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# OBSERVER

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14, 2022 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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## Police group part of children's grief camp

### Law enforcement outreach coalition helps Maybury Farm campers

**Susan Vela** [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A new law enforcement coalition just made one of its first public appearances at Maybury Farm in Northville Township.

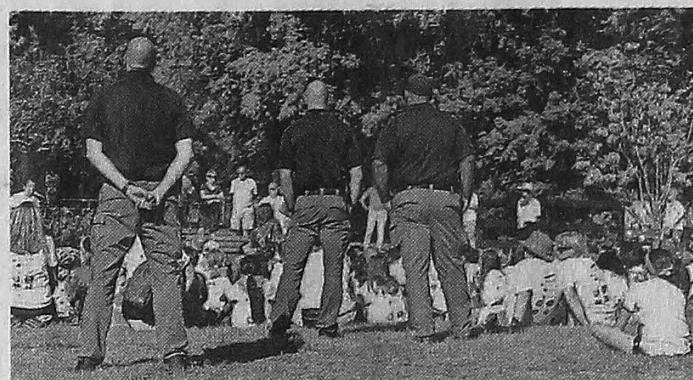
The Michigan Law Enforcement Outreach Coalition, which consists of police officers known for community engagement and school resource assignments, wanted to be present for the children's July 21-22 day camp presented by the New Hope Center for Grief Support.

"It's the first of its kind, this group," said Northville

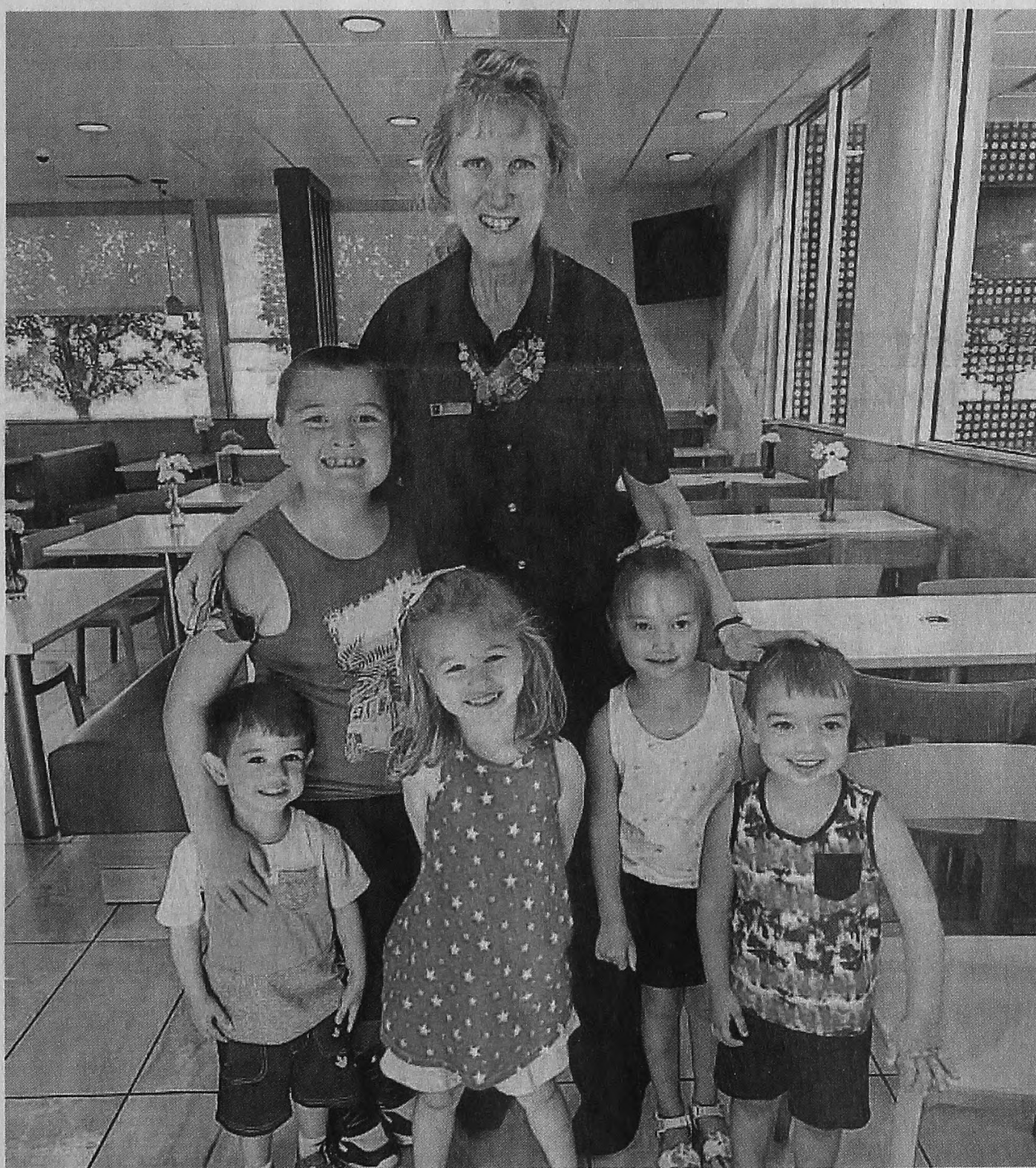
Township Community Service Officer Andrew Domzalski. "It has never been established before. It's a great way for the community members everywhere to realize that we're trying to work together to find different ways to connect with them."

Jennifer Frush, New Hope's executive director, appreciated the police presence and said the interaction between officers and children helps both heal from loss and trauma.

"We're human," she said. "We're not meant to grieve alone. So what better than the presence of police that we know are safe and will help us in times of need." [svela@hometownlife.com](mailto:svela@hometownlife.com)



Police officers and children gather for the opening statements at Maybury Farm grief camp July 21, hosted by the New Hope Center For Grief Support. [SUSANVELA/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM](http://SUSANVELA/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM)



Yolanda Sabatini with her five grandchildren at her McDonald's retirement party Aug. 2.   
COURTESY OF YOLANDA SABATINI

## Fast food phenom finishes 47-year McDonald's career

**Laura Colvin** [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Cheeseburgers cost a quarter, the Egg McMuffin was a brand-new menu item and Happy Meals were still four years from introduction when Yolanda Sabatini donned her first McDonald's uniform in 1975.

Back then, she had no idea she would spend her whole career with McDonald's - and no idea that two generations of family would be born through connections made under the golden arches.

Last week, after 47 years with the company, Sabatini

ni, 65, hung up her hat and retired from the Canton Township McDonald's on Ford Road just west of Sheldon.

"McDonald's is the only place I ever worked," Sabatini said, noting orders were hand-written and added on paper when she worked those first shifts fresh out of high school. "I was so frustrated after the first two weeks that I wanted to quit. But I said, 'Nope, I'm going to keep going,' and six months later I was promoted to manager."

See CAREER, Page 3A

## Streets in downtown Northville will stay permanently closed

**David Veselenak** [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

An idea born out of helping businesses survive the COVID-19 pandemic is now a permanent fixture in downtown Northville.

The closures of Main Street and Center Street in the heart of the city will remain closed to motor vehicle traffic permanently. The decision by the city council at its Aug. 1 meeting comes less than two months after the council voted to extend the closures downtown through early November.

After reviewing more information and taking in more details, the city council addressed the street closures issue again, making the decision to keep the roads closed to cars, allowing pedestrians and diners to continue using the street.

Supporters of the closures said they were helping attract and retain younger residents and visitors, something they said the city should continue to do.

"I'd submit that we need to roll out the welcome mat to families," Councilman Andrew Krenz said. "To me, that is something that is enviable to any of my friends that come in from out of state or out of town."

The roads were closed in 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic to allow for better social distancing and add more seating since there were restrictions on indoor seating.

See STREETS, Page 3A

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# Three years later, Novi woman's homicide still unsolved

Susan Vela [hometownlife.com](mailto:hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Tia Joe had birthday visitors in July when her mother and young son visited her Grand Lawn Cemetery grave in Detroit.

Joe's burial site has a new headstone where son Braxton sang "Happy Birthday."

He was weeks away from his fourth birthday. His mother would have been 25 years old if she had survived the bullet that ripped through her Oakland Glens manufactured home three years ago in Novi.

"He was like, 'This is Mommy, my mommy,'" Joe's mother, Trina Bennett, said. "He said he wanted to open the top of it up to see Mommy. Then he put his ear to it and said, 'I can't hear her.'"

Now living in Oak Park, Bennett finds strength in her grandson while her daughter's homicide remains unsolved.

Braxton wears a brace on his left leg because of his own gunshot wound and consequent nerve damage.

"I know I have to be strong for him," she said, holding on to sweet memories while frustration with Novi police occasionally gets in the way.

Tia Joe was working at Walmart and had been studying to become a certified nursing assistant when she and her son lived with Bennett at Oakland Glens near Novi and 13 Mile roads.

Wanting to be a good mom, Joe brought home a piece of cake and put Braxton in a new outfit to celebrate



Tia Joe, of Novi, would have been 25 this year. COURTESY OF TRINA BENNETT

when he turned 6 months old.

It wasn't long after when gunshots startled Bennett awake during the early morning hours of April 7.

"He was crying," Bennett said. "I went to the room. I tried to turn on the lights. All the lights were out. The smoke detector was going off."

"When they ran out of the house, they knocked the utility pole in the yard down. They shot her in the house."

Neighbors have said they heard screaming and calls for help before first responders arrived and pronounced the pregnant woman dead. Her surviving son would spend nearly three months receiving hospital care.

Tia Joe's older brother would suspect men she had been involved with. Her

best friend would be unable to name anyone wanting to harm the woman she had known since middle school.

Three years into the investigation, Novi police detectives still contact the family every few months for an update and to check on Braxton.

"I can share their frustration," Detective Mike Marchetti said. "With it being an open investigation, there's not much more. I can't give you specifics just because it's open and ongoing."

Tabrian Joe misses his little sister. Heck, he even misses their fights and those times she would mess with his mood.

"She was a sweet person. She was a fighter. I mean ... She was everything to us," he said. "It has been three years. Given that it was Novi, it should be a faster process. They should have caught the person by now."

Daijah Hayes met Tia Joe when they were middle school students attending George Washington Carver Academy in Highland Park.

Tia Joe was the new girl.

"She was really, really quiet," Hayes said. "One day, we just started talking. We literally just clicked and we just stayed friends. We had a lot of stuff in common. We did a lot of stuff together."

