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PLYMOUTH OBSERVER

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Plymouth's top cop: Nearly \$600K in drug money coming to township

Darrell Clem
hometownlife.com

The U.S. Department of Justice has withheld nearly \$600,000 from Plymouth Township amidst allegations that local elected officials misspent drug forfeiture money, but Police Chief Tom Tiderington predicted the funds will be freed up within weeks.

DOJ authorities had "frozen" the money, Tiderington said, after a federal audit last year revealed that the Plymouth Township Board of

Trustees, specifically former Treasurer Ron Edwards' office, had control over expenditures they should have entrusted to the police chief.

A recent decision by the township board to repay the drug forfeiture fund \$83,397 from the general fund is expected to satisfy the DOJ and free up the nearly \$600,000, Tiderington said.

"In my opinion we will be



Tiderington

back in compliance within a few weeks," he said Tuesday.

Beyond the \$600,000, Tiderington estimated that another \$300,000 or more in local drug forfeiture revenue is "in the pipeline" with the court system and the DOJ — money Plymouth Township also should eventually receive. Tiderington said the local drug forfeiture fund currently has no money in it.

Drug forfeiture funds come from assets seized during certain criminal investigations such as drug-related cases.

The money goes to the DOJ and a portion is given back to local communities to pay for patrol cars, bullet-proof vests, overtime costs and other items related to police work.

The DOJ audit found that some drug forfeiture money was "commingled" with general fund dollars and used inappropriately for purposes such as civilian salaries. DOJ officials launched a review of spending after Tiderington raised concerns about it.

The audit states that the law enforcement agency head — in

this case, Tiderington — "must authorize all expenditures" from drug forfeiture money, which the DOJ also refers to as the equitable sharing fund.

"However," the audit said, "we found that the Plymouth Township's governing body, including the township Treasurer's Office, rather than the Plymouth Township chief of police, had responsibility for and control over all expenditures from the equitable sharing fund."

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Four-year-old Kellen Weakley has used his super-hero spirit to battle stage 4 neuroblastoma for two years now.

SUBMITTED

New chapter hits high note for Plymouth musician

Jill Halpin
Correspondent

At age 60, Plymouth Township resident Mark Jewett may be in the midst of his first act, but he is already starting on another.

Last month, the career-long engineer and project manager launched his second career — as a singer and songwriter — with the release of his first full-length album, "Tending the Fire." The product of an 18-month collaborative effort with a variety of Detroit-area musicians, the album contains 11 original songs composed by Jewett. It features him on lead vocals, backing vocals, acoustic and electric guitar.

Jewett's endeavor has been worth the effort: He has not only already been recognized by "American Songwriter" magazine, he's also booked his first public concert scheduled for Jan. 6, 2017 at Livonia's Trinity House Theatre.

His success and the unlikely journey to a career in music have been both surprising and rewarding, he said. "It has been a real later-in-life, second-life discovery. It has pulled me into a new dimension," he said.

For Jewett, however, it is all part of the journey, which began in 2008 when he bumped into an old friend. As a young man growing up in Redford, Jewett was heavily involved in music, singing in a capella groups in school and playing in local bands with friends until 1981.

He put music on hold as he attended college and began work as an electrical engineer. He married Debbie, his wife of 33 years, and together they raised two children, a son, now 31, and a 26-year old daughter. The couple has lived in Plymouth Township for 26 years.

A chance meeting with an old friend and band mate eight years ago lead to a renewed interest in music, he said. Jewett picked up his guitar and discovered the affinity for a good song had never left him. "I think I had forgotten how much I truly enjoyed it. It touches my soul," Jewett said.

After making an initial foray into songwriting via some computer software, he attend-

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Local family devastated as cancer returns in 4-year-old

Brad Kadrich
hometownlife.com

Ryan and Tracy Weakley were riding high in early 2014.

The Livonia couple had good jobs and two young children, they were expecting a third and they'd just bought a nice new house to make room for all those kids Tracy had always wanted.

Tracy had just come home from a pediatrician's appointment for the couple's 2-year-old son Kellen and was reveling in her son's good health.

On the way home she thought, "Life can't be going any better."

A week later, it came crashing down around them, the way life sometimes does — without explanation or warning.

Kellen was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma, a rare form of pediatric cancer generally diagnosed before the age of 5 and which, according to St. Jude Children's Hospital, accounts for some 10 percent of all childhood cancers.

And after a two-year battle that earned Kellen an all-clear status, the family was flattened again in July with the news he had relapsed.

A HELPING HAND

What: Fundraiser for Kellen Weakley, a 4-year-old boy whose stage 4 neuroblastoma relapsed in July.

When: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 1

Where: Peterlin's Restaurant, 22004 Farmington Road (at Nine Mile), Farmington.

Details: The restaurant will donate 20 percent of proceeds from lunch, dinner and takeout receipts; just hand in a fundraiser flier or mention the fundraiser. Also featured will be raffle baskets to be auctioned off and other activities.

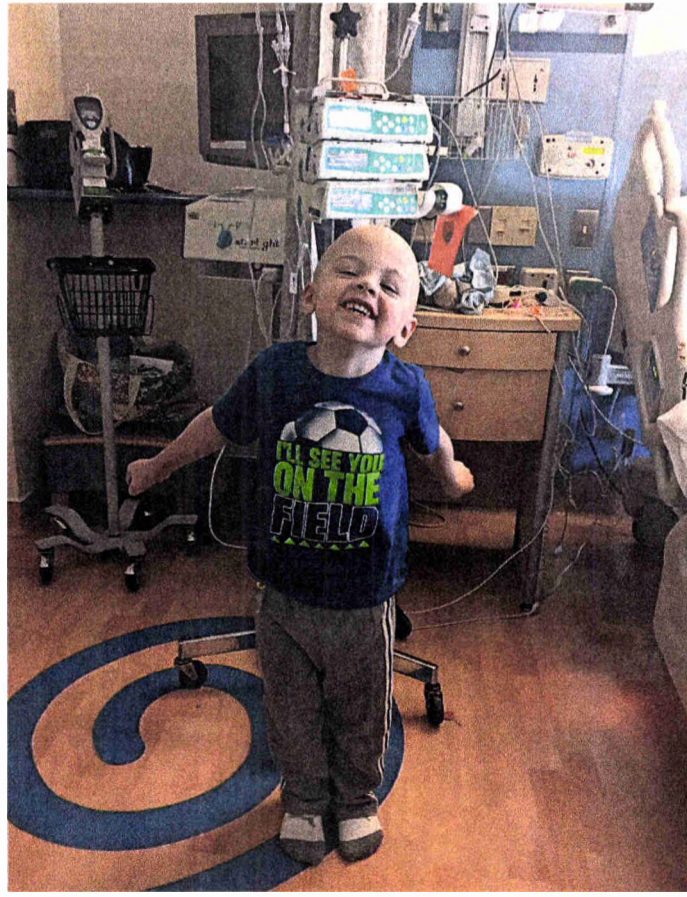
More help: You can also help at a GiveForward page set up for Kellen.

The family was devastated — twice.

"It affects, like, 1 in 100,000 children," Tracy said. "How my child could fall into those odds ... I'll never understand it."

It wasn't supposed to be that way. A week before the original diagnosis, Tracy had Kellen at the pediatrician's office for a checkup and Kellen got a clean bill of health. A week later, she dropped him off at day care and she got a

See CANCER, Page A3



Kellen Weakley has shown his natural joyfulness despite his struggle with cancer, his parents said.

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PRICE: \$1.50

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Volume 130 • Number 32

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FORFEITURE

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Although Edwards and former Clerk Nancy Conzelman have contended Plymouth Township already had repaid the drug forfeiture money for all that was owed, they nonetheless went along with a board decision, before they left office this month, to move \$83,397 from the general fund.

Joe Heffernan, a partner in the Plante Moran firm that audits township finances, has told the board that the payment should resolve financial issues cited by the DOJ for a four-year period ending Sept. 30,

2014. During that time, Plymouth Township received \$1.9 million and spent \$1.3 million in drug forfeiture dollars, money that is meant only to support law enforcement efforts.

Newly elected township Supervisor Kurt Heise has said the newly reshaped township board is expected soon to have a study session to get an update on the issue.

He and other officials are hopeful they can resolve the issue and move forward with drug forfeiture funds once again flowing to the township.

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734-972-0919

Ladies of Straight Ahead perform at the Elks

The Ladies of Straight Ahead will perform mainstream jazz, contemporary jazz, Latin and jazzy hip-hop from 7-10 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29, at the Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge 325, 41700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth

They have performed for several years, being led by bassist Marion Hayden. Hayden is well known throughout the Detroit area, nationally and internationally, having just returned from Japan. Drummer Gaylynn McKinney comes from the famous McKinney family in Detroit where her father Harold McKinney and his siblings achieved fame for



Ladies of Straight Ahead

their performances and promotion of jazz. McKinney plays a weekly gig at Bert's Marketplace in Detroit, the longest running jam session format in the area. She also recently toured with

Aretha Franklin. The band also includes Alina Moore on keys, and Kymberli Wright on vocals.

This group played at the Detroit Jazz Festival this year as well as the Michigan Jazz Festival.

Being an all girl band, they break the stereotype of the typical male-dominated jazz groups around town and they play all forms of jazz, as their name implies "Straight Ahead." Additionally, several of these ladies are very involved with organizations who work with the inner-city youth to give them the joy of music and the opportunity to learn if they have musical talents. They are wholesome, good people who are great examples of breaking race barriers to do what they love and to share it with the world.

