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League panel

The League of Women Voters of Northwest Wayne County is presenting a panel of elected officials and administrators to discuss privatization of government services 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 at the Livonia Civic Center Library.

The panel will include State Sen. Glenn Anderson, Livonia Councilman Tom Robinson, former Wayne Councilwoman Susan Rowe, and Kristen Hennessey, the Director of Services for Plymouth Canton Schools.

The public is invited to attend at no charge. For more information, contact Paula Bowman at (734) 455-4726.

District misses AYP despite improved scores

By Brad Kadrich
Observer Staff Writer

Two years ago, every school in the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, with the exception of Starkweather Alternative high school, achieved Adequate Yearly Progress.

Two years later — despite either higher or level scores in the majority of the testing areas of the MEAP test — none of the district's 25 buildings achieved AYP success.

While MEAP scores released Wednesday morning show Plymouth-Canton schools raising their scores over last year in 11 of 18 areas, and keeping them level in two others, a state increase in "cut" scores — the score the state uses to separate proficient and nonproficient grades — kept district schools out of AYP achievement.

"Many of our schools raised their scores, but just didn't make it enough to make AYP," said Dana Jones, the district's direc-

tor of academic and assessment services. "The state raised the cut scores significantly. We can't worry about that; this is the new standard, and we've got to get there."

According to Jones, the state's Board of Education became one of only three states in the country to lift their cut scores into the top tier of AYP scoring. She said the district's ongoing move to match the state's more rigorous common-core curriculum should right the ship once adjust-

ments are made. "Our curriculum will be more rigorous," Jones said. "The common-core state curriculum is more rigorous, and we're working on ours to bring it to that level."

Matched against the previous cut scores, Plymouth-Canton continued to improve in most areas, Jones noted. Only five scores — third-grade reading and math, fourth-grade writing,

Please see SCORES, A3

Senior party

The committee putting together the 2012 P-CEP All Night Senior Party hosts a fundraiser Tuesday at the Canton Cinema from 6-10 p.m. The party earns 50 percent of concession sales if the movie-goer brings a coupon they printed off at home.

There will be coupons available in the lobby, organizers said, but those only earn 25 percent of the concession sales.

For more information and to get coupons, e-mail Cathi Macko at cathikemacko@yahoo.com.

Exam prep

The Huntington Learning Center of Canton and the Plymouth Coffee Bean are partnering to offer a free exam prep workshop event, taking place at the oldest independently owned coffee shop in Michigan, the Plymouth Coffee Bean.

The event, called "Bean Studying?" takes place 5-6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Plymouth Coffee Bean is located at 884 Penniman in Plymouth. For more information, call (734) 207-7930.



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Noah Van Hook of the Plymouth Reign put a good foot into a shot at last year's Canton Cup soccer tournament. Members of the Plymouth Reign would love to see the city of Plymouth make more soccer fields a priority in their master recreation plan.

Public's ideas sought on city's recreation plan

By Matt Jachman
Observer Staff Writer

Hockey and softball players are invited to join fitness walkers, yoga practitioners, wood-carvers and other athletes and hobbyists as Plymouth's recreation department seeks ideas for updating its five-year master plan.

The master plan is a detailed look at parks and recreation facilities and their use, plus a wish list and a road map for the future. A public input workshop on the plan update is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Plymouth Cultural Center.

A master plan update is required every five years for the city to be eligible for state grant funding, and Recreation Director Steve Anderson said anyone with ideas about what they'd like to see the department do, and how they'd like any grant money to be spent, is welcome to attend the brainstorming session.

In preparing for the update —



Among the groups to whom city officials reached out as they developed their master recreation plan were senior citizens, who have used the Plymouth Cultural Center for events such as the Senior Olympics euchre tournament.

the department is writing the plan in-house, rather than hiring a consultant, in order to save money — Anderson has already reached out to groups involved in recreation programs or that

use city facilities, meeting with hockey, soccer and baseball leagues, senior citizens and civic organizations. Public input is a

Please see PLAN, A4

Group takes ballot wording fight to appeals court

By Matt Jachman
Observer Staff Writer

Even before Plymouth Township voters have had their say on a proposed special assessment district, the citizens group that got the question on the ballot is heading to court to seek a different outcome.

The Citizens Action Group of Plymouth Township, which wants to stop planned job cuts in the Plymouth Community Fire Department, has filed a claim in the Michigan Court of Appeals challenging Judge Gershwin Drain's Dec. 19 decision on the wording of the special assessment district proposal.

CAG members had pushed for a 1-mill (\$1 for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value) levy for five years, but Drain, in Wayne County Circuit Court, denied its motion, and the township Board of Trustees that evening put on the ballot a question with no sunset and almost no millage cap.

"We're asking the Court of Appeals to reverse Judge Drain's clear legal error," said CAG attorney Marvin Stempien, noting that the group's petitions clearly asked for a one-mill, five-year levy. "We have a constitutional right to have a petition accepted by the township board."

It was a successful CAG petition drive, and action by the group in circuit court, that led the board to put the proposal on the ballot.

Floating levy?

The SAD plan will be decided by township voters during the Tuesday, Feb. 28, primary. If approved, the plan would create a special assessment district of all taxable property in the township, and that proper-

Please see APPEALS, A3

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AROUND PLYMOUTH

"Around Plymouth" is designed to announce upcoming events taking place in the community. Items will run on a space-available basis. Send details to bkadrich@hometownlife.com.

BLOOD DRIVE

Date/Time: Friday, Feb. 17, 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Location: Canton Public Library, 1200 S. Canton Center

Details: The Canton Public Library will host the American Red Cross for a blood drive. Reservations are being accepted now; walk-ins also welcome.

Contact: (734) 397-0999, Ext. 1071, or by e-mail to glad-den@cantonpl.org.

SPOTLIGHT AUDITIONS

Dates/Times: Feb. 20-21, 7-10 p.m.

Location: Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill in Canton

Details: Spotlight Players presents "Into the Woods" in April at the Village Theater, and the group is holding auditions. The audition will consist of singing selections from the show, cold readings, and a short dance may be taught. Bring a head shot or photograph of yourself. The play, to be directed by former Second Stage director Shannon McNutt, is James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim's fractured fairy tale. What begins a lively irreverent fantasy becomes a moving lesson about community responsibility and the stories we tell our children, learning there are consequences to our choices.

Contact: For more information and an audition form go to: www.spotlightplayersmi.org.

CORRECTION

A story in Sunday's *Plymouth Observer*, on planned changes at the Plymouth Square Plaza at Ann Arbor and Sheldon roads, incorrectly identified three businesses there. The Pagoda Inn restaurant is now the Red Dragon, and the Solid Gold Jewelry and Plymouth Beauty Supply are closed and have also been replaced.

Charter school planned for Plymouth area

By Matt Jachman
Observer Staff Writer

A charter school management firm and an Upper Peninsula community college are planning to open the Plymouth area's first charter school late this summer.

Organizers of the Plymouth Scholars Charter Academy say they are looking at several locations in Plymouth and Plymouth Township and hope to pick one soon. One possible site for the school is a nine-acre parcel on North Territorial west of Beck, which was discussed at a township Board of Trustees meeting last week.

Plans call for the Plymouth Scholars Charter Academy to open as a school for pre-kindergarten through the sixth grade, and an enrollment of 500 students, for the 2012-13 school year, company spokesman Joe DiBenedetto said. A seventh grade would be added in 2013 and an eighth grade in 2014, and the school's total capacity would be 725 students, DiBenedetto said.

The Plymouth Scholars Charter Academy is chartered, or sponsored, by Bay Mills Community College, an Upper Peninsula college formed by the Bay Mills Indian Community. The PSCA's application was approved in January.

Michigan base

National Heritage Academies, a for-profit company based in Grand Rapids, was founded in 1995 and currently manages 71 schools in nine



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The possible site for a new charter school is on North Territorial between Beck and Ridge roads.

states; more than half its schools are in Michigan.

"Our belief is simple: Set high standards and clear expectations, provide meaningful instruction and watch children excel," DiBenedetto wrote in an e-mail. "We will work to ensure that every student receives the tools and support needed to succeed — in and out of the classroom."

DiBenedetto said NHA is looking to purchase, rather than lease, its local site, and that its purchase and construction investment would range from about \$7 million to \$9 million.

Rocco Bellino, a PSCA board member, said organizers were responding to local demand for a charter, as measured by waiting lists at other NHA-run schools, such as Canton Charter Academy and South Canton Scholars

Charter Academy.

"We are confident that we have the right partner in National Heritage Academies and, working together, we will successfully establish Plymouth Scholars as a school known for academic excellence," Bellino said in an e-mail.

The possibility of locating the school on the north side of North Territorial, west of Beck, just west of the Rolling Oaks subdivision, was raised at the Feb. 7 township Board of Trustees meeting, when the board was asked to amend a 2005 conditional rezoning agreement with the parcel owner, Leo Soave Development of Livonia.

No local plan review

The original agreement called for a residential development; the amended agreement will allow

for a school on about nine acres and an eight-lot residential development on the remaining six acres. The zoning will remain residential, which allows for school facilities.

Township attorney Tim Cronin told the board that under state law, school site plans are not subject to review by local planners, needing only the approval of the state superintendent of schools.

DiBenedetto said he could not disclose the other locations NHA is considering.

Charter schools are taxpayer-funded public schools with voluntary enrollment that are backed by state-approved sponsoring organizations, such as colleges or universities.

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District shifts graduation requirements

By Brad Kadrich
Observer Staff Writer

Plymouth-Canton students beginning with the class of 2016 will now only need a half-credit of physical education — and no computer applications classes — in order to graduate after the district's Board of Education Tuesday approved new graduation standards. The board's decision followed a recommendation by administrators trying to align Plymouth-Canton's graduation requirements with those of the Michigan Merit Curriculum.

The MMC adds a requirement for two full credits of world language to its requirements beginning with the incoming freshman class. Jeanne Farina, the district's assistant superintendent for instructional services, said the requirement for the two world language credits affects students' ability to take advantage of the district's full slate of electives. Eliminating the half-credit of PE and the half-credit of computer applications, Farina said, gives students more flexibility in choosing electives. She said

PE and computer courses could be moved down into middle and elementary schools. "We do value physical education, it's a very important part of the curriculum," Farina said. "We want to emphasize that in the early years so students are starting as early as kindergarten to develop those habits. Providing those classes in earlier years frees up schedules when students get to high school." That was no consolation to the district's physical education teachers, some of whom left Tuesday's board meeting in

anger following the vote. They're upset they weren't really consulted on the change, which they say affects a "small number of students." They also pointed out the Park Council voted 14-2 against the proposed changes. Mostly, though, they said they're upset because the changes "don't take into account the best interests of the students," "We need to use some common sense, and think about what's best for the students," teacher Roxane McCormick said. "We don't even know if

there is a problem. Why put the cart before the horse?" Teacher Amy Tortora, as others had done at previous meetings, pointed to the results of numerous surveys that extol the virtues of a strong physical education program. "Research shows physical activity increases student achievement," Tortora said. "Research shows effective health education helps students stay in school and better achieve in their classes."

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Blockbuster bust



The Blockbuster video store on Ann Arbor Road in Plymouth Township, in the Plymouth Square Plaza, will be closing. An employee on Wednesday said he knew of no exact closing date and directed question to Blockbuster's media department, but representatives did not return phone calls. Blockbuster is owned by Dish Network, which purchased it out of bankruptcy last spring, and is reportedly planning to close more than 400 locations. The Plymouth Township store's closing will be among several planned changes at Plymouth Square, including the razing of the Big Boy restaurant to make way for an expansion of the Kroger supermarket.

SCORES

Continued from page A1

fifth-grade science and ninth-grade social studies — dropped, while scores in eighth-grade science and seventh-grade writing remained the same. As has been the case in past years, Plymouth-Canton scores were significantly higher than the averages in both Wayne County RESA and across the state. Still, while proud of the results, Jones said district officials realize they can't just rest on their laurels. With a new standard comes new responsibility. "Our schools experienced a similar level of success (compared to last year), but the stakes are higher," Jones said. "We have work to do, definitely. If we were looking at last year's (cut) scores, we'd be celebrating. But there is a new standard, and we have to move for-

ward." Jones noted the state — knowing many districts are going to miss out on AYP — is asking the federal government for a one-year waiver of AYP progress. "We're waiting to see what happens (with the waiver)," Jones said. "We want to give ourselves time to make these adjustments." While they're making the adjustments, Jones said, administrators will examine MEAP performance to determine what the scores mean from an academic standpoint and where to go from here. "We'll look at the data from all angles so we can pinpoint what areas need attention," Jones said. "We need to find what areas we need to spend more time on, what areas we need to bolster to support our teachers and our kids."

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APPEALS

Continued from page A1

ty would be subject to a levy of up to 10 mills for fire department capital expenses, and an unlimited amount for department maintenance and operations, with no time limit. The exact levy would be made annually by a Board of Trustees vote, based on the department's budget for that year. The township's position was that CAG petitions were improperly worded in calling for a 1-mill, five-year levy, because the state law governing the creation of township special assessment districts for public safety purposes allows for no such limits. The township, however, would not be required to levy the tax at all, and several board members have said they would not be inclined to do so. Stempin charges the SAD question was deliberately written in a way that would guarantee its failure

at the polls, and that the township's contention that a special assessment cannot be limited is wrong. "It's going down" "You know it's going down. It was written to be rejected, so it's going to be rejected," Stempin said. Township Supervisor Richard Reaume did not return phone calls on Wednesday. Stempin said he'll ask the Court of Appeals to void the voters' Feb. 28 decision on the SAD and order a new SAD proposal, for a 1-mill tax for five years, be put on the ballot for the August election. No briefs have yet been filed in the appeal and no hearing date has been set. Township officials are planning job cuts in the 23-member fire department to make up for the loss of nearly \$1 million a year from the city of Plymouth, which left the joint department at the end of 2011 and began a partnership with the city

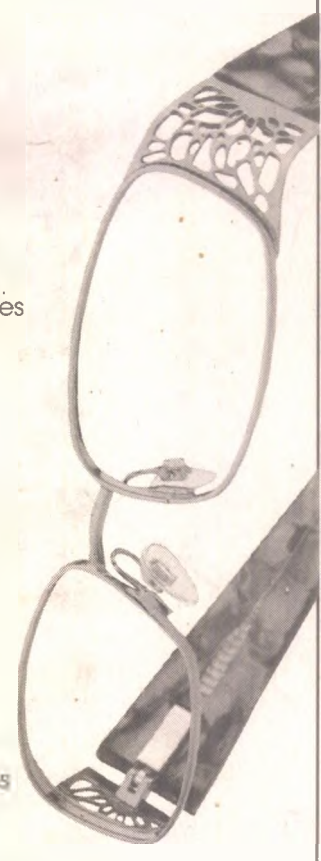
of Northville for fire-fighting and emergency medical services. Plymouth's department reduces the department's work load by between 25 percent and 30 percent, township officials say. CAG members say a 1-mill special assessment, which would raise around \$1.6 million a year, would be more than enough to offset the loss of revenue formerly provided by Plymouth. CAG representative Tom Kelly said on Monday that the group is urging a no vote on the SAD measure as written.

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subject and has been interviewed on various television programs. Both attorney Bieske and Alfonsi have also been interviewed on radio programs and have given speeches to many groups.

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Bieske and Alfonsi represent clients from all over the state of Michigan. Their Livonia office is on Six Mile Road just west of I-275. Their Novi office is located on Haggerty Road just north of 12 Mile Road. Call them at 1-800-331-3530 for a free consultation if you have been denied, or if you are thinking of possibly applying for Social Security benefits.

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CRIME WATCH

Shoplifters foiled in stealing cart loads of drinks from supermarket

Two different attempts to shoplift a cart load of drinks from a Plymouth Township supermarket were unsuccessful on Feb. 6.

The incidents took place at the Kroger at Ann Arbor Road and Sheldon, the first shortly after 11 a.m. and the second less than two hours later, according to Plymouth Township Police Department reports.

In the first incident, a man walked out of the store with a shopping cart full of cans of Red Bull and Monster drinks for which he had not paid, an employee told police. When the employee confronted him, the police report said, he said, "sorry," and off behind the nearby Blockbuster video store.

In the second incident, just after 1 p.m., a man also left with a cart loaded with drinks — baby formula and 5-Hour Energy drinks, the police report said.

Seeing the drinks were not bagged, the manager asked the man for a receipt, and he replied that he had thrown it away, police said.

The manager asked the man to come back to the store, but he instead fled, taking three containers of baby formula with him and running behind the neighboring Aco Hardware.

The descriptions provided of the men were somewhat similar; township detective Sgt. Dave Hayes said it's possible the same man committed both crimes but there was no direct indication of that.

Vandalism

A resident of Hill Top Drive, in the area of Beck Road and M-14, reported that someone threw a potted plant, and also kicked or pounded at his front door, on the evening of Feb. 8. No damage was reported.

The complainant told police he went outside to see a male teenager walking in the street, and that the boy ignored him and walked behind a house on nearby Oakland Court.

— By Matt Jachman

House holds hearings on Skype legislation

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

A bill requiring officials to be physically present to participate in public meetings received support at a Michigan House committee hearing last week.

The bill, aimed at clarifying the Open Meetings Act when it comes to Skype and other electronic communications, was the subject of a hearing by the House Oversight, Ethics and Reform Committee, which is expected to vote on moving the bill out of committee on Tuesday.

"The committee appeared generally supportive, some enthusiastically so," said state Rep. Richard LeBlanc, D-

Westland, who introduced the bill. "My expectation is that it could be a unanimous vote to send the bill to the House floor."

The bill is aimed at giving an answer on whether it is legal under the Open Meetings Act for officials to cast votes and participate in public meetings via electronic methods, such as Skype.

One dissenting voice at the hearing was from a representative of the Michigan Township Association.

"Basically, they said to get with the 21st century and gave some examples," said LeBlanc, adding electronic participation is fine for private companies but not for conducting public business.

MTA Legislative Liaison Tom Frazier spoke at the

hearing on behalf of the organization which he said opposes the bill as written since it doesn't allow exceptions for extenuating circumstances.

"It's not that we're opposed to what he is trying to do. A lot of government officials are part-time and their full-time jobs may take them out of the area," said Frazier.

"There are some circumstances it (Skype) could be used as long as the public has full access to what the person is saying."

This issue arose for LeBlanc after Wayne-Westland Board of Education member John Goci used Skype to participate in at least one board meeting while he was out of the country for an extended period.

Once he introduced the measure to require physical presence at meetings, LeBlanc said he was surprised to hear how often officials around the state were using electronic means to not only participate in meetings but to have a quorum present.

"There can be three officials physically present and three or four more online, that is so wrong," said LeBlanc, who also wants language to say officials must be physically present to be part of a quorum at a public meeting.

LeBlanc worked with Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette and his staff in preparing the bill which was co-sponsored by several other state representatives.

PLAN

Continued from page A1

required part of the master plan update.

"We want to take that extra step and give everyone a chance if they like," Anderson said of the upcoming forum. "If people have suggestions, you want to hear them."

Creating partnerships

One theme Anderson hears consistently is the lack of space for athletic fields, he said.

"That's the one thing we're really lacking in the Plymouth area, is athletic field space," he said. People also often express a desire for a public pool,

he said, and senior citizens often say they'd like to see a city senior center.

Anderson said his department is always looking to partner with other entities — schools, companies or other local governments — to find usable space or create recreation opportunities. An example would be the partnership with the Automotive Components Holdings (formerly Ford Motor Co.) plant on Sheldon Road, where Anderson's department maintains two soccer fields, providing space for recreation leagues and ACH company teams.

The Plymouth Reign Soccer Club, a youth soccer program for boys and girls with about 350 players, was among

Anderson sought ideas.

"We have a very good working relationship with them. We have a long history with them," club president Steve Hutnik said. Plymouth Reign teams compete with Michigan State Premier Soccer League and Western Suburban Soccer League teams through the recreation department, Hutnik said.

Fields of dreams

Not surprisingly, increasing the number of soccer fields topped Plymouth Reign members' wish list, he said.

"The city doesn't really have good soccer fields," Hutnik said. "We're very limited."

Ideally, Hutnik said, he'd like to see a soccer

park with 10 fields.

"You'd have plenty of space there to grow and you could have game fields and practice fields," he said.

Anderson said that while Plymouth's chances of securing a grant for parks and recreation are probably slim given the state's tight budget, only projects outlined in a master plan are eligible should a grant come along. In 2002, he said, Plymouth won a \$650,000 Michigan Department of Natural Resources grant for an expansion at the Cultural Center.

The recreation department has an annual budget of around \$1 million, about 90 percent of which is generated through rentals and user fees.

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Concert rocks arts fundraiser

By Brad Kadrich
Observer Staff Writer

With an open date at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill and a strong desire to raise awareness of the arts in Canton and surrounding communities, Jill Engel took a chance that a second fundraiser for the Canton Partnership for the Arts & Humanities might work. She was right.

More than 300 people crowded into the Village Theater Friday for "Rock-n-Roll Valentine's," a holiday concert that featured local favorite Steve King and the Dittilies, a Livonia-based act and a huge draw at local events such as the Friday night concert series in downtown Plymouth.

The event raised nearly \$8,700 for the Partnership. And it might have done better if Mother Nature hadn't sent a snowstorm through the area.

"I truly think (Friday's) fundraiser would have been closer to a sell-out," said Engel, executive director of the Partnership. "We normally sell about 50 tickets at the door, but I think people who saw the weather coming kind of went in another direction."

The 324 who did show up, Engel said, saw a "wonderful performance" from the Dittilies. Engel said people came not only from Plymouth, Canton, Livonia and surrounding western Wayne County communities, but also from places such as New Boston and Royal Oak.

Many of them, she said, came to see King. "Their draw was Steve King," Engel said. "They'd heard about him, and they came to see him.



More than 300 people crowded into the Village Theater at Cherry Hill Friday for a fundraiser for the Canton Partnership for the Arts & Humanities.



Chef Cheryl Hanewich of The Chop House-Ann Arbor doled out La Dolce Vita desserts to more than 300 guests at Friday's fundraiser.

It was amazing." Friday's event, sponsored by Engel and her husband, Frank, along with Glenn and Patty Shaw and Don and Col-

leen Soenen, featured a pre-concert reception. Appetizers came from Station 885 in Plymouth and PF Chang's in Northville, along with desserts

from The Chop House in Ann Arbor.

Once inside, the crowd enjoyed the rock music from the 1930s through the current era the Dittilies have become known for playing. The set list also included songs that show the depth of the band and "showy stuff" that brings horns front and center.

Before the concert, King talked about preparing for a show with a wide audience.

"This gig is more challenging than most," King said. "The majority of the people will be sitting in the audience, listening. So, not only are we doing a show with people sitting there, we have to try to hit all eras because that will be the demographics."

Turns out he was right, according to Engel.

"There was a great mix of people, from their middle 20s to their 80s," she said. "It was phenomenal."

PHOTOS BY SUE BURKE



Steve King and the Dittilies rocked the stage at Friday's fundraiser for the Partnership for the Arts & Humanities.

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Ball a hit for Canton 'couples'



More than 700 daddies/daughters celebrated Canton Leisure Services' annual Butterfly Ball at the Summit in Canton.



PHOTOS BY DICK SWISHER

The large crowd that turned out for the annual Butterfly Ball enjoyed music, dancing, photo ops and the annual balloon drop.

Canton's annual Butterfly Ball is so successful, organizers have to run it for two nights.

That was the case again this year, as the Canton Leisure Services department presented the annual daddy-daughter dance at the Summit on the Park in Canton.

The event, spread over two nights in a couple of rooms at the Summit, drew more than 700 daddies and daughters, according

to Peg Stevens, communications specialist with the Canton Leisure Services Department.

"It really is a big hit," Stevens said. "A great time was had by all!"

Silver Sounds DJ's provided the music for the event, while TSS Photography was on hand to provide pictures of each couple.

In addition, Stevens said, the "highly anticipated balloon drop at each of the three dances "was a huge hit."



Canton residents Rachel Watson, Renee Watson and Pat Watson enjoyed Friday's Butterfly Ball festivities.



Wes Anderson and his daughter, Isabel (left), along with Frank Smith and his daughter, Carly, were among the dads and daughters who attended the Butterfly Ball Friday. All are from Canton.

Museum hosts genealogy workshop

The Plymouth Historical Museum will hold the third in a series of genealogical workshops to help family historians of all levels research their 19th-century American ancestors Saturday, Feb. 25. This workshop features Liz Kelley Kerstens and Jana Sloan Broglin.

Kerstens is the executive director of the Plymouth Historical Museum, has been speaking on genealogical topics for about 15 years, and has been doing family history research for nearly 40 years. She is a certified Genealogist through the Board for Certification of Genealogists and will be speaking on:

- Effective Internet Searching: Learn how to use the Internet and genealogy software effectively to increase your research success. Examples will include Google, WorldCat, other search engines and some useful strategies.

- Demystifying Ancestor Origins: Learn the basics of determining the place of origin of your immigrant ancestor, using records available at major repositories in the United States. A case study will be used to show how some Irish immigrants' origins were determined.

Broglin, a native of northwest Ohio, is a professional genealogist with more than 30 years of experience. She has spoken at local, state, regional, and national conferences. She is a lecturer and freelance writer. Over 30 publications on Kentucky resulted in being

named a "Kentucky Colonel." Broglin currently serves as vice president of membership for the Federation of Genealogical Societies and is a past trustee of the Ohio Genealogical Society. She is a certified genealogist through the Board for Certification of Genealogists and will be speaking on:

- When Johnny Comes Marching Home: A case study of the four Borton sons of Fulton County, Ohio. Learn the types of records found for this military family in the Civil War.

- Land Records of the Old Northwest Territory: Learn the migration, county formation, land offices, military districts, and survey systems of the Old Northwest Territory.

The workshop begins at 9:30 a.m. and will end at 3:30 p.m. There will be limited seating and the event is filling up rapidly. The fee for the day, \$40, includes the four lectures, lunch, and the option of touring the Museum's special exhibit, "Ration Stamps & Bombers: WWII at Home," during lunch and the afternoon break. Tickets are available at the Plymouth Historical Museum or on its website at <http://plymouth-history.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=fe0521ffc0a5788d628eaa160&id=7b41c4d644&e=9fa7e1796a>.

The Plymouth Historical Museum is located at 155 S. Main Street, one block north of downtown Plymouth. For more information, call the Museum at 734-455-8940.



The Spotlight Players, with a cast that features several actors from Canton and Plymouth, brings "Cheaper by the Dozen" to the Village Theater stage Feb. 17-19 and Feb. 24-26.

'Cheaper by the Dozen' takes Spotlight on stage

The Spotlight Players bring what organizers call a "story with great heart and good cheer" to the stage at the Village Theater of Cherry Hill Feb. 17-19 and Feb. 24-26.

Director Theresa Spencer said the story, which takes place in the early 1920s, is about a real family. The mother and father (Frank and Lillian Gilbreth) ran a business which promoted industrial and workplace efficiency through motion study and psychology.

The couple also had

12 children and used the same methods to run the family. The play, Spencer said, is about the ups and downs, often very funny, of a large, loving, unusual family. Much of the story revolves around the oldest daughter, Anne, who loves her odd family but longs to be a normal, and hopefully popular, high school girl.

The story was first written as a book, authored by two of the children. It was made into a play, and then a movie in 1950, featuring Myrna Loy and

Clifton Webb.

"Both the play and movie correspond closely to events in the book," Spencer said. "The 2003 movie only uses the same name. The stories are different. So when folks see our play, they won't see the Steve Martin story, but they will enjoy an equally funny and warm family tale — which happens to be true."

The cast includes Drex Morton, Thomas Strock, and Jim Broderick, Miki Somers, Alex Smith, Donovan

Sutton, Roman Bonacorsi, Jenessa Hubbard, Denise Staffeld.

The play runs 8 p.m. Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, and will follow the same schedule Feb. 24-26.

The Village Theater at Cherry Hill is located at 50400 Cherry Hill in Canton. Tickets are available at the Village Theater box office at (734) 394-5460 or online at www.spotlightplayersmi.org; tickets are \$18 for adults and \$17 for seniors and students under 19.

Local Scots ship 72 boxes to troops in Afghanistan

Members of the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit mailed 72 boxes of personal products and other requested items Saturday to U.S. Marines at Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan.

The boxes were mailed from the Greenmead Station of the Livonia Post Office, with postal employees arriving two hours early to accommodate this special annual mailing.

This is the seventh year the St. Andrew's Society of Detroit has organized this special delivery for troops deployed abroad. It uses the Greenmead post office because it's next door to Greenmead Historical Park where it holds its annual Highland Games each August, said trustee and past president Bob Giles of Huntington Woods.

The Post Office weighed the packages, which averaged 10.5 pounds each for an estimated total shipment weight of one-third of a ton.

As postal employees processed the shipment, Detroit St. Andrew's Pipe Band Pipe Sgt. Don Ross "piped" the packages off to Camp Leatherneck.