Their birthdays were a day apart. Hayes said her friend loved being a mom.

Hayes suspects the person who shot Tia Joe knew her and the layout of the manufactured home she shared with her mother and son.

"I never thought it would be unsolved," Hayes said, noting that she saw her friend about a week before the shooting.

Bennett said her daughter was doing her best to become a great mom. The Detroit high school graduate had prior experience working in the dining room of a Brookdale senior home and had finished CNA coursework to return to such an environment.

Before she died, Tia Joe told her mother she wanted Braxton's first birthday to have a safari theme. Bennett had wanted a LEGO theme, but she honored her daughter's wishes with a "safari" birthday and "a ton of people" at Brookdale.

Braxton turns 4 in September, and his grandmother wants him to have a good day.

"He's my strength," she said. "I tell everybody he's my strength."

Crime Stoppers of Michigan is offering up to \$2,500 for information that could help solve Tia Joe's case. Contact Crime Stoppers of Michigan at 1-800-773-2587 or 1-800-SPEAKUP.

According to a flier, "Tia Lanae Joe and her infant son were found shot on Sunday, April 7, 2019, in the city of Novi. They were discovered at 4:10 a.m. in the 29000 block of Rousseau Drive near Carousel Street."

"The homeowner believed an intruder had entered the residence. Tia Joe was deceased and her infant son survived his injuries."

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## Among the trees

Novi farm uses nature to help visitors improve mental well-being

Susan Bromley [hometownlife.com](mailto:hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Do you feel stress melt away when you're out in the woods?

Forest therapy, a free program offered at Tollgate Farms in Novi this summer, aims to help you capture that feeling more, refreshing and recharging mental health through the healing power of nature.

"Forest therapy builds resilience and helps them learn how to cope," Debbie Wertz, Novi Community Coalition program director, said. "The effects of being out in nature last for a week according to scientists. If you can get outside more, it helps you cope with the normal stressors of life."

Wertz first learned about forest therapy last fall from RJ Webber, Northville Public Schools' new superintendent.

He called it forest bathing, a literal translation from "Shinrin Roku," a Japanese practice that is known to reduce stress and foster a general sense of relaxation.

Wertz's interest was piqued and in her research of the practice, learned that forest bathing, which has gone by many names over hundreds of years, received renewed attention in Japan in the 1980s as the country sought to halt an escalating number of suicides by burned out executives.



Debbie Wertz, program director for the Novi Community Coalition, has been trained in forest therapy and leads sessions at Tollgate Farm.

[SUSAN BROMLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM](mailto:susan.bromley@hometownlife.com)

"They found that being out in nature is very relaxing," Wertz said. "It lowers blood pressure and boosts the immune system. It reduces depression, anxiety, anger and improves overall health and well-being."

Thanks to a \$50,000 grant from Prevention America, the Novi Community Coalition and MSU Tollgate Farm are now offering forest therapy in a summer series with dates at the Novi farm through mid-August.

In each session, a guide trained in forest therapy leads groups of about 10 participants on a walk into the woods at Tollgate, but it is less a hike and more a leisurely sensory experience. Participants are encouraged to take in what they see, hear, smell and feel, explained Wertz, who took a 6-week course to become a certified forest therapy guide. Sessions last 90-120 minutes.

On a recent warm afternoon, she strolled through the Tollgate woods

with sunlight reaching through the leafy canopy to dapple the path before her. Wertz paused, reaching out to touch the bark of a tree and tilting her head to listen to birdsong. She smiled and reflected on what a tree that has stood for dozens or even hundreds of years has gone through in its life.

She wants participants to think about the life of flora and fauna, too, and to slow down.

"You are immersing yourself in nature," she said. "People think they are going on a hike or fast walk, but no, we stop and use our senses. It's having mindfulness, in the moment and thinking about it, instead of thinking about the end of the journey."

Each participant receives a backpack filled with items including a first aid kit, bug spray, an eco-friendly water bottle, a forest bathing book and journal, a coloring book, calming tea, and more.

Reviews so far have been glowing, with participants able to take with them a sense of peace, calm and appreciation for nature, Wertz said, and apply forest therapy on their own.

It is, she said, a strategy that is needed in a society where mental health issues have been on the increase the last few years especially, due to the pandemic as well as increased technology use.

"Get back to nature, get back to your roots," Wertz said. "I'm not anti-tech, but you need to put limits on it, and incorporate the wonderful benefits of being outside."

The grant enables the farm and coalition to offer Forest Therapy to at least 500 participants and Wertz expects sessions to continue into the fall.

Advance registration is required through the Tollgate Farm website.

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at [sbromley@hometownlife.com](mailto:sbromley@hometownlife.com) or 517-281-2412. Follow her on Twitter @SusanBromley10.

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## City planning first Tour de Livonia bike ride

Shelby Tankersley [hometownlife.com](mailto:hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Fancy a long bike ride on a crisp September morning?

Livonia's first city-wide bike ride — dubbed the Tour de Livonia — will take cyclists of all ages through some of the best places to ride a bike close to home.

Don't let the "Tour" fool you, though. Ted Davis, the city's superintendent of parks, said the event is more about enjoying a bike ride with neighbors than it is about seeing who can zip through town the quickest.

"It's just a way to get people excited about biking in Livonia," he said. "It's not a race; we're not timing it. It will just be, hopefully, a nice event."

The ride, which officials hope will be the first of many, takes place Sept. 18.

A 17-mile course for people 16 or older kicks off at 8 a.m., and a shorter 7-mile course for all ages begins at 8:30 a.m. Both routes will begin and

end at Bicentennial Park on Seven Mile Road.

Both courses will take people through some of the city's parks, neighborhoods and local landmarks. Davis said people of all ages and skill levels can enjoy the ride, especially through the city's scenic Harry Tatigian Park, which is behind Stevenson High School.

"Both courses go through Tatigian Park," Davis said. "If you haven't been to Tatigian, that to me is the best park for riding a bike or going on a run in Livonia. You really feel like you're up north. It's mostly straight, but it has just enough curve where it's just this wall of trees. It really has a cool feel."

Officials began cooking up the event in 2019 after Chuck Dardas, CEO of AlphaUSA, suggested it.

"As a Livonia-based company, we look for opportunities to collaborate with organizations on events and programs that enhance the quality of life in our community," Dardas, who is also the founder of Livonia Kids and

Families, said.

Livonia has been working to increase its non-motor travel opportunities in recent years with improvements for cyclists on Five Mile Road, Lyndon Street, Seven Mile Road and Victor Parkway. Davis said his next goal is to make trail connections leading to Hines Drive.

"The big thing we'd like to do with bike pathways is connect into Hines," he said. "If we can get that Stark Road connection down into Hines, that would be a big deal."

Proceeds will go toward the Livonia Kids and Families organization. People can register or sign up to volunteer at [tourdelivonia.org](http://tourdelivonia.org). Riders are encouraged to wear a helmet.

The fee for the long course is \$30, and the shorter course costs \$20. Riders who register by Aug. 31 are guaranteed an event T-shirt.

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



# Streets

Continued from Page 1A

Since then, the closures have become hot topic of discussion in the community, with many different opinions on how to move forward with the streets. A survey on the issue completed by thousands was also conducted.

After gathering more information, the council voted 4-1 to permanently continue with the closure of Main Street between Center and Hutton and 3-2 to keep Center Street closed between Main Street and Dunlap.

## Worry about lack of use in winter months

Mayor Brian Turnbull, who voted against both resolutions, said he plans to do what he can to support the closures. He said the downtown will most likely stay active through the end of the year, but said the challenge will come in

January, February and March to keep the downtown active.

"It will be outstanding throughout the end of the year. There is no question. January, February, March, we will have to work this extremely hard," he said. "We will now have to work with our business owners to see how we make this work through the winter."

He said it's crucial special events take place to keep the downtown activated, especially during the colder months.

That low activity in the winter was one reason many residents have said they want to street to reopen to cars. One such resident was Teresa Folino, who supported the closures initially but said it was time to allow vehicles to travel the two roads at least part of the year.

"I would like to speak in favor of compromise. I dislike the streets being closed all the time. I think that our community should be open," she said. "I'm not opposed to change but I think it needs to be a compromised change."

Part of that compromise, one local

business owner said, should include extending the closures to include other parts of the street. Karry Bazzi, owner of The Lava Grille on Main Street between Center and Wing streets.

She said it would benefit her restaurant and others on the western side of downtown.

"I completely understand why the businesses in the closed area want it closed. I think there needs to be a fair playing field," she said. "If you're going to keep it closed, please consider expanding the closure to include the Lava Grille, the coney island and the Garage or open it back up completely."

## Lost road funding with street closures

Some of the new information considered by the city council on the road closures had to do with funding. If the roads remain closed permanently, the city loses Act. 51 dollars for those stretches. That amounts to more than \$3,100 annually.

"If the roads are closed, there's less wear and tear on the roads," City Manager Pat Sullivan said. "On the other hand, you're now maintaining roads that you want to make sure pedestrians don't trip on, so there's a little bit of a higher standard of maintenance than just maintaining an open street."

The bigger consequence could be if major repairs are needed: the closures also mean those portions would not be eligible for federal funding for construction, an amount that can encompass as much as 80% of a project.

Krenz said the loss of the Act 51 funds is something the city can absorb.

"That's less than the contingency on that epic new printer that we signed up for in June," he said, referencing an agenda item taken up during the June meeting where the street closures were last discussed. "That's (money) that, one way or another, I think we can absorb even if we lose that funding. To me, that's a non-factor."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com).

# Career

Continued from Page 1A

Although she's worked at about 10 local McDonald's locations over the years, Sabatini's longest stint was at the store on Ann Arbor Road in Plymouth, where she was employed from 1984 to 2013, before landing at the Canton Township location nine years ago.

## Family ties

Originally from Australia, Sabatini – then Yolanda Groenewald – came to the U.S. with her parents when she was 8-years-old. Her parents bought a home in Garden City, which Sabatini and her husband Ken still live in today.

The couple met in 1981. At the time, Ken Sabatini was an assistant manager who also did maintenance at McDonald's, while Yolanda worked what was then known as the "all night close."

"The two of us were basically locked in the building all night to clean the whole place," she said. "But there was no dating at that point; we were just friends at first."



Yolanda Sabatini during her early days working for McDonald's. COURTESY OF YOLANDA SABATINI

Later, he asked her out. They had a date on Valentine's Day in 1982 and were married the following year. Their oldest child, Andrea, was born in 1985, followed by Kimberly, then Christopher. With three kids at home, her job as

McDonald's swing manager allowed Sabatini the flexibility to work opposite her husband, who by then was working at the airport – sometimes on days, sometimes at night.