\$10 donation at the door. Call 734-453-1780 or visit www.plyaa325.

PLYMOUTH OBSERVER

Published Sunday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Media

Community Office:

29725 Hudson Drive • Novi, MI 48377 • 866-887-2737
Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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Subscription Rates:

Newsstand price: \$1.50 Thursday and \$1.50 Sunday
\$8.25 EZ pay per month
\$52.00 six months
\$104.00 per year
\$91.00 six months mail delivery
\$182.00 per year mail delivery

Home Delivery:

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Visit White House Yuletides at Plymouth museum

The Plymouth Historical Museum invites families and friends to gather for a look at the festive new "Yuletide at the White House" special holiday exhibit.

The Member Preview Night for "Yuletide at the White House" drew a record crowd of more than 160 people on Wednesday, Nov. 16.

"This was our largest crowd ever for an exhibit preview," said Liz Kerstens, executive director. "It was a perfect kickoff to the holiday season."

Families are encouraged to visit the museum to experience the holiday traditions of our first families from the whimsical story of Lincoln's

pardoning of the first Thanksgiving Turkey, to the touching story of Andrew Jackson's nieces and nephews making him cry on Christmas morning. For those who enjoy the peculiar: learn how children were banned from sledding on the Capital grounds for 40 years.

"The museum is decked out in red ribbons, garland and Christmas tree lights," said Kerstens. "It's a beautiful time to visit."

The exhibit officially opened to the public on Nov. 18 and runs through Dec. 31 with two "Free Days" scheduled. "We've been working with businesses and community

sponsors to increase the number of free admission events on our calendar so that everyone has a chance to visit," Kerstens said. "Come and delight in the festive holiday atmosphere and be sure to come back Saturdays and Sundays from Nov. 26 to Dec. 18 for pictures with Santa! No lines here."

The next free day is 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Dec. 3: Craft Bazaar, Open House and Bake Sale. The Craft Bazaar is a juried show that is free and open to the public and includes free admission to the museum and all exhibits. The Bazaar will feature a bake sale, and many crafts, such as

knit, ceramic, jewelry, and recycled art. Santa will be there too, so bring the whole family!

The museum is located in downtown Plymouth at 155 S. Main Street. Hours of operation are Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.. Regular admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. Visit www.plymouthhistory.org for events and exhibit information.

The Plymouth Historical Museum is a privately funded organization dedicated to preserving, teaching, and presenting history through the operation and support of the museum.

CAREER

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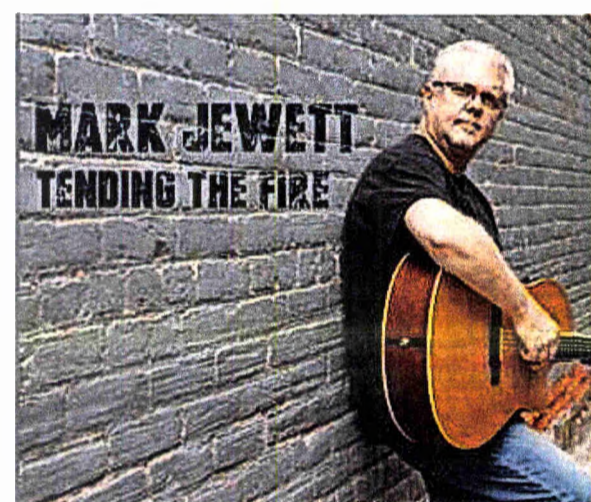
ed a songwriting conference in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It was there he encountered a variety of local musicians, including "Detroit music legend" Jill Jack.

Jack, a well-known singer songwriter who has toured with a variety of musicians from Bob Seger, Chris Isaak, Emmylou Harris and many more, encouraged Jewett to take a leap of faith.

"She pulled me aside and said, 'you need to do this,'" Jewett said, crediting "amazingly supportive local musicians" for spurring him on.

Renewed and inspired, Jewett returned home from the conference and began writing songs in every moment of his spare time. Working with Detroit Music Award-winning producer Nolan Mendenhall and a cast of local musicians, Jewett was able to complete his album, a collection of songs that runs the gamut of musical moods from deep introspection to self-deprecating humor and genres from folk Americana to rock, country and blues.

"All in all, the sequence of events since 2008 has been very unlikely and the timing, speed and impact of this journey are sometimes hard for me to grasp. The result has been life changing. The past eight years have been pretty amazing. I have done this all part-time while working, raising a family and doing life," he said, adding that his new-found calling was not only a revelation to him; it also took his wife by surprise.



Plymouth Township resident Mark Jewett

"She didn't marry a musician; this isn't who I was when I married her. I am very fortunate; she has been extremely supportive," he said, adding that his children have also been very encouraging.

Although finding the time to devote to his music has been challenging, the positive feedback he has received has been motivating. "I have had other artists express an interest in cutting my songs for their own albums. I still have almost 40 unfinished songs, and there is inspiration all around," he said.

Jewett is hopeful that his new endeavor might inspire others at a crossroads in life. "I feel like this is a story that might

give people hope when they are otherwise feeling like they've reached a dead end. I am re-energized and more excited than I've been in decades."

He also has words of advice to offer others: "If there's something that you have been wanting to do, don't wait until you feel ready - just do it. Life is too short. We don't really know how many days we have left - just do it," he said.

Jewett's CD Release Celebration Concert is scheduled for 8 p.m. on Jan 6, 2017 at the Trinity House Theatre in Livonia. Tickets are \$15 (\$12 for Trinity House members) and are available at trinityhousetheatre.org/upcoming-shows.

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CANCER

Continued from Page A1

call that afternoon that the staff "was concerned" about some slight swelling around Kellen's right eye.

The next morning, the eye was "pushing up," according to Tracy, who immediately called the doctor. The pediatrician referred them to an ophthalmologist, who ordered an MRI.

"And the nightmare began," Tracy said, wiping away tears.

They got the diagnosis no parent wants to hear: stage 4 neuroblastoma, five tumors, including the one that was pushing his eye upward - "Thank God for that, because there weren't any other symptoms," Tracy said - and one the size of a potato in his adrenal gland.

"We walked out of the pediatrician's office (the week before) with a healthy baby," a stunned Tracy said. "Everything physically appeared fine."

Two years of treatment followed, including trials for his kind of cancer, immunotherapy and eight rounds of chemotherapy. The treatment even took Kellen to the Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids.

In April, after months of treatment and testing and a grudging reluctance to declare Kellen in remission, DeVos doctors finally gave the Weakleys the news they'd longed to hear: Kellen was clear.

"We couldn't believe it," Tracy said. "We asked to come out there and see the scan for ourselves."

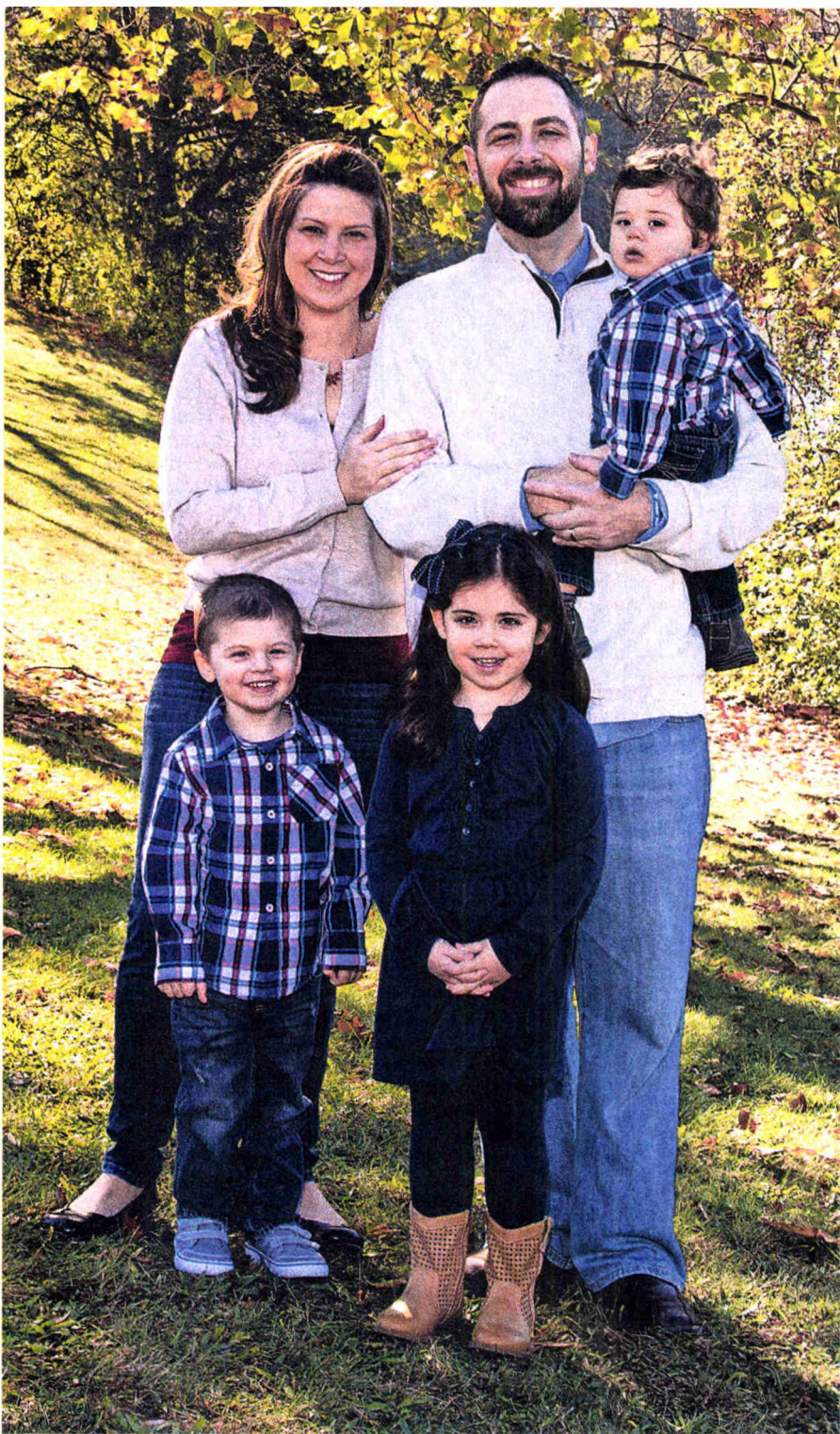
The joy was short-lived. In July, just three months after the all-clear, doctors found the cancer had returned, discovering a mass behind that same eye. The family knows the odds: Children facing the original diagnosis have a 50-percent chance of survival; that number drops to 10 percent in kids who relapse.

