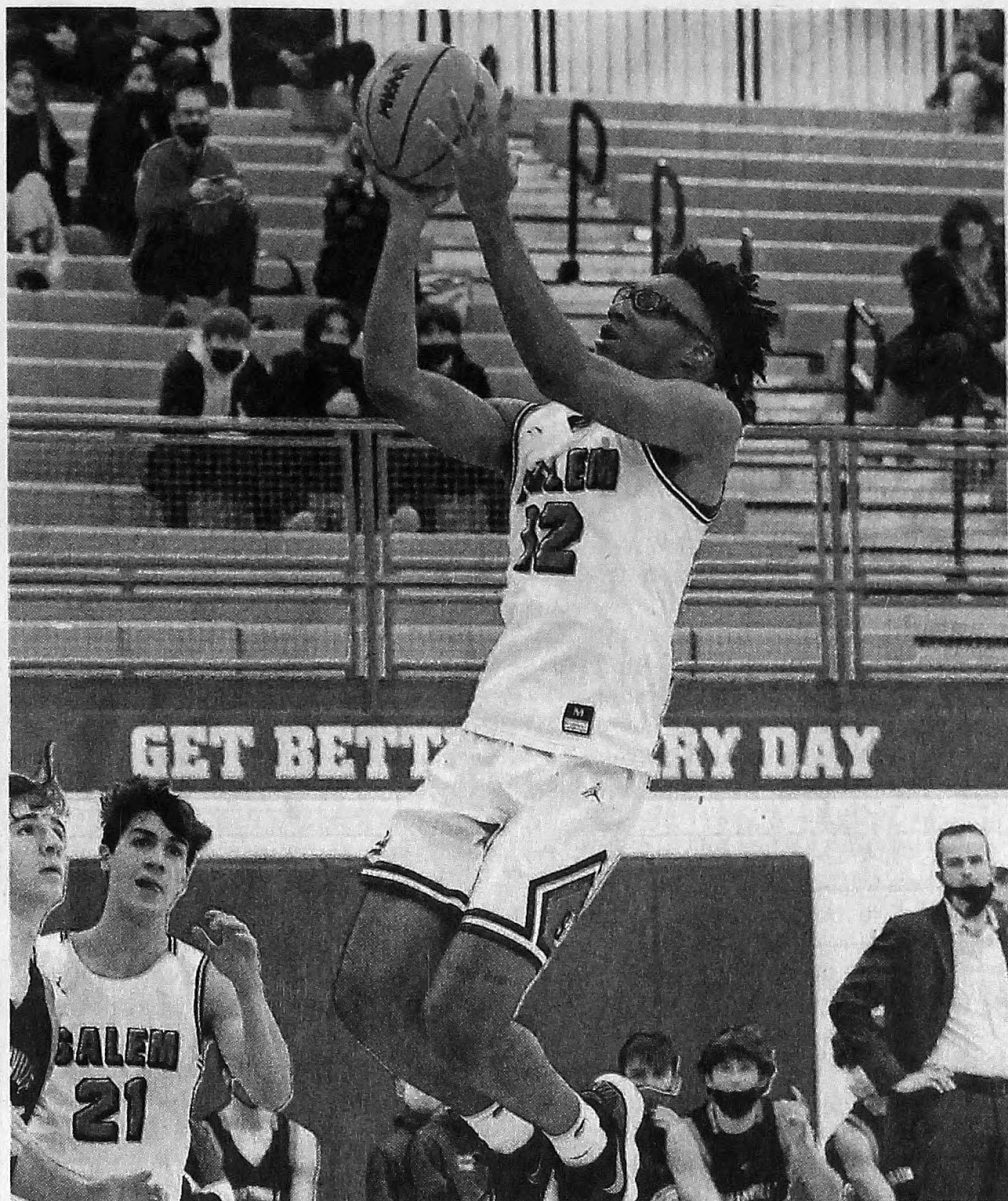
Salem's Pryor Reynolds and Peters each finished with 10 points.

However, it was the game within the game that might've helped determine the win for Northville.

Wheeler is one of the most athletic big men in the KLAA. He brings size, speed and poise when battling near the rim.

Sander assigned Barnhart (11 points, 5 of 7 from foul line) to stay on Wheeler the entire night. Wheeler got his points, but Barnhart was the annoying gnat bothering him in the paint.