Years passed and Sabatini's children followed in her footsteps. When Andrea turned 15, she got a job working beside her mom at McDonald's. Later, Kimberly and Christopher were also hired. At one point, they all worked together.

"It was fun working with them," Sabatini said. "Sometimes, they would all be in the grill working together while I was up front. If people didn't know they were my children, they wouldn't have known, because I treated them like any other employee."

For example, she recalls, Andrea once wanted to take a weekend off to go with her friends to camp.

"I said, 'If you can get your shift covered, you can go.'"

Like her mother before her, Andrea – now Andrea Markwood – also met her future husband while they were both working at McDonald's.

"That will always be special to me," said Markwood, who lives in Plymouth with husband Russ and their two young children.

## Dedicated employee

With staffing shortages plaguing businesses everywhere over the past few years, Sabatini said she's been working upwards of 60 hours a week recently.

Evelyn Crawford, general manager at the Canton McDonald's, said she's never worked with an employee more dedicated than Sabatini.

"It's been a crazy couple of years with the pandemic," Crawford said, noting she and Sabatini have worked together since 2015. "She never shies away from hard work; she's always a team player and always does so many extra things to help out. I wish she would stay longer."

"I'll miss her. You just don't see a lot of people like her anymore."

Sabatini said she would miss her friends and customers at McDonald's, too.

Now that she's retired, she and Ken, also retired, will be spending more time with her five grandchildren.

Other than that, anything is possible. Contact reporter Laura Colvin at [lcolvin@hometownlife.com](mailto:lcolvin@hometownlife.com) or 248-221-8143.



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# Popular game's growth in dilly of a pickle

Neighbors nagged by noise, other concerns from pickleball courts

Frank Witsil Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Four fit grandmothers in their late 50s and early 60s faced off Thursday morning at Birmingham's Crestview Park for a quick game of pickleball, taking turns — two on each side of the net — swatting a perforated, yellow ball with a pop. On a 20-foot wide, 44-foot long court — almost half the size of a tennis court — the women also were playing close enough to each other to hold casual conversations without much effort.

The popular summer sport with a quirky name has captivated residents in metro Detroit and communities nationwide. It also has been making headlines as publications hail it as “the fastest-growing game in America.”

But even as communities like Birmingham and private country and athletic clubs are creating courts to meet the demand, there also has been pushback to the changes and what Sports Illustrated called the game's “growing pains.”

One of them is less than a mile from Crestview Park, where several Beverly Hills residents are quietly organizing to prevent the Birmingham Country Club from adding courts in front of their homes.

In protest, they've lined their yards with “NO PICKLEBALL EXPANSION” signs.

S.I.'s May article — “Pickleball is the wild, wild West: Inside the fight over the fastest-growing sport in America” — noted several problems, including “too many leagues,” “too many federations,” “battling billionaires” and “bad behavior.”

The article went deep into the business considerations of the sport.

“Until recently,” S.I. said, “pickleball was widely perceived as the last athletic refuge of those who had undergone a knee, hip, or spouse replacement. In reality, the sport — where 300 different paddle manufacturers bear witness to



Linda Siluasi, left, Karen Liddle, Teresa Pilibosian and Jean Charboneau play pickleball at Crestview Park in Birmingham on July 29. The sport is similar to tennis, but it uses a much smaller court and has recently seen an increase in popularity.  
ERIC SEALS/DETROIT FREE PRESS

an as-yet unrealized potential — is in the throes of its terrible tweens.”

### It can be an especially social sport

A big part of pickleball's appeal — particularly for the so-called “hip and spouse replacement” set — is that it is still a fast-paced game but not as physically challenging as tennis.

Balls don't go as far or as fast, and the court is smaller, also making it more social.

It also has some of the qualities of badminton and pingpong.

Thursday morning, as the foursome hit dillballs and falafels — names of certain pickleball shots — there was opportunity for plenty of conversation, laughter, and even a little cooing when the granddaughter of two of the players showed up on the sidelines.

“A bunch of hotties over there,” Currie Olson, 30, said to the group, which included her 58-year-old mother, Kris Barich, and 61-year-old mother-in-law, Kathy Olson.

She explained that she wanted to “come watch for a minute.”

The younger Olson pushed a stroller with her 1½-year-old daughter in it.

“It think it's great,” Olson said of the courts. “I've seen so many more people here.”

### Outdoor rec and community clashes

Community clashes about outdoor recreation are hardly new.

For years, suburbs and schools with basketball courts have wrestled with what to do when pickup games got too intense and boisterous. And some resi-

dents would voice concerns that those courts would attract players from “other communities.”

Urban areas, like Detroit, don't always have the same kind of public recreation facilities. And when a suburb adds or upgrades a basketball court, it offers a new place for those who didn't have one at which to play.

Five years ago, for example, the small city of Pleasant Ridge wrestled with what to do with its outdoor basketball hoops at Gainsboro Park after what the city manager called “an escalating pattern” of incidents that he said included traffic violations, public urination, and drug citations.

In that case, the city's recreation commission decided to temporarily close its court.

See PICKLEBALL, Page 5A

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# Pickleball

Continued from Page 4A

## Converting tennis courts to pickleball

In Birmingham, where the fierce foursome of friends played, the city recently transformed Crestview Park's two outdoor tennis courts into pickleball courts so residents could enjoy the game.

"Once you start, you either love it or you hate it," said Carrie Laird, the city's parks and recreation manager. "It's a gathering. You come, you play, you talk. You get to meet new people — and part of the sport is the interaction with others."

And Laird, who is spearheading a more comprehensive upgrade of the courts, said the plans call for entirely upgrading the playing surface — filling in cracks and painting it — by the fall to permanently convert the space into six pickleball courts.

The cost, she said, is a small part of a more than \$11 million parks and recreation bond that was overwhelmingly approved by voters.

One of the other things that is driving the sport is media coverage.

Parade, for instance, recently published a pickleball primer: "What's all the racket about pickleball? Everything you need to know about the growing sport." The nationwide magazine is distributed in Sunday newspapers, including the Free Press.

Far fewer people play pickleball than tennis, which boasts a participation of more than 21 million. But, Parade said, the sport "has been sprouting like a cucumber vine," growing an average of nearly 12% a year for five years to reach 4.8 million.

### The game 'won over everyone'

Pickleball's origins date to 1965 as a backyard game on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Joel Pritchard, who later served the state as a U.S. representative and lieutenant governor, invented the game with two buddies, Barney McCallum and Bill Bell.

There are at least a couple of accounts of why they called it pickleball. One goes that it reminded them of the pickle boat in crew; another is that it was named after the Pritchard family dog, Pickles.

The game, of course, has its own lingo.

Die-hard players, for instance, call themselves picklers.

As the sport spread, it was adopted by various groups, including community and senior centers, country clubs, and school rec and summer programs. Kids even learned how to play the game.

By 2014, the New York Times ran a speculative headline: "At tennis's sunset, pickleball is rising as an alternative," and then, last year, Vanity Fair published its take: "How pickleball won over everyone from Leonardo DiCaprio to your grandparents."

The 47-year-old heartthrob, the pop culture magazine said, plays every day.

And then, it listed off a who's who of other celebrities who also engage in the game: Larry David, Melinda Gates, Jamie Foxx, the Kardashians, Owen Wilson, Jillian Michaels, Zach Braff, and Giuliana Rancic.

It named pro athletes Russell Wilson and Annika Sörenstam and said the 61-year-old George Clooney self-deprecated that his younger wife, Amal, routinely beats him on their court in L.A.

And then, earlier this year, Washington actually named pickleball its official state sport.

### 'Much easier than tennis'

Among the women who gathered



Jean Charboneau, 57, of Birmingham, heads onto the court at Crestview Park in Birmingham to play pickleball with friends.

PHOTOS BY ERIC SEALS, DETROIT FREE PRESS

Thursday to play at the park in Birmingham, Kathy Olson, of Grosse Pointe, was the veteran. She learned to play, she said, at her country club and has been enjoying it for two years.

Jenny Shebib, 59, said the game is easy to play, and "you can get others to join up." It's "much easier than tennis," she said, leaning in and adding — as if she were telling a secret — "it's not as hard on your body."

That's because no matter how hard you hit the ball, it doesn't go far.

Barich said she used to play tennis, and likes pickleball, in part, because it's novel.

Many people just picking the game up, like Barich, are playing for fun, the women said. But, they noted, there are more competitive levels of play: tournaments, leagues and recreational courts with reservation times.

They also agreed, however, that game tends to be louder than tennis.

And with six courts going, Pattie Dull, 59, speculated, it's likely to get even noisier.

### 'All Saturday. All Sunday?'

That's exactly what residents who live on the edge of the Birmingham Country Club, where another pickleball project is planned, fear. The club, residents say, wants to add pickleball courts and is seeking approval for its proposal.

As a result, some neighbors are politely fighting the club's efforts. They are protesting with yard signs featuring QR codes that send folks to an online Change.org petition they can sign to oppose it.

Unlike tennis and badminton, which use a racket that makes a swish or soft ping sound when it comes in contact with the ball or shuttlecock, a pickleball paddle pops when it hits a ball — and that, to many, gets annoying.

On top of that, the social aspect that makes the game fun, isn't as enjoyable if you have to hear that chatter all day — or worse, the expletives when the picklers miss their shots and lose.

Lisa Hudson, 58, whose home faces the club, said in addition to the noise, she also doesn't want the bright lights the project will bring shining in her large, picture windows.

Nor does she want, she said, the additional traffic on the roadway in front of her house.

The club, which includes a golf course, has plenty of property to install pickleball courts, residents insist. So why — Hudson rhetorically asks — do they have to put them right in front of

their homes?

"Many of us play pickleball, it's a great sport," the petition says. However, it went on to explain the group's objection to the project: "Imagine having to hear the pop, pop, pop sound of the pickleball, 14 hours a day. All Saturday and all Sunday."

The petition is seeking 100 signatures.

As of Saturday, it had 42, including Hudson's.

### Can the game's growth be slowed?

How much of a chance the Beverly Hills residents have at convincing the club to alter its plans is unclear. One challenge they face is that the club is in an entirely different municipality, Bloomfield Township.

It's also fuzzy how open the country club is to compromise.

In two separate calls from the Free Press to the club seeking its position,

folks answering the phone initially said that no one was available to answer questions about its pickleball plans.