Micki McFarlane, social activities chair, said in the Scottish tradition, bagpipers played as soldiers went off to battle so it was appropriate that a bagpiper played



PHOTOS BY BOB GILES

St. Andrew's Society of Detroit members Scott David of Plymouth (left) and Micki McFarlane of Eastpointe help U.S. Postal Service employee Joe Smith of Livonia get the boxes ready for shipment.

as the packages were shipped.

The boxes included donations of the "little things from home" that the men and women often don't have access to in combat. Also included were notes from children and personal notes from Society members indicating just how much St. Andrew's members appreciate these service men and women. The contents were donated by

members of the Society. Members also donated money to mail each box.

The boxes were packed Feb. 6 at the Kilgour Scottish Centre in Troy.

The St. Andrew's Society of Detroit is Michigan's oldest non-religious benevolent organization celebrating Scottish culture and history in America through education and charity. This year's Highland Games will be held Aug. 3-4.

Credit union marks record year

Community Financial Credit Union announced this week 2011 was a record year for growth in member satisfaction ratings and number of members.

The credit union, with branches in Plymouth, Canton, Northville, Novi, Gaylord, Hillman and Lewiston, saw a record near 10-percent increase in membership in 2011. It also saw its highest all-time member satisfaction rating. Among the credit union members surveyed by Raddon Financial Group, Community Financial ranked in the 97th percentile for members who said they were "very satisfied." Overall, over 96-percent

of Community Financial members indicated they are either satisfied or very satisfied, the highest ranking available on the survey.

"We are constantly striving to better serve our members and better serve the communities in which we operate," said Chief Financial Officer Meg Pankow. "We are thrilled so many of our members view Community Financial as a great place to bank."

According to the 2011 American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), released by the University of Michigan, credit unions set an all-time record of 87 (out of 100), the highest score

ever achieved by the 47 industries ranked. Credit Unions also increased their lead over banks, which had a score of 75.

Community Financial is a cooperative credit union offering a full range of financial services to members, specializing in auto and home loans and small business support. It also supports non-profit organizations throughout the year and financial education through several student-run credit union programs at local schools.

"Our members and our communities are our backbone," Pankow said. "We will continue to work each and every day to support them."

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Pinterest offers quicker social sharing

By Jon Gunnells
Guest Columnist

In the past decade, social media has evolved from long form blogging to shorter Facebook posts to even shorter 140 character tweets. And if you've been paying attention, you've noticed social sharing becoming even shorter and quicker thanks to new sites like Pinterest.

Pinterest is a self-described online pin-board where users can share the things they love with just one click of their mouse. When users sign up, they can select categories they are interested in such as movies, or music.

These interests help the folks over at Pinterest decide what type of content to show you. So a fan who has movies listed as an interest will log in to Pinterest and see content relating to movies. When that fan stumbles across something they like, they can "pin it" to their virtual tack board or share it among their friends.

Despite being an invite-only website, Pinterest has already been making waves by becoming a very powerful e-commerce tool for retailers. Many retailers have already used Pinterest to successfully share pictures of clothing or accessories for their new collections.

When fans that have listed clothing or accessories as one of their inter-



Tech Savvy

Jon Gunnells

ests are exposed to the new content, they often times make the content spread rapidly. But Pinterest's success extends far beyond the virality of retailers' new clothing lines. Pinterest is also becoming a favorite website of women of all ages to share recipes, crafts, artwork and more.

Because Pinterest's membership is about 70 percent women, the bulk of the shared content appeals to women. And if most of your friends on Pinterest are women (as is my case) you will be exposed to said content in your streams when you log in.

Of course, as more men join the site, the content will begin to even out. One of the reasons Pinterest is female-dominated is because the early adopters were mostly all women, who in turn invited their women friends to join the site.

But men shouldn't be fooled, there's plenty of chest-pounding, manly content on Pinterest — you just have to refine your settings first. When I logged into my Pinterest account today the first two pictures in my stream were a picture of fried onion rings and a picture of Eli Manning. Still, for those men

who need even more chest-pounding, manliness there's a male-dominated sharing site similar to Pinterest. The site is called Gentlemint and works just like Pinterest.

Content can be shared with one click of a button — much easier than writing a Facebook update, sending a tweet, or creating a blog post.

And the results are much more fun. If you haven't had the opportunity to join Pinterest or even Gentlemint, get in contact with your nearest Millennial.

If you can pry them away from their compulsive "Pinning" and "Minting" long enough, they might be able to teach you how to set up and use the next big social network.

Pinterest on the go

You can also "pin" from your smartphone or tablet by downloading the Pinterest app from the Apple iTunes store. Sorry, Droid, Blackberry and Windows Phone users, Pinterest doesn't have a compatible app for your device yet, but stay tuned.

Jon Gunnells, a Northville Township resident, is a social media planner at a Detroit-based advertising agency. A 2007 graduate of Michigan State University, he holds a B.A. in journalism. When he's not working, Gunnells enjoys college sports, social media and playing basketball. He can be reached at jonathan.gunnells@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @GunnSh0w.

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS Q&A



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Elle and Charles Dale opened Genuine Toy Co. on Forest Avenue, in downtown Plymouth in August 2009.

Toy store helps find the fun

Observer: Tell us about your business, including the types of services and/or products you feature?

Genuine Toy: The most fitting tag line we could come up with for Genuine Toy Co. is "Find The Fun!" Fun is really what we are offering, what we consider our 'product' to be. If it makes us laugh, we want to bring it in. If it is clever and amusing, different than everything else we see at stores, we're interested. Yes, we are a toy store with all the trimmings. Our biggest areas are games, arts & crafts, science, and puzzles; we believe we have among the best offerings in those categories of anyone around. Beyond that, we have great books and infant toys, unique stuffed animals and puppets, gags, retro toys and just plain fun stuff.

Observer: How did you first decide to open your business?

Genuine Toy: Like so many others who have found themselves at a crossroads due to the harsh economic conditions of recent years, we concluded that our best course of action was to reinvent ourselves. We had no background in retail, no experience owning a business, and no special knowledge of the toy industry. What we did have was a passion for fun, for games and toys, for knowledge and creativity. We had one shot to make this work so we poured all of our energy into creating what you see today.

Observer: Why did you choose Plymouth?

Genuine Toy: Although we looked at a variety of nearby locations, nothing compared to the vibrancy Plymouth has successfully cultivated and its endearing small town atmosphere. It was the perfect choice for us since it fit so well with the vision we had for our store. Plymouth is our home — we chose to live here long before opening our store for those same reasons.

GENUINE TOY CO.

Business name and address: Genuine Toy Co., 550 Forest Ave., #8, Plymouth

Your names: George and Elle Dare, owners

Your hometown: Plymouth

Business opened: Aug. 3, 2009

Your business specialty: Toys of all kinds, games, puzzles, craft and science kits, and fun stuff.

Number of employees: Two full-time employees (ourselves), seven part-time employees plus extra help during the holiday season.

Hours of operation: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Saturday; 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday; noon to 5 p.m. Sundays (closed Sundays January through March)

Phone and website: (734) 414-9500; www.GenuineToyCo.com

Observer: What makes your business unique?

Genuine Toy: The sense of fun we try to instill into the whole Genuine Toy Co. experience. We put a wavy funhouse mirror right inside our door and see people smiling and even laughing out loud from the moment they walk in. There's an erupting volcano filled with polished rocks that grabs every kid's attention. Nearly every new customer delights at seeing some favorite toy from when they were a kid sitting right there on our shelves. We even have some anonymous customer who makes us laugh when we keep discovering the fairy princess figures we sell riding atop the T-rex's like a jockey riding a horse.

Observer: How has it changed since you opened?

Genuine Toy: We played it a little bit safe when we first opened by carrying all the 'normal' specialty toy store items in addition to some of the more unique items we liked too much to pass up. What we have found over time is that what our customers want to find is what they don't expect — the more unusual items bring people in and have sold well overall. That has given us more confidence to continue taking chances on what we carry and to drop other things that may be staples for other stores but that have not

done as well for us.

Observer: How has the recent economy affected your business?

Genuine Toy: Genuine Toy Co. has been operating since day one in a very challenging economy. We knew from the get-go that we would have to stock our store with quality items that are unique and highly affordable. Although we have never carried many higher priced items, right now 80 percent of everything we sell is priced at under \$20 and 97 percent is under \$50. We offer more than 3,000 ways to have fun — on a budget.

Observer: Any advice for other business owners?

Genuine Toy: Our tag line, "Find The Fun!" is also a subtle reference to one of our favorite movies, Mary Poppins. You know the scene where the children have to clean up their room and Mary Poppins says, "In every job that must be done there is an element of fun; find the fun and snap, the job's a game!" If you can find the fun in what you do, odds are that you will be successful at it.

Observer: What's in store for the future of your business?

Genuine Toy: Mining. We are bringing a mining sluice to operate during events as a fun and educational attraction. Coming soon, look for the Plymouth Rock Mining Co.!

PLYMOUTH CHAMBER CHAT

Joint after-hours

Plymouth Community Chamber members will be joining their neighbors in Livonia for the February After Hours with the Livonia Chamber of Commerce Feb. 29. This event will again provide businesses the opportunity to expand their network of professionals from business people in a neighboring community and with many Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce members at the same time.

"Last year we held two joint After Hours, with other Chambers that drew our largest attendance with both events having over 100 people," said chamber executive director Wes Graff. "With the Livonia Chamber having over 810 members and our Chamber having over 770 members, we will definitely be able to draw another outstanding crowd for this joint event. While the trip is a little further for our members to go, it will be well worth the drive to for this fantastic opportunity to network."

The event runs 5-7 p.m. at Guilio's,

31735 Plymouth Road in Livonia. Guilio's will provide hors d'oeuvres and there will be a cash bar. There is no fee to attend; RSVP by Feb. 27 to teri@plymouthmich.org or call (734) 453-1540.

Google workshop

The chamber hosts the workshop "Google to the Maxx" Feb. 28 at the chamber office, 850 W. Ann Arbor Trail. The event will feature guest speaker Meaghan McCann, president of Search Ad Marketing, an expert on how to attract traffic to your web site and how to use Google to the Maxx who has received excellent reviews by members after speaking at several Chamber workshops and events in the past two years.

The workshop is from 8:30-9:30 a.m. and there is no charge to attend. Our conference room can only hold 25 people comfortably. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to teri@plymouthmich.org or call (734) 453-1540 as soon as possible.

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What a difference a year makes

By Patrick Colbeck
Guest Columnist

In November 2010, I was elected to work with the governor and my fellow legislators to fix Michigan. In 2011 we fixed quite a bit, reflecting one of the most productive legislative sessions in decades.



Patrick Colbeck

As we begin 2012, we are already seeing some of the results of our work and the work of our fellow Michiganders to restore our state to prominence. We started 2011 with an unemployment rate of 10.7 percent; we start 2012 with an unemployment rate of 9.8 percent. We started 2011 with a structural deficit of \$1.5 billion. We

start 2012 with a projected budget surplus of up to \$1 billion.

Let's review some of the policies and legislation from 2011 that helped to start off 2012 on the right track. We started the year off focusing on fiscal responsibility. We passed a balanced budget four months early that fixed our structural budget deficit and cut over \$700 million in total spending.

Not only did we restore responsible spending practices, but we also eliminated the job-killing Michigan Business Tax and replaced it with a simple, flat 6% corporate income tax. Over 95,000 small businesses in Michigan are no longer subject to double taxation and no longer have to file a state income tax form.

I worked to support our local communities with a bill to sell the Scott

Correctional Facility in Northville Township. I'm working with both the House and members of both parties to relieve congestion at the Ford/I-275 interchange and I am working on ways to put the Detroit Steel Company land in Trenton back to productive use.

In order to provide better visibility into how we are spending your money, I have introduced game-changing transparency legislation. I led the way with metrics-based accountability as the Senate appropriations subcommittee chairman for last year's Michigan State Police and Department of Military and Veterans Affairs budget. Our transparency reforms in the legislature set the stage for more timely and accurate measures in the governor's dashboards that will help our government make better, more

informed decisions about the appropriation of your hard-earned tax dollars.

Once we had our fiscal house in order, we proceeded to work on other reforms. As a member of the Senate Education Policy Committee, I have worked with my fellow legislators in a relentless pursuit of educational excellence. Our first major accomplishment was a transformation of teacher tenure. Tenure is now tied to performance not longevity so that we have the best teachers in our kids' classrooms.

We followed tenure reform with a profound shift in the delivery of public education that encourages educational excellence through competition. The removal of the cap on the number of charter schools in the state not only provides parents with more options for the education of their children, it also

incentivizes all schools to provide excellent education services or risk the loss of per pupil funding from the students that choose to be educated elsewhere.

I believe there are many ways to lead that have nothing to do with passing a bill. Some of my most rewarding moments have come about because of events we have coordinated outside of Lansing. The new Freedom Center at Detroit's Metro Airport is a case in point. I put together a team of veterans, community volunteers, corporations and the Wayne County Airport Authority to open up a new, permanent hospitality center for our troops, veterans and their families.

In addition to the Freedom Center, we have worked with the Attorney General's office to advise seniors of scams

that should be avoided, conducted several business roundtables, hosted community forums on key issues and even leveraged my Aerospace Industry experience to pursue partnerships between local businesses and NASA in conjunction with the Detroit Regional Chamber.

These are just a few examples of the ways our elected officials can have positive impact on our state without adding new wings to Michigan law libraries.

We already have much to be thankful for, but we are just beginning to turn our state around. It truly is Morning in Michigan.

Patrick Colbeck is the state Senator from the 7th District, which represents Plymouth and Canton, among other communities. He can be reached at www.morninginmichigan.com or calling (866) 262-7307.

Check credentials, fees for preparer, adviser

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

I was talking to a client the other day and he told me that for the first time he was going to hire a professional to do his tax return. He was somewhat distraught that he could no longer do his return himself. It was almost like it was a personal failure on his part that he could no longer prepare his own return. I told him there was no way he should feel distraught or disappointed and went on to explain that everything in life, particularly personal finances, is more difficult.



Money Matters
Rick Bloom

Take tax law. We have seen literally hundreds of tax law changes over the last few years. It's not just federal tax law changes that consumers need to be concerned with, but also state of Michigan tax laws.

The bottom line, taxes

have become much more complex and the penalties and consequences for making a mistake are more severe. Because of this no one should feel inadequate by having to hire a professional.

Many people also may need to hire a professional to help with their investments. This is an area that is constantly changing and more people are recognizing that they cannot do it themselves.

I always ask people when was the last time they've rebalanced their portfolio. Rebalancing a portfolio is the general maintenance need to keep a portfolio balanced and diversified. If they don't remember the last time you rebalanced, then it means they need the assistance of a professional.

Another sign that the assistance of a professional is needed is if you are afraid to make

a move in your portfolio without causing great anxiety. I know many people that literally cannot make a move in their portfolio because they get paralyzed by analysis. It seems that they want to look at every piece of information before they make a move. If this sounds like you, once again, you need the assistance of a professional.

I recognize that when it comes to investing, many people are reluctant to use a professional. That same person wouldn't hesitate about using a doctor to resolve a medical situation. Why should they be leery about using a professional financial person to assist with their finances?

I suggest one reason — particularly in the investment world — is because of the horror stories that they have heard. The bottom line is just because it may

be a little more difficult to find the right person, don't avoid looking.

When it comes to hiring someone to assist with your investments, there are questions to ask. One of the most important areas to discuss with a professional adviser is fees. I have always preferred financial advisers who charge a fee for their service as opposed to those who work for commission. I've always found that the more you can take conflict of interest out of the equation, the better it is for the customer. That doesn't mean that all commission salespeople are only concerned about their commis-

sion, because the best commission salespeople I know never worry about commissions, they just worry about taking care of their clients. However, unfortunately, there are too many commissioned people in the financial world who are incompetent.

Whether you deal with a tax person or a professional financial adviser, one of the keys to a successful business relationship is communication. If you feel intimidated or you don't feel comfortable asking questions, it's a sure sign that you're dealing with the wrong person.

Life in general — and particularly person-

al financial planning — has become more difficult and more complex. The fact that you have decided you need professional advice and assistance is a sign of maturity. Remember that hiring the right professional will not only put your affairs in better order, but it also can give you peace of mind, something we all should strive for.

Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit his website at www.bloomassetmanagement.com.

VOICES & VIEWS:
COMMENT ONLINE



hometownlife.com

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH PUBLIC NOTICE

To all residents and other interested parties: Agenda's and Minutes for the Charter Township of Plymouth Board of Trustees Meetings are available for review under the Reference Desk Page of the Township Website: www.plymouthtp.org. They are also posted in the Clerk's Office at Plymouth Township Hall, 9955 N Haggerty Road Plymouth, Michigan for public perusal.

Meeting dates: January 10, February 7, March 6 & 20, April 17, May 8 & 22, June 12

The public is invited and encouraged to attend the Board of Trustees Meetings.

Joe Bridgman, MMC
Township Clerk

Publish: February 12 and 16, 2012

0208768012 2x3

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to federal guidelines, the Charter Township of Plymouth decided on February 7, 2012 to submit the following projects for funding from the 2012 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program:

| LOCATION | 2012 PROJECTS | ESTIMATED ALLOCATION |
|---|--|----------------------|
| 201 South Main 1160 Sheridan 46640 Ann Arbor Tr | SENIOR SERVICES | \$ 3,960 |
| | TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM | \$ 7,644 |
| | ADA Accessibility Improvements to Township Park Two (2) Year Multi-Year Pre-Commitment | |
| | TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE \$156,200 | \$ 57,192 |
| 9955 N. Haggerty Rd | ADMINISTRATION | \$ 7,644 |
| TOTAL | | \$ 76,440 |

If Wayne County determines after all applications are received that additional funds are available for public service projects the proposed allocations submitted are:

| LOCATION | 2012 PROJECTS | ESTIMATED ALLOCATION |
|--|---|----------------------|
| 201 South Main 1160 Sheridan 46640 Ann Arbor Tr. | SENIOR SERVICES | \$ 9,937 |
| | TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM | \$ 26,754 |
| | ADA Accessibility Improvements to Township Park Four (4) Year Multi-Year Pre-Commitment | |
| | TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE \$156,200 | \$ 31,340 |
| 9955 N. Haggerty Rd | ADMINISTRATION | \$ 7,644 |
| TOTAL | | \$ 76,440 |

Plymouth Township Hall, 9955 N. Haggerty Road
Friendship Station Senior Center, 42375 Schoolcraft Road

Publish: February 16, 2012

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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH NOTICE OF HEARING ASSESSMENT BOARD OF REVIEW

NOTICE OF HEARING given that the Plymouth Township Board of Review will meet on the following dates and times:

Hearings are by appointment, please call 354-3269, between 8 am and 4:30 pm for an appointment.

| Date | Time | Event |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Tuesday, March 6 | 9 am - Noon | Organizational Meeting |
| Monday, March 12 | 2 pm - 5 pm 6 pm - 9 pm | Hearings by Appointment Hearings by Appointment |
| Wednesday, March 14 | 9 am - Noon 2 pm - 5 pm | Hearings by Appointment Hearings by Appointment |
| Thursday, March 15 | 9 am - Noon | Hearings by Appointment |
| Saturday, March 17 | 9 am - 11 am | First Come - First Served |

Other hearing dates and times may be scheduled as needed.

All persons protesting their assessment must complete petitions prior to appearing before the Board. A personal appearance is not required. Written protests to the Board of Review must be received by mail or delivered in person to the Assessing office by the close of business on Friday, March 23, 2012 at 4:30 pm.

The Board of Review will be held in the Board Meeting Room of Plymouth Township Hall, 9955 N. Haggerty Road, Plymouth, MI 48170.

Please come prepared as a ten (10) minute time limit before the Board of Review will be strictly adhered to.

Publish: February 16, 19 and 23, 2012

0208767988 - 3x5

CITY OF PLYMOUTH 2012 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW

The City of Plymouth Board of Review will be conducting the 2012 March Board of Review and will convene in the City Commission Conference Room, 201 S Main Street, Plymouth, MI 48170.

The regular Board of Review schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, March 6, 2012 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 7, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Thursday, March 8, 2012 from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 13, 2012 from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 19, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Other hearing dates and times may be scheduled as needed. Hearings are by appointments only. COMPLETED 2012 BOARD OF REVIEW PETITIONS ARE NECESSARY, and must be submitted to the Front Office located on the First Floor of City Hall prior to your appointment. The "Deadline" for submitting petitions for all persons wishing to appeal in person before the Board of Review is Monday, March 19, 2012.

A resident or non-resident taxpayer may file a petition with the Board of Review without the requirement of a personal appearance by the taxpayer or a representative. An agent must have written authority to represent the owner. Written petitions must be received by Monday, March 19, 2012 by 3:00 p.m. Postmarks are not accepted.

Copies of the notices stating the dates and times of the meetings will be posted and published in the local newspaper.

All Board of Review Meetings are open meetings in compliance with the "Open Meetings Act".

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Assessor's Office at (734) 453-1234, ext 253.

Linda J. Langmesser, CMC
City Clerk

Publish: February 16, 19 & 23, 2012

0208767827 - 3x5

OUR VIEWS

Vote no Feb. 28

Township SAD question simply irresponsible

It's an unusual ballot proposal that can't draw support from anyone on either side of the issue, but that's where the proposal for a Special Assessment District for fire services in Plymouth Township stands.

No one wants this proposal to pass, and we agree.

The proposal, if approved would allow the Plymouth Township board to levy up to 10 mills (\$1 for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value) for fire department capital expenditures and an unlimited amount for operations. It would have no time limit.

Many have called it a "blank check" and, despite elected officials' contention there's no plan for this board to ever levy it, a blank check is exactly what it is. That alone makes it a bad idea.

It's up for a vote because the Citizens Action Group, a grassroots group that had been pushing for a 1-mill, five-year SAD, got enough petition signatures to force the question onto the ballot. The township's legal advisers, however, contended an SAD could not be limited in that fashion; thus, the current ballot language was born.

Then the Friends of Plymouth Township was created to fight the language on the ballot, mostly arguing the "blank check" factor.

Even the firefighters, who would benefit most from this proposal, are against it. They'd prefer the 1-mill, five-year proposal put forth by CAG and, in fact, campaigned heavily for it during CAG's petition drive. But it's too late for that proposal.

Firefighters and township officials are at odds about how best to redesign the department in the wake of the loss of the City of Plymouth at the end of 2011. They've lobbed salvos about fair labor and concessions, work loads and compensation at each other.

The place to solve those issues is at the negotiating table, not the ballot box.

The question on the ballot is simply a bad idea. But voters should not be complacent and believe that because no group supports the proposal they need not vote.

A competitive GOP presidential primary will attract many township voters. However, it is important that voters address the ballot issue by voting no on Feb. 28.

'New' station deserves a listen

An old friend has a new look and, if you haven't yet noticed, it's time you did.

WSDP 88.1, the student-run radio station that serves Plymouth-Canton Community Schools and the surrounding area, got a face-lift as the new year dawned, and "The New 88.1," Plymouth and Canton's Hit Music was born.

And, while the musical format has changed — now you can hear everything from Adele and Maroon 5 to Kelly Clarkson, Bruno Mars and Bon Jovi — you're still getting other programming, such as hourly news from our community, live broadcasts from throughout Plymouth and Canton, and live high school sports from Canton, Plymouth and Salem. They've also debuted a new Community Focus 2.0 video webcast and cable show (featuring former *Observer* reporter Tony Bruscato).

There's one thing, though, that hasn't changed: The dedication of the students entrusted with the station's success. They work hard, and it's tough to argue with their success, with many alumni going on to do great things in broadcasting and other fields.

There are a number of ways you can help keep that quality going — fundraisers like the recent can-and-bottle drive and the Record/CD/Music Memorabilia Show Saturday, Feb. 25 at the Salem Cafeteria. And, while money is always a great way to help, there's another way equally important.

Listen. The radio station is something other districts can't offer, an asset not to be taken for granted. The students work incredibly hard, and they're good at what they do.

If you haven't tried the new 88.1, show your support and tune in.

COMMUNITY VOICE

What feature or business would you like to see added to downtown Plymouth?

We asked this question at the Plymouth District Library.



"A Chase Bank. It would be very convenient for us."

Kathy Quinn
Livonia



"I think, maybe, like a cheaper restaurant. Not fast food but, sort of less expensive. ... Like a diner."

Laura Castle
Plymouth Township



"Maybe a hardware store and maybe more convenience stores."

Earl Hoffman
Canton Township



"I've been here since '85. My wife and I miss general stores ... grocery stores, hardware stores."

Dennis Robare
Plymouth Township

LETTERS

Out-and-out fraud

That petition for the Special Assessment District for the Plymouth Township Fire / EMS is an out and out fraud. What the Citizen Action Group did was fraud. They walked up to as many residents as needed, and told them you had better sign this or we won't have a fire department. So they got their required signatures, sent it to a judge, and so on the ballot it goes.

This leads to a potential 300-percent Fire/EMS Dept. millage increase. The specific language on the proposal reads that it will be in an amount equal to one (1) mill for only five years. Actually, first year's estimate calls for an assessed rate of 2.444 mills with an increase for fire equipment that can be up to 10 mills with no end date, and portions of the tax increase for fire maintenance and operations including wages and benefits is unlimited with no end date.

Also indicated on the language of the proposal that it can authorize the Charter Township of Plymouth Board of Trustees, after a public hearing, to annually assess and levy special assessments for amounts necessary for operation and maintenance of Fire Services.

Actually, if approved the SAD millage will be in effect for each and every year. If this passes, township residents will no longer have any voting input regarding any tax increases. So forget their lofty idea of having a "public hearing." So what?

We no longer have a vote on how our tax dollars are to be spent. People were duped into signing that petition. The Citizen Action Group should be held accountable for their fraud. The people that signed it were not told all the facts. They read that petition and saw only "in an amount equal to one (1) mill (\$100 on each \$1,000 of taxable value) for a period of five (5) years, 2012 to 2016, inclusive."

The SAD amount to be assessed is \$3,837,000. Millage rate increase 2.444 mills. That proposal must be taken off the Feb. 28 election ballot.

Bonnie Austin
Plymouth

Can't support SAD

Dear Plymouth Township Firefighters:

With all due respect, I cannot support your Feb. 28 ballot proposal. As a retiree on a fixed income, I know I am not alone.

Our pensions are now being taxed by the State of Michigan and it's taking its toll on our household budgets. Another tax increase, whether it's at the municipal, county, state, or federal level, would be unpalatable in this depressed economy.

As a suggestion, our state reportedly has a \$500 million budget surplus. Perhaps you could submit your business case to the governor and see if he'll support you.

John M. Vraniak
Plymouth Township

Opposed to SAD

I am a Plymouth Township citizen

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We welcome your Letter to the Editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We may edit for clarity, space and content. Submit letters by the following formats:

Web: www.hometownlife.com

Mail: Letters to the Editor, Plymouth Observer, 615 W. Lafayette, Second Level, Detroit, MI 48226

Fax: (313) 223-3318

E-mail: bkadrich@hometownlife.com

Blog: You may also let your opinions be heard with your own blog at hometownlife.com.

Deadline: Letters should be received by 9 a.m. Monday to be published in the Thursday edition.

and appreciate all services that the township employees provide. I am now retired and living off a fixed income but, while I worked, I always lived within my means, paid my taxes, and saved to have a decent retirement.

I have been retired for five years and I continuously hear about the need to raise taxes. All I expect from the public servants is to live within their means, as I did, and not play the increase-taxes card every time things get tight.

I did it, so can government. It's not rocket science.

Johnnie Johnson
Plymouth

Identity theft

This SAD proposal on the ballot is akin to identity theft.

I am retired from one of the auto companies after 37 years and my benefits aren't even close to what these guys are asking for. I also spent two tours of duty in Vietnam so do not hand me this baloney about how dangerous these jobs are.

The dangers involved in these jobs are part of the deal, if you do not like it find another line of work. I can't believe anybody with any common sense would vote for this, let alone have guts enough to expect the taxpayers to approve this.

Dave and Cathy Mills
Plymouth

Not listening

Re: The Plymouth Township Firefighters' attempt to work with the Township of Plymouth in working out a solution to the Fire/EMS service level stalemate.

Can we learn anything from the Feb. 2, 2012, *Observer* editorial about the school board "Book" debate?

An editorial in the Feb. 12 *Observer*, re: the "book" controversy, stated (fourth paragraph), "The problem with that logic is this: Listening to the people who elected them is also the board's business"

In the eighth paragraph, the editorial states, "But the bigger picture issue — not listening to the people they were elected to represent — is a far more egregious mistake. Listening to the people, making sure they have a stake in decisions made, should be a priority. Board President

John Barrett said as such Monday."

Paragraph 11 states, "The way we do that is to listen carefully (to residents) and honor what they have to say."

Has the Plymouth Township Board of Trustees "listened to, and honored" the people that elected them? Not in the least! Why do we have this "righteous indignation (rightly so) to the "book," violation of constitutional rights, but not that of 4,000 petition signers, whose right to put a 1-mil/five-year millage question on the ballot is being violated?

Tom Kelly
Plymouth

'No' on SAD

The citizens of Plymouth Township should take note of an opportunity to make a long past due structural change to their current Fire/EMS delivery model.