"Wheeler is such a great player, and I was really proud of how Barnhart guarded him, and you've got to guard him with more than one guy," Sander said. "He battled him the whole night. They call him 'Sleepy Sam' because you never see much emotion out of him, good or bad. He just stays very even keel, and I think that was the key to his success. He played great defense. Wheeler, because he's so good, would



Salem's Ashton Wheeler attempts a layup against Northville during a Kensington Lakes Activities Association boys basketball game on Friday, Jan. 14, 2022. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

make a great shot, but Sam would not get discouraged. He kept playing, and he really kept battling on the glass, which was good, and he shot some free throws tonight, which we need out of him."

Barnhart stayed out of foul trouble and off the bench while limiting Wheeler to only seven points (three field goals) in the second half.

"We practiced a lot, and we came up with a plan," the 6-foot-5 senior said of guarding Wheeler. "I had less help responsibilities, which the other guys did a really good job of. Usually, I'm the big-time helper, but the other guys did a good job stepping up. I was able to focus more on defending Wheeler and face-guarding him instead of guarding him normally. He's really fast, and he hit

some good shots on me, but if I'm solid on him and keep my ground, it helps."

Sander was excited about the bounce-back. But he knows it's not going to get any easier with matchups against Howell and Novi this week.

"We were feeling really good about ourselves and we got humbled a little bit earlier this week," the coach said. "We just need to keep moving forward. Back to the drawing board."

In girls basketball action, Northville edged Salem 47-43 in overtime Friday night. Salem's Madison Morson scored 36 points, five of which came in OT.

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.

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Baseketball

Continued from Page 1B

Wait, what? How is Diet Dikembe Mutombo not just naturally gifted? You're saying the guy who scored eight points in the third quarter alone, helping ignite the 40-point running-clock rule against his rival, is basically brand new?

"He's young. He's only been playing basketball for a limited number of years so it's all new to him," Negoshian added. "He's only a junior who played on the JV for us last year because of our depth. It's all kind of new to him, too, but it's been unbelievable watching him progress."

Hardy didn't have an AAU start to his career like a lot of his teammates.

He tried out for middle school basketball but was cut from the seventh-grade team. He made the eighth-grade squad, but he spent the season on the bench as a third-stringer.

Hardy grew as a JV player, but his success on the basketball court started as soon as he took the weight room seriously.

"I think the key is he's getting into the weight room with Billy Slobin, our strength and conditioning guy," Negoshian said. "They've been on a mission to get him bigger, stronger and tougher and to change his mentality. I think it shows every day as we've progressed."

"It's been huge. It's just another guy who does all the little stuff that we need in our program. It allows us to spread that out, and now we're not counting on one person to rebound or one person to block shots. It's coming from multiple people at multiple times, which gives us depth and allows kids to put less minutes on their legs, which is good."

Aside from past middle school woes motivating Hardy, he said he's also received some flack from outsiders who believed he should've already been playing at a high level.

He calls it "a lot of hate." Whatever it is, it's been motivating him to improve.

"I just use that as motivation," he said. "Just a lot of people. They don't really matter as long as you just focus on the game. So I've got to thank my coach (Negoshian) for that because I wasn't doing that (playing well) two weeks ago."



North Farmington's Donovan Williams shoots over Farmington's defense during an Oakland Activities Association-Red boys basketball game on Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022.

BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"Coach's pushing me hard in practice because he wanted me to get physical. So I've been in the weight room a lot. Coach has been helping me a lot, mentally and physically. He wants me to be strong with the ball."

North Farmington (8-1, 2-0 Oakland Activities Association-Red) continues to rank in the top 10 among the various polls out there.

It's easy to see why.

Aside from Hurst, who's one of the best scorers in metro Detoro, the talented cast around him, which includes Tyler Spratt (eight points), Landon Williams (seven) and Aaron Rice, gives the Raiders quite the mix of athleticism, size and scoring.

Adding Hardy into that equation just makes them even scarier to try and stop.

"It's just fun playing with your teammates," Hardy said.

Farmington (2-6, 0-2) got nine points from Nick Morgan, seven from Tony Tolbert and four from Bassiru Jallow.

Also for North Farmington, Donovan Williams scored 11 points off the bench.

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.

Panthers

Continued from Page 1B

The win marked Union's third-straight year of capturing the City rivalry trophy.

The team celebrated by snapping photos with its dance team, cheerleaders and fans at halfcourt afterward.

"I think we just have such an inexperienced team — and this is probably my most inexperienced team I've had the opportunity to coach — that I just think they came out with so many nerves," 12th-year Union coach Randall Taylor said. "We didn't play like we normally play. We didn't play aggressively in that first half. Our defensive energy wasn't there. Once we got those butterflies out the way, we were able to open some things up a little more."