Then, they said, the club had "no comment" on the matter, and then hung up — twice.

The Free Press made a third inquiry Thursday by email, in case the message wasn't getting through to the right people, and later that day the club's General Manager Taras Strychar responded.

He said via email he was "getting ready for a couple of meetings" and not available, but offered to connect "next week."

"We are still in the planning process of the project," Strychar also wrote, adding the club is "committed to working with Bloomfield Township and the neighbors to be able to address any of the concerns they might have."

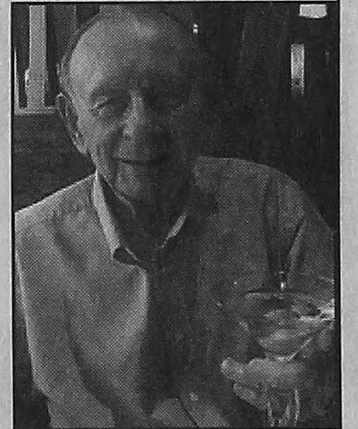
And that, the neighbors said, is all they really want: for the club to listen to them and be good sports about their uneasiness about the proposal.

## Obituaries

To place an ad, call 586-826-7171 or visit [mideathnotices.com/place.php](http://mideathnotices.com/place.php)

### Gary L. Overstreet

Gary L. Overstreet was born on May 3, 1954 in Ypsilanti, Michigan to the late Dennis and the late Rita Overstreet. He passed away on July 31, 2022 at the age of 68 in Cadillac, Michigan. His family was by his side when he passed away peacefully. Gary is survived by children; Gary (Barbara) Overstreet, and Cheryl (Marc) Brideau, grandchildren; Utonia (Ryan Kellogg) Overstreet, Wendi (Lucas) Poster, Gary M. Overstreet, Steven Brideau, Brandon (Adra Ringdahl) Brideau, Johnathan (Emily DiLucia) Brideau, Ashton Brideau, and Adam Brideau; great-grandchildren; Mackenzie Poster, Kyle Poster, Gracie Poster, and Liam Poster; siblings Jack Overstreet, Mary Ann (the late Barney) Czajkowski, Vickie (Dave) Troup-Thigpen, Kenneth (the late Pam) Overstreet, and Denise (Larry) Webb. Gary is also survived by many nieces and nephews, and his 2 goats, and 6 chickens.

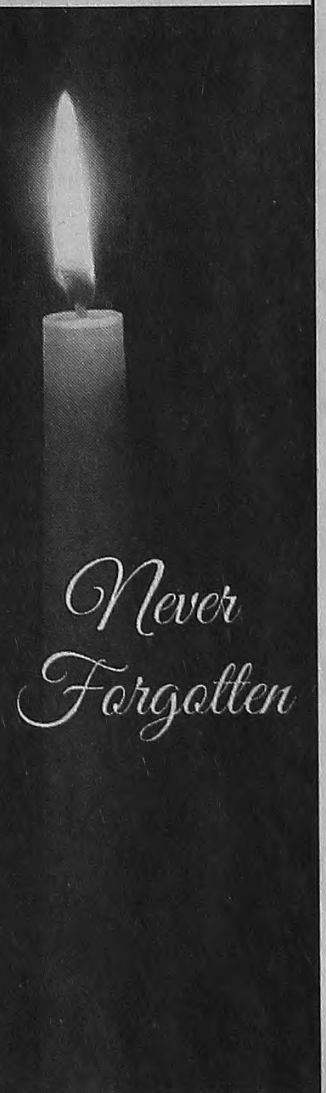


### Robert Ernest Simanek

NOVI - Age 92, passed away August 1, 2022. Visit [heaney-sundquist.com](http://heaney-sundquist.com) for complete information.



Lisa Hudson, of Beverly Hills, stands with one of the signs that line residents' lawns near the Birmingham Country Club. She lives nearby on Saxon Drive.



Gary was a proud retiree from American Ring Manufacturing having worked there for 32 years. After retirement, he sold his house in the city and moved to the country to start a farm next door to his son. He loved his new children- 2 goats and 6 chickens, and took much pride in caring for them. Gary loved singing karaoke with his family and friends, especially his son Gary and daughter Cheryl. Some of his favorite songs were by Conway Twitty, which he sounded just like him when he sang. Gary loved singing, "It's Only Make Believe" and he especially loved singing the duet "Joni" with his daughter Cheryl. He loved everyone and made friends easy. Affectionately known as "Hound Dog", he enjoyed going to car shows with his son Gary and he loved his black mustang that he called "his little girl." Gary was an easy going, family man, who found love and laughter in everything he did. His smile and endless happiness will be dearly missed.

Visitation was held on Saturday, August 6, 2022 from 1-8pm with a service on Sunday at 2pm at the Uht Funeral Home, 35400 Glenwood Rd., Westland, MI 48186.

Please view memorial and send tributes at [www.uhtfh.com](http://www.uhtfh.com).





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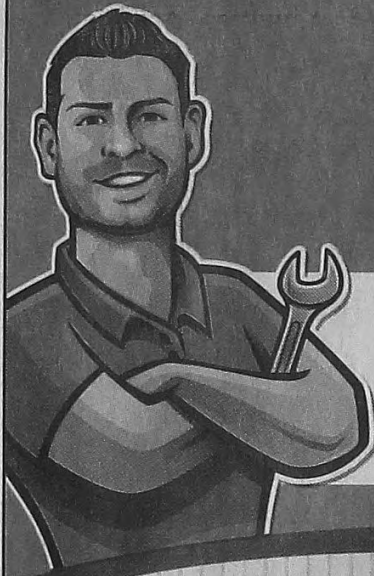
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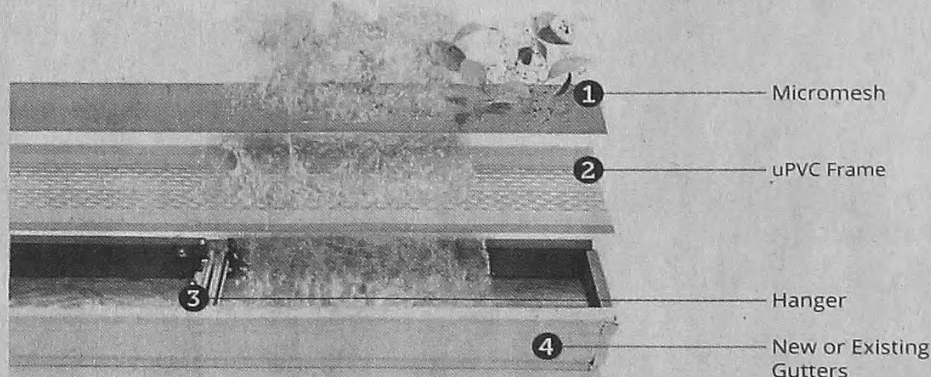
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# SPORTS

## Five best sound bites from OAA Media Day

Local coaches preview upcoming football season

**Brandon Folsom** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

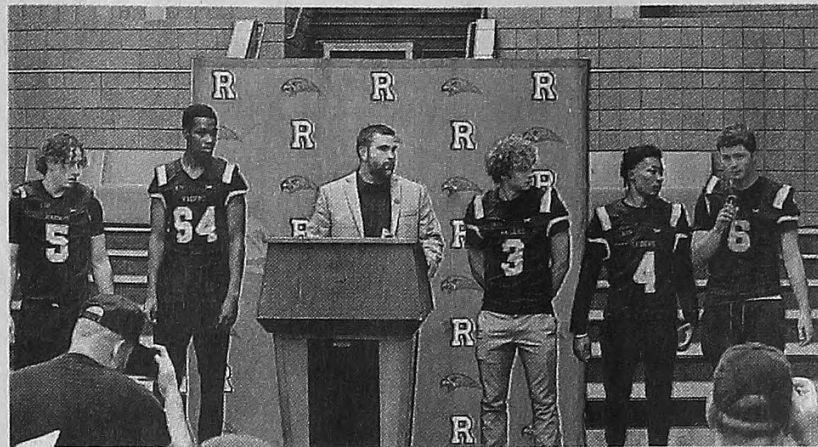
Rochester High School hosted the Oakland Activities Association Football Media Day on Aug. 5, and there was plenty of chatter among the 22 coaches present.

Here were the five best sound bites from coaches who play in Hometown Life's coverage area:

**North Farmington coach Jon Herstein on the Raiders being predicted to win the OAA-Blue in the pre-season coaches poll:**

"I guess that's the way the coaches predicted it to go, and that's a nice honor for our program, so we've got to go out there and prove it and get the job done every week. Last year we had a good

See **SOUND BITES**, Page 3B



**North Farmington coach Jon Herstein and his players speak during Oakland Activities Association Football Media Day on Aug. 5.**  
TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Milford takes the field before facing East Lansing in the Division 2 football pre-district last season.

PHOTOS BY TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Five bold predictions about upcoming LVC football season

**Brandon Folsom** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

With high school football teams returning to practice this week, here are five bold predictions about the upcoming Lakes Valley Conference season:

### Playing without QB a year ago should only benefit South Lyon

It's pretty admirable what the Lions accomplished a year ago. They overcame the season-ending injury of quarterback Dawson Skupin and even a COVID-19 quarantine to backup Braden Fracassi to somehow win the LVC championship. And then they marched through the playoffs, winning district and regional titles and even playing in the state semifinal.

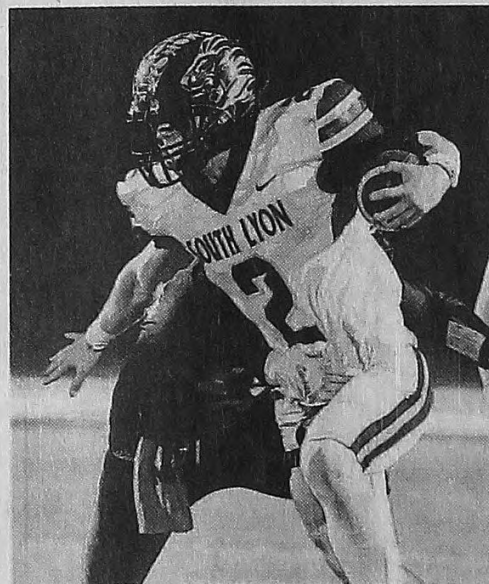
With Skupin leading the offense, doing all those things probably goes a lot smoother.

But they were forced to retool their offense with Fracassi and, sometimes, third-stringer Coy Plummer under center.

