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Westland Mayor Bill Wild to resign at year's end

Shelby Tankersley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Bill Wild, Westland's longest serving mayor, plans to resign at the end of the year.

"Being the mayor has probably been

the proudest thing in my life other than having my children and being married," Wild said. "There's no really good time to leave, but I feel comfortable that we have good leadership coming up and the city is in a good spot. I'm proud of the work I've done here."

Wild is stepping back from his city

role to become the president and CEO of the Midwest Independent Retailers Association. MIRA is based in West Bloomfield and serves as "the voice of the food, beverage and petroleum industry," according to its website.

"It's a very well respected, prestigious organization," Wild said. "I was

very honored that they would even consider me to run it for them."

The mayor said his new role will also allow him to spend more time with his family and enable all of them to lead a more "normal" lifestyle. Wild said he

See MAYOR, Page 5A

Livonia, Canton have some of county's most dangerous intersections

Shelby Tankersley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Drivers in Livonia should use extra caution when passing through two of the city's busiest intersections.

Four of the five most dangerous intersections in Wayne County are in the Hometown Life area, according to Michigan Auto Law's recently released annual list.

Middlebelt Road at Schoolcraft Road as well as Six Mile Road and Interstate 696 in Livonia are the third and fifth most dangerous intersections in Wayne County in 2021. Middlebelt at Schoolcraft was home to 78 crashes, and Six Mile at I-696 saw 73.

Also on the list is Schoolcraft Road at Telegraph Road in Redford — which took its usual place at number one with 104 crashes — and Ford Road at Lilley Road in Canton — which is in fourth place with 75 crashes.

Canton Police Chief Chad Baugh said the Ford and Lilley intersection is the cause of multiple service calls every week. Usually, crashes don't happen at the intersection but at the entrances of many businesses in the area. When possible, Canton assigns extra officers to the area.

"There's so much retail in that area, from Lilley all the way to I-275," Baugh said. "It a stretch of roadway where people are turning north, and other people, who are trying to be nice, allow them to turn, but then there are drivers going through who don't see the turn

See INTERSECTIONS, Page 5A



Elle Dare looks over the board games inside Genuine Toy Company in downtown Plymouth. Board games are one of the bigger items the shops sells. DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

IT'S ALMOST TOY TIME!

Stores preparing for their busiest season of the year

David Veselenak

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

It can be a heavy load for Santa Claus to deliver all the presents around the world on Christmas Eve. Luckily, some local elves can help.

This time each year, toy stores all over the area ramp up for the biggest season of the year, preparing for the parents and grandparents lining up to

find the hottest new toy of the season to put under the tree.

"Once they get through Halloween, people are like 'Oh my gosh, the holidays are coming.' It kind of hits and triggers that," said Elle Dare, who owns Genuine Toy Company in downtown Plymouth with her husband, Charles. "When you think about it, we have seven weeks. And then it's over."

The last two months of the year bring the most activity to the locally-owned

shops, which have become more rare. In recent years, many toy shops have closed, including Adventures in Toys in downtown Birmingham last year and the Doll Hospital and Toy Soldier Shop in Berkley in 2018.

It's a time to do business for the shops that remain open, but also bring excitement. Shops begin to fill with all the products they've ordered earlier in

See TOY STORES, Page 4A

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Farmington Hills sexual abuse case rapidly widening

Police: 33 tips received about 'hockey doc'

Bill Laitner
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Farmington Hills police said they've received 33 tips from people who said they had additional knowledge about a doctor who already faces numerous charges of criminal sexual conduct resulting from his treatments of youth hockey players.

Dr. Zvi Levran was initially alleged to have sexually assaulted youths in treatments he conducted at his home in Farmington Hills, but the rapidly widening case now involves investigations in Grand Rapids and East Lansing, and it could spread to other states, Farmington Hills Police Chief Jeff King said.

The department has established a 24-hour tip line. "We strongly encourage anyone who has information relevant to these incidents to call our command desk at 248-871-2610," King said at a news conference held Wednesday at Farmington Hills police headquarters.

The expanding tale of Levran's al-

leged crimes adds to Michigan's shocking toll of authority figures from youth sports being charged with criminal sexual conduct. The fact that Levran is a doctor, and treating patients at an impressive home office on an upscale street in Farmington Hills, had put him in a position of authority over his patients, similar to the status long abused by the imprisoned former therapist of girl gymnasts, Dr. Larry Nassar, legal experts have said.

Tips have come from individuals in Farmington Hills, Novi, Livonia, West Bloomfield and Redford Township, and also from people in California, Georgia, North Carolina, Minnesota, Arizona and Canada, all reporting "suspicious and possibly criminal activity," King said.

Levran, 66, has been associated with youth hockey teams in Michigan and Minnesota for at least two decades, and he was licensed to practice in those states as well as Ohio, Georgia and Iowa, King said. In addition to at least 10 counts of criminal sexual conduct Levran faces — ranging from sexual touching of minors to oral or anal sexual pene-

tration — new information points to the likelihood that more charges may be filed against the man police refer to as "the hockey doctor," according to King's presentation.

After police investigated recent tips, "several new allegations of sexual abuse stemming from medical examinations at his home office in Farmington Hills, as well as medical offices where he practiced, were brought forward," King said, adding that five investigations had been "referred to outside jurisdictions for follow-up on potential criminal conduct."

Levran's attorney Joe Lavigne pleaded not guilty on his client's behalf at each of two arraignments. Levran is married and has three adult children, Lavigne said. Levran, who is a urologist with sports-medicine credentials, has been in custody since turning himself in to police on Nov. 10; he was free on \$100,000 bond posted after initial charges were filed against him in late October, but he has been unable to post the new bond of \$1 million cash or surety, Lavigne said. Levran has been held at the Oakland County Jail since Nov. 11, according to jail records. Lavigne said he was unable to comment on the case because he has not yet been able to ob-

tain documents from prosecutors.

"We're looking forward to defending the charges," he said.

Early on, Farmington Hills police revealed that the first complainant was a 19-year-old man. He notified Farmington Hills police after an exam at Levran's house on Oct. 18, when "it was alleged that during this medical examination, Dr. Levran sexually assaulted his patient," police said in a news release several days later.

Since then, police have declined to reveal the gender of those who say they've been victimized by the doctor's treatments, nor will they state the ages of those complaining. But because the cases involve youth hockey players, additional cases may involve young men. Men and boys are more reluctant than women and girls to report a sexual assault or sexually abusive health care, said Oakland County Prosecutor Karen McDonald, who joined King at the news conference.

"I want to commend the survivors who came forward for their courage. I also want to encourage any additional survivors to come forward. ... You will be treated respectfully," McDonald said.



A rendering of the Plymouth Walk development submitted with plans from the developer. COURTESY OF PLYMOUTH TOWNSHIP

New homes, apartments set for construction in Plymouth Twp.

Laura Colvin
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Construction on a few notable housing developments in Plymouth Township is expected to begin during the spring and summer of 2023. A number of smaller developments, with bigger homes, are also taking shape.

The end result means that, even when the housing market picks up again, developers won't find much open space in the township.

"I don't anticipate any other major housing projects in the future," said Plymouth Township Supervisor Kurt Heise. "We're pretty much built up now,

as far as residential goes. We no longer have the vast tracts of land needed for large scale subdivisions."

"What we're seeing are a lot of smaller developments," he added. "Anywhere from seven to 30 homes that are targeted to smaller parcels in the township."

Here's a look at what's currently underway.

Courthouse Grille

The storied restaurant at 41661 Plymouth Road closed in 2018 after serving patrons for more than 80 years. Since, it's become an abandoned-looking eyesore. Kevin Kovachevich of District Capital Detroit has plans to change that with a modern four-story, 120-unit apartment building, with floorplans ranging from 578-1,040 square feet. Plans have been approved by the Township Board of Trustees, and Kovachevich is currently working to secure grants from the State of Michigan to address environmental concerns on the property. Work could begin this spring.

Plymouth Walk

Plymouth Walk is a 369-unit apartment and townhouse project developed by Nicolas Peranio of Pomeroy Living and in conjunction with Toll Brothers. The project is located at 41700 Ann Arbor Road on the site of the former Elks Lodge. Like the Courthouse Grille site, the property requires environmental remediation. Completion of the project is expected to take several years, but site work is expected to begin soon.

To offset the impact on the neighborhood to the north, the developer has agreed to give the township \$1.6 million to pave the neighborhood, which includes about 45 homes.

"It's one of the last neighborhoods in the township that still has dirt roads, no curb and gutter," Heise said. "They flood a lot; the roads are in terrible condition."



A rendering of the 120-unit complex proposed for the property that currently hosts the long-closed Courthouse Grille in Plymouth Township.

COURTESY OF DISTRICT CAPITAL DETROIT

Margate

Developed by Tim Loughrin of Robertson Brothers Homes, Margate is in the construction phase. Located west of Canton Center Road near Isbister Elementary School, the project will feature 30 single-family detached homes ranging from 1,850-3,000 square feet.

Pursell Place

Pursell Place, by Leo Soave of Leo Soave Developments, LLC, has a planned location at 46200 North Territorial near M-14. Township officials say the multi-acre project will consist of nine luxury homes. Construction has not yet begun.

Verona Park

Verona Park, developed by Centenni-

al Homes Group, is located at 12731 Beck Road. Plans originally included 14 two-story single-family homes. A Centennial Home Group spokesman said plans called for a second home to begin the construction phase soon. "The market is soft," he said. "We're going to put up one house, and then we'll wait. The market seems like it's going to get worse, so I really don't want to take a chance."

The Woods

The Woods, developed by Walter Menard of Menard Premiere Builders, is located north of Ann Arbor Road across from Pioneer Middle School. The project, featuring nine single-family detached homes of 2,200 square feet, is nearing completion with most of the homes already occupied.

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Observer & Eccentric Newspapers
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Published Sunday and Thursday by
Observer & Eccentric Media

Newsroom Contacts:

Phil Allmen, Content Strategist
Mobile: 248-396-3870

Email: pallmen@hometownlife.com

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Subscription Rates:

Newsstand price: \$1.50
\$104 per 12 months home delivery

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Michigan sets records in midterm voting

Turnout, however, is a murkier measurement

Kristi Tanner
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

It was a record midterm election in Michigan. More Michiganders are registered to vote than ever before and more voted — more than half of the state's voting-age population.

But what about voter turnout? Historically, the gap between registered voter turnout and voting-age population turnout has been wide.

That's because not everyone who is eligible to vote is registered to vote. This leads to an *overestimate* of voter turnout.

The total voting-age population is not a perfect way to gauge voter turnout either. Only U.S. citizens are eligible to vote and people who are serving a jail or prison sentence cannot vote in Michigan.

Voter turnout is *underestimated* with this measure.