Despite leading by as many as eight in the first, it took two baskets down low late from Russell Wilcox, who finished with eight points, for Thurston to escape the quarter with a 15-11 lead.

Union scored 10-straight to open the next period. That included Mike Myles (game-high 20 points) driving to the hoop for a contested layup that knotted the score at 16 just 5:45 before halftime.

Shortly afterward, Denim Ray-Barrow (16 points) threw down a one-handed dunk in transition to give Union its first lead.

Baskets by Myles and Amare Slaughter-Taylor (eight points) to close out the half ensured the Panthers a 25-18 lead entering the locker room.

Thurston scored just three points in the eight-minute stretch.

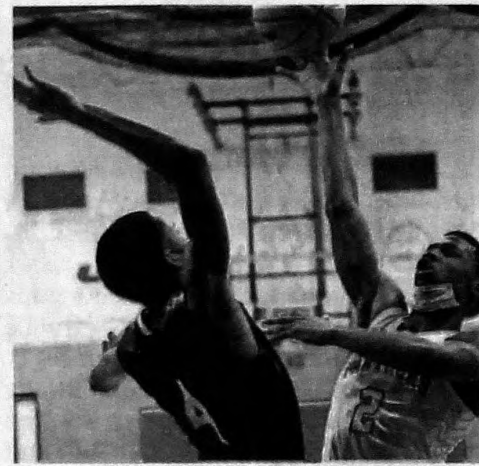
"We got a little discombobulated," Thurston coach Brian Bates said. "We got out of position a little bit offensively and defensively, and we had to get it back together a little bit. Other than that, the kids played well."

And the Eagles did play well to close out the game.

Union extended its lead to 10 points in the third, but Thurston briefly trimmed its deficit to 31-28 following a 3-pointer from Cameron Williams.

Once the Panthers grabbed a 12-point lead in the fourth, they looked to stall the clock by slowing down the offense. Instead, Thurston's full-court trap forced Union into making turnovers.

The Eagles went on a 16-3 run,



Amare Slaughter-Taylor, right. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

which included Williams burying a jumper that made it 49-48 with 1:13 left.

Union finally snapped out of its funk when Myles made a layup.

Thurston's Kahlil Bedford attempted an NBA-ranged 3-pointer to try and tie it at 51 with 27 seconds remaining, but the shot rimmed out. The Eagles didn't score again until Williams cashed in on a put-back with 2.3 seconds left.

The Eagles sent Myles to the line in an attempt to get the ball back, but the sophomore made one free throw to extend Union's lead to two points.

"We did not play the way we practiced at all," Taylor said of the Panthers fumbling a big lead late. "We practiced to learn how to handle pressure. But we sped things up and played out of control tonight. We turned the ball over a lot. We didn't play how we normally play, and I know we had 24 turnovers tonight. So we were just fortunate enough to get the win turning the ball over. It's an ugly win, but we'll take it."

Williams, who scored 11 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter, attempted a half-court buzzer-beater but it didn't fall in. Bedford added 19 points for Thurston.

"We ran out of time, but the kids played hard," Bates said. "They played really hard tonight, but you've got to make shots and you've got to make free throws. They (Union) did a nice job. They played hard and executed at the end to win the game."

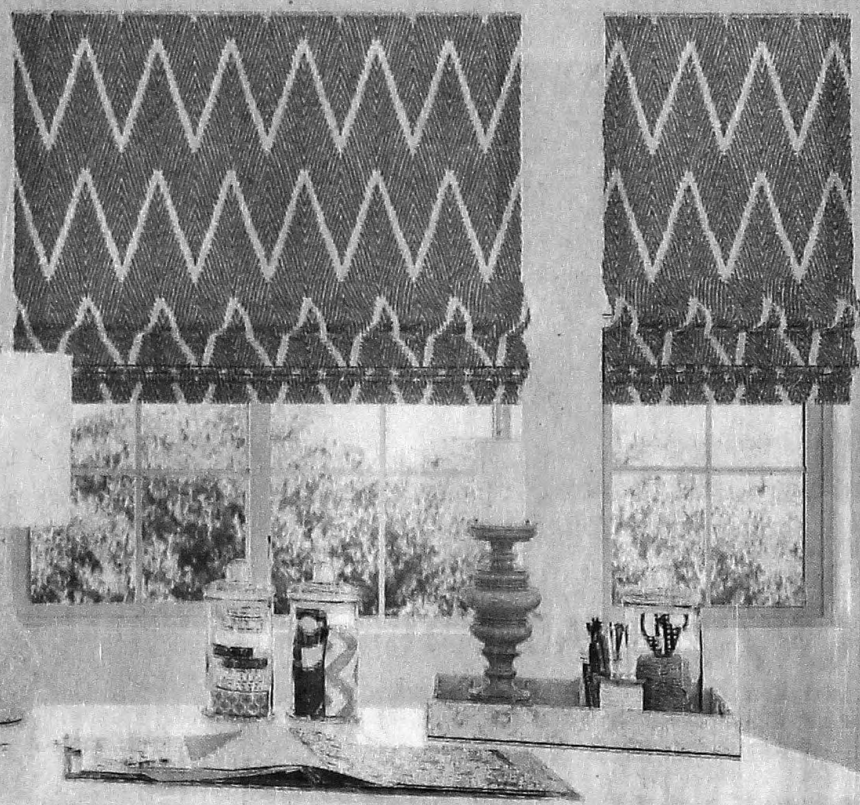
Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.