After two years of fighting, though, the Weakleys drew upon their shared strength and didn't allow themselves to be completely devastated.

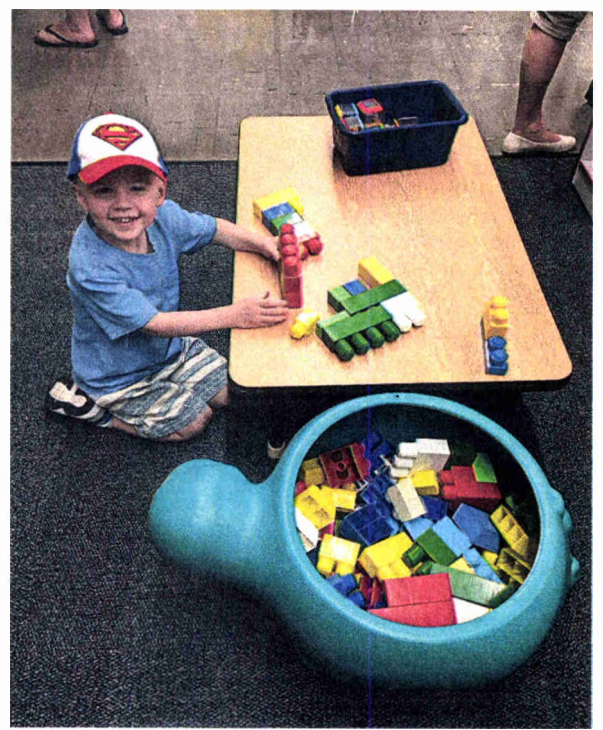
"We've learned to celebrate the small things," Tracy said. "We were glad it was just one small spot."

It's a strength that has impressed her friends, many of whom are working on fundraising ideas to help the family with the burgeoning costs of Kellen's treatment, which is now going to include about a dozen trips to the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York for immunotherapy and seven vaccines. And that's after two more rounds of chemo here in Michigan.

Tracy, who is on her second leave of absence from her job as a kindergarten teacher in Livonia schools, has to choke back tears as she struggles with what to do to help Kellen while



The Weakley family — Tracy and Ryan, with Ava, Kellen and Wyatt.



Kellen Weakley gets in some playtime while waiting for a treatment.

"The cost is going to be insane. I want to be able to help and the only way to do that, really, is financially."

LAURA MELANCON
one of Tracy Weakley's best friends

really carried us through."

The other thing that has carried the family through is Kellen himself. As much as he's been physically able to, Kellen has carried on with life, going to school when he can - "His teachers have been amazed that he could miss so much school, then come back and fit right back in," Tracy said - and showing a strength his parents call "inspiring."

"I can't believe someone who has been through so much could be so joyful," his mom said. "He doesn't really understand what's going on, but he truly in-

spired us. He's our strength."

The doctors at Sloan Kettering are hopeful, Weakley said, and they've met parents whose children have gotten the treatments Kellen is about to experience who've given the Weakleys reason for optimism. But their biggest reason is Kellen himself.

"In his four years, Kellen has taught us just to live in the moment," Tracy said. "Every day he's here is another day of hope for us."

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Twitter: @bkadrich

maintaining life for her other children.

"We're a family of five; we can't afford to take our other children (to New York). There are a lot of arrangements to be made," she said, struggling to fight back tears. "You wonder if it's the right thing to do, but what are you supposed to do?"

Laura Melancon, one of Tracy's best friends, has watched the struggle from up close. Melancon's daughter Evie and Tracy's daughter Ava were born six weeks apart and her son Owen is just a year younger than Kellen.

"The thought of your child being diagnosed with cancer ... it hit me hard," said Melancon, whose husband has been friends with Ryan Weakley since high school. "When I found out I was pregnant (with Owen), I thought, 'Oh my God, we're going to have a best friend for Kellen.'"

Melancon wanted to do something to help, but Tracy balked - for a while. Finally, Melancon went ahead and established a GiveForward page to help with expenses.

"The cost is going to be insane," she said. "I want to be able to help and the only way to do

that, really, is financially."

Sarah Davies' family has known Ryan Weakley's family forever and Sarah now has a young daughter and so can empathize with Tracy and Ryan. Like Melancon, Davies has been tugging at Tracy Weakley to let her help - "It's hard to get to a position where you have to ask for help," Tracy said - and finally began helping to organize a fundraiser.

It takes place at Peterlin's Restaurant in Farmington. The restaurant will donate 20 percent of proceeds from lunch, dinner and carry-out meals from Dec. 1 to the Weakleys.

"Watching them go through this experience the last two years has been heart-breaking," said Davies, a Livonia resident. "I can't cure cancer. I wish I could, so you think, 'What can I do?'"

Tracy's first reaction when she heard about the GiveForward page was to tell Melancon "to call all of those people and have them take their money back." But the family has since come to accept that there really are people out there who want simply to help.

"The surprising thing was that perfect strang-

ers were helping," Tracy said. "We're so grateful. To have this kindness ...

Check us out on the Web every day at hometownlife.com

Ask Dr. Stewart



Dr. James Stewart is a general dentist practicing in Livonia, MI. Today he discusses the effect breastfeeding may have on the development of a baby's mouth.

BREASTFEEDING AND BABY'S MOUTH

Dear Dr. Stewart: I've heard that breastfeeding my baby can help with the development of their mouth. Is this true?

Dr. Stewart: Yes. Several studies have concluded that exclusively breast fed babies are at a decreased risk of dental malocclusion (the misalignment of the teeth and jaws). Why is this? While no definitive link has been found, the association might be explained by the fact that breastfeeding requires the baby to move her jaws and tongue in a way that helps develop the mouth. Breastfeeding also requires the use of jaw muscles more so than bottle-feeding, helping to develop muscle tone in the jaw. This use of muscles, especially from the tongue, can help promote proper nasal breathing rather than mouth breathing. Mouth breathing has been linked to health problems. Of course, this doesn't mean that all bottle-fed babies won't enjoy proper mouth development and as a mother, you should choose the option that works best for you and your baby.

If you have a question about your oral health and what you can do to enjoy a healthier smile and higher quality of life, contact Dr. James Stewart by calling (734) 425-4400 or visiting his website at jamesstewartdds.com.

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Forever After Productions staging 'A Christmas Carol'

Forever After Productions will perform "A Christmas Carol - The Musical" at the PARC in Plymouth, 650 Church St., with an opening Thursday, Dec. 1.

A holiday classic that is great entertainment for the whole family, "A Christmas Carol - the Musical" is based on the Charles Dickens novel with music by Alan Menke and poignant lyrics by Lynn Ahrens. The show tells the story of how miserable old Ebenezer Scrooge journeys back through his life with the help of the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future and finally manages to recapture his Christmas spirit.

"This is definitely our favorite production of our season," said Shirley Auty, office administrator and Blind Old Hag in the play. "We love



Ghosts of Christmas Present, Past and Future are played by Maura Doyle (South Lyon), Brandon Waldenmayer (Canton) and Shirley Auty (Canton) with Chris Plum as Scrooge (Plymouth).

having new families join us for the holiday fun along with some super

cast members that return year after year!" "A Christmas Carol" is

composed of cast members ages 6-75. This is Forever After's

fifth annual performance of the production. New this year is Chris Plum of Plymouth playing the role of Ebenezer Scrooge. His daughter Claire plays the role of Mr. Smythe's daughter.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to play Scrooge with this talented cast but to have Claire in it as well makes it very special for me," Chris Plum said. "Having played the role of Bill Sykes in 'Oliver' a few years ago, and a couple of years touring in the UK I was somewhat familiar with the British accent but it's been fun to revisit it."

Familiar aspects of the show include the songs "Link by Link," "Fezziwig's Annual Christmas Ball" and "Christmas Together." This show is suitable for all ages with something for everyone — acting,

singing and choreography from Dance Beat dancers.

Forever After Productions is a community theater company based in Plymouth. Since 2009, it has produced more than 45 full-stage musical and dramatic productions throughout metro Detroit, including the Power Center in Ann Arbor, The Berman Center in West Bloomfield and The Village Theater in Canton.