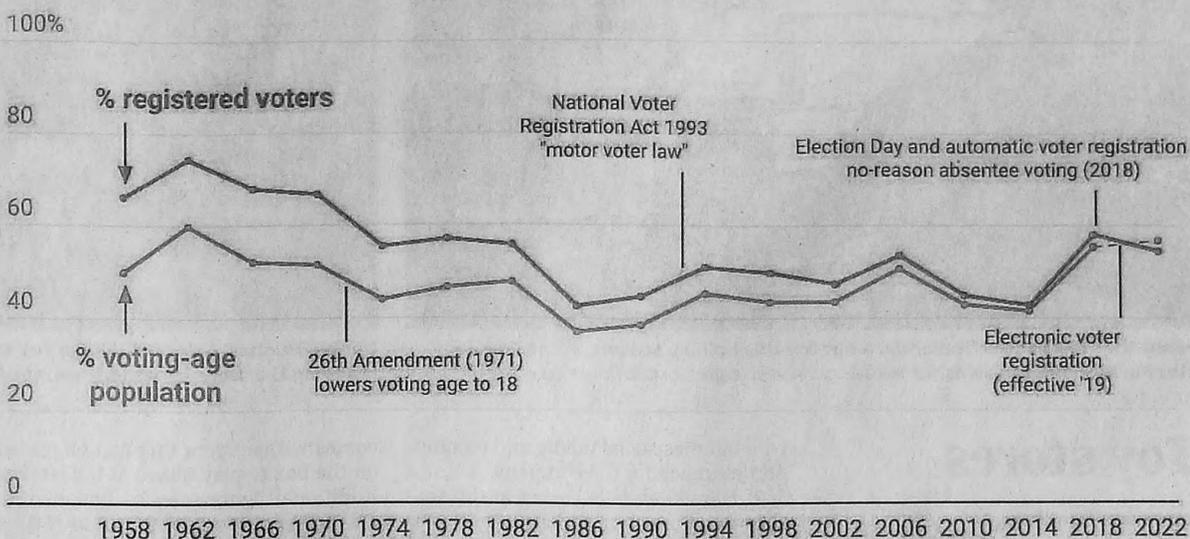
Over time, however, the gap between registered voter turnout and the voting-age population in Michigan has declined. There was a 16-percentage-point gap in 1958 after the state first started tracking Election Day voter registration statistics.

In 2018, the last midterm for which official election statistics are available, the gap was just under 3 percentage points. That year marked the largest increase in voter turnout between two midterm elections.

Brady Baybeck, an associate professor of political science at Wayne State University, says he is not surprised by the diminishing gap. "If you make registration seamless and register every eligible person older than 18," he said, "then the number of registered voters will match the number of eligible voters."

In 2018, voters made sweeping changes to Michigan's election law. Thanks to Proposal 3, Promote the Vote automatically registers qualified citizens to vote when they obtain a driver's license or personal identification card from the Secretary of State's Office, un-

Michigan midterm voter turnout: 1958-2022



**NOTE For 2022, data are unofficial election results and Michigan's 2021 population estimate, the latest available, and are subject to change. Registered voter statistics for elections are unavailable prior to 1956. Before 1976 total votes are based on the greatest number of votes cast for any office.*

Chart: Kristi Tanner • Source: Michigan Department of State, Bureau of Elections and U.S. Census Bureau • Created with Datawrapper

less they decline.

The changes also included same-day voter registration and no-reason absentee voting. Separately, the Michigan Legislature passed a measure to authorize electronic voter registration, made effective in 2019.

"The modernizations passed in the last few years have successfully met voters where they're at so that they are able to access the vote," said Merissa Kovach, legislative director at American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan. "No matter what they have going on in their lives ... they're not going to lose their right to vote because their options are so limited."

Last week, voters approved Proposal 2, a constitutional amendment that establishes early voting and expands access to absentee voting.

So is voter turnout up or down this year? The answer, as we saw above, depends on how you measure it.

The latest available population figures from the U.S. Census Bureau estimate 7.9 million residents ages 18 and older in Michigan last year. If you compare the total votes last week to the most recent census estimate, voter turnout rose in 2022 to 56.8% — greater than in 2018 and just a few percentage points shy of the record set in 1962 (although this rate is likely to change when the U.S. Census Bureau releases 2022 voting-age population figures).

On the other hand, based on the number of registered voters in the state, voter turnout fell in 2022. Michigan voter turnout was 54.5%, according to unofficial results — lower than in 2018 (58%). Voter registration in Michigan increased at a faster pace than the number of total ballots cast between 2018 and 2022.

On Election Day, the number of registered voters swelled in the state to more than 8.2 million people, an increase of

roughly 750,000 from October 2018. That's three times the rate of the increase in votes.

But wait, we don't have 8.2 million people 18 and older living in Michigan.

Correct. Among those 8.2 million registered voters only 7.3 million are active, according to the Secretary of State's Office. And more than 500,000 inactive voter registrations are slated for removal by 2025.

Before cancellation, clerks are required to send a notice to the voter's Michigan address.

If there is no response or voting activity within two November elections held in even-numbered years the registration is canceled.

It's better to err on the side of caution, Baybeck said. "If you want to make voting easy and get people to vote, then you should keep them on the rolls."

"The next issue is how do you get people to actually show up to vote?"



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Jenna Klar talks about Toniebox, a hot toy this holiday season, at the Toyology store in Bloomfield Township. PHOTOS DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Debbie Hughes, owner of Village Toy Shoppe in downtown Milford, talks about readying the store for holiday shoppers. She's owned the shop for 28 years.

Toy stores

Continued from Page 1A

the year. Dare said she begins ordering for the holidays in September, with other shops ordering earlier than that.

Debbie Hughes, owner of the Village Toy Shoppe in downtown Milford, begins ordering in the summertime after she heads to trade shows in places like Atlanta. There, she looks to find what could be hot toys for the year.

"That's when I really starting looking," she said. "It's a big show. It's not just toys, it's everything."

While shops begin to see more shoppers in November, come the week after Thanksgiving, crowds really pick up. Once the turkey and stuffing are gone, shoppers pivot toward getting ready for the holidays.

That requires toy stores to shift gears as well, including adding hours, something Hughes plans on doing during the holiday season.

"With Thanksgiving from there on out, we'll be open seven days a week," she said. "We're pretty steady Thanksgiving on."

For one area toy store, the holiday season also depends on the Hebrew calendar. Toyology — with locations in Bloomfield Township, West Bloomfield Township and Royal Oak — will see big shopping leading up to Christmas, but also Hanukkah as well, said Jenna Klar,

who handles social media and community outreach for the company.

If Hanukkah falls earlier in the season, the stores will typically be busier then as well, she said.

"We've been busier when Hanukkah's earlier," she said. "We have our Hanukkah paper as well as our Christmas paper, and it's both being used."

Hanukkah begins Dec. 18 and ends Dec. 26.

When's the best time to beat the crowds? Probably during the week, if you can swing it. Saturdays fill up the shops across the area, with Dare saying the Saturday in mid-December is the busiest day of the season for the shop on Forest Avenue in downtown Plymouth.

"I think our busiest day is the Saturday two weeks before Christmas," she said. "Because that is when everybody is like 'Uh-oh, two weeks left. I have to move.'"

Is there a 'hot toy' this year?

Admittedly, most of the area shop owners say there isn't an "it" toy this holiday season everyone wants. Nothing rises to the level of Tickle Me Elmo or Hatchimals this year, shop owners said, but there are plenty of great options kids are flocking to for the holidays.

One piece Klar will gush about if you visit Toyology is Toniebox, an interactive, screenless electronic that allows younger kids to play and hear stories using special figurines. Each starter box

comes with a figure that can be placed on the box to play music or tell stories. Additional figures can be bought that are characters such as PJ Masks, Peppa Pig and more.

"It's a screen-free toy and what's so cool about it is it's kid friendly," Klar said. "It's soft, it's all kid-driven."

Genuine Toy Company is known for its massive wall of board games, ranging from classics such as Monopoly to new classics such as Ticket to Ride and other newer ones. Stuffed animals are also a hit from the store as well, Dare said.

The classic toys that were popular decades ago are also popping up in shopping carts as well.

"People recognize them from their childhood, and get them for their kids," Dare said. "So it becomes part of their childhood too. It kind of becomes a timeless thing."

Shop local keeps stores around

While it's easy to simply grab something from the shelf at Target or online through Amazon, local shops hope customers keep them in mind.

With the challenges facing retail, more shops hope the little things they offer will keep customers coming in the door.

That includes personalized help, a wide selection and gift wrapping, often complimentary.

"We want to wrap for free, because

that's the Toyology difference of why we want you to come here instead of Target to get your birthday or holiday presents," Klar said. "If they don't shop local and support us, especially this holiday season, we're not going to be able to be in these communities."

That's the case in Plymouth as well at Genuine Toy Company.

"It's a lot of fun, it's very fast-paced," she said. "Especially when they're shopping local, they're in a good mood, they're shopping in their city."

Given downtown Milford's cozy feel, Hughes said she's found people are more likely to come in now than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

She said shoppers will discover her shop, including during events such as Milford Memories in the fall, and make the trip back to purchase something from her.

Being in business 28 years, Hughes has weathered plenty of challenges. Despite all that, she finds customers still want to bring their Christmas shopping to her space.

"I have found people very supportive, especially since COVID. I think they just really appreciated that the stores were back open," Hughes said. "I feel like they try to support downtown and it's local."

We have a nice town, and we want to keep it that way."

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

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AMC in Fairlane town center closes doors

Emma Stein
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

The AMC Fairlane 21, located in the Fairlane Town Center in Dearborn, has permanently closed.

Sunday was the theater's last day of operation, said AMC spokesperson Ryan Noonan in an email to the Free Press.

"AMC regularly evaluates its locations and potential opportunities outside of its circuit, and makes decisions to close or acquire locations on a theatre-by-theatre basis based on what will best strengthen the Company going forward," Noonan said.

He noted that all "impacted associates" were offered jobs at other locations.

Dan Fayad, Fairlane's general manager, said in an email to the Free Press that the theater had not been renovated since 1999, and some guests said they would



Sunday was the last day of operation for the AMC Fairlane 21 in Fairlane Town Center in Dearborn.

MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS

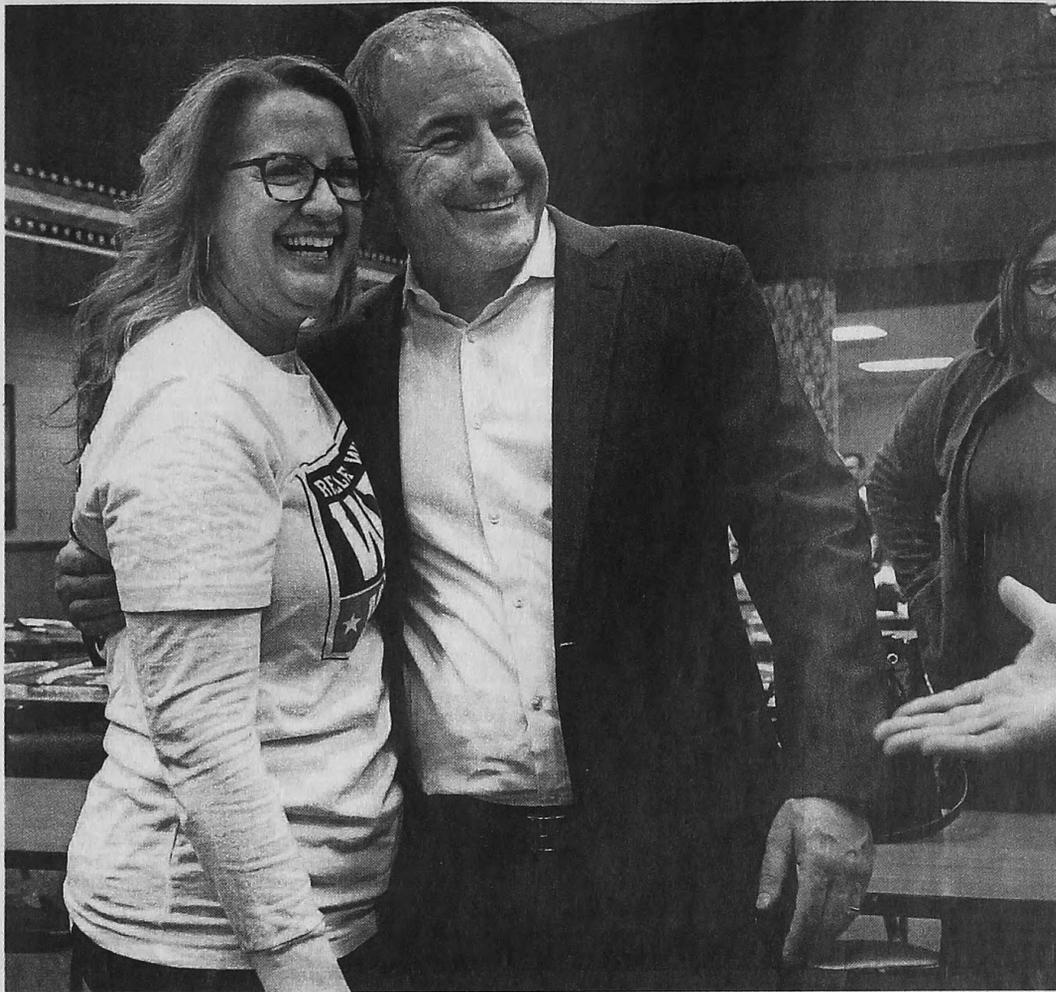
have preferred a more modern look. He noted AMC Fairlane 21 had 21 screens, whereas others in similar markets have 10-14.

"The center's skilled leasing team is already working on a replacement for the theater, and is considering a number of options, including other movie theaters that may provide a more modern design that will better align with the expectations and experience we would like our customers to have when visiting Fairlane Town Center," Fayad said.

The mall itself was sold to Centennial, a Dallas-based real estate firm, in May. The new owners said they were considering adding housing to the mall property. The town center also hosted the popular Ramadan Suhoor Festival in 2022.

Fayad said he's sad to see AMC close, but he's excited for what's next.

"We have learned that the loss of any tenant, no matter how well-loved, provides us with the opportunity to assess new offerings that may better match the changing wants and needs of our shoppers," Fayad said.



Westland Mayor Bill Wild and his wife Sherri, left, greet a well-wisher at the Wayne Ford Civic League in 2021. Bill Wild announced he will resign from his position at the end of this year. HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

Mayor

Continued from Page 1A

and his family plan to stay in Westland.

"My son plays college hockey and my girls are both very active," he said. "They need their dad and my wife needs her husband. I think, right now, this is a good opportunity for our family."

A Westland native and graduate of John Glenn High School, Wild has been mayor since 2007 and was soundly reelected for a fourth term last year. Before becoming mayor, Wild served as a city councilman. He said he's most proud of Westland's city hall building, which opened in 2014 after crews renovated an old Circuit City to fit municipal needs.

Councilman Jim Godbout, who's served in city government alongside Wild for about 20 years, said the mayor's departure is a loss for Westland.

"From the city's perspective, it's disappointing to see him leave," Godbout said. "But, from a personal perspective, it's a great opportunity for him and is

something that doesn't come along every day."

Godbout said whoever the city's next mayor is can learn a thing or two from Wild's even-keeled nature. Godbout and Council President Jim Hart said they're not worried about the city's future because they believe in the staff Wild has assembled over the years.

"He's been doing this an awful long time, and I'm of the opinion that our city runs very well," Hart said.

Some of the major projects Wild has undertaken in recent years include working to turn the old Marshall Upper Elementary School into a community building, bringing curbside recycling back to Westland and hiring the city's first chief diversity officer.

Wild is expected to officially step down Jan. 16. Council would, in that case, appoint a mayor to serve the remainder of 2023 at its Jan. 17 meeting. In late 2023, Westland voters will elect someone to finish the remaining two years of Wild's term.

Hart said he's considering running for mayor, but hasn't made a decision yet.

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

Intersections

Continued from Page 1A

and that often is the reason for the crash."

Michigan Auto Law compiles its annual lists using accident reports from Michigan State Police. According to the firm, 2021's statistics show a return to pre-pandemic numbers.

"Knowing what intersections have the most car accidents is important because even though a crash does not always result in a person being injured, it does increase substantially the likelihood of an injury occurring," said Steven Gursten, president of Michigan Auto Law.

Hometown Life reporter Laura Colvin contributed to this story.

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

Most dangerous intersections

- 1 Schoolcraft Road at Telegraph Road, Redford Township: Total Crashes 104, Injuries 21
- 2 Dix Avenue at M-39, Lincoln Park: Total Crashes 83, Injuries 17
- 3 Middlebelt Road at Schoolcraft Road, Livonia: Total Crashes 78, Injuries 16
- 4 Ford Road at Lilley Road, Canton Township: Total Crashes 75, Injuries 32
- 5 Six Mile Road at I-96 and I-275, Livonia: Total Crashes 73, Injuries 19
- 6 Ford Road at Telegraph Road, Dearborn: Total Crashes 69, Injuries 19
- 7 Conner Street at Gratiot Avenue, Detroit: Total Crashes 64, Injuries 24
- 8 Ford Road at N. Beech Daly Road, Dearborn Heights: Total Crashes 61, Injuries 19
- 9 Livernois Avenue at W. Davison Street, Detroit: Total Crashes 59, Injuries 37
- 10 Telegraph Road at Van Born Road, Dearborn Heights: Total Crashes 57, Injuries 10

Michigan Auto Law

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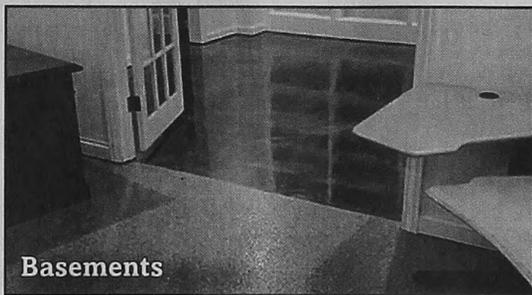
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Michigan expected to have best year for real Christmas trees in a decade

Mike Ellis

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

When it's 90 degrees outside and his hands getting sticky shearing Christmas trees and the bees are threatening to run him off, Ed Carpenter thinks of where the trees will end up once the snow starts falling.

"I wonder, 'What family is this tree gonna be a part of?'" said Carpenter, from Peacock Road Family Farm near Laingsburg.

It should be a great year to buy a live Christmas tree in Michigan, Carpenter and other industry experts said.

The weather was just right, so expect maybe a little bit more thickness than normal, and the number of trees is expected to have returned to the levels last seen a decade ago, said Amy Start, executive director of the Michigan Christmas Tree Association.

That means there should be enough supply, said Bert Cregg, a Michigan State University horticulture professor who has studied or worked in the Christmas tree industry for 46 years.

"If you want a real tree, you're gonna find one," he said.

It may not, however, be at the first spot you choose, Carpenter said.

They grow their own trees but not enough for what the farm sells so they also buy from suppliers. Several years ago, Carpenter could call a supplier and get 100 new trees in a pinch. Now, it'd be too late and he'd have to close up early because the wholesale trees are all spoken for by the time spring comes.

While a particular lot or farm may sell out, there are a whole lot of Michigan trees, Carpenter said.

But Christmas trees, like so much else, will likely cost more this year.

Trees get shipped on semi trucks that use diesel, which was selling for about \$5.50 a gallon in Michigan this week, up nearly \$2 a gallon from a year ago, according to AAA.

And producers and retailers are dealing with labor shortages that are plaguing many Michigan businesses.

A good price estimate is around \$10 to \$12 a foot, with higher prices in urban areas and lower prices in rural areas. There will be premiums for all the sleigh bells and whistles at full-service spots that include experiences, Start said.

While people go home with a tree to display, the real product being sold is most often tradition and nostalgia, she said.

A study by the Real Christmas Tree Board, based in Howell, found almost half of real Christmas tree buyers opted for a real tree for the smell. "Christmas tree" is the most holiday of scents, ahead of cookies, cinnamon and hot cocoa, according to the same study.

Michigan's Christmas tree economy is big business. A Michigan State University analysis in 2006 found it was a \$100 million industry. That number is likely much higher due to inflation and an industry that has increasingly shipped trees across the nation.

Only two states - Oregon and North Carolina - grow more trees and their crops don't have as many varieties.

There are a few new trends in the old business, like potted or living trees, which people can rent and return or buy and later plant. There are more exotic types in Michigan than anywhere else, including Start's favorite, concolor fir.

But overwhelmingly the Christmas tree business is simply nostalgia and classics such as a Douglas Fir or Frasier Fir, she said.

The trees come with sap, a piney scent and rings that tell its history.

Peek at those rings and you'll see a typical tree has been in the ground about eight to 10 years, growing about 10 inches a year, said Kate Dodde, a project manager at Missaukee County's Dutchman Tree Farm, one of the state's largest.

A majority of people people don't buy real trees. About two-thirds of customers prefer an artificial tree for their main tree, according to a 2021 survey by Rocket Homes.

It's why the experience and the nostalgia are so important to the industry, Dodde said.

The trees planted today will be bought a decade from now when those 10-year-old, 11-year-old, 12-year-old kids who get wowed this year come back to buy when they get their first tree, she said.

