



PROM DRESS BARGAINS
COMMUNITY LIFE, B5



ALL-AREA GIRLS BASKETBALL
SPORTS, B4



LIFE-SAVING ADVICE ON WEATHER DISASTERS
USA WEEKEND



By any other name

With its eponymous military cannon shipped to another park seven years ago, Plymouth's Cannon Park — a small park on Farmer between Starkweather and Mill with no play structures, ballfields or drinking fountains — may be in line for a name change.

An old cannon used to decorate the park, but was moved in 2006 when the Plymouth Community Veterans Memorial Park was created. Mark Oppat, Old Village's informal historian and a longtime resident, appeared before the Plymouth City Commission Monday saying he had support for the change from the Old Village Association and the Plymouth Historical Society. Oppat suggested the name Starkweather Park, in honor of one of Plymouth's founding families.

Budget meeting

The Plymouth City Commission this week begins public deliberations on a city spending plan for the 2013-2014 fiscal year. A commission review session on the budget is scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday at City Hall.

The plan, including a nearly \$7.5 million general-fund budget proposal, was introduced to the commission last week by City Manager Paul Sincock. Two more budget review meetings are scheduled, one for Thursday, April 18, and another for Monday, April 22.

A public hearing on the budget is scheduled for the commission meeting of Monday, June 3.

Trail cleaning

Spring has finally sprung in southeast Michigan, and the Friends of the I-275 Metro Trail are taking advantage, staging a series of cleanups on the Wayne County portion of the trail 5:30-7 p.m. at the following locations:

- Thursday, April 18, in Canton Township near Michigan Ave. Volunteers meet at Wendy's on Michigan Avenue at Lotz.

For more information call Dave Duffield at (248) 982-8776, check out <http://i-275.michigantrails.org>, or visit the Friends of the I-275 Metro Trail on Facebook.

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Volume 126 • Number 69

Home Delivery:
(866) 887-2737



Return Address:
41304 Concept Dr.
Plymouth MI 48170

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PRICE: \$1 • SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2013 • hometownlife.com



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Paul Sincock, who grew up in Plymouth the son of a former mayor, has spent the last 12 years managing his boyhood hometown.

Paul's place

Sincock at ease managing his boyhood home

By Jill Halpin
Correspondent

If you have ever driven through downtown Plymouth in the early morning hours, perhaps you've seen him walking Luke, his 9-year-old yellow Labrador retriever. It's something he does at 4 a.m. each day, giving Luke a little exercise while making sure the city is in top shape to greet its residents each morning.

You might have even spotted him working "behind the scenes" at one of Plymouth's many festivals, picking up litter, directing traffic or even providing directions to area visitors with a smile. On the chance you've missed him at one of these events, you'll have no problem finding City Manager Paul Sincock in his first-floor office in city hall every Monday through Friday, working with city staff to keep operations in the city flowing along as smoothly and pleasantly as possible.



Paul Sincock was a young boy in 1963 when his father helped place the cornerstone for the then-new city hall.

There is no doubt the name Paul Sincock has become synonymous with Plymouth. The lifelong city resident has built a sort of mutual admiration society with the community where he lives and works.

Just ask local community leaders and you'll get an idea of Sincock's relationship with the city.

"Paul genuinely loves the city," said Tony Bruscati, director of operations for Plymouth's Downtown Development Authority. "It is where

he grew up."

"He has his roots here," Plymouth Police Chief Al Cox said. "When Paul says he cares about the city, he really does. He is a straight shooter. What you see is what you get."

"You know how some people wear their college logo on their T-shirts?" Plymouth Mayor Dan Dwyer asked. "Paul wears the city seal on every piece of clothing he owns. He literally wears the city on his sleeve."

Please see SINCOCK, A3

City upset with state's alcohol changes

By Matt Jachman
Staff Writer

Plymouth city officials are increasingly concerned about losing local control of licensing decisions regarding bars and restaurants that sell alcoholic drinks by the glass, and a state lawmaker said he's willing to look at a legislative solution.

Mayor Dan Dwyer, City Manager Paul Sincock and Police Chief Al Cox have in recent weeks expressed frustration with the Michigan Liquor Control Commission, saying its interpretation of state liquor laws, starting about a year ago, has eroded local control and affected their efforts to regulate Plymouth bars and restaurants. With 23 places in the 2.2-square-mile city licensed to sell alcohol by the glass, Plymouth officials stress compliance with alcohol regulations, and close local oversight, as they try to minimize potential dangers and the demands drinking establishments have on city services, particularly the police force.

"We want to make sure that the establishments

are running the way they should and the ownership understands there are rules and there are ordinances," said Cox last week.

'Isn't like a flower shop'

Cox said his sense is that the MLCC wants to be more actively pro-business and streamline the licensing and permitting process. He understands that, he said, but at the same time, "you want to be thorough."

"This isn't like a flower shop or a bagel place that's coming into town," Cox said. "We want to be in the process."

Plymouth ran up against the MLCC's new interpretation of the alcohol laws recently, Cox said, when it was discovered a licensed restaurant had added a drink serving station without city officials' knowledge or input. The station is used for special events, Cox said, not on a regular basis, but restaurant management didn't want to have to apply for a temporary serving-sta-

Please see ALCOHOL, A2

Board takes to the road to pitch bond

By Brad Kadrich
Staff Writer

Judy Mardigian has seen her share of bonds in the last 16 years, and the Plymouth-Canton Board of Education's longest-serving member sees real parallels between the \$114.4 million bond the district is seeking in May and the bond voters passed in 2004.

That bond "did a lot of good for this community," Mardigian said, because it allowed the district to make building repairs, pave parking lots, correct bus drop-off issues and buy buses officials otherwise would have had to fund out of a depleted general fund.

That makes for a lot of similarities with the current bond proposal, with which the district hopes to replace its buses, buy technology on a 1:1 ratio

"We're doing everything we can to have people understand what's in the package in a relatively short period of time."



JUDY MARDIGIAN
Plymouth-Canton Board of Education

for students and teachers, build a new middle school to replace the aging Central Middle School and make other facility repairs officials say they won't be able to manage without the bond.

Please see BOND, A2

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BOND

Continued from page A1

"That 2004 bond was sort of an 'extreme makeover' and it did a lot of good for this community," Mardigian said. "If we hadn't done it, we'd have had to find a way to repair and keep the buildings running for all of these years. There are a lot of things in this (2013) bond for bare-bones things. There are some very real parallels."

To make that argument to voters, board members and administrators have taken their presentation on the road, talking to PTOs, civic organizations, homeowners associations and municipal bodies. Jeremy Hughes, the district's superintendent, and Kim Crouch,

GET THE DETAILS

What: Community forms on Plymouth-Canton's \$114.4 million bond proposal

When: 7 p.m. Thursday, April 25

Where: Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer in Plymouth, and the DuBois Little Theater inside Canton High School, 8415 Canton Center in Canton.

Why: To hear Plymouth-Canton Community Schools officials explain the details about the bond proposal, which, if passed, would pay for technology advancements, a bus replacement program, a new middle school and other facilities repairs and upgrades.

Contact: For information, call (734) 416-2755.

the school board's newest member, pitched the bond to the Canton Township Board of Trustees a couple of weeks ago.

Road show

Up next is the Plymouth Township board, where officials will discuss the bond Tuesday. The Plymouth Township board meets 7 p.m. in the township hall meeting room,

9955 N. Haggerty.

"The goal is to inform these groups about the bond and make sure they have the facts regarding it, and answer any questions they might have," said board Treasurer Sheila Paton, who said she'd probably "do about 15" of the presentations by the time the May 7 election comes. "We're getting great

questions. People don't appreciate how few people vote in these elections. In the last several school or bond elections, only about 15,000 people voted, and about 70 percent of those are voting absentee. That's crazy. So the more people you can inform, the better chance you have."

Canton Township Supervisor Phil LaJoy said that, while the township board as a whole doesn't endorse political issues, trustees still appreciated the information.

"It gave them an opportunity to do that, so anyone who catches that on cable or who was in the audience, gets the perspective from the superintendent and board members on the issue," LaJoy said.

After the meeting, several Canton trustees —

including Pat Williams and Tom Yack — posted Facebook messages supporting the bond. LaJoy said, speaking strictly as a resident, that he can get behind the bond.

Knocking on doors

"I'm in favor of it (personally)," LaJoy said. "I'd like to see a new middle school in Canton. We have the vast majority of the kids here, and I think some of them get transported quite a way. If there's going to be a new middle school, this is where it should be."

The nearly door-to-door approach — "Really, if any group requested a presentation, we would do that," Mardigian said — is similar to efforts to pass previous bonds. The 1997 bond produced Plymouth High School and Dodson Elementary

School, and a bond passed in 2005 built Discovery Middle School. Bond proposals failed in 2006 and 2007.

Board members know they've got to reach as many people as possible in a short window, having only made the decision in February to go for the bond.

"We're doing everything we can to have people understand what's in the package in a relatively short period of time," Mardigian said. "I'm hoping voters understand that when a bond passes, there is research that shows home values jump up automatically. We have to work very hard to help people understand what the bond means."

bkadrich@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-8899 | Twitter: @bkadrich

ALCOHOL

Continued from page A1

tion permit for every event.

"When we found this out it was kind of strange," Cox said. No one in city government

had been notified, he said, and that wouldn't have been the case not too long ago.

Plymouth hasn't yet faced another MLCC development with which Cox takes issue: the decision last year to no longer require local government

approval when a license is being transferred, or when ownership of, or interest in, a license is being changed. The was announced in a MLCC bulletin dated June 21.

"That approval process has been completely removed," Cox said. The MLCC has said it will notify local governments of license transfers, the chief added, but he also said he fears those notifications will fall through the cracks.

Andrea Miller, an MLCC spokeswoman, emailed a statement in response to phone calls from the *Observer*.

"The Michigan Liquor Control Commission values input from local governments and local police agencies when making decisions on applications for licenses and permits. The Michigan Liquor Control Code and the Pro-mulgated Rules of the Liquor Control Commission provide local government and local police

agencies authority to weigh in on applications," it read, in part.

Miller then provided a link to MLCC charts that show what kinds of approvals are needed for different license and permit application situations, and said the information is from the liquor code and related rules.

Heise involved

As they criticize the MLCC changes, city officials have praised state Rep. Kurt Heise, R-Plymouth Township, for setting up a recent meeting with MLCC chairman Andrew Deloney and some of his staffers, at which city officials aired their concerns. Officials from Northville and Brighton and other communities, and police from Livonia, were also at the meeting.

Dwyer, at the April 1 City Commission meeting, however, said the meeting was frustrating and "there wasn't a lot of

listening going on."

Heise on Friday said he thought the meeting was productive.

"It helped to make sure everybody was on the same page." Notification requirements and how the rules are being applied were among the issues discussed, he said.

Heise said he is sympathetic to Plymouth officials' concerns, and that it's possible he would sponsor legislation to alter the way the MLCC interacts with local governments.

"I think there is a sense that the Liquor Control Commission has been more liberal in their interpretation of the law and less interested in what the locals have to say, and if there's a way to tighten that up legislatively, I'm willing to do that," he said.

mjachman@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-2405
Twitter: @mattjachman

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.

HEISE HOURS

Date: Monday, April 8
Locations/Times: 10-11 a.m., Parthenon Coney Island, 39910 Ford Road in Canton; noon-1 p.m., Northville District Library, 212 W. Cady; 3-4 p.m., Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main.

Details: State Rep. Kurt Heise invites residents to meet with him locally during district office hours on Monday, April 8. No appointment is necessary.

Contact: Residents unavailable to attend who wish to set up an appointment either in the district or in Lansing or speak with Heise can call 1-855-REP-KURT.

OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS

Published Sunday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Media
www.hometownlife.com

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Community Office:

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Subscription Rates:

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SINCOCK

Continued from page A1

Last month, Sincock, a 1975 graduate of Plymouth Salem High School and proud former Salem Rock, celebrated 12 years as Plymouth city manager.

Proud legacy

It's a fine legacy for the son of the late Robert Sincock and wife Dorothy, who currently resides in his childhood home: Robert was a longtime member of the Plymouth City Commission and served as mayor of the city from 1961-63.

In fact, it is his fond recollections of hearing his late mother typing her weekly column (for the *Plymouth Mail* — forerunner of the *Plymouth Observer*) Sunday evenings after putting her children to bed and his father discussing the ins-and-outs of politics while serving as mayor that most likely deepened his affection for the place he calls home.

His passion for the area runs deep.

"I love the neighborhoods, the way that the community takes care of each other," Sincock said. "I love that we have Lions clubs, Rotary clubs and Kiwanis filled with residents waiting to do something to help our community. I love that they fund scholarships for community residents to go to school and even participate in recreational sports."

An active Rotarian, Sincock plays a role in that spirit of cooperation himself. He and wife Traci often serve as host families for exchange students from around the world, sharing Plymouth's congeniality.

There is something special about a community that works together to help each other, Sincock said.

"It is more community-based than government-



JOHN GAFFIELD

Laying the cornerstone of the new city hall in 1963. The old city hall is at left, where the museum now stands. At the base of the street light, slightly left, is the young Paul Sincock with his Mom's arm on his shoulder.

based," he said. "It is a team effort and we work together."

It is exactly that philosophy that has helped Sincock shape a city able to withstand the recent economic downturn that nearly shut down some Michigan municipalities.

"Paul is extremely creative, especially financially," said Dwyer, who was a member of the city commission that hired Sincock in 2001.

'Cares deeply'

"Paul cares deeply about the community and it is reflected in his leadership," said Scott Lorenz, a longtime Plymouth resident and owner of Westwind Communications, a public relations and marketing firm. "He is always looking for ways to try and improve things in the city and make them better. From a numbers standpoint, he has been phenomenal. Under Paul, the city not only survived, but actually thrived during the recession."

A self-confessed "oper-

ations geek," Sincock has an interest in teamwork and customer service that has become somewhat of a carefully studied science.

Inspired by many trips to Florida's Walt Disney World with his wife of 17 years, Paul Sincock has devised his own operations guidelines, now a mantra for city employees.

"Paul's Five Rules," as he calls them, are a set of principles designed to allow for solid decision-making based on the answers to five questions. They are:

1. Is it good for the community?
2. Is it good for the city?
3. Is it ethical and legal?
4. Does it fit within the morals and values?
5. Is it something that I am willing to be accountable for?

"If you can answer yes to all five of these questions, then you have probably made the right decision," Sincock said.

Constant reminder

He is so committed to this decision-making pro-

cess that he carries a card with the rules printed on them as a constant reminder. He also makes sure that all city employees, from firefighters to public works employees to receptionists, use the guidelines in their works as well.

"If you have ever been to Disney, you know their system of delivering customer service is amazing. It is not a 'me' thing. It is a system, with everyone working together for the common good," he said.

"We are so small that we need everyone to be on the same page for this to be successful. It is our philosophy; this is how we do things," said Sincock, who views himself as a more of a coach than a boss.

Sincock said it's that cohesiveness that allows the city to function well in the face of adversity. "Every one of our employees uses these guidelines," he said. "It allows them to be ready to make a good decision for the city at any time if necessary."

The system of decision-making appeals to her husband's "MacGyver"-

type personality, said Traci Sincock, associate director at the Northville Chamber of Commerce.

"He likes to figure things out, he likes to problem-solve," said Traci, who met her husband when they both worked at the Plymouth Cultural Center.

It was shortly after his graduation from Central Michigan University, where he earned a degree in communications, that he began working at the Plymouth Cultural Center, eventually working his way up to assistant recreation director, director of public safety and municipal services director before becoming assistant city manager.

Promotion to manager

Former Plymouth Mayor Pro Tem Colleen Pobur remembers Sincock's promotion to the position of city manager well.

"We were looking for a new manager and the city had been through some scary things in terms of finding someone who was

a good fit," Pobur said. "In the interim, Paul had stepped in and was doing a great job."

Although Sincock was doing a great job, he was hesitant to throw his name in the ring for the position.

For some people in this line of work, a town the size of Plymouth is a stop on the "career railroad," Pobur explained.

"His devotion to Plymouth was deep and he had no desire to get involved in that and then eventually move on," she said. "He wanted to stay on in Plymouth permanently."

After the search for a city manager continued, Pobur said it became apparent the solution was sitting right in front of her.

"I called Paul and said, 'I have good news for you and bad news for you,'" she said. "I am throwing your name in the hat and you can't do anything about it."

Cooperation

It was a decision that has benefitted the entire area.

Longtime Plymouth Township Trustee Kay Arnold praises Sincock for his spirit of cooperation with the township.

"Paul's input has always been very valuable to us, especially when the Plymouth Community Fire Department started up years ago," Arnold said. "He was always helpful and cooperative."

It is a sentiment echoed by Cox.

"You can approach him about anything and he is willing to help," Cox said. "His reputation commands a lot of respect. People know that if Paul is saying it, it is the truth and they respect that."

Sincock is keeping his future fairly open.

He plans to "keep on doing what I am doing," and he may do some consulting.

And, of course, you may also see him "driving a bus at Disney."

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Plymouth Christian Academy junior Luke Holmes, here with German teacher Emily Carlson, has earned a trip to Germany.

PCA junior gets trip to Germany

Luke Holmes, a junior at Plymouth Christian Academy in Canton, has been awarded an all-expense-paid summer study trip to Germany. Holmes was selected as a national winner after scoring in the 90th percentile or above on the Level 3 2013 National German Exam for High School Students sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of German. Nearly 23,000 students participated in the program. After qualifying with a high score on the National German Exam, he submitted responses to several short essay questions in German and in English and was then interviewed by a committee comprised of high school teachers and college professors of German. Holmes is one of 44 outstanding German stu-

dents selected from across the U.S. to receive the award. The study trip includes round-trip air transportation to Germany from New York, a home stay in a host family, and excursions to places of cultural and historical significance. The study trip award is made possible through a grant from the Federal Republic of Germany. "This program gives students the chance to experience Germany firsthand by living with a German family and attending school," said Keith Cothrun, Executive Director of the AATG. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity." Holmes and the other winners will travel to Germany this summer. He is a student of Emily Carlson, German teacher at Plymouth Christian Academy.

Seventh-grader wins writing contest

A seventh-grade student from Canton Charter Academy recently won an essay contest that asked the question, "Which U.S. President would you like to have lunch with and why?" Krupa Patel said it was a tough decision, but when she thought about it deeply the answer became clear: George Washington. "I realized that George Washington was more than just America's first president," Patel said. "He was the greatest military leader known during the Revolutionary

Canton Charter Academy seventh-grader Krupa Patel said it was a tough decision, but George Washington would be the president with whom she'd most like to have lunch.



War. I wanted to have lunch with someone I could look up to." This is the second year Community Financial held the President's Day

essay contest. Patel won first place in the middle school division, winning the \$100 prize for herself, \$100 for school supplies, and a free lunch for her classroom. Four other Canton students earned finalist status for their essays and each won a gift card. "We have so many strong writers at Canton Charter Academy, and Krupa is one of our top writers," language arts teacher Mary Brown said. "When I read her essay, I knew it had the potential to be the over-

all winner. We are all so proud of her." Patel said she put a lot of effort into her essay and it was exciting to win the recognition, but she really wants everyone to honor the sacrifices made by the first president of the United States. "I'm glad that people saw the true importance of George Washington," Patel said. "It's great to be a winner and to know that others will learn more about Washington's story and all that he has done for the United States of America."

ON CAMPUS

Salem State University

Michael Zhang, a resident of Canton, is the recipient of a postgraduate certificate in clinical trial management after completing a seven-week professional certification program taught at Salem State University by experienced faculty of PAREXEL Academy. The program is a collaborative between Salem State and PAREXEL International, a leading global biopharmaceutical services provider. This collaboration will provide candidates with the education needed to succeed in the growing clinical research management industry.

Northwood University

Two Canton students have been named to the President's List for fall semester at Northwood University. The



Canton resident Michael Zhang earned a postgraduate certificate in clinical trial management at Salem State University.

announcement was made by Keith A. Pretty, president of the university. To achieve President's List recognition, students must earn a 3.85 grade point on a 4.0 scale. Canton students making the list were juniors Stacey Klonowski and Lind-

sey Lipa. Other area students made Northwood's Dean's List. To achieve Dean's List recognition, students must earn a 3.25 grade point on a 4.0 scale. Canton students to make the list includ-

ed freshmen Faris Abraham and Jacob Leib, sophomore Garrett Bryden, junior Joseph Bellino and senior Amanda McManus. Plymouth residents making the list included freshmen Emily Bagwell and Jeffrey Conflitti.

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Campaign seeks to update museum marquee

By Matt Jachman
Staff Writer

The Plymouth Historical Museum's collection includes hundreds of artifacts from a slower, simpler time, but that doesn't mean its own technology can't be up to date.

Prompted by a pledge from a donor who wants to remain anonymous, the museum is in the midst of a campaign to raise money for a digital marquee that could change messages instantly. The electronic marquee would replace the current one, on which letters on a board behind Plexiglas have to be changed by hand.

"Our marquee is our No. 1

advertising method, because people drive by and see what we put up there," said Liz Kerstens, the museum's executive director. "A digital marquee would give us a lot more flexibility."

Kerstens said a digital marquee has long been on her wish list for the museum.

"I've been dreaming about it for a while, and this person (the donor) knew that," she said. The donor approached her last year, she said, pledging to match what the museum raised for a marquee.

An electronic marquee, including installation, runs about \$16,000, and the museum already has raised about \$4,500,

plus a little more than that from the donor, who will match up to the \$8,000, Kerstens said.

The museum has launched a sponsorship incentive aimed at attracting donations from businesses and organizations. Donors of \$1,000 (the gold level) or \$500 (the silver level) will be thanked by name on the new marquee: the name of each sponsor, Kerstens said, would appear on a marquee message for several hours each day, for six months at the gold level and three months at the silver. Donors of lesser amounts would be recognized in other ways.

Plymouth has an ordinance prohibiting the messages on electronic signs from being

changed more than eight times a day, but Kerstens said she would be "thrilled to be able to change it twice a day."

As an example, Kerstens pointed to four museum events scheduled for the next few weeks. With the current marquee, she said, "I can only advertise the first two events coming up," one on each side.

The museum already has a digital marquee picked out; Kerstens said the finished marquee be of a similar size to the current sign and would be framed by the same two brick pillars that stand there now.

"It would have a similar look, just more modern," she said.

So far, Kerstens said, the

campaign has been mentioned at meetings, in the museum's newsletter and in the e-mail blasts she sends to its fans.

"Members have been seeing it, and it's members that have been donating," she said.

Contributions to the museum are tax-deductible and can be made through its website, www.plymouthhistory.org. Click on the "Support Us" link.

The Plymouth Historical Museum, 155 South Main, is open 1-4 p.m. Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It's closed most holidays. The phone number is (734) 455-8940.

mjachman@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-2405 | Twitter: @mattjachman

YMCA partners to help seniors

The Plymouth Community YMCA is recognizing the unique needs of older adults in the community by partnering with the nationally recognized Healthways SilverSneakers Fitness Program.