We often complain or wonder how we can make a positive impact in Washington or Lansing with little resolve. We have an opportunity in our own back yard to make a difference for generations to come and to send a message to a self-serving department that is in need of serious structural change and to remind these individuals that our entire community has suffered during these troubled financial times.

We do not owe our firefighters an excessive lucrative lifetime pension or health care coverage through death. It has been documented that a firefighter would have to save over \$2,000,000 net after tax dollars in their lifetime in order to fund the current pension and health plans outlined on the Plymouth Township website at www.plymouthtp.org.

Who is America's fastest growing class of millionaires — they are police officers, firefighters and federal bureaucrats. Firefighters on average make as much as twice their private sector workers when you include the net present value of their pension/health care obligations. How long can this last?

Picking your neighbors' pockets is not a necessity of survival or a earned entitlement. Our township leaders have expressed their desire to take the township Fire/EMS delivery model in a new direction and have done an excellent job of trying to fully disclose to all citizens the negative financial ramifications of implementing a Special Assessment District (SAD).

We need to support our leaders, protect our wallets and future by voting "NO" on Feb. 28.

Daniel B. Smith
Northville

Thank you

I am writing to thank you for your column on Sunday, Jan. 29 ("Politics moves front-and-center in book debate).

I worry about what is happening in our community, and I appreciate your article — especially the part about this issue not being about the children!

Keep up the good work!

Becky Hurst
Plymouth

PLYMOUTH OBSERVER

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Community Editor
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Executive Editor

Grace Perry,
Director of
Advertising

Public's input sought on I-96 project

By Ken Abramczyk
Observer Staff Writer

Livonia residents and commuters who travel on I-96 can expect to see a reconstruction of the freeway start next year between Telegraph Road in Redford Township and Newburgh Road in Livonia.

The two-year project is estimated to cost approximately \$150 million and will reconstruct the freeway and bridges spanning the freeway.

The Michigan Department of Transportation has scheduled an open house for 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 1, in the Gallery Room on the fifth floor of Livonia City Hall. Businesses and residents impacted by the I-96 construction are invited to speak with MDOT officials about their concerns and ask questions about the construction.

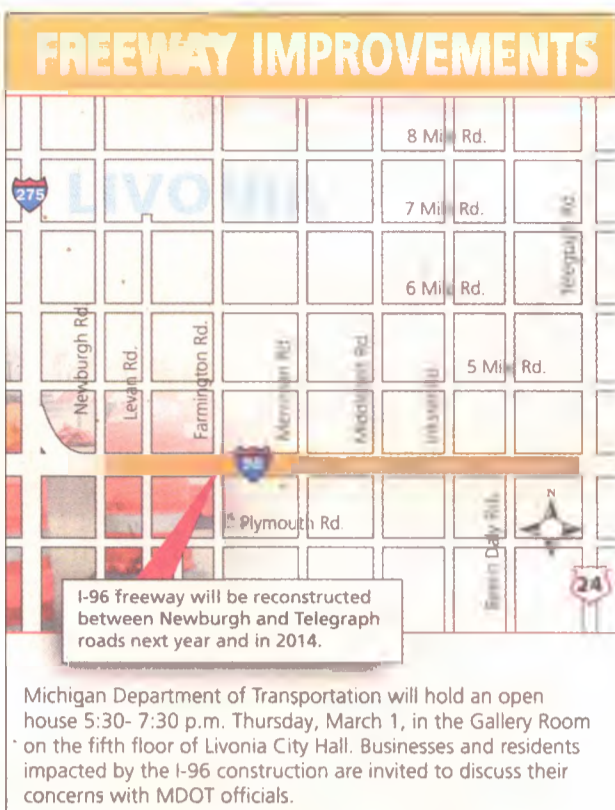
A preliminary schedule discussed with the city indicates that Phase I would begin in 2013 and

encompass Newburgh Road to Melvin, just west of Middlebelt. Phase II, Melvin east to Telegraph in Redford Township, would be completed in 2014.

"We are in the very early stages of the planning and design of the project," said Gorette Yung, project development engineer with MDOT. "We want to talk with the public and hear what their major concerns are and work with them in the planning stage."

Yung said public comments will assist MDOT in deciding how many lanes will be closed at once or whether to close all lanes of the freeway, and which entrance and exit ramps will be closed or left open on the freeway and when they will be closed. According to MDOT's traffic survey on its website, an average of 128,900 vehicles travel I-96 in Livonia per day.

Construction will move quicker if more lanes



Michigan Department of Transportation will hold an open house 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 1, in the Gallery Room on the fifth floor of Livonia City Hall. Businesses and residents impacted by the I-96 construction are invited to discuss their concerns with MDOT officials.

are closed simultaneously, but MDOT wants public input first before making a final decision, Yung said. "We know that

there are a lot of businesses that need deliveries in that area that use the freeway," Yung said. "In this day and age, we

try to be mindful of businesses and the economy, too."

Asked if the freeway might be entirely closed like the Lodge was during its reconstruction a couple of years ago, Yung said each community is unique. "The Lodge has a lot of residential homes near it, but this area has more businesses on the south side."

"We want to know what everybody is thinking."

City Engineer Todd Zilincik said residents will have a chance to tell MDOT what impact it will have on them.

"MDOT will know whether eastbound or westbound should be closed or whether to split (the freeway) up, and what impact that will have on residents," Zilincik said.

An owner of Wine Palace, 13971 Middlebelt, said his business was hurt four or five years ago when roadwork was done on I-96. "It's like you're closing

valve and the blood can't get through," said Cliff Denha.

Denha said he plans to attend the open house. "That's going to impact us," Denha said. "We get a lot of our business from customers who drive off the freeway. We depend on that, and it will certainly hurt us."

Customers drive from Redford and Detroit from the east, and Northville and Plymouth from the west, Denha said. Denha likes the fact that MDOT is looking for public comment, but wants to know why MDOT is reconstructing the freeway when roadwork was done recently on it.

"It looks like it was in pretty good shape," Denha said. "I don't see why they need to do it. They just went through this about four years ago."

kabramcz@hometownlife.com | (313) 222-2591 | Twitter: @Ken-Abramcz

Local couple eager to welcome son from Russia into home

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Tiffany and Julian Zendejas of Canton are eager to adopt a son from Russia. The couple began with a Chinese adoption about five years ago.

"Their adoption program is just going slower and slower," said Tiffany Zendejas, who owns Sincerely Yours in downtown Northville, a store featuring stationery and invitations.

In June 2011, the couple decided on a Russian adoption.

"We actually traveled for the first time last month (December)," she said. "We were there



Tiffany and Julian Zendejas of Canton are adopting a young son from Russia.

about a week."

They anticipate their son's adoption to be complete this March, April or May.

The couple can't say too much about the boy or

use social media, but can do so after the adoption is complete. Tiffany Zendejas said they tried to get pregnant starting about eight years ago. She's 38

and he's 40.

"We've both been through the gamut of tests." After a time, she said, they decided it was more important to be parents.

Before they got married in 1997, they'd talked a lot about adoption. "I had always felt like I was called to adopt," she said. "I just have never been able to see the difference, I guess."

The approval process for adoption is extensive, including a home study with a social worker. The couple must be cleared by local and state police, as well as the FBI and Homeland Security. Psychiatric testing

is required and couples must show they have no substance abuse issues and sufficient finances.

Tiffany Zendejas said the book with their adoption papers weighs about six and a half pounds and is growing.

"It's kind of known as a fairly consistent adoption process," she said of Russia. The couple wishes to share their son's culture and heritage as he grows up.

"We're excited," she said. "It's been a very long road for us. We're excited to have the opportunity." The process of starting a family doesn't take most couples as long, she added.

"It really could not be a more perfect fit, I think," she said of the son they plan to adopt and love already. "As far as adoption standards go, he's pretty young."

The process is costly, and the couple held a couple of road rallies with family and friends as fundraisers. Bowling and comedy nights are planned for final costs.

Julian, who works as a quality control manager for Skyway Precision in Plymouth and Livonia, is eager to be a dad.

"He's pretty much over the moon," she said. "He's really excited."

jbrown@hometownlife.com

House OKs bipartisan measure to downsize judiciary

The Michigan House approved a package of bills Tuesday that will cut the number of trial judges in the state by 36 through attrition.

The original bipartisan legislation passed by the House in December proposed eliminating 41 trial court judgeships. The Senate amended the bills and reduced the number to 36.

"The last time we eliminated judgeships in Michigan was more than a decade ago, and even though the current reduction is not as sweeping as we first envisioned, it is a huge step toward reforming the judiciary, assuring access to justice and saving taxpayer money," said state Rep. John Walsh, R-Livonia, chair of the House Judiciary Committee.

The legislation was recommended in a report compiled by the State Court Administrative Offices. Past reports have urged similar reductions, but the recommendations were not acted upon. The current report received the support of the Michigan Supreme Court and all three state judges' associations.

"This will in no way affect a citizen's right to a speedy trial or full access to justice through the court system," Walsh said. "It is overdue reform that will save taxpayer money in the long run, and will bring our judicial system to the correct size."

The package — House Bills 5071-77, 5093-95 and 5101-08 — now goes to the governor for his signature.

Class on appealing tax assessments

Schoolcraft College is offering a class on how to appeal property tax assessments 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23.

Taught by a former Board of Review member, the class will cover what a property assessment is, how to determine

grounds for appeal, documentation necessary to support your appeal, the hearing process and post hearing relief.

The cost of the class is \$29.

"Schoolcraft College is in a position to give homeowners a leg up in this

cumbersome process,"

said Jennifer Bodurka, programming coordinator for Schoolcraft's Continuing Education and Professional Development department. "If anything, our class will give people good knowledge on how to proceed

and what courses of action are available."

For more information, call (734) 462-4448 or visit www.schoolcraft.edu/cepd. Schoolcraft's main campus is on Haggerty Road between Six and Seven Mile roads in Livonia.

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SPORTS

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'Cats, Chiefs in KLAA semis

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

The KLAA girls basketball championship tournament isn't exactly the state playoffs.

But for Plymouth, Tuesday's 34-32 victory in the first round against Livonia Stevenson came pretty close to it.

"Stevenson was one game away from a division title," Plymouth head coach Bob de Bear said. "So this is an outstanding win for our team. And for our program, a post-season win is a terrific step in the right direction. I'm incredibly proud of the way the kids worked together tonight."

With the victory, the Wildcats (11-6) advanced to the Kensington Conference semifinals.

Plymouth will face KLAA South Division champion Westland John Glenn (10-0 KLAA South) at 7 p.m. Thursday. The game will be at John Glenn.

The first half was a defensive battle, with the opening stanza ending with Plymouth (third seed in the KLAA South) up 5-4 over the second seed from the KLAA Central.

It was a 13-9 halftime edge for the Wildcats and it wasn't until the fourth quarter for Stevenson (11-5) to reach double digits in any frame.

Adjustments click

"In the second half, we made some adjustments that gave us more offensive flow and rhythm," de Bear said. "We were able to get the ball inside and keep Stevenson off balance."

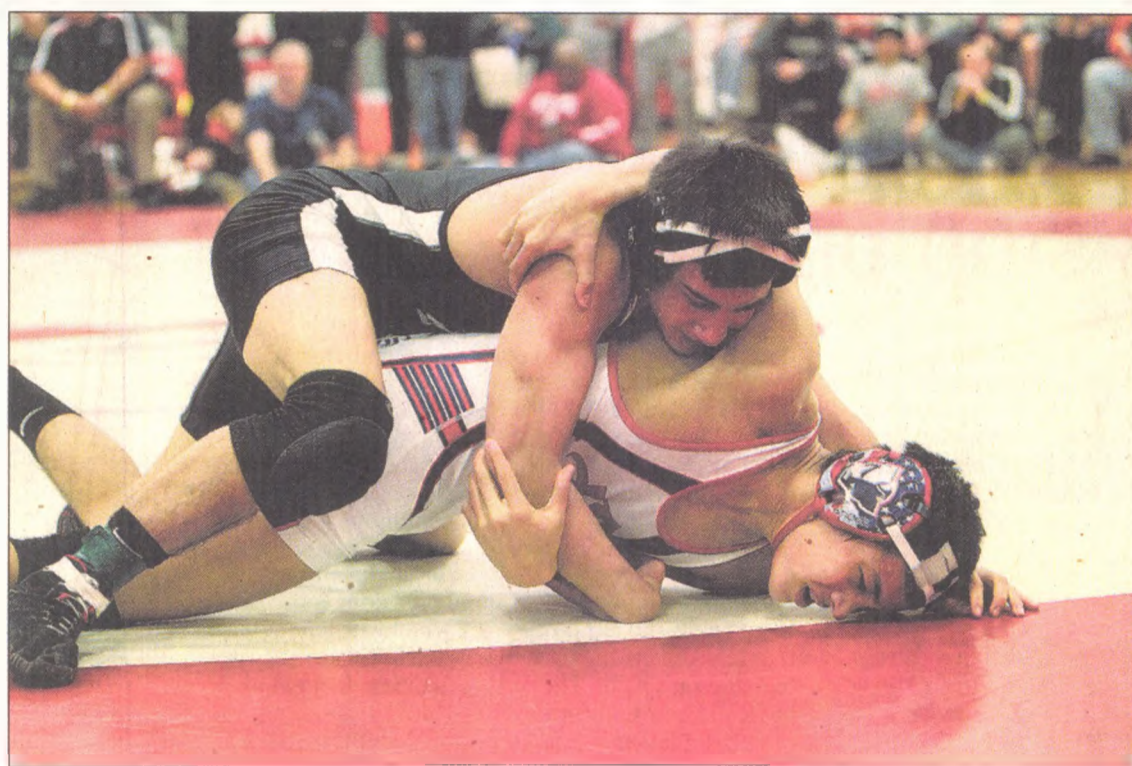
Both teams had trouble shooting from the floor. Plymouth made just 10 of 29 two-point shots (34.5 percent) while the Spartans connected on a paltry 12-48 (25 percent).

It helped the Wildcats that they were better at the free throw line, making 11 of 17 attempts (64.7 percent). Stevenson attempted just 14 foul shots and only made six of them (42.9 percent).

Jada Woody led Plymouth with seven points and nine rebounds, while Alyssa Burris scored six (hitting two clutch treys).

Please see HOOPS, B2

INDIVIDUAL DISTRICTS



Plymouth's Said Youssef (top) puts the clamps on Livonia Franklin's Jordan Atienza during the championship bout at 140 of the Division 1 individual finals.

PHOTOS BY JOHN KEMSKI

Ready for regionals

Fifteen PCEP wrestlers stay alive in quest for D1 state meet

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

There's no denying that Novi-Detroit Catholic Central continues to be a mega-power in wrestling.

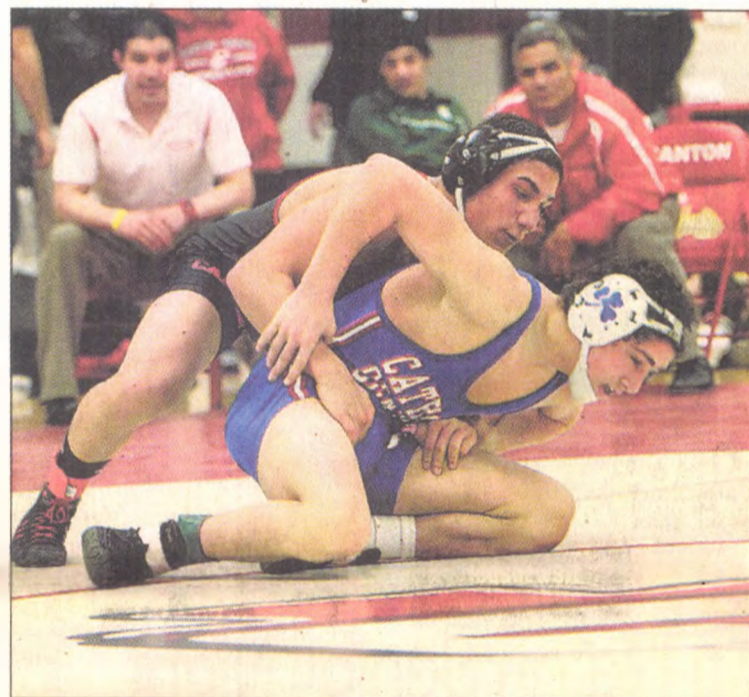
The Shamrocks racked up first-place finishes in nine of 14 weight classes at Saturday's Canton-hosted Division 1 individual wrestling district finals. But Livonia Franklin will send eight to the D1 individual regionals at Saline and the three Plymouth-Canton Educational Park teams are combining to send 15 — seven from Plymouth.

Wrestlers in the top four per weight class earned district medals and qualified for the regionals.

"We got seven which is the most Plymouth's ever had advance to regionals in one year," Plymouth head coach Quinn Guernsey said. "... I'm very happy with our showing, I was real happy with the way our guys wrestled."

"The seven guys who got out (to go to regionals) wrestled great, but we had a couple other guys make the blood round (top eight) and wrestled hard."

There were four wrestlers each from Canton and Salem to



Canton's Alec Pantaleo (left) takes on Novi-Detroit Catholic Central's Malik Amine in the championship bout at 135 during Saturday's Division 1 individual district finals.

qualify for regionals.

The time to peak

Individual champions from the Park included Plymouth's Said Youssef and Canton's Alec Pantaleo.

Youssef battled Franklin's

Jordan Atienza to the wire, finally prevailing 8-6 at 140.

"Had to get up as fast as I can (and) get back on my feet because that's where I'm strongest at," Youssef said. "The key

Please see WRESTLING, B3

'Cats girls lax meeting

Anyone interested in playing Plymouth High School girls lacrosse in the spring should circle Thursday, March 1, on their calendars. At 7 p.m., there will be a mandatory parent and player meeting in room 401 at Plymouth High School.

Rockettes pom clinic

The Salem Rockettes Kids Clinic is just around the corner, slated from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 10.

Participants will learn various routines, receive a T-shirt and pom poms and be invited to perform at the annual Rockette Show.

To download the clinic flier, go to www.pompon.salemrocks.com and click on documents.

Eagles clipped

Despite a 22-point night by Mick Noel, Plymouth Christian Academy's boys basketball team lost 64-38 Tuesday night to Oakland Christian.

The Eagles (5-11) played without senior center Eric Jipping, who was deemed lost for the rest of the season with a knee injury sustained on Feb. 4 against Lenawee Christian.

Jipping finished his prep career 15 points shy of the 1,000 mark.

Play ball

Registrations are now under way for the Greater Canton Youth Baseball Softball Association's baseball and softball programs.

The GCYBSA offers progressively developmental recreational baseball and softball programs for players age 4-18 from Plymouth and Canton. GCYBSA is also home to a competitive league and travel programs (Boys Cardinals, Girls Pride Fast Pitch).

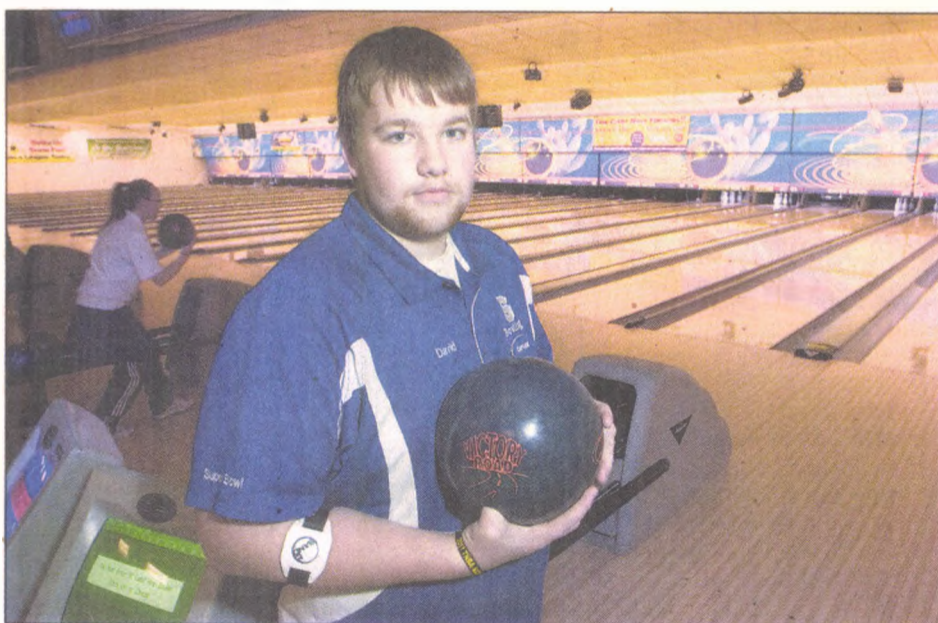
For more information, go to www.gcybsa.com or contact Coralee Ott at (734) 394-5358, via e-mail at cott@cantonmi.org.

YMCA spring leagues

The Plymouth Family YMCA is accepting registrations for spring co-ed soccer and girls volleyball leagues.

Both leagues run from April 16 through June 9. There will be one practice and one game each week. The cost is \$84 for program members or \$115 for community members. The registration deadline is March 30.

If you are interested in participating or coaching your child's team, please contact the YMCA at (734) 453-2904 or visit www.ymcadetroit.org.



Salem senior captain David Nikkila's bowling skills and leadership have been key elements of the Rocks' strong season.

Nikkila powers upstart Rocks

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Not everybody knows there is a varsity bowling program at the Park.

But people are starting to notice thanks to the efforts of bowlers such as Salem senior and team captain David Nikkila.

"This year has been great. We're doing the best we've ever done at Salem," Nikkila said during a recent interview at Super Bowl in Canton, home base for all three

high schools from Plymouth-Canton Educational Park. "We just beat (Westland) John Glenn, which is very intense. It's great to beat a team that's winning."

The Rocks have put the lone blemish on the Rockets' record this season, with their 18-12 victory Feb. 1. John Glenn won the KLAA South Division with a record of 11-1; Salem's within the division is 9-3, good for second place.

One reason for the

Rocks' solid season is Nikkila's power bowling. He rolled an impressive 248-249—597 earlier this season at Town and Country Lanes and has averaged 206. Ironically, he wasn't at his best when Salem defeated John Glenn, throwing a 182-199—381 series.

Team-first attitude

But even though it wasn't Nikkila's top showing of the season, he was

Please see BOWLING, B2

Canton keeps raising the bar

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

On the heels of a record-breaking night last Thursday against Livonia Blue, the Canton gymnastics team Monday improved to 12-0 in the KLAA Kensington Division.

The Chiefs defeated Plymouth 145.875-to-134.375, on a night where Canton's five gymnasts set a new school mark for floor exercise with a 38.175 cumulative score.

"We had five nines on floor, which is phenomenal," Canton head coach John Cunningham said. "I know of only one other team that can catch us on floor with scores like that."

He undoubtedly was making a reference to defending state champion Grand Ledge.

Leading that floor quintet was Ayana Lewis, who registered a 9.725 — just shy of the 9.775 school record.

Also surpassing the nine-point mark on floor were Melissa Green (9.525), freshman Jocelyn Moraw

GIRLS GYMNASTICS

(9.475), Nicole Lasecki (9.45) and Marina Milad (9.125).

Plymouth's Jane McCurry was fifth on floor with a 9.375. The Wildcats also took sixth place with Kennedy Lewis, who scored a 9.25.

The Chiefs finished 1-2-3 on vault, led by Erica Lucas and Green, tying with a mark of 9.1. They were trailed by Lasecki (8.85) and Plymouth's Reagan Engstrom (8.8).

Moraw took first both on balance beam (8.35) and uneven parallel bars (9.625).

"I talked to you about worrying about the people we lost (after 2010-11), like Robyn Piwowar and Kali Pierce, the Granowiczes (Brittany and Brooke)," Cunningham said. "And I had no thought there would be any one person who could pick up most of that slack. And Jocelyn has done that."

Taking second on beam for Canton was Green (9.15), with Plym-

Please see GYMNASTS, B3

Plymouth's Stefan Noesen (No. 11, left) sends the puck past Saginaw goalie Jake Paterson during Sunday's shootout. The Whalers won the shootout 2-1 and the game, 5-4.



Whalers stop brief skid

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

For Plymouth Whalers forward Stefan Noesen, scoring in Sunday's shoot-out win over Saginaw was a piece of cake — fitting, since it was his 19th birthday.

Noesen and teammate Alex Aleardi (Farmington Hills) each perfected the forehand-backhand-roof shot against Spirit netminder Jake Patterson with Aleardi's snapping a tie in the shootout.

That gave the Whalers a much-needed 5-4 win before nearly 2,100 fans on "Faith & Family Day" at Compuware Arena. The victory snapped a two-game losing skid, following losses Friday at London (8-6) and Saturday at home against Kitchener (6-5). Plymouth improved to 36-15-2-1, first in the OHL West Division.

"Those are both kind of our bread-and-butter moves, we work on those every day in practice all the time," said Noesen, a first-round pick of the Ottawa Senators in the 2011 NHL Entry Draft. "It's just a habit, just go forehand-backhand and luckily it went in both times."

Noesen opened the scoring early in the first period, sending the puck between Patterson's pads for his 25th goal of the season.

It was a 2-0 lead with

12:19 left in the first when defenseman Curtis Crombeen scored (from defenseman Beau Schmitz of Howell and forward J.T. Miller, who had two assists).

But the Spirit (25-24-0-5) kept giving the home team fits, sending 57 shots on Plymouth goalie Matt Mahalak — outshooting the Whalers 18-6 in the third — and erasing a 4-2 deficit to force OT.

Mahalak shut the door after Josh Shalla scored a power-play goal at 11:34 of the third to make it a 4-4 game.

Net presence

"Matt (Mahalak) played real well (Sunday)," said Whalers' assistant coach Don Eiland, at the helm during a five-game suspension being served by head coach Mike Vellucci. "That was what we needed, we needed our goalie to steal a game and that's exactly what happened. We got outshot pretty good (57-44) but we found a way to pull it out, thanks to Matt."

Vellucci will be on the sidelines for two more games. He was suspended by the league following his ejection in the final minute of the Feb. 4 game against Windsor.

Also scoring for the Whalers were forwards Jamie Devane and rookie Danny Vanderwiell.

Devane persevered in front of Paterson, chip-

ping in his own rebound at the 31-second mark of the middle stanza. It was his 18th goal of the year.

Following a Saginaw marker by winger Brandon Saad, the Whalers needed just 1:26 to restore a two-goal cushion.

Aleardi whipped a shot from below the left circle that clanked off the post to Paterson's right. The puck slid across the netmouth to Vanderwiell, who tapped it into the wide-open cage.

With the Whalers resting several players due to nagging injuries and with the compressed schedule, Vanderwiell took advantage of extra ice time to score goals in all three weekend games.

He scored twice against the OHL-leading Knights and once against Kitchener and now has five for the season.

"It's a great opportunity for him," said Eiland, about Vanderwiell. "He's taking advantage of it, he's playing hard, he's keeping it simple. Danny's doing a good job and he's getting better every week."

Plymouth will have another busy week, traveling to play Windsor at 7 p.m. Thursday and returning to Compuware for 7 p.m. games Friday (Owen Sound) and Saturday (Guelph).

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(734) 469-4128

Newbie bowler glad she joined

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Better late than never for Salem's Ashley Hinojosa as far as bowling's concerned.

The senior is wrapping up her first and only season with the high school's program, but would have liked to have known about it a couple years ago.

"I didn't really know about it my freshman and sophomore year," Hinojosa said. "Last year when I wanted to try out, school was too much."

With a chuckle, she added that "I made time for it this year."

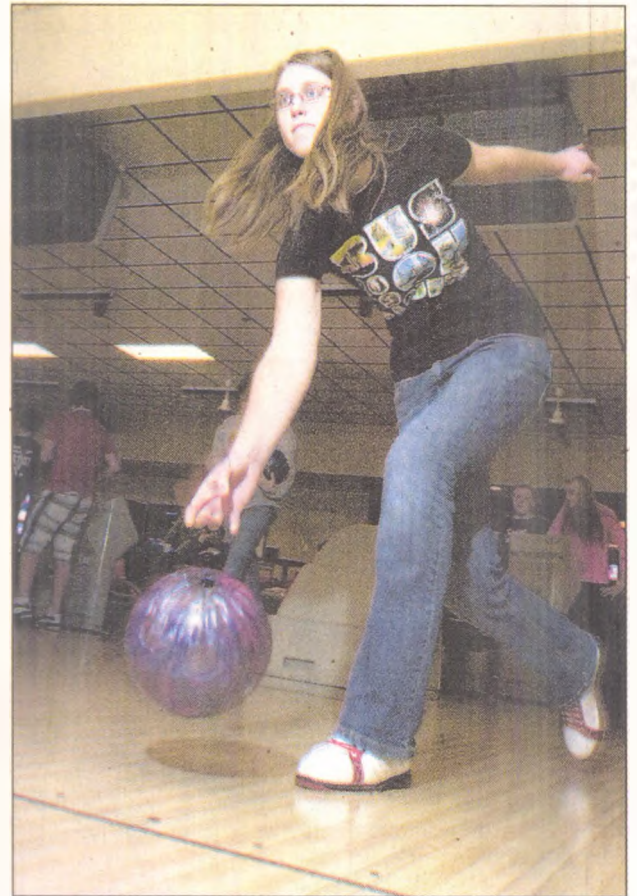
During tryouts, Salem head coach Kathie Hahn said Hinojosa averaged about 130 per game. That average has jumped by 10 pins during the season.