That means tree farmers had to predict, a decade out, how many trees people would be buying this year. That tree is in effect a paper record of Michigan's economy.



Christian Voorhies, general manager of Peacock Road Family Farm in Laingsburg, checks out an area where Christmas trees grow at the business Nov. 16. PHOTOS BY NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL



The tip of a Christmas tree growing in a field at Peacock Road Family Farm.

So if you're wondering about getting a real tree this year, ask these questions. Will the trees sell out early? Can I wait? Will they go up dramatically in price?

And look back 10 years ago to 2012 for the answers.

The economy in Michigan at the time was well on its way toward recovering from the 2008 recession. So there should be more trees now than in the last few years, Start said. There was a bad drought about a decade ago that also cramped supplies, Carpenter said.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, conducts a survey of Christmas tree farms every five years. It is currently underway. The latest surveys showed a drop, from 1.7 million trees in 2012 in Michigan to 1.5 million in 2017.

That's expected to be reversed when the 2022 survey is released, Start said. She is expecting this season to be between 1.7 million and 2 million trees.

Up to 30 million trees are sold nationally and at least 1.5 million of those are from Michigan.

Missaukee County, between Cadillac and Grayling, is clearly the leader in Christmas trees in the state, selling more than half a million trees a year, more than a third of the state's sales.

Dutchman Tree Farms began selling trees 50 years ago.

Those trees were planted years before the first sale, said Dodde. The farm is now building a new greenhouse to grow seedlings, that's one of the potential chokepoints for the industry in Michigan, Cregg said.

But like the rest of the business, it'll take a few years to pay off, quicker than full trees but still two or three years.

The Dutchman farm is largely wholesale but they do retail sales in the same classic format that's across the state.

There's a red barn, white picket fences, Santa Claus by the fire and plenty of flannel.

It's about tradition and nostalgia and it's the kind of tradition that Start, Dodde and the other tree growers hope will keep people coming out to cut the trees this year. And into the next decade.



A truck hauling Christmas trees heads north on US-127 on Nov. 10. MATTHEW DAE SMITH/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Obituaries

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Velma Marie (Evans) Smith

In loving memory of Velma Marie (Evans) Smith.

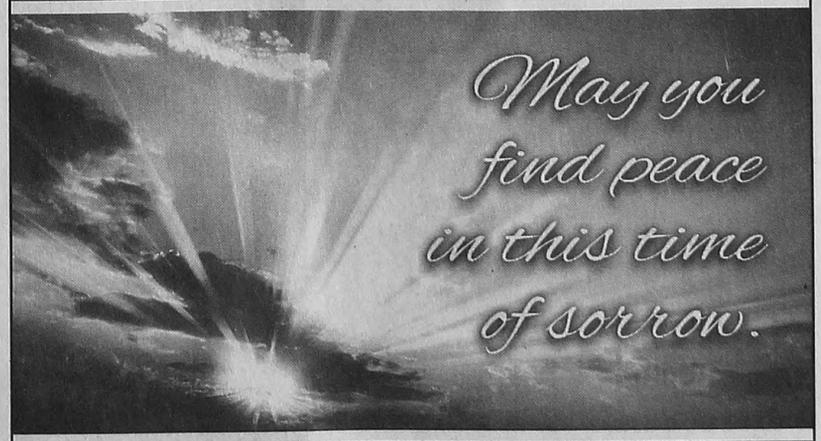
Velma was born April 22, 1926 in Plymouth to George and Mabel (Avery) Evans, and passed away peacefully on October 31, 2022 at the age of 96, after a long, full life. She was an avid golfer, card player and traveler. Velma would never turn down an invitation, and knew how to have a good time wherever she was. She had many treasured friends and never met a stranger.

Velma was employed by Anchor Coupling and Gold Seal Photo Company and was a school bus driver for Plymouth schools. She was a member of New Hudson United Methodist Church.

Velma was preceded in death by her husband of 46 years, Robert R. Smith, who passed away August 2, 1993, her parents and her brother Harold Evans. Velma is survived by her two children, Raina Allegra, partner John, and Ken Smith, wife Moira. She was a beloved grandmother and great grandmother to Chad and Christine Allegra (Caedon, Cylus, Cruz and Cash), Brett and Hannah Allegra (Jordan and Graham), Kyle and Ashley Smith (Andi and Karter) and Erica and Russell Bellomy (Payton). She had many loved nieces and nephews.

Phillips Funeral Home in South Lyon, Michigan is handling the arrangements. A memorial service is to be held on April 22, 2023. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the New Hudson United Methodist Church

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SPORTS

HOMETOWN LIFE'S ALL-AREA FOOTBALL TEAM



Livonia Franklin's Cordell Mabins Jr. rushes against Westland John Glenn during a game in September. PHOTOS BY BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Franklin RB Mabins Jr. named Player of the Year

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Sports reporter Brandon Folsom is here to name his 2022 Hometown Life All-Area football team.

Hometown Life's coverage area spans over 10 cities on the west side of metro Detroit and includes 28 different football teams, ranging from Division 1 schools down to D-6.

Cordell Mabins Jr., Livonia Franklin

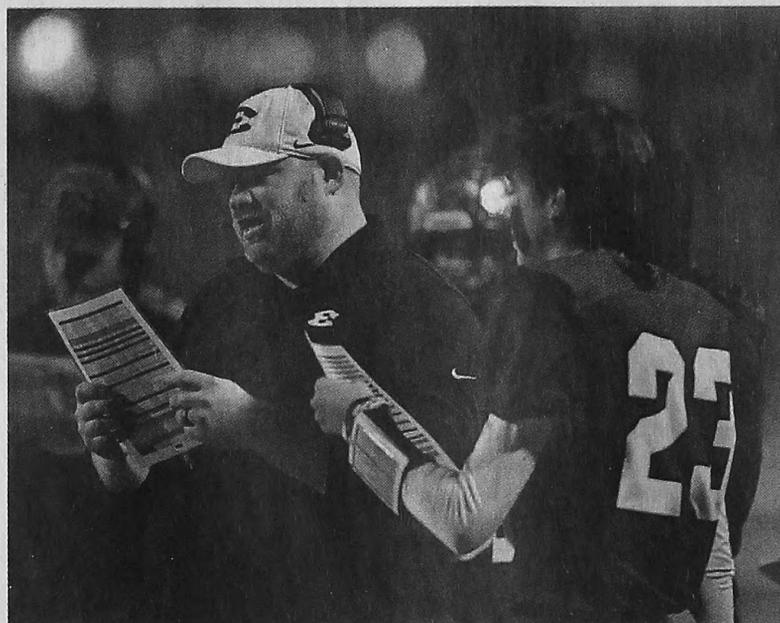
PLAYER OF THE YEAR

The first time I interviewed Livonia Franklin coach Chris Kelbert was in late September 2021. The Patriots had opened the season 1-3, and Kelbert told me, "We're just not a good football team right now." As you know, they turned around their season and pulled off upset after upset en route to playing in the Division 2 state semifinal.

They kept that momentum going into 2022. They won eight of their nine regular-season games and even took home another district championship trophy. I interviewed Kelbert again following their Week 5 victory at Westland John Glenn, and I asked him: How did the Patriots seemingly turn things around overnight and keep it going throughout the following fall?

Kelbert pointed at his running back, Cordell Mabins Jr.

"Because of him and his class," the 24th-year coach said.



South Lyon East coach Jacob Topp draws up a play with Grayson Roslinski. Topp has been named Hometown Life's 2022 Coach of the Year.

Mabins and his fellow seniors have just refused to lose. And when they do take a loss, they don't take it lightly. They're in the weight room afterward. They're studying the film. They're getting better day after day. It's a stubborn way to go about things, but it works.

And that translated onto the field. Mabins, a three-time All-Kensington Lakes Activities Association selection, rushed for 1,818 yards and 28 TDs this

past fall. That made him the all-time leading rusher in school history.

You want to talk about being stubborn after a loss. Mabins, who is 5-foot-10 and 200 pounds, just runs stubbornly. He's a tank in a sprinter's body. He's the total package. He doesn't get tackled. And he's my Player of the Year.

See ALL-AREA, Page 2B

Northville volleyball earns Cereal City sweep vs. Berkley in quarters

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Northville volleyball coach Sarah Lindstrom huddled her players before they took the floor and defeated Berkley 3-0 during the Division 1 state quarterfinal Nov. 15 at Royal Oak Middle School.

"Raise your hand if you have been to Battle Creek as a player?" the second-year coach asked them.

Only one hand went up.

It was assistant Keegan Flack, who was a starting outside hitter as a sophomore when Lindstrom coached Dearborn Divine Child to the Class B state semifinal in 2012.

The thing is: Lindstrom already knew the answer to that question.

A year ago, in Lindstrom's first season on the Mustangs' bench, she led them to district and regional championships. They advanced to the quarterfinal but lost 3-1 to eventual state runner-up Ann Arbor Skyline, which was led by Nebraska commit Harper Murray, who was actually named Michigan's Miss Volleyball just last week.

That's right.

Northville was right there. Right on the doorstep of qualifying for the final four at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek. And they let the opportunity slip.

And Lindstrom hasn't stopped reminding her players about missing out on a trip to the Cereal City.

"To get so close and to have that heartbreak was really difficult," she said. "That's something that is sometimes hard to rebuild on top of, but it's the first thing we talked about on the very first day of our first practice this year.

"We sat in the locker room, and I said, 'Some of you were so close you could taste it. We have to put everything we have into this starting today.' And we've talked about Battle Creek every single day since then. Some people think that's superstitious or something you're going to jinx. I don't think it's a jinx type of thing. It's a manifestation thing, right? Let's talk about what we want to do. Every single one of them has jumped on board with that, and I think that's the reason we're here tonight and we're going to go and, hopefully, do big things in Battle Creek."

What a way with words Lindstrom has.

"Some of you were so close you could taste it."

Since Day 1, Lindstrom has hung a sign in Northville's locker room with a picture of cereal box mascot Tony the Tiger playing volleyball. And on it is the acronym, "BCOB." Tony is obviously a nod to Battle Creek being the cereal mecca of the world. And BCOB means, "Battle Creek or Bust."

Before each player leaves the locker room, they must jump up and slap the sign. And when the Mustangs play road games, they bring the sign with them.

"It's just a reminder that we have a goal at the end of the season," Lindstrom added. "If you think about your

See VOLLEYBALL, Page 3B

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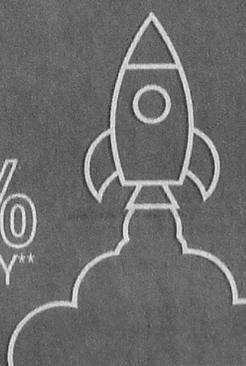
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All-Area

Continued from Page 1B

Tommy Donovan, South Lyon

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

South Lyon coach Jeff Henson called this Illinois State running back commit “One of the best we have ever had.” I’ve been doing this since 2010, and he’s one of the best I’ve ever seen as well.