The Plymouth Community YMCA is helping older adults increase their levels of physical activity while motivating them to remain active. SilverSneakers is an exercise program designed exclusively for older adults and is available — at little or no additional cost — through many Medicare health plans, Medicare Supplement carriers and group retiree plans.

"Research points to the significant health benefits of regular exercise for older adults," spokesperson Abigail Sigal said. "In addition to helping our members stay physically healthy, SilverSneakers also offers a great way for them

to socialize, meet new friends and have fun."

Members receive access to a variety of participating locations throughout the country, including Plymouth Community YMCA. The SilverSneakers classes will be offered through the YMCA at The Friendship Station, located at 42375 Schoolcraft in Plymouth Township. Classes will be offered on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:30-10:30 a.m., starting in April.

This location offers the signature SilverSneakers Fitness Program classes, designed specifically for older adults and taught by certified instructors. Additional signature classes, including YogaStretch, SilverSplash and Cardio Circuit, may be available at select locations.

The YMCA will start registration April 15 at the YMCA office. Additionally, the YMCA will

hold two open house dates for registration and sample classes on Tuesday, April 23, and Friday, April 26, from 9:30-11:30 a.m., at the Friendship Station.

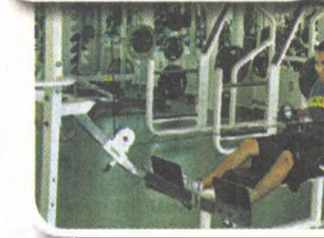
Sage Hegdal, YMCA Executive Director, says, "We are so excited to be able to offer this program in our community since the YMCA is for healthy living," YMCA Executive Director Sage Hegdal said. "We encourage all seniors to come out to the open house events to register and to try out a class — so come prepared to exercise and have fun." The YMCA is working with Plymouth Community United Way and Plymouth Township to be able to offer this program at little to no cost for seniors.

To check eligibility, contact health plan providers. To learn more about the Plymouth Community YMCA call (734) 453-2904.

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Daughter takes the lead in mother-daughter acting combo

By Maureen Paraventi
Correspondent

Canton resident Anne Cloutier got a surprise when she and her daughter, Elise, decided to revive a long-dormant family tradition by performing together in a stage play — the musical “Barnum,” opening at the Village Theatre in Canton April 19.

It seems the student has surpassed the master.

This isn't the first time the two have formed an acting combo. Anne and 13-year-old Elise were in several community theatre productions five or six years ago.

“In other shows we did together she was so young that most of the time I had to be ‘Mom’

and watch out for her, and tell her where to be and what to do,” Anne said.

The two continued to do stage shows, but separately, because they weren't able to find one that was right for both of them. Anne acted in “It's a Wonderful Life,” “FONTS,” “Music Man” and “My Fair Lady,” among others.

Then along came “Barnum,” a unique hybrid of musical theatre and circus that contains the expected (song and dance numbers) as well as the unexpected (stilt walkers, unicyclists, jugglers and tumblers). While the show, which is presented by Spotlight Players, won't be performed under a Big Top, audience members may

well forget that they're not at a circus.

Colorful cast

Barnum tells the story of P.T. Barnum and his conclave of circus acts. Spanning 45 years, it reveals how the dynamic relationship Barnum had with his wife, Charity, influenced the colorful cast of characters who would help make him a household name, like General Tom Thumb, Jenny Lind and the man who ultimately became his show biz partner, James Bailey.

The two Cloutiers couldn't resist auditioning for “Barnum,” which has the kind of songs “you just can't get out of your head,” Anne said, who added, “That's a good thing.” They are

both in the ensemble, and Elise is a dancer and trapeze artist as well.

Between “Barnum” and the shows she did previously with her mother, Elise has been compiling a fairly impressive theatrical resume that includes roles in “Camp Rock,” “Aladdin,” “Footloose,” “Annie” and “Little Mermaid.”

With all that experience behind her, along with training in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop and lyrical dance, Anne said Elise is now the expert, and has been teaching her mom — helping Anne learn dance steps and songs — instead of the other way around.

“It is so wonderful to be able to see the fine young lady she has become,” Anne said proudly.

She's not the only person impressed by her daughter's stage presence.

“People were amazed that she is only 13 — especially her adult male dance partner, whose jaw dropped when he realized he was partnered with, and asking for help from, a seventh-grade kid,” Anne said.

Bug bitten

Elise was bitten by the acting bug early. She was in a production of “Bye, Bye Birdie” when she was only 5 years old — sort of.

Anne was the one who was actually in the show, but Elise was videotaped for a segment that was shown on a screen at the beginning of the second act. Seeing her mother onstage in the first act got no reaction from young Elise, but seeing herself on the screen caused her to jump up in her seat and scream, “That's me! That's me!” She was a hit with both her fellow audience members and the actors. “I was onstage wait-



Canton resident Anne Cloutier (left) with her daughter, Elise, backstage at the production of “Sound of Music.”

ing for the lights to come up and we were all just cracking up!” said Anne.

Now that Elise is a teenager, she's not only onstage in her own right, but she's adding trapeze artistry to her list of accomplishments. Anne said her daughter is a little nervous about this role, especially since the director teased her at one rehearsal by asking her if she could hang on by just one toe.

Lessons learned

“She is so excited about this,” said Anne. “She is taking private lessons at the Detroit Flyhouse to help in this. She won't be doing too many daring things, but I thought the lessons would help her to feel more comfortable when she is on the tra-

peze onstage.” “Barnum” is being directed by Wendy Sielaff of Canton, assisted by Music Director Richard Alder of Westland and choreographer Jen Beitzel of Northville.

The cast includes Leo Babcock of Saline as P.T. Barnum; Cathy McDonald of Plymouth as Charity; Rebecca Winder of Livonia as Jenny Lind; Tina Paraventi of Ypsilanti as Joice Heth; Jim Jackson of Westland as General Tom Thumb and Jeff Foust of Canton as James Bailey.

“Barnum” runs April 19-28, with Friday and Saturday shows at 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Ticket prices range from \$13-\$16.

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Skate plaza a popular spot for teens

By Sue Buck
Staff Writer

Some teens only need to look to the users of the new Garden City skate plaza to observe role models of good behavior and politeness.

Skate plaza users are good examples of politeness and taking turns.

With no adult supervision or monitoring, the young people wait in line to take their turns.

On a sunny afternoon during Spring Break, many turned out to while away their time and hone their skateboard skills.

A number of children said that they come to the plaza daily or often.

"I come here every day," said Nathan Gillespie, a Garden City resident.

Residents Chase Folger and Ryan Leithead do likewise.

After months of using the plaza since it opened in November, the teens would like the plaza to become larger.

One young man is hop-



Keith Thering from Canton Township enjoys the Garden City skate plaza during spring break.



PHOTOS BY STEPHEN CANTRELL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Garden City skate plaza which opened last fall is a popular attraction during spring break.

by Jones, a Taylor resident, who works in Garden City.

When the dirt kicks up around the plaza, it gets slippery. "It gets everything real dirty," Jones said.

It gets the wheels and the skateboard dirty which affects performance.

Additions seem to be on everybody's minds.

Y.D. Trapstar, an Inkster resident, would like another transfer, another

miniramp.

The plaza is located in Garden City Park, on Cherry Hill, east of Merriam in Garden City.

The skate plaza is located in front of the old pool

parking lot.

The plaza was built with park millage money and was facilitated by former Wayne County Commissioner Diane Webb, (Dearborn Heights) who

was redistricted.

Webb wanted Garden City kids to have a free source of entertainment.

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Logan Rock from Garden City performs a stunt at the skate plaza during spring break.

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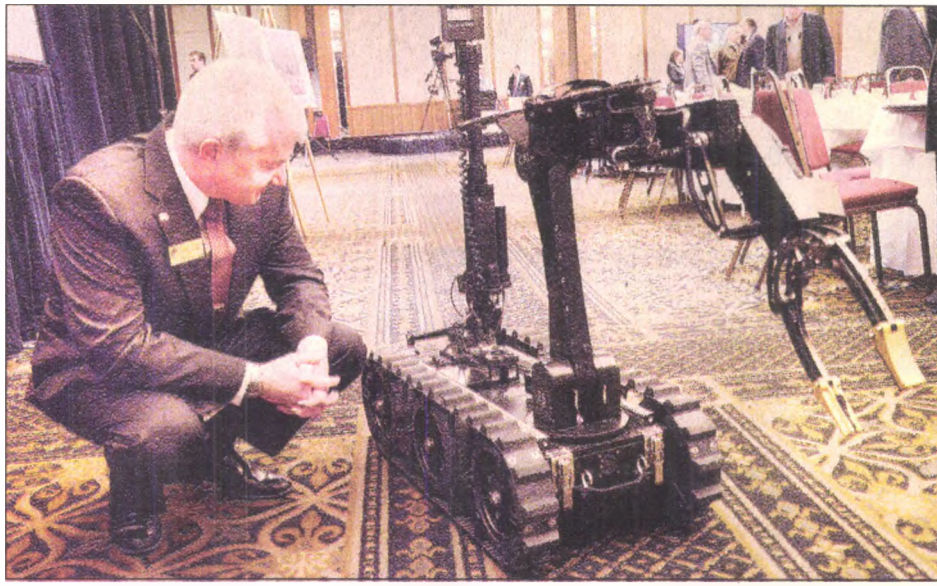
Robot will help on dangerous runs

By Ken Abramczyk
Staff Writer

Livonia police and fire departments have a new ally in protecting the public in the entire western Wayne County region from dangerous situations.

A new robot has been purchased to assist the fire department with hazardous materials and will help police, and specifically the Western Wayne County SWAT team, in responding to barricaded gunman or hostage situations.

The robot, which cost \$85,000, was purchased through a \$185,000 Urban Area Security Incentive grant secured by Fire Lt. Mike Magda and coordinated through the efforts of the police and fire departments. The remaining funds were used to purchase a portable X-ray machine to examine contents of suspicious containers.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tom Stroup checks out the robot obtained through a grant.

The public first caught a glimpse of the robot, which drove up onstage with Mayor Jack Kirksey, at the mayor's State of the City last month.

Magda, who coordinates the Western Wayne County Hazmat Team with firefighters from various

departments in the county, said that hazmat team is the only one in the state with a hazmat robot.

Police and fire officials believe the robot, operated by wireless remote, will help keep public safety personnel safe in dangerous or potentially

deadly situations.

"We've had several runs in recent years where we've had to bring in a hazmat technician," Magda said. "This robot can go into harm's way to do what that technician would do. The robot can close valves, relay

information or tell where the hot spot of the fire is located. I can see all of that live."

The robot is equipped with a camera and can take air samples. Magda said the robot can be sent in first at a scene while the western Wayne County Hazmat team assembles to carry out its operation.

"It can run up to a mile away from its base station," Magda said.

Deputy Police Chief Ben McDermott said if the western Wayne County SWAT team is called to a potentially dangerous scene, the robot will assist with transporting items into a barricaded situation, without endangering an officer.

"It expands our capability without any hazardous exposure to personnel," McDermott said. "It gives us another set of eyes."

Police Capt. Ron Taig said the robot can deliver equipment, such as a "throw phone." "It also can breach windows and doors," Taig said.

Since the robot can lift over 200 pounds, it can also pull an injured offi-

cer out of a dangerous building and can go up and down stairs.

The robot arrived in February, but it has not been used in a real-life hazmat situation or dangerous police situation. Firefighters conducted training exercises at the end of February, Magda said.

Taig said that in March the SWAT team trained at the old site of the Northville Psychiatric Hospital using the robot.

Officials at each department are pleased that they have the robot to rely on to help in risky, life-threatening runs. "We're looking forward to using this new technology, because we know it is going to save lives," Taig said.

"It will save time, save infrastructures and let us recover from the incident quicker and more efficiently," Magda said. Magda said the robot will also be used as a backup to assist the Detroit Wayne County Metropolitan Airport, if necessary.

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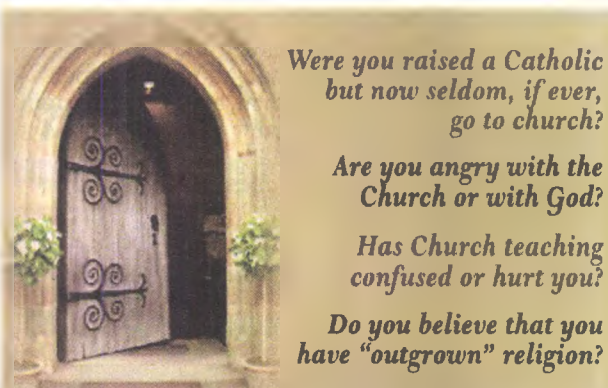
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PUBLIC NOTICE

The Plymouth District Library Board will hold its regular meeting April 16, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. at the Friends Room on the main level of the Library at 223 S. Main Street, Plymouth, MI 48170.

The Plymouth District Library will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon seven (7) days notice to the Plymouth District Library. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Plymouth District Library by writing or calling the following:

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Habitat Detroit names man 'Volunteer of Year'

By Karen Smith
Staff Writer

Gary Earnley of Livonia is one of those homeowners who enjoys do-it-yourself projects.

So when he retired in 2008 as a systems analyst for AT&T, he thought it would be fun to volunteer for Habitat of Humanity Detroit — and give back to the city he grew up in.

Last year — and again this year — he was honored by Habitat as Construction Volunteer of the Year. He received the most recent award in February.

"It's a lot of fun," he said. "When I started, I knew some things, but I've learned a lot. My knowledge has improved dramatically, I now understand about all aspects of constructing a home."

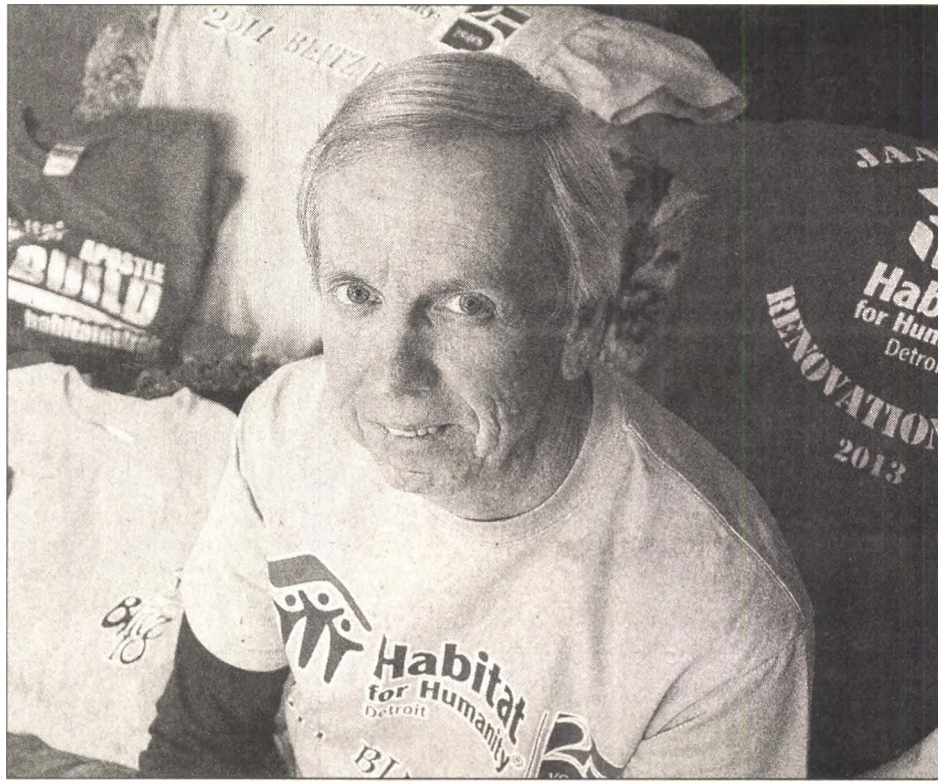
Earnley, 64, was recognized for volunteering for 58 days in 2011 and 67 days in 2012. He shared the 2012 award with the Wednesday crew, a group of about eight volunteers. The 2011 award was an individual award.

"I was surprised to win last year, surprised our team won this year," he said. "When you do volunteer work, you don't do it for rewards."

Humility, passion

Sandra Cobb, chief of community development for Habitat Detroit, said all 2,900 of their volunteers are extraordinary, but Earnley takes his involvement with Habitat to another level that deserves recognition.

"The only thing greater than his humility is his passion," Cobb said, adding that whatever needs



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gary Earnley, surrounded by Habitat T-shirts.

doing, Earnley is committed to doing. Cobb said Earnley's passion, part of his "faith belief," influences others around him.

Earnley estimates he's worked on about 45 homes on Detroit's far east side, either building new homes or fixing up existing homes. He's done everything but electrical work and plumbing, which licensed contractors are required for.

He's met some of the partner families — Habitat is a hand up, not a hand out, program and requires sweat equity from the families. "I really enjoy those conversations," he said. "It gives you a chance to hear their story. They're always really thankful, and in most cases, very humble. It makes you feel good helping someone that

really needs help." Earnley was familiar with Habitat before retiring. As a member of the mission board at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Livonia, he had volunteered on Habitat projects in other states and in northern Michigan.

International mission trips

He wasn't new to volunteering either. Since 1997, he has been on about 15 international mission

trips to Belize, Ecuador, Mexico, Brazil, Peru and South Korea, where he has worked on Habitat-like projects.

At a leprosy hospital in Ecuador, he helped build a second access door to the women's dormitory and a wheelchair ramp to the men's dorm, and helped install a new gutter system. At a deaf orphanage in South Korea, he helped install smoke alarms with flashing lights so the hearing-impaired children would awaken in a fire.

He has also volunteered in disaster relief in the United States, helping with Hurricane Katrina cleanup eight times and assisting with tornado cleanup in Joplin, Mo., and flood cleanup in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

He's heading to the New Jersey coast for a week in May to help with Hurricane Sandy relief efforts there.

Earnley said each mission trip is different, but they all change him in some way. "I would say you get more back than you give," he said.

The trips that touched his heart the most, he said, were the ones to the leprosy hospital. The people there were so shunned by society that many of them stayed living at the hospital even after they were cured. Believing lepers have some kind of bad spirit, family and friends refuse to visit. If the lepers move back into a neighborhood, and neighbors find out they had leprosy — often obvious from their missing fingers and toes — the neighbors will burn their house down.

Earnley and his fellow mission workers would sit on the lepers' beds and visit with them, purchase items they had made, unafraid they would catch the disease. The connection built would be so strong that by the

time they left, even some of the most "macho" construction workers would be crying, Earnley said.

Earnley's wife, Terry, said her husband is so humble, he didn't mention two other volunteer organizations he's involved with.

Scouting award

For 40 years, Earnley has taught swimming through the Red Cross to Boy Scouts in Dearborn, she said. He recently was honored with the Scouts' Silver Beaver Award for outstanding service to youth.

He also volunteers as a guide for blind cross country skiers through Ski for Light, Terry Earnley said.

Earnley plans to continue volunteering for at least another 15-20 years. "I do feel blessed," he said, adding he not only has good health, but the resources to pay for traveling and other mission trip and volunteer expenses. "I think it's part of God's plan for me (to give back)," he said.

Plus, he still has more to learn about construction. A member of the Habitat Detroit Thursday crew is 84.

"He moves a little slower," Earnley said, "but kids like me can learn from someone like that."

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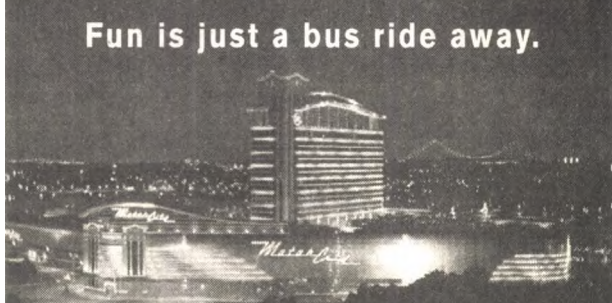
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Companies may buy, lease former GM sites

By Ken Abramczyk
Staff Writer

Officials responsible for the remediation and development of two former GM factory sites in Livonia believe they are close to finding purchasers or tenants.

Four or five parties are expressing interest in purchasing the former GM Powertrain plant on Middlebelt, while two or three others are inquiring about leases there, according to Bruce Rasher, redevelopment manager for Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response Trust.

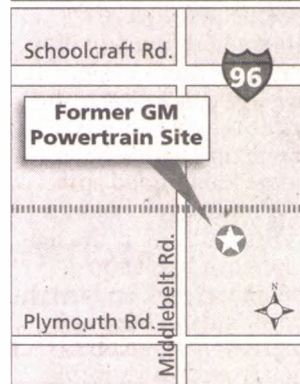
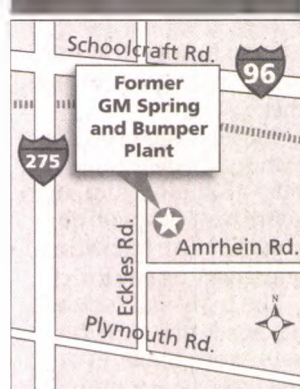
One "serious" buyer has approached RACER Trust about purchasing one of two properties on Eckles, just north of Amrhein, and south of I-96, at the site of the former Spring and Bumper plant. A second prospective buyer has entered into preliminary discussions about purchasing a second separate portion of the site, Rasher said.

Rasher would not identify the companies. "We have nothing to announce today, but we are very excited about the interest in these sites," Rasher said Tuesday.

Vacated factory sites

The former Powertrain plant site at 12200 Middlebelt, south of I-96 and north of Plymouth Road, was built in 1971. After an expansion in 1984, the building now spans 1.2 million square feet on 40 acres of property. Zoned M2 for heavy manufacturing, it once housed machining operations for automotive engines and related components. The

Two former GM properties may be sold or leased soon, according to officials responsible for overseeing the cleanup and redevelopment of sites



property also includes a warehouse and wastewater treatment plant. At one time, the facility employed more than 1,200 workers. When it closed in June 2010, it had 300 employees.

The site of the former Spring and Bumper Plant (Delco Chassis), at 12950 Eckles and 13000 Eckles, on the northeast corner of Amrhein, once housed 14 buildings comprising 2.1 million square feet. Between 1954 and 1998, this 120-acre site was operated by various divisions of GM.

The property is surrounded by industrial or commercial properties with the exception of a residential neighbor-



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The former GM Powertrain plant on Middlebelt Road.

hood, located southeast of the site.

The site at 13000 Eckles is 116 acres. The buildings were removed in 2001, though concrete slabs remain on the property, which is zoned industrial. A 3.5-acre groundwater treatment facility, still operational, is located at 12950 Eckles.

At the plant, GM manufactured vehicle bumpers, leaf springs, coil springs and struts there. Other operations included bumper plating, metal forming, heat-treating, metal plating and finishing and assembly. According to an article in the *Observer* in September 1970, more than 2,600 employees worked there.

In 1993, GM ceased its bumper operations and, in 1998, sold the coil spring business to an independent company, which leased a portion of the facility through the year 2000.