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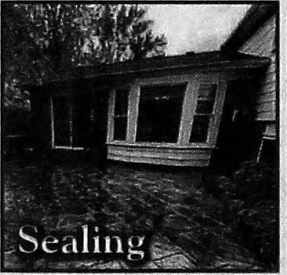


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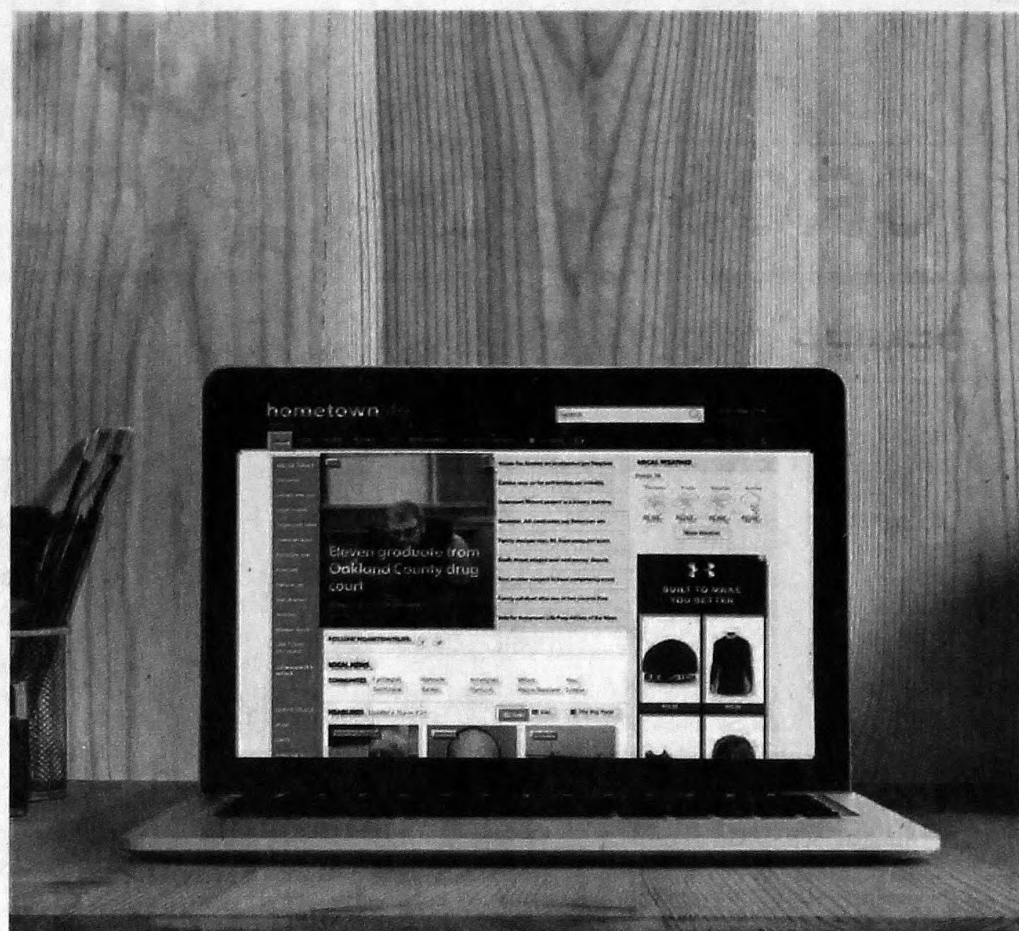
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