Tommy Donovan’s easily comparable to NFL star Christian McCaffrey with how he plays the game.

The 5-foot-11, 185-pound scatback rushed 143 times for 1,226 yards and 18 TDs. But he also caught 31 passes for 460 yards and six TDs, returned 13 kick-offs for 423 yards and two scores and had a handful of highlight-reel plays on defense.

I once joked that Donovan does everything for South Lyon but drive the team bus. And he would, too, if you asked him. But I doubt McCaffrey would be willing to do that for his team.

Niko Krall, Novi

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Statistically, this senior is the greatest linebacker in school history.

Niko Krall’s 124 tackles this past fall ensured he’d leave the Wildcats with seemingly every defensive school record that matters. Most tackles for a career. Most tackles in a single season. You name it, and he did it.

Which is saying something because he’s undersized at 5-foot-9 and 215 pounds. He’s not your typical middle linebacker. But he had no trouble keeping up with the likes of Milford’s Wyatt Lesnew and Detroit Catholic Central’s Brayden Couser, statistically, all season long.

Nico Campo, South Lyon East

TATE MYRE COURAGE AWARD

It’s unlikely any football player in Michigan will ever be as courageous and selfless as Tate Myre. It’s just not going to happen.

But the spirit of his leadership can be found in many players all over the state. And you can definitely find it inside the heart of South Lyon East quarterback Nico Campo.

The Cougars just wrapped up the greatest season in program history. And who knows just how good they could’ve been had Campo not gotten hurt twice?

The senior had his team undefeated heading into the Walled Lake Western game. And he even had the juggernaut Warriors on the ropes before he left the game with an injury.

So he spent the following weeks acting as a player-coach, virtually tied to the hip of coach Jacob Topp. He was always leading the best he could in street clothes and a sling. And he acted as a bigger brother to backup QB Dominic Giovannini.

Campo returned to the field at the end of the season. But he suffered another injury against South Lyon, this time it was definitely a season-ending one.

He didn’t waiver. He was there cheering on his brothers the next week.

Want to know how much he meant to his teammates? Receiver Jordan Newbill wore Campo’s jersey during the D-2 district opener against South Lyon. And Campo roamed the sideline with Newbill’s uniform on as well.

I was covering South Lyon’s game at Detroit Country Day in Week 4 when the news spread that Campo might be lost for the season. “Oh no, that’s not fair. I love that kid,” one Lion said halfway through the second half of their game, which was far from over.

South Lyon hates East. But the Lions loved Campo. Let that sink in.

How Campo handled losing his senior year was something special to watch from afar.

Jacob Topp, South Lyon East

COACH OF THE YEAR

When Jacob Topp took over South Lyon East before the 2021 season, he was handed an almost impossible situation. Not only was he asked to turn around a team that historically was mediocre at best, but he was forced to do so in the middle of a pandemic.

And the Cougars took their lumps. They won just three games that season.

Yet that didn’t stop Topp from building his program.

And this past fall was a milestone year because of that perseverance.

This year’s squad set single-season records for most wins (7) and points forced (284). What’s more, their Week 9 upset over South Lyon went down as only the second time the Cougars had ever beaten their crosstown rivals since East started playing the sport in 2008.

I never heard an opposing coach say a bad thing about Topp. All of them said

they respected the way he went about rebuilding the team. And they loved seeing East competitive because it made their teams better in the process.

And the best part? This is just the beginning for Topp and the Cougars.

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

Hometown Life’s 2022 All-Area Football Team

First Team

OFFENSE

- QB - Cory Chavis, senior, Redford Union
- QB - Ryan Allen, junior, Milford
- RB - Cordell Mabins Jr., senior, Livonia Franklin
- RB - Tommy Donovan, senior, South Lyon
- WR - Jayden Allen, senior, Livonia Churchill
- WR - Jordan Newbill, senior, South Lyon East
- WR - Kyren Ware, senior, Redford Union
- TE - Jack Wainer, senior, Birmingham Groves
- TE - Connor LeCourt, senior, Westland John Glenn
- TE - Drew Kelbert, junior, Livonia Franklin
- ATH - Cam Pettaway, junior, Farmington
- ATH - ArJon Thompson, junior, Livonia Stevenson
- ATH - Tyler Garrett, senior, Livonia Franklin
- ATH - Owen McGraw, senior, Garden City
- OL - Owen Hawley, senior, Livonia Franklin
- OL - Avery Gach, sophomore, Birmingham Groves
- OL - Charles Mackley, senior, Brother Rice
- OL - Gavin Miller, senior, Farmington
- OL - Justin Lynch, senior, Livonia Churchill
- OL - Jamire Hall, senior, Redford Union

DEFENSE

- DL - Jovon Massey, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- DL - Charlie Davidek, senior, Livonia Stevenson
- DL - Eryx Daugherty, senior, Brother Rice
- DE - Caden Calhoun, senior, White Lake Lakeland
- DE - Gabe Winowich, junior, Detroit Country Day
- OLB - Jeremiah Alston-Jackson, senior, Redford Union
- OLB - Simeon Mardossian, senior, South Lyon
- LB - Niko Krall, senior, Novi
- LB - Wyatt Lesnew, junior, Milford
- LB - Brayden Courser, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- LB - Damon Powers, junior, Westland John Glenn
- LB - John Kersh, senior, Cranbrook
- DB - Chris Little, sophomore, Birmingham Groves
- DB - Brady Blakita, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- DB - Luc Damiani, junior, Plymouth
- DB - Jon Jasionowski, junior, Livonia Franklin
- DB - Dominic Simpson, senior, Livonia Franklin

SPECIAL TEAMS

- K/P - Nick Stoyanovich, junior, South Lyon
- K/P - Griffin Nowak, senior, Livonia Franklin

COACHES

- Jacob Topp, South Lyon East
- Brendan Flaherty, Birmingham Groves

Second Team

OFFENSE

- QB - Luca Prior, senior, Northville
- QB - Colton Kinnie, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- QB - JD Bates, senior, Livonia Franklin
- RB - Joshua Woods, senior, Birmingham Groves
- RB - Jon Lytle-Montgomery, senior, Livonia Churchill
- RB - Robert Jones Jr., senior, Salem
- RB - Jordan Williams, senior, Livonia Clarenceville
- FB - Granden Kinnie, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- WR - Aaron Zekman, senior, Bloomfield Hills
- WR - Angelo Rodriguez, senior, Northville
- TE - Henry Garrity, senior, Brother Rice
- TE - DaeMon Eubanks, senior, North Farmington
- ATH - Gabe Zeldes, senior, Detroit Country Day
- ATH - Alex Stoyanovich, senior, South Lyon
- OL - Caleb LeBar, senior, Livonia Churchill
- OL - Andrew Berg, senior, South Lyon
- OL - Benny Leece, senior, South Lyon
- OL - Mike Boyd, senior, Westland John Glenn
- OL - Graham Gilmartin, junior, Northville

DEFENSE

- DL - Ferris Jordan, junior, Northville

- DL - Preston Phimister, senior, Novi
- DL - Brendon Rice, sophomore, North Farmington
- DE - Ben Radley, junior, South Lyon
- DE - Orlando Daniels, senior, Plymouth
- OLB - Evan Deak, junior, Northville
- OLB - Hunter Ladach, senior, Northville
- LB - Jayden LaPerna, senior, South Lyon East
- LB - Evan Cosgrove, senior, Plymouth
- LB - Sam White, senior, Livonia Franklin
- LB - Kaden Williams, senior, Garden City
- DB - Martez Langford, senior, Novi
- DB - Caleb Williams, junior, Canton
- DB - Tyler Freer, junior, Milford
- DB - Caleb Gash, senior, South Lyon East

SPECIAL TEAMS

- K/P - Christos Tzoumakas, senior, Cranbrook
- K/P - Kaemon Tijerina, sophomore, Redford Union

COACHES

- Chris Kelbert, Livonia Franklin
- Ian Iler, Redford Union

Third Team

OFFENSE

- QB - Cayden Hardy, junior, Birmingham Groves
- QB - Dominic Pesci, senior, Farmington
- RB - Caleb Moore, junior, Northville
- RB - Evan Haeger, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- RB - Devon Pettus, junior, Canton
- FB - Jack Hulgrave, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- WR - Luke Aurilia, senior, Novi
- WR - Drew Moyer, senior, South Lyon East
- ATH - Nolan Thomson, senior, Northville
- ATH - Noah Entyne, senior, Lutheran Westland
- OL - Jordan Atkins, junior, South Lyon East
- OL - Damani Robinson, senior, Livonia Churchill
- OL - Robbie Schuckel, junior, Northville
- OL - Brady Flanigan, junior, Milford
- OL - Marlon Jones, senior, Garden City

DEFENSE

- DL - Malachi Coleman, senior, Birmingham Groves
- DL - Ekene Uzosike, senior, Farmington
- DE - Josh Ross, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- DE - Jon Motes, junior, Milford
- OLB - Graham Doman, senior, Detroit Country Day
- OLB - Michael Patsy, senior, Salem
- LB - Braden Hall, junior, Birmingham Groves
- LB - Elias Kendra, senior, Birmingham Groves
- LB - Owen Reed, senior, Livonia Stevenson
- LB - Jack Toth, junior, South Lyon East
- DB - Josiah West, senior, Canton
- DB - Sean Emerson, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- DB - Kyle Robbins, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- DB - Eli Craig, junior, Livonia Clarenceville

SPECIAL TEAMS

- K/P - Jake Matigian, sophomore, Detroit Catholic Central
- K/P - Mori Miller, senior, Birmingham Groves

COACHES

- Jason Mensing, Westland John Glenn
- Matt Ladach, Northville

Honorable Mention

OFFENSE

- QB - Evan Snead, junior, Livonia Churchill
- QB - Nick Wetmore, senior, Westland John Glenn
- RB - Jaxon McCaig, junior, Plymouth
- RB - Nolan Ray, senior, Brother Rice
- RB - Trevor Tschudin, sophomore, White Lake Lakeland
- FB - Elliot Flake, junior, Westland John Glenn
- WR - Mill Coleman, junior, North Farmington
- WR - DJ Lee, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- ATH - Spencer Lyons, senior, Detroit Catholic Central
- ATH - Alex Yolles, senior, Cranbrook
- ATH - Jack Lewis, junior, Birmingham Seaholm
- OL - Jamari Powell, senior, Wayne Memorial
- OL - John Jokisch, senior, Birmingham Seaholm
- OL - Ben Rosenfield, senior, Birmingham Seaholm
- OL - Morgan Goldberg, senior, Birmingham Groves
- OL - Idrys Cotton, junior, Plymouth