Structures were demolished in 2001, with the exception of concrete floor slabs and a groundwater collection and treatment system, located at an adjacent, 3.5-acre site at 12950 Eckles and on the southwest corner.

Trust worked with AGs

The Trust is unique because it works with state and federal environmental agencies and discussions involved attorneys general from the 14 states, Rasher said. "The U.S. government, the states and tribe involved in the case recognized that the presence of environmental contamination can in most cases be an impediment," Rasher said. "Their con-

cept was to use some of the funds generated in the bankruptcy proceedings to give to the trust to remove some of these impediments, so communities are not stuck with the properties."

Rasher added that the money was not intended just for the cleanup, that the property can be promoted and marketed to companies for redevelopment.

"We don't just do this on our own," said Grant Trigger, cleanup manager for RACER Trust's Michigan properties, "We work with the communities to clean it up and bring jobs to the site."

Rasher said they have been in discussions with Mayor Jack Kirksey and Mark Taormina, director of planning and economic development.

Remediation is ongoing

Trigger said there was "limited remediation" required at the former GM Powertrain plant. Limited metals and cleaning solutions were found beneath the floor.

According to the RACER Trust website, groundwater collected at select areas of the site was found to contain levels of inorganic compounds above MDEQ's nonresidential drinking water protection criteria. EPA is reviewing the data and additional monitoring is planned.

The Trust will continue working with the EPA on an environmental investigation and remediation plan for the site.

At the Eckles Road property, Trigger said chromium and nickel were found in the southwest corner near where the plating operations were once located. A groundwater collection trench and treatment system was installed to address that impacted groundwater.

A vapor mitigation system was installed in one nearby home after officials found that soil vapors were present

above a narrow groundwater plume containing volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including trichloroethylene TCE, that migrated off-site to the southeast.

The site has been subject to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Corrective Action under EPA oversight since October 2001. Since then, there have been approximately 10 stages of investigation; and several cleanups at the site, including removal of impacted soil from a former fire training area, powerhouse area, historical coal pile area, the former mudhouse area, and a small area under the north portion of the main building slab; and the groundwater collection trench and treatment system.

In addition, a barrier wall was installed to supplement the groundwater collection system; and a groundwater monitoring program and institutional controls were implemented. Groundwater will be continued to be monitored related to the collection trench and off-site TCE impacts, and tests for soil vapor levels will be monitored southeast of the site to follow the recent evaluation and mitigation, according to the RACER website.

The Trust will continue to prepare documentation and work with the EPA to finalize the site's status as the RCRA corrective action will include semi-annual reports.

Both Rasher and Trigger believe that creating jobs is the ultimate goal of the Trust and the redevelopment of the properties. They were asked how companies promise and officials know that a large number of jobs would be created with their purchases or leases of the sites.

"My personal goal is to return as many jobs that were lost when the plant shut down," Rasher said. "If there were a thousand jobs in a plant, that is my goal to shoot for."

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Dated: 04/03/2013
Publish: April 7, 2013

AT8796778 - 3x2

CITY OF PLYMOUTH ACCURACY TESTING FOR VOTING EQUIPMENT WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17TH, 4:00P.M.

The City of Plymouth has scheduled and will be conducting the Accuracy Testing for the Optical Scan Voting Equipment, as well as the Hearing Impaired Equipment, for the General Election to be held on TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2013. The testing is scheduled for WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17TH, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. at the Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer Street, Plymouth, MI 48170.

This is an open testing session and any interested person is encouraged to attend. Election Source will be conducting the testing to assure that the voting equipment has been programmed appropriately.

If there are any questions, please direct them to the City Clerk's office at 734-453-1234. The Plymouth Cultural Center is in compliance with the American Disabilities Act and is handicapped accessible.

Linda Langmesser, CMC
City Clerk

Publish: April 7, 2013

AT8796712 - 3x3

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH PUBLIC NOTICE

To all residents and other interested parties: Agendas 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.plymouthtwp.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 in 2013: April 9, May 14 & 28, June 25, July 23, August 20, September 10 & 24, October 8 & 22, November 12 and December 10.

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

Nancy Conzelman
Township Clerk

Special meetings should be scheduled for Tuesdays, unless otherwise posted.

Publish: April 7, 2013

AT8796718 - 3x3.5

Don't sign bogus return; file one on your own

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

Q: Dear Rick: I read one of your columns and it dealt with a wife who got in trouble with the IRS over tax returns. In short, her husband was not reporting income and she was held liable for the taxes. At the time, you gave her some advice. I'm in a similar situation; however, my husband and I have not filed this year's tax return. He earned some money that he doesn't want to report. He says we will never be caught. I don't know if I should sign the return. What if the IRS discovers that we did not report income, can I be held liable? I should add that our marriage is not the strongest and I think that we are headed for a breakup.

A: I remember the column. It dealt with a



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

as the innocent spouse rule. Basically, this allows the spouse to avoid liability if they can show that they had no knowledge and were totally innocent with regards to the underreporting of income.

Unfortunately, this would not be the case in your situation. If the IRS did discover the underreporting of income, you could be held liable not

only for the taxes, but also for interest and penalties. You would not be eligible to use the innocent spouse rule because you had knowledge of the underreporting before you signed your return.

While I know this is difficult, my advice is that you do not sign the return and inform your husband that either the income is reported on your joint return or you will file a separate tax return. He won't be happy with either alternative because there are adverse tax consequences when a married couple files separately. Generally, when married couples file returns individually, they end up paying higher taxes. I do not like people to pay more taxes than they have to,

however, I am also a firm believer that you should not file a tax return that you know is inaccurate.

I wish there was another alternative, but I don't know of one. The bottom line is when you sign a tax return, you are stating it is fair and accurate. When that turns out not to be the case, there can be severe consequences.

Many people believe that they won't get caught by the IRS. However, you would be surprised how the IRS can find information. For example, what if the person who gave that money to your husband claimed it as a deduction on his/her tax return and then gets audited by the IRS? The trail could lead back to you and your husband. Or what if the peo-

ple who gave the money to your husband get in trouble with the IRS and cut a deal and voluntarily report the information about your husband to the IRS? Once again, it could put you in a difficult position.

I cannot stress enough how important it is for everyone to review their tax return for accuracy before signing. If you know that the return is wrong and the number is substantial, do not sign the return. In your case, since we are so close to the tax filing deadline, my advice is to file for an extension and then discuss the situation with your husband.

Keep in mind penalties can be severe, particularly when it comes

to underreporting of income. In those situations, if it's a substantial underreporting of income, you can have penalties as high as 50 percent. When you add the penalties and the interest to the tax liability, you could be doubling the amount you owe. Never play games with your taxes; do the right thing. It may cost a few extra dollars, but it certainly will allow you to sleep at night.

Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. His website is www.bloomassetmanagement.com. If you would like Rick to respond to your questions, please email him at rick@bloomassetmanagement.com.

PCAC hosts arts weekend

The Plymouth Community Arts Council is promising "something for everyone," including two exhibits and a classic rock music experience with its April Arts Weekend April 12-14.

On the agenda:
• Friday, April 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. — Spaces and Places artist reception,

the PCAC's fourth annual juried exhibit, a free event open to the public.

• Saturday, April 13, 7-10 p.m. — Benefit concert with D'Art Band, featuring classic rock music and door prizes. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the PCAC office or at the door.

• Sunday, April 14, 2-4

p.m. — Front Wall exhibit reception for "Sisterhood." Hosted by Cadet Girl Scout Troop 40844. It's a free event, open to the public.

The PCAC is located at 774 N. Sheldon in Plymouth. For more information visit the PCAC's website at www.plymoutharts.com or call (734) 416-4278.

Public invited to recital by local piano students

Each year, the Livonia Area Piano Teachers Forum auditions students in elementary through high school for the Award for Piano Performance Excellence. Winners receive a cash prize and the opportunity to perform in a winners' recital sponsored by the LAPTF.

This year's winners' recital will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 21, in The Steinway Gallery, 2700 E. West Maple Road, in Commerce Township. The recital is free, and the public is welcome.

Donations will be accepted for the Sharon Rea Music Scholarship

program, which provides scholarships to students attending summer music programs.

The Livonia Area Piano Teachers Forum has more than 100 members from all over the metro Detroit area.

For more information, visit www.laptf.org.



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SOCIAL SECURITY



Many people are wrongly rejected when they apply for Social Security Disability benefits. Money was taken out of their paychecks for Social Security taxes to ensure that they would receive disability benefits if they could no longer work full-time. Sadly, the government denies approximately 60% of those who apply for disability benefits.

Attorneys J.B. Bieske and Jennifer Alfonsi have 42 years combined experience representing only Social Security disability clients. And they personally meet with all clients and appear personally at all court hearings. Many large firms assign inexperienced attorneys to your case. And some of these firms are located thousands of miles away and only fly the attorney in the day of the court hearing. Attorneys Bieske and Alfonsi have vast experience before local Michigan judges.

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.

Attorneys Bieske and Alfonsi offer free phone or office consultation. If they represent you, there will be **no fee charged until after the case is won**. The fee is a percentage of retroactive benefits.

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.

Those denied can appeal on their own but statistics for many years reveal that those represented by attorneys win a much higher percentage of appeals. And attorneys who specialize in Social Security Disability cases win a much higher percentage yet.

In addition to practicing only Social Security disability law attorney Bieske has written a book for attorneys about the

www.ssdfighter.com

Schoolcraft to start plastics technology program

By Ken Abramczyk
Staff Writer

Bill Dunbar, dean of occupational programs and economic development at Schoolcraft College, met with engineers and manufacturers over the past several months to discuss changing technologies and how tomorrow's workers can best be educated.

More companies are using an increasing number of plastic parts in products ranging from motor vehicles to medical equipment. Dunbar learned companies want to hire trained employees who know plastics. The college wanted to help students land a job and develop competency levels in technology.

Those discussions led to the development of a plastics technology program. Schoolcraft is expected to offer associate degrees in 2015 and build an academic foundation for plastics engineering.

Starting in May, the college will offer its first plastics class, Characteristics of Plastics.

While that class is noncredit, it will help build in students a foundation of plastics knowledge.

The idea for the program is similar to that of the college's health information technology and nursing programs, which also have strong "industry/employer" ties, Dunbar said.

Skill building

The first four classes after the Characteristics of Plastics will be "stackable" credited classes, which will be added to the curriculum as students progress through the program. "These classes will build their skills for a one-year certifica-



NYX Cherry Hill Production Manager Gurjit Singh Sidhu explains how plastic parts for Ford and General Motors products are produced at the plant. Listening to the explanation are Dawnne Toppa, vice president of the Livonia Chamber of Commerce, and Amy Jones, director of business development, Schoolcraft College.

tion; then once they hit 60 to 62 credits in that curriculum, they can obtain their associate's degree in plastics technology."

Dunbar estimated entry-level positions range from \$13 to \$16 an hour. "They move up from there," Dunbar said.

"It gives them an opportunity to build their skill levels and keep building their credentials. Education and those credentials are something that no one can take away from you."

Sassan Tarahomi, president-elect of the Society of Plastics Engineers Detroit Section, will be teaching the class in May.

He and other SPE members met with Dunbar to discuss the program. "We are targeting this southeast Michigan region to bring in jobs," Tarahomi said. Companies with representation in the group include NYX, IAC and Q'Vive.

Tarahomi said companies would like to hire workers, but many of the younger ones don't have experience. Students can learn about plastics materials, processing and design in the class. The class would be geared toward a designer, technician or a high school graduate. "They need to prepare so that they can get experience,

try working in that field and experience that learning, and eventually get a co-op position," Tarahomi said.

Part of program

Internships at companies will be available. Dunbar estimated that students would be eligible after the one-year certification.

Plastics technology is part of the growing field of mechatronics, which Dunbar described as intelligent control of mechanical systems. Companies are turning to plastic parts in manufacturing and production to lighten the weight of vehicles

to improve mileage and durability and also lessen the cost of medical equipment. Hospitals are full of equipment comprised of plastics.

"Companies are heavily involved in it," Dunbar said. "The auto industry is big on plastics, but plastics are in every industry."

Students will be able to transfer those credits to Ferris State University, which is the closest university that offers plastics technology and plastics engineering, Dunbar said.

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Dems bring 'Listen Tour' to Garden City

By Sue Buck
Staff Writer

House Democrats brought their "Listening Tour" Wednesday to Garden City.

But they listened to few because attendance was low.

Organizers announced the press conference Monday and held it mid-morning Wednesday. Many in the community, as well as the entire state Legislature, were on spring break.

State Reps. David Knezek, D-Dearborn Heights, and Dian Slavens, D-Canton, spoke at a Wednesday press conference at Garden City Hall to talk about the House Democrats' Middle Class Plan.

have heard from seniors about the pension tax, from teachers who complained about classroom sizes and how they have to pay out-of-pocket for school supplies and from women who are concerned about access to health care.

Slavens said at one meeting, a woman named Michelle in Sterling Heights asked "whether this is Michigan or Mississippi?"

"We heard the same concerns from residents over and over again," Slavens said. Tim Roraback, a 22-year Plymouth resident and member of the Democratic Club, spoke at the Garden City meeting. He is married with two daughters.

"My concern is the increase in taxes on low-income and middle-income people, which I think is very devastating," Roraback said.

He said Republicans have recently cut \$1 billion from local public schools.

"My daughters were both educated in Plymouth-Canton Schools," he said.



STEPHEN CANTRELL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

State Reps. David Knezek, D-Dearborn Heights, and Dian Slavens, D-Canton, spoke at a Wednesday press conference at Garden City Hall to talk about the House Democrats' Middle Class Plan.

Slavens urged strong support of the public school system. "A strong public education system has all kinds of benefits to our economy," he said.

Knezek said Lansing Republicans have "misguided principles."

He, too, has attended other stops across the state.

Slavens urged people to write letters to the editor. Garden City Schools Superintendent Michelle Cline was concerned about charter schools.

"We have a charter school coming into Garden City," she said. "Charter schools devastate public schools in a community where a charter school opens. While they get taxpayer money, they are not held to the same standard of regulation as the public schools are."

"Charter schools need to be held to the same standards as all public schools," she added.

Knezek agreed accountability is a high priority for the Democrats.

"If we are not careful, our public schools will be schools for children of poverty and children

of special needs," Cline said. "It scares me a lot to think that is where we are going because there is such an attack on public education right now."

Cline said Michigan-ers as a whole don't understand the difference between charter schools and public schools and parochial schools and what their responsibilities are.

The plan is based on the response Democrats received during their recent statewide Real State of Our State Listening Tour.

"In every corner of the state, residents told us that the policies of the last two years aren't working for them," Knezek said. "We want people

to know that we held this Listening Tour to actually get their input, not as a publicity stunt. Our Middle-Class Plan turns those concerns into action."

Slavens added, "Our job is to make laws that work for the average, hard-working Michigander, not CEOs or special-interest groups. Although the economy is starting to recover, too many families are still struggling. Our plan will address those struggles."

Restoring and protecting funds to public education, eliminating barriers to health care for women and providing solutions for fixing our roads and bridges, Michigan's Middle-Class Plan will:

- Repeal the tax on seniors' retirement

- Restore the per-child tax deduction, restore the Earned Income Tax Credit to 11 percent and restore the Homestead Property Tax Credit.

- Implement a fine for habitually overweight trucks, ensure existing transportation funds are used for road construction and refinance existing infrastructure bonds.

- Make the School Aid Fund only available for use in funding K-12 education and increase per-pupil funding by \$320.

- Improve access to health care for women by removing barriers to health care centers and increasing access to family planning services.

To view the plan in its entirety, visit www.realstateofourstate.com.

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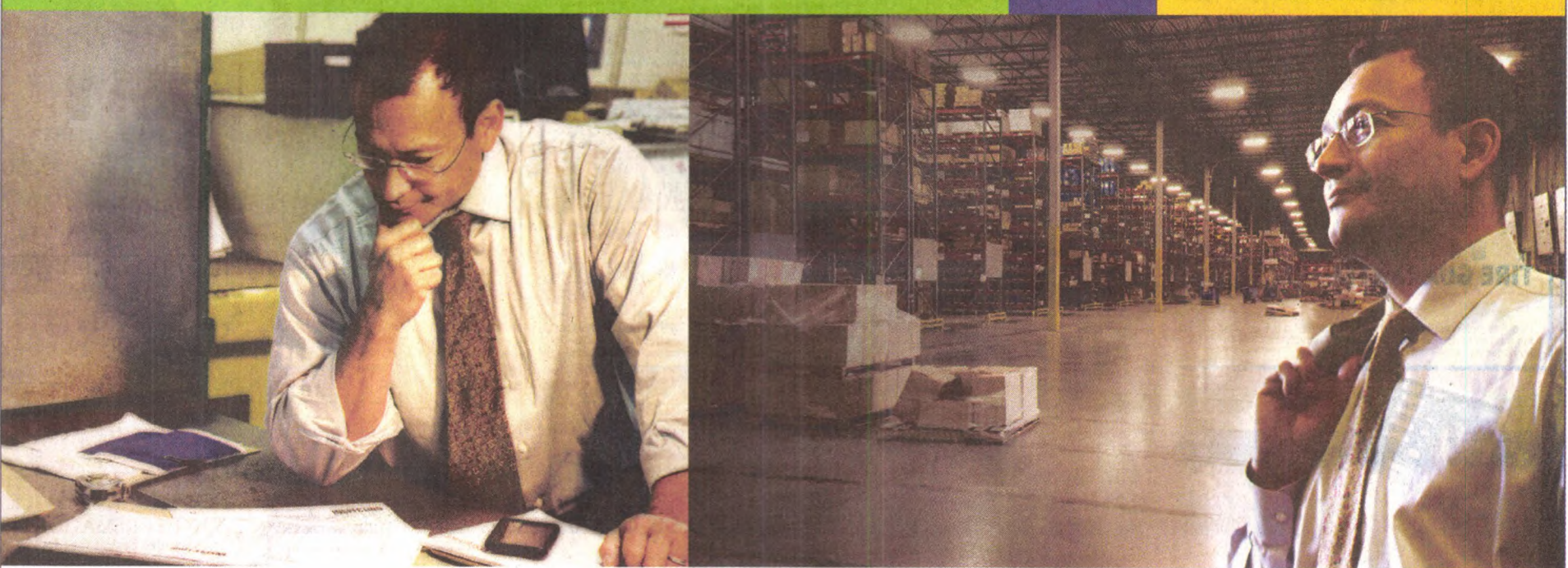
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2013 TOUR OF REMODELED HOMES DEBUTS IN PLYMOUTH

If you want to see firsthand the remodeling possibilities for your own home, you'll want to mark Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28 on your calendar.

That's the weekend date of the 2013 Tour of Remodeled Homes in Plymouth, sponsored by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry of Southeast Michigan. Five homes in Plymouth have been added on to the nine homes in Ann Arbor to expand the market area of this popular annual tour — now in its tenth year.

"You can walk through each home and have an opportunity to meet the builders," said Monica Forward, tour event chair. "It will give you some new ideas to use in your own home."

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry of Southeast Michigan is a group of local remodelers, suppliers, trade contractors and other building professionals who promote and support the remodeling industry. "One of the things that is unique about this organization is that they equally recognize members of all professional and trade backgrounds," said Michael Klement, AIA, architect and owner of Architectural Resource, LLC in Ann Arbor.

Remodeled Home #1:

One of his project homes is on the tour, entitled "Addition by Subtraction." "For the first time I can ever remember on any remodeling tour, this project presents a charming 1920s Plymouth bungalow whose square footage was actually reduced by 55 square feet," said Klement. "It represents our firm's view of making every inch count in our client's homes, no matter what the project size."

In this home, Architectural Resource, LLC removed a solarium on the rear of the home that was actually losing more energy than it was gaining. By completely reconfiguring the floor plan, they created a home that functioned much more efficiently than before.

Remodeled Home #2:

Bill Cowdin of Cowdin Design + Build in Plymouth completed a full home remodel entitled "This Small Space" for his project tour home. "We took a small duplex in downtown Plymouth and created a really modern space with an open kitchen, cherry floors and a totally remodeled master bedroom suite," said Cowdin, whose company specializes in middle to upper-range remodeling. "It was very exciting to work in a confined space and make it feel twice as big."

Remodeled Home #3:

Dave Latawiec, owner of DJL Builders in Plymouth, will be presenting "Four-Square Revisited," a whole house remodel plus an addition to a 1925 two-story four-square home. "We totally gutted the original 1500 square feet of space, then added 1400 more square feet," said Latawiec. "What will attract the most attention is the open kitchen



"Upstairs Downstairs" two-story addition and deck by Seghi Renovations.

1990s colonial that has been totally rebuilt inside, entitled "Whole House Re-imagined." "It's absolutely gorgeous," said Bob Royston. "The homeowner has spared no expense in the meticulous remodeling of this home."

With a new master bath, guest bath, basement kitchen and bath, and decorative trim work, the house exemplifies Royston's ability in the high-end scale of remodeling. Another plus is its Michigan-made custom cabinetry. The moral of this house's story is: The details truly make the project.

Remodeled Home #5:

A two-story addition and cedar deck define this project by Seghi Renovations in Plymouth, is entitled "Upstairs, Downstairs."

The project includes a stone fireplace and cozy family room on the main floor, added onto the dining room, with a finished lower level below. The winding cedar deck goes down to the lower level, connecting the entire project at the exterior. "The view is gorgeous, overlooking a wooded backyard," said Seghi. "The whole back of the addition is all windows and high cathedral ceilings."

— By Sally Rummel

and family room. We also added a large mudroom and an open sunroom in the existing house space, then the addition which includes a large master suite."

Remodeled Home #4:

Royston Design + Contracting of Northville will show an early

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BOYS BASEBALL PREVIEW PT. 2



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Connecting for a double during a 2012 game is Salem's Demetrius Dunlap (No. 11), who is one of the team's top returnees.

Rocks ready to roll

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Longtime Salem baseball coach Dale Rumberger doesn't like to hype something if the facts don't back up his excitement.

Rumberger doesn't mind going to bat for his 2013 team, because the evidence is mounting that the Rocks will be a strong contender both in the KLAA and possibly the state tournament.

Although Salem went just 16-18 in 2012, the Rocks finished strong (13-7 after April) as young players gained experience, returned to health or both.

Then Salem's summer league team, coached by Rumberger, took a giant step forward with a 35-1 record.

With nine key seniors returning plus a number of emerging players hitting their stride, Rumberger can only think this might be the year where the Rocks add a banner

or two inside the gymnasium.

"I'll take talent over experience every day," said Rumberger, with a laugh. "I'll teach them what I need them to know. They're just really smart, they've improved a lot over last season, improved a lot over the summertime. I just think they're going to play well."

Of course, Rumberger — inducted last year into the Michigan High School Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame — knows a lot about what is and isn't talent.

Now entering his 19th season as Salem's head coach and 27th overall, his teams have collected a total of 22 division, conference, district and regional championships and won the 1991 state championship. During his tenure, the Rocks are 454-340.