General admission tickets are \$10 and are currently on sale for all six performances: 7 p.m. Dec. 1; 7 p.m. Dec. 2; 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Dec. 3; and 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Dec. 4. Buy tickets at the door, online at www.heartforeverafter.com or by calling Shirley at Forever After Productions 734-547-5156.

Lawyers take pies in the face, challenge others to do the same

Attorneys at Southfield-based Goodman Acker took a "whipping" last week, but it was all for a good cause.

Goodman Acker attorneys and staff are taking part in the #WhipCancer challenge, with a goal to help raise funds and awareness for pediatric cancer.

One of out of five children diagnosed with childhood cancers have their lives cut far too short. Goodman Acker has joined the #WhipCancer challenge and all funds raised will go to the Pediatric Oncology department at the DMC Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit.

"Cancer is a disease that touches the lives of millions of people and their families. Our ef-



Jerry Acker (left) attempts to put a pie in Berry Goodman's face.

orts in the #WhipCancer challenge are a success if they help spread the message, support the

fight to block out childhood cancer and further groundbreaking research," senior partner



Cyndi Corey (left) puts a pie in Elizabeth Rhodes' face.

Jerry Acker said. For those wanting to donate to the Pediatric Oncology department at the DMC Children's Hospital of Michigan, please make checks payable to

CHM Foundation, "oncology" on the subject line of check. Checks can be dropped off or mailed to the Goodman Acker, P.C. office, attention Kathryn Kunst. Donations are

tax-deductible. The Children's Hospital of Michigan Foundation will mail out an acknowledgment letter once the challenge is complete.

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Residents feel county response to residential water crisis is lacking

Maria Taylor
Correspondent

Troy Anderson was standing on the basement landing, helping his wife with a load of laundry, when he first noticed the smell. A smell like rotten eggs, coming from the washing machine.

As the water kept running, Anderson started feeling dizzy. Then he blacked out and fell down the stairs.

Anderson is allergic to sulfur and that smell — and the fall — meant a trip to the hospital for 47 stitches in his leg. One year later, he's about 90 percent recovered. But his water still smells like sulfur.

He's not the only one in Farmington Hills with a water problem, either. Anderson lives in the Greencastle subdivision where, since last fall, residents have reported foul-smelling water, sediment in their tubs and toilets and black sludge coming out of their faucets.

Residents in Greencastle and neighboring areas are blaming their problems on an Oakland County tunnel project on Middlebelt, stretching from Interstate 696 to 13 Mile Road. It's an underground storm drain, designed to reduce sewer overflows during heavy rainfall.

Ever since fall 2015, two million gallons of groundwater have been pumped out of the area each day so that construction work can carry on. However, since the de-watering began, Greencastle residents have complained of wells drying up. And many who do have water say



Resident Melanie Williams poses for a photo with a poster she made. Some 48 houses marked red are impacted.

JUNFU HAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

it's not safe to drink.

At first, a lot of them thought it was a fluke. Dan McRoberts was taking a shower back in May when the water suddenly stopped. The well had slowed to a trickle and the system had drained the holding tank dry.

McRoberts called the county and workers came out two weeks later and drilled another well. "They're looking at 15 gallons a minute for water flow, in order to call it a successful well," he said. "It produced three

gallons a minute and it was salty."

It took 2½ months for him to get a crew out to dig another well. That one wasn't much better — and it was still salty. In the end, he ended up piggybacking off a county water main in the next subdivision over, via a one-inch pipe called a spaghetti line.

At a city council meeting last month, project manager Joel Brown said the county, in an attempt to mitigate the problem, has:

» Drilled 19 new wells

for homeowners.

» Put four residents on temporary water tanks.

» Connected two homes to municipal water, with plans to add three more.

» Performed water quality testing.

Water Resources Commissioner Jim Nash took the brunt of the blame at that same meeting, even going so far as to hand out his cellphone number.

"If you're going to blame someone, blame me," Nash said, while giving out his cell num-

ber. "It's not the city's fault."

McRoberts is president of the Greencastle homeowners association, so he's been acting as the go-between for his neighbors and the Oakland County Water Resources Commission. A lot of the residents, himself included, said they've been frustrated by delays. The project was supposed to be done in four months, but it's dragged on for more than a year. And residents feel like the WRC isn't giving them the attention they de-

serve.

"It seems like the only thing they (the WRC) care about is water flow — if there's water flowing, it's fine," he said.

Greencastle residents would disagree. For some who've had their water tested, the results are worrying: things like iron particles, sewage, traces of lead. Now they're scared about living with water that's contaminated.

Ken Polk's water tested positive for two by-

See WATER, Page A6

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WATER

Continued from Page A5

products found in gasoline: ethylbenzene and xylene. Both amounts are below the EPA's standards, but the fact that they're there at all gives him cause for concern. He's been working with Joel Brown, project manager for the Middlebelt tunnel, and the project's insurance lawyer, and, so far, he's had nothing but positive things to say. His home will likely be getting a carbon filtration system, which should keep the chemicals out.

Melanie Williams is secretary of the homeowners association. She's heard all the complaints and she said Polk's case is the exception, not the norm.

Justin Droste was the first to lose water pressure, back in mid-September 2015. He ended up getting a new well drilled, which he said has served him fine. That is, until two weeks ago, when a test for lead came back at twice the EPA's limit.

"My heart kind of stopped," he said. "We drink a lot of bottled water, but all my coffee is right from the tap" — not to mention things like showers, cooking, and washing dishes.

The new well was drilled in January. "So anywhere from January until now, it could have been ..." he said, trailing off.

Jeff Junttonen, who's lived in Greencastle for 10 years, has a different problem: His well is contaminated with coliform, a bacteria found in human waste.

Junttonen's well failed when the water table was lowered for the tunnel project. So the WRC dug it deeper. Fast forward about a year, and he started to have issues with water pressure, smell and sediment backing up into the laundry. "I started to have gray socks, gray underwear," he said. "They came back out and lowered the well again, subsequently came out and tested the water and they told me I had this coliform."

A couple of weeks ago, someone came out and put chlorine in the well, which was supposed to solve the coliform issue. It didn't. Now, he's living off bottled water supplied by the county.

Many of his neighbors are, too. Some eight or 10 families have water tanks in their front yards, standing out stark-



Two water tanks outside of resident Justin Droste's house.

JUNFU HAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

ly white against the grayish-brown brick of the houses. But that water isn't safe for drinking.

"It comes from a fire hydrant, gets put into a water truck," McRoberts said. "It's brought in multiple times a week and fed into the several-hundred-gallon tanks via a little hose. If you want to drink it, you have to boil it."

Some residents don't want to use the tank water at all. One man, a 91-year-old veteran, takes showers with bottled water. Anderson rinses dishes with bottled water after washing them, although he still has to wash his clothes in well water. Soap doesn't lather up like it normally would, so he's taken to using three times the normal amount of water softener. Even then, the clean clothes still smell bad.

Junttonen's kids, ages 5 and 15, won't take a shower or go anywhere near the water. Not so with pets, though, and he worries about the golden retriever puppy he got last year. "He had all this coccidian — I had to take him in for several dewormings," he said. While nothing can be proven, he said, "You just start to wonder."

Rachel Kellert isn't taking any chances. "We brush our teeth with bottled water now," she said. "We shower at our parents' house. We go there to do laundry, cook food — I'm afraid."

Kellert's well failed last October and, since there was no water left, it started pumping up sludge and sediment. There was sludge in the water

heater, coming out of the faucets. "It was completely unlivable," she said. Things got so bad that she and her husband Adam had to move to a hotel for 2½ months while everything was replaced and a new well was dug.

When the Kellerts returned, they still had to change their water filters every month, but they were glad to be home. Then Monday, it started to happen again: Adam turned on the shower and black water started coming out.

He grabbed his phone and made a video. It was 8:25 a.m. "I was flipping out," he said. "It's scary s--."

The blackness in the water comes and goes, he said. He flipped on the tub faucet to demonstrate. At first, the water seemed clear enough. But as the tub filled, black grains started to cluster around the drain and at the top of the water level. Within minutes, a stench like rotting eggs filled the bathroom. Adam said the water tastes really bad — bitter and sour.

Out in the Kellerts' front yard, the pump that's causing all the problems stands prominently near the front walk, about 15 feet from the house. Further toward the street is a long patch of dirt. That's where all the sludge from the first well was pumped last year, making a pile some two feet deep. "They had to pen it in," he said. "It left little stones all over." Now grass won't grow there.

The Kellerts' property isn't the only landscape affected. At Lisa Amman's house, the front

and back yards are both torn up, along with her garden. Droste's 30- by 50-foot backyard pond has dried up into a giant empty pit. One woman had to take her house off the market because it wouldn't sell.

Down the street from her house, a row of big, round cement fixtures and a line of stakes mark the spot for a new partial water main. Around the corner, a dozen or so long black pipes, the size of telephone poles, lay stacked at the edge of the road. And all across the subdivision, yards are dotted with six- or eight-foot pits — some roped off with orange fencing, some open.

At McRoberts' house, a white sandwich-board sign near the driveway has a message for residents: "IF YOU ARE STILL HAVING ISSUES LET US KNOW." And on the reverse: "WRITE A LETTER WITH YOUR CONCERNS — PUT IT IN MY MAILBOX OR EMAIL."

It's been out for 15 months.

Some residents, like Williams, are calling it a crisis. For her and her husband, as well as for Adam and Rachel Kellert, the inconvenience has gone way past taking a shower or brushing your teeth.