That's why they're going to stay a step ahead of attrition this season. They already know what it's like to play without Skupin, who has since graduated. They've already had a chance to get Fracassi experience as a starter. Much of what they proved to be a year ago is what they'll look like in 2022.

If South Lyon can get past Walled Lake Western on opening night (more on this later), it should have a strong chance to repeat as league champions.

See **LVC**, Page 2B



South Lyon's Tommy Donovan rushes during a Lakes Valley Conference football game last season.

## Four bold predictions about OAA football

**Brandon Folsom** Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

With high school football teams returning to practice this week, here are five bold predictions about the upcoming Oakland Activities Association season:

### North Farmington will only be as good as its new starters

With only four returners on both sides of the ball, the Raiders will have a slew of new starters in several different roles. And coach Jon Herstein loves it.

He said the incoming juniors and seniors already have built a strong chemistry and were playing as a team in off-season workouts.

That chemistry should pay off as North Farmington attempts to bounce back from a rough season in 2022. After ripping off three blowout wins to open the fall, it proceeded to lose six-straight and miss the playoffs. And four of those losses were by one score or less.

When the Raiders line up against Troy in Week 3, we should know just how talented Herstein's new guys actually are since the Colts are one of the favorites to win the Blue.

### Dominic Pesci might be the most underrated QB in the league

The 6-foot-6, 215-pound Farmington senior has an absolute cannon for an arm, and no one in the media has back talking about him. Social media included.

He was a team captain as a junior, throwing for over 1,200 yards and 19 touchdown passes en route to All-OAA-Blue honors.

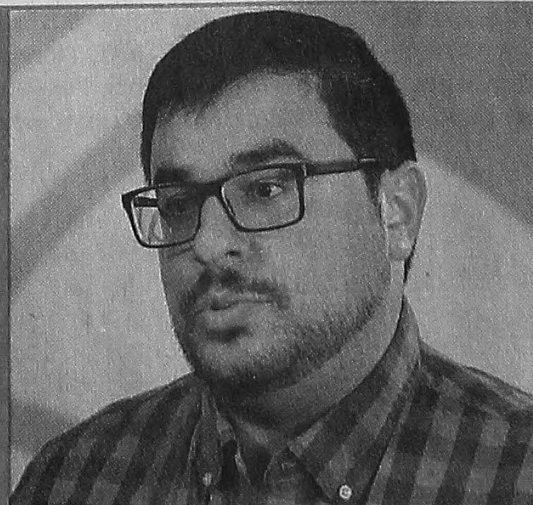
The Falcons, 4-5 a year ago, have a solid chance to compete for a divisional

See **OAA**, Page 2B

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# LVC

Continued from Page 1B

That's at least the one benefit of the team losing its starting QB last season.

## Milford won't take a step back, despite switching head coaches

In his fourth season leading the team, Garfrey Smith took the Mavericks to new heights. They won seven games in 2021 after winning only seven games in the five previous seasons combined. It was their best season since winning both 10 games and a district title in 2006.

Unfortunately for the program, Huron Valley Schools let go of Smith following their loss to East Lansing in the playoffs because, according to him, his job in Grand Blanc didn't allow him to spend enough time near the high school.

Fortunately for the program, the Mavericks replaced Smith with his top assistant, Andrew Micovich, who should continue to build on the strong foundation already laid over the past four seasons.

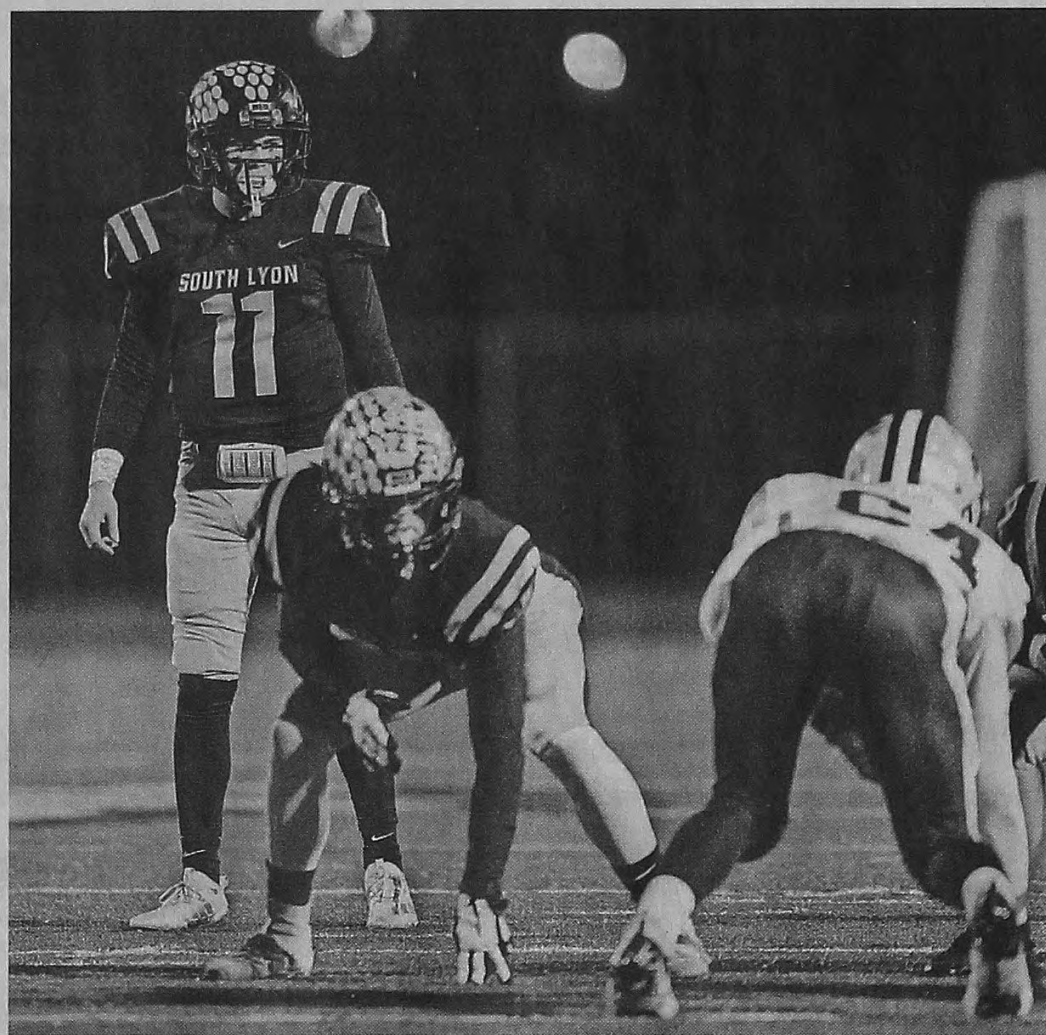
Milford might not win as many games as it did a year ago, but the product on the field shouldn't dwindle. But this will definitely be an important first season for Micovich and his staff.

## South Lyon East will look improved in Topp's second season

Jake Topp will be the first to tell you he loves being the Cougars' coach. But he probably won't admit just how challenging it's been leading the team. So we'll do that for you.

He took over the smallest team in the LVC during a pandemic and had a shortened off-season to prepare East for his first season on the sidelines last fall. He inherited some talented players, especially Temple signee Bryce Lambeth and RPI's Grant Roslinski, who will both play Division I football this fall, but he was put in an unrealistic situation to win right away. Especially considering the school has won five games in a single season only three times since it started playing football in 2007.

Yet Topp's squad showed fight almost every week. They even upset White Lake Lakeland, the first time they



South Lyon's Braden Fracassi readies his offense in the Division 2 regional final against Portage Central last season. DAVID DONOHER/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

had ever beaten the Eagles in program history. That proved to be something to build on.

So here we are. Topp had a full, traditional off-season with his team, completely unbothered by COVID-19. Younger starters are now a full year older. And attrition around the league has made it look a little more competitive in the LVC. This season should be the start of something special at East.

## White Lake Lakeland will keep its 6-year playoff streak alive — but it won't be easy

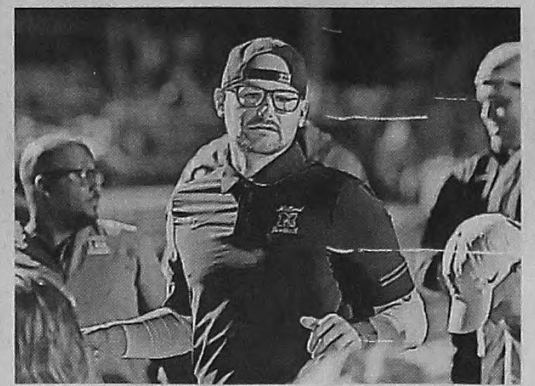
Graduation might have hit the Eagles the hardest out of all the LVC teams. Not only must they replace three-year quarterback and team captain Tate Farquhar, who is signed with Michigan State for baseball, but everywhere you look along their offense and defense are holes left behind by an All-Area caliber player who walked across the graduation stage last school year.

That's going to be tough, especially for a squad that needed everything it had to sneak into the postseason, ensuring it'd be in the big dance for a sixth-straight season. They lost games to South Lyon and South Lyon East in the league. And they lost to Gibraltar Carlson. Fortunately their forfeit win over Walled Lake Western was just what they needed to make it in.

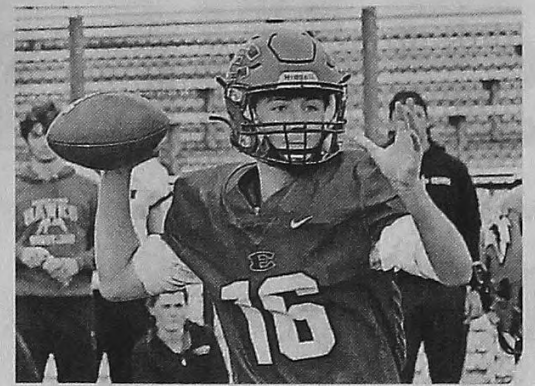
Lakeland shouldn't have a problem reloading with even more talent and winning games. That's something it's always proved to do, even before coach Jim Calhoun took over the program from Joe Woodruff. It just needs to win a game or two over the league's top squads (Western, South Lyon, Milford and Waterford Mott) to make it back to the playoffs.

## Who will win the LVC?

South Lyon has the firepower to repeat as the league champions, especially with quarterback Braden Fracassi



Milford High School promoted assistant Andrew Micovich to its vacant head football coaching position in early January. MILFORD ATHLETICS



South Lyon East's Nico Campo passes during a non-conference football game against Paw Paw last season. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE

and running back Tommy Donovan returning for their senior years. Heck, even Alexander Stoyanovich gives the Lions a considerable edge on special teams since the senior is one of the highest-ranked kickers in the country.