"I have all my starters back," he said. "The only starter I lost that played significant time was (catcher) Brett Ramirez, who's playing

over at Madonna now."

Catching on

The Rocks boast solid players all over the diamond. But proverbial strength up the middle is why Salem should, in the least, contend for the KLAA Central Division.

Taking over from catcher is senior Lucas Salinas. He'll handle a talented staff featuring starters Nick March, Colin Pietron (both juniors) and Josh Penn (sophomore) along with senior closer Jeremy St. Laurent.

His double-play combination is junior shortstop Jack Driscoll and senior second baseman Aaron Moore.

Senior and Saginaw Valley State-bound center fielder Demetrius Dunlap is the anchor of the outfield.

As catcher, Salinas will be the unofficial captain of the Salem ship. In addition to swinging a good bat (.350s is his projected

Please see ROCKS, B2

TRACK PREVIEW

Chiefs look to heat up fast

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Bob Richardson has seen this movie before: Large group of all-conference athletes graduate from his Canton varsity boys track and field team, followed by an influx of new talent.

At least that's what Richardson hopes will happen in 2013, with the Chiefs set to open the season with a dual meet Tuesday against Livonia Franklin. Because of cold weather this spring, preseason practices have largely been forced indoors — not the best way for runners to prep for actual competition.

"We've lost some people from last year," said Richardson, starting his 25th season at the helm of the Canton squad. "And, we've had unusually chilly weather. So right now, we've probably got more questions than answers to what to expect out of our guys."

"But, we've got good numbers, with 80 to 90. We'll see how they progress. But our coaching staff will have them as ready as we can have them."

Canton, co-champions of the KLAA South Division in 2012 with a 4-1 record (6-1 overall), lost standouts such as Miles Felton, Ryan Jones, Shean Krolnicki, Demetre Lopez, Jeff Molchan,

Please see CHIEFS, B3



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Jamal Dixon will reprise his role as a top long jumper for Canton in 2013.

Reign Junior Academy registration

The Plymouth Reign Soccer Club will begin their Spring Junior Academy on Tuesday, April 16, a six-week program for any player ages 5-9.

Cost is \$60 for once a week, either Tuesdays or Fridays. Those who want to take part on both Tuesdays and Fridays over the course of the program can sign up for \$110.

All sessions (5:30-6:30 p.m.) will be instructed by Plymouth Reign professional coaches and an academy T-shirt will be included with every paid registration.

The academy is set to take place at Allen Elementary School, 11100 N. Haggerty in Plymouth.

For more information or inquiries, visit plymouthsoccer.net or e-mail vice_president@plymouthsoccer.net.

Senior men's golf meeting

The Livonia Senior Men's Golf Association will stage its 2013 registration and business meeting at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 20 at the Livonia Senior Center,

located on the southeast corner of Five Mile and Farmington roads.

The meeting is open to golfers 59 years and up, regardless of residency.

The \$30 registration fee also covers the season-ending awards banquet luncheon and gift.

For more information, call Tony Amadori at (734) 261-4718.

Sibling revelry

Birneys carry lacrosse torch from Plymouth to UDM

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Lacrosse is the sport of choice in the Birney household, and that's good news for siblings Mike and Kylie Birney — midfielders for University of Detroit Mercy's men's and women's teams, respectively.

It didn't hurt that after Mike Birney, 20, started getting into the sport while in middle school at Our Lady of Good Counsel that his parents and another couple opened up The Michigan Lacrosse and Training Center in Plymouth to

make sure he could get whatever lacrosse equipment he needed.

Soon enough, his sister, Kylie, followed suit, ultimately deciding to ditch soccer for the sport is brother can't get enough of.

"My brother kind of started the whole lacrosse thing in my family," said 19-year-old Kylie Birney, who played varsity lacrosse at Livonia Ladywood and is now a freshman midfielder with the UDM women's team (which plays 1 p.m. Sunday against Howard

Please see BIRNEYS, B3



UDM ATHLETICS

Lacrosse-loving siblings Mike and Kylie Birney of Plymouth are feeling right at home at University of Detroit Mercy.

Whalers break through in third

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

The Plymouth Whalers battled rust during the first two periods of Friday's OHL Western Conference semifinal opener against Owen Sound at Compu-ware Arena.

Plymouth also had to deal with outstanding Attack goalie Jordan Binnington, who brought his .937 save percentage from Owen Sound's first series into the game.

Owen Sound scored midway through the first period and that held up until the third.

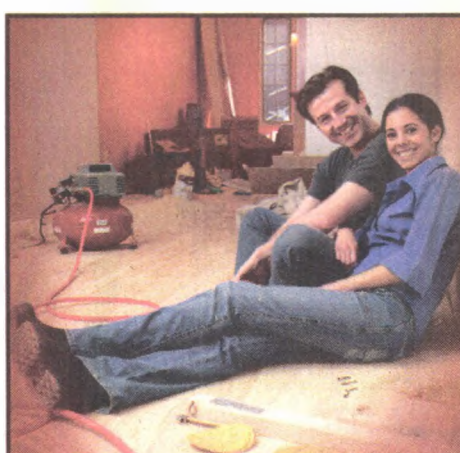
But once the Whalers

were finally free of the last bit of rust — collected during the nine-day hiatus between playoff rounds — they scored four goals in the third period for a 4-1 victory.

Some serious sniping from wingers Garrett Meurs and Sebastian Uvira (two goals) also helped get Plymouth's offense clicking, to the delight of 2,978 home fans.


"We had a couple really glorious chances early on and we didn't bury them," Plymouth head coach and general manager Mike Velucci said. "And they got

Please see WHALERS, B2



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ROCKS

Continued from page B1

average), he knows how to handle a pitching staff, block pitches and get throws down to second base for quick tags.

"Lucas has caught a lot, he caught a lot last summer," Rumberger said. "He's a kid that fought hard all the way through freshman and JV and it's his turn to be the catching leader of our team."

Backing up Salinas will be another catcher with promise, sophomore Colin Savage.

"That's a tradition here at Salem," Rumberger, himself a former catcher, said about having strong players behind the dish. "I've had seven all-state catchers since I've been coaching here. ... So it's always been a point of emphasis to have catchers."

Plethora of arms

As for Salem's pitching staff, Rumberger said he has "more pitchers than I have innings for."

March (1-3, 3.50) is the No. 1 starter and is poised for a breakout season.

"Nick was one of our primary starters last year (as a sophomore)," he noted. "He has good experience. He was only 1-3 last year, but opponents only hit .211 against him."

Pietron and Josh Penn will be regulars in Salem's rotation, both having made strides since Northville defeated the Rocks in the 2012 districts. They were pretty good to begin with — Penn's first varsity start was a 1-0 shutout over Wayne Memorial.

Other pitchers who could make a big impact are sophomores Tyler Brooks (who throws in the mid-80s), Brandon Gillen and freshman lefthander Alex Nicholson, whose dad played on

Salem's 1991 championship team.

Seniors Dave Proctor and Austin Silletti and junior Andrew Hunt will pitch in middle-relief situations to get the game to the seventh, when hard-throwing St. Laurent can take over.

"Jeremy's a strike-out guy, he has as much velocity as Tyler," Rumberger noted. "The best thing about him now is, we've been working on his breaking ball over the winter and he's made a lot of improvement."

"So now he's got two pitches. The kids have a lot of faith in him because you know what's on his mind when we put him in the game. He throws a lot of strikes. For the most part, when Jeremy's in the game, it's over."

Improved D

Salem pitchers will benefit from improved defense in the infield, with senior third baseman Kyle Penn healthy after missing a chunk of 2012 due to illness.

The double-play combo of Driscoll and Moore (ably backed up by junior Derrick Vergolini) also is a couple notches better than a year ago, simply due to having a lot of varsity experience.

"He (Penn) had pneumonia, then strep throat," Rumberger said. "It was just a battle. And finally, in May he was able to come back and start playing. Once that happened, our infield fell right into place because we had a quality infielder at every position."

Driscoll "has good range and a good arm" and turns the DP well — either with Moore or Vergolini.

The infielders do more than pick it. Driscoll will lead off and Rumberger could envision him improving on last year's .288 average.

Moore displays power, smacking a three-run shot in the districts against Northville while Penn hit .309 last year.

"I have a lot of kids that can really swing the bat," he said.

Splitting first-base duties will be Silletti and Josh Penn, and each brings a different element to the mix. Silletti is a slick fielder while Penn (.417 average) likely will be the cleanup hitter.

High praise

Salem's outfielders also give Rumberger reason to smile, especially Dunlap — who hit .367 with 21 RBI last year in addition to flagging down anything hit anywhere in his vicinity.

"I don't say this often, but Demetrius is probably the best center fielder I've ever had," Rumberger said. "And I've had three or four all-staters. Sam Ott played center for me."

A player who could take over center after Dunlap graduates is Nicholson, who is the team's lone lefty hitter and thrower.

"Alex is a great athlete." When Gillen isn't pitching, he'll play left. Meanwhile, sharing right field will be junior Justin Sydowski and senior Alex Starr.

"He (Sydowski) is another guy I brought up as a sophomore," Rumberger said. "He's a big, strong kid and he can really drive the ball."

Going up and down his roster sheet, he couldn't ignore impressive facts detailing previous successes and current potential. Rumberger and Salem assistant coach Andy Ciantar know they have a pretty good team on paper.

Now, it's time to get it done on the diamond.

tsmith@hometownlife.com
(734) 469-4128

Stafford blanks Irish in opener

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Cool, windy weather Wednesday did not slow down Canton senior pitcher Mike Stafford one bit in the Chiefs' season opener against Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard.

Stafford hurled a no-hitter into the fifth inning and struck out 12 batters as host Canton rolled to a 6-0 victory in the opener of a twinbill.

"You know, Mike is a senior and is a college-level athlete," said Canton head baseball coach Mark Blomshield, about how little the weather bothered Stafford on the mound. "So that's basically what we expect out of him and what he expects out of himself, too."

The southpaw, who recently signed to pitch at Liberty University (Va.) next year, walked three batters and his pitch count was climbing too high for a first start when Jack Gage slapped a grounder up the middle with two outs in the fifth to spoil the no-hit bid.

"I'm kind of glad they got that hit there," Blomshield said.

"Because he was getting up around the 80-pitch mark. Yeah, he had a no-hitter going in the fifth (but) I didn't really want to leave him out there. That (Gage's hit) made the switch easier."

Taking over on the mound for Canton in the sixth was another hard-throwing lefty, junior Nick Hazergian, who finished up the final two scoreless innings.

Canton grabbed an early 1-0 lead when Nick Schnur scored on a wild pitch in the first.

The Chiefs then gave Stafford a bit more



JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO

Canton's Mike Stafford throws a pitch during Wednesday's game against Ann Arbor Gabriel Richard.

breathing room with three runs in the fourth, a rally capped off by a two-out RBI single by Weston Price and a two-run single by Jake Boucher.

A line-drive double to right-center by Jake Raymo in the sixth led to another Canton run. Raymo advanced to third and home on two wild pitches, giving the Chiefs a 5-0 edge.

In the sixth, Canton made it a six-run cushion. Leading off with a single to right was James Hall and he eventually scored on Hazergian's RBI hit.

The teams played a second game Wednesday night, using Catholic League rules (each batter stepped into the box

with a 1-1 count), and Canton rallied for a 6-3 victory to improve to 2-0 on the season.

Going six innings and striking out 13 while giving up just three hits was winning pitcher Brett Mattson.

Hazergian's two-run double was one of Canton's key hits to bounce back from a 3-1 deficit in the third.

A three-run fifth snapped a 3-3 deadlock.

Stafford doubled and drove in two runs, including the winning run with two outs in the bottom of the fifth.

Also collecting an RBI was Alex Clark.

tsmith@hometownlife.com
(734) 469-4128

WHALERS

Continued from page B1

kind of a fluky goal there that put us on our heels for 10 minutes."

The Whalers turned it up a couple of notches in the middle period, outshooting the Attack 14-6, but still could not answer Owen Sound's early goal scored by Germel Smith at 10:54 of the opening period.

"Noese (Stefan Noesen) hit the post, (Tom) Wilson missed an empty netter, (Ryan) Hartman missed an empty netter," Vellucci said. "That's the way it goes. We've been off for nine days and you could tell early on."

The tables started to turn at the 20-minute mark of the second period.

Owen Sound's Kurtis Gabriel was assessed a double minor for high sticking, stemming from an altercation at the end of the period. That gave Plymouth an excellent chance to finally solve Binnington (who stopped all 26



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plymouth's Sebastian Uvira (No. 17) slips the puck past Owen Sound goalie Jordan Binnington to put the Whalers up 2-1 Friday night. At right is Attack defenseman Cody Ceci (No. 8).

shots through two periods).

Vellucci also gave the Whalers a little bit of a pep talk going into the third, trying to keep them from letting any frustration get to them.

"Stay positive, that was it (the message)," he said. "You get one, you'll get a bunch."

On the board

Owen Sound killed off the first of the two penalties to Gabriel to open the third, but then Meurs scored a goal that would have made Gretzky smile.

Rickard Rakell skated up the left half-wall and threaded the puck into the corner to Meurs, who

walked toward the blue paint. From a sharp angle near the left post, and with only a small opening to shoot at over Binnington's glove hand, Meurs ripped a shot into the top right corner with 17:30 remaining.

With the goal came a collective feeling of relief and — partly thanks to an

Owen Sound line change — it took just two minutes for Uvira to put the Whalers in front for good.

Veteran defenseman Austin Levi (Farmington Hills) hit Uvira with a pass in the neutral zone and the mid-season acquisition did the rest. Uvira skated down the right wing, maneuvered around Owen Sound defenseman Keevin Cutting and cut in on Binnington. After going forehand-backhand-forehand, Uvira slipped the puck under Binnington's arm from just above the crease.

"I was kind of yelling for it," Uvira said. "I wanted the puck so bad because I saw everybody was kind of changing. So I used my speed. I wanted the puck to get into the net and I was lucky."

The 6-2, 206-pounder, a solid contributor since being traded to Plymouth in January from Oshawa, padded the lead to 3-1 with 3:12 remaining.

OHL scoring champion Vince Trocheck lofted the puck high into the air out

of Plymouth's zone, merely to ease the pressure on Whalers rookie goalie Alex Nedeljkovic (22 saves).

The puck bounced over the Owen Sound blue line, where Uvira corralled it and skated in for his second of the night. He went top shelf with the shot.

"I saw Trocheck throwing the puck out high and I was like, 'C'mon, I got to get it,'" Uvira said. "Then I saw the puck on the ice and I started wheeling in hard to get to the net."

"He's a big, strong guy," Vellucci said about Uvira. "When you go to the net, it's tough to stop him."

Capping off the win was an empty netter by Rakell with 1:02 left.

Vellucci said he expects another hard-hitting contest in Game 2, which is set for 4 p.m. Sunday at Compuware.

"They're very physical. We knew they were going to be a tough opponent," Vellucci said. "It's going to be a great series."

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Late Registrants Accepted

BIRNEYS

Continued from page B1

University at Titan Field, on the UDM campus). "All four of us play now."

Indeed, younger brothers Sean and Ryan also play the sport and their dad, the elder Mike Birney, coaches it at Plymouth-based Good Counsel. Meanwhile, mom Lisa runs the Godfredson Road business with friends Gene and Sandy Pulice (like the Birneys, from Plymouth).

And the fact Mike and Birney followed successful prep careers by playing their sport of choice at Mercy is icing on the cake.

"It's pretty cool because our whole life we kind of grew up playing lacrosse together," Mike said. "It's pretty cool that she came to the same school."

Also pretty pumped up about the family connection at UDM is Kylie, noting "it brings a comfort factor to school. To be away from home, at the same time he's always here. If I ever need my big brother he's always here for me."

Taking root

The Birneys are there for the Titans, too. Mike Birney through games of April 3 has 11 goals and six assists in eight contests. UDM played Saturday morning against Manhattan College in a game that took place after this issue of the Observer went to press.

Meanwhile, Kylie Birney's stats through 10 contests are pretty impressive, too. She has 11 goals entering Sunday's 1 p.m. game against Howard University (at Titan Field on the UDM campus, where both



Racing down the field for the University of Detroit Mercy men's lacrosse team is Mike Birney (No. 11) of Plymouth.

teams play home contests).

The men's team is part of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Association (MAAC) while the women play in the Atlantic Sun Conference (A-Sun).

Their college careers are taking root, just six or seven years after the lacrosse seed was planted.

"I got introduced to (during middle school) because of my friend, Gino (Pulice)," Mike explained. "He played soccer his whole life. He really wasn't really into it (lacrosse), but he watched a game on-line one day and got really interested in doing it."

"He bought a mini stick and he had two of them and gave me one and we started playing in his basement. Soon enough, we started liking it more and more."

In order to take the sport up seriously, they needed to get some gear

and find a team.

"We told my mom and dad there wasn't really any place around to go buy equipment around us, so they decided to start up a store (with the Pulices)," Mike continued. "Then, we started playing some summer leagues and stuff out at Total Sports in Wixom. I started playing organized in eighth grade (on the Good Counsel team)."

Following his lead

After that, he carried on with lacrosse at Catholic Central, where he also played football. The similarities of the sports resonated with him.

"I've been playing football my whole life and I really like the high-pace, contact kind of sports," Mike said. "I just like how it's always going, always flowing. Never a stop to it, you always get an opportunity to make a good play."

"You don't have to wait,

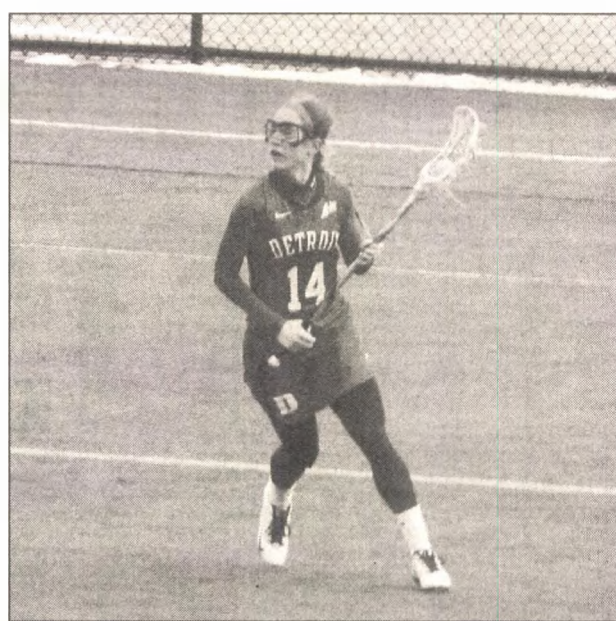
stop, reset. ... The fact the sport is so quick-paced, with hitting and high scoring, was really appealing to me."

Once Kylie saw how much her brother loved lacrosse from the get-go, she had to give it a try.

"In eighth grade, soccer was a fall sport (at Good Counsel) and I finished that up," Kylie recalled. "In the spring, I decided to switch over to lacrosse. That eighth-grade year was in a really small Plymouth rec league that introduced me to the sport."

"It really was my brother kind of getting me into it, because there's not a lot of girl leagues around my area."

Then at Ladywood, Kylie played for the Blazers' field hockey team (in the fall) and had to decide between soccer, lacrosse and track for the spring season. Her decision wasn't too hard to make. "I'd always done soc-



UDM ATHLETICS

Plymouth native Kylie Birney competes during a recent game for the University of Detroit Mercy women's lacrosse team. She played high school lacrosse at Livonia Ladywood.

cer and I kind of got burned out on that," Kylie stressed. "So I kind of switched over to lacrosse. It is just one of my favorite things because I'm really into running. ... I don't know, it was just something new to try initially and then I really got into it as high school went on."

On the rise

According to Kylie, preparation at private high schools definitely helped her and Mike to make the transition to college — both in lacrosse and academically. Both want to pursue degrees in business.

Does that mean running the family lacrosse store is in their future plans?

"Like Mike said, if they need us I'll be there," she said, chuckling.

But it's no joke how much the Birneys are working to put lacrosse on the local map.

"I think boys, they

get a bigger turnout (for lacrosse) because it seems there's a lot of boys switching over from baseball and things like that," Kylie said. "A lot of hockey players like the whole contact idea so they'll play boys lacrosse."

"With girls, it kind of conflicts with soccer and track because all three are in the spring. So I think they really just need to start the programs at a younger age like sixth grade."

That said, lacrosse is "definitely growing" in Michigan, she added. Over at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park, for example, all three high schools have boys and girls programs that are gaining traction.

It seems the Birneys have plenty of company getting hooked on their favorite sport.

tsmith@hometownlife.com (734) 469-4128

CHIEFS

Continued from page B1

Matt Schacht, Stephen Schacht, Zach Smilo and Tyler Winningham.

Richardson knows he has some top-notch returnees, however. One of those is senior sprinter Colby Morris (100, 200). Another is junior Jamal Dixon, slated for hurdles and jumps.

Other sprinters on the roster include seniors Drake Hogan, Ryan Jimenez, juniors Anthony Tillman, Akil Wade and freshman Alan Jones. In the 400 dash will be seniors Billy Nicholson, Charlie Steslick, Andrew Ste-

phens and sophomores Isaac Pennock and Mitch Morin.

Fast impression

"Probably the one who's impressed us the most is a freshman sprinter, Alan Jones," Richardson said. "He's right up there with Colby Morris, one of our senior leaders."

Dixon will be joined in the hurdles by seniors James Hildreth, Andrew Stephens and sophomore Bryan Eastman.

Set for jumps in addition to Dixon are Wade, Stephens, juniors Davon Taylor, Forrest Hall and sophomore Alec MacDonald.

"Some of our dis-

tance runners are mostly underclassmen, but they've had a lot of experience in cross country and have been with us two or three years," continued Richardson, listing juniors Evan Dunklee, Tom Walkinshaw and sophomore Billy Toth.

Others who will compete in the mile and two-mile runs will be seniors Bryant Chen, Josh Joy and Owen Ash.

Throwers include seniors Olaniyi Owagbemi, Matt Halim, Austin Lynn, sophomores Adam Armesto and Guntas Dhanda. In the pole vault will be Hildreth, Jimenez, juniors Kyle Zander and Grant Mast.

Once the weather warms and the team jells, Richardson will have a better idea of what the season might bring.

The Chiefs would like to stay among the division leaders and improve on last year's ninth-place finish at the KLAA conference meet.

Canton did enjoy a third-place performance at the regional meet.

"Franklin and Churchill will both be tough teams and Plymouth's got a good squad coming back," he noted. "So it should be an interesting South Division race."

tsmith@hometownlife.com (734) 469-4128

Wildcats could have 'field' day

By Tim Smith
Staff Writer

Despite losing a slew of great runners to graduation, Plymouth varsity

TRACK PREVIEW girls track and field coach Ricky Styes isn't discouraged about what the Wildcats can do in 2013.

He still has "a lot of great young runners that we think will make a quick and significant impact on the team."

And Styes is banking on plenty of points from field events, as Plymouth looks to follow up on last year's 4-1 record in the KLAA South Division and second-place finish at the Division 1 regional meet.