Both couples want to start families. But their doctors have told them to put that decision on hold. "Now we're terrified about that," Rachel Kellert said. "A lot of the things we read about that cause miscarriages ... some of them we have."

Williams agrees with her. "At this point, this project has caused so

much stress and so much frustration and loss of peace of mind and now it's affecting our personal lives," she said. "It's not OK to have to put our lives on hold because (Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner) Jim Nash and his planning crew didn't have our safety in mind."

Like her, other Greencastle residents are wondering: Why here?

"We've got (Interstate) 696. Why couldn't they have put this along a freeway?" Amman said. "I don't understand it. (I-)275 was torn up ... they could have put it under 275. They reassure me they're going to clean up the whole mess, but it seems to me every time they try to fix something, they destroy something else."

They're also upset that the county won't say that their problems stem from the de-watering.

"They'll accept that the process is causing wells to go dry, but they won't accept the fact that the de-watering is causing these other problems," Anderson said. The WRC's insurance lawyer, for example, sent Anderson a letter stating there's no proof that his fall was a direct result of the de-watering, something Anderson found "incredible."

McRoberts and Williams have been keeping tally of the problems via a color-coded map of the subdivision. Of the 84 total homes, 48 have had their water impacted. Eleven want tests done, 14 are already on spaghetti lines and four are waiting for a new partial water main that will bring them county water.

Residents would like to see that water main extended to bring county water to the entire subdivision, rather than tackling problems on a case-by-case basis. They've showed up to Farmington Hills City Council meetings and Oakland County Board of Commissioners meetings to plead their case.

They're also frustrated by what they see as a lack of communication on the part of the county. "(The WRC) don't know the answers themselves," McRoberts said. "They didn't know anything since day one." Originally, he said, the county thought only six houses would be affected. "They decided to make the main shorter, so they obviously know it isn't working," he said. "It doesn't take an expert to realize they screwed up."

McRoberts is annoyed at Nash in particular, citing long waits for test results and what he and his neighbors call a wait-and-see attitude. "One of our biggest things is, (Nash) says that everything is resolved," McRoberts said. "Being on temporary tanks is not a resolution. Having people without test results is not a resolution."

Several Farmington Hills council members have called for action and Oakland County Commissioner Bill Dwyer introduced a resolution in late October pressing the WRC to act quickly in completing the project.

For its part, the WRC contends it has acted in good faith by drilling new wells and providing temporary water tanks to residents, connecting homes to the municipal water system and testing for water quality.

McRoberts accused the WRC of putting its insurance company's bottom line over the safety of the residents.

"At this time, they do not want to spend any more money than they have to," McRoberts said.

"To install a water main and hook up everyone is estimated to be \$2 million. The Oakland County general fund budget is over \$400 million. If you really think about it, it's just a drop in the bucket; \$2 million to make sure that 85 homes have safe, clean drinking water?"

Williams put it more succinctly: "I really can't believe that the lives of Oakland County residents aren't worth more than the cost of extending the line."

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November Livonia veteran of the month

Alan Berry, Vietnam/Desert Storm/Gulf War Era veteran of Livonia, was honored as the November 2016 "Veteran of the Month" by the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 32, of the Myron H. Beals American Legion Post 32 in Livonia.

Alan Berry served a total of 23 years in the service from 1961 to 1997. He was born in Watseka, Ill., and moved to California when he was 6. He was living in Walnut Creek, Calif., in 1961 when he turned 18. Congress passed the Reserve Forces Act of 1955 with the aim of improving National Guard and Federal Reserve Component readiness. It mandated a six-year service commitment, in a combination of reserve and active duty time.

Alan's father told him that it would be better to sign-up rather than be drafted as he could pick his branch of service. He went to the Navy recruitment and signed up for the Navy Reserves and was told to be back to the recruitment office at 7:30 the next morning. As soon as he arrived at the center he was put on a train to Camp Nimitz in San Diego for 6 weeks of basic training. He was then assigned to the U.S.S. Dixie AD-14 as part of the deck force and honor guard.

The U.S.S. Dixie was a Cruiser Destroyer Tender. It was 530 feet long and had a crew of more than 1,250. It contained all the manuals and parts to repair any Cruiser or Destroyer in the Pacific fleet. From February to June of 1961 she was at Mare Island Navy Shipyard near Vallejo, Calif., for a complete facelift with a new Helicopter flight deck and hanger as well as parts and manuals to be able to repair the latest weapon systems.

Alan joined the U.S.S. Dixie 1961 as she prepared to assume the du-



Alan Berry was honored as Veteran of the Month by the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 32.

PICASA

ties of flagship for Commander Cruiser Destroyer Forces US Pacific Fleet. In February 1962 she departed San Diego for 8 months duty in the Western Pacific. While in the Pacific they earned the Combat Efficiency Award when they set a record by simultaneously refueling by high-lining two destroyers at sea.

"It was quite an accomplishment and we were all relieved and proud when it was over," recalled Alan. On Feb. 20 they were sent to rescue a 34 foot sailboat 180 miles south of Tokyo in 14 foot seas with 50 knot winds. Alan was on watch at 6:30 a.m. when he spotted the sailboat.

"I could see the flickering of his signal mirror, he had been adrift for 14 days," said Alan. "It took us three hours to get him aboard." They returned to San Diego in September 1962 when she was relieved by her sister ship U.S.S. Prairie AD-15. Alan served out the rest of his time in San Diego and was on the ships basketball team. In February 1963 Alan finished his 2 years of active service, was then put on the Active Status List and returned to his job at Kaiser Gypsum.

In 1976 Alan was laid off from his job at ACE Hardware's Warehouse. His wife was 9 months pregnant and he had no

job. Distraught, he knew he had to do something and fast. He went to the Air Force recruitment center to discuss his options. The recruiter told him that he could join the A.F. Reserves and did not have to go to basic training again. He joined and was assigned to Travis AFB, only an hour from where he lived. He wanted to be a Mechanic but was assigned to a Field Maintenance Squadron. Alan spent the next 21 years in the reserves. Every month he spent a weekend at Travis AFB and he spent 2 weeks each year at different Air Force bases all over the world relieving base personnel

in field operation.

"I was very fortunate and spent time at bases in Hawaii, Spain, Germany, Philippines, Korea and Japan," Alan commented. "We basically ran the base by taking care of scheduling and loading of cargo and passengers." In early 1991 Alan joined a reserve unit that was sent to Tinker AF Base, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to assist in moving a large amount of armament and supplies to Riyadh and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia in support of Desert Storm. "All the supplies had to be manifested, sorted and shipped ASAP", noted Alan, "the base was run mostly by civilians

and the stuff was just sitting there and no one was moving it."

In 1996 Alan signed up for 90 days of active duty and was sent to Bosnia. He was a Tech. Sergeant and was supervising the loading of a 9,500 pound pallet of supplies when the pallet got stuck in the cargo bay opening. He was inside the plane's cargo bay when the pallet broke loose and trapped his foot between the pallet and a roller rail. All the toes on his foot were broken and his foot was smashed. Alan spent 3 months in rehab. He returned to duty and spent the next year at Travis AFB. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force in 1997.

Alan's wife was from Michigan and they moved to Canton, Dearborn and finally Livonia where he has lived for the past 16 years. Alan retired from McKesson Pharmaceutical in 2008. He has 2 children and 10 grandchildren. He has been a member of American Legion Post 32 since 2009.

Alan was interviewed by members of the S.A.L. Veteran of the Month Committee. A DVD was made of the interview and shown at the November S.A.L. membership meeting. Alan attended the meeting and was given a standing ovation for his service. A plaque was presented to Alan from Livonia Trophy with his picture and service information. An additional plaque was also put on display in the vestibule of the American Legion Hall.

The S.A.L. invites local residents to attend their monthly meetings to listen to the Veteran of the Month. The public is also encouraged and to nominate veterans to be honored at its meetings. Nomination forms can be picked up at the American Legion Hall, 9318 Newburgh Road, Livonia.

Meeting this Thursday to discuss Ann Arbor Road construction

David Veselenak
hometownlife.com

The state of Michigan is running out of trunklines in Livonia on which to do construction. The organization will hold a meeting Dec. 1 to discuss its next project within the city, reconstruction of part of Old M-14 between Newburgh and Market.

The Michigan Department of Transportation will hold an informational meeting regarding the work along parts of Ann Arbor Road and Plymouth Road, which is part of Old M-14, 4-7 p.m. Dec. 1 at Livonia City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Dr. The meeting is open to anyone interested in the project and will also include a presentation at 6 p.m.

The proposed work will consist of the reconstruction of the road in that area and will also include:

- » Adding right-turn lanes on Newburgh Road
- » Replacing the Old M-14 bridge over the Middle Rouge River and the Hines Drive bridge over Old M-14

» A new sidewalk along the west side of Old M-14, from Newburgh Road to Plymouth Road

» A paved pathway connecting the Old M-14 sidewalk and Hines Drive pathway

There was no word on when work on the road or bridges would begin. Old M-14 consists of Plymouth Road from Telegraph to the Ann Arbor Road/Plymouth Road fork in Livonia. It continues along Ann Arbor

Road to the Wayne County/Washtenaw County border at Napier Road.

MDOT has done a lot of projects in the Livonia area recently: resurfacing of Plymouth Road took place from Farmington to Market in 2012 and Interstate 96 from Telegraph in Redford Township to Newburgh in Livonia was reconstructed in 2014. Work crews also recently completed construction on I-275 through Livonia and Farmington Hills this past summer.