DEFENSE

- DL - Tyrell May, senior, Plymouth
- DL - Alex Smith, senior, Cranbrook
- DE - Blake Zoro, junior, Livonia Stevenson
- DE - Massiah Amerson, sophomore, Livonia Churchill

- OLB - Cole Shires, senior, Novi
- OLB - Tyler Radley, junior, Westland John Glenn
- LB - Nathan Klann, senior, Lutheran Westland
- LB - Malachi Bratton, senior, Livonia Churchill
- LB - Lawson Shields, senior, Salem
- DB - Aidan Nolan, junior, Livonia Stevenson
- DB - Owen Pittenger, sophomore, Livonia Franklin
- DB - Aaren McCray, senior, Farmington
- DB - Dylan Wilczynski, senior, Livonia Churchill

SPECIAL TEAMS

- K/P - Nolin Thompson, junior, White Lake Lakeland
- KR/PR - Dylan Moore, senior, Westland John Glenn

COACHES

- Jeff Henson, South Lyon
- Andrew Micovich, Milford

Special Mention

OFFENSE

- QB - CJ Jackson, senior, Bloomfield Hills
- QB - Preston Washer, senior, Cranbrook
- QB - Nathan Wasil, senior, Garden City
- QB - Caleb Walker, junior, Novi
- QB - Nick Warren, sophomore, Redford Thurston
- QB - Robert Ahlgren, senior, Salem
- QB - Braden Fracassi, senior, South Lyon
- QB - Nico Campo, senior, South Lyon East
- QB - Dominic Giovannini, sophomore, South Lyon East
- QB - DeMarus Bird, freshman, Wayne Memorial
- RB - Jackson Crane, senior, Birmingham Groves
- RB - Cashton Papadelis, junior, Brother Rice
- RB - Joe Najduk, senior, Canton
- RB - Miles Ealy, senior, Livonia Clarenceville
- RB - Donte Robinson, senior, Livonia Clarenceville
- RB - Peyton Chamberlain, junior, Milford
- RB - Lance Gailliard, junior, Novi
- RB - Daquan Davis, sophomore, Redford Union
- RB - Dawaune Strickland, senior, Redford Union
- RB - Javerious Shepherd, senior, Redford Union
- RB - Charles Nelson, junior, Redford Thurston
- RB - Xavier Spadacini, senior, Westland John Glenn
- FB - Echie Kemutambah, junior, Redford Thurston

- WR - Owen Matteson, junior, Farmington
- WR - Johnny Pallozzi, junior, Livonia Churchill
- WR - Joey Lavigne, sophomore, Lutheran Westland
- WR - Aiden Sexton, sophomore, Lutheran Westland
- WR - Quinn Parpart, senior, North Farmington
- WR - Boden Fernsler, junior, Novi
- WR - Colin Masterson, senior, Novi
- WR - Dematthew Dixon, junior, Redford Union
- WR - Nick Mullin, senior, Salem
- ATH - Jalin Samuel, senior, Birmingham Groves
- ATH - Chase Dawkins, sophomore, Detroit Country Day
- ATH - Keichean Wilson, Farmington
- ATH - Dwayne Jones, junior, Wayne Memorial

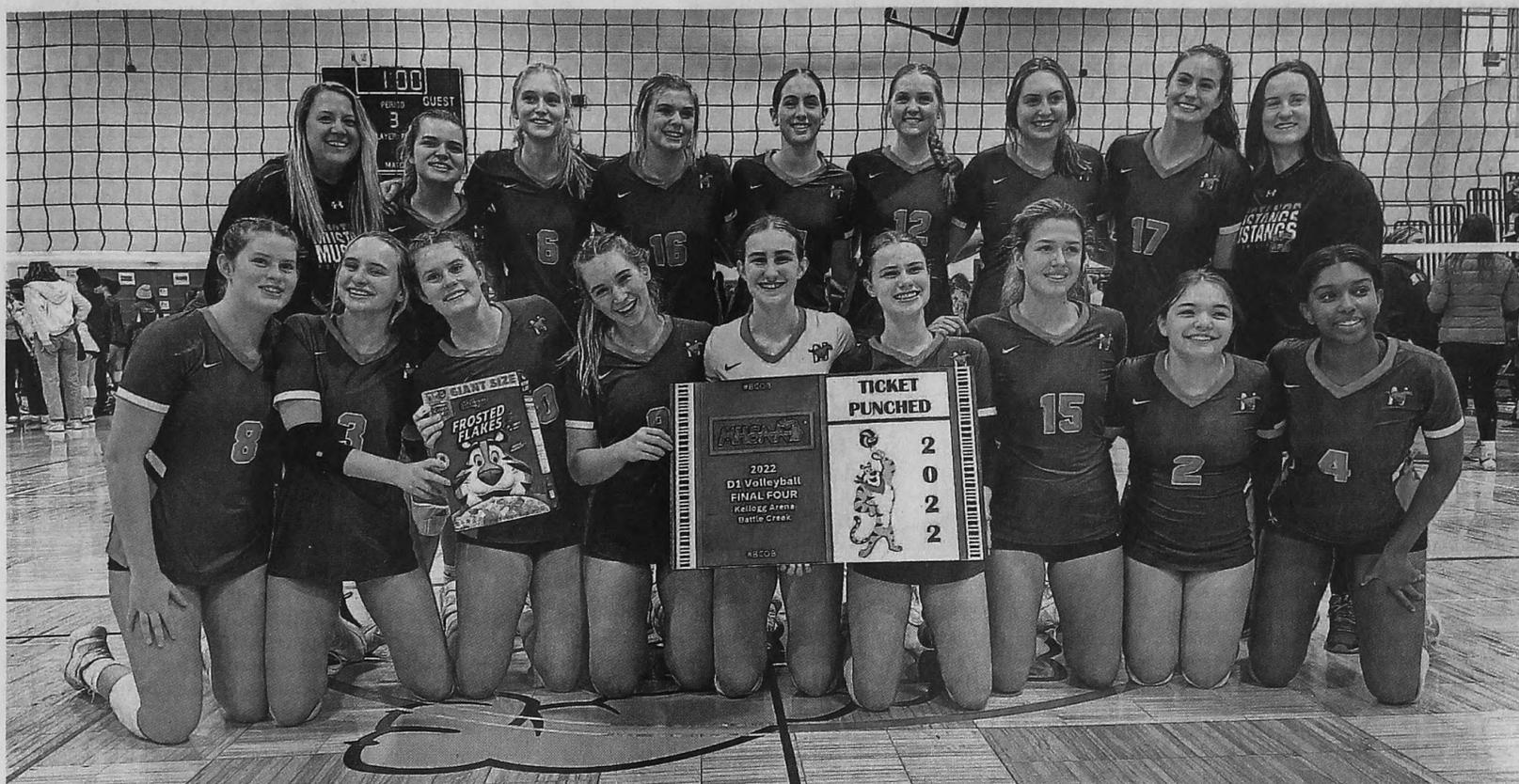
- OL - Paul Wint, sophomore, Garden City
- OL - Niko Hertrich, senior, Novi
- OL - Jorgito Shqau, junior, Plymouth

DEFENSE

- DE - Brenden Barrett, senior, Birmingham Seaholm
- DE - Ahmad Taylor, senior, Bloomfield Hills
- DE - Travis Hartwell, senior, Garden City
- OLB - Danny Sternberg, senior, Milford
- OLB - Caden Besco, junior, Northville
- OLB - Malique Wilson, senior, Redford Union
- LB - Nic Emond, sophomore, Garden City
- LB - James Bigelow, senior, Lutheran Westland
- DB - Aiden Leung, sophomore, Birmingham Groves
- DB - Mendal Broaden, sophomore, Livonia Franklin
- DB - Josh Tobias, senior, Milford
- DB - Owen Mitchell, senior, South Lyon

COACHES

- Jim DeWald, Birmingham Seaholm
- Bill DeFillippo, Livonia Churchill
- Andy LaFata, Canton
- Jason Albrecht, Farmington
- Dan MacLean, Detroit Country Day
- Dan Anderson, Detroit Catholic Central
- Thomas Michalsen, Garden City



Northville celebrates winning the Division 1 volleyball quarterfinal Nov. 15 at Royal Oak Middle School. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Volleyball

Continued from Page 1B

goals daily you're more likely to achieve them. You're more likely to stay on your path, and I didn't want these girls to lose their path. Had we had that focus last year, maybe we could've pulled that match off (against Skyline in the quarterfinal). It just makes it a lot more believable."

And, you bet, that sign was there in Royal Oak, hanging from the back of Lindstrom's chair on Northville's bench.

So, too, was a larger sign that read, "BCOB," that sat against the wall next to the Mustangs' service line.

But there were also a few other props the players didn't know about.

There are trophy celebrations following the district and regional finals. There are no trophies handed out during the Elite Eight round.

Lindstrom thought that was lame. Northville worked too hard to get this far. And after sweeping Berkley 25-13, 25-12 and 25-14, the Mustangs needed some sort of way to celebrate.

So when it came time to take a team picture at the volleyball net, she unveiled a box of Frosted Flakes as well as a Tony the Tiger-inspired banner that read, "TICKET PUNCHED."

Lindstrom said it was an idea she had after chatting with Flack, whose Divine Child team celebrated its quarterfinal win in 2012 with boxes of Frosted Flakes and Froot Loops after Flack had slammed home the winning kill to push the Falcons past Haslett, 3-1.

"We just thought maybe if we bring it back, it'll give us some luck, and (Tony the Tiger) is our school colors," Lindstrom added. "So that's why we chose him."

For Northville's four seniors, Abby Reck, Anna Wilds, Taryn Rice and Lauren MacKellar, last year's heartbreak

hasn't been forgotten.

It was on Rice's mind when she toed the service line for the match point in the final set.

"The pressure kind of takes its toll, but, in the end, it's kind of just knowing that I know what we're capable of doing as a team," said Rice, who signed with Northern Iowa last week. "I'm just thinking, 'We're going to get to Battle Creek.' We've been saying it all year, and it's just a great feeling to finally get there."

Before Rice sent up her serve, Northville's crowd started chanting, "Battle Creek! Battle Creek! Battle Creek!"

The starting libero's serve safely landed in play, but Berkley volleyed it back.

That set up MacKellar, Northville's 6-foot right-side hitter, to blast home the winning point and advance Northville to the state semifinal against Saline.

"This was huge. We've been looking forward to it. I mean, BCOB! Battle Creek

or Bust!" the senior said. "This is huge. This is the game we got knocked out of last year. But this year we came back and wanted it, and we gave it all that we got. Coming into the season, I wanted Battle Creek. I wanted a ring on my finger. This is something I've been talking about at school. I've been telling my teachers we are going to win tonight, and this was huge."