For example, Plymouth boasts three of Division 1's best pole vaulters in seniors Jane McCurry, Sarah Uhlian and Taylor Rieckhoff.

"We will be strong in the field events this year," Styes said. "This will be the strength of the team, at least early in the season."

"We have three of the top vaulters in the state and a deep stable of talented, young vaulters. ... I would put the talent that we have in the pole vault against any school in the state."

In addition to the senior pole vaulters, the Wildcats will feature sophomore Kayla Janevski and freshmen Sam Fontana and Haly Metz in that event.

Plymouth's throwers (discus, shot put) and high/long jumpers should do their part to add points to the scoreboard, Styes noted.

Juniors Tionne Johnson, Taylor Bickers and Megan Wieloch are returning throwers who consistently eclipsed the 31-foot mark in 2012. They'll be augmented by freshman Elise Wehmer.

Rieckhoff also will be

among the jumpers, along with sophomore Emily Freiburger and freshman Kat Harris.

"Both Taylor and Emily cleared five feet last year and Kat cleared it this winter during the indoor season."

Easing them in

The potential in the field events will help uber-talented freshmen sprinters Bailey Brown and Jewel Davis not feel too much pressure early in the year to make things happen.

"Both Bailey and Jewel have run times in the 400 this early in the season that may have them in the mix come our big meets at the end of the season," Styes emphasized. "Our talent in the field events will take some pressure off of these young runners as they develop."

"By the end of the season, we will be a strong team that will be able to score points both on the track and in the field."

Plymouth has first-year distance runners who also could make a quick impact. Those are freshmen Charlotte Clark and Sophia Stephan.

Plymouth has a number of other returnees ready to keep the Wildcats in contention.

Those include seniors Shannon Shaver (distance/hurdles), Natalie Puckett (hurdles), juniors Marina DeBiasi (distance), Brian-na Lax (distance), Ashley MacBrien (sprints), Katie Salanga (sprints), Holly Stark (sprints/hurdles) and sophomore Anna Lukens (sprints).

"We will be returning a strong core of hurdlers," Styes added. "Two (Puckett, Stark) of which will be in the mix come conferences and regionals at the end of the year."

tsmith@hometownlife.com | (734) 469-4128

Ex-Glenn track coach starts new chapter

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

After resigning last fall following 26 years of coaching boys track and field and cross country teams at Westland John Glenn High, Jess Shough admitted he suffered through coaching withdrawal.

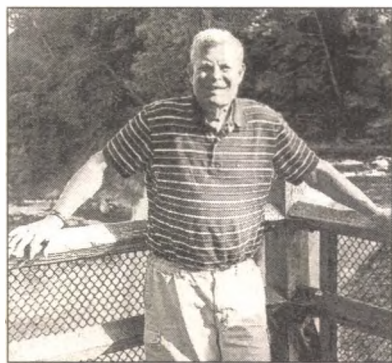
The 68-year-old Shough, who spent 22 seasons as head coach and another four as an assistant with the Rockets, thought he'd stay connected to the sport he loves in a different way.

"That was my intent ... was to do track officiating," Shough said. "I didn't get started because I wasn't getting any contacts. I got registered and put contacts out, but didn't get anything because around here pretty much all the officiating assignments are locked up at this time of year already."

So Shough went to Plan B and started Monday as an assistant coach at KLAA South Division rival Canton.

"I stayed around the house not doing anything ... then I was just feeling, 'I want to coach,'" Shough said. "I went back and got a contact with (athletic director) Sue Heinzman and she said they were looking for an assistant. I had been a great friend for many years with (head coach) Bob Richardson and coached against him, so I thought it would be a natural fit and it happened."

Shough retired from teaching in 2010 from the Wayne-Westland Community Schools following 44 years (including 20 with the Cherry Hill Schools), but stayed on coaching at



Jess Shough didn't stay retired very long after coaching boys track 26 seasons at John Glenn. He is now an assistant at Canton.

Glenn where he compiled a 104-84 dual-meet record.

And after Shough ended his brief hiatus, he became reacquainted with track.

"It's been an adjustment," Shough said. "Everybody looks at me and says, 'What's he doing over here?' It's been an adjustment, but up to this point it's been very natural. The coaching staff has really been receptive and the kids have been really receptive."

Shough started coaching at Glenn in 1986 and served as an assistant under Richard Gordon before taking the head coaching reins in 1991.

In 1995, he guided the Rockets to Western Lakes Activities Association and WLAA Lakes Division titles. But his best season came in 1997 when Glenn captured the WLAA, division and regional crowns.

When Glenn moved into the Kensington Lakes Activities Association in 2009, Shough's top finish with the Rockets was fourth in the Kensington Conference meet in 2010.

In the past few years wins had become harder to come by for the Rockets in the KLAA.

"The biggest thing we've had the last three years is lack of depth," said Shough, who was replaced by Jason Dixon. "We've had some great athletes and state qualifiers. I've coached four of the Midwest Meet of Champions selections. We've had good success in terms of individuals, but that lack of depth was making a difference in terms of being competitive in the (KLAA South) division."

Shough graduated from Adrian High School and played fourth years of both basketball and baseball at Eastern Michigan University where he earned a B.S. degree in physical education.

His first coaching job was as an assistant at Garden City East under Clayton Kelly.

Shough then took the head girls track position at Cherry Hill.

"I got hooked on the fact that track was the sport that I really could see myself coaching it," said Shough, who also holds a master's degree in educational administration from EMU. "It was something that I was actually looking for in coaching. I got hooked and I've been coaching it ever since."

Shough has begun a new phase in his life and he's glad he accepted the Canton position.

All-Area girls cagers rise to the occasion

FIRST TEAM

Paige Aresco, Jr., F, Canton: There was little the junior forward didn't do in 2012-13 for the Chiefs, coming up with big offensive performance after big performance all season.

Aresco averaged 16 points per game, shooting 42 percent from the floor and 75 percent from the free-throw line.

On a team that stresses team defense, Aresco reached 10 points or more in 19 of 23 contests, often despite being double teamed.

She also played excellent defense and grabbed five rebounds per contest, helping carry the Chiefs to a 16-7 record and a Class A district crown.

"Paige was outstanding this year," coach Brian Samulski said. "She is a great competitor and gives it everything she has every time she steps out on the floor. She really proved throughout the year that she can score."

Her season netted her all-conference honors, along with numerous all-state accolades.

Andie Anastos, Sr., G, Ladywood: The three-time All-Observer first-team selection, headed to Boston College on a hockey scholarship, averaged 19.5 points, 9.4 rebounds, 5.8 assists and 2.4 steals per game for the state Class B quarterfinalists.

"Andie is one of those 'once in a lifetime' type athletes that only few people are lucky enough to have come through their programs," Ladywood coach Anthony Coratti said of his senior point-guard. "Not many people can boast of leading her high school to its first regional title in over 20 years and winning a hockey state championship, while being named tournament MVP — all within the same week."

The first-team Class B all-stater and three-time all-Catholic League selection also carries a 3.8 GPA.

"Trying to contain her was the focal point of every team we played," Coratti said. "Yet, she would always find a way to make a play because of her ability to see the floor, share the ball, along with her overall tough, scrappy nature, which allowed her to play way bigger than her (5-9) height putting up a double-double almost every night."

Raven Bankston, Sr., G, John Glenn: The 5-7 senior guard, a transfer from Detroit Mumford, paced the Class A state semifinalists with 18 points, six rebounds and eight steals per game.

"Raven can take the ball to the basket," Glenn coach Eric Kovatch said. "She's very, very strong with the ball."

The first-team Class A all-stater is headed to Delaware State.

"We wouldn't be here if hadn't been for the Bankston twins," Kovatch said following a 55-46 state semifinal setback to eventual champ Grand Haven at Michigan State's Breslin Center. "They'll be Rockets forever."

ShaKeya Graves, Sr., G, John Glenn: The 5-8 senior guard, headed to DePaul University, averaged 13 points, six rebounds and six assists per game for the 24-2 Rockets, who captured their first-ever regional en route to the Class A Final Four.

Graves' 18 second-half points sparked a 55-50 quarterfinal win over Detroit King.

She also hit a last-second game-winning three-pointer for the KLAA South, Kensington and KLAA Association champions in a December win over Novi.

"She's an incredible player," Kovatch said. "There's nobody I'd rather have the ball than in her hands."

Marissa Cotton, Sr., G, Harrison: Cotton was a three-year starter at point guard and led the Hawks to their best season in school history as a senior. In addition to directing the offense, she averaged 12.5 points, 3.0 assists, 3.5 steals and 4.0 rebounds.

Cotton set a single-season record with 54 three-point



Paige Aresco
Canton



Andie Anastos
Ladywood



Raven Bankston
John Glenn



ShaKeya Graves
John Glenn



Marissa Cotton
Harrison



Candice Leatherwood
Mercy



Aaron Howell
Farmington



Ayanna Buckley
Clarenceville



Kaitlyn Kendall
N. Farmington



Emily Gerulis
Plymouth
Christian



Raine Bankston
John Glenn



Amber Stephens
Harrison



Taylor Jones
Mercy



Shelby Walsh
Ladywood

field goals. She is second in career threes made and percentage, and she is second in career steals.

"Marissa led this team in so many more ways than just on the floor," coach Tim Micklash said. "She has an extremely high basketball IQ, and she has meant so much to our program, starting every game since her sophomore year."

"As the only senior on our team, she led by example and showed the younger players the right way to do things. Marissa will certainly be missed but will continue her basketball career in college."

Candice Leatherwood, Jr., G, Mercy: A three-time, all-area player, the junior point guard led the Marlins to a 19-6 season and a runner-up finish in a Class A regional, losing in double overtime to No. 1-ranked Detroit King.

Leatherwood not only ran the offense; she was a key part of it with a 12-point average. She also produced four assists, three steals and two rebounds per game. On a team with no seniors, she was a captain and two-time, all-Catholic player.

"Defensively, Candice is very smart, reads the passing lanes well and is an excellent on-ball defender," coach Gary Morris said. "Offensively, she plays the point with good vision and smarts, and she has improved her shooting — both from the perimeter and in the paint. For the second straight year, Candice led the team in free throw attempts and shot an excellent 72 percent."

Aaron Howell, Sr., G, Farmington: Howell was a four-year varsity player and an all-round player, too. Though she was a guard, she also is a terrific rebounder and had many double-doubles during her career. Howell averaged an impressive 19.3 points per game, as well as 7.8 rebounds, 3.7 steals and two assists.

She set school records for single-season steals (75), rebounds (196) and points (366), and she also has single-game records for steals (10) and points (34). She was named to the coaches association's all-state first team.

Howell, who is a two-time all-stater in track and field, is a New Balance national champion in the heptathlete and has a scholarship to Michigan in that sport.

"Aaron is a special athlete," coach Dave Browne said. "She's the type of kid who comes through your program once in a lifetime. From her personality, to her work ethic, to her athleticism, I can honestly say, while we have had and will have many great basketball players at Farmington High School, we will never have another Aaron Howell."

SECOND TEAM

Ayanna Buckley, Jr., C, Clarenceville: The 6-1 junior center paced the Trojans by averaging a double-double with 19.8 and 11.3 rebounds per game.

"Ayanna is a dominant player," Clarenceville coach Brady Gustafson said. "She played inside and out, and is a defensive presence in the post and at the top of our trap."

"She excels at all aspects of the game. She's a hard worker and a quick learner. I believe she's as talented as any player I've seen this

year."

Buckley was also a first-team all-Observer selection in volleyball.

Kaitlyn Kendall, Sr., F, N. Farmington: Kendall was a four-year varsity letter winner who helped the Raiders win three FPS city championships and one Class A district title. Considered a guard, the 5-foot-8 senior is a wing-type player who can handle the ball, post-up and rebound, too.

She averaged 10 points, 5.5 rebounds, 1.5 assists and 1.2 steals for the third-place team in the rugged OAA Red Division. Her career high was 21 points. Kendall is also an outstanding center fielder in softball and will play both sports at Alma College.

"She's been really a rock for us," coach Tim Carruthers said. "We asked her to play different positions last year — down low and the back of our press, because that was where we needed her. We moved her around a lot this year. She was a really good leader for our younger kids. She is so respected by her teammates and the coaching staff."

"Kaitlyn is truly a throw-back in terms of being a three-sport athlete (volleyball, too). It's fun coaching someone like Kaitlyn. She brings those experiences from other sports to basketball, and I think it has made her a better player."

Emily Gerulis, Jr., F/G, Ply. Christian: It was a great season for Plymouth Christian, finishing 18-7 and winning the Class D districts and regionals before bowing out in the quarterfinals.

And Gerulis was instrumental to the Eagles' big-time success. She was voted PCA's MVP, as the third-year varsity starter got the job done — and then some — wherever she was stationed on the floor.

A gritty competitor and defender, she averaged nine points, eight rebounds, five assists, five steals and two blocks per contest.

"At 5-8 she can play any position on the court that is needed," coach Carol Gerulis said. "One of the top defenders on the team, Emily is a competitor from start to finish."

Raine Bankston, Sr., G, John Glenn: The 5-7 senior guard finished the season averaging 12 points and six steals per game.

The Detroit Mumford transfer also earned all-KLAA honors for the Rockets, who were crowned KLAA South, Kensington, KLAA Association, district and regional champions.

"Raine's ball-handling is very good, it's probably the best aspect of her game," Kovatch said. "She's also got a very nice shot."

Raine will also follow her twin sister Raven to NCAA Division I school Delaware State this fall.

Amber Stephens, Fresh., G, Harrison: The freshman guard led the Hawks in scoring with 14 points per game and steals (4.0). She also averaged three rebounds and 2.5 assists. The addition of her and fellow frosh Kristen Nelson to the team made Harrison instantly better.

Stephens already is being recruited by Division I schools, according to her coach. She set a single-season

2013 ALL-OBSERVER GIRLS BASKETBALL FIRST TEAM

F-Paige Aresco, Canton, Jr.
G-Andie Anastos, Ladywood, Sr.
G-Raven Bankston, John Glenn, Sr.
G-ShaKeya Graves, John Glenn, Sr.
G-Marissa Cotton, Harrison, Sr.
G-Candice Leatherwood, Mercy, Jr.
G-Aaron Howell, Farmington, Sr.

SECOND TEAM

C-Ayanna Buckley, Clarenceville, Jr.
F-Kaitlyn Kendall, N. Farm., Sr.
F/G-Emily Gerulis, Ply. Christian, Jr.
G-Raine Bankston, John Glenn, Sr.
G-Amber Stephens, Harrison, Fr.
G-Taylor Jones, Mercy, Soph.
G-Shelby Walsh, Ladywood, Sr.

THIRD TEAM

C-Kyla Roland, Harrison, Soph.
F-Breanne Beaver, Salem, Sr.
F-Ariele Paris, Thurston, Sr.
G-Rachel Winters, Canton, Jr.
G-Kaira Barnes, John Glenn, Jr.
G-Rachel Wilkinson, Stevenson, Jr.
G-Bri'janee Durrough, N. Farm., Jr.

FOURTH TEAM

C-Taylor Hunley, Canton, Jr.
F-Charlesann Roy, Stevenson, Jr.
F-Jada Woody, Plymouth, Jr.
G-Samantha Bauer, Mercy, Jr.
G-Karen Windle, Ply. Christian, Sr.
G-Abby Joseph, Garden City, Soph.
G-Katelynn Devers, Franklin, Sr.

COACH OF THE YEAR

Tim Micklash, Farmington Harrison

HONORABLE MENTION

Canton: Alanna Brown, Natalie Winters, Shannon Perry; **Plymouth:** Kylie Robb, Shelby Cheston, Paige Smolinski; **Salem:** Kayla Kavulich, Janyra Wilson, Kelly Whalen; **Plymouth Christian:** Jennifer Malcolm, Jenna Abraham, Rachael Fuller; **Farmington:** Maria Peurach, Taylor Suurmeyer, Amani Echols; **Harrison:** Kristen Nelson, Katie Conrad, Asia Campbell; **Mercy:** Allie Gorceya, Tyler Parlor, Sierra LaGrande; **North Farmington:** Megan Carter, Jessie Carruthers; **Churchill:** Sydney Anderson, Hannah Pummill; **Franklin:** Sarah Cramton; **Stevenson:** Mara Murray, Uzoma Nwankwo; **Ladywood:** Sara Even; **Clarenceville:** Ashley Murphy; **Lutheran Westland:** Aldreanna Fikes; **Huron Valley Lutheran:** Julie St. John; **John Glenn:** Kierra Jordan; **Wayne:** Ashley Bland; **Garden City:** Julene Pummill; **Redford Union:** Ashley Sandelin, **Jamaya Dixon:** Thurston: Daniell May, Sommer Lemle.

record for field goals made, shooting 52 percent from the field. She is second in points and third in steals for a single season.

"Amber had one of the most impressive seasons any freshman in the area has had in years," coach Micklash said. "Her ability to create steals and finish around the basket is unlike any player I have ever coached."

"Amber is also one of the hardest working and most coachable players I have coached. That combination is going to take her a long ways as she continues in her basketball career. She has an extremely bright future."

Taylor Jones, Soph., G, Mercy: The sophomore guard got better throughout the season and emerged as one of Mercy's top scorers and players. Jones averaged 11 points and scored a career-high 31 in a regional victory over Southfield-Lathrup. She also had 13 against Detroit King in the regional final. Jones averaged two assists, two steals and three rebounds, too. She shot 51 percent from the floor.

"As a first-year varsity player, Taylor worked her way into the starting lineup after our ninth game," coach Morris said. "She improved tremendously as the season

went on, earning CHSL all-league honors.

"Taylor is a very good on-ball defender and forces turnovers on our press. She has the ability to get to the basket and create scoring opportunities for herself and her teammates."

Shelby Walsh, Sr., G, Ladywood: The 5-7 senior guard was a stabilizing influence for the 17-8 Blazers

with her three-point shooting prowess.

Walsh averaged 12.3 points, 3.1 rebounds and 2.1 assists per game for the Class B district and regional champions.

The captain and all-Catholic League pick also carries a 4.0 GPA.

"Because of key injuries, Shelby was forced into taking more of a scoring role than she had in prior years," Coratti said. "She has an innate ability to put the ball in the basket no matter where she was on the floor scoring over 20 points in several games, while also being a rock of consistency on the defensive end. Shelby exudes toughness in everything she does."

COACH OF THE YEAR

Tim Micklash, Harrison: Micklash guided the Hawks to 23-2 record and their best season in school history. That included winning the OAA White Division, the FPS city title and the first district championship by a Harrison team (girls or boys).

The Hawks lost to Dexter on a three-point shot at the buzzer

in a Class A regional final. Otherwise, Harrison might have been a state semifinalist, as was Dexter.

"It was certainly one of those years I'm always going to remember,"

Micklash said. "You never know if you're going to have a year like that again."

"I couldn't have a better group of girls to work with. The wins are what made it a lot of fun, but I had just an outstanding group every day in practice and the games. The girls worked extremely hard, and the chemistry was the best of any team I've coached. That was a big part of why we had the success we had."

Furthermore, the Hawks did what they did with one of the youngest teams in the state. Veteran point guard Marissa Cotton was the only senior. Harrison also started two sophomores and two freshmen.

"After we got through the summer, I thought we had a chance to be pretty good — much more than most people thought we were going to be," Micklash said. "But I didn't anticipate finishing the season 23-2, winning the city title, which we haven't done in a lot of years, and being seconds away from winning a regional title."

"It was just one of those special years, and things feel into place. I give credit to the girls for how hard they worked and really believed in what we were doing."

Micklash, who has a 56-35 record in four seasons as the girls varsity coach, was a boys freshman and varsity assistant coach at Farmington and North Farmington, previously.

A native of Cass City in the Thumb Area and a graduate of Central Michigan, Micklash teaches health and physical education at Farmington High School.

He added the future looks bright for the Hawks, but they will certainly miss Cotton's leadership and talent.

"She was a rock for this program the last four years and helped put Harrison basketball back on the map," he said.



Tim Micklash
Harrison coach

Dressing for prom



Callie Gross of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church sorts through dresses that will be sold at the 2nd Life Prom Dress Sale on April 13.



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Teens will find bargains at two local sales

By Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

Callie Gross and Lisa Benages hope to make prom more affordable for hundreds of girls this year.

Gross, a member of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, has organized the "2nd Life Prom Dress Sale," from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13, at the church, located on Five Mile, just west of Inkster Road, in Livonia. Doors will open at 8 a.m.

She has approximately 600 dresses, all priced at \$20 each, along with shoes, purses and jewelry that cost \$5 or less.



No prom outfit is complete without jewelry, and the church in Livonia will offer plenty for sale Saturday, April 13.

"The majority are from bridal salons ... brand new dresses, samples, with tags still on

them," Gross said. Benages, a Plymouth High School teacher, started a prom dress sale two years ago at her school. This year's event is set for 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, April 13, at the school, at the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park, 8400 Beck, in Canton.

She has a few hundred dresses, all priced at or below \$10 each, as well as accessories.

"I advertise for dona-

tions — I get a lot of those — and I send letters to bridal salons," Benages said. "I had one (store) give arm loads of sample dresses."

Both say they decided to offer low-cost dresses because they recognized the need in their communities.

Borrowing an idea

Gross got the idea for a "2nd Life" sale from her former church,

Cranberry Community United Presbyterian Church, north of Pittsburgh, Pa. Although she now lives in Michigan, her job is located in Pennsylvania. She travels to Pittsburgh for business each month.

"I'm very close to the people from my church there and they started (a sale) five years ago. When I told them I wanted to do it here, because Detroit right now is rough, they said great

idea and they sent me all the information. It was a good start."

On a recent work trip, Gross collected 200 dresses donated by her former church. She's storing all 600 garments in the youth room at St. Paul's. They hang on hangers donated by Target, on racks lent by J.C. Penney. The dresses, both long and short, range from size 2-22.

Please see DRESSING, B6

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Livonia teen wins store's 'Cinderella' prom contest

By Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

Erin Babcock found "low" prices in the \$400-\$450 range when she shopped for a prom dress at a shopping mall recently.

"I thought I was going to die. I would never be able to afford that," said the Livonia Churchill High School senior.

Luckily, she won't have to. Erin, 17, won a prom dress, accessories, hair styling, make-up session, corsage, boutonniere, and the services of a limousine through Style Trader's first annual "Finding Cinderella" competition. The upscale resale shop in Livonia sponsored the contest as a way of giving back to the community. Jennifer Fields, store manager, said she received about a dozen nominations.

"We put a committee together and narrowed it to three finalists," she said, adding that nominations included brief essays about each teen. "We were looking at hardship and at great things they did in the community. Once we narrowed it down, all of the girls were deserving."

The store drew the top winner at random

from the three finalists. Erin won the prom package and two other girls received \$50 Style Trader gift cards.

Erin said her mother, Cindy, nominated her for the honor.

"She described how I am a hard worker. It meant a lot to me," Erin said. "That was so sweet."