But this is Walled Lake Western's year. At the end of last season, the Warriors were ranked No. 11 in The D Zone 100, which ranks the best 100 football teams in Michigan, regardless of division. Plus, they'll be led by a pair of three-star seniors committed to Minnesota in QB Drew Viotto and RB Darius Taylor.

The scuttlebutt around the 7-on-7 passing leagues this summer is Western should be one of the top teams in metro Detroit, and it should even compete for a state title.

Never count out the Lions but don't be surprised if it's the Warriors hoisting the LVC championship trophy by the end of the regular season.

Follow Brandon Folsom on Twitter: @folsombrandonj.

# OAA

Continued from Page 1B

championship, especially with second-year coach Jason Albrecht getting a full off-season free from the pandemic to prepare his team for this fall. Pesci should be the key piece on offense helping them vy for that league title.

## Bloomfield Hills won't win the OAA-White — but that's OK

Death, taxes and the Black Hawks being on the move.

Since Lahser and Andover merged in 2013, Bloomfield Hills has never stayed in the same OAA division for more than two seasons. And that trend continues, as the Black Hawks are getting bumped up from the Blue to the White. And the White is absolutely loaded with powerhouse teams.

Coach Dan Loria likes the level of competition they'll face in the White, but it's definitely going to be a lot tougher than the Blue division they won a year ago (more on this later).

Bloomfield Hills should be a playoff team, especially with quarterback CJ Jackson returning for his senior year, but churning out a second-straight 9-0 regular season might be too talk of a task for the Black Hawks.

Which teams are winning OAA titles? Since two divisions don't have any of Hometown Life's local teams, we'll start with those.

While the coaches predicted West Bloomfield to win the Red during media day, we expect state runner-up Rochester Adams to claim the conference title and make another playoff run back to Ford Field.

Auburn Hills Avondale and Berkley are pre-season favorites to win the Gold, but Ferndale actually had a strong summer and might be adding a few players to the starting lineup that could make a difference immediately. Don't be surprised if the Eagles upset the field and win the division.

The White is interesting because new OAA member Harper Woods is a proven winner and one of the more intriguing teams in the state. But Southfield A&T has junior QB Isaiah Marshall, who is one of the best players in metro Detroit and likely a future Mr. Football candidate. Plus, there's Oak Park, which has



Bloomfield Hills' Ahmad Taylor wraps up a ball carrier during an OAA-Blue game against Farmington last season. COURTESY OF SUSAN ADAMS PHOTOGRAPHY



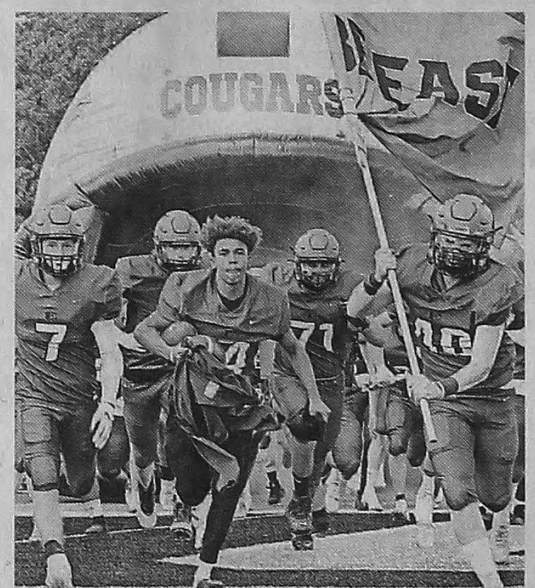
North Farmington's Anderson Sculati, left, Thomas Balazovic, Quinn Parpart, Jayden Taylor and Kyle James represented the Raiders during OAA Football Media Day on Aug. 5. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

been a college football recruiting factory for years. It'll be tough for Birmingham Groves and Bloomfield Hills to compete with those three squads. We're leaning toward Southfield on having a strong season and winning the division championship.

Good luck guessing who wins the Blue. The division is the epitome of par-

ity with North Farmington, Farmington and Birmingham Seaholm all equally talented. And then there are rivals Troy and Troy Athens.

The Colts could make a strong case to win the league as they were the runner-ups a year ago, and it took a late effort from Bloomfield Hills to beat them in Week 9 to end their undefeated season



South Lyon East takes the field against Paw Paw during a non-conference football game last season. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

and rip the league title away from them. What's more, Troy returns three-star wide receiver Darius Whiteside II, who is committed to Grand Valley State as a cornerback. He is absolutely must-watch. We're going with the Colts to win the Blue.

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports for Hometown Life.



# Sound bites

Continued from Page 1B

team, but we just fell short in a few games, and we graduated a good group of seniors. But the guys coming in beneath them are a tight-knit group of kids who I think really enjoy playing football, and they've worked hard. They've bought in, and they're putting in the work, and we're just going to have to wait and see what they're able to do."

### Farmington coach Jason Albrecht on how competitive the OAA-Blue is:

"It took me a few minutes to even put numbers down (when filling out the pre-season coaches poll) because our division is really well-balanced. Obviously, everyone has question marks here and there. But, all in all, they're all well-coached programs, all have talent coming back and all have size up front. I couldn't even tell you who I picked because we're all just pretty well-balanced. ...

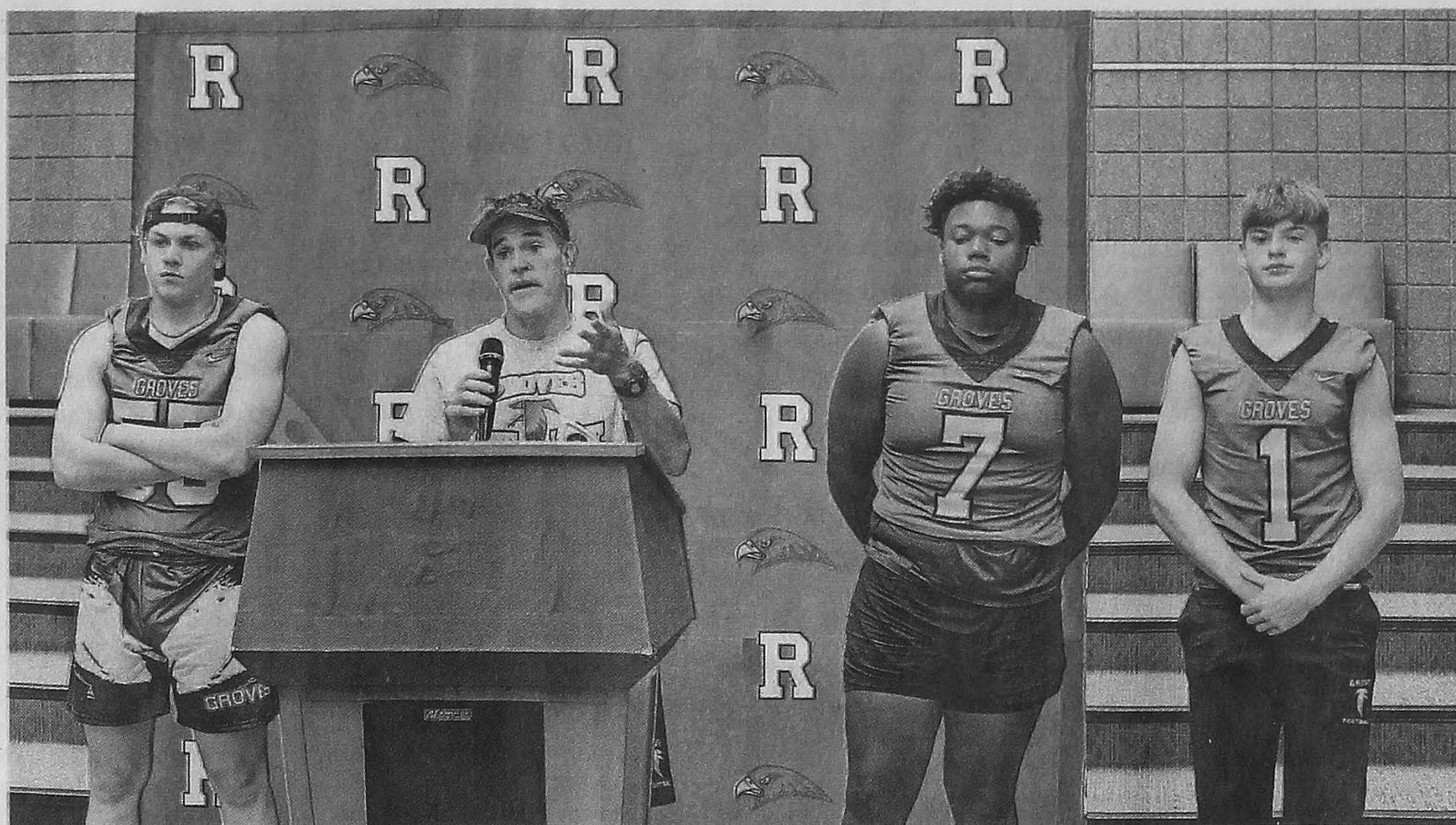
"Troy and (Troy) Athens had a really good year last year. Seaholm was a little down, but coach (Jim DeWald) running the option there is always dangerous. That's something I'm looking forward to is the challenge of playing against them. And, obviously, going against North and Coach Herstein, his staff does a great job, and it's a rivalry game, so you never know how it's going to go."

### Bloomfield Hills coach Dan Loria on moving from the OAA-Blue up to the White:

"Since I was at Lahser as the head coach until we merged, and since we've merged, all we've done is moved (divisions). We were in the Red for the longest time, and we either had a really good year in the Red or we'd get our (butts) kicked. They moved us down to the White, and we were down there for a while. And then they put us in the Blue. And every time they put us in the Blue, we were successful, and we won the league. But then they'd shoot us right back up again, and they'd take us from the Blue all the way up to the Red while skipping a whole league (White) on us. ...

"Now I think where we're at, in the White, it's a good division, and I'm happy with where we're at. I want to stay here and play the same teams for a while instead of just jumping around and playing brand new teams."