In addition, work is planned to take place along Plymouth Road from Telegraph to Farmington in 2017 for resurfacing.

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1. Article II. Definitions.
Sec. 78-21, Definitions,
2. Article XVII. Schedule of Regulations.
Sec. 78-190, Limiting Height, Bulk, Density, and Area by Zoning District
Sec. 78-191, Notes to Schedule

All interested persons are invited to attend.

In accordance with the Americans with disabilities Act, the City of Plymouth will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting/hearing, to individuals with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids or services may be made by writing or calling the following:

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WAYNE COUNTY EVENTS CALENDAR

Toys & Trains: Railroadiana

The Ss. Simon and Jude Ushers' Club will sponsor a buy-and-swap Railroadiana Train Show from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 27, at the Ss. Simon & Jude Catholic Church Social Hall, 32500 Palmer Road, between Merriman and Venoy Roads, Westland.

There will be approximately 100 dealer tables available. The cost is \$10 for an 8-foot table. Dealer set up is 9 a.m. on the day of the show, and complimentary coffee and doughnuts will be available for dealers until 10:30 a.m. Food will also be available to the public. Admission is \$2 per person and \$4 per family. Parking is free.

For more information, call Bob at 734-728-1247 or Norm at 734-595-8327.

Vintage toy show

A vintage toy show is set for 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sunday Nov. 27, at Livonia Elks Hall, 31117 Plymouth Road. Admission is \$5; kids under 12 are free. Items may include Hot Wheels, comic books, games, non-sport cards, Star Trek, Star Wars, music memorabilia, posters, Records, autographs, beer and pop items, GI Joes, and much more. For more information, call Jacque at 586-329-8213.

Stuff a SWAT truck

The Westland Police are assisting the Westland Goodfellows with their "No Child without a Christmas" by holding a "Stuff a SWAT Truck" 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 27, at the Target store, 35401 Warren Road in Westland. The goal is to fill an entire Swat truck with presents for children in need during this holiday season. Stop by and help fill the truck with gifts for children that might otherwise be without.

Detox your home

Jennifer Kelly will offer personal and home



The Harmonyhouse Chorus will perform its Christmas concert, Sunday, Dec. 11.

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cleaning products for a healthier home and life at "Detox Your Home" at 1 p.m., Monday, Nov. 28, at Livonia Alfred Noble Library, 32901 Plymouth Road, Livonia.

Christmas tour

Livonia's 28th annual Christmas Walk/Home Tour, sponsored by the Friends of Greenmead, will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3. Tickets are \$10 or \$9 in advance and are available at Greenmead Historical Park, Livonia City Hall (Community Resources, 5th Floor), all Livonia public libraries, or from any member of the Friends of Greenmead. The tour will feature four private homes, St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox Church, and the Simmons/Hill House and the A.J. Geer store on the Greenmead grounds. (Start your walk at Greenmead.) All proceeds benefit the restoration of Greenmead Historical Park. For more information, call 248-477-7375.

After work with the Rep

State Rep. Leslie Love, D-Detroit, will host her

"After Work with the Rep" to provide people with 9-to-5 work schedules an opportunity to meet with her and get legislative updates. This is the final legislative update of the year. The event is scheduled for 5-7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5, at Michno's Café, 25524 Five Mile Road in Redford Township. Refreshments will be provided.

Jazz at the Elks

Jazz @ The Elks presents an all female group, Straight Ahead, from 7-10 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29, at the Plymouth Ann Arbor Elks Lodge 325, 41700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth. The band's sound ranges from mainstream jazz, contemporary jazz, Latin and jazzy hip-hop. The group is led by Marion Hayden on bass with Gayelynn McKinney on drums, Alina Moore on keys, and Kymberli Wright on vocals.

Jazz@the Elks is on the last Tuesday of the month. There is a \$10 donation at the door, which includes hors d'oeuvres. Enjoy jazz in a listening room setting close to the entertainers.

For more information, call 734-453-1780 or

visit www.plymouthharbor-elks325.com or email jazzat-theelks@gmail.com.

LPS Foundation luncheon

WDIV-TV news anchor Devin Scillian is the keynote speaker at the seventh annual Livonia Public Schools Education Foundation luncheon set for noon to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29, at St. Mary's Cultural and Banquet Center, 18100 Merriman Road, north of Six Mile, Livonia. Tickets are \$50 each or \$500 for a table of 10. Tickets may be purchased through PayPal at www.LPSFoundation.org or by check, payable to LPS Education Foundation, 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia. The luncheon host is WJR sports director Steve Courtney.

Art of Giving sale

The Farber Soul Center hosts the "Art of Giving Holiday Sale" at the center, 5586 Drake Road in West Bloomfield, from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8. A "donor preview" runs from 5-6 p.m. with the sale starting at 6 p.m.

Soul Studio's inaugural holiday sale is an art lover's shopping event, featuring amazing art and merchandise for your gift season. The studio will be filled with unique and original works of art, prints, ceramics and weavings. Get a first look at new works for sale and a sneak preview at current works under construction.

In addition to selected new artworks, you'll find a remarkable assortment of new Soul Studio products and merchandise including prints, posters, greeting cards, tee shirts, water bottles, sketchbooks, tote bags, and more - all featuring the artwork of our over 50 studio artists.

Ladywood 5K fundraiser

Ladywood High School will host a community wide 5K to raise funds for scholarships, at 9 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 10. The 5K includes an exclusive route and beautiful

scenery on the grounds behind Ladywood High School in Livonia. Registration cost for the run/walk, is \$30 for adults, \$25 for students, \$15 for kids 12 and under, and kids 5 and under are free. To receive a free T-shirt, all registrations should be in by Nov. 29. To register online, print a paper registration, and/or learn more about the 5K, please visit ladywood.org/campus-life/blaze-trail-5k-run-walk/. If your business is interested in sponsorship opportunities, please call Dawn Conn at 734-591-1544 x237.

Mike Modano Ice Arena open

Stop by and check out the new and newly renovated locker rooms and the other significant improvements at the Mike Modano Ice Arena. Open skates will be every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:30-3:20 p.m. The ever popular glow skate will be held every Friday from 7-9:20 p.m. Timbits can learn to play hockey every Saturday morning from 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. and anyone can come get skating lessons Mondays from 5:50 p.m., Fridays from 6-6:50 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:30-11:20 a.m. There are adult drop in times every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1-2:50 p.m. Ice is available to rent after 10 p.m. for \$150/hour.

Livonia Towne Club

The Livonia Towne Club, a nonprofit women's organization bringing together women for social interaction meets the fourth Thursday of each month September through May (except in November and December when it's held on the second Thursday).

The club meets for lunch and a program at different restaurants in Livonia and surrounding areas. The program could be an informative speaker, bingo, fashion show, music entertainment and more. The next luncheon is Dec. 2 with entertainment from a local accordion musician.

For more information, call Vicki at 734-591-3254 for more information.

Franklin High library teen book fair

The high school library will have a book fair Dec. 9-13 at Barnes & Noble, 17111 Haggerty, Northville Township. Teens are encouraged to participate in the Harry Potter Magical Holiday Ball - dressed in a favorite character - and dance until you drop. The store and cafe will be open. A percentage of Barnes & Noble sales will benefit the Franklin High School library. If you can't make it and wish to donate, go to bn.com/bookfairs Dec. 9-13. Enter Bookfair ID12026894 at checkout.

Holiday Harmonies

The Harmonytown Chorus will perform "Holiday Harmonies," its eighth annual Christmas show at 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 11, at the Livonia Public Library Auditorium, on Five Mile, east of Farmington Road. This year's show has an alphabetical treatment the chorus celebrates the Christmas season from A to Z.

Tickets are \$6 for adults; \$3 for students 12-18; children 12 and younger are free. To purchase tickets go to WeSingBarbershop.com or call 734-743-1764.

Broomstick Pool Tournament fundraiser

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 32 will host a Broomstick Pool Tournament fundraiser beginning at noon, Saturday, Dec. 17, at the Myron H. Beals Post 32, 9318 Newburgh Road, Livonia. The cost is \$10 per entrant, with a light lunch included. Register by calling Jerry "mouse" Lundquist 248-310-1775. The public is welcome.

New Year's Eve Party!

Celebrate the New Year at beginning at 7 p.m., Dec. 31, at the AM Vets Memorial Hall, 1217 Merriman Road, Westland. The cost is \$30 each or \$50 per couple. The ticket includes dinner, dancing, pizza snack at midnight, and one bottle of champagne per table at midnight.

Tickets available at [AMVETS Post 171](http://AMVETSPost171), 734-765-0716.

Town Hall speakers

The Livonia Town Hall has announced speakers for its 52nd season:

» Jan. 18: Writer Doug Stanton, who will relate his writing on travel adventures and political pieces from national publications.

» March 15: Best-selling author Denise Kiernan will discuss how she wrote "The Girls of the Atomic City."

Tickets are \$150 for the season, which includes lunch and lecture, or \$180 for priority seating. Programs are held at 10:30 a.m. at St. Mary's Cultural Center, 18100 Merriman, in Livonia. Call 734-751-1898 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for tickets.

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Kaylee Diehl greets her dad, Sgt. Michael Diehl, just back from Iraq.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Westland soldier surprises daughters at school

David Veselenak
hometownlife.com

Sgt. Michael Diehl walked briskly past the rows of elementary school students clapping for him Tuesday afternoon at Schweitzer Elementary School in Westland. He was looking forward to a big family reunion with his daughters, whom he had not seen this past year.