Erin has been involved in competitive dance since age 4. She also works part time and is on student council at Churchill. She plans to attend Schoolcraft College in the fall.

"I'm not sure what I'll study, probably something to do with special education because my sister is a special needs student and I have lots of experience. I love it."

Fields said Style Trader plans to make "Finding Cinderella" an annual event.

Erin will wear a Jessica McClintock gown for the Churchill prom on May 23.

"They are so nice at Style Trader. I was so thankful to get a free prom dress. When I found out (everything) I won I was shocked. They are so generous. I feel blessed."

To learn more about Style Trader, visit www.StyleTrader.biz.



Erin Babcock, a Churchill High School senior, models a prom dress while showing a certificate of recognition from Style Trader in Livonia.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Just a few dollars will buy a new pair of heels at the gently-used prom dress sale in Livonia.

DRESSING

Continued from page B5

All of the merchandise will move to a large multi-purpose room for the sale, where customers will get a chance to try on clothing before buying.

Bridal dresses

Gross said the event is open to anyone looking for dressy and formal attire. In addition to prom dresses, donations have included a wedding dress and mother of the bride dresses.

"One of our members is looking here because she has a Halloween wedding to go to," Gross said. "A lot of people are saying, where were you when we were in high school. This would have been awesome, because of the cost."

Benages said the Plymouth sale draws teens from throughout the metro area. The event, which includes a table of free dresses, is

open to teens and women in need of inexpensive formal attire.

"We really get every style imaginable," Benages said. "I've had a couple of moms buy a dress for (an event) they had going on. We've had people waiting at the door for the sale. It's always been well-attended."

Fitting rooms are set up in restrooms and a classroom.

Benages, who teaches family and consumer science, uses proceeds from the sale to buy adaptive equipment for special education cooking classes.

Gross said planning for the St. Paul sale was underway when she found out about Plymouth High School's event set for the same day.

Both events will keep each other's flyers on hand.

"I said, I'll advertise yours, you advertise mine," Gross said. "It's all about the girls. It doesn't matter where they buy a dress."

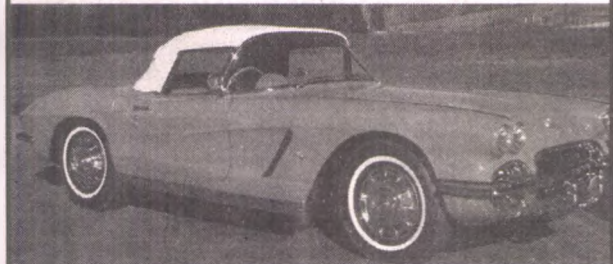
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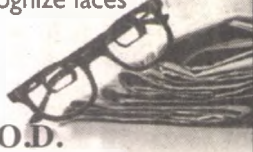
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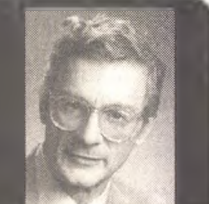


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TRIGGER POINTS

Trigger point is the name given to sites on the surface of the body, which when pressed lightly or moderately, elicit a response of sharp pain at the site of the applied pressure.

The best known trigger points are those found in fibromyalgia. In the past, diagnosis of fibromyalgia depended on a doctor finding 12-18 trigger points distributed over the body above and below the waist and present in a symmetrical pattern. Interestingly, the diagnosis of fibromyalgia today does not require the presence of even a single trigger point.

However, trigger points and therapy for them remain a part of daily medicine. Popular sites include the low back, pelvis and lateral or medial knee areas.

A problem for physicians is that the cause of trigger point pain remains unclear. Investigations have not uncovered an underlying condition such as diabetes or hypothyroidism, or an unrecognized abnormality in bone and calcium metabolism.

Injecting the trigger point with local anesthetic and methylprednisolone usually is effective therapy. Resolution of pain lasts for weeks to months, and in some instances the trigger point ends forever. However, in many cases the same pain returns indicating that the treatment suppressed the cause but did not remove it. At times, the pain may end spontaneously, leaving as mysteriously as it came on.

Physicians can assure a patient that as annoying as the trigger point is, it is not a sign of cancer or any underlying condition that can cause permanent impairment.

Back on her feet



PHOTOS BY JULIE YOLLES

Brenda and David Steuer of Orchard Lake, (left) 2013 JVS Women-to-Work Honoree Jeannie Steuer of Farmington Hills and Brian Steuer of Menlo Park, Calif., enjoy the fifth annual Trade Secrets fundraiser at the Townsend Hotel. Jeannie Steuer was honored at the event. Following a divorce and job layoff, she enrolled in the Women-to-Work program and was provided with the support to help write her resume, prepare for job interviews and re-enter the job force. Today, she works at Jewish Vocational Services, helping seniors remain active and involved with the community.

Birmingham resident Judy Adelman (left) and Farmington Hills resident Barbara Peltz, JVS senior services coordinator, helped raise more than \$120,000 for the JVS Women-to-Work benefit. Crain's Detroit Business Publisher and Vice President of Crain Communications, Mary Kramer, was this year's honorary chair and keynote speaker.



Series teaches finance, energy, home tips

Livonia Cares, a group of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches, begins a five-week series of educational programs, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 9, at Newburg United Methodist Church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia.

"We believe that these sessions will benefit our whole community," said the Rev. Paul Perez, deacon at Newburg United Methodist Church and one of three Livonia Cares coordinators, "Our hope is to empower participants with crucial information and practical resources to address

real-life issues that affect many in our community."

All classes start at 7 p.m. In the session on April 9, participants will learn how to navigate the social service system and learn the ins and outs of popular social service programs. Other classes are:

April 16 — Learn how to establish a successful financial plan to accomplish your goals. Topics discussed will include repairing your credit, loans, developing a financial plan for your family, learning to read your credit report, and saving

for the future.

April 23 — Learn more about the home buying process, including budgeting, credit and qualifying for a mortgage.

May 7 — Get practical information on saving energy, understanding your utility bill and reducing energy costs, along with simple tips to make a home more energy efficient and lower utility bills.

May 14 — Learn more about the foreclosure process, your options and rights as a homeowner. In addition, short sales, sheriff sales, modifica-

tions and redemption periods will be explained.

Reserve a place at each session by calling Newburg's Church Office at (734) 422-0149.

For more information about Livonia Cares, call the Rev. Scott Sessler, pastor at Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, at (248) 422-8822, the Rev. Paul Perez, Deacon at Newburg United Methodist Church at (734) 422-0149, or the Rev. Michelle Warner, Associate Pastor at Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at (734) 464-0211.

REUNIONS

Send information to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com.

BELLEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS OF 1963
50th reunion will be held Sept. 28. Contact Kathy (Toth) Hay at khay@reinhardrealtors.com or Dianna (Basnaw) McDaniel at djmcdaniel45@comcast.net.

DETROIT BURT ELEMENTARY

Classes of 1960-79
A reunion is planned for April 20 at Big Tommy's Parthenon, 40380 Grand River Ave., Novi. A limited number of tickets are available. They will not be sold at the reunion. Presale tickets are \$25; 5-7 p.m. March 15 at Panera at Six Mile and Newburgh in Livonia. Pattypure@yahoo.com or Burtreunion@yahoo.com for more information.

DETROIT GESU CATHOLIC SCHOOL

CLASS OF 1956
A reunion is planned for Aug. 17. Call Jack Sayed at (810) 231-9230.

DETROIT MUMFORD

CLASS OF 1963
A 50-year reunion is set for 6:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m., Saturday, Oct. 5, at Somerset inn, 575 W. Big Beaver, Troy. Tickets are \$85. For more information visit www.mumford63.com.

LIVONIA BENTLEY

CLASS OF 1973
A reunion is set for 6 p.m.-midnight, Sept. 13, at Livonia Marriott, located at Six Mile and Newburgh. Tickets are \$60 for alumni and \$50 for teachers. The event is open to other classes, as well. Contact Marcia Elliott at (269) 327-0657 or e-mail to mickey55@chartermi.net for more information including purchasing tickets.

PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS OF 1963

A 50th class reunion is set for Saturday, Aug. 10 with dinner at Fox Hills Country Club. Other reunion activities will include a mixer on Friday, Aug. 9 at Bennigan's, a tour of the "old school" followed by lunch at a popular "uptown" bar on Saturday, and a picnic on Sunday, Aug. 11 at Plymouth Township Park. For more information call Nancy Richard Earle at (734) 634-8974 or e-mail to nancyearle@comcast.net.

CLASS OF 1968

A 45-year class reunion is planned for Saturday, Sept. 7. For information contact Susan Keith Johnson at sgjohnson4@comcast.net.

SOUTH LYON

CLASS OF 1963

A 50th class reunion is planned for July 20. For more information, contact Barbara Cook at (248) 349-5982.

WAYNE HIGH SCHOOLS

ALL REUNION

The Alumni Association's 29th Annual All Reunion Banquet is 5-10 p.m., with dinner at 6 p.m., Friday, May 17, at Wayne Tree Manor, 35100 Van Born, Wayne. For more info contact Sharon Scott at (734) 722-4651 or sscott@wcccd.edu. The class of 1963 will be honored at the event.

WAYNE MEMORIAL

CLASS OF 1973

Reunion May 18 at the VFW, 6440 N.Hix, Westland. For tickets contact Pat Cantrell at user100295@aol.com or call (734) 326-1239. Tickets are \$30, with a cash bar.

WESTLAND JOHN GLENN HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS OF 1983

6 p.m.-midnight, Saturday, Oct. 26, at Burton Manor Banquet and Conference Center, Livonia. For more information, e-mail to Linda Harbison at jghs.1983@gmail.com.

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NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
ON PROPOSED 2013-14 BUDGET
In compliance with "Act No. 43," State of Michigan Public Act of 1963, and "Act No. 2," State of Michigan Public Acts of 1968 ("Section 16" of the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act). Schoolcraft College publishes this notification of a public hearing on the proposed 2013-14 College budget. This hearing is to take place at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 24, 2013, at the Grote Administration Center, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, Michigan. A copy of the proposed budget is available for public inspection at the above address during normal business hours.
The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.
Glenn Cerny
Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Publish: April 4 and 7, 2013
AT8796029 2x4

Tree, shrub sale benefits education programs

ReLeaf Michigan, a nonprofit tree education, and planting organization, will accept online orders for trees and shrubs until Monday, April 12. The 23rd annual sale is a fundraiser for the organization's tree planting and educational programs.

Trees are 4 to 6 feet, bare-root, and single or multi-stemmed depending on the species. They cost \$34 each — three or more \$32 each — and include bloodgood planetree,

autumn blaze maple, northern red oak, sugar maple, river birch, red spire pear, Valley Forge American elm, Japanese tree lilac, red bud, red flowering crabapple, thundercloud plum, honeycrisp apple, yellowwood, tulip tree, and green-spire linden.

Specialty trees include Haku-ra Nishiki, royal frost birch, snow mountain cherry and Tina crabapple. They're 4 to 6 feet and have a bare root. They cost \$50 each.

Shrubs are 1 to 2 feet, with a bare root. They cost \$18 each; three or more are \$15 each. They include American hazelnut, butterfly bush "Pink Delight" and "Black Knight," sugar plum fairy lilac, summer wine ninebark, "Easy Elegance" rose, pee gee hydrangea, dwarf red stemmed dogwood, vernal witch hazel, alfredo compact cranberry bush, and blue muffin arrowwood viburnum.

Evergreens are delivered in

one-gallon containers and are 2 feet. They cost \$20 each; three or more are \$18 each. They include Black Hills spruce, Canadian hemlock, Serbian spruce, eastern white pine, and fraser fir.

Two download an order form, visit www.releafmichigan.org or call (800) 642-7353 or e-mail to info@releafmichigan.org. Check, money orders, or credit cards are accepted.

Pick up trees from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, April 27, in

Handy Park, in Redford Township, Springfield Oaks Park in Davisburg, Goldner-Walsh Nursery, Inc., in Pontiac, and Fraleigh's Landscape Nursery in Dexter. Bring a large plastic bag to protect roots during transport.

For more information about ReLeaf Michigan or to request information on organizing a tree planting in your neighborhood, contact ReLeaf Michigan at (800) 642-7353 or info@releafmichigan.org.

GARDEN & NATURE CALENDAR

Send garden and nature information and photos to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com.

Miller Woods Tours

See native spring wildflowers blooming at Miller Woods in Plymouth Township during free, guided tours from 2-4 p.m., leaving every half hour, Sunday, April 14, 21 and 28. These dates are weather dependent because the flowers don't always bloom when expected. Check the Miller Woods website, www.millerwoods.com, starting in April for last-minute changes to the dates when flowers are in bloom.

Entrance to the nature preserve is on Powell Road, just east of Ridge Road, between N. Territorial and Ann Arbor Roads. No dogs are allowed in the nature preserve.

English Gardens

• Annual garden party weekend includes "Top 10 Garden Tips" by Nancy Szerlag at 3:30 p.m. April 7 in Dearborn Heights; "The Best, Easiest Perennials" by Janet Macunovich, on April 7 at 12:30 p.m. in Dearborn Heights and 3:30 p.m. in West Bloomfield; "New Vegetable Plants from Burpee Home Gardens," by Mason Day, at 12:30 p.m. April 7 in Royal Oak. The presentations all are free of charge.

• First-time gardeners can get started in the right direction with a free presentation 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 10 and 10 a.m. Saturday, April 13.

• Learn to garden in containers and raised beds, 10 a.m. Saturday, April 20 at a free in-store presentation.

Area stores are at 155 N. Maple, Ann Arbor, (734) 332-7900; 22650 Ford Road in Dearborn Heights, (313) 278-4433; 4901 Coolidge Highway, Royal Oak, (248) 280-9500; and 6370 Orchard Lake Road, in West Bloomfield; (248) 851-7506.



Guide to Employment

Check out these exciting career opportunities!

For even more opportunities see our "award winning" classified section!

To place your ad here contact us at careers@hometownlife.com or call 1-800-579-7355

<p>Help Wanted - General</p> <p>ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Saga Communications, a publicly traded broadcast company headquartered in Grosse Pointe, is looking for a dependable professional who can handle eight incoming phone lines, juggle multiple priorities, and likes working in a fast-paced small office environment with a great group of people. Candidate should be adept at Microsoft Word and Excel. HR experience and knowledge of COBRA is a plus. Mail or fax (313.881.2085) resume to: Marcia Lobato, Saga Communications, Inc. 73 Kercheval Avenue, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236 EOE</p>	<p>Help Wanted - General</p> <p>DELIVERY TECH: CareLinc Home Medical Equip. 45+ hrs. a wk 401K, benefits. Must be 21 yrs. old. Must be able to obtain a CDL-C with HAZMAT endorsement license. Inquire btwn 8-5, Mon-Fri 734-525-4399</p> <p>DIRECT CARE: Make a difference! Support people with disabilities living their life the way they want to! Assist with personal care, meals, taking care of their homes, getting places etc. Many locations & shifts! Must be at least 18 yrs old, have valid MI Driver's License & are CLS, Inc. trained, call our Job Line 734-728-4201, OH</p> <p>DIRECT CARE STAFF Evenings 5-10pm, Mon & Wed, \$10/hr. 734-637-9143, 248-471-9168</p> <p>DIRECT CARE STAFF Work with developmentally disabled adults. Westland. (734) 722-4580 x9</p>	<p>Help Wanted - General</p> <p>Schoolcraft College</p> <p>Fantastic new opportunities now available!</p> <p>FULL-TIME FACULTY POSITIONS:</p> <p>Instructor-ADN (Med-Surg Doctorate)</p> <p>Instructor-ADN (Med-Surg MSN)</p> <p>Instructor-ADN (Pediatrics MSN)</p> <p>Instructor-Health Information Technology</p> <p>Visit http://jobs.schoolcraft.edu to apply to these positions and many others</p> <p>Deadlines are approaching so apply now!</p>	<p>Help Wanted - General</p> <p>Press Operator/ Die Setter All around Press Operator/Die Setter wanted. Press tonnage range from 38 tons to 300 tons. Good potential for advancement. If you are the right person. Karl: 248-380-6640</p> <p>NOW HIRING Seasonal Parks & Recreation Jobs City of Farmington Hills See website: www.fhgov.com</p> <p>PAINTERS Full & Part-Time. Experienced. Call: (734) 679-7229</p> <p>PAINTERS Needed with experience. Pay based on experience & skill. Call: 734-467-4870</p>	<p>Help Wanted - General</p> <p>Help Wanted - Office Clerical</p> <p>SECRETARY, PT For Farmington Hills law firm. Prepare letters/legal documents & coordinate office operations. General office exp. MS Word & attention to detail required. Resume: dpheny@phenylaw.com</p> <p>Help Wanted - Dental</p> <p>DENTAL RECEPTIONIST Full-Time/Part-Time incl Sat's. Must have dental/computer knowledge. Farmington Hills. Ask for Karen: 248-851-1034</p> <p>Help Wanted - Medical</p> <p>DIRECT CARE WORKERS Full-Time w/benefits. All shifts available. Wayne & Oakland County. Requires DCW Training: CLS, MRC, Wayne Center Valid MI DL (No Susp Hist) ARC or AHA CPR - FA Cert.</p> <p>ENHANCE, INC. 248-919-4287 EMAIL RESUME TO: JOBS@ENHANCE-INC.COM</p> <p>Medical Assistant Over 30 hrs/week. Benefits. Troy Dermatology office. tderm@comcast.net</p> <p>MEDICAL BILLER W. Bloomfield office. Full-Time Position. Exc. Salary & Benefits. Experience a must. Cover Letter, Resume & References MUST be included. FAX: 248-932-0182</p>	<p>Help Wanted - Sales</p> <p>GARDNER WHITE IS GROWING! Gardner-White Furniture is looking for Career-Minded People to join our growing SALES TEAM. We have immediate openings in our 10 Metro Detroit Locations. Our average Sales Associates earn \$52,000, with Top Salaries over \$110,000! Preferred Qualifications include 2 yrs. of proven retail experience, the ability to work nights/weekends/holidays, and a passion for excellence! Gardner-White offers unlimited income potential, excellent medical, dental and optical benefits. 401(k) with company match, merchandise discounts, paid training, and opportunity for professional growth.</p> <p>New Training Classes are starting soon!</p> <p>Please email resume to us immediately: resumes@gardner-white.com or apply online at www.gardner-white.com/about_us/careers.php</p> <p>GARDNER-WHITE</p>	<p>Help Wanted - Sales</p> <p>SALES ASSOCIATES NEEDED Growing co has an opportunity for motivated and personable sales professionals, possessing strong self management skills to join our sales team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent Commission • Advancement Opportunities • Immediate Openings • Avg \$525-\$950 weekly • Sales experience preferred • Reliable transportation req'd • Full time including weekends <p>If interested please call Circulation Promoters, Inc. Patrick Brady: 734-657-7143 Call between 12-3pm Ken Wuorenma: 734-377-1398 Call between 9am-3pm</p>	<p>Your Search Ends Here!</p> <p>No matter what you're looking for, a new home, a new job, a new car, or maybe a contractor to work on that new home...your search ends here in your Classifieds!</p> <p>800-579-SELL (7355)</p>
<p>ADULT FOSTER CARE WORKERS NEEDED FOR Grace Rae's Place Alzheimer's, Dementia & Strokes. Adult foster care for up to 6 women. Afternoon shift, full-time. Ask for Margie. New Hudson/Milford 248-240-3274, 248-486-9322</p> <p>Angela Hospice hiring: EVENTS COORDINATOR FULL TIME w/BENEFITS Experience in event planning and fundraising req'd. Apply at www.angelahospice.org (Click on News & Events) or in person at 14100 Newburgh Rd, Livonia, MI 48150 Fax: (734) 779-6689 Email: kunley@angelahospice.net No phone calls, please</p>	<p>DISPATCHER/ PRISONER ATTENDANT Charter Twp. of Redford E.O.E. For more info call: 313-387-2761 or visit our website at: redfordtwp.com/personnel.php</p> <p>DRIVER: \$2,500 SIGN-ON BONUS! Hiring Solo and Team Drivers Great Benefits Package. Excellent Home Time. CDL-A Required. 888-471-7061 www.superservice.com</p> <p>DRIVERS CDL-A: Lots of Miles. Great Pay/ Benefits & Bonuses. Dedicated Team Route. 5400mi/wk Home Wkly. No Slip Seat. No Touch. Newer Equip. 877-723-8932</p>	<p>FIRE FIGHTER/ MEDIC Canton Township is now accepting applications for Firefighter/Medic. Application Deadline: 4 p.m. Monday, April 12, 2013. Job description is available on the Canton Township website www.canton-mi.org EOE</p> <p>GENERAL MAINTENANCE For home remodeler. Pay based on experience & skill. Call 734.467.4870</p>	<p>PROPERTY MANAGER Full-Time, for metro Detroit area apartment community. Apartment community management exp. required. Please fax resume: (248) 473-5480</p> <p>RETAIL ABC WAREHOUSE NOW HIRING for Nov Immediate Positions Major/Small Appliance, Audio/Video Sales, Mobile Electronics Sales, Stock and Installers. Highest commission. Full medical benefits, 401K, Profit sharing. Employee discount. Full training. On-site Interviews Mon & Tues 10am-7pm See Store Manager 43606 West Oaks Drive Novi, MI 48377 E.O.E.</p>	<p>WAREHOUSE/DRIVER For Hydraulic component Distributor. Responsibilities include: Pick, Pack & Ship customer orders, stock shelves, maintain warehouse cleanliness. Clean driving record required. Full-Time \$9/hr. Email resume to: tkalfs@hydra-flex.com</p> <p>RECEPTIONIST Metro Detroit Auto Dealer is accepting applications for a part-time receptionist/cashier. Duties include answering a multi-line phone system, cashiering, and other clerical work as needed. Must be able to work nights & Saturdays. Please email resume to: clerkaljob13@gmail.com</p>	<p>SEWERS Full time, w/benefits. Must have commercial grade sewing experience. Please apply within btwn 9-4pm. Mon-Fri Marygrove Awings 12700 Merriman Rd Livonia MI 48150</p> <p>VEHICLE DISMANTLER Parts Salvage/Scrap/Torch Exp. steady good pay & benefits 734-423-3121</p> <p>Help Wanted - Office Clerical</p>	<p>PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGIST wanted to provide Pediatric Cardiology medical care to patients at Royal Oak, MI hospital. Send resume to Amanda Werthmann, HR, William Beaumont Hospitals, 16500 W 12 Mile Rd, Southfield, MI 48076. An Equal Opportunity Employer</p> <p>PHARMACY SERVICES Southfield 2 Positions Open Client Relations/ Business Development Nursing Background Preferred Pharmacy Technician Experience Preferred Fax resume: 248 416-1316</p>	<p>CLASSIFIED YOUR TICKET TO Buy • Sell • Find</p> <p>HOMETOWN WEEKLIES</p> <p>1-800-579-SELL (7355)</p>
<p>CUSTOMER SERVICE: Ideal for anyone who can't get out to work. Work from home PT, schedule pick-ups for Purple Heart. Call Mon-Fri 9-5: 734-728-4572 or email: phoneworkinfo@aol.com</p> <p>DELIVERY DRIVER Full-Time \$13.50/hr + incentive pay & w/over time. Medical Insurance. Paid Vacation. Must be physically fit. Must have Class A w/Hazmat. Based out of Brighton Email: jackson@bluehino.com or fax: 269-415-0430</p> <p>DRIVER CDL Class B with air. Ability to lift heavy objects.</p> <p>ROOF LOADER Valid MI license. Apply in person at: Benson Building Supplies 25018 Plymouth Rd, Redford. (313) 536-9300</p>	<p>Drywall Finisher/ Repair Person Pay based on experience & skill Call 734.467.4870</p> <p>FIELD SERVICE TECHNICIAN TRAINEE Looking for a self-motivated individual needed for entry-level position within the controlled environmental testing industry. Must possess a mechanical & electrical aptitude, computer skills and clean driving record. Drug testing will be required as well as a background check. Candidate will start part time on ride alongs to slowly progress into full time should the individual retain all the attributes necessary and req. for full time status. Please send resume to: Clean Air Testing, Inc. P.O. Box 530668 Livonia, MI 48153-0668</p>	<p>LEAD TEACHERS & ASSISTANT TEACHERS Child care facility. Exp a MUST! (734) 459-9920</p> <p>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. E.O.E. Fax resume: 734-729-9840 Email: westhavenmanager@associatedmanagement.net</p> <p>PAINTERS & DRYWALLERS Exp'd. 10 yrs. + only Farmington Hills area. 248-987-4931</p>	<p>REACH even more potential employees with an Observer & Eccentric and Hometown Recruitment Package!</p> <p>For details call 1-800-579-7355</p>	<p>SECRETARIAL FULL-TIME AP/AR. Manual Bookkeeping. Must have office exp. MUST APPLY IN PERSON: Brose Electrical 37400 W. 7 Mile, Livonia (734) 464-2211</p> <p>RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER</p>	<p>FOOD - BEVERAGE</p> <p>COOKS & SERVERS Experienced for Beautiful Assisted Living Community in Westland. Please fax resume: (248) 350-9083</p> <p>DIETARY SERVER & BACK UP COOK American House in Livonia. Apply btwn 9-4 at: 11525 Farmington Rd.</p>	<p>It's all about results!</p> <p>...and it's all here!</p> <p>NEWSPAPERS & PAPER PRODUCTS</p> <p>1-800-579-SELL (7355)</p> <p>fax (586) 826-7318 INTERNET ADDRESS www.hometownlife.com</p>	<p>Help Wanted - Sales</p> <p>SALES ASSOCIATES NEEDED</p> <p>Growing co has an opportunity for motivated and personable sales professionals, possessing strong self management skills to join our sales team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent Commission • Advancement Opportunities • Immediate Openings • Avg \$525-\$950 weekly • Sales experience preferred • Reliable transportation req'd • Full time including weekends <p>If interested please call Circulation Promoters, Inc. Patrick Brady: 734-657-7143 Call between 12-3pm Ken Wuorenma: 734-377-1398 Call between 9am-3pm</p>

RELIGION CALENDAR

Send items for the religion calendar to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com.