### Birmingham Seaholm coach Jim DeWald on his run-first offense im-



Birmingham Groves coach Brendan Flaherty speaks during Oakland Activities Association Football Media Day on Aug. 5. PHOTOS BY TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



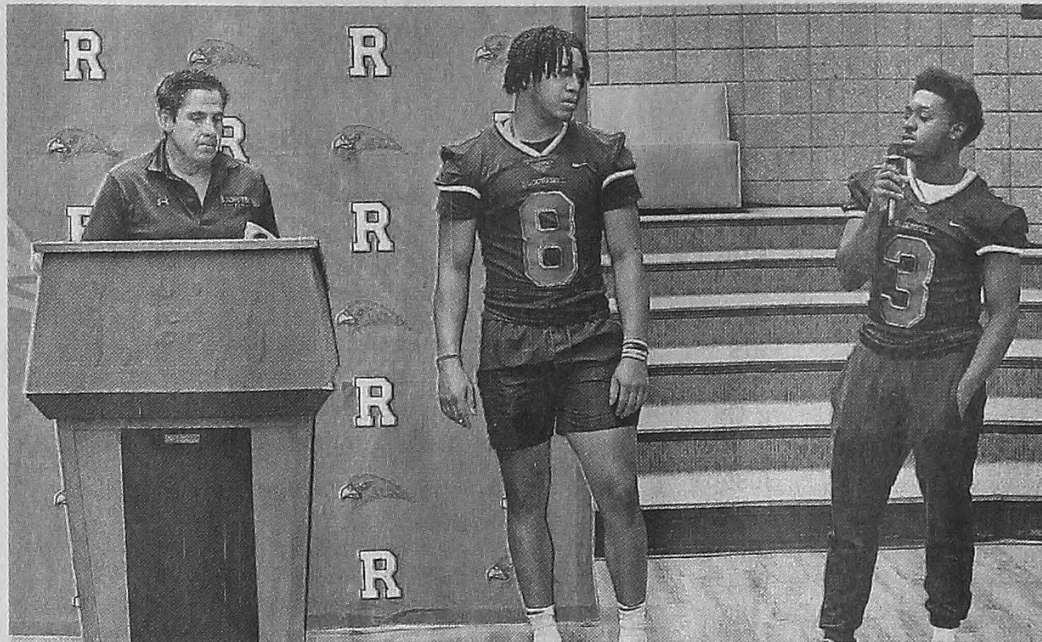
Farmington coach Jason Albrecht speaks during OAA Media Day.

### proving during the off-season:

"We came off a season that was not so great at 1-8. I think these guys have been pretty good in the weight room. I was very pleased with our summer stuff. We did lifting and team camps, and we don't do 7-on-7 stuff. We're trying to eliminate the forward pass in football. But we had a really good summer."

### Birmingham Groves coach Brendan Flaherty on returning 23 seniors after a 2-7 season:

"I think everybody in here would agree at times that you're only as strong as your senior class. We are really encouraged by our senior class, and we're looking for a good bounce-back year."

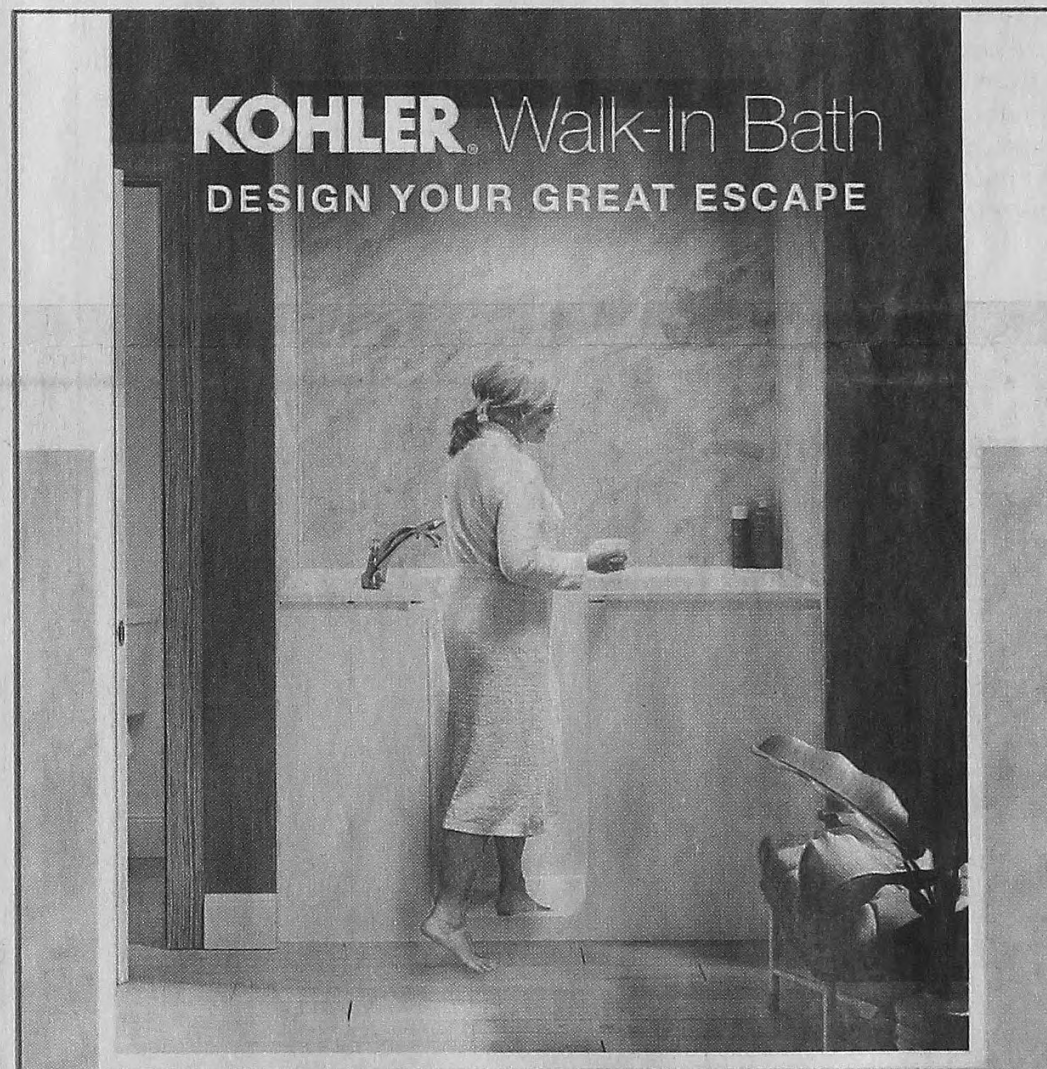


Bloomfield Hills coach Dan Loria and the Black Hawks speak at OAA Media Day.



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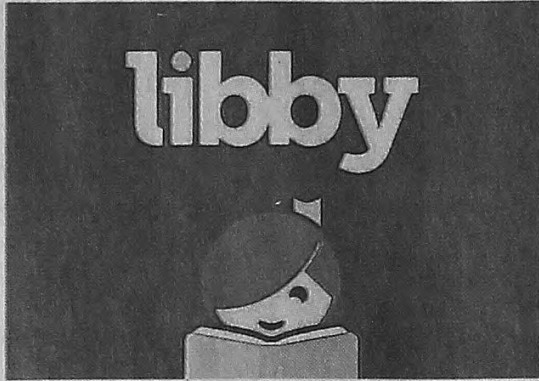
# ONLINE FREEBIES EASE FINANCIAL LOAD

Marc Saltzman Special to USA TODAY

As the rising costs of living strain many families – not to mention the interest rate hikes that will probably affect credit cards and mortgage payments – Americans look for ways to save. ● No surprise that Google Search told USA TODAY there was a huge spike for the words “cheap” and “affordable” over the past few months. ● What’s the only thing better than “cheap” and “affordable”? Free, of course. ● You probably know about the thousands of free games you can download from your favorite app stores, but there is so much more.

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## TV shows and movies

Called AVOD services (“ad-supported video on demand”) or sometimes FAST (“free ad-supported streaming TV”), there are several options that provide free videos to watch on demand via your Smart TV, smartphone, tablet or laptop.

Popular examples include Tubi, Pluto TV, Crackle and Roku Channel, all of which have a huge collection of new and older shows and movies. Other platforms that offer free content include Facebook Watch, Peacock (free version), Dailymotion and YouTube.

You’ll need to sit through commercials, but they’re shorter and less frequent than those on regular TV.

## E-books

So long as you have a library card, you can borrow e-books – today’s bestsellers and classics, too – through the Libby by OverDrive app.

Once you install Libby on your tablet or smartphone, create a free account, then search for something to read. You can enjoy the book until the “due date,” like checking it out from the library, but you don’t need to drive the books back to the library or face a late fee!

You can install Libby on multiple devices and all your loans, notes, bookmarks and reading progress sync across your devices. For example, start on your iPad and finish on your smartphone.

## Audiobooks

Here’s a little-known trick for iPhone or iPad owners: Turn your e-books into free audiobooks, using a built-in accessibility tool called Speak Screen.

To activate it (only required once), go to Settings > Accessibility > Spoken Content > Speak Screen. In any app you have open, such as an ebook reading app, swipe down with two fingers from the very top of the screen for the book to be read to you.

It works with emails, web articles, recipes or notes.

You can tweak the voice (which does not sound synthesized, like many apps do), including gender and language, speaking speed and more.

## Phone numbers

A handy app, TextNow (iOS Android) gives you a secondary – and completely free – phone number to use on your smartphone.

After all, you might not want to reveal your real phone number if you’re, say, selling something online or going on a blind date.

Choose a city in the USA or Canada, and you’ll receive an available area code and number. Like your main number, you can change the ringtone, access voicemail and more (at no cost). Note: There are ads in the app.

You can call or text for free over Wi-Fi with this new number or use it out of the home by picking up a TextNow SIM card for 99 cents, then unlimited calls and texts over cellular connectivity are \$0/month. If you want data, plans start at \$8.99/month for one gigabyte.

## Video surveillance

Given how often we update our devices, you might have a spare iPhone, iPad or Android somewhere at home.

If so, you can turn it into a free wireless surveillance camera, a baby monitor, a “nanny cam” or a way to keep an eye on your pets while away.

It’s all handled through an app called Presence.

After you install (and sign into) the app on your phone or tablet and your aging one that will become the camera, simply place that old device somewhere in your home, ensure it’s plugged in and point the device’s camera somewhere.

Wherever life takes you, open the app on your phone or tablet to see what’s happening in real-time at home.

## Radio plays

Speaking of audio, you’re missing out if you’re not listening to “old time radio” (OTR) shows.