"I haven't seen them in a while," said Diehl, who has spent the better part of the last year deployed to the Middle East with the U.S. Army. "I missed them."

Educators at the school on Glenwood, along with Diehl's wife Ashley, organized the surprise appearance by Diehl at the school Tuesday afternoon. A banner welcoming Diehl, who also attended Schweitzer, hung outside the main doors and many students and family members at the school lined up outside and in the hallway to greet him before he surprised his two children, including one who is in kindergarten at the school.

During a lesson on leadership in his daughter Kaylee's classroom, he walked through the door when the teacher began talking about leadership with members of the military. She grabbed on and hugged him for several moments before she and her classmates went across the hallway to perform a mini-concert for Diehl.

Michael Diehl said he will be on leave for a few days until after the Thanksgiving holiday. He said he'll then return to Fort Campbell.

Kristen Brickey, the principal at Schweitzer, said she hadn't seen something like the visit during her time at the school and said it was a unique experience to see. "We've both been here for five years and nothing like this has happened," she said.

Ashley Diehl said she had spoken with her oldest daughter's teacher,



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sgt. Michael Diehl enters the school he attended as a child to meet his daughter Kaylee Diehl, a kindergarten student at Schweitzer Elementary.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kaylee Diehl has big hugs for dad, Sgt. Michael Diehl.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kaylee Diehl and her dad, Sgt. Michael Diehl, reconnect. Three-year-old Emma, overwhelmed by the event, goes back to the arms of mom Ashley Diehl.

Meredith Bylo, who came up with the idea of surprising Kaylee with a visit from her dad after his deployment to Iraq. "It was just complete excitement," she said. "It was actually her teacher who started putting this

idea of surprising her." And Michael Diehl's daughter wasn't the only one surprised; he said he wasn't expecting all the fanfare when he arrived to the school with the students all waiting for him in the hallway. It was something, he admitted, that he wasn't used to. "I normally don't like

the attention," he said.

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PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL PREVIEW - PART 1

It's Young's town now at Salem

As upbeat veteran coach takes over Rocks, he's glad to have trio of senior captains helping him

Tim Smith
hometownlife.com

Dan Young jumped around the Salem High School gymnasium with unbounded joy and enthusiasm during his new team's practice.

There were uptempo drills and plenty of two-way conversations as the new Salem varsity girls basketball coach and his players get to know each other ahead of the 2016-17 season. The Rocks open Wednesday at Farmington Hills Mercy.

"I know we have really good teams

we have to play against," Young said. "I don't know how we're going to stack up until we start playing them. We're going to focus on us and get good."

It's been two decades since Young coached high school girls basketball, although he was at the helm of boys hoop teams at Westland John Glenn as recently as 2013-14.

"I coached girls with Bob Blohm back when I was the Canton boys coach back in the 90s (when girls and boys seasons alternated)," Young said. "But I



TIM SMITH

See ROCKS, Page B2

New Salem girls basketball coach Dan Young holds court with players during a recent practice.

PREP GIRLS BASKETBALL PREVIEW - PART 1

JUMPING INTO THE FRAY

Trio of tough non-conference foes await Chiefs, but Hult and other seniors ready

Tim Smith
hometownlife.com

There is no easing into a new season with the Canton Chiefs varsity girls basketball team, and that's just fine with senior co-captain Erin Hult.

Hult and the Chiefs open with what coaches are labeling a "Triple Threat Week," with games at 5:30 p.m. Monday at Detroit Cass Tech, 7 p.m. Tuesday at home against Birmingham Marian and 7 p.m. Thursday at Detroit King.

"I think it's obviously going to be a challenge right away," Hult said. "But by the time districts comes around again, we're already going to be prepared."

"And it will be easier for us to excel in our division because we'll have already played such hard teams. Playing the harder competition makes it easier to beat easier teams."

Canton second-year head coach Rob Heitmeyer said it is part of the process to get it going with such a tough schedule.

"We very much want to learn from those six non-conference games that we play to start the season," Heitmeyer said. "I recall one year at Salem, working on Fred Thomann's staff. We went 1-6 to start the season with an incredibly tough schedule. That year we ended up winning the KLAA."

They're primed

The Chiefs do have a quartet of excellent senior leaders to lean on during the week and beyond in shooting guard Hult (who averaged 15 points per game in 2015-16, when Canton won the KLAA South Division and finished 17-5), guard Brianna Finn, forward Madison Wolfbauer and forward Sam Mattern.

"I'm really excited for the season because we have seven seniors, so experience wise we're very experienced,"



JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO

Senior Erin Hult (No. 4), shown from last season, leads an impressive group of Canton seniors.

"We very much want to learn from those six non-conference games that we play to start the season."

ROB HEITMEYER
Canton head coach

Hult said. "I think that's going to help us in high pressure moments. The varsity experience is going to help us."

Hult added that the Triple Threat Week merely gets the adrenaline flowing earlier and will launch what the Canton seniors plan on being a long and successful season.

Plus, it's their last chance as part of a high school team to get to the Breslin Center for the Final Four.

"It's not extra pressure, but just more excitement and more drive and motivation," Hult said. "It's our last chance, we all really want it."

Heitmeyer said Hult and Finn will be "go-to players" although others — especially the seniors, which include forwards Shanya Butler, Raquel Church and Marissa Templeton — have the ability and determination to make key contributions.

"Both Erin Hult and Brianna Finn, last year showed an incredible propensity to want the ball at the end of the game," Heitmeyer said. "Both of them scored big shots at big moments."

"We look for both of them again to hit a few big shots for us."

Talent and leadership

It helps that the team also can rely on the other seniors when the going gets tough.

"This program has always had a lot of incredible senior leadership," the coach noted. "And our seniors this year fit right into that mold."

He said Mattern "is one of the hardest-working student-athletes I've ever had the privilege of coaching. Just by

See CHIEFS, Page B3

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS HOCKEY

Plymouth icers show no letdown against Canton

Tim Smith
hometownlife.com

There was a lesson learned by the Plymouth Wildcats in the Nov. 19 season opener against Dearborn Divine Child.

Even though the Wildcats prevailed 5-4 at Taylor Sportsplex, the varsity boys hockey team nearly let a four-goal lead evaporate when the Falcons cranked one off the crossbar with one measly tick left on the clock. That was how close Plymouth was to finishing in

an unsatisfying 5-all tie.

So when Plymouth returned to the ice for Wednesday night's campus clash against Canton at Arctic Edge Arena, there would not be a letdown from start to finish. The Wildcats overcame a scoreless first period and drubbed the young Chiefs 7-2.

"They (Falcons) almost came back," Plymouth head coach Gerry Vento said. "They hit a crossbar with a second left. We certainly fell asleep at the wheel on that one, a lot of new guys who thought

the game was over.

"They learn quickly, I thought it was a good sign in the third period tonight and got a couple early to get control of the game."

Many chip in

Plymouth enjoyed a balanced attack, with six players getting on the scoresheet. The Wildcats netted three goals in the second and four more in the third.



MICHAEL VASILNEK

Battling for a loose puck Wednesday night are Canton's David Gunnis (No. 8) and Plymouth's Zach Gallaher.

See HOCKEY, Page B2

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HIGH SCHOOL BOYS HOCKEY PREVIEW

Canton looking for win, confidence

Despite opening losses, Chiefs showing spurts of being improved hockey team

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

Canton varsity boys hockey coach Brad Barath is looking to key returnees and promising newcomers jelling as a unit during the 2016-17 season.

Early returns haven't been great, however, with the Chiefs following their season-opening 6-3 loss to Chelsea with Wednesday's 7-2 defeat at the hands of cross-campus rival Plymouth at Arctic Edge Arena, the rink both Park teams call home.

"Every year you go in with high expectations, high goals," said Barath, entering his fourth season behind the Canton bench. "And that's no different this year. We lost some players in the offseason, we added some players in the offseason, we're looking forward to seeing how the new players go together with the returning players."

Last year was difficult for the Chiefs, who finished 7-16-1 overall. But it's a new season with new hope that this winter might see an improvement.

Barath knows off the hop he has strong senior leadership in captain Michael Gaffka and Matt Eastman, both defensemen — as well as from forward Michael Tucker.

"He (Gaffka) is going to be big on the defensive end," said Barath, adding Eastman and senior David Gunnis as other important veteran defensemen.

Up front, there are several returning senior forwards, including Tucker, Emerson Taylor and Brett Cygan. "We expect big things out of them."

Helping the cause are several juniors who skated for Canton last season. That list includes forwards David Bourgeois, Joe Powers, Paul Maurer, Michael Buckley and goalie Donald Jardine.



MICHAEL VASILNEK
Canton senior forward Michael Tucker skates up the ice during Wednesday's game against Plymouth.



MICHAEL VASILNEK
A key player for Canton is senior captain and defenseman Michael Gaffka.

Canton added Canton Prep players Luke Davis (junior forward) and Brendan Simons (sophomore forward) who are "going to be impact guys."

Joining the team from outside the program are former Plymouth Stingray travel players Brendan Kacic (senior forward), Hugo Fonovic (freshman forward) and Grant Davison (senior defenseman).

"They have to jell with the team here," Barath said.

Rounding out the roster are senior defensemen Jalen Miller, Michael Testani, senior goalie Bailey Dugan (who played for the Chiefs as a sophomore but played travel last year) and sophomore D-man Steven Barlow.