April

BLOOD DRIVE

Time/Date: 1-7 p.m. Friday, April 26

Location: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 37775 Palmer, Westland.

Contact: For appointments call (734) 722-1735 or (800) RED-CROSS

CAMP ENROLLMENT

Time/Date: Now through May 31

Location: Consuming Fire Christian Center, 31463 Ann Arbor Trail, Westland

Details: The Center is enrolling kids and teens, age 5-15, for its six-week Bible/Home-work Enrichment Camp that will run July 8-Aug. 16. Full day sessions are \$700 and a half-day is \$480. Families get a \$25 discount for added siblings for the full day rate; \$10 discount for the half-day rate. A non-refundable \$100 registration fee at the time of enrollment secures a place at camp. All tuition must be paid in full by May 31. Cost includes the registration fee, snacks, materials for class, tutoring in most subjects and assessment testing

Contact: Melanie Staten or Sylvia Brown at (734) 266-2293

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME

Time/Date: Begins 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, continues Wednesday through May 15

Location: In the convent's meeting room at St.; Michael the Archangel Parish, 11441 Hubbard, just south of Plymouth Road, Livonia

Details: The six-week series is for non-practicing Catholics who are curious about discussing the possibility of returning to the Church. A former lapsed Catholic will conduct each session in a non-threatening environment with opportunities for practical and open questions and discussion

Contact: (734) 261-1455, ext. 200; www.livoniastmichael.org

CONCERT

Time/Date: 4 p.m., Sunday, April 7

Location: St. John Lutheran Church, located on Gill Road between Grand River Ave., and Freedom Road, Farmington Hills

Details: The Macomb Chorale, Macomb Chamber Singers and the Macomb Handbell Choir, Belles Voix will perform. Gospel Mass by American composer, Robert Ray will be featured. Also included on the program are a variety of choral styles from the Renaissance to popular musical selections. Admission is free. A free-will offering will be taken. Refreshments will be provided

Contact: (248) 474-0584

CONCERT

Time/Date: 2 p.m., Sunday, April 7

Location: Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 29887 W. 11 Mile, Farmington Hills

Details: Brandon Ridenour, principal trumpet player of the Canadian Brass, performs a free concert. Rich Ridenour accompanies on piano. The program will include music by Debussy, Bartok, Joplin, Prokofiev, and Gershwin, among others. Complimentary refreshments will be served at intermission

Contact: (248) 476-8860; www.nardinpark.org

FILM

Time/Date: 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 17

Location: Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church, 23925 Northwestern Highway, Southfield

Details: "Homeland: Four Portraits of Native Action," profiles struggles of Native American leaders who are taking on powerful energy companies and government agencies to protect the environment. The film is a tribute to grassroots organizing. A discussion and refreshments follow the film

Contact: (248) 354-4488; www.northwestuu.org

FILM

Time/Date: 6:30 p.m. Saturday, April 27

Location: St. Michael Lutheran Church, 7000 N. Sheldon, Canton

Details: The church and AAA Pregnancy Resource

Center, show the film, "October Baby," which tells the story of a woman adopted by loving parents after a failed abortion. Free child care will be provided. Snacks will be available. The film is not recommended for children under 13

Contact: (734) 459.3333

OPEN HOUSE

Time/Date: Noon-2 p.m. Sunday, April 14; 1-2:30 p.m. Friday, April 19

Location: St. Genevieve Catholic School, 28933 Jamison, Livonia

Details: Accepting registration for the 2013-14 school year for grades 1-8, full and half-day kindergarten, Young 5's, preschool for ages 3 and 4. Flexible payment plans and tuition assistance is available. The student population is diverse and class size is small. The April 19 open house is specifically for parents interested in sending their children to the kindergarten or Young 5 program. Parents and children will spend an afternoon in either the Young 5 or kindergarten class. Their children will listen to a story, do a craft and meet teachers, friends and enjoy a snack

Contact: Ann Tonissen, principal, at atonissen@stgenevieve.org or Phyllis Chudzinski, preschool and Young 5's director, at pchudzinski@stgenevieve.org

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Time/Date: 1 p.m. Sunday, April 14

Location: Prentis Apartments Community Room, located on 10 Mile east of Greenfield in Oak Park.

Details: Linda Lublin will lead an evil eye bracelet project. There is a \$2 materials fee. Bring a clipboard if you have one. The group also will prepare its display for the Farmington Festival of the Arts, "Color the World," April 18-20

Contact: Judy Galperin at (248) 661-5337

PURSE AUCTION

Time/Date: 5 p.m. Saturday, April 13

Location: Faith Community Wesleyan Church, 14560 Merriman, Livonia

Details: Bid on purses filled with mystery items. Bidding will start at \$5 and bidders must be over 15 years old. Light refreshments will be served and Angela Morgan will speak on the topic "What's in your purse?" Proceeds will go to the "Women of Faith" and to Faith Community's 2ND Service. Individuals also may donate a purse containing items for auction

Contact: Register by calling Mary Cisney at (248) 471-1322

RUMMAGE COLLECTION

Time/Date: 8:30 a.m.-noon, Sunday, April 14 and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and 5-8 p.m., Monday-Wednesday, April 15-17

Location: Antioch Lutheran Church, 33360 W. 13 Mile, Farmington Hills

Details: Donations of gently-used items are needed for a rummage sale. Tax deductible donations may be left in the hallway. Receipts will be on the table near the door. Use the back door on the north side of the church. The church also is collecting used eye glasses, cell phones and ink cartridges

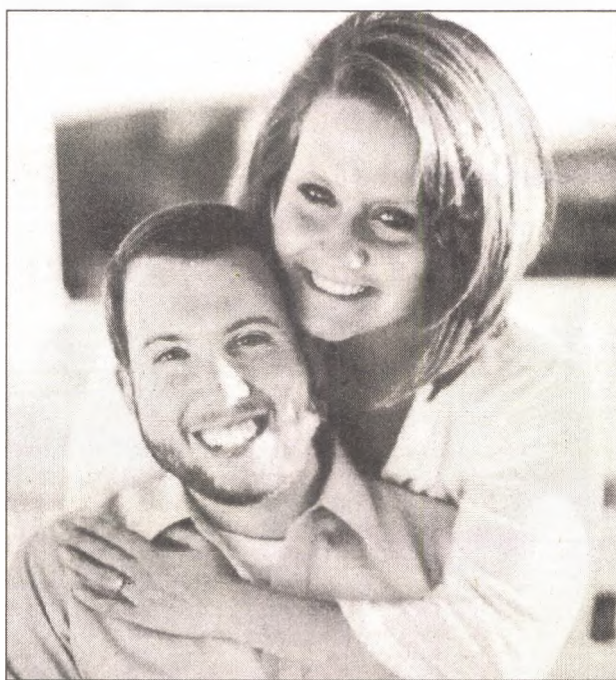
Contact: (248) 626-7908; 1982conrad@gmail.com

SINGLE PLACE

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Thursday, April 11

Location: First Presbyterian Church of Northville, 200 E. Main, Northville

Details: Games night with Scattergories, snacks and soft drinks. Guernsey ice cream will be served afterward. \$5 donation
Coming up: Melanie Duquesnet, CEO of the Better Business Bureau in Southfield will talk about "senior fraud" at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 18. Ice cream will follow the presentation. \$5 donation. Cards and games night will round out the month at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 25. Play Euchre, Mexican Train and other games. Snacks and soft drinks provided. Ice cream will be available. \$5 donation. Single Place is designed for mature singles
Contact: www.singleplace.org.



Milestones

ENGAGEMENT

Schulz-Moriter

Mary Woznik Schulz of Canton, announces the engagement of her daughter, Laura Marie, to Matthew Paul Mortier, son of Paul and Terry Mortier of Grand Blanc.

Laura, daughter of the late Marvin Schultz, and Matthew are 2009 and 2010 graduates of Eastern Michigan University, where they met. Laura has returned to Eastern as a full-time student to earn an additional degree and Matthew is employed by the university as a senior admissions adviser.

They will be married in June 2013 at St. Thomas A' Becket in Canton, followed by a reception at the Dearborn Inn. The couple plans to reside in Canton.

Passages

Obituaries, Memories & Remembrances

How to reach us:

1-800-579-7355 • fax 313-496-4968 • oeobits@hometownlife.com

Deadlines: Friday, 4:15 p.m. for Sunday paper • Wednesday, 9:45 a.m. for Thursday paper

BERRY, THELMA L.

101, April 4, 2013. Beloved wife of the late Charles (d.1969). Loving mother of Douglas and Beverly (Carl) Fox. Cherished grandmother of Cyndie, Laura, Christopher, Stephanie, Jeffrey. She was also survived by many great, and great-great grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. Sadly, she was preceded in death by her brother, Charles. Visitation Sunday, April 7, 2:00-6:00 pm, at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, 23720 Farmington Rd., (btw. 9-10 Mile Rds., just N/Grand River) downtown Farmington 248-474-5200. Private interment Acacia Park Cemetery, Beverly Hills. Memorial tributes are suggested to Arbor Hospice. heeney-sundquist.com

BLEEKER, MARILYN J.

88, a resident of Davenport, Iowa, died Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at Trinity, Bettendorf. Services in the Detroit, Michigan area will be held at a later date. Halligan McCabe DeVries Funeral Home, Davenport is assisting the family with arrangements. Marilyn Joy was born on July 27, 1924 in Detroit, Michigan, a daughter of Harold E. and Gladys W. (Lee) Joy. Marilyn was married to David L. Helm, Jr. and later was united in marriage to Henry G. Bleeker. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Susan G. Komen for the Cure. She is survived by her daughters: Sharon (James) Puffer, Asheville, NC, and Heidi (Robert) Herman, Davenport; step-daughter, Pamela (Brent) Johnson, Aurora, CO; and her loving grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Henry, her parents, and a sister, Joann Hatke. Online remembrances and condolences may be expressed to the family by visiting Marilyn's obituary at www.hmdfuneralhome.com

HALLIGAN-McCABE-DeVRIES



CONNER, ELIZABETH JEAN

Age 76, April 4, 2013 of Westland. Beloved wife of the late Bobby Gene. Loving mother of Debra Conner, Cynthia (George) Conner-Palmer, Jean (Bruno) Borin and Bobby Conner. Proud grandmother of Zachary (Maniah) Ogger, James Conner, Jason Borin, Antonio (Meghan) Borin, Andrea (Ryan) Bame, Tamara (Mark) Swart and Geoffrey (Brandy) Palmer. Great grandmother of Maewyn Ogger, Zeline Borin, Dominic Bame, Jada Cobb, Rachael Swart, Lexi Palmer and Atticus Palmer. Also leaves three sisters, Betty (Jewell) Monroe, Dorothy (James) Wesley, Nellie (the late Robert) Jones and many loved nieces and nephews. Visitation Sunday 3-9 PM at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 980 North Newburgh Road (between Ford Road and Cherry Hill), Westland. Funeral Service Monday 10:00 AM at the funeral home. Entombment Glen Eden Lutheran Memorial Park. To share a memory, please visit vermeulenfuneralhome.com

VERMEULEN FUNERAL HOME

SIDDALL, DALE

March 19, 1922-March 28, 2013 Services on Thursday, April 4, 2013, 10am, at Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 13120 E. Kentucky Ave, Aurora 80012

May peace be with you in this time of sorrow.



DeDONA, LENNA LORRAINE WITT

Age 92, of Novi, Michigan, formerly of Plymouth, MI and Longboat Key, FL, passed away peacefully in her sleep on Sunday, March 24, 2013. A gathering of friends and family will be held at Harry J. Will Funeral Home at 37000 W. Six Mile Road (at Newburgh) Livonia, Michigan 48152 on April 6, 2013 beginning at 1:00 PM, concluding with a memorial service at 3:00 PM. The interment service will be private at a later date. Lenora Lorraine was born in Detroit in 1920. She attended Plymouth High School and graduated in 1939. She was a member of the Professional Business Women's Club and the National Association of Realtors. L. Lorraine worked as a real estate agent for over 30 years in Plymouth and Northville Michigan, as well as Sarasota Florida. L. Lorraine is preceded in death by her husband of 31 years, Elmer M. Witt, and of 13 years, M. John DeDonna, son, Leon Pasiuk, and brother, Harold Welch. Survivors include Sons' Glen Witt (Mary) of Maumee, OH., Ron Witt (MaryAnn) of Durham, N.C., daughters' Gale Witt Amyx (Charles) of Plymouth, MI., Gladys Witt Strain (James); 10 grandchildren, Kimberly Witt Cook, Kristina Witt, Justin Sokol (LeAnn), Adam Sokol (Stephanie Bonk), Jay Strain (Ann), Jeff Strain (Jenna), Jamie Strain (Amy), Eric Witt, Martha Witt Santlucia (Remo), Daria Witt, and 13 great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Fox Run Scholarship Fund, 41000 13 Mile Road, Novi, Michigan 48377 or Oakland Talking Book Service for the Blind and Handicapped, Rochester Hills Public Library, 500 Olde Town Road, Rochester, MI 48307.



HART, VICKI LYNN

Age 58, of Livonia, Michigan, died March 2, 2013. Beloved wife of Michael Hart. Loving mother of Cassandra Goldyn Hart, Gabrielle Ann Hart and Ian Michael Hart. Devoted daughter of Betty and the late Albert Barach. Cherished sister of Kevin (Dawn) Barach and Cori (James) Cann. Dear sister-in-law of Susan Hart, Patti (Ray) Pettijohn, Joe (Nancy) Hart, David (Imelda) Hart and Amy (Brian) Parent. Special niece of Toba Duncan. Also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

SERVICES WERE HELD AT THE IRA KAUFMAN CHAPEL IN SOUTHFIELD. INTERMENT AT BETH ABRAHAM CEMETERY IN FERNDALE. 248-569-0020. www.ira kaufman.com

THE IRA KAUFMAN CHAPEL

KILYANEK, PAUL T.

Age 55 - Died March 27, 2013. Survived by sisters Mary Morreale and Kathleen Morgan and brother Tony Kilyanek. Brother of late Stephen Kilyanek. Friends and family are invited to a memorial art exhibit of Paul's work on Saturday, April 20 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 26550 Cherry Hill Road, Dearborn Heights, MI. Eulogy at 5:00 p.m. Proceeds from the sale of Paul's art will be donated to charitable causes. In lieu of flowers, please make donations in Paul's name to the Michigan Humane Society.

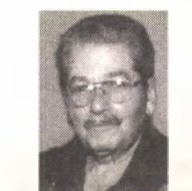


KATZ, ROGER H.

Devoted son of Edward and the late Genevieve Katz. Cherished brother of Marsha (Bob Liston) Katz. Loving uncle of Christopher and Stephen Johnson. Also survived by two great nieces, several cousins and a large host of friends and acquaintances.

GRAVESIDE SERVICES 11:30 A.M. SUNDAY MORNING AT BETH EL MEMORIAL PARK. ARRANGEMENTS BY THE IRA KAUFMAN CHAPEL. 248-569-0020 www.ira kaufman.com

THE IRA KAUFMAN CHAPEL



OLIVERSON, JAMES J.

Age 89, March 31, 2013. Beloved husband of Sara. Dear father of James E., Lynda (Michael) Gattyan, Gary E. (Susan) and Sheryl Buddenborg. Grandfather of 9. Great-grandfather of 26. Great great grandfather of 4. Brother of Joyce Thompson and Beverly Chamberlain. Visitation Thursday 2pm until the 7:30pm Funeral Service at the John N. Santeiu & Son Funeral Home, 1139 Inkster Rd., (between Ford Rd. and Cherry Hill), Garden City. Memorials suggested to Mott Children's Hospital. www.santeiufuneralhome.com

Santeiu Funeral Home

PADEN, FLORENCE (CRAWFORD)

Age 98, passed away peacefully on April 1, 2013 in Chandler, AZ. Visitation is scheduled for Friday, April 12, 2013, 2-8pm, service 10am on Saturday, April 13th at Schrader-Howell Funeral Home, 280 South Main Street, Plymouth. Interment will be in Leland Cemetery in Salem, MI. In lieu of flowers please send donations to The Livonia Historical Society or Newburg United Methodist Church. Share your special thoughts and memories at www.schrader-howell.com

ROBERTS, NAOMI A.

80, of Bradenton, FL died March 17, 2013. Mrs. Roberts was born on April 15, 1932 in Detroit MI and lived in Garden City up until 1998 when she moved south to Bradenton. Beloved wife of the late James "Bill" Roberts. Also predeceased by her daughter Susan Rigney, and granddaughter, Chelsea Rose Hickson. She is survived by her daughter Kristy Hickson (Jeff) of Livonia, son-in-law Lee Rigney, grandchildren, Alexis, Reed, and Jenna Hickson, Jessica Moser (Matt), and Joshua Rigney. Sister to Jack Harrington (Darlene), Joan Hoekwater, and Judy Beatty (Brent). Aunt to several nieces and nephews. A memorial service will be held in celebration of her life at Life Pentecostal Church on Sunday, April 21st at 5:30 p.m. Dessert reception to follow. Life Pentecostal meets at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church and is located at 30900 Six Mile Rd. Livonia, MI. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Life Pentecostal Church in her honor. Arrangements entrusted to Shannon Funeral Home of Bradenton FL.

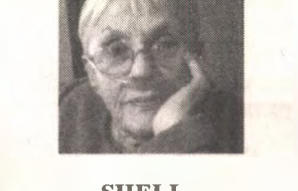
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ROGERS, ERMA (PLUMLEY)

Age 93, April 1, 2013. Beloved mother of David (Nancy) Plumley. Loving grandmother of Michael, Anna and Emily. Dear aunt of George (Heather) Tweed. Great-aunt of Jamie (Susan) Tweed and great-great-aunt of Sara Tweed. Erma owned and operated an Interior Design business in Birmingham and retired in 1997. She was an avid reader and enjoyed weekly card games with her family. A private gathering will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions may be directed to Marywood Nursing Care Center in Livonia.

Please share a memory at www.rggharris.com



SHELL, MARY LILA McDONALD

Age 83, died peacefully Thursday, March 28, 2013. Born on May 25, 1929, in Detroit, Mary attended Cooley High School and Wayne State University. She worked in Personnel at Square D and Parke-Davis, where she met electrical engineer and future husband of 52 years, Murphy D. Shell (1920-2010). They made their home in Birmingham until 2007 when they moved to Arbor House in Traverse City. She leaves behind four children: Amy (Chris) Shell-Gellasch, Jules Shelby, Murdeen (Jerry) Shell Wells, and David (Debbie) Shell; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and "children" Sharon Steelman and Henry Hoenk. A committed stay-at-home mother, her part-time career as a sought-after market researcher included the Gallup Poll. She cherished her dogs and gardens, and most of all, her countless friends. She was the single funniest, smartest person her kids ever knew. A church service for Mrs. Shell was held Saturday, April 6th at Birmingham Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. Burial service and celebration of her life will also take place in June.

Memories of Mary may be left at Visit Life Story Funeral Home's website, www.lifestorynet.com

WAHL, JOYCE ANN

Age 72, of Howell for the past 25 years, passed away Thursday, April 4, 2013. She was born September 2, 1940 in Detroit, the daughter of Raymond and Margaret (Coseo) Muccino. Devoted wife of Donald J. Wahl, whom she married on January 4, 1964; dear mother of Denise Wahl of Howell, John Wahl of Williamston, Christine (John) Stefforia of Howell and Nick Wahl of Howell. Grandmother of Eric, Michelle, Stephanie, Haley and Amanda; sister of Janice (Ron) Miller of Florida and Craig (Colleen) Muccino of Farmington Hills; also survived by many nieces and nephews. Joyce was a 1959 graduate of Farmington High School; she owned and operated with her husband, Miracle Soft Water in Howell since 1956 and was a member of Howell Area Chamber of Commerce. Joyce was a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church, 440 E. Washington Street (at Fowler St.). Howell where Mass of Resurrection will be held Monday, April 8 at 11:00 a.m. Burial will be in Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Visitation Sunday from 2-8 p.m. with a rosary service at 7 p.m. at MacDonald's Funeral Home, 315 N. Michigan Avenue, Howell (517-546-2800). In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions be made to St. Joseph Catholic Church. Please sign the family's online guestbook at: macdonaldsfuneralhome.com

Program helps pre-diabetics lose weight, get healthy

By Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

Reducing risk for type 2 diabetes takes a commitment to healthy eating, exercise and weight reduction.