And to laser in the winning point?

"A feeling like no other," said MacKellar, who Lindstrom tabbed as the Player of the Game following the match. "I can't even describe it. I really wanted it. As soon as I saw the ball coming to me, in my head, I was like, 'This is it. This is how I'm going to punch our ticket to Battle Creek.'"

The second MacKellar's spike hit the hardwood, Northville's fans started up the "Battle Creek!" chants one final time.

The goal had finally manifested.

Follow Brandon Folsom on Twitter @folsombrandonj.

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ASK HUMAN RESOURCES

Remote workers can balance life, show value



Johnny C. Taylor Jr.
Columnist
USA TODAY

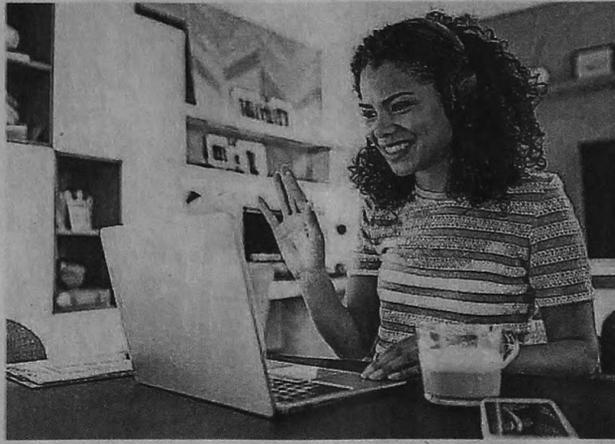
Johnny C. Taylor Jr. tackles your human resources questions as part of a series for USA TODAY. Taylor is president and CEO of the Society for Human Resource Management, the world's largest HR professional society and author of "Reset: A Leader's Guide to Work in an Age of Upheaval."

The questions are submitted by readers, and Taylor's answers below have been edited for length and clarity.

Question: As a remote worker, my day never seems to end. The boundaries between work and not work are blurred and often seem nonexistent. Working remotely, I find it challenging to show my value and work ethic to leadership and my colleagues. I often work extra hard to compensate for this perception. How can I set expectations in my work life and still be a team player? – Dale

Answer: You aren't alone. Most of us want a fruitful personal life and productive work life, but competing demands tend to push us in one direction or another. While many seek work-life balance, it is better to think of it as work-life integration. Employees are pursuing the flexibility to have a choice of where, when and how work gets done, and of course, opportunities to prioritize what is important in life – both personally and professionally.

Visibility as a remote employee can often be challenging. In fact, SHRM research has shown in-person workers are five to seven times more likely to believe remote employees are less productive and work fewer hours than they do. Understandably, you feel the pressure to put in extra effort and hours. However, the research also shows this perception is incorrect. In fact, more in-person workers (27%) feel excluded from opportunities at work than remote workers (20%), and more onsite workers (30%) feel passed over for promotions than remote workers (24%).



Eating lunch away from your computer or taking a short walk outside can help you be more productive and feel more energized to finish your workday strong.

GETTY IMAGES

yourself, don't have much authority over what employees post on their social media. Employees have the right to discuss work conditions, for instance, safety, compensation, and benefits. This is what's considered a protected concerted activity under the National Labor Relations Act. However, employees can't be completely reckless on social media, making untrue or maliciously disparaging statements, or bad-mouthing their employer with broad-stroke commentary.

So, what do you do? Here are five things:

1. Consult with your legal counsel, your state laws and the labor regulations to ensure you're not addressing things (on employees' social media) that shouldn't be addressed.

2. Employees may be addressed individually or as an entire team. However, if there is a specific concern with an individual, you can speak to them directly and in private.

3. If federal or state laws don't protect the social media post, it boils down to company policies and practices. Some employers specifically have a social media policy to address these issues with predetermined consequences of such actions.

4. Termination should often be a tool of last resort. Provide channels for communication with solid performers about their dissatisfaction. After hearing from employees, decide whether coaching, counseling, training, or disciplinary action may be more appropriate. Get an idea of what is working well and what is not working well for employees. Make some adjustments if and where possible.

5. Ask HR to help you conduct employee engagement surveys to gauge employee attitudes and satisfaction. If solid performers are dissatisfied, there may be reasons worth investigating. This can help you retain high-performing employees and benefit talent acquisition and retention, especially in today's competitive labor market.

With some intentional effort and gathering more information, you can move forward positively with your employees.

Here are a few ideas to help you with your work-life fulfillment as a remote employee:

- Schedule "me" time. It can be difficult to log off, especially if you are already home. Make plans to see friends, family, or do a fun activity after work. It can help to have a change of scenery and take a true break from work.

- Create a separate workspace in your home. Avoid working in common areas like your living room. A separate workspace or office makes it easier to walk away at the end of your workday.

- Take a break. Eating lunch away from your computer or taking a short walk outside can help you be more productive and feel more energized to finish your workday strong.

To demonstrate your work ethic to leadership and your colleagues, and continue to be a team player, keep these in mind:

- Be available. Use technology to your advantage – it can help your co-workers know when you are available and find easy and efficient ways to reach you.

- Communicate. Provide updates on your work to your manager and offer to help with any ongoing projects or tasks. Reach out to colleagues and offer help and feedback too. The best way to be "seen" in a remote work environment is to leverage your communication channels fully.

- Meet Deadlines. Be consistent and

reliable. Your hard work can easily be seen when you complete tasks and projects well and in a timely manner. People will see you as a reliable, valued team member.

- Collaborate. Be open to other co-workers' ideas, and brainstorm new ways of doing things. Always be respectful, even if you disagree.

- Show your value. Do more than the bare minimum of what your job requires. Look for professional development opportunities and assignments to help you grow in your career.

Remember, as a remote employee, you aren't alone, working on an island. Being intentional and implementing some of these strategies can help you showcase your work ethic while also preserving work-life integration.

A couple of my employees have posted negative or unflattering comments about work on social media. I am already short-staffed so firing them isn't a great option. Plus, they are generally solid performers. How should I respond? Should I deal with them individually or should I address the entire team? – Dewey

It depends on what is being said.

For better or worse, social media appears to be here to stay. In many ways, social media is an extension of water cooler talk or a coffee break, but with a broader reach.

Surprisingly, many employers, like



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Brighton fueled by loss in state championship game

Bill Khan

Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Brighton's hockey team practiced its own brand of social distancing after losing to Detroit Catholic Central in the state Division 1 championship game last March.

Nobody from Brighton wanted to get anywhere near the state runner-up trophy. Coach Kurt Kivisto didn't accept it and the players reluctantly took a mandatory team photo with it, but got up without touching the hardware they earned by winning their four previous postseason games.

The unwanted wooden mitten might still be on the ice at USA Hockey Arena if Brighton athletic director John Thompson hadn't picked it up to bring back to the school's trophy case.

The statement being made that night was that Brighton isn't satisfied with anything less than state championships. With five state championships and three other finals appearances, the Bulldogs weren't happy just being there.

"You hope it hurts and you hope you grow from that pain and remember it and don't forget it," Kivisto said. "It should drive you to put in the work throughout the season and hopefully not experience it again."

Brighton will make a run at its first state championship since back-to-back titles in 2017 and 2018 with a roster that includes three first-team all-stars. The group of nine returning players includes four of the top six scorers from last season and two goaltenders who had successful sophomore seasons.

"We had a lot of fun last year," all-state goalie Levi Pennala said. "It was good to get to the state finals, but obviously with that tough loss it's a big learning experience for the team."

"Obviously, the goal is to get back to (USA Hockey Arena) and hopefully get back to the state championship game every year. Every time we're in the weight room, every time we're on the ice, that's what we're working toward every time we step out there."

The Bulldogs' other returning all-stars are junior forward Cameron Duffany and senior defenseman Mattix McMullen, who made an impact in their



Brighton defenseman Mattix McMullen made first-team all-state last season after scoring six goals and 16 assists. TIMOTHY ARRICK/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

first seasons of high school hockey.

"It was a bunch of fun," McMullen said. "I kind of met my group of brothers doing that. It was a great run, and just falling up short was sad for us, but it gives us something to work for this year."

Brighton graduated leading scorer Nick Baker, but has plenty of firepower

in Duffany (19 goals, 28 assists), junior Lane Petit (23 goals, 22 assists) and senior Evan Wohlar (12 goals, 14 assists). Duffany and Petit skated on a line with Baker, whose 52 points were the most by a Bulldog since Mr. Hockey winner Jake Crespi in 2016-17.

McMullen is the only returning defenseman, though junior Aiden Seiter

can play up front or on defense.

"We should be pretty strong up front," Kivisto said. "We lost five defensemen; Mattix is the only one back. We have to fill some holes in there. We're obviously strong in net."

"Nick's a big loss. It's a big hole to fill. Hopefully, those guys who contributed pretty well as sophomores take a step and the new kids on the team can step up, as well."

In net, Pennala was the No. 1 goalie last season, going 13-6-1 with a 1.99 goals against average and .915 save percentage. Ryan Nickerson was impressive as the backup, going 9-0 with a 1.68 GAA and a .927 save percentage.

"It benefits both of us," Pennala said. "We both work off each other, we talk to each other, we have a really good relationship with each other. We're fortunate to have that and we're fortunate we're both good enough to step in and fill the role of netminding for the Brighton hockey team."

Senior forwards Dylan Hunt (6 goals, 8 assists), Winston Lerch (1 goal, 5 assists) and Nathan Daavettala (4 goals, 1 assist) are Brighton's other returning players.

Junior forward Charlie Burchfield, sophomore defenseman Ryan Watkins and senior forward Dominic Vincent are expected to make an impact as first-year varsity players.

Regardless of returning talent, making it back to the state championship game this season will be even tougher for the Bulldogs. The Michigan High School Athletic Association reconfigured the hockey postseason to spread out the co-op programs evenly among the three divisions, which results in some of the top Division 2 schools being bumped up to Division 1.

"It will make the state finals a lot better than what it's been the last number of years," Kivisto said. "There's more teams that will have a shot at it this year. That'll be a good thing overall."

Brighton will open its season against Novi at 6 p.m. Wednesday at Kensington Valley Ice House.

Some of the highlights of the Bulldogs' schedule are games against Detroit Catholic Central Dec. 10 in Livonia, at Howell on Dec. 17 and at Hartland on Jan. 20.

Plymouth Canton Community Schools 2020 Bond SECTION 00 11 13 ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids for the Plymouth Canton Community Schools, 2020 Bond, Bid Package #EL-3 Addition & Remodeling, consisting of:

Additions and remodeling at Isbister Elementary School

will be received through Building Connected until **1:00 PM on Tuesday, December 13th, 2022.**

- All Bids shall be submitted electronically on or before the Due Date through Building Connected: <https://app.buildingconnected.com/public/5ae227ade0d395000fd24541> (McCarthy and Smith Plan Room)
- For instructions on how to submit a Bid please go to the following link: <https://buildingconnected.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360010222793-How-to-submit-your-Bid-through-BuildingConnected>.