"Ashley's done really well this year," Hahn said. "I'm disappointed she's a senior and she won't continue to bowl with us."

"She's a gifted bowler and she could really be good, I just wish I had more time to work with her."

Hahn, who said the program is only in its fourth year, emphasized that it would be a plus to let students now in the middle schools find out there is a bowling team at Salem.

"I want the word to get out there," Hahn said. "Super Bowl is going to do a program for middle school bowlers after high school is done, to start trying to get them



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rookie Salem bowler Ashley Hinojosa practices at Super Bowl in Canton. She has improved by 10 pins in her only season with the Rocks.

involved, so us coaches know what's coming up."

Hinojosa's interest in bowling began in earnest last year, when she joined the Strike Force league held at Super Bowl in Canton, which is where the Rocks bowl.

On that rec team was a longtime friend, Nathan Purcell (currently on the Plymouth junior varsity). Both decided to give high school bowling a try.

"It's been really fun," Hinojosa said. "It's a lot of time but I've made really good friends with it. I love every time I can come bowl. It's a great after-school activity."

She plans on it being a great after-graduation activity, too. "I know it's something I want to continue."

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BOWLING

Continued from page B1

thrilled to share the experience of an upset victory with teammates.

"You bowl your own game, that's what people think," Nikkila said. "But in the end, it's all about what the whole team does, whether you're going to be a strong team or not."

"That's exactly what Salem has. Every single bowler has very unique qualities that make us a good team."

According to Salem head coach Kathie Hahn, personal performance is trumped by the team camaraderie that Nikkila fosters.

She said Nikkila initiates team dinners and carpools to practices.

"This year the whole concept of what a team is all about has clicked with David," Hahn said. "The kids just all definitely look up to him and his game itself."

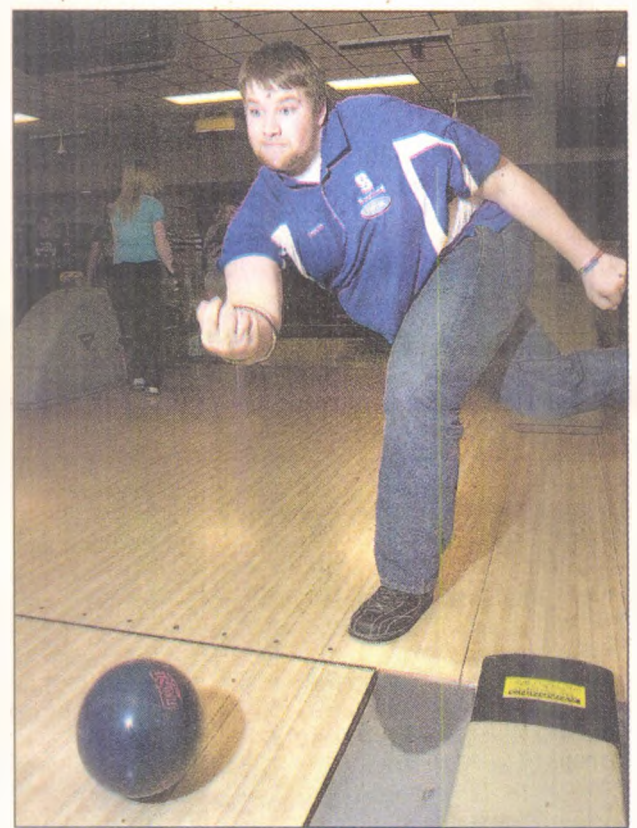
"I've seen much more consistency in his game, how he throws the ball."

Hahn described Nikkila as a power hitter as opposed to the old-school down-and-in — the style where bowlers throw the ball to a mark on the floorboards.

"Most of your standard bowlers are down-and-in players," Hahn said, "where they pick their mark, whether it be the 10-board, and they throw it right up and it just hooks in."

"David doesn't, he has a lot of power. He's a big kid, he just gets that ball out there and that thing comes in and those pins fly."

But he couldn't bowl consistency with that style until this season, following off-season competition around the area in the Western Wayne Youth



Salem's David Nikkila powers another ball toward the pins during a recent practice at Super Bowl in Canton.

Travel Classic.

"He learned this year, he got a better grip on how to control it and how to pick up the spares," the coach said. "It's hard for somebody who throws those big hook balls to be consistent with spares."

No plans to stop

Concurring was Nikkila, who would like to keep bowling in college, probably on a club team somewhere.

"Last year I really struggled with the 10-pin, and this year I've missed three pins all together," Nikkila said. "All the practice has made me much better on spares."

Nikkila said he didn't bowl competitively or much at all, really, until reaching high school. And that's even though his parents (Barb and Doug), grandfather (Ken Nikkila) and sister (Kelsey) all enjoy the sport.

Although he played foot-

ball at Salem when he started high school, he finally gravitated to bowling and signed up for the school team in 10th grade. (He also was on the JV boys golf team last year and plans to golf for the Rocks again this spring.)

"My entire family bowls, so it was kind of a family thing," he said. "My dad used to play football, but I didn't have as much fun."

"I just wanted to do a sport that I enjoyed playing. Bowling is one of those sports I always had fun doing, and I learned really quickly because it was in my genes."

He's glad he made that choice, and he plans to keep on rolling — literally.

"Bowling you can do for your whole life," Nikkila said. "I plan to bowl my whole life."

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PCA girls win big on Senior Night

Plymouth Christian Academy's girls basketball team celebrated Senior Night Tuesday with a 45-20 victory over visiting Oakland Christian.

The Eagles (13-5, 9-2 in the MIAC Blue) got off to a fast start, with senior guards Katie Baum and Kristin Lindberg in the starting lineup. PCA led 12-4 after the first quarter and padded that advantage to 29-9 at halftime.

"They (Baum and Lind-

berg) both did a good job for us," PCA head coach Carol Gerulis said. "We had a big lead at halftime so I was able to mix up the lineup a lot."

Sophomore guard Martha Mullett paced the Eagles with 13 points, with junior guard Jenna Abraham fallying eight points.

Lindberg (seven points), junior guard Karen Windle (five points, six rebounds, five steals), sophomore forwards Emily Gerulis

(four points, six boards) and Rachel Smith (nine rebounds) all helped the cause.

UNIVERSITY LIGGETT 68, PCA 38: Emily Gerulis scored 21 points — sinking five treys — and grabbed 10 rebounds Friday night.

But Gerulis could not do it all as Plymouth Christian Academy lost big-time at Grosse Pointe Woods University Liggett.

Rachael Fuller scored five points for the Eagles.

Madison Ristovski led University Liggett with 18 points.

The middle stanzas were the undoing for PCA, being outscored 41-12 over that span.

Canton (14-3) will face host Novi 7 p.m. Thursday in the conference semifinals.

SALEM 50, FRANKLIN 27: Bri Berberet keyed a 17-point first quarter Tuesday night to spark the Rocks (4-13) to a KLAAs consolation bracket victory at Livonia Franklin (1-16).

Berberet hit three triples and a deuce in the first "to get us started pretty good," Salem head coach Fred Thomann said.

It was a 25-18 game at halftime, but the Rocks really shut down the Patriots in the second half.

"We ended up pulling away and getting after it pretty good," Thomann said.

One key to the win was the play of senior point guard Katelynn Krause, who tallied seven rebounds and seven assists.

"She didn't score but she had herself a pretty good floor game," the coach added.

Next up for Salem is a 7 p.m. home game Thursday against Livonia Churchill.

HOOPS

Continued from page B1

Providing inside presence was Shelby Cheston (seven boards, five blocks).

Contributing five points were Kylie Robb and outstanding defender Alyssa Dillon, who the coach said shadowed Stevenson's best perimeter player.

Scoring 14 points for Stevenson was senior guard Molly Knoph.

According to de Bear, the return from injury of senior guard Kate Watson (two points in 24 minutes) provided a lift.

"I know she wasn't playing at 100 percent," de Bear said. "But Kate is

such a great competitor. It showed tonight."

CANTON 39, NORTHVILLE 23: Also victorious in Tuesday's opening round of the KLAAs tourney's top bracket was host Canton.

The Chiefs (No. 2 seed in the South) rolled out to a 9-1 lead after one frame against the Mustangs (No. 3 seed in the Central).

Senior point guard Robyn Mack was excellent, with 22 points, five rebounds, four steals and four assists.

Adding nine points and four boards was Paige Aresco.

"I thought the girls defended really well tonight especially in the first quarter," Canton head coach Brian Samulski said.

"Robyn was outstanding tonight and I thought Paige really stepped up and had a great game too."

Samulski added that junior center Kiara Schneider and sophomore center Taylor Hunley "did a great job" of keeping Northville's low-post game from getting in sync.

YMCA starts registration

The Plymouth Family YMCA is registering for its instructional clinics.

The focus of these programs will be on fun, exercise and social interaction through

sports instruction. Clinics include Tiny Tikes Sports Sampler (ages 3-5), Preschool Basketball (ages 4-5) and Y Pucks (ages 6-8).

The programs run the weeks of March 6 through April 17. All classes are held in local

schools during the week.

For more information, contact the YMCA at (734) 453-2904 or visit www.ymcadetroit.org.

Baseball clinics

Baseball fundamentals are on tap for youngsters looking to improve their

skills, at the forthcoming Plymouth Wildcats Youth Baseball Clinic.

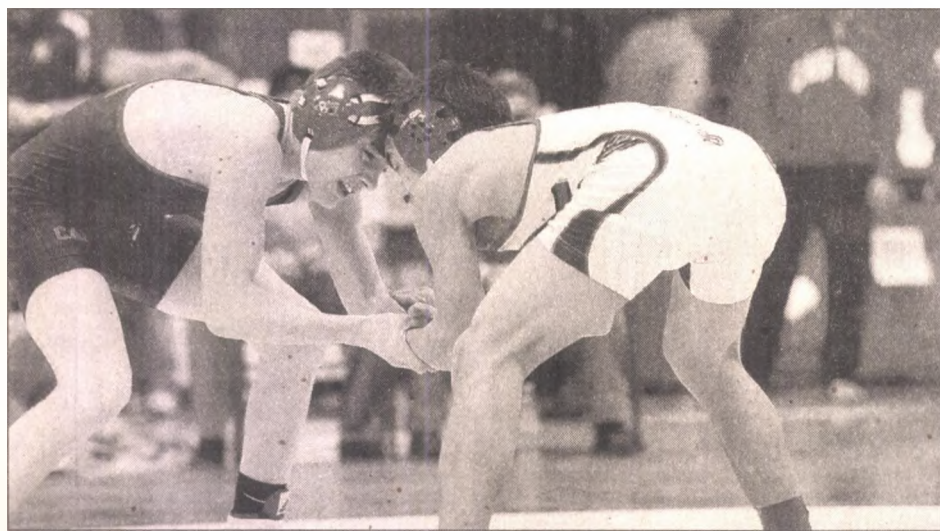
Participants in grades 1-8 will receive age-appropriate instruction from 2012 Plymouth varsity baseball coaches and players. Stations will include hitting, pitching,

infield, outfield, catching and radar gun readings.

Sessions, in the Plymouth High School gymnasium, will take place: 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday March 17 (for those in grades 1-4); Saturday March 31 (for those in grades 5-8).

The pre-registration cost, which includes snack, is \$20. The fee is \$25 the day of the clinic. Pre-registration is urged, as camp is limited to 100. Go to www.baseball.plymouth-wildcats.com for more information.

SPORTS ROUNDUP



Canton's Ben Griffin (left) and Livonia Franklin's Danny Martinez face each other in the championship match at 112 during Saturday's Division 1 individual districts.

JOHN KEMSKI

Plymouth drops two at MIHL Showcase

Plymouth had little to show for two spirited games at the Michigan Interscholastic Hockey League Showcase in Trenton.

The Wildcats (12-10) took a combined 65 shots on goal in the two games at Kennedy Arena, a 2-1 loss last

Thursday against Grosse Ile and a 3-2 defeat Saturday against Muskegon Mona Shores.

"They (Wildcats) showed themselves very well," Plymouth head coach Gerry Vento said. "We probably played two of our better games, we just couldn't put the puck in the net."

Against Grosse Ile, the lone Plymouth goal scorer was senior forward Matt Goertz. Scoring against Mona Shores were senior forwards Cody Staub and Zach Gambrell.

Senior Rich Guglielmi played in goal for the first game, with the second contest handled by senior Peyton Wilburn.

Plymouth will now play a KLAA crossover match 3 p.m. Saturday at Lakeland.

CHIEFS IN CHELSEA: Canton also took part in a "showcase" last week, namely the Michigan Public High School Hockey Showcase in Chelsea. The Chiefs managed to split a pair of games, following a 3-1 loss last Thursday against Sault Ste. Marie with Sunday's 6-2 victory over Macomb

Dakota. Canton head coach Jeremy Majszak said the win was one of the team's best of the season, with five different goal scorers and three power-play goals.

Lighting the lamp twice against Macomb Dakota was senior forward Brandon Grillo. Adding single markers were senior forwards Duggan Tear, Andrew Gorski, sophomore forward Ian Fagan and senior defenseman Brandon Schlieger.

Chipping in with two assists was senior forward Taylor Baker while sophomore netminder was solid in goal with a 22-save performance. In the loss to Sault Ste. Marie, Tear scored for the Chiefs in the second period but could not net the equalizer. Taking a tough loss was senior netminder Spencer Craig (21 saves).

WRESTLING

Continued from page B1

was to keep moving." For Youssef, the district championship was his first, having lost in the 2011 district finals.

"Said is wrestling really, really well," the best tournament I've seen him in probably this year.

"It's a nice time of the year to be wrestling the best matches of the year for you."

Pantaleo hung tough to nip CC's Malik Amine, 3-2, at 135.

"I train with Malik (and others) during the summer twice a week," said Pantaleo, 47-2 on the season. "I knew what he was going to do. I knew I had to stop his low single (a takedown involving a single shot to the leg).

"... I made sure when I chose bottom and when I was taking him down not to lose position, not give up anything that I shouldn't."

Pantaleo then smiled when talking about defeating Amine, who defeated him by one point last season in the blood round of regionals.

"It felt kind of good to get a re-take at him and I actually beat him by one point," Pantaleo added.

Canton head coach Cory Mancuso said Pantaleo deserved the win by wrestling with pace and intelligence.

"It was a good win for him," Mancuso said. "He was fast, he stayed in good position, he wrestled real smart in all of his positions."

"Hats off to Alec, he stayed in great position the whole match."

Plymouth also had three runnerups (Chase Kallil, 125; Alec Breckenridge, 130; Brandon Harris, 103) and three third-place finishers (Joe Conn, 130; Mohamad Youssef, 103; Trey Berry, 112).

For the Chiefs, Zach Marsh (145) and Ben Griffin (112) finished second while Austin Pilmer came in fourth at 125, losing by a fall to Farmington's Immanuel Gov-

PREP WRESTLING RESULTS

MHSAA INDIVIDUAL WRESTLING DISTRICT RESULTS DIVISION 1 Feb. 11 at CANTON (top 4 advance to regional)

119 lbs: Gabe Martinez (Franklin) decisioned Evan Toth (Catholic Central), 9-2; 3rd place: Cody Korpus (Salem) technical fall over Imad Soukar (Fordson), 21-5/4:31.

125: T.J. Fagan (CC) dec. Chase Kallil (Plymouth), 6-1; 3rd: Immanuel Govantes (Farmington) pinned Austin Pilmer (Canton), 4:00.

130: Ken Bade (CC) tech. fall Alec Breckenridge (Plymouth), 18-2/4:23; 3rd: Jon Conn (Plymouth) major decision over Alejandro Albyeme (Novi), 11-1.

135: Alec Pantaleo (Canton) dec. Malik Amine (CC), 3-2; 3rd: Kody Roy (Stevenson) dec. Travis Compo (Northville), 2-0.

140: Said Youssef (Plymouth) dec. Jordan Atienza (Franklin), 8-6; 3rd: Riley Hanson (CC) p. Ali Saad (Dearborn), 3:39.

145: Logan Marcicki (CC) dec. Zach Marsh (Canton), 8-3; 3rd: Ryan Derry (Franklin) maj. dec. over Arlan Khatem (Dearborn), 10-1.

152: Alec Mooradian (CC)

tech. fall over Avery Opperman (Franklin), 18-2/3:31; 3rd: Yahya Talab (Dearborn) maj. dec. over Nick Frazier (Franklin), 11-2.

160: Nick Mason (CC) dec. Tyler Steele (Salem), 9-5; 3rd: Allen Grosse (Franklin) maj. dec. over Shehab Natour (Fordson), 14-4.

171: Drew Garcia (CC) maj. dec. over Trevor Maresh (Northville), 16-6; 3rd: Jake Dobras (Novi) dec. Alex Brown (Salem), 8-1.

189: Kevin Beazley (CC) p. Joe Scott (Stevenson), 1:08; 3rd: Jacob McCabe (Salem) p. Dajon Raheem (Southfield), 1:36.

215: Antonio Echols (Southfield) dec. Jake Range (Stevenson), 5-3; 3rd: Adam Druz (Garden City) p. Andy Boyd (Northville), 2:32.

285: Bob Coe (CC) dec. Jimi Keller (Novi), 4-2; 3rd: Omar Haymour (Franklin) dec. Manny Haddad (Churchill), 1-0.

303: Trevor Zdebski (CC) p. Brandon Harris (Plymouth), 1:48; 3rd: Mohamad Youssef (Plymouth) dec. Dan Denova (Novi), 11-6.

112: Danny Martinez (Franklin) dec. Ben Griffin (Canton), 7-4; 3rd: Trey Berry (Plymouth) won by injury default over Myles Amine (CC).

antes in the bout for third place.

Solid showing

A runnerup for Salem, Tyler Gross, lost the finals matchup with Nick Mason of Catholic Central at 160.

Cody Korpus and Jake McCabe each finished third (at 119 and 189, respectively). In fourth at 171 was Alex Brown.

"We had a couple other guys," Salem head coach Pete Israel said. "Tony Agostini was one match away and freshman Mitchell Gross was one match away."

"Could have had two more, but four is a decent number and the ones we have are hopefully good enough to get to the state meet."

According to Franklin head coach Dave Chiola, whose individual champions included the Martinez brothers (Gabe at 119; Danny at 112), the next test will be getting them ready for the Saline regionals.

Danny Martinez (52-1) earned a 7-4 decision over Canton's Griffin (41-5) in

the 112 final.

"You don't take anyone lightly," Chiola said. "You see a lot of rematches this time of year, so if you've seen a kid before and beat him you can't take him lightly."

"And if you lost to him before you got to believe you can beat him."

Mental toughness is something Israel said he'll reiterate with his regional contingent.

"Just focus on the wrestling," Israel said. "You can't come up with a trick move or new strategies, just wrestle hard the way you have all year."

"And just win your last match, because if you do you'll end up at states."

Israel stressed that the large group going from PCEP to the regionals shows how competitive wrestling programs are becoming at the three high schools, with help from middle school feeder programs and instructional organizations for kids just becoming interested in the sport.

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COLLEGE BASEBALL PREVIEW

MU gets jump on new season

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

Despite an unusually mild winter, Bardon University baseball coach Greg Haeger decided to get an early jump on the 2012 season.

The Crusaders, who captured a Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference regular season title and finished 32-14 overall, started the season last Thursday in San Diego, Calif. with a double-header against Vanguard (Calif.) and Oregon Tech.

"We lost so many games to weather last year we figured adding another trip would help us — at least add five more games," said the 16th-year coach, who earned his 450th win last season. "We're going to give it a shot. It's a little unique trying to set up your team to play on February 9, but we're doing our best at it."

And expect the Crusaders, who also have spring trips set for Friday-Saturday (in Tennessee) and March 2-10 (in Florida), to have plenty of arms on the mound.

"I think most outsiders would look at it that pitching is the strength of our team," Haeger said. "We brought six, or junior college transfers, to our program. Guys with great records who throw the ball very hard. In addition to getting (Robert) Fraser back after last year and what Jeremy (Gooding) did the year before ... and where a couple of the sopho-

mores come since their freshman year, we have a lot of options."

Gooding, a junior right-hander from Livonia and Dearborn Divine Child High, finished 9-0 with a 1.10 earned average last season en route to NAIA All-America honors.

Fraser, a junior right-hander from Westland John Glenn, was 7-1 as a sophomore, but pitched only six games last year after suffering a shoulder injury. He was granted a medical redshirt.

On the bump

Among the other returnees who made 10 or more appearances on the mound in 2011 include sophomore reliever Travis Schuba, who will return following basketball season; reliever Andy Omilian (Plymouth/Catholic Central), and left-handers Aaron Saarela, Erik Wright (Canton) and Logan Ryan.

Meanwhile, Haeger is confident about his catching duo of starting with fifth-year senior Drew Adamiec and sophomore Donny Holland.

The team's top hitter, second baseman Jeff Bultinck (.372) graduated, but Haeger is confident he can fill the void.

"Second base is really competitive," he said. "We have really good kids, all have different assets in what they can do. Ryan Lech, a sophomore and two JUCOs, Tyler Cotter (Churchill/Lake Michigan CC) and Logan Curtis (Brook-

lyn/Jackson CC), both juniors. All three are capable and will play."

Meanwhile, Plymouth High grad Brad Lineberry (.315) returns at first base, while Spencer Sarel moves to third and Victor Barron goes to short.

"We keep on throwing different lineups out," the MU coach said. "(Brad) Lineberry (Plymouth) did a great job converting over to first last year."

As far as the outfield, Haeger lost the team's second-leading hitter and best defensive outfielder in Matt Kay (Canton), who hit .348.

"He did a great job for us," Haeger said. "Played a solid right field and threw guys out on the base paths. With Matt's graduation it puts us in a hole in right field."

Junior Steve Pelletier (.318), a Farmington Hills Harrison grad, will stay in left field, while Alex Charles (Harrison/Brother Rice) goes to center.

Among those also vying for other outfield time include Chris Baumann, a transfer from Earlham (Ind.) College, and freshman Christian Holder (Divine Child).

One possibility in right field is junior Josh Deeg, a native of Lake Orion who made 18 appearances on the mound and threw 68 innings with 52 strikeouts two seasons at NCAA Division I school Xavier University.

Deeg, battling a sore pull, could be also the team's closer, but may eventually land in right.

GYMNASTS

Continued from page B1

outh's Sarah Uhlian third with an 8.875 tally.

Green and Lasecki placed second and third, respectively, on beam

with scores of 9.0 and 8.925. Fourth place was shared by Milad and Engstrom with 8.35.

Monday's showing, which featured 11 nines for the Chiefs, followed the 17 nines tallied against Livonia Blue.

Canton broke the team

mark with 149.1 points and Moraw — then Lewis — took turns setting the record on bars.

After Moraw scored a 9.7 for the record, Lewis followed with a 9.9 to take the mark away.

"Jocelyn Moraw on bars had the record for about

six minutes," Cunningham said. "She has been really strong on bars, and to have it eclipsed right away by Ayana ... a 9.9, that's going to stand forever, no doubt about that."

Looking for 3-peat
The Chiefs now look to

win the KLAA championship tournament for a third straight year.

The 11-team tourney will take place starting at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Euro Stars Gymnastics in Plymouth (located at Five Mile and Sheldon roads).

"There are good

teams," he said. "Milford-Lakeland has scored 142, 143, Howell scored 142, 143, Salem has been in the 140s, Plymouth has had a 140. It will be an interesting meet."

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OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC HOMETOWN WEEKLIES

A Division I Company

Church members create centennial banners

By Sharon Dargay
O&E Staff Writer

Colorful, handmade banners will enhance the worship service this Sunday as St. John's Episcopal Church in Plymouth wraps up a yearlong cen-

tennial celebration. It's not the first time St. John's has integrated fabric art into its services or used it to decorate the church, but the new pair of 10-foot-tall banners are the first designed and

made by members. "We had a woman from the Chicago area — for a number of years she made banners professionally for churches — and we invited her to come and do a workshop last

February," said Betsy Sole, chairwoman of the church banner committee. "She showed us how to do this."

Church members brainstormed designs, shopped for fabric, crafted letters, cut, sewed and constructed the final product, working for nearly a year to ready the banners for Sunday's Centennial Festival Eucharist service.

"A lot of people helped. People did all sorts of things," Sole noted. "I've never done anything like this and everything we did was like a new problem we had to figure. It has been interesting. A couple of people said why not just buy them? But it needed to come from us, what's important to us."

One banner references the centennial, with letters arranged on an iridescent blue-green fabric. The other piece incorporates a cross and streamers in the colors of the church seasons — blue for Advent, purple for Lent, white for Easter, red for Pentecost and green for the rest of the year — on satin fabric.

Working on the slippery satin and slightly stiffer iridescent fabric "wasn't too bad," Sole said.

"The thing that was difficult was sewing on something so big. That was a challenge, getting all that fabric under the sewing machine."



Betsy Sole (left) and Mary Alice Brunner work on a banner at St. John's Episcopal Church, Plymouth. They'll use the new banners, marking the church's centennial, in a worship service Sunday.

Banner procession

Sole said the group proceeded carefully and slowly, avoiding most mistakes.

"We didn't really have to rip anything out. The cross wasn't the right proportion and we had to fix it," she said. "Our next challenge is to get them into the church and have the kids walk with them."

Youngsters will hold the streamers as the banners are carried into the church on Sunday. Sole said the streamers, when unfurled from the cross-adorned banner, seem to represent the roofline of the church. The cross on the banner is prominent, like its counterpart stationed in front of St. John's.

Sole suspects that the new banners will be used periodically for church events.

St. John's centennial celebration continues this weekend with the gala dinner at 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 at the Summit in Canton. The event will include dinner, a video on church history, music gift drawings and a ticket for a chance to win a centennial quilt. Tickets are \$40 per person.

The Centennial Festival Eucharist starts at 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 19. Bishop Wendell Gibbs will participate in the service that will include special music and a procession with the new centennial banners. A celebration reception will follow the service.

Passages

Obituaries, Memories & Remembrances

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BUSCHLEITER, FRED "Harley"

Passed away Monday, February 13, 2012, of Westland, Ypsilanti and Canada. He was a good friend, former employee of Northwest Airlines, and served in the U.S. Army. Per his request no funeral/burial services will be held.



PERRY, GEORGE ROBERT

Formerly of Westland, passed away Feb. 9, 2012, reuniting with his beloved wife Mary Lou (Owens) and eldest David (Jamie). Born Sept. 8, 1927, to John Henry and Claire (Reilly) Perry. George had a brother, John "Jack" Perry and sister Miriam Bauley. He will be missed by his survivors: Douglas John (m. MaryCarole) Perry and daughters Meaghan and Erin; daughter Denise Perry (m. Paul) Donavin and sons, Daniel and Craig; and David's son Robert (m. Brittany) and their children: Jack, Brock, and June. George joined the Army in 1945, served as the Chief Clerk of the Military Government of post-WW II Japan. A U. of Detroit law school graduate and a judge for 10 years, he was honored in 2004 as a Bar Association Golden Member. A Master Tax Planner in Tucson, where he relocated 20 years ago. He was an avid traveler, golfer, bowler, bridge player, and Gold Medal Senior Olympian. Visitation will be Mon., 2/13 at Adair Funeral Home, Dodge Chapel from 5-8 p.m.



TUCKER, MADELINE E.

Age 87, February 13, 2012. Loving wife of over 70 years to Edward "Tom" Tucker. Beloved mother of Fran (Jim) Griffith, Nancy Clarke, Thomas, Timothy, Stephen, James (Jeanette), Barbara (Jeff) Baker and Mary Tucker. Grandmother of 15 and great-grandmother of five. Sister of Robert, Richard (Eileen) and William (Marcy) Haney and the late Raymond Haney and Mary Haney-Roach. Loving aunt of numerous nieces and nephews. She was a long time resident of Livonia, Michigan and retired with her husband to Roscommon in 1985. Madeline will be laid to rest at Richardson Cemetery in Roscommon, Michigan on Saturday, February 18, 2012 at 1:30 pm. Memorials may be made in her honor to the Fr. Solanus Guild of the Capuchins or the charity of your choice. Please visit www.harryjwillfuneralhome.com



GELINAS, KATHERINE DANA (GROM)

After a short, but courageous battle against Pancreatic Cancer, Katherine, peacefully passed with her loving family by her side on February 12, 2012 at 46 years of age. Loving wife of Ken Gelinas. Cherished mother of Amber and Trevor Gelinas. Loving stepmother of Michael and wife Mel Gelinas and Ryan and wife Joany Gelinas. Beloved daughter of Joseph and Mary Grom. Dear daughter-in-law of the late Helen and Alvin Gelinas. Dear sister of Michael, Marilea and husband Patrick Rogers, Steven and wife Erin. Many loving aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins survive. Will be sadly missed by her companion pets Chloe, Copper and Mace. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to LaSalle Minor Hockey Association and or the LaSalle Turtle Club Soft Ball League. Visiting Tuesday 7-9pm and Wednesday 3-5 & 7-9pm. Prayers Wednesday 8pm at Families First 3260 Dougall Ave. South Windsor, Canada 519-969-5841. On Thursday family and friends are invited to meet at Sacred Heart Church LaSalle Canada (219 Sacred Heart Dr) after 9:30am followed by Funeral Mass at 10:30am. Interment Greenlawn Memorial Gardens. A memorial luncheon will take place on Friday February, 17th from 12:30pm-2:30pm at Mama Mia's on Plymouth road in Livonia.

May you find comfort in Family and Friends

RELIGION CALENDAR

Send items for the religion calendar to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com. Photos must be in jpg format, attached to the e-mail.

February

BLACK HISTORY

Time/Date: 11 a.m., Sunday, Feb. 19 and 26
Location: First Baptist Church of Detroit, 21100 Southfield Road, Southfield
Details: Observe Black History Month at 11 a.m. services. Ardis Cazeno will present "Tuskegee Airmen" Feb. 19 and the church's Praise Dance Group and Children's Church will present dance and music selections. Light refreshments

will be served after the services. United Voices in Christ, a male singing group, also will perform at 3 p.m., Feb. 26
Contact: (248) 569-2972 or firstbaptist@fbc-detroit

BOOK SALE

Time/Date: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 18
Location: Faith Community Wesleyan Church, 14560 Merriam, Livonia
Details: Teen youth group will sponsor a used book sale that includes DVDs, CDs and VHS tapes. Gourmet cookies also will be sold.
Contact: (734) 522-3570

BOWLING FUNDRAISER

Time/Date: 1 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26
Location: Westland Bowl 5940 Wayne Road, Westland
Details: For Good Hope Lutheran Church in Garden City; tickets are \$20 for adults; \$15 for children and include three games, shoes, pizza, and pop
Contact: (734) 427-3660

Breakfast
Time/Date: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 19
Location: St. Theodore, 8200 N. Wayne Road, Westland
Details: Pancakes, French toast, ham, sausage, scrambled eggs, applesauce, coffee, tea, juice, milk; \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children, 2-10
Contact: (734) 425-4421

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| <p>CATHOLIC</p> <p>ST. ANNE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH Tridentine Latin Mass St. Anne's Academy - Grades K-8 38100 Five Mile Road Livonia, MI 48154 • (734) 462-3200 Mass Schedule: First Friday Mass 7:00 p.m. Saturday Mass 11:00 a.m. Sunday Masses 7:30 & 10:00 a.m. Confessions Heard Prior to Each Mass Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions Tuesdays at 7:00 P.M.</p> | <p>UNITED METHODIST</p> <p>ORCHARD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 30450 Farmington Road • Farmington Hills www.orchardumc.org 248-826-3620 Worship: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m. Christian Education for all ages Pastors: Carol J. Johns, Jim Braid, Margo Dexter</p> | <p>PRESBYTERIAN (U.S.A.)</p> <p>ROSEDALE GARDENS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) 9601 Hubbard at W. Chicago, Livonia, MI (Between Merriam & Farmington Rds.) (734) 422-0494 Friends in Faith Service 9:00 am Traditional Service 10:30 am Visit www.rosedalegardens.org For information about our many programs CE08760825</p> | <p>LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD</p> <p>Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church 14175 Farmington Road, Livonia just north of I-96 www.christsavior.org Sunday Worship 8:30 & 11:00 am - Traditional Sunday School/Bible Class 9:45 am Early Childhood Center Phone 734-513-8413 Staffed Nursery Available Making disciples who share the love of Jesus Christ Pastors: Davenport, Bayer, & Creeden 734-522-6830 CE08760702</p> |
| <p>CHURCHES OF THE NAZARENE</p> <p>PLYMOUTH CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 45801 W. Ann Arbor Road • (734) 453-1925 Sunday School - 9:45 A.M. Sunday Worship - 11:00 A.M. Sunday Evening - 6:00 P.M. Family Night - Wed. 7:00 P.M. NEW HORIZONS FOR CHILDREN LEARNING CENTER (734) 455-3196 CE08760821</p> | <p>PRESBYTERIAN</p> <p>Fellowship Presbyterian Church Adult Sunday School: 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. • Worship: 10:30 a.m. Childrens Sunday School: 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Dr. Jimmy McGuire Services held at: Saint Andrews Episcopal Church 16360 Hubbard Road in Livonia • South of Six Mile Road Nursery provided • www.fellowship-presbyterian.org CE08760708</p> | <p>EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN</p> <p>WARD CHURCH 40000 Six Mile Road Northville, MI 48168 248-374-7400 www.wardchurch.org Traditional Worship at 9, 9:30 & 11 a.m. Contemporary Worship at 9:30 & 11 a.m. Children's Programs available at 9:30 & 11 a.m. The Traditional Service is broadcast on the radio each week at 11 a.m. on 560 AM</p> | <p>LUTHERAN CHURCH WISCONSIN SYNOD</p> <p>ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL 17810 FARMINGTON ROAD, 2077 LIVONIA (734) 281-1360 WORSHIP SERVICES SUNDAY: 8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M. THURSDAY: 6:30 P.M. website: www.stpaulsilivonia.org</p> |
| <p>ASSEMBLIES OF GOD</p> <p>OPEN ARMS CHURCH Worship: Sunday 10:30 am Children's Programs Available Kid's Stop Preschool Now Enrolling 248.474.0001 Meet our New Pastor Grady Jensen & Assoc. Pastor Abe Fazzini 33015 W. 7 Mile Rd. • Livonia 48152 Between Farmington & Merriam Across from Joe's Produce 248.471.5282</p> | <p>CONGREGATIONAL</p> <p>North Congregational Church 36520 12 Mile Rd. Farmington Hills (bet. Drake & Halsted) (248) 848-1750 10:30 a.m. Worship & Church School Faith • Freedom • Fellowship Rev. Mary E. Biedron Senior Minister</p> | | |

For Information regarding this Directory, please call Karen Marzolf at 313-222-2214 or e-mail: kmarzolf@hometownlife.com



The Gentlemen Songsters Chorus will sing songs that are out of this world at its annual concert Feb. 18 in Livonia.

Chorus takes listeners to the stars and beyond

By Sharon Dargay
 O&E Staff Writer

This Saturday, The Gentlemen Songsters Chorus will boldly go where no local barbershop singers have gone before. The singers will perform their annual concert looking like crew members of the Starship Enterprise in a *Star Trek*-themed show at Clarenceville High School in Livonia.

"It should be fun," said Stephen Sutherland, a Canton resident and director of the 45-member group. Sutherland suggested the theme after watching a California-based barbershop quartet called Hi-Fidelity, perform a *Star Trek* routine in competition last summer. The quartet, along with a collegiate group called Prestige, will perform during the Songster's upcoming concert.

"The audience was in stitches.



Captain Kirk and crew a.k.a Hi-Fidelity, a national a capella barbershop singing group, will perform songs in four-part harmony at "Barbershop in Space...The Final Frontier," Feb. 18 in Livonia.

They act out Kirk, Spock, Scotty and Dr. McCoy roles. It's really a hoot." Although Hi-Fidelity includes

a few *Star Trek*-related songs in its repertoire, the Songsters will harmonize standards that focus on the stars and the moon.

"We wove a story through it, of our starship heading home and the stuff we run into on the way. Without the script, it sounds like a regular barbershop show. We try to do songs that get some audience recognition."

But it will look a little different from most Gentlemen Songsters shows. Singers will wear red, blue and yellow shirts that fans of the 1960s science fiction television series will recognize as *Star Trek* crew and officer uniforms.

"The joke that has been going around is that if you wear the red shirt, you don't get to come

Please see CHORUS, B6

BARBERSHOP IN SPACE ... THE FINAL FRONTIER

What: The Gentlemen Songsters Chorus annual concert
When: 1:59 p.m. and 7:29 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18
Where: Schmidt Auditorium at Clarenceville High School, 20155 Middlebelt, Livonia
Details: The concert takes on a "Star Trek" theme with the Chorus singing tunes about the heavens. Special guest quartets are Hi-Fidelity and Prestige
Tickets: \$18, available at the door or with credit card by phone
Contact: (248) 559-7082

Pottery show benefits food bank

Pewabic Pottery will present its 18th annual Empty Bowls fundraiser from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, at 10125 E. Jefferson, Detroit.

Visitors who buy an artist or student bowl, ranging from \$5-\$20, will receive soup and bread donated from local restaurants including Polish Kitchen, Vivios, Russell Street Deli, Sindbad's, St. John's Hospital, Beverly Hills Grill and Lunchtime Detroit. There is a limit of two bowls per person.

"This event is a wonderful way for the community to bring delicious food and art together for a good cause," stated Terese Ireland, executive director of Pewabic Pottery. "The need is still great in metro Detroit and we are proud to do our part to help fill some of those Empty Bowls."

All of the proceeds from the event will go to Gleaners Community Food Bank.



Buy a bowl and benefit Gleaners Community Food Bank at Pewabic Pottery, in Detroit.

For each dollar raised, Gleaner's can provide three meals to an individual in need. Last year, Pewabic's Empty Bowls event raised \$5,000, which helped provide 15,000 meals.

The concept began in 1990 when a Michigan art teacher wanted to come up with a way for his

students to help out with the issue of hunger in local communities. Since then, the Empty Bowls project has grown into an international initiative. Pewabic Pottery has offered its annual Empty Bowls fundraiser since 1994.

For more information call (313) 626-2000 or visit www.pewabic.org.

Think you know who will win an OSCAR™ this year?

Choose correctly and YOU could win!

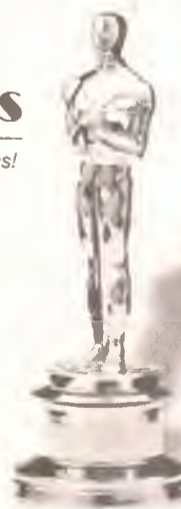
Go to www.hometownlife.com to enter. Correctly identify the top 7 Oscars™ categories and you could win one of the following prizes:

- 1st Place:** 12 month movie pass for two to Emagine Theatre
- 2nd Place:** 4 movie passes

Correctly Identify the Top 7 Categories

The person with the most correct answers wins!

- Best Picture
- Actor in Leading Role
- Actress in Leading Role
- Animated Feature Film
- Actor in a Supporting Role
- Actress in a Supporting Role
- Director
- Tie Breaker Categories
- Music (original score)
- Documentary Feature



All entries must be received by Saturday, February 25, 2012 11:59 p.m. to be considered.

Sponsored by: OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC HOMETOWN WEEKLIES EMAGINE

AT THE HISTORIC REDFORD THEATRE
 1928 Bartles Theatre Organ played 30 minutes before each show!

The Apartment
 Won 5 Oscars & 3 Golden Globes

Starring Shirley MacLaine, Jack Lemmon, & Fred MacMurray

Feb. 17 - 8:00 p.m.
 Feb. 18 - 2:00 & 8:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$4.00

★ Doors open 1 hour before the show
 ★ Real butter on your popcorn
 ★ Affordable candy and beverages

Buy tickets online: redfordtheatre.com

Park in one of our **FREE** supervised parking lots!

Located at 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, MI 48219. The theatre is on the east side of Lahser, just north of Grand River. 24-hour information phone number: (313) 537-2560

The Best of 2011 Academy Award® Nominated Films
At EMAGINE THEATRE IN NOVI
9 MOVIES
 Only \$35 for One Day or \$60 for Two Days
 (4 OR 5 IN ONE DAY EACH WEEK)

2 - DAY PASS
 February 10 - 16 and February 17 - 23

1 - DAY PASS
 Select from dates listed above

Unlimited Popcorn Each Day!

Academy Award® Viewing Party
 Join us at Emagine Theatre - Rochester Hills
 February 26, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

For further information go to: www.emagine-entertainment.com

Art

DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Time/Dates: 2 p.m. Sundays
Location: 5200 Woodward, Detroit

Details: Target Family Sundays, storytelling, performances, free with admission

Exhibits: Detroit Revealed: Photographs 2000-2010, an exhibit of 50 photos through April 8; Gift of a Lifetime: The James Pearson Duffy Collection of drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures and photographs through March 18

Contact: (313) 833-7900, www.dia.org

DIRTY SHOW

Time/Date: 7 p.m.-2 a.m., Feb. 17-18, 18 and over
Location: Bert's Warehouse Theatre, 2739 Russell Street, Detroit

Details: Exotic art exhibit with art by more than 300 artists, priced \$10-\$10,000. The show includes a film screening, burlesque performance, and more. Tickets are \$20 in advance at www.dirtyshow.org and \$25 at the door

Contact: (313) 393-3233

FARMINGTON HILLS CITY GALLERY

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, through Feb. 24

Location: Costick Center, 28600 W. 11 Mile, Farmington Hills

Details: The work of Patrice Erickson, all original oils, is on exhibit. Erickson is inspired by nature and strives for landscapes that are rich in color

Contact: (248) 473-1856

NORTHVILLE ART HOUSE

Time/Date: 1-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, through Feb. 18

Location: 215 W. Cady, Northville

Details: "6th Annual Member Exhibition," includes work by more than 70 artists; free admission

Coming up: Sell or donate "used art" for "Art from the Attic," 2-7 p.m. Feb. 21-22 or by appointment. Opening sale and reception is 6-9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24; public art sale is 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25 and noon-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 26. Opening reception tickets are \$10; public sale is free admission

Contact: (248) 344-0497

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

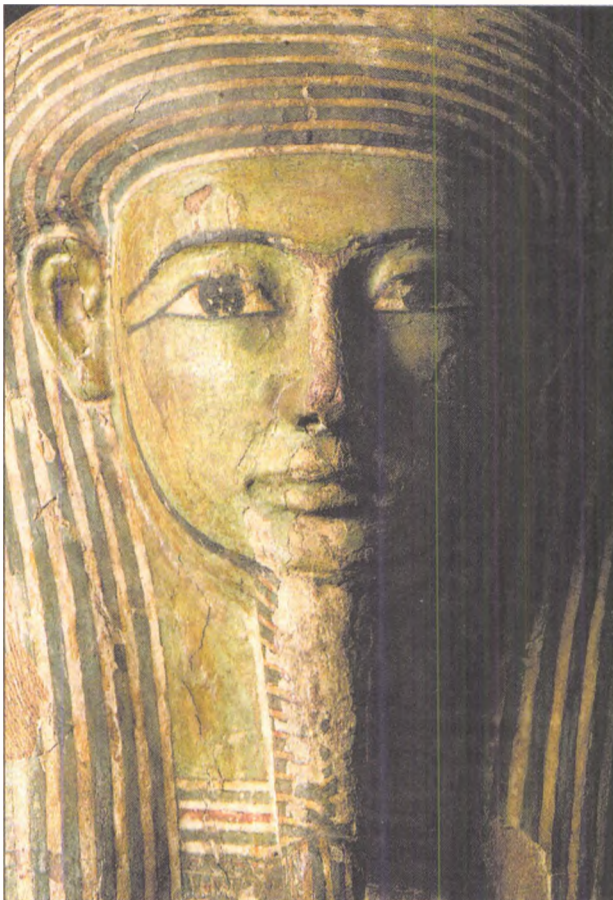
Time/Date: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 25-May 20

Location: University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor

Details: "Fluxus and the Essential Questions of Life," includes more than 100 works by major artists, such as Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik and George Maciunas; admission is free



John Boufford of Northville Township and Geoff Wehner of Bloomfield Hills rehearse a scene from "Whose Wives Are They, Anyway?," a comedy that runs through March 3 at the Farmington Players.



Artifacts such as this coffin are on display at Kelsey Museum of Archaeology in Ann Arbor.

Contact: (734) 764-0395

VILLAGE THEATER

Time/Date: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday through Feb. 24

Location: 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton

Details: "Lest We Forget: Legends of Detroit Gospel," celebrates the history of Gospel music in Detroit

Contact: (734) 394-5300 or visit cantonvillagetheater.org.

Comedy

GO COMEDY!

Time/Date: Various show times Wednesdays thru Sundays

Location: 261 E. Nine Mile, Ferndale

Details: Improv most nights. Open mic/jam session show for improvisers is 10 p.m. Wednesdays

Contact: (248) 327-0575; gocomey.net

JD'S HOUSE OF COMEDY

Time/Date: Various show times Wednesday-Saturday evenings

Location: 25333 W. 12 Mile, inside Star Theatre complex,

Southfield

Details: Stand-up shows, 8 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m., 10:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; Apollo amateur night, 8 p.m. Wednesday

Contact: (248) 348-2420 or www.ticketmaster.com

JOEY'S COMEDY CLUB OF LIVONIA

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Mondays, open Mic; 8 p.m. Tuesdays, Local Legends; 8 p.m. shows Wednesdays, Thursdays; 8 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays

Location: 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia

Details: Basile, through Feb. 11; Mikey Mason, Feb. 15-16; Rich Guzzi, Feb. 17-19; Coco, Feb. 22-25; Glen Wool, Feb. 29-March 3; John DeBoer, March 7-10; Tracy Smith, March 14-17; Horace HB Smith, March 21-24; Dave Landau, March 28-31

Contact: (734) 261-0555, www.kickerscomplex.com

MARK RIDLEY'S COMEDY CASTLE

Time/Date: Rocky Laporte, Feb. 16-18; Ted Alexandro, Feb. 23-25; Justin McKinney, March 1-3; Dave Attell, March 8-10; Michael Malone, March 15-17; Tom



Carol Lipinski (left), Beth Brooks, Lana Collins, Barbara Bloom and Marian Busa portray "ladies of the night" in the Still Got It Players production, "The Oldest Profession," March 1-4 in Canton.

Contact: (734) 453-0870; www.penntheatre.com

REDFORD THEATRE

Time/Date: 8 p.m. Feb. 17 and 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Feb. 18

Location: 17360 Lahser, just north of Grand River Ave., in Detroit

Details: "The Apartment," tickets \$4

Coming up: "Gone With The Wind" 8 p.m. March 2-3 and 2 p.m. March 4, includes an appearance by "the Gone With The Wind answer lady," Kathleen Marcaccio

Contact: (313) 537-2560

Museums

CHARLES H. WRIGHT

Time/Date: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday

Location: 315 E. Warren Road, Detroit

Details: Regular museum admission is \$8 for adults, 13-61; and \$5 for youth, 3-12, and seniors, 62 and over. Members and children 2 and under are admitted free. "Moving to His Own Beat" celebrates the life and music of Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, who fused traditional African high life music with classical jazz and funk, a unique sound he called "Afrobeat" The exhibit runs through April 1

Contact: (313) 494-5800

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Time/Date: 1-4 p.m. Wednesday and Friday-Sunday; current exhibit runs through June 17

Location: 155 S. Main, Plymouth

Details: "Ration Stamps & Bombers, WWII at Home" is the current exhibit. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for students, 6-17

Contact: (734) 455-8940

U-M KELSEY MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY

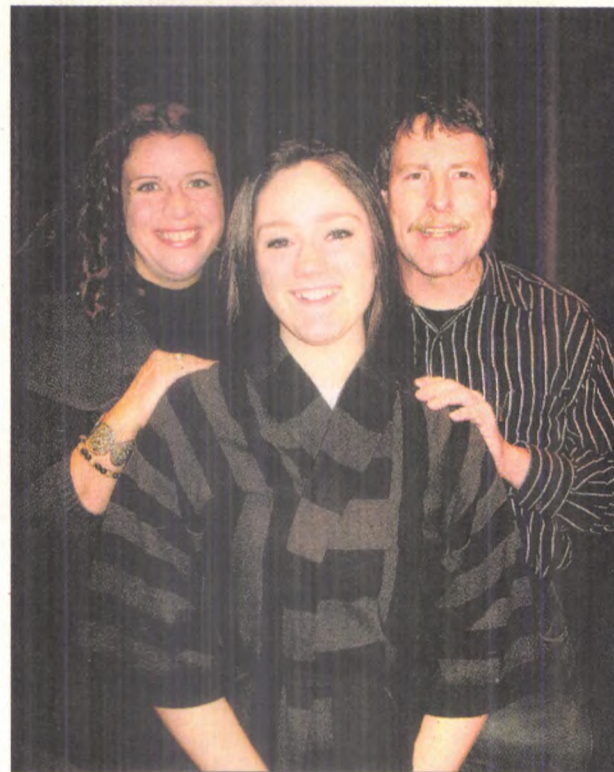
Time/Date: The museum is open 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, and 1-4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday

Location: 434 S. State, Ann Arbor

Details: Part II of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology's special exhibition - "Karanis Revealed: Discovering the Past and Present of a Michigan Excavation in Egypt" - will run through Sunday, May 6. This special exhibition explores the story of the site's excavation, which was initiated by the University of Michigan in the 1920s and 1930s.

Special event: Ancient Egypt Family Day runs 1-3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 with hands-on activities such as hieroglyphic writing, mummy wrapping (with a doll filled with candy organs), crown making, jewelry crafting, and flower wreaths, like the one found on King Tut.

Contact: www.lsa.umich.edu/kelsey; (734) 764-9304



Kristin Heitmeier of Northville (left), Jenessa Hubbard and Drex Morton, both of Canton, portray members of a large family in the comedy, "Cheaper by the Dozen," starting Feb. 17 at the Village Theater in Canton.

Papa, March 22-24; Gary Valentine, March 29-31; Jay Black, April 5-7

Location: 269 E. Fourth, Royal Oak

Contact: (248) 542-9900, www.comedycastle.com

Dance

DANCE MONTH

Time/Date: Through Feb. 18
Location: Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield

Details: Ballet Folklorico de Antioquia, 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 18. Ticket prices are \$30 for members and \$40 for non-members for all other programs. Call the box office for student and workshop prices

Contact: (248) 661-1900; www.theberman.org

MOON DUSTERS

Time/Date: 8:30-11:30 p.m. every Saturday; dance lessons 7-8 p.m.
Location: Livonia Civic Center, 15218 Farmington Road, Livonia

Details: Singles and couples dance to music of the '30s, '40s and '50s; free refreshments. Dance lessons cost \$6;

dance and lessons are \$11; dance only is \$7 for guests, \$6.50 for associates and \$6 for Moon Dusters members

Contact: Joe Castrodale, club president, (248) 968-5197

Film

MARQUIS THEATRE

Time/Date: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 18
Location: 135 E. Main, Northville

Details: "It's a Mad, Mad, Mad World," tickets \$3

Coming up: "Bye, Bye, Birdie," Feb. 25

Contact: (248) 349-8110

PENN THEATRE

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Feb. 17-18, and 4:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 19

Location: 760 Penniman Ave., Plymouth

Details: "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows," \$3

Coming up: "Hugo," 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24; 4:15 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 25-26 and 7 p.m. Thursday, March 1

Pistons seek singers for national anthem

The Detroit Pistons are looking for talented, devoted, and open-minded performers who would feel comfortable singing the *Star Spangled Banner* at the team's home games.

Interested applicants must submit their headshot along with a DVD, CD or link of them singing the National Anthem to the attention of Game Operations, National Anthem, at 6 Championship Dr., Auburn Hills, MI 48326 or by e-mail at nationalanthem@palacenet.com.

CHORUS

Continued from page B5

back from the away mission," Sutherland said, referring to the series' expendable characters.

Sutherland, a retired Northville teacher, watched the original *Star Trek* series as a high school student and followed all of its subsequent spin-off shows as an adult. He hopes the recognizable television theme will draw a mix of ages, including some barbershop music newcomers, to the Songsters' concert.

"We have attempted to contact some *Star Trek* clubs, but it all depends on the members and who they are trying to sell tickets to."

Two clubs unite

The Gentlemen Songsters Chorus is a part of the Detroit-Oakland Chapter of the Barber-shop Harmony Society. The Detroit and Oakland chapters were separate organizations until they merged in 1986. The Detroit group, first chartered in 1938, claims to



Prestige, collegiate quartet champ, will sing Feb. 18 in Livonia.

be the first chapter established east of the Mississippi River. The Oakland chapter was chartered in 1941.

The Gentlemen Songsters rehearses from 7:30-10:30 Mondays, at Starr Presbyterian Church, located at 13 Mile and Crooks in Royal Oak. The group meets all year and participates in spring and fall competitions, in addition to singing throughout southeastern Michigan. Venues have included Nar-

don Park United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Village, among others.

Three assistant directors give Sutherland a chance to sing at least a few songs when the chorus performs in concert. A vocal coach helps members hone their skills.

"We're always looking for new singers and now is the perfect time to join," Sutherland said, adding that prospective singers should be able

to carry a tune and must audition. "It's not a formal audition. It's an audition with one guy in a room and it's mostly to check their range and to recommend the (vocal) section they should sit in"

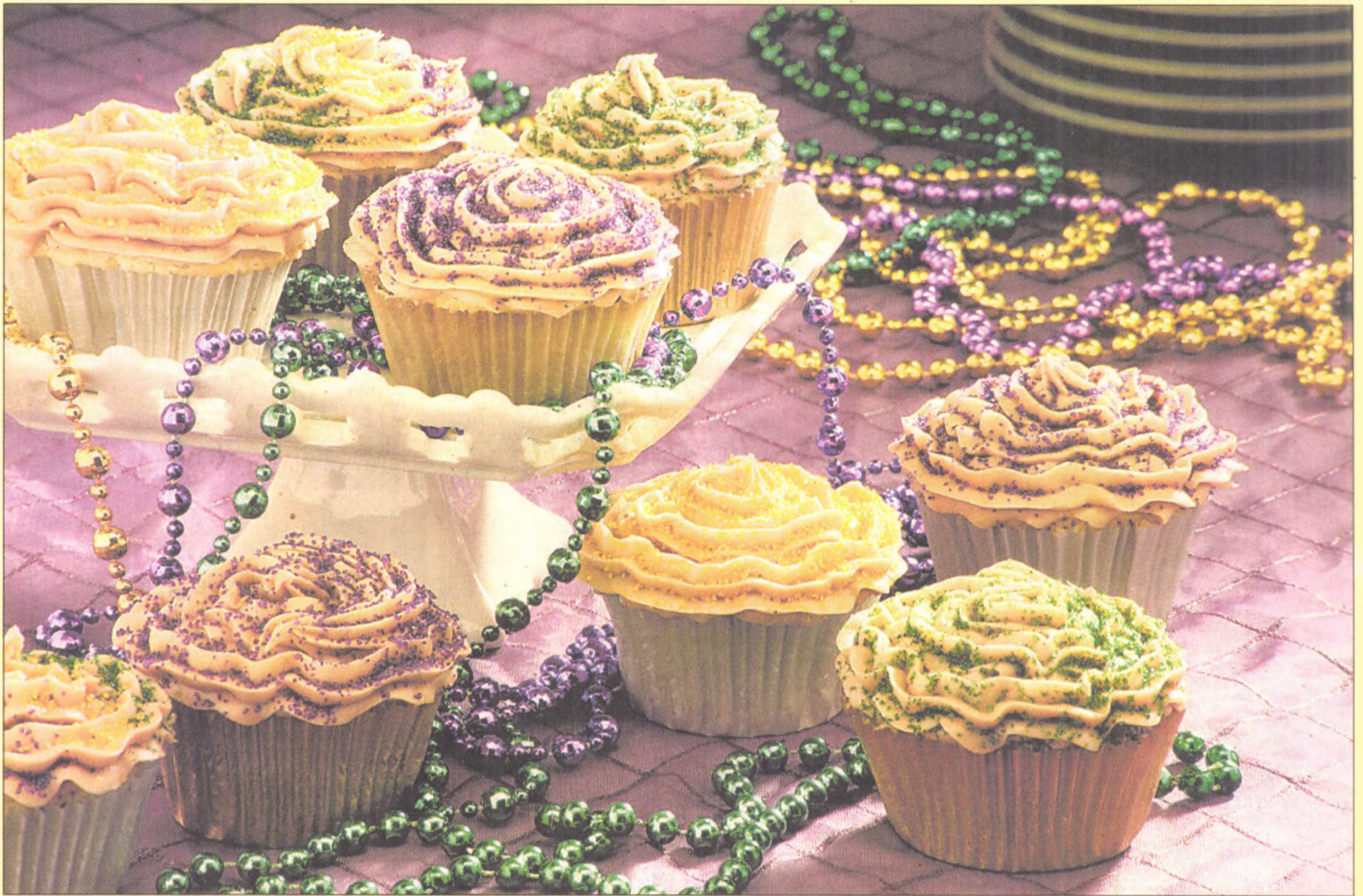
"We have a lot of ways to help people acclimate themselves. We have part recordings and sheet music and that helps a lot."

For more information about joining or hiring the group, visit detroitokland.org.

Boats & Fun!
February 11-19
Cobo Center
Save \$2 when you purchase tickets at
DetroitBoatShow.net







King Cake Cupcakes

Celebrate Mardi Gras with food, family

Bring the spirit of Mardi Gras to your table this season by creating your family's very own "Big Easy" flavorful and festive celebration.

Revel in the true meaning of celebrating Mardi Gras in the comfort of your home, with good music and good friends, as well as a wide-ranging menu, including everything from classic dirty rice to a twist on jambalaya and the traditional King Cake for dessert.

Jazz up your celebration

The Mardi Gras tradition is steeped in family celebrations and food. Bring the party home and focus on spending time together and enjoying flavorful dishes that are easy to prepare. Tap into the traditional way of celebrating with these tips:

- **Lead the Potluck Parade:** Create a potluck-style party and ask everyone to bring their favorite Mardi Gras dishes like Jambalaya Maque Choux, Red Beans & Rice Tortilla Casserole and Mardi Gras Dirty Rice. Make sure to have guests bring copies of their recipes so they can swap secrets with friends and find new favorites.

- **Don't Forget the Kids:** Welcome young Mardi Gras revelers to the celebration by inviting them to create their own bead necklaces or use shoe boxes to craft parade floats by adding construction paper, feathers and glitter. • **Get Your Dancin' Shoes On:** New Orleans jazz isn't just for listening — it's also for dancing. Keep lively music playing throughout the gathering.

- **Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth:** Put a tiny twist on the traditional King Cake dessert by making King Cake Cupcakes. Kids can get in on the decorating fun by adding traditional Mardi Gras colored frosting, sprinkles and candy in purple, green and gold.

For more information on how to jazz up Mardi Gras celebrations, visit www.facebook.com/zatarains and follow Zatarain's on Twitter (@MyZatarains) for party tips.

Mardi Gras Dirty Rice

Flavorful and versatile, serve this dirty rice as a one-skillet main dish or as a filling for tacos or lettuce wraps. Makes 7 (1-cup) servings

Prep Time: 5 minutes
Cook Time: 35 minutes

1 tablespoon oil
1 medium red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 medium yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 pound bulk pork sausage
1 package Zatarain's Dirty Rice Mix, Original

Heat oil in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add bell peppers; cook and stir 3-5 minutes or until tender-crisp. Remove from skillet. Add sausage to skillet; cook and stir 5 minutes or until no longer pink.

Stir in rice mix and water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 20 minutes. Return bell peppers to skillet. Cover and cook 5 minutes longer or until rice is tender. Remove from heat. Let stand 5 minutes.

Tips:

Dirty Rice Tacos: Serve rice mixture in warmed corn or flour tortillas. Top with shredded cheese, lettuce, salsa or sour cream, if desired. For Dirty Rice Taco Salad, serve rice mixture on shredded lettuce with desired toppings.

Dirty Rice Lettuce Wraps: Serve rice mixture on Bibb, Boston or iceberg lettuce leaves. Top with shredded carrots, chopped pecans, chow mein noodles or chopped green onions, if desired.



Jambalaya Maque Choux

Jambalaya Maque Choux

This recipe offers a fun Cajun twist on New Orleans-style Jambalaya. Corn maque choux is a traditional south Louisiana dish with corn and peppers, usually served as a side or over rice. Add some andouille sausage to kick up the flavor!

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 30 minutes
Makes 6 servings

1 tablespoon oil
½ pound andouille sausage, cut into ½-inch slices
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped green bell pepper
½ cup chopped red onion
2½ cups water
1 can (14½ ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained

1 package Zatarain's Jambalaya Mix
1 cup frozen corn

Heat oil in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook and stir 2 minutes.

Add celery, bell pepper and onion; cook and stir 3 minutes or until sausage is browned and vegetables begin to soften.

Stir in water, tomatoes and rice mix. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 20 minutes. Stir in corn; cover and cook 5 minutes longer or until rice is tender, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with fork before serving.

Red Beans & Rice Tortilla Casserole

Turn leftover cooked chicken into a Mexican-style casserole by layering with red beans and rice, cheese and tortillas. Or, skip the chicken and make a great Meatless Monday dish.

Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 45 minutes
Makes 8 servings

1 package Zatarain's Red Beans and Rice Mix
1 can (8½ ounces) whole kernel corn, drained
1 can (4½ ounces) chopped green chiles, undrained
6 flour tortillas (8-inch)
2 cups shredded cooked chicken
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Assorted toppings, such as sour cream, salsa and chopped green onions (optional)

Prepare rice mix as directed on package. Add corn and green chiles; mix well.

Spread ½ cup of the rice mixture on bottom of 13- by 9-inch baking dish sprayed with no-stick cooking spray. Top with 3 of the tortillas, overlapping as needed.

Layer with ½ each of the remaining rice mixture, chicken and cheese. Repeat layering with remaining tortillas, rice mixture, chicken and cheese.

Bake in preheated 350°F oven 15 minutes or until heated through. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serve with assorted toppings, if desired.

King Cake Cupcakes

Chef John Besh of the Besh Restaurant Group takes the traditional King Cake and turns it into a miniature form with these cupcakes. Makes 12 (1 cupcake) servings

Cupcakes:
1¼ cups cake flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
¼ cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs
¾ cup milk
Creole Cream Cheese and Root Beer Frosting:
8 ounces Creole or regular cream cheese, softened
½ cup (½ stick) butter, softened
¼ cup confectioners' sugar
¼ teaspoon Zatarain's Root Beer Extract

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. For the cupcakes, mix flour, baking powder and salt in medium bowl. Set aside.

2. Beat butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed 30 seconds or until softened. Add granulated sugar and vanilla; beat until light and fluffy, scraping down sides of bowl frequently. Beat in eggs, 1 at a time. Alternately beat in flour mixture and milk on medium-low speed just until mixed. Spoon batter into 12 lightly greased or paper-lined muffin cups, filling each cup ¾ full.

3. Bake 12 to 14 minutes or until toothpick inserted into cupcake comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pans; cool completely.

4. For the frosting, beat cream cheese and butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Add confectioners' sugar and extract; beat until fluffy. Set aside.

5. Make an indentation in the center of each cupcake using the handle of a wooden spoon or a straw, making sure not to break through bottom of cupcake. Spoon frosting into resealable plastic bag or piping bag fitted with star tip. If using plastic bag, cut a small piece off one of the bottom corners of bag. Pipe a small amount of frosting into each cupcake. Pipe remaining frosting onto each cupcake. Sprinkle with colored sugar, if desired.

Tip: Insert a dried fava bean into the indentation of each cupcake before piping in filling. The fava bean is for decoration only and should not be eaten.

ATTENTION! SIGN UP NOW!

If your business or organization serves seniors,

you'll want to be
part of this exciting event!



8th Annual Spring Senior Expo
TUESDAY
MAY 17, 2011
9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.
SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE
VISATeCH CENTER

Join the fun!
ADMISSION/PARKING
Exhibitors
Demonstrations
Meal Service

Over 245,750 Readers!

9th Annual Spring SENIOR EXPO

Tuesday, May 22, 2012
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Schoolcraft College
Livonia Campus
Vis TaTech Center - Haggerty Rd.
between 6 and 7 Mile Roads

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- Exhibitor Listings
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For more information about this event and to reserve your space, please contact:

Choya Jordan
313.222.2414
Fax: 313.496.5303

Email: cbjordan@hometownlife.com

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SPECIAL OFFER!

Customers who register by February 17, 2012 will be offered the **Early Bird Special Rate**

Customers can call for details and pricing 313.222.2414, email cbjordan@hometownlife.com or fax 313.496.5303

Great Value!

One Gold Level Sponsorship opportunity is available for a major sponsor.

- Important Dates:**
- Early Bird Deadline: February 17, 2012
 - Feature Vendor Deadline: April 9, 2012
 - Registration Deadline: April 23, 2012

Building Industry Association lauds leaders in business, government

Court mulls economic limits in case

By Robert Meisner
Guest Columnist

Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan presented its annual Industry Leadership Awards to Immediate Past President Adorno Piccinini, Walbridge, Detroit, and the other distinguished awards honorees on Feb. 15 at the Sterling Inn & Banquet Center in Sterling Heights, in conjunction with the Builders & Remodelers Trade Show and BIA's Economic Forecast Luncheon.

Award honorees include:

- Hall of Fame to Al Kligman, Superb Homes
- Builder of the Year to Anthony Lombardo, Lombardo Homes
- Young Builder of the Year to Tim Capaldi, CGR, Capaldi Building
- Samuel Kreis annual Award for Distinguished Service to the Building Industry to Norman Finkelstein, Norwood Homes, Ltd.
- Distinguished Service Award to Government to Lannie Young, supervisor, Lyon Township
- Thomas Ricketts Award to the Region's Outstanding Building Official to Michael Taylor, deputy director, City of Detroit, Building, Safety Engineering & Environmental Department
- Distinguished Service Award for Urban Home Building to Mark D. Lewis, Community 1st Development
- Don Maillho Memorial Award in Banking to Huntington Bank, Mike Fezzey and

Deborah Herdman

- Distinguished Service to BIA's Charitable Endeavors to Richard Cherkasky, CAPS, The Richard Group Inc.
- Distinguished Service to the Housing Industry to Forrest M. Wall, CAE, Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan
- Distinguished Service to the Building Industry Association to Lynne Pratt, CGB, CAPS, CSP, Pratt Building Company
- Outstanding Subcontractor of the Year to Spencer Roed, Multi Drywall & Partition, LLC
- Remodeler of the Year to Pat Baker, Kohler Company
- Remodeler of the Year to Gordy Oliva, CGR, CAPS, Gordy Oliva Remodeling/Go Barrier Free
- Distinguished Service to the Remodeling Industry to Bob Veresan, AIA, DTE Energy
- Professional Women in Building Council Leadership to Katie Hallett, TK Design & Architecture
- Membership Growth Honoree to Robert M. Tedesco, Silverado Custom Homes, Inc.
- Membership Connection Honoree to Cathy McLeod, The Huttenlocher Group, Inc.

Industry awards were given recently at a luncheon featuring David Crowe, chief economist of the National Association of Home Builders in Washington, D.C., and Edsel Charles, chairman, MarketGraphics Research Group in Franklin, Tenn.

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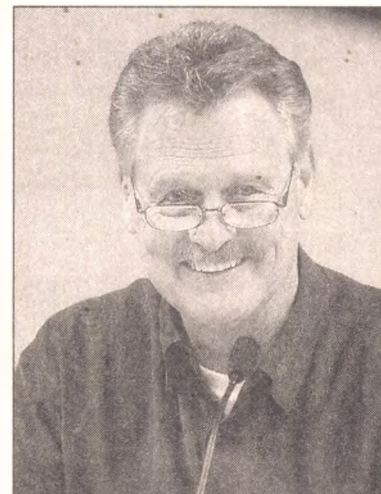
Hall of Fame to Al Kligman, Superb Homes



Builder of the Year to Anthony Lombardo, Lombardo Homes



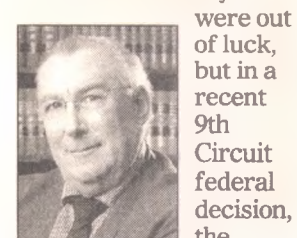
Young Builder of the Year to Tim Capaldi, CGR, Capaldi Building



Lyon Township Supervisor Lannie Young, Distinguished Service Award to Government

Q: We believe that our developer knowingly sold condominium units to individuals who presented a high risk of foreclosure and abandonment of their homes, provided them with financing, and really didn't give a true story of the nature of our neighborhood. Is there anything we can do against our developer?

A: In the past, I would have said you



Robert Meisner

were out of luck, but in a recent 9th Circuit federal decision, the court held that the purchaser's decreased economic value and desirability were cognizable injuries which could be pursued against the developer, and if they can establish a sufficient causal connection between any decreased value and desirability in the developer's actions, they should be able to pursue the matter. This is certainly, therefore, worth something to consider and developers should be clearly put on notice of their potential exposure for selling units to people who have no business buying these units because of economic limitations.

Q: I am still thinking about buying a condominium in Naples, Fla., and I am wondering if the market has bottomed out, in your opinion?

A: As of the end of 2011, the market appears to have reached bottom as there has been a lot of activity in sales and not necessarily scavengers attempting to buy out properties at ridiculously low levels. Once again, the beachfront property has remained steady and the exorbitant appreciation which occurred for 10 years is not likely to come back for a considerable period of time.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track, second edition. It is available for \$9.95 plus \$1 shipping and handling. He also wrote Condo Living: A Survival Guide to Buying, Owning and Selling a Condominium, available for \$24.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling. Call (248) 644-4433 or visit bmeisner.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-WAYNE

These are the Observer & Eccentric-area residential real-estate closings recorded the week of Oct. 31 to Nov. 4, 2011, at the Wayne County Register of Deeds office. Listed below are cities, addresses, and sales prices.

CANTON

1866 Aberdeen St \$121,000
42115 Addison Ave \$136,000
2052 Arcadia Dr \$95,000
998 Bristol Ct \$247,000
46761 Camelia Dr \$180,000
386 Constitution St \$380,000
41880 Coventry Way \$128,000
2483 Cranbrook Rd \$153,000
7400 Eranson Dr \$199,000
50240 Geddes Rd \$63,000
46755 Maidstone Rd \$196,000
6628 Marshall St \$235,000
568 McKinley Cir \$258,000
50483 Monroe St \$256,000
43443 Proctor Rd \$250,000

47501 Rammer Ct \$435,000
41250 Southwind Dr \$52,000
49515 Taft Ln \$359,000
45192 Thornhill Rd \$270,000
47533 Vistas Circle Dr N \$185,000

GARDEN CITY

32700 Bock St \$40,000
32439 Donnelly St \$42,000
30965 Maplewood St \$72,000
32164 Maplewood St \$50,000
32109 Sheridan St \$43,000

LIVONIA

14795 Arcola St \$90,000
11425 Auburndale St \$180,000
37354 Bennett St \$175,000
11402 Berwick St \$133,000
27445 Buckingham St \$94,000
11894 Bucking Blvd \$140,000
15530 Comstock St \$160,000
29549 Curtis Rd \$94,000
36372 Fairway Dr \$30,000
31846 Gable St \$49,000
9900 Garvett St \$65,000
18454 Golfview St \$210,000
9593 Inkster Dr \$67,000

18230 Mayfield St \$235,000
38807 Meeting House Ln \$180,000
14574 Melrose St \$93,000
18255 Middlebelt Rd \$80,000
39023 Pinetree St \$120,000
32922 Southgate St \$170,000
34993 W Chicago St \$103,000
20251 Wayne Rd \$299,000
17429 Westbrook Dr \$162,000
28662 Westfield St \$104,000

NORTHVILLE

16342 Brookwood Ct \$215,000
16145 Homestead Cir \$255,000
20465 Lexington Blvd \$285,000
50676 Livingston Dr \$365,000
16109 Maplewood Ct \$342,000
15858 Portis Rd \$175,000
46992 Red Oak Dr \$443,000
39692 Rockcrest Ln \$145,000
319 S Rogers St \$450,000
41738 Waterfall Rd \$269,000

17247 Willow Ridge Ct \$472,000
16506 Winchester Dr \$285,000
PLYMOUTH
39663 Birchwood Dr \$151,000
40420 Newport Dr \$68,000
13928 Oakwood Ct \$384,000
51240 Plymouth Lake Cir \$473,000
364 Roe St \$187,000

REDFORD

13478 Arnold \$43,000
9251 Brady Ct \$60,000
9658 Centralia \$50,000
10031 Crosley \$37,000
9039 Dale \$31,000
15592 Fox \$15,000
9974 Garfield \$83,000
11724 Hazelton \$22,000
15886 Kinloch \$40,000
25122 Lyndon \$60,000
11727 Nathalie \$43,000
13011 Nathaline \$65,000
9906 Seminole \$65,000
12761 Tecumseh \$61,000

23607 W Chicago \$44,000
14207 Winston \$34,000
Westland
32516 Anita Dr \$91,000
30758 Avondale St \$34,000
7305 Bison St \$89,000
35891 Booth St \$24,000
7840 Donna St \$89,000
348 Ethan Dr \$220,000
2401 Hawley Blvd \$91,000
31535 Hazelwood St \$61,000
8243 Huntington St \$11,000
29730 Julius Blvd \$25,000
2034 Minerva St \$82,000
8221 N Henry Rd \$90,000
8206 Pickering Pl \$190,000
1365 S Karle St \$21,000
7324 S Kingston Ct \$60,000
2227 Stieber St \$7,000
6272 Twin Oaks \$84,000
8400 Vista Ln \$30,000
7345 Woodview St \$20,000
7360 Woodview St \$28,000

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-OAKLAND

These are the area residential real estate closings recorded the week of Oct. 24-28, 2011, at the Oakland County Register of Deeds office. Listed below are cities, addresses, and sales prices.

BEVERLY HILLS

32210 Arlington Dr \$218,000
32320 Bell Vine Trl \$350,000
16321 Birchwood Ave \$192,000

BIRMINGHAM

730 Chester St \$285,000
724 Lakeview Ave \$450,000
1651 Latham St \$240,000
263 Ravine Rd \$400,000

BLOOMFIELD HILLS

2332 Devonshire Rd \$176,000
2468 Hickory Glen Dr \$270,000
1451 Ravineview Ct # C-10 \$128,000
800 Trailwood Path \$130,000

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

1968 Bent Tree Trl \$160,000
2757 Brady Dr \$215,000
4378 Compton Way \$366,000
5935 Crabtree Rd \$329,000
666 E Fox Hills Dr \$34,000

1987 Eagle Pointe \$133,000
2316 Greenlawn Ave \$105,000
1418 Inwoods Cir \$660,000
1900 Lone Pine Rd \$725,000
3544 Maxwell Ct \$520,000
5859 Miller Way E \$415,000
3555 Shallow Brook Dr \$105,000
3330 Sunnyside Dr \$230,000
4730 Tullamore Dr \$320,000
784 Wooddale Rd \$300,000

COMMERCIAL TOWNSHIP

1721 Applebrook Dr \$343,000
5305 Inverrary Ln \$206,000
32111 Newton Rd \$128,000

FARMINGTON

34015 Glenview Dr \$120,000
35560 Lark Harbor Ct \$122,000
34052 Moore Dr \$130,000
33435 Shiawassee St \$103,000
35875 Smithfield Rd \$148,000

FARMINGTON HILLS

35365 Blue Spruce Dr \$115,000
21349 Boxwood Ct \$134,000
33964 Brittany Dr \$243,000
39016 Empire Ct \$335,000
23051 Fox Crk \$280,000
28700 Independence St \$60,000
21329 Inkster Rd \$87,000
36847 Kenmore Dr \$290,000

36571 Martel Ct \$135,000
26305 Middlebelt Rd \$90,000
29612 Nova Woods Dr \$112,000
36356 Old Homestead Dr \$180,000
29717 Pendleton Club Dr \$40,000
28016 Quail Hollow Rd \$118,000
34055 Quaker Valley Rd \$333,000
34462 Ramble Hills Dr \$410,000
38251 Remington Park \$136,000
31914 Restain St \$110,000
30610 W 10 Mile Rd \$45,000
32005 W 12 Mile Rd Unit 313 \$28,000

LATHRUP VILLAGE

18154 Redwood Ave \$134,000
MILFORD
1794 Bristol Dr \$311,000
590 Hill St \$123,000
2941 Katie Ln \$315,000
1714 Millford Hts \$150,000
1640 S Gardner Rd \$315,000

NOVI

22728 Cortes St \$49,000
22655 Cranbrooke Dr \$75,000
26385 Crestwood Dr \$588,000
24844 Davenport Ave \$260,000
46535 Galway Dr \$385,000
26576 Glenwood Dr \$420,000
27663 Harrington Way \$45,000
26990 Maxwell Ct \$45,000

51134 Mayfair Ter \$45,000
44410 Midway Dr \$243,000
22679 Penton Rise Ct \$215,000
27595 Sloan St \$45,000
25242 Sutton Ct \$50,000
45564 Violet Ln \$352,000

SOUTH LYON

25016 Carriage Ln \$40,000
440 Chester Ct \$130,000
25596 Coach Ln \$70,000
166 Easton Dr \$235,000
569 Graefield Dr \$155,000
426 Jean Rd \$136,000
23739 Lyon Ridge Dr \$61,000
25345 Meadow Ct \$30,000
23832 Prescott Ln E \$61,000
401 Princeton Dr \$124,000

SOUTHFIELD

21960 Concord St \$70,000
30524 Fairfax St \$132,000
28466 Inkster Rd \$70,000
15638 Jeanette St \$28,000
15858 New Hampshire St \$100,000
15638 Stone Crossing Dr # D \$31,000
20515 Westhampton Ave \$25,000

WHITE LAKE

9909 Palmoor St \$59,000

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Career Seminar

Learn about the \$50,000 income guarantee Thursday, Feb. 16, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Keller Williams Realty, 40600 Ann Arbor Road, Suite 100, Plymouth.

For more information, contact: Lesley Aiello at (734) 459-4700 or laiello@kw.com.

BIA courses

Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan (BIA) will present all three courses needed for Certified Aging-in-Place designation by the National Association of Home Builders. Don Pratt, CAPS, CGB, CGR of CECS

of Michigan, LLC will be the instructor for all three courses. He will cover the technical, business management and customer service skills essential for competing in this fast growing segment of residential construction.

CAPS I, Marketing and Communication Strategies for Aging and Accessibility, will be held on Monday, March 12. CAPS II, Design/Build Solutions for Aging and Accessibility, will be held on Tuesday, March 13. Business Management, the third course required for this designation, will be held on Wednesday, March 14. Each session runs from

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Association Offices, 2075 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield.

Registration for each course is \$195 per person for BIA members and \$225 per person for guests. For registration information, call (248) 862-1002 or register online at www.builders.org.

Seminar on Tuesdays

A free Reverse Mortgage Seminar is 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Colonial Mortgage Corp., 33919 Plymouth Road, Livonia. No obligation. Learn about reverse mortgages. RSVP with Larry Brady at (800) 260-5484, Ext. 33.

Free Foreclosure Tours

Free Foreclosure Tours are 1 p.m. every other Sunday. Meeting place is Panera Bread on the southeast corner of Middlebelt and I-96. E-mail Georgia@addvaluer Realty.com or visit FreeForeclosureTour.com.

On Facebook

RE/MAX has launched a new Facebook page for customers and the public to get direct answers for their real estate questions from RE/MAX experts. The new site is a chance for the public to ASKREMAX and get clear, expert answers in real time. Visit www.facebook.com/

ASKREMAX.

Finance Seminar

Learn how to finance your purchase and rehab projects in and around Detroit. Hear from an expert in the lending business, Trent Dalrymple, who has more than 25 years of experience. Real estate and investment professionals are welcome. Seating is limited so call (248) 547-3006, or sign up at www.metro-mi.com. These free one-hour seminars will be 6-7 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of the month at Metro Mortgage Investments, 26711 Woodward Ave., Suite 301, Huntington Woods.

Challenging fun for ALL ages

Thursday PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

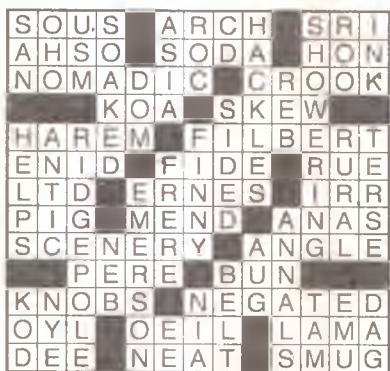
ACROSS

- 1 Leafy vegetable
- 6 Wallpaper, etc.
- 11 John Wayne genre
- 13 Opera barber
- 14 Telegraph signal
- 15 Map source
- 17 Close kin
- 18 Yale alumnus
- 19 Skylark maker
- 20 Birthday count
- 21 Edit out
- 23 Plant sci.
- 24 Sapporo sashes
- 25 Margot Fonteyn, e.g.
- 27 1066 raider
- 29 Urchin
- 31 Hotfoot it
- 32 Against
- 35 Freebie
- 38 Thickens
- 39 Sitcom waitress
- 41 Indy champ

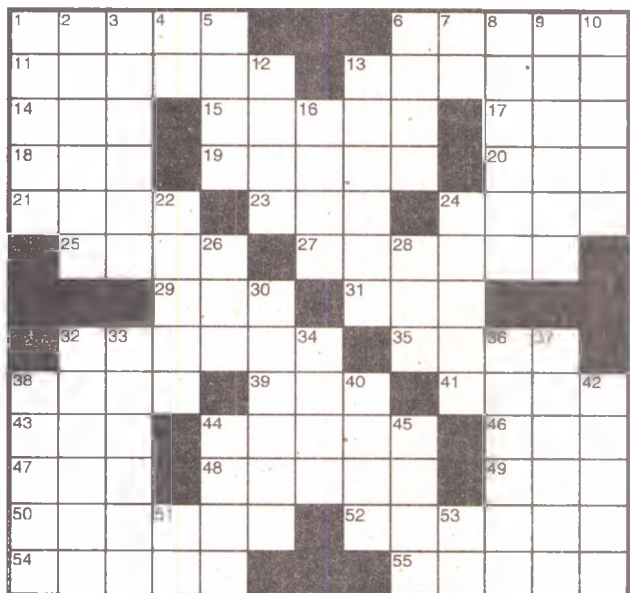
Down

- 43 Peak for Heidi
- 44 Ignited
- 46 Stock on hand, briefly
- 47 Gator Bowl st.
- 48 In-between state
- 49 FICA funds it
- 50 Fission opposite
- 52 Twisted
- 54 Wax theatrical
- 55 Distinctive elegance
- 1 Used encryption
- 2 Grabbed a cab
- 3 Well-known Hun
- 4 About
- 5 Far from colorful
- 6 Frisbee, for instance
- 7 Cairo loc.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

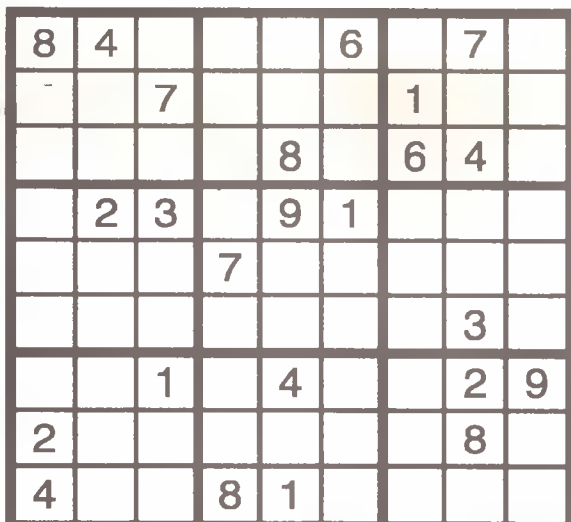


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Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

SUDOKU



Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

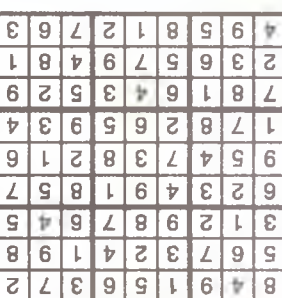
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Word Search — Winter Sports

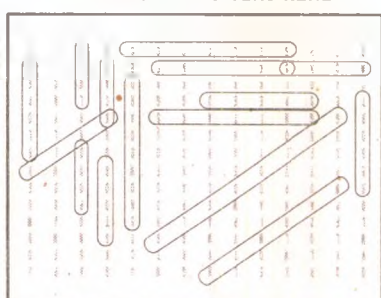


- Boots
- Goggles
- Luge
- Pack
- Pond
- Resort
- Rink
- Skating
- Skiing
- Slopes
- Sledding
- Snow
- Snowboard
- Speed
- Warmth

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CANTON: 3000 SF retail space on Michigan Ave between Haggerty & Lilley. \$14/sf. #3101955. Bela Sipos 734-669-5813, 734-669-4100 Reinhart Commercial

Cemetery Lots

FOUR CEMETERY PLOTS: Parkview Memorial Cemetery in Livonia, Ascension, sec. 493, \$950ea (586) 435-5309

GLEN EDEN (Livonia): 2 adjacent lots, Garden of the Ascension section 852 Will sell sep. or together. \$495/each. 313-937-8665

THREE PLOTS: Parkview Memorial Cemetery in Livonia in the Garden of Faith, sec. 313. Directly off entrance, prime location. \$900ea (734) 266-0168

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GARDEN CITY: Large 1 & 2 bdrm. Appl., heat & water Free. \$560 & \$800 + Security. 734-464-3847. 734-513-4965

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PLYMOUTH: Prime location. 1 bdrm available. \$580/mo Near downtown. Incl. heat. No dogs. 734-455-2635

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Moves You In! Spacious 1 bedroom Private entry On-site maintenance Hurry, won't last! 734-721-6699 EHO *call for details

WESTLAND

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NORTHVILLE- 7 Mile & Northridge condo. 1200 sq. ft. 2 bdrm/2 bath, carport, C/A, refrigerator & stove incl. Small dogs & cats welcome! \$825/mo. +sec. 248-465-0262

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SUN HOMES *Some restrictions apply, call for details. Exp. 2/29/12 EHO

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Wilderness

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Garden City

Luna Apts. Move-In Specials! Near Westland Mall (734) 425-0930

Village Apts.

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|---|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| 1st Choice Mortgage Lending (734) 459-0782 | 3.625 | 0 | 3.125 | 0 | J/A |
| Accurate Mortgage Solutions (800) 593-1912 | 3.625 | 0 | 3.125 | 0 | J/A |
| AFI Financial (877) 234-0600 | 3.625 | 0 | 3.125 | 0 | J/A/F |
| Ameriplus Mortgage Corp. (248) 740-2323 | 3.75 | 0 | 3 | 0 | J/A |
| BRINKS Financial Group (800) 785-4755 | 3.375 | 1.125 | 2.875 | 0.875 | J/A/V/F |
| Client Services by Golden Rule (800) 991-9922 | 3.5 | 1.375 | 2.875 | 0.25 | J/A/V/F |
| Co-op Services Credit Union (734) 466-6113 | 4 | 0.25 | 3.375 | 0 | J |
| Dearborn Federal Savings Bank (313) 565-3100 | 4.125 | 0 | 3.375 | 0 | A |
| Fifth Third Bank (800) 792-8830 | 4 | 0 | 3.25 | 0 | J/A/V/F |
| First State Bank (800) 372-2205 | NR | NR | NR | NR | J/V/F |
| Golden Rule Mortgage (800) 991-9922 | 3.625 | 0.25 | 2.9 | 0.25 | J/A/V/F |
| Group One Mortgage (248) 282-1602 | 4.125 | 0 | 3.5 | 0 | J/A/V/F |
| Mortgages by Golden Rule (800) 991-9922 | 3.5 | 1.25 | 2.875 | 0.25 | J/A/V/F |
| Talmer Bank & Trust (800) 462-2786 | 3.875 | 0 | 3.125 | 0 | J/A/V/F |

Above information available as of 2/10/12 and subject to change at anytime. Rates are based on a \$200,000 loan with 20% down & credit score of 740 or above. Jumbo rates, specific payment calculation & most current rates available Fridays after 2:00 P.M. at www.rmcreport.com Key to "Other" column - J= Jumbo, A = Arm, V = VA, F = FHA & NR = Not Reported. All Lenders are Equal Opportunity Lenders. Lenders to participate call (734) 922-3032 © 2012 Residential Mortgage Consultants, Inc., All Rights Reserved

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If interested. 313-533-5603

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builder.com

Help Wanted-General

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Canvass door-to-door to schedule appointments with local homeowners. \$5 to meet with our Sales Team.

Are You:
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Hungry to succeed
Good Communicators
Ability to Learn From & Heave Past Rejection

Earn This:
\$10.00 per hour
\$1.00 per hour
Paid Time Off
Career advancement
Co-Matching 401k Program
A Full Time, Permanent Position
Uncapped bonus potential
weach set appt

(734) 462-6019
*Minimum length of employment required
Gutter Grate of America

Help Wanted-General

Attention CDL A Drivers

Immediate local runs available for CDL A drivers in the metro Detroit area, home every night. Good pay, health ins, vacation. Must have 1 yr exp w/clean MVR. Willingness to work. Sign on bonus up to \$500. Come join our team. Call today: 877-977-4287

Help Wanted-General

LEASING CONSULTANT

For retirement community in Westland. Enthusiastic, pleasant, energetic, a real go-getter. Training provided. Full-time with Sat's. Compensation includes benefits and 401K. Fax resume: 734-729-9840 E.O.E.

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DeVlieg Boring Mill Operator Manual & CNC.
Exp. only. Day shift.
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A 24 month Paid Internship that may lead to a Six Figure Income.
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PatRyan@RealEstateOne.com

Help Wanted-Dental

DENTAL ASSISTANT:
Experience, preferred 4 years. a week in Dearborn. Must be a team player with friendly personality and positive attitude. Please fax a note as to why you should be hired along with your resume to: (313) 563-5865

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* SAVE \$150 on \$400 JOB *
Small Repair, Remodel Basement, Bath, Kitchen
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Help Wanted-General

APPOINTMENT SETTER
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Valid Driver's License Req. Co. Vehicle Provided.
\$600-\$800/Week
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Attention CDL A Drivers

Immediate openings for driver for road work and teams. Road drivers in the Detroit area are out 5 days, home 2 days. Team drivers are out of Toledo Running to south US out 5 days, home 2 days. Sign on bonus up to \$500. Must have 2 yrs exp w/clean MVR. Good pay and benefits. Call today for more info 877-977-4287

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For Star Cutter Company located at our Farmington Hills Facility. Knowledge of Anca, Walters, and Star Machine Tools a plus. Positions available are 2nd or 3rd shifts.

We offer a competitive wage and benefit package. Send resumes to **HR@starcutter.com** or to Star Cutter Co 4210 Doyle Drive Lewiston MI 49756. For more information on our company visit www.starcutter.com

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No Experience Needed
Must be SELF-MOTIVATED & DEPENDABLE

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Requirements include: Associates degree or six months related experience and/or training, thorough knowledge of solid modeling / CAD principles (Solid Edge, SolidWorks, Unigraphics, Pro/E Wildfire, Inventor, CATIA, or similar), G&T proficiency, and basic hands-on mechanical / electrical aptitude. Exposure to AutoCAD 2000.

Send resume to: **HR@acecontrols.com**
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With exp. in electrical software & hardware applications. For interview: 248-358-1717

Material Handler

Livonia Steel Service Center is looking for Material Handlers and a Burner Trainee. Material Handlers need experience with crane & saw machine operation. We offer a competitive pay and benefit package which includes medical, dental, 401k/profit sharing. Send resume to: 734-452-3919 or email to: **app_email@lsc.com**

Warehouse Attendant

No Experience Needed
Must be SELF-MOTIVATED & DEPENDABLE

Hours: 12pm-8pm w/some mornings
Call (248) 767-4106

OPTOMETRIC ASSISTANT

Positive, personable professional needed part-time for private office. Pre-testing, contact lenses, eye-glass dispensing, exp. preferred. Email resume to: **eyecarehr@yahoo.com**

Drywall

COMPLETE DRYWALL SRV.
Plaster Repair. All jobs welcomed. Lic/Ins. 313-363-6738

Antiques/Collectibles

Child's Table & Chairs:
Trumpet - \$50, Breyer Horses, albums, 40's / 50's music mags, etc. (248) 444-8942

Dogs

BEAGLE LAB MIX PUPS
Adorable, 1st shots & dewormed. \$100 to loving stable homes. (313) 740-9118

Goldendoodle Pups
35-40 lbs., 1st shots, dewormed. Ready now! 519-738-2389

Driver/Shop Help, Part-Time

West Metro Printing, Livonia. Local deliveries in our van. Ideal for Retirees.
Fax resume to: 734-522-9171 or call: 734-522-0410

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Housekeeping/Janitorial

Dining Services Management Company has an immediate opening for a full-time WORKING SUPERVISOR at a Detroit College. Supervisory exp., a plus. Must be able to work evenings and weekends. Friendly, energetic, customer service oriented individuals need only to apply. Great Benefits! Email resume: **sales@ovationscleaningservices.com** or mail to: PO Box 261 New Hudson, MI 48165 Attn: Human Resources

Production & Delivery Person

For local seafood company. Must be able to handle 50 lbs. Clean driving record. Full time. \$11.00/hr. Send resume: **scott@thefreshfoods.com**

Front Office Coordinator

Immediate full-time position available with a very busy sales office. Will be required to work directly with people and manage a multi-line phone system. Computer and telemarketing a must. Send resume: **kollette@yahooc.com**

Dining Room Server

Part-Time
at retirement community. Apply within: 37501 Joy Rd. Westland, MI 48185 EOE

Electrical

ALL YOUR ELECTRICAL NEEDS
obeyerelectric@hotmail.com
Mike: (734) 502-4271

Estate Sale

Estate Sale Filming for HGTV's Cash & Cari Season 3
GREAT FINDS incl. Tool Collection, Dolls & Crystal
11232 Paclon Dr.
Livonia MI 48157
Feb 17-18th, 10-5pm
<http://reputableestate.com>
248.719.8332

Lab Puppies

LAB PUPPIES:
Chocolate or black 14 weeks, shots & wormed. \$150/or best. 248-991-4176

MASTIFF - NEO AKC PUPS
3 colors, vat checked, declawed, wormed, & shots. 734-671-5324

Driver/Shop Help, Part-Time

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Dining Room Server

Part-Time
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Hauling/Clean Up

A-1 HAULING
Move scrap metal, clean basements, garages, stores, etc. Lowest prices in town. Quick service. Free est. Wayne/Oakland/Carroll location. 248-547-2764, 248-559-8138

Household Goods

ARMOIRE-THOMASVILLE:
(Dark cherry), Ethan Allen, Pennsylvania House, dining room set, Hitchcock chairs & antique furniture
Call: 248-563-1689

Lost - Pets

LOST: COCKER SPANIEL
Female, brown/white in color. Pink collar. 6 Mile & Northville Rd. area. Answers to 'Autumn'. 248-380-0233

Driver/Shop Help, Part-Time

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Housecleaning

ELEGANT TOUCH CLEANING SERVICES
Apartments & Office Cleaning
(248) 929-4286

Bedroom Set

ATTRACTIVE, oak 4 piece set.
\$900. 586-264-5524

Lost - Pets

LOST: COCKER SPANIEL
Female, brown/white in color. Pink collar. 6 Mile & Northville Rd. area. Answers to 'Autumn'. 248-380-0233

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Dining Room Server

Part-Time
at retirement community. Apply within: 37501 Joy Rd. Westland, MI 48185 EOE

Moving/Storage

A1 Movers & Service
Lic. & Insured-Efficient 3 men. \$75/hr. 866-633-7953

Bedroom Set

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\$900. 586-264-5524

Lost - Pets

LOST: COCKER SPANIEL
Female, brown/white in color. Pink collar. 6 Mile & Northville Rd. area. Answers to 'Autumn'. 248-380-0233

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Dining Room Server

Part-Time
at retirement community. Apply within: 37501 Joy Rd. Westland, MI 48185 EOE

Painting/Decorating

DEDICATED RE. PAINTING SERVICE FOR OVER 40 YRS.
Free Estimates.
Call: (248) 225-7165

Bedroom Set

ATTRACTIVE, oak 4 piece set.
\$900. 586-264-5524

Lost - Pets

LOST: COCKER SPANIEL
Female, brown/white in color. Pink collar. 6 Mile & Northville Rd. area. Answers to 'Autumn'. 248-380-0233

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Dining Room Server

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Roofing

BEST CHIMNEY CO.
Free Est. Lic & Ins.
248-557-5595, 313-292-7722

Household Goods

ARMOIRE-THOMASVILLE:
(Dark cherry), Ethan Allen, Pennsylvania House, dining room set, Hitchcock chairs & antique furniture
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Free Estimates.
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Household Goods

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(Dark cherry), Ethan Allen, Pennsylvania House, dining room set, Hitchcock chairs & antique furniture
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 First Year Of Maintenance is FREE!
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 black, fully loaded, leather heated seats, sunroof Bose sound. Security System. Perfect cond. Runs Great. Only \$7250. SOLD!!!!
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 Bronze XLT, PL/PW, ABS & OnStar! Cruise in style!
 Reduced to \$20,978!
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 White, 73K, \$33,995
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BUICK, GMC
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 Ultimate Package
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 Silver, 51K, heated seats, satellite radio, new tires, \$18,899. Jim: (248) 444-9480

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 Candy Apple Red, 31K, touring, and power options!
 Ready for an adventure!
 Just \$17,995!
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 CXL Silver, only \$8,995
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 Very clean, Red, 114K, Moon Roof, \$8995
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 Apple Red, 7K, PL/PW, and OnStar! Fun gas sipper! Just \$13,695!
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CHEVROLET IMPALA 5 to choose from!
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 Eternal Silver, 5K, LS, and auto! Exceptional performance! Just \$16,994!
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NEWSPAPER POLICY
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 Stunning Silver, limited, chrome, and sync! Top to bottom loaded! Reduced to \$24,977!
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Lou LaRiche

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NORTH BROS. FORD
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 Blue Harmony, SLT, leather & AWD! Roomy & loaded!
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 Summer Tan, LX, and AWD!
 One sweet ride! Only \$16,995!
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HONDA ODYSSEY 2008
 Enchanted Black, leather, sunroof, and htd. seats!
 Luxury for the whole family!
 Just \$23,895!
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 Red, mint condition \$14,695
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BUICK, GMC
(734) 453-2500

WRANGLER 4X4 2006
 Silver, low miles \$16,995
BOB JEANNOTTE
BUICK, GMC
(734) 453-2500

ES300 2000
 STK# 12C8192A \$8,988
 Check It Out At northbros.com
DEALER
734-402-8774

LINCOLN LS-V8
 Only 64K Blue, 1 owner
BOB JEANNOTTE
BUICK, GMC
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Lincoln
ION 2007
 White Frost, GT, sunroof, and leather. Powerful G-force!
 Reduced to \$15,973!
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TOWN CAR 2007 Signature
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MAZDA 3 2010
 Silver, auto \$13,995
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Mercury
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 1st yr. of maintenance is free
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G6 2009
 White Frost, GT, sunroof, and leather. Powerful G-force!
 Reduced to \$15,973!
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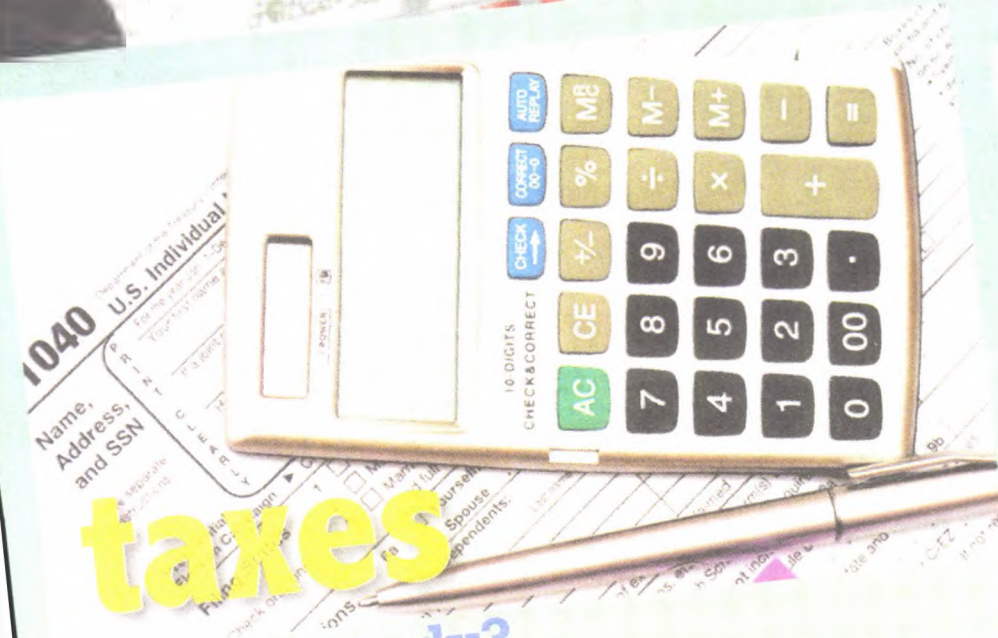
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Adventure Down Under

Part 2: New Zealand

By Jay Young

Contributing Writer

News flash! In a recent survey of 4,000 expatriates published in *Forbes* magazine, New Zealand was ranked as the world's friendliest country. Separated from the world's stress, with quality social programs, a focus on family outdoor activities, lower unemployment, crime and poverty levels, it is little wonder people love living there. They often respond to a question by a visitor with "no worries."

Called Aotearoa, "land of the long white cloud" by the Maori, New Zealand is breathtakingly beautiful. It is a land of majestic snow-capped mountains and tropical rainforests, crystalline lakes speckled with wooded isles, of glaciers and fjords, geysers and volcanoes. It has cosmopolitan cities and back-country sheep stations, kauri forests and kiwi fruit plantations and unique wildlife, including the flightless kiwi bird, the moniker inhabitants have given to themselves.

We started the second half of our journey down under by flying from Sydney to Auckland, the largest city in the country with over one million inhabitants. Located on the North Island on a narrow isthmus between two stunning harbors, Auckland is known as the "City of Sails" due to the large number of boat owners whose beautiful crafts regularly ply the waterways.

Our Maori guide Prince led us around the Auckland Domain, a 185-acre park that includes two large conservatories containing native flora and the Auckland War Memorial Museum, which contains an extensive display of Maori and Polynesian culture, including a 115-foot-long war canoe carved from a single giant totara tree and designed to seat 100 warriors.

Thermal wonderland

From Auckland we drove to Rotorua, one of New Zealand's two tourism "hot spots." We stopped along the way to visit an organic farm and enjoy a home-hosted meal, a highlight of all Overseas Adventure Travel tours, prepared by our gracious hosts Ray and Dorothy Higgins, who are fourth-generation dairy farmers.



The "other-worldly" sight of pure, crystal clear water in the Blue Spring formed from the waters of the Mamaku River in the North Island. Water from the river takes between 50-100 years to reach the Blue Spring, which removes any light scattering particles due to its long residence in the underground aquifers, thus rendering the water blue/green in color.

Rotorua was settled around 1350 A.D. and is the center of Maori culture in the country. The smell of sulfur pervades the town which is built on an active geothermal area characterized by scalding cauldrons and roaring geysers. On a day trip from Rotorua, we visited the Waimangu Volcanic Valley, where we walked downhill past bubbling creeks and algae-covered terraces to the shores of Lake Rotomahana. From there we took a boat ride past steaming cliffs and mini geysers that astounded us, much as they did George Bernard Shaw who exclaimed, "I was pleased to get so close to Hades and be able to return" after his 1934 visit to the area.

The highlight of our visit to Rotorua was a "hangi" meal cooked in boiling waters from a bubbling pool in the Whakarewarewa Thermal Village. Villagers also performed native dances and songs and demonstrated the art of making garments using flax fibers.

Adventure capital

From Rotorua, we flew along the southern Alps to the country's other tourist hot spot in the South Island, the beautiful lakeside city of Queenstown. Situated on the banks of Lake Wakatipu and ringed by snow-capped mountains, Queenstown has become the adventure capital of the world. It is the birthplace of bungee jumping, and also offers windsurfing, para-sailing, white water rafting, sky diving, hang gliding and a whole host of other adrenaline-pumping pastimes.

Using the gorgeous Millbrook resort as our home base, we traveled to the picturesque village of Arrowtown. Arguably the prettiest and most authentic gold-mining town in New Zealand, Arrowtown's main street looks almost "Disneyesque" with its perfectly preserved or reconstructed wooden buildings.

Like many American gold mining towns, Arrowtown sprang up almost

Please see **NEW ZEALAND, 6**

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For centuries, brewers have made full-bodied beers built to endure the frosty days of winter. As we slush through the final month of the season it's time to take advantage of these winter warmers still populating local markets.

Most will find a festive spiced offering infused with the warming qualities of alcohol, but all will deliver a savory layer that comes from a healthy hit of barley malt.



Nate Parsons

Not for the faint of heart, these offerings are robust and served at a warmer temperature to showcase their delicious flavor profile. Cinnamon, rum, caramel, nutmeg and dried fruit are just a few of the attributes one can look for in this sudsy encounter.

When looking to melt the grip of Old Man Winter, Ommegang brings the heat with its winter seasonal, Adoration. The ales of Ommegang are already legendary despite the brewery's young age. Over its short 15-year history the farmhouse brewer located in Cooperstown, N. Y., has pulled down its fair share of accolades.

The brewery is named after a colorful annual procession that takes place in the Grand Place in Brussels. The brew master's focus is Bel-



gian-style beer. The year-around lineup is impressive and the seasonal offerings are second to none.

Adoration is a winter warmer crafted true to its style — silky smooth with a malty backbone, slight hop bite, and caramel scent. The alcohol will waste no time grabbing the wheel to infuse a layer of warmth. For gastronomes, the offering is rock-solid with braised venison or beef stew and for the purist, a bowl of steamed mussels saddled with a wedge of crusty bread.

TASTING NOTES

- **Beer:** Adoration, Special Winter Ale
- **Brewery:** Ommegang
- **Origin:** Cooperstown, N. Y.
- **Style:** Ale
- **ABV:** 10%
- **Glassware:** Snifter, Tulip, or Goblet
- **Description:** Caged and corked Adoration holds its own among the other elegant 750ml bombers lining the beer aisle. The snifter pour is deep chestnut with a light haze and a tan head that needs encouragement to form the two finger head. Fruit dominates the aroma, with a lot of vanilla, raisin, fig, and rum cake in the background. The palate is lush, with a big mouth

and some toffee sweetness. Dark fruits and figs are encountered again with notes of cinnamon and nutmeg more apparent in the flavor. Dark rum heat is evident in the finish but not overwhelming.

• **Conclusion:** Nothing worth knowing can be taught, but for most Adoration will be an education.

Where to Purchase:

- Hillers Market, 425 North Center Street, Northville – 750ml / \$8.99
- The Wine Palace, 13971 Middlebelt, Livonia – 750ml/\$11.99
- Super Fine Wine, 1634 Haggerty, Canton – 750ml / \$11.99
- Brass Mug Liquor, 19213 Newburgh, Livonia – 750ml / \$12

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Instant gratification: Painting projects to update your decor in one weekend

(ARA) - Updating the decor in your home doesn't have to be a long, laborious or expensive process. Instead, get a little instant gratification by using paint to easily refresh areas and items throughout the house. With a little cash and a free weekend, you can makeover your house right now.

Furniture facelift

Whether it's an old pair of chairs in the attic or a desk that's seen better days, it's easy to breathe new life into pieces of forgotten furniture with a fresh coat of paint. You can add interest and a pop of color to any room. A semi-gloss finish works best when painting furniture because it's easy to clean and hides any imperfections.

How to:

- Make sure the surface is clean, dull and dry.
- Prime with a stain blocking primer to ensure the surface is properly sealed. This will help the paint go on evenly and uniformly.
- With a high-quality mini-roller, like those from Purdy, apply the paint of your choice to achieve the best finish. These tools are versatile, lightweight, and can quickly and easily deliver a perfect finish with smooth rolling action.

- For extra protection, brush on two thin, even coats of water-based polyurethane.

Door do-over

Changing the color of an interior door can make a big impact in any room. The key to getting this update right: color selection. Choose color similar to your walls for the door, because you don't want the contrast to be jarring. Be sure to paint the frame too, so the door doesn't seem to float in space, and use a gloss or semi-gloss finish.

How to:

- Remove door and hinges from the wall.
- Make sure the door is clean dull and dry.
- Prime bare, sanded woodwork; there's no need to prime previously painted surfaces if they're in good condition. However, if you are going over an existing oil-based paint with a latex paint, follow the instructions on the paint can on how to prime.
- When applying paint or primer, work from the center of the door outwards in the following order: molding, inside panels, rails, stiles
- Once paint is completely dry, re-hang door using existing hinges.

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NEW ZEALAND

Continued from page 3

overnight when gold was discovered in 1862. Fortune hunters from all over the world flocked to Arrowtown, including about 60 Chinese miners, whose little stone huts are preserved on the edge of town. Over time, the Arrow River yielded enough of the precious metal to make it one of the world's richest sources of alluvial gold.

Eighth Wonder of the World

Early the next morning we departed on a 13-hour round trip bus ride to Milford Sound — dubbed the “Eighth Wonder of the World” by Rudyard Kipling — situated in the heart of Fjordland National Park. After passing shimmering Lake Te Anau, dense forests and rich farmland, we boarded a tour boat for an unforgettable cruise around this majestic inlet of the Tasman Sea. Bounded by towering cliffs, we viewed cascading waterfalls, beech forests, unique flora and fauna, including some fur seals sunning themselves on the rocks, and the perfect cone of Mitre Peak that caps the sounds' famous fjords.

The following day we journeyed along the shores of Lake Wakatipu to the remote township of Glenorchy, the last frontier of the Southern Alps and one of the sites for the recent filming of the “Hobbit” movie (due to be released in December 2012) by Kiwi native son Peter Jackson.

After a guided walk through the primeval Te Wahipounamu forest, we ended up at the Dart River and boarded a jetboat, brought to New Zealand by none other than Sir Edmond Hillary. A thrilling ride up river, skimming along the water's surface at breakneck speeds in just inches of water, took us into remote areas of wild beauty.

Leaving Queenstown we traveled through wine country, where the growers plant red roses at the end of each strand of grapes as an early-warning sign of disease, but which adds additional color to the hillsides already covered in vibrant blue lupine and yellow scotch broom. Traveling over the Haast Pass we arrived at the Franz Josef Glacier, one of the most remarkable geological wonders on Earth due to its past rapid advance down a narrow valley, at the astonishing rate of about 17 feet per week, ending at the edge of a dense, temperate rain forest.

Rugged West Coast

We continued our expedition into New Zealand's wild and rugged west coast to



Steam rises from the Infernal Crater Lake near Rotorua. Formed after the 1886 eruption of the Tarawera volcano, the lake maintains a water temperature ranging from 95 to 165 degrees Fahrenheit. The intense blue color is caused by finely divided silica that is held in suspension in the water.

the towns Greymouth and Hokitika, the greenstone (jade) capital of the country. We took a scenic drive to the historic town of Reefton, so named for the abundance of quartz reefs, which once held veins of gold and coal. Locals dressed in period garb guided us to Blacks Point museum and other historic buildings in the town.

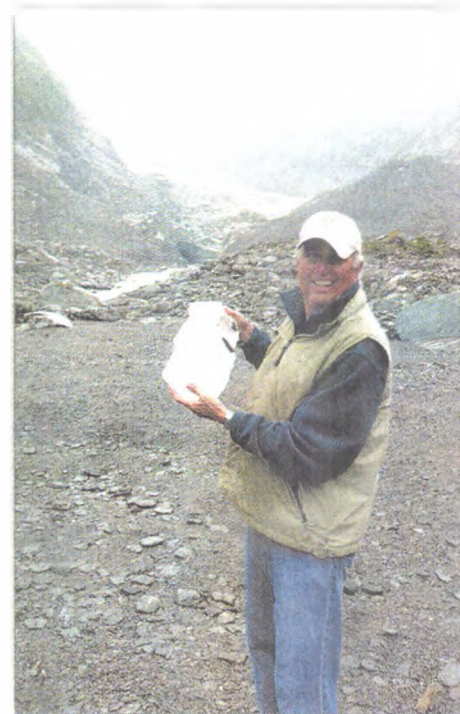
We continued to Tauranga Bay, where we walked along a high wind-swept ridge overlooking a weathered shoreline that contains colonies of thousands of fur seals. We stopped for a leisurely stroll through the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes of Paparoa National Park, a bizarre collection of stratified limestone formations that appear to be petrified stacks of pancakes rising from the waves.

Our next discovery was at the Flock Hill sheep station, where we witnessed the uncanny ability of a working sheep dog to herd his flock of reluctant charges into a small corral, being directed only by the hand signals and dog whistle of his master.

We flew from Christchurch, whose downtown is still closed to visitors because of the devastating earthquake that hit the city last year, to Wellington, New Zealand's capital city. It was a fascinating place with its distinctive beehive-shaped capital building, the Weta Cave where many of the fantastic creatures of “Lord of the Rings” were devised, the country's finest museum — Te Papa Tongarewa — the bright red cable cars climbing up the hillside to the Botanic Gardens and the city's vibrant nightlife. Wellington proved to be a fitting conclusion to a spectacular country and a fabulous journey of discovery down under.

For information about this trip and other Overseas Adventure Travel tours, go to www.oattravel.com or phone (800) 955-1924.

Canton residents Jay and Linnea Young are retired educators who are attempting to see the world. This is the second of a two-part series about their recent trip to Australia and New Zealand. The first installment was published in the January edition of Inspire.



Jay Young is shown holding a large chunk of ice from the Franz Josef glacier in the background. Few sights equal the spectacle of this giant tongue of ice grinding down through temperate rainforest to just 900 feet above sea level.

Avoid these mistakes on your tax return

Several of the most common mistakes made on tax returns are simple in nature. For example:

- Social Security numbers must match perfectly with what's on Social Security cards.
- All names on returns must also match Social Security cards.
- If you're not sure which of the five statuses you are, see IRS Publication 501.
- In addition to math errors, taxpayers often miscalculate amounts related to their taxable income, withholding and estimated tax payments, the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child and Dependent Care Credit, the standard deduction for age 65 and older or blind, and taxable amounts of Social Security benefits.
- Double check the routing and account numbers for your financial institution so that you either receive your refund in a timely fashion or pay your balance on time.

"Another easy way to avoid these types of errors is to use a tax preparation solution," said Jessi Dolmage, TaxACT spokeswoman. "Online and download solutions like TaxACT allow you to import information from last year's return, which reduces the chance of mistyping key information. The programs also provide step-by-step guidance while completing the forms and math for you, and they check your return for errors and missed opportunities."

— ARA Content

Tips for saving money on taxes

Who isn't looking to save a little money these days?

Here are some easy ways you can save money on preparing your taxes, as well as ways you might be able to pay out a little less.

IRS Free File: more savings, less taxing

Looking for a fast, easy and free option to do your taxes? IRS Free File allows everyone to prepare and e-file their federal tax returns for free. And, the step-by-step, brand-name software offered by IRS' commercial partners helps you find the tax breaks you are due.

Each of the approximately 20 private-sector partners tailor their offerings based on criteria such as income, age or state residency. If you need help finding a Free File match, just select the "get help finding a Free File company" as your option. Simply enter a little information about yourself and the matches will appear. Some also offer state returns for free or for a fee.

• While all the companies have different criteria, if you made \$57,000 or less in 2011 — and that's 70 percent of us — you will be eligible for at least one free tax software program.

• If your income was higher than \$57,000, you can still prepare and e-file your return for free by using Free File Fillable Forms. This is the electronic version of IRS paper forms. It's more basic and is probably best for people comfortable preparing their own paper tax returns. It does not support state tax returns.

Just go to www.irs.gov/freefile to get started.

Organize records

The IRS recommends keeping all tax-related documents for three years, in case of an audit. Keeping track of income-related documents can help you take full advantage of deductions available to you. If you don't have the information, you might be losing out on money.



VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

If you need personal assistance to prepare your tax return, there are 12,000 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites nationwide. These sites offer free help to those earning around \$50,000 or less. To locate the nearest VITA site, search for "VITA" on IRS.gov.

Tax Counseling for the Elderly, which is supported by AARP, offers free tax help to people who are age 60 and older. To locate the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, call (888) 227-7669 or visit AARP.org.

- Interest/dividend statements, i.e. 1099 forms
- Form 1099-G showing any state refunds
- Unemployment compensation amount
- Social Security benefits
- Expense receipts for deductions
- Day care provider's identifying number

Find out if you are eligible for the EITC

No tax benefit offers a greater lifeline to working families than EITC. Yet, one out of every five eligible taxpayers fails to claim it, according to the IRS. Because of the economy, even more people may be eligible if they have had changes in

their earned income. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- The amount of qualifying income depends on your situation. For example, married workers, who earned \$49,078 or less from wages, self-employment or farm income last year, are filing jointly, and have two qualifying children, could be eligible. The maximum credit for 2011 tax returns is \$5,751 for workers with three or more qualifying children.
- Eligibility for the EITC is determined based on a number of factors including earnings, filing status and eligible children. Workers without qualifying children may be eligible for a smaller credit amount.
- You must file a tax return, even if you

Please see TIPS, 12

DID YOU KNOW?

- Because of a holiday, the 2012 tax deadline is April 17.
- Everyone can do their taxes for free with IRS Free File.
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is for working families, yet 20 percent overlook it.
- Eighty percent of taxpayers get a refund.
- IRS2GO is a new smartphone app that lets you track your refund.
- No phone? Visit "Where's My Refund?" at www.irs.gov.
- The official website, www.irs.gov, has a new look, and the latest info.

EITC RULES: ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Rules for everyone

- Your adjusted gross income cannot be more than the limit.
- You must have a valid Social Security number.
- Your filing status cannot be "Married filing separately."
- You must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year.
- You cannot file Form 2555 or Form 2555-EZ.
- Your investment income must be \$3,150 or less.
- You must have earned income.

Education tax benefits help to lower taxes



Given today's economic and employment outlook, the thought of paying for higher education can be discouraging. The average cost of higher education for students staying in their home state was about \$6,400 and about \$15,100 for out-of-state students in the 2009-10 academic year, according to a survey by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Looking at these statistics can be nerve-racking, but there is light at the end of the tunnel.

The U.S. government provides incentives, in the form of credits and deductions, to help decrease the economic impact of pursuing a college education, according to Lisa Lewis, TurboTax blog editor and CPA.

"Education credits can reduce your tax bill or increase your refund while education deductions may lower your taxable income and result in reduced taxes," said Lewis.

The NCES revealed that nearly half of American undergraduates cut their college expenses by an average of \$700 by taking advantage of tax credits or deductions. If you're unclear about which one you qualify for, TurboTax easily does the behind-the-scenes calculations for you and figures out which credit or deduction you are eligible for

and which one gives you the biggest tax break. You can also see how life events such as enrolling in college impact your taxes by using TurboTax TaxCaster 2011.

American Opportunity Credit and Lifetime Learning Credit

The education credits available through Dec. 31, 2012, include the American Opportunity Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit.

The American Opportunity Credit is available to you or your dependent for the first four years of college if your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) is less than \$90,000 or \$180,000 if married filing jointly.

If you are eligible to claim the credit you can benefit from:

- Up to a \$2,500 education credit per eligible student.
- Up to a \$1,000 refund even if you don't owe any taxes because 40 percent of the credit is refundable.

If you're a professional student, the Lifetime Learning Credit may be ideal for you. With this credit, there is no limit on the number of years that can be claimed for you or your dependent, as long as your modified AGI is less than

Please see EDUCATION, 12

Sudoku

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 7 | 3 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | 3 |
| | | | 5 | 7 | 2 | 4 | | |
| 8 | | 1 | | | | | 9 | 6 |
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | 8 | | | |
| 8 | 6 | | | | 3 | | | |
| | | | 6 | 4 | | | 5 | |
| | 1 | 7 | 9 | | | | | 6 |

Level: Beginner

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | | 4 | | 6 | | | | 3 |
| 2 | | 7 | | | | | | |
| | | | 4 | | | | | 8 |
| 6 | | | | 8 | | | | |
| | 3 | | | | | 2 | | 4 |
| | | | | | | | 8 | 1 |
| | | | 5 | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | | | 1 | | 6 | 7 | |
| 9 | | | 3 | | | | | |

Level: Intermediate

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | 7 | 3 | | | | | |
| | 5 | | | 1 | 9 | | | 7 |
| | 4 | | | | | | | 9 |
| 8 | | | | 2 | 6 | | | |
| | | | | 5 | | 4 | 3 | |
| 9 | | | 6 | | 2 | | | |
| 4 | | | 5 | 3 | | | | |
| 6 | | 1 | | | | 5 | 4 | |

Level: Advanced

Answers found on page 14

Fort Myers Beach beckons in winter

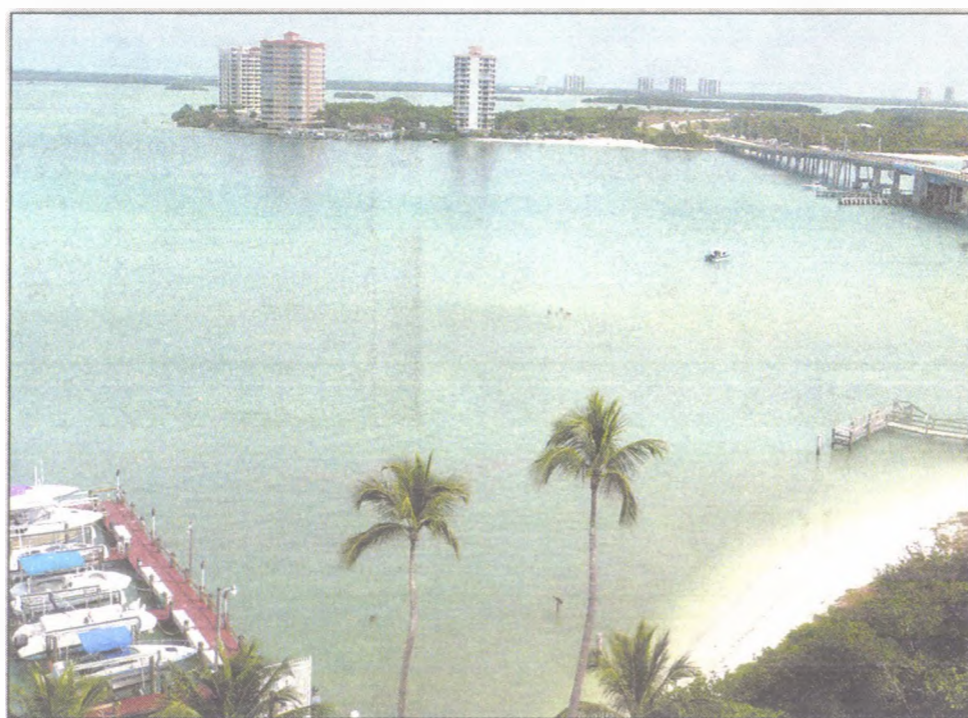
Story and photos by Mary Quinley
Contributing Writer

A long T-shaped pier juts out into the Gulf of Mexico near the northwest fringes of Fort Myers Beach. It's a happy little spot. Anglers drop fishing lines into the salty sea; couples stroll along the boardwalk hand-in-hand; and youngsters wrestle with double-decker, chocolate-swirl ice cream cones.

Situated an easy beach-ball-toss-away from the pier is Times Square. When my hubby and I visit Fort Myers Beach, a slim, seven-mile-long island in southwest Florida, we like to mosey around the square, a miniscule version of the popular New Year's Eve party place. We shop, sample fudge, maybe nibble on a shrimp cocktail, or sip a margarita with special friends. Other days, we pause to applaud the musicians, mimes and array of street performers that charm the crowds.

Seasonal swell

During the "season," which typically runs January through April, the pier and square swell with visitors. But, it's the silky-sand



A view of the southern tip of Fort Myers Beach, a slim, seven-mile-long island in southwest Florida.

beaches, shallow water and outdoor recreation that lure northern-based travelers to this isle where Calusa Indians constructed shell mounds thousands of years ago.

Some folks, like Jan and Steve Markwell, enjoy the island's boating opportunities.

The twosome like to cruise around the waterways where congregations of egrets, seagulls and pelicans hang out. Yet, it's the playful, sleek-skinned mammals with the elongated heads that capture their attention.

"I get excited every time we see a pod of dolphins," said Jan Markwell. "They follow the boat in its wake."

Flotillas with friends rank high on the couple's fun list.

On a recent boating trek to the northeastern edges of the island, the Markwells rendezvoused with other boaters at Nervous Nellie's eatery for lunch.

"We all sat outside. Fishermen had brought in their fresh catches; the temperature was in the 80s; and, there was much laughter going on," said Markwell. Northerners love the area not only for the great weather, she said, but, for the simple lifestyle the island provides.

Kayaking — Monique Sproviero is a huge fan of the sport — is another popular way to explore this sun-soaked destination.

Sproviero loves to paddle through the "beautifully quiet small bays and interior channels." Not long ago on a winter's late afternoon, I joined her and several other

paddling pals for a sunset kayak excursion.

We met just south of Fort Myers Beach at a launch along The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail. As we maneuvered our kayaks near the shoreline's spiny mangrove bushes we sighted a plethora of wildlife, including roseate spoonbills, herons, and a very friendly manatee.

Back to nature

It's an amazing feeling to be up-close-and-personal with an endangered, wrinkled-face manatee. We longed to stay put to observe and listen to the creature's playful squeaks and squeals. Yet, we were eager to experience more of the mini-paradise before the day's light disappeared. So, we bid "adieu" to our whiskered friend and paddled away.

In the near distance to our north was Lovers Key Carl E. Johnson State Park, home to osprey, bald eagles and marsh rabbits. The park's four barrier islands offer eight miles of hiking and biking trails. Sunsets are spectacular here. Bicycles, kayaks and canoes are available to rent.

The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail offers delightful surprises for paddlers — with canoes or kayaks — of all skill levels. The marked, 190-mile trail weaves through shallow water dotted with mangroves, abundant wildlife and silver-sand beaches. Maps of the inland tributaries and coastal

Please see FLORIDA, 11



Hottest colors for your home

(ARA) - You can easily beautify and modernize your home using hints from design experts on the hottest color trends. Don't worry that you'll need to break the bank — simply updating the shades of your walls can create the feel of an entire new home without the cost of buying one. And you'll enjoy starting the year in fresh, contemporary surroundings.

"Our world has become increasingly complicated and fast-paced in recent years, to the point that many people are now taking steps back to re-evaluate their lifestyles and consider what's truly important," says Donna Schroeder, Dutch Boy Paints manager of Color + Design. "As we look back to simpler times, we also see how design and style have evolved. Dutch Boy's 2012 color forecast is based on this reflection and the self-expression of what people find meaningful. This year's diverse color trends are rich and full of history, helping people create spaces that truly show their inner selves."

Featuring five groupings of the hottest colors in home decor, the Dutch Boy color forecast offers options for any room or personal taste. The 2012 trends palettes are as follows:

Ethereal. Whether it's the search for enlightenment or just the best cup of organic coffee within 20 miles, the path is about more than the ground covered. The Ethereal collection floats above other color palettes, airy and atmospheric with tea-stained and faded hues evocative of the lightness of the

sky under the midday sun. Light colors from this palette include Epidermal, Faded Mint and Feather Lite.

Primitive. A meandering path through the forest takes us past colors only to be found in nature. Deep barks, shocking citrines and raw earth inspired the natural colors of this palette. The Primitive colors are as mysterious as the shaded canopy of the woods that inspired them. Suffused with energy, they speak to growth, regeneration and life. This natural palette includes Raw Garnet, Symbiotic Green and Indigenous Teal.

Fundamental. We've walked far away from the beige computer housings of the 1970s, only to find the hues from this budding technological era coming back full force. Retro office meets geek chic for a new take on '70s style, as seen in this grouping. The Fundamental color palette makes full use of classic, contrasting neutrals like beige and gray — designed to work as the perfect foil for bold main accents of green, orange and vibrant blue. Basic colors in the Fundamental palette include Ink Blue, Aged Cognac and Rudimentary Beige.

Pastimes. It's time for a road trip back in time to motels boasting refrigerated air, a gallon of gas that cost a dime and the game of miniature golf that was every family's obsession. The Pastimes color palette is filled with exuberant shades reminiscent of lazy summer days at a lake house without a television, or the intensity of the circus coming to town.

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The beach at sunset.

FLORIDA

Continued from page 10

waters are available at www.greatcalusab-ueway.com.

Boating options

Other boating options from the island include dinner and sunset cruises, sightseeing and gambling trips, and, excursions to Key West.

If fishing is more your style, consider a deep-sea adventure in the Gulf of Mexico. "It's plain fun and relaxing to be on the water. And the fishing is superb!" said Cherry Crowley of Fort Myers. Crowley likes to fish for yellowtail snapper and mangrove snapper while aboard the Sea Trek, a deep-sea fishing excursion boat based in Fort Myers Beach.

"You get to keep the fish you catch that are legal," explained Crowley. And, as an added bonus, take your fish to Bonita Bill's Waterfront Cafe, a restaurant "just next door," tip the cook, and your fish will be prepared to your specifications. "There's nothing better," Crowley said.

Some island anglers are content to fish from bridges, docks or piers.

"It's impossible not to have fun fishing or snook," said Bernie Gottschalk, who, with her family, used live shrimp and artifi-

cial lures to fish from a pier on the southern fringes of town during a getaway to Fort Myers Beach.

And, even though the fish weren't biting, it didn't matter, she said. Watching the snook move around under the dock made the experience memorable. Gottschalk, a former Michigander, now resides in Sarasota, Fla.

Snowbirds who are keen on participating in water sports while on Fort Myers Beach can rent kayaks, canoes, boats, personal watercraft and fishing gear. Parasailing is also available.

And, finally, if you visit this area during winter, as so many Michiganders do, expect traffic snarls on Estero Boulevard, the two-lane, north-south road. Rather than drive in the bumper-to-bumper traffic, park the car and hop on the island trolley. Fee is 50 cents each way.

If you go

For information on accommodations and activities in the Fort Myers Beach area, contact the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau at (800) 237-6444 or go online to www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com.

Mary Quinley is a freelance journalist from Livonia. Fort Myers Beach is her favorite winter getaway.

The welcome sign to Fort Myers Beach in southwest Florida. The area is a favorite winter escape for Michiganders.



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TIPS

Continued from page 9

do not have a filing requirement, and specifically claim the credit. Those who typically fail to claim the EITC include rural workers and their families; nontraditional families, such as grandparents or foster parents raising children; taxpayers without qualifying children; individuals with limited English proficiency; and taxpayers with disabilities.

- If you claim EITC, it can be complex so try to avoid the common errors such as mistakes on income amounts, filing head of household when you should file as married, or claiming children who have not lived with you for more than half the year.

- If you use a paid tax return preparer, make sure to seek out a reputable one. Tax professionals must sign returns they prepare and use their Preparer Tax Identification Numbers.

To learn more about EITC, go to www.irs.gov/eitc and use the EITC Assistant, or ask your tax professional.

All EITC claimants are eligible for free tax help from the 12,000 volunteer sites nationwide or to use Free File at www.irs.gov/freefile.

— Courtesy Family Features



Preventing identity theft at tax time

Even if you're expecting a refund, tax time can be stressful. Gathering all the necessary income and financial information, making sure forms are completed and filed on time, and waiting to see if you'll owe or get money back can weigh heavily on your mind well before the filing deadline (April 17 this year). Do you really need one more thing to worry about?

Unfortunately, you also need to think about security and identity theft at tax time. Whether you file online or by mailing paper forms, your tax return contains a staggering amount of information about you. You need to protect that information at every step of the preparation and filing process.

Fortunately, the steps you take to stop identity theft throughout the year — such as subscribing to an identity theft detection, protection and resolution product like ProtectMyID — are still effective at tax time. You just need to add some extra precautions to your regular habits.

First, arm yourself with information about what the IRS is doing to combat identity

theft. The Identity Theft Resource Center, a nonprofit organization that aims to educate consumers about identity theft prevention, reports that the IRS has implemented several measures, including:

- Development and implementation of standardized processes for tracking and handling identity theft reports.
- Creating procedures to identify and resolve identity theft cases related to taxes.
- Tracking identity theft incidents reported by taxpayers.
- Tracking identity theft cases discovered by the IRS.

Next, know the signs of tax-related identity theft. If you receive a written notice from the IRS (they don't contact taxpayers via e-mail) that they received more than one tax return for you in the same year, or IRS records indicate you received income from an employer you don't know, you may be a victim of identity theft.

Keep in mind that as tax time approaches every year, criminals impersonate the IRS by e-mail, phone, websites and even tweets.

EDUCATION

Continued from page 9

\$60,000 or \$120,000 if you are married filing jointly.

Benefits of the Lifetime Learning Credit include:

- Up to \$2,000 tax credit per tax return.
- Eligibility even if you or your dependent takes only one class.
- Eligibility even if you or your dependent are not pursuing a degree.

Student loan interest deduction

According to the NCES, 56 percent of first-time, full-time students attending four-year institutions had student loans. With the state of the economy, that percentage is likely to increase.

If you're repaying a student loan (during school or after graduating) for you, your spouse or your dependent, you may qualify to deduct student loan interest of up to \$2,500 from your income subject to tax even if you don't itemize your deductions. Generally the right to claim the tax deduction goes to the person legally obligated to pay interest on the qualified student loan.

Other qualifications include:

- Modified AGI of less than \$75,000, \$150,000 if filing a joint return.



- The loan was taken out only to pay for qualified education expenses.
- The student must be you, your spouse or your dependent.
- You, your dependent or spouse must have been enrolled at least half-time in a degree program.
- Qualified education expenses must have been paid or incurred within a reasonable period of time before or after the loan is taken out.
- Your loan was to attend an eligible educational institution.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to get a better education and reap the benefits of these tax breaks.

— ARA Content



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Getting a dog? Consider these factors to make sure you're a match

(ARA) — There are plenty of cliché things that people say about dogs: that they're man's best friend, that they love you unconditionally and that behind those cold noses, there are warm hearts. But while dog owners might feel a bit silly about repeating those old chestnuts, they'll also admit they're absolutely true.

Before you get a dog, doing a bit of background research is important, but keep in mind that you also have a valuable resource right in your community — the local animal shelter. Shelter dogs are often the ones that are "invisible" — out of the public eye and therefore, out of mind as well. Best Friends Animal Society has created the "Invisible Dogs" campaign to call attention to the hundreds of thousands of very real, but unseen dogs hoping to be adopted from U.S. animal shelters, any of which might be right for your home.

Whether your household has one person or 10, a dog can fit right in, but not every dog fits with every home. At shelters across the country, the pet experts on the staff can help match you with an adoptable dog, based on your lifestyle and the dog's personality and traits. Because you can meet shelter dogs before bringing them home, it's easier to make the perfect puppy love connection.

When you're ready to start looking for the

right dog for you, consider these tips from Best Friends Animal Society and InvisibleDogs.org:

- Be honest about your lifestyle. Everyone has a different schedule, and dogs have schedules of their own. If you're away from home a lot, consider dogs that have lower energy levels and minimal exercise demands. However, if you love to go for a run in the morning and a long stroll every evening, you might be a good match for a dog that has a bit more of a get-up-and-go demeanor.

- How much maintenance? Some dogs have wash-and-wear coats that don't require grooming other than a nice bath every so often. Others will need to be combed and still others will need haircuts to keep their coat in check, or to be more comfortable in the summer heat. Opt for a dog with a coat that matches the level of dedication you're ready to put into grooming, keeping in mind that it's not too much of a hassle for any dog. Also remember that you'll need to care for his toenails and teeth to keep him feeling his best.

- Find a personality match. Some dog owners like their pups to be right on their lap as much as possible, while others prefer a companion who is a little more independent. While breed can have some effect on this, it also largely depends on the individual dog.

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Super swaps

Small changes
make a big
difference

One of the easiest ways to make better-for-you recipes is to swap out some ingredients. In these recipes, mayo, high-calorie dressings and heavy sauces get swapped out for creamy guacamole or flavorful fat-free salsas. Swaps like these make it easy to enjoy your favorite recipes even when you're cutting back on fat and calories.

All-natural and preservative-free Wholly Guacamole brings a whole new dimension of tastiness to Asian Chicken Salad and Grilled Chicken Fettuccini — and it cuts down on the bad fats typically found in these dishes. The Salsa Salmon recipe gets a healthful zip of flavor from Wholly Salsa — and you can make it as spicy as you like.

Here are some other super swaps you can do to make a big difference in how you eat:

—Breakfast: Instead of high-fat cheese, add a dollop of guacamole to eggs.

—Lunch: Skip the mayo and add guac to your ham or turkey sandwich.

—Snack: Dip carrots or other veggies in salsa to keep you going until dinner.

—Dinner: Lose the high-fat dressing and sauces and try spicy guac on burgers, chicken, fish and, of course, tacos.

Find more recipes to help you make the swap at www.eatwholly.com.

Salsa Salmon

Yield: 4 servings

4 salmon steaks (thawed if frozen, but fresh are best)
Salt and pepper to taste
8 ounces Wholly Salsa
2 ounces black olives
5 ounces mozzarella cheese (it's better to use a ball of mozzarella cut into chunks)
Chopped parsley

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Season salmon with salt and pepper and arrange in an oven-proof dish. Divide salsa evenly, spoon over salmon steaks and scatter olives on top. Top evenly with cheese.

Cook for approximately 20 minutes (or recommended cooking time on salmon package). Sprinkle with parsley to serve.

Grilled Chicken Fettuccini

Yield: 4 servings

¾ teaspoon salt, divided
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon ground cumin
3 chicken breasts
½ pound fettuccini, uncooked
2 tablespoons canola oil
1 yellow bell pepper, seeded, julienned
½ cup green onion
1 lemon, juiced
1 cup Roma tomatoes, seeded, cored and diced
¾ cup Wholly Guacamole

Mix ¼ teaspoon salt, pepper and cumin together. Toss over chicken to coat.



Grill chicken for 2 minutes, then turn 45 degrees and cook for another 2 minutes. Flip chicken over and repeat.

Allow to cool for 5 minutes, then slice the partially cooked chicken into strips.

Start boiling water for fettuccini. Add ¼ teaspoon salt if desired. Follow directions on packaging for cooking time. Drain and set aside.

Add canola oil to large pan over medium-high heat. Saute pepper strips.

Add chicken and cook for at least 4 minutes. Add green onion, lemon juice, remaining ½ teaspoon salt and diced tomatoes.

After 1 minute, remove pan from heat and fold in guacamole mix and cooked fettuccini.

Suggested garnishes: crumbled queso fresco or cojita cheese.

4 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
¾ cup Wholly Guacamole
3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
¼ teaspoon salt
5 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
1 5-ounce package spring salad mix
¼ cup red onion, diced
¼ cup tomato, diced
½ of a 15-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained
2 tablespoons cilantro, rough chopped
3 grilled chicken breasts
Crispy chow mein noodles, for garnish

Add lime juice, 1/3 cup chopped cilantro, sesame oil, guacamole, rice wine vinegar, salt, water and soy sauce to blender. Blend until uniform.

Place dressing in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes to let flavors meld.

Toss salad mix, onion, tomato, oranges, dressing and 2 tablespoons rough-chopped cilantro in a bowl.

Divide salad between 3 plates and top with sliced grilled chicken and chow mein noodles.

Asian Chicken Salad

Yield: 3 servings

Juice from half a lime
½ cup cilantro, chopped

— Courtesy Family Feature

Sudoku Answers

Beginner

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 2 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| 4 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| 9 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 8 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 7 |
| 7 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 2 |

Intermediate

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 9 |
| 2 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 |
| 8 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 4 |
| 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 2 |
| 5 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 3 |
| 7 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 5 |

Advanced

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 1 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| 8 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| 2 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| 9 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| 4 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 6 |
| 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 4 |

ENJOY GUAC ANY TIME YOU WANT

It's not always possible to make fresh guacamole, because ripe avocados aren't always available. Pre-made guacamole is a great alternative, and you can freeze it for later. But not all guacs are created equal. Make sure the first ingredient is avocado. Wholly Guacamole, for example, is 90 percent avocado with all natural spices. To thaw frozen guac, move it from freezer to fridge for 24 hours, or place unopened package in a bowl of cold water.



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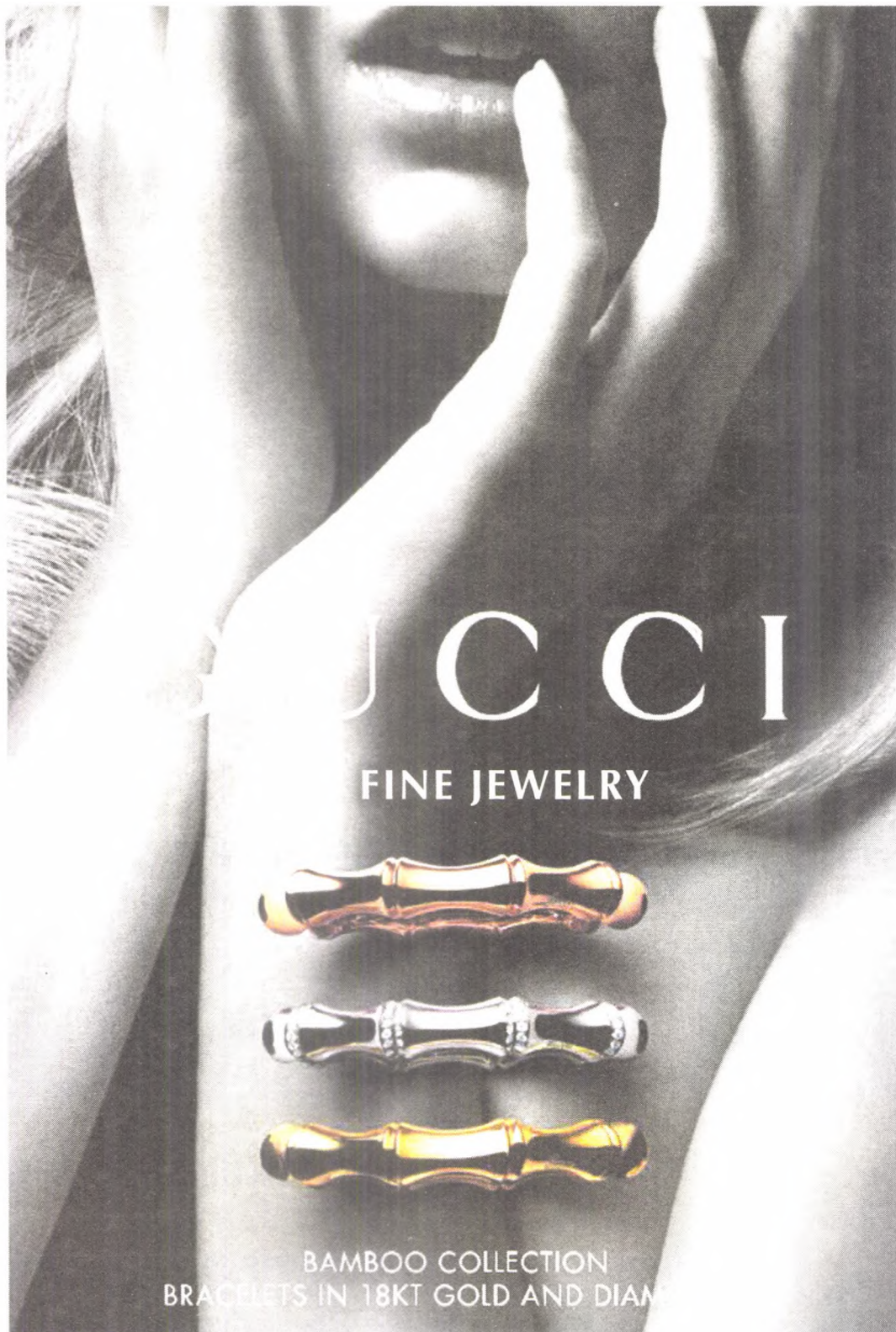
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