Popularized in the 1930s, ’40s and ’50s, – before television became the dominant entertainment medium in the home – you can find virtually all major radio series for free at websites such as Archive.org or by subscribing to various podcasts.

Not sure where to start? Stream or download “Sorry, Wrong Number” (suspense), starring Agnes Moorehead and the infamous “War of the Worlds” (Mercury Theatre).

Keep in mind these aren’t audiobooks – they’re radio plays, featuring a cast of characters, sound effects and music and more.

## Productivity software

Though there are some free productivity programs, most require an internet connection to use.

Instead, Apache’s OpenOffice is a downloadable, offline suite of productivity tools for word processing, creating spreadsheets, presentations and more. OpenOffice is available in multiple languages and runs on many operating systems.

The software suite supports a wide range of file types created by other programs (including Microsoft Office’s .doc, .xls and .ppt).

On a related note, there are many good, free photo-editing tools, but Gimp might be the most robust, thanks to its powerful editing features, digital retouching, multiple file support and customizable interface options.

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This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated at right. Find the listed words in the grid. They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once. Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 18 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

- |          |            |         |        |        |
|----------|------------|---------|--------|--------|
| Awls     | Doll       | Image   | Relax  | Style  |
| Axle     | Dyed       | Kits    | Ribbon | Table  |
| Band     | Edge       | Knit    | Rope   | Tool   |
| Brad     | Emboss     | Light   | Salon  | Trim   |
| Cafe     | Exhibition | Link    | Scarf  | Twist  |
| Canvas   | Finish     | Models  | Show   | Unpick |
| Chalk    | Frames     | Observe | Silk   | Veneer |
| Clay     | Gauge      | Oils    | Skein  | Vice   |
| Daub     | Gesso      | Pelt    | Soft   | Video  |
| Decorate | Glue       | Pins    | Spun   | Wheel  |
| Die cut  | Gold       | Pull    | Stamps |        |

**TODAY'S ANSWER**

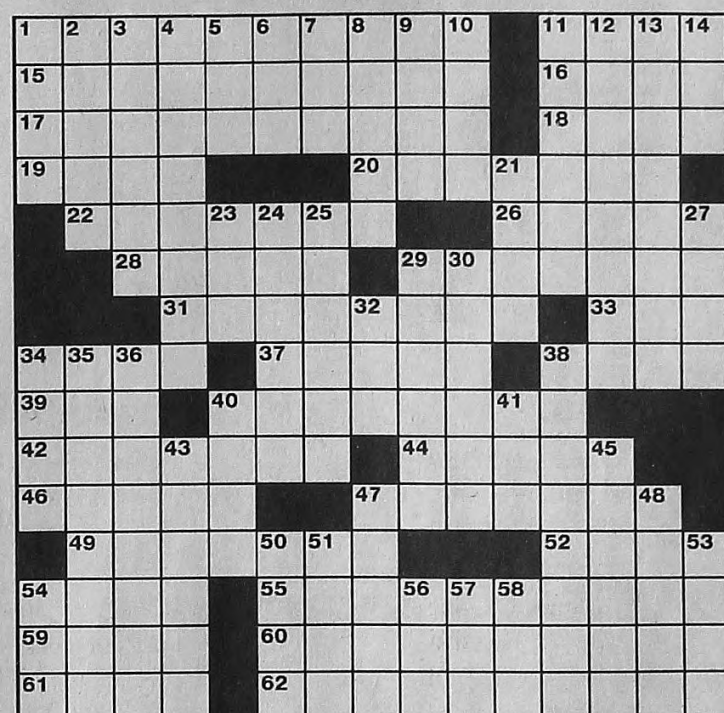
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 T R E E N E V E T R I M L T S  
 U B K I L G C S I B K X F I F  
 N W S T O U W B B N A W L S R  
 P H C R T A M O I O E K A T A  
 I E G H A G N T H G I L G I M  
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 K L L R E L A X E N U P S T S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

**NEWSDAY CROSSWORD**

- ACROSS**
- 1 Took care of
  - 11 Letters with 1980 Summer Olympics stamps
  - 15 Genre of shaggy dog stories
  - 16 Word seen twice on the UN roster
  - 17 Mold-made French dessert with milk and almonds
  - 18 Lens holders
  - 19 Worth following
  - 20 Granted formally
  - 22 Sort of sanitizer
  - 26 Boss or subordinate of a millennium ago
  - 28 Hair Buster Gel brand
  - 29 Shady, in all likelihood
  - 31 Peacock's display
  - 33 Big name in *Artistic Licence Renewed* magazine
  - 34 *de génie* (brainstorm)
  - 37 Undisguised
  - 38 It means "ancillary"
  - 39 Light-colored letters on MLB caps
  - 40 Aid in white blood cell generation
  - 42 Direction often following "Allegro"
  - 44 Wonky
  - 46 Pricey coolers with a Tundra line
  - 47 Well-worn
  - 49 Math's "unifying thread"
  - 52 "To \_\_\_ heaven is to steer": Shaw
  - 54 Airborne?
  - 55 Elastic quality
  - 59 Appropriate home of the minor league Aces
  - 60 Scraps
  - 61 The earliest quarters
  - 62 Professor's preservative
- DOWN**
- 1 Soft touches
  - 2 You might get one at City Hall
  - 3 Unspontaneous
  - 4 John Muir's "magic wand in Nature's hand"
  - 5 NCAA Division I grp.
  - 6 Frequent fryer
  - 7 Entertainer of the Year bestowal
  - 8 "So . . ."
  - 9 Tone that's sharp
  - 10 Hid one's silver, say
  - 11 Cycling, swimming, etc.
  - 12 Yardsticks
  - 13 Deceptive dress
  - 14 Where to see *Curious George*
  - 21 Sardinia Ferries destination
  - 23 Reproving gesture
  - 24 Not excluded
  - 25 Grafted plant with red and white edibles
  - 27 Name related to Aidan
  - 29 Literally, "want of blood"
  - 30 Getting on
  - 32 [sometimes preferring]
  - 34 "Unbelievable!"
  - 35 Turned the page?
  - 36 Point of divergence
  - 38 Father of fairy tales
  - 40 Vessel taking on water
  - 41 Hound or badger
  - 43 Felid hybrid
  - 45 *Sei times cinque*
  - 47 Now stocked
  - 48 Adds surface area to one's strawberries
  - 50 Promoted
  - 51 A moving experience
  - 53 Where the UN head rang a bell in 2013
  - 54 Its grade depends on concentration
  - 56 View preamble
  - 57 Exciting or excellent, these days
  - 58 "Similar" finisher

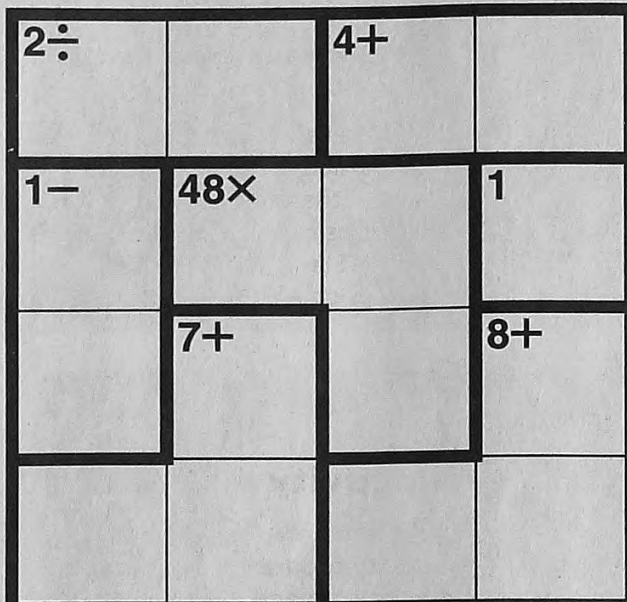
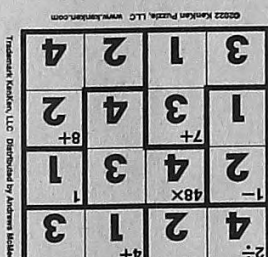


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- Each row and column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
- Freebies: fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

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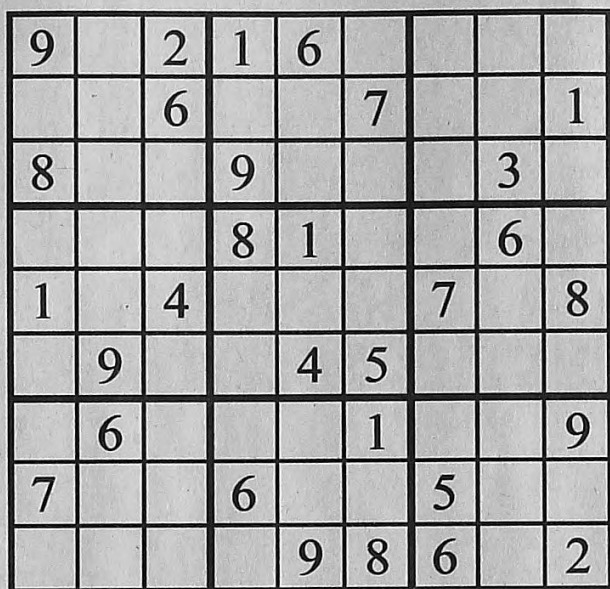
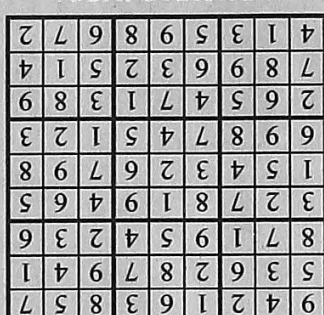


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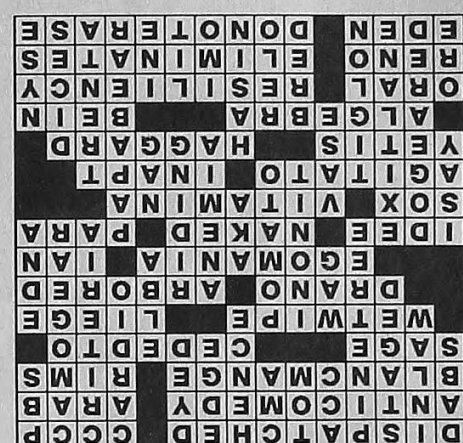
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Insert numbers 1-9 in each box with every row, column and 3x3 box containing the digits just once. Difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest) **RATING: SILVER**

**TODAY'S ANSWER**



**TODAY'S ANSWER**



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