Bids submitted after this time and date will not be considered or accepted.

Faxed and/or E-mail proposals will not be accepted.

Sealed Bids will be publicly opened, read aloud and tabulated, beginning at approx. 1:00 PM on Tuesday, December 13th, 2022. Bid Opening will be publicly conducted via a Zoom meeting.

The Bid Opening can be view at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89183305605>

This Bid Package will consist of separate sealed bids for the following Bid Divisions:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 101: Earthwork/Site Utilities | 102: Asphalt Paving/ Site Concrete |
| 103: Selective Demolition | 104: Concrete Footings & Foundations |
| 105: Interior Concrete Flatwork | 106: Masonry |
| 107: Steel | 108: Carpentry / General Trades |
| 109: Roofing / Sheetmetal | 114: Aluminum Entrances / Storefront / Glass & Glazing |
| 115: Metal Stud / Drywall | 116: Hard Tile |
| 117: Acoustical Treatments | 118: Carpet / Resilient Tile Flooring |
| 120: Painting | 123: Folding Partitions |
| 124: Wood Flooring | 125: Toilet Partitions |
| 128: Prefabricated Casework | 131: Gymnasium Equipment |
| 134: Stage Equipment | 140: Plumbing |
| 142: HVAC | 143: Electrical |
| 149: Fencing | |

Bidding documents prepared by **TMP Architecture Inc.** will be available for public inspection at the main office of the Construction Manager, **McCarthy & Smith, Inc.**, 24317 Indoplex Circle, Farmington Hills, MI 48335; the Construction Association of Michigan Plan Room, Bloomfield Hills; and the Builder's Exchange, Lansing.

Bidding Documents will be available beginning at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 via Building Connected.

There will be a **Pre-Bid Meeting on Thursday, December 01 at 4:30 p.m. at Isbister Elementary School, located at 9300 N Canton Center Rd, Plymouth, MI 48170.** The purpose of the meeting will be to review the project bid documents & schedule, and to answer any questions bidders may have. Following the meeting, the bidders will have the opportunity to visit the project site. The pre-bid meeting is not a mandatory meeting however, bidders are strongly encouraged to attend.

All bids **must** include the Familial Disclosure Affidavit (Section 004205), the Iran Linked Business Affidavit (Section 004210), and the Criminal Background Check Affidavit (Section 004220).

All Bids **must** be accompanied by a Bid Security, in either the form of a bid bond or certified bank check, in the amount of five (5) percent of the amount of the Bid, payable to Plymouth Canton Community Schools, as a guarantee that if the Bid is accepted, the School District is secured from loss or damage by reason of the withdrawal of the Bid or failure of the Bidder to enter a Contract for performance. Further, the Bidder will execute the Contract, provide the required insurance certificate(s) and file the required bonds within ten (10) days after notice of award of Contract but prior to Work commencing.

If awarded a contract, the successful bidder may be required to furnish a Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond in the amount of 100% of the contract price.

Plymouth Canton Community Schools reserves the right to reject any or all bids received, to waive any informalities and irregularities in the bidding, and to accept a bid other than the lowest bid.

END OF SECTION

Publish: November 24 & December 01, 2022

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FIND THE WORDS

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 16 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. australianwordgames.com.au

- | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Avon | Ferry | Linda | Ovens | Temma |
| Bagdad | Fish | Lodge | Peaks | Tent |
| Bank | Forest | Long | Pyap | Tides |
| Bays | Genoa | Lorne | Radio | Tops |
| Big Hill | Gold | Maps | telescope | Trams |
| Brim | Gray | Maze | Rain | Trek |
| Cargo | Heat | Mild | Rare | Trout |
| City | History | MONA | Rocks | Walk |
| Como | Huon | Mushrooms | Ross | Wine |
| Cormorant | Kelth | Nala | Rugged | |
| East | KI KI | Ocean | Safe | |
| Epsom | Lakes | Ouse | Scuba | |
| Euroa | Lara | Ouyen | Swell | |

TODAY'S ANSWER

Cool climate charm

Southern states

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

NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

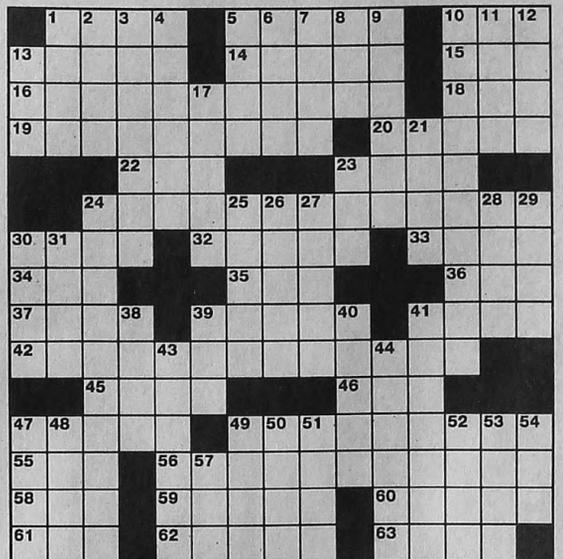
- 1 Belted out
- 5 Jersey, for instance
- 10 Garfield guy
- 13 Surfer since the '90s
- 14 Assertive personality
- 15 Onetime Navajo foe
- 16 Firebrand
- 18 Homer's bartender
- 19 Painted like Pollock
- 20 Dual advanced degree
- 22 Irish actor Stephen
- 23 Architect Lin
- 24 Charitable group with soldiers
- 30 Blue-green hue
- 32 Spaniards spend them
- 33 Ruler of old Venice
- 34 Contemplator's comment
- 35 ___ Faire
- 36 Name on Pulp Fiction posters
- 37 Tennis officials
- 39 Michelangelo masterpiece
- 41 Cookout inconveniences
- 42 Compound related to aspirin
- 45 French being
- 46 In payment of
- 47 Father of King David

- 7 Tablet brand
- 8 Sleep state, for short
- 9 New Zealand arrival of 1642
- 10 Move erratically
- 11 Texter's "alternatively"
- 12 Pine for
- 13 Nativity scene beast
- 17 Don't take
- 21 Twosome
- 23 FBI profiler's data
- 24 Decision for a pollster
- 25 Acoustic
- 26 Receiver of many 32 Across
- 27 Charged, in chemistry

- 28 Corp. leaders
- 29 Votes in favor
- 30 Therefore
- 31 Austen novel
- 38 Gathers dust
- 39 Turn green, perhaps
- 40 Actor Willem
- 41 Taker of short flights
- 43 Reaches a peak
- 44 Rope (off)
- 47 Green stone
- 48 Shade sources
- 49 Money supply
- 50 Stretched out
- 51 Oceanic predator
- 52 "Checkmate"
- 53 Fill with freight
- 54 Visual discernment
- 57 Juan's "what"

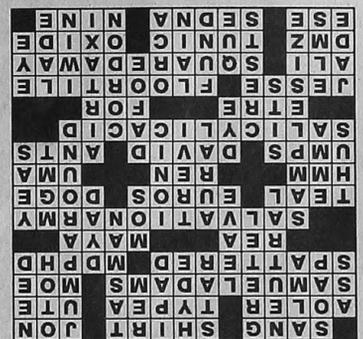
DOWN

- 1 Hand cleaner
- 2 ___ mater
- 3 Not taking sides
- 4 Grimm sister
- 5 Be a standout
- 6 Evil alter ego



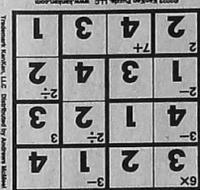
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2022 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 11/24/22

TODAY'S ANSWER



KENKEN

- 1. Each row and column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- 2. 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.
- 3. Freebies: fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.



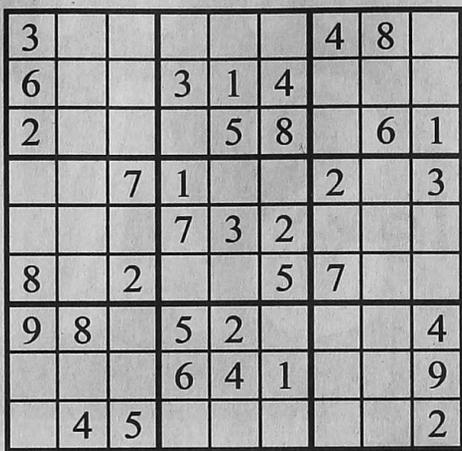
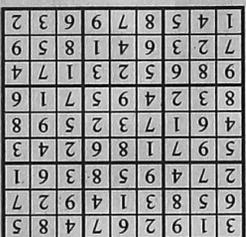
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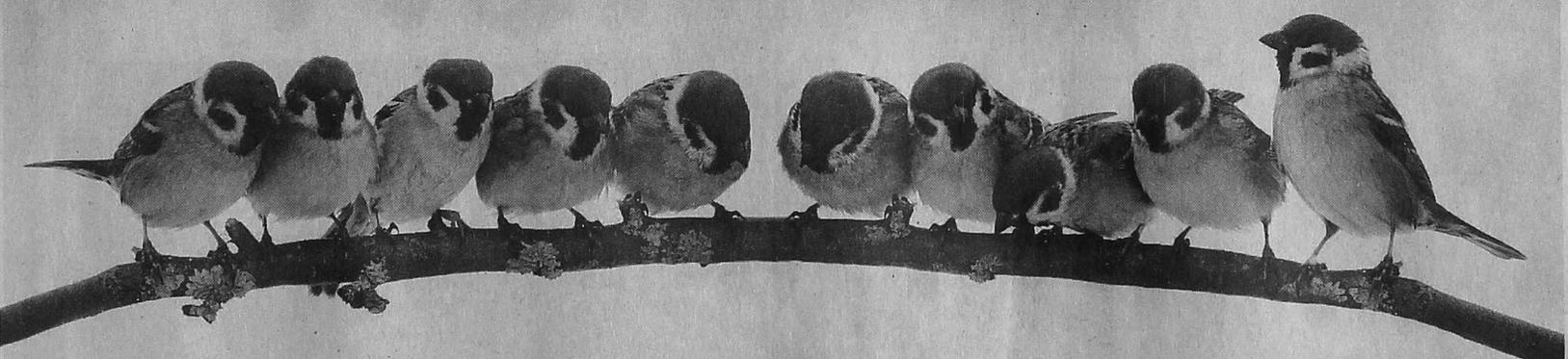
SUDOKU | CREATORS

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: BRONZE**

TODAY'S ANSWER



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