Barath said his team needs to get a victory to help

overall confidence. The Chiefs visit Farmington Hills United Wednesday and host Livonia Churchill on Dec. 3 in a KLAA South Division tilt at Arctic Edge.

"We're starting the game with energy, with enthusiasm," Barath noted. "For whatever reason as the game goes on we lose that energy and other teams begin to break us down."

"When we play with confidence we play well. But we don't sustain that confidence for an entire game. Absolutely, it will help (to get a W)."

tsmith@hometownlife.com
Twitter: @TimSmith_Sports



MICHAEL VASILNEK
Reaching for the puck Wednesday are Plymouth's Josh Weber (No. 26) and Canton's Jalen Miller (No. 16).

HOCKEY

Continued from Page B1

Tallying two of the goals was senior forward CJ Mullenax (who also had two assists), with single markers by junior forward Josh Weber, sophomore defenseman Graham Sheehan, junior forward Tim Baldwin, senior forward Nicholas Yankee (also two helpers) and junior forward Jack Chumley contributing to the rout.

"That's the way our team's got to be," Vento said. "We don't have the superstars so to speak. But we have a lot of guys that play well and do the right things. It's going to be a total team

effort for us to be successful."

Canton spoiled sophomore goalie Brendan Olepa's shutout bid in the third, when freshman forward Hugo Fonovic and senior defenseman Michael Gaffka scored.

Even though the Chiefs have had a couple down years recently, the Wildcats figured on getting a battle. And that was the case, especially early.

"We knew Canton was going to come out stronger this year, we knew they were going to be a hard team," said Yankee, who after two games is tied for the team lead in goals with Mullenax (three each). "I was really proud that we all came out and were able to offensively bring pressure and get a few goals on them."

Close it out

Yankee agreed with Vento that the team breathed a sigh of relief after escaping the Divine Child game with a win and made sure to file that tidbit away in the memory bank.

"Honestly we had that mindset we were up and had the win easily (against Divine Child)," Yankee noted. "But we realized we can't think that. We carried that over to this game."

Canton head coach Brad Barath, whose team is 0-2 (having lost 6-3 Nov. 18 to Chelsea), lamented the inability to adjust to Plymouth's fierce forecheck in the Chiefs' defensive zone.

"After the first period, they (Wildcats) really concentrated on getting the

puck in deep in our end and forechecking hard," Barath said. "We didn't make the adjustments, we weren't able to get the puck out of our zone, which resulted in some goals."

"Same with penalties and power plays, we lost the special team battle. We have a pretty new defensive corps, ... there's some new players in there. They have a lot to learn and they're still learning. More ice time, more repetition they're going to get better."

Taking the loss in goal for Canton was junior Donald Jardine. Chipping in with assists in a losing cause were junior forwards Paul Maurer, Daniel Bourgeois and senior forwards Brendan Kacic and Emerson Taylor.

tsmith@hometownlife.com

ROCKS

Continued from Page B1

haven't coached girls since then.

"Coached a lot of ball, though. It's fun. The girls are great, they listen, they try to do what we ask them to do. It's a lot of fun, I really enjoy it."

New and exciting

Just as excited about the new era in Salem girls basketball are senior co-captains Darby Scott, Jayna Lenders and Emily Stewart.

Those captains also are thrilled to have Young as their coach.

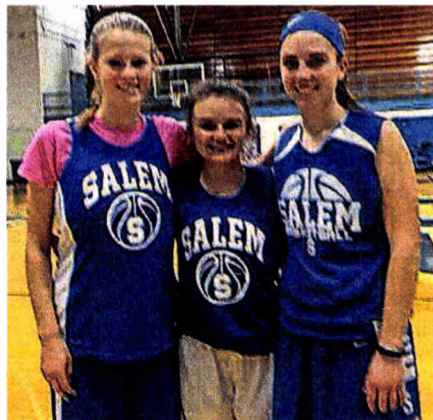
"He's a great coach, he's got a lot of history coaching," said Scott, who plays big for her diminutive size (5-foot-2) and can toggle between point guard and shooting guard. "It's just all different. We're just getting used to it, it's a good change."

"I'm really pumped, senior year, got two of my best friends by my side. I'm excited."

Young is back coaching high school basketball (most recently with the boys team at Westland John Glenn) after a two-year hiatus.

He stepped away from coaching basketball (he still coaches boys and girls golf at Plymouth) after 2013-14 to watch his son Ryan compete for Salem's boys team.

But Young, also a football quarterback for the Rocks, broke a bone in his



TIM SMITH
Salem senior co-captains (from left) Jayna Lenders, Darby Scott and Emily Stewart are all-in on leading the 2016-17 Rocks.

hip in 2015 and that effectively ended his cage career.

So Dan Young decided it was time to return to the gym.

"I loved coaching at Glenn and at Canton, places I've coached," Young said. "Kids are kids. Boys or girls, it doesn't matter. But this is a really good group. It's fun to work with kids."

Fresh start

And the 2016-17 Rocks are glad to have last season in the rear-view mirror.

During the season, the Rocks lost their trio of Petree sisters (Jala, Lasha and Mahrianna, to Ypsilanti Arbor Preparatory).

The remaining seven players battled the rest of the season (the team finished a respectable 11-10 overall and 5-5 in the KLAA Central Division), and later it was decided to make a coaching change from Lindsay Klemmer to Young.

"I think it's made all of us mentally stronger, probably pushed us to be more confident with ourselves in what we do," Scott said. "Helps us move on from things that happened."

Concurring were Lenders and Stewart, who will start somewhere on the floor. Like Scott, they are versatile and Young is finalizing the pieces to his lineup puzzle.

"We're not really focused on our past, we're working on moving forward," Lenders said. "We got a lot of young players who have a lot of potential. We're all just working on getting better, getting our fundamentals down before we get out here and have a great season."

Stewart said "having a fresh start is good for all of us. It's helping us through a lot. Dan is a lot more intense, he has a lot of (coaching) history, he has a lot of knowledge. He has a lot of passion, too. We could have a pretty good season."

Young said it is nice to have the captains there as he goes through his own learning process.

"They're doing a great job leading

this group," Young said. "They're going to have really good years. And from there we've got two juniors and five sophomores."

Juniors include Maddie Kemahan and Madalyn Simko. The roster also features five sophomores: Kate Mockaitis, Jaclyn Deprez, Jenna Sydlowski, Lyniah Wilson and Natalia Lewandowski.

Time to grind

The personable coach said he is taking the same approach he does with Plymouth high school golf teams that annually go far in the postseason.

"Just like we talk about in golf, we're gonna just keep getting better," Young said. "We'll grind, have good chemistry and try to be good at the end of the year where it's playoff time. That's my goal."

So far, practices have focused on the nuts and bolts of good basketball.

"Defense, rebounding and trying to get good shots, not turn it over," Young said. "That's all we're working on right now is trying to play good D as a team, teach the defensive fundamentals, try to rebound missed shots."

"And then try to move the ball, we're trying to develop skill level on offense, so where anybody can score when they're open and in rhythm. And not turning the ball over, not giving the ball to the other team. That's our focus right now."

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COLLEGE WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Hawkins helps Crusaders get jump

Hard-working Stevenson alum sparks MU spikers as they reach NAIA pool play

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

From antenna to antenna, the signal is being received loud and clear about Madonna University junior middle hitter Amanda Hawkins.

The 2014 Livonia Stevenson graduate, who gets in the face of opponents despite her 5-foot, 11-inch height, literally made the jump to go from prep standout to a key contributor on the Crusaders' women's volleyball team.

"Our coach (assistant Tim) DeBeliso tells me I have one of the highest verticals on the team," said Hawkins during a telephone interview Wednesday. "And that's something I really focus on during the summer to prepare for season."

"I'm always jumping. I do jump rope, I jump on boxes and everything. Because I really need my vertical to get up over those hitters on the other side of the net."

This week, Madonna is headed to Sioux City, Iowa for the NAIA National Tournament and Hawkins' season-long excellence has been a big reason why.

The 20-year-old led Madonna with 16 kills against Point Park on Nov. 19, enabling the Crusaders to get to the nationals.

"I've been proud of the season, I think I had a really standout season," said Hawkins, adding with a laugh that she "broke out of my little shell."

Hawkins added that although the Crusaders are used to high-stakes competition in the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference, nationals represent "a whole different atmosphere than playing here. It's so competitive and everyone gets really into it."

The terminator

That's an understatement as far as how intense Hawkins plays the game, according to longtime Madonna head volleyball coach Jerry Abraham.

She's one of our go-to players," said longtime Madonna head volleyball coach Jerry Abraham. "She's a middle hitter, has the ability to terminate attacks with a wide variety of shots."

"... We run the middle a lot and Amanda is integral in our success, that's for sure. And has been that way for three years. One of our upperclassmen that I rely upon each night."

This will mark the fourth consecutive year that Madonna has qualified for the nationals, but first the team must get out of pool play to have a shot at a NAIA championship.

That quest begins Tuesday; the Crusaders must finish 1-2 among four teams after three contests to advance. MU opens 5 p.m. Tuesday against Dordt (Iowa).

"We're getting better and better as the season goes," said Abraham, whose team has some experience, we have some young players but we're excited. We're playing our best volleyball of the season right now, so I think we're ready, that's all we can do. We have a tough pool."

Madonna won the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference East Division with a 14-2 mark but fell in the WHAC semifinals to Cornerstone.