Leigh Vogelsohn of the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, says individuals often recognize those needed lifestyle changes, but struggle to make them.

"Some people have tried so many times to lose weight or to exercise, that they are feeling a little hesitant about starting something else. We'd encourage people to try again. We've found we've had success.

Vogelsohn says the National Diabetes Prevention Program that she coordinates for the Foundation has all the tools necessary to help keep pre-diabetics stay on track to good health.

The Foundation will offer an informational meeting about the program at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 16, at the St. Mary Mercy Hospital Professional Building, classroom 10 on the fourth floor, 36475 Five Mile, Livonia. The 16-week program will start at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, with a group of approximately 15-20 participants meeting for an hour each week. After the 16 sessions, they'll meet monthly for additional support in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The program is free, but participants must qualify. They must be overweight and at a high risk for developing diabetes or overweight and diagnosed with pre-diabetes.

"The way people typically are diagnosed is through blood tests," Vogelsohn said. "You can take the screening assessment that we have on our website, www.nkfm.org. The assessment would in part qualify a person for the program.

"There are other factors to look at. That would be a body mass index greater or equal to 24."



Participants also must be over age 18.

The Foundation promotes the program in areas where residents are at high risk for diabetes. In addition to Livonia, it has offered the program in Inkster and Chelsea. Vogelsohn said Livonia was included because it has a significant number of senior citizens.

"One out of two seniors are at high risk for developing diabetes," she noted. "You absolutely can do something about it. That's our message. We'd like people to know there is something that can help them lower their risk."

Weight loss, healthy eating and exercise are all components of the program. Participants track of everything they eat and drink for a lifestyle coach who comments weekly on their progress. They aim for 150 minutes of physical activity per week, which at the start of the program might include brisk walking and housework.

"We give people a list of all kinds of activities. We encourage them to work up to becoming more active and increasing their heart rate," she said. "We do a weekly weigh-in so that participants are able to track their progress."

"Part of the program is knowing where you are and setting goals for where you want to go. It's a goal-oriented program."

In addition to lowering risk for type 2 diabetes, Vogelsohn said the program also can lower cholesterol, lower the risk for heart disease and lower blood pressure.

To register or learn if you qualify, call St. Mary Mercy Hospital at (734) 655-8950. For more information, visit www.nkfm.org/ndpp.

Diabetes educator/nurse stresses meal management, weight control as key factors

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

In 1996, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control identified diabetes as an epidemic. In 2012, some 28 million people in the U.S. were diabetic, with those with tendencies toward diabetes boosting the total to 110 million.

The worldwide total is 350 million, said Fern Vining, a registered nurse and recent Beaumont Hospital retiree who's a diabetes educator.

"The disease has been around for thousands of years," said Vining, noting it wasn't until the mid-1980s that the first major research study was done. Diabetes is now linked to such conditions as new blindness, nontraumatic amputation, and kidney failure often requiring dialysis. It impacts the large blood vessels, she said, which often leads to heart attacks or strokes.

"That's it, major lifestyle changes," Vining agreed with her recent Plymouth A.M. Rotary audience at a breakfast meeting. That's why she runs an Adult Diabetes Support Group with help of the Plymouth Lions. It meets 2-3:30 p.m. the second Thursday of the month at the Plymouth District Library, 223 S. Main in downtown Plymouth.

Information on the support group is available from Vining at (734) 454-0859.

"Glucose or sugar to your body is like gasoline to your car," said Vining, who doesn't believe diabetics generally should never have carbohydrates.

She's been in nursing years but is still impressed with the human body. "I still marvel today at what this body can do. Medicine has not cracked a lot of the secrets."

Diabetes was for years described as Type 1, or juvenile onset, and Type 2, adult, but age lines are blurring, she said. The majority of children with diabetes are still Type 1.

Young kids with diabetes are adept with technology and pumps, Vining said. "Insulin is still the safest drug for people with diabetes."

Insulin became commercially available in the 1920s and dramatically improved health and life for diabetics, who previously had been put on starvation diets.

Vining is encouraged by good research on the horizon. She touched on gestational diabetes, usually in the third trimester of pregnancy. That tends to run in families, and some of those women will remain diabetic after delivery.

Vining emphasizes portion, control and frequency in meal planning. "That way, nobody feels like they're totally denied," she said of the diabetic who has a small slice of birthday cake.

Signs that you may be diabetic include excessive thirst and urination, along with hunger. Some people get blurry vision or sores that don't heal. Vining cautioned against buying expensive eye-glasses before a diabetes visit to the doctor, as your vision will often improve with diabetes treatment.

Meal management remains the No. 1 key to managing diabetes, she told the Rotarians, along with body weight. Vining also showed them some new technology, including a "fountain pen" style of device for giving shots, as well as a small meter for monitoring blood sugar.

jcbrown@hometownlife.com

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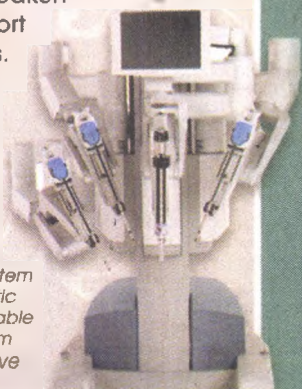
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"I really need a drink, ...is that a problem?"

Ask A Garden City Hospital Health Expert



Dr. O'Dwyer
Psychologist

In Michigan alone, there are roughly 300 alcohol-related fatalities every year. In recognition of Alcohol Awareness Month, Psychologist, Published Author and Garden City Hospital Health Expert, Dr. Phil O'Dwyer, explains the risks associated with alcohol consumption and touches on the treatment for alcoholism.

Q: Alcoholism has been an issue in our family. I am worried about how this will affect my teenaged children, who will surely be exposed to drinking soon, if not already. Is alcoholism passed through genetics and how can I effectively reach my children without coming across as "preachy"?

A: Alcoholism tends to run in families, and genetic factors partially explain this pattern. Researchers are currently looking for the genes that influence vulnerability to alcoholism. A person's environment, such as the influence of friends, stress levels, and the ease of obtaining alcohol, may also influence the development of alcoholism. While a factor such as social support, may help to protect even high-risk people from problems with alcohol.

Risk, however, is not destiny. A child of an alcoholic parent will not automatically develop alcoholism. A person with no family history of alcoholism can become alcohol dependent. It's important to note that, youths who use alcohol before age 15 are five times more likely to become alcohol dependent than adults who begin drinking at age 21. Alcohol use in teens often leads to an increase in risky sexual behavior, poor school performance and injury.

There are a number of great resources available to help you properly educate your children. The most important thing is to stay involved, be diligent and have an open path of communication. Alcoholism is a chronic, often progressive disease that is treatable with professional help and support.

Q: Does treatment for alcoholism work?

A: In many cases, treatment for Alcoholism is effective. However, a minority of alcoholics remain sober one year after treatment, others have periods of sobriety alternating with relapses, while some are unable to stop drinking for any length of time.

Treatment outcomes for alcoholism compare favorably with those of other chronic medical conditions. The longer one abstains from alcohol, the more likely they are to remain sober. It is important to remember that many people relapse once or several times before achieving long-term sobriety. Relapses are common and do not mean a person has failed or cannot eventually recover from alcoholism. If a relapse occurs, it is important to try again and to get help. Eliminate as many drinking "triggers" from your life as possible.

If you or a loved one is having a problem with alcohol dependency or another addiction issue, make a confidential appointment with Garden City Hospital's Center for Counseling. Please call 734.458.3395 or visit GCH.org for more information.

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JOBS

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Are you a good fit for a small company?

Robert Half International

If you're job hunting, one way to potentially increase your chances of success is to look for a position with a small business. Many applicants focus their efforts on large companies, because they either are attracted to the idea of working for a household name or believe these companies have more openings. Yet pursuing employment opportunities with smaller companies can be a wise move.

Before you begin sending your résumé to every small employer with an opening, however, make sure you'd be a good fit for the company. Small businesses often have very defined corporate cultures, and working at a mom-and-pop shop can be different than working at a larger company.

The ideal candidates for roles with small businesses often have these traits:

An entrepreneurial mindset.

By definition, small and mid-size companies have fewer people to tackle projects, oversee initiatives and move things forward. As a result, employees need to be self-starters who can work on their own and think creatively about business solutions.

The ability to collaborate.

It's hard to get any job if you aren't a team player, but in a small business, your ability to work and get along with colleagues is absolutely essential.



The most effective employees can advance their ideas, but not at the expense of working relationships.

In addition, you should possess excellent listening skills and an upbeat personality. When you're working with the same tight-knit group every day, a negative attitude can easily affect the entire team.

A willingness to do it all.

If you're a veteran of a large employer, you're probably accustomed to having someone in IT address your computer issues and asking the depart-

ment's administrative assistant to order more office supplies. At a small company, however, you may not be able to call upon these same resources. Are you comfortable attending to all tasks, both large and small? And are you willing to help others who need a hand?

A focus on customer service.

Every client counts for a small business. You'll need strong interpersonal skills to provide great service and ensure customer satisfaction. A small company may not be a place in which you'd thrive if

you get annoyed by the small or "irrational" demands of clients.

A passion for the job.

Small employers seek employees who don't merely punch the clock. They want people who show a true interest in and commitment to the bigger picture and understand the correlation between individual effort and the company's overall success.

Working for a small business offers many rewards, including autonomy, the opportunity to make large contributions, a chance to assume significant responsibility and often a fam-

ily-type atmosphere that may be hard to find elsewhere. If you possess the right skills and mindset, working for a small business could be an excellent career move.

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Help Wanted - General

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Saga Communications, a publicly traded broadcast company headquartered in Grosse Pointe, is looking for a dependable professional who can handle eight incoming phone lines, juggle multiple priorities, and likes working in a fast-paced small office environment with a great group of people. Candidate should be adept at Microsoft Word and Excel. HR experience and knowledge of COBRA is a plus. Mail or fax (313.861.2085) resume to: Marcia Lobatto, Saga Communications, Inc., 73 Kercheval Avenue, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236

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FULL TIME w/BENEFITS Experience in event planning and fundraising req'd. Apply at www.angelahospice.org (Click on News & Events) or in person at 14100 Newburgh Rd, Livonia Fax: (734) 779-6689 Email: khunley@angelahospice.net No phone calls, please

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REQUIREMENTS:

- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience working with legal issues relating to print and on-line operations, including knowledge of state and federal laws that apply to First Amendment protection, the Freedom of Information Act, the Open Meetings Act, etc.
- Three years experience working with news operations, both in print and digital products.
- Must have a demonstrated proficiency in both PC and Mac-based software. Knowledge of Microsoft Office applications are a plus. Demonstrated proficiency in using a digital camera and social media tools (Facebook and Twitter).
- Bachelor's degree in journalism or communications (a four-year degree in another discipline, combined with relevant experience is acceptable) is required.
- Must provide own transportation and be able to work a flexible schedule of days and afternoons. Weekends included.

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 (FR Doc. 724983 3-31-72).
 Equal Housing
 Opportunity Statement:
 We are pledged to the
 letter & spirit of U.S.
 policy for the achievement
 of equal housing
 opportunity, throughout
 the nation. We encourage
 & support an affirmative
 advertising & marketing
 program in which there
 are no barriers.

Help Wanted - General

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 Gardner-White Furniture is
 looking for Career-Minded
 People to join our growing
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 We have immediate
 openings in our
 10 Metro Detroit Locations.
 Our average
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 \$52,000, with
 Top Salaries over \$110,000!
 Preferred Qualifications
 include 2 yrs. of proven
 retail experience, the ability
 to work nights/weekends/
 holidays, and a passion
 for excellence!

Gardner-White offers unlimited
 income potential, excellent
 medical, dental and opti-
 cal benefits, 401(k) with
 company match, merchan-
 dise discounts, paid training,
 and opportunity for profes-
 sional growth.

New Training Classes
 are starting soon!

Please email resume
 to us immediately:
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 www.gardner-white.com/
 about_us/careers.php

GARDNER-WHITE

Help Wanted - Office Clerical

SECRETARIAL
 FULL-TIME AP/AR,
 Manual Bookkeeping.
 Must have office exp.
MUST APPLY IN PERSON:
 Brose Electrical
 37400 W. 7 Mile, Livonia
 (734) 464-2211

SECRETARY, PT
 For Farmington Hills law firm.
 Prepare letters/legal docu-
 ments & coordinate office op-
 erations. General office exp.
 MS Word & attention to
 detail required. Resume:
 dphoney@pheneylaw.com

MEDICAL ASSISTANT
 Part-time for pediatric office,
 exp. required.
 Call: (734) 591-0220

PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGIST
 wanted to provide Pediatric
 Cardiology medical care to
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 hospital. Send resume to
 Amanda Werthmann, HR,
 William Beaumont Hospitals,
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 experienced individual
 in high quality
 specialty practice.
 Call: (248) 357-3100

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 Full-Time/Part-Time incl Sat's.
 Must have dental/computer
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 Ask for Karen: 248-851-1034

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 specialty practice.
 Call: (248) 357-3100

DENTAL RECEPTIONIST
 Full-Time/Part-Time incl Sat's.
 Must have dental/computer
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 Ask for Karen: 248-851-1034

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 85 yr old woman in her
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 days/week. Caregiver would
 have own bdrm & own bath-
 room. 85 yr old is mentally
 sharp and primarily uses
 wheelchair. Needs assistance
 with transferring, meal prepa-
 ration, showering, and light
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Accurate Mortgage Solutions (800) 593-1912	3.5	0	2.75	0	J/A
AFI Financial (877) 234-0600	3.5	0	2.625	0	J/A/F
Ameriplus Mortgage Corp. (248) 740-2323	3.5	0	2.625	0	J/A
Client Services by Gold Star (800) 991-9922	3.5	0	2.625	0	J/A/V/F
Co-op Services Credit Union (734) 466-6113	3.875	0.25	3.125	0	J
Dearborn Federal Savings Bank (313) 565-3100	3.75	0	3	0	A
Fifth Third Bank (800) 792-8830	3.5	0	2.75	0	J/A/V/F
Gold Star Mortgage (888) 293-3477	3.25	1.625	2.375	1.375	J/A/V/F
Group One Mortgage (248) 282-1602	3.75	0	3.25	0	J/A/V/F
Mortgages by Gold Star (888) 293-3477	3.125	2.875	2.625	0	J/A/V/F
Sierra Pacific Mortgage (313) 215-1766	3.375	0.5	2.5	0.5	J/A/V/F

Above Information available as of 3/29/13 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.
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Sunday PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Anaconda, for instance
- Where heather grows
- Hurry
- TV band
- Mayberry kid
- To be, to Brutus
- Cal Tech rival
- Plush fabric
- Lyrical
- Health resort
- Oaters' Lash La—
- Sherlock's lady friend
- Turf warriors
- Cadet's org.
- Pester for payment
- Back when
- Oxidizes
- Witness's vow (2 wds.)
- Philosopher — Tzu

DOWN

- Road caution
- Michigan neighbor
- Before dusk
- Blockbuster
- Fuel cartel
- Sunflower yield
- Gives it the gas
- Pave over
- Avail oneself of
- NNW opposite
- Domestic fowl
- Heroic tales
- Pull hard
- Newspaper feature
- Hosiery hue
- Plenty, in verse
- Squall
- Lab medium
- Cause a blister
- Iron source
- Stump remover
- Bandleader Count —
- Family mem.
- Rocker — John
- Above the horizon
- Race by, as clouds
- Links org.
- Woody's son
- Misrepresent
- Get spliced
- Blue or green
- Keogh relative
- "Exodus" hero

Answer to Previous Puzzle

PELT	VALE	CAT
AMOR	ONYX	UFO
MICA	LIRE	BAN
ROCK	CLIMBER	
KEA	CPA	
ERR	GNP	TRILL
NOEL	OAT	SOIL
DEBUG	NAT	NIB
LAS	PEG	
HOLLY	WREATH	
FAX	OREO	OWED
UKE	SILO	LIAR
REN	HALT	SGTS

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Want more puzzles?
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 at QuillDriverBooks.com

SUDOKU

	1		9					8
2								7
			3	7			1	5
	6							2
8	4		5					6
					3			
	3			2				9
	9		7		4	6		
			6	3				

Level: Beginner

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 — Lawn & Garden

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

Aerate Flowers Green Lawn Shovel
 Compost Foliage Hose Mulch Shrubs
 Fertilizer Garden Irrigation Seed Trees

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

Sudoku

7	8	1	6	9	4	2	5	3
3	2	9	4	5	4	8	6	1
6	5	4	5	8	1	2	7	3
4	1	4	8	3	9	2	5	7
9	3	7	1	6	5	2	8	4
2	6	5	7	8	1	4	8	3
5	1	6	2	7	3	9	8	4
4	7	4	3	9	8	6	5	2
8	2	6	8	5	4	9	1	7

Word Search

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

HOMES

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Homes

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AT2333848

RENTALS

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Apartment For Rent

WESTLAND: Livonia Schools 1 bdrm apt, immediate occupancy, \$520/mo & up. Paul & Assoc. (734) 779-9800

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Birmingham Berkshire Middle School
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Saturday, April 13, 9-3 pm
Early Entry 8-9 am. \$1 Half Price 1-3 pm. Sunday, April 14, Bag Sale 10-1 pm.

Estates Sales

LARGE SELECTION OF women's vintage clothes, kitchen & glassware, books, games, king bed, 3 dressers, mirror. April 12 & 13, 10-4pm. No early birds. In Kings Mill, 18838 James-town Circle, Northville; off Northville Rd btwn 6 & 7 Mile

Garage/Moving Sales

Mom2Mom Sale
St. Thomas a Becket Catholic Church Mom2Mom Sale Sat, April 13, 9am-Noon. Strollers are welcome after 10am. Over 90 tables and large item rooms. 555 S. Lilley Rd., Canton. \$1 admission.

REDFORD -Estate/Garage Sale.
12840 Tecumseh, S of Schoolcraft, btwn Beech/Inkster. Sat-Sun, April 13-14, 10-5. Lawn mower, fridge, stove, etc.

WESTLAND: Huron Valley Lutheran, 33740 Cowan Rd. (N. of Warren, E. off Wayne). Thurs-Fri., Apr. 11 & 12, 9am-5pm. Sat., Apr. 13, 9am-noon \$3 Bag Day

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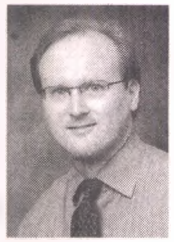
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Car Report

Advertising Feature

Acura launches all-new RDX as spearhead of brand revival



By Dale Buss

Honda is trying to address the woes of its Acura brand with a one-two punch: better vehicles, and better advertising. But so far it isn't clear if either is landing with the kind of authority necessary for Acura to close the sales and perception gaps with U.S. luxury-market leaders in those areas such as a resurgent Lexus and a rising Audi.

Acura demonstrated its two-part strategy during March Madness telecasts on CBS with advertisements for the new 2014 RLX sedan, an important, all-new nameplate taking the lead in an all-new advertising campaign created by an all-new agency relationship for the brand.

"We're refreshing the whole brand, and started with entry-level vehicles last year," Gary Robinson, manager of Acura advertising and brand, told me about the 2012 introductions of the ILX sedan and a new version of the RDX crossover.

"This year, it's all about filling in the prestige market, beginning with the RLX. And a couple of months from now, a new MDX [crossover] comes out. With both of them you're talking about price points in the \$40,000s and into the \$50,000s and all of our newest technology."

Also, as it replaces the old RL model, RLX is getting a boost from a new tag line — "Luxury, taken to a whole new level" — that is the first effort by its new agency, Mullen, part of Interpublic Group. The idea is to get American upscale consumers to take notice of Acura like they haven't before and even to get emotional

about a brand that remains sort of mushy to most of them.

At first glance, Acura would seem to be on a roll already. Sales in 2012 were up by nearly 27 percent over 2011, to more than 156,000 vehicles, keeping the Honda-owned marque ahead of both Audi and Infiniti, which it considers the primary competition for Acura.

But the truth is that the huge year-over-year increase mostly reflected an easy comparison with a disastrous 2011, when deep supply woes resulted from the tsunami and earthquake in Japan in March and flooding in Thailand in the fall. For 2013 through February, Acura sales were up only by about 6 percent over a year ago.

And what's more, the condition of the Acura brand might have been even worse. Many Americans consider Toyotas and Hondas, not Infinitis and Audis, to be Acura's true equivalents. At one point last year, about 21 percent of people who considered an Acura also looked at a Toyota, while fewer than 13 percent of people looking at an Audi also considered Acura, according to Edmunds.com data.

"We have these great, luxurious prod-

ucts, but there's a gap between the customer perception of what Acura is, and the luxury that is in our cars," Mike Accavitti, American Honda's CMO, told Advertising Age.

Robinson said that ILX and the new RDX were meant to be just a start to refreshing the Acura brand and vehicle line, and that this year's salvos — the RLX and MDX introductions, and the new advertising campaign — will do some heavier lifting.

And while the expressed point of the first TV ads is that RLX is so luxurious, it makes the owner forget about other luxury goods — an emotional appeal — the campaign is largely unfolding around boasting about the product itself and particular attributes: "Jewel Eye" LED headlights, the next generation of the AcuraLink connected-car system, and Acura's proprietary Precision All-Wheel Steer system.

Every major competitor to RLX is a rear-wheel-drive sedan or has available all-wheel drive, which traditionally have been associated with luxury performance cars because of handling characteristics that are generally perceived as superior to front-wheel drive. But RLX is going it alone in the sedan segment with front-wheel drive even though the RL it replaces



A prototype of the soon-to-be-launched new MDX.

was all-wheel drive.

Robinson noted the "inherent benefit" of front-wheel drive such as lighter weight and the ability to put together a smaller exterior footprint with greater interior space. "It's roughly the same exterior size even as [RL] was, and as its mid-size competitors, but it has noticeably more interior space."

And while Robinson conceded that conventional wisdom in the upscale market is suspicious of front-wheel drive, he maintained that the new Acura Precision All-Wheel Steering system allows RLX to "handle better in most situations than rear- or all-wheel drive, and in extreme situations as well as them."

The handling-countermeasure system allows the rear wheels to be pointed, independently, up to 2 degrees of toe-angle adjustment in either direction, for 4 degrees of articulation.

"So the wheels can turn together or in different directions," Robinson explained. "And if you're braking, both wheels will turn a bit to create a wedge and slow down in a stable way, or they'll turn together for cornering situations."



Acura is counting on the new RLX sedan in the heart of the luxury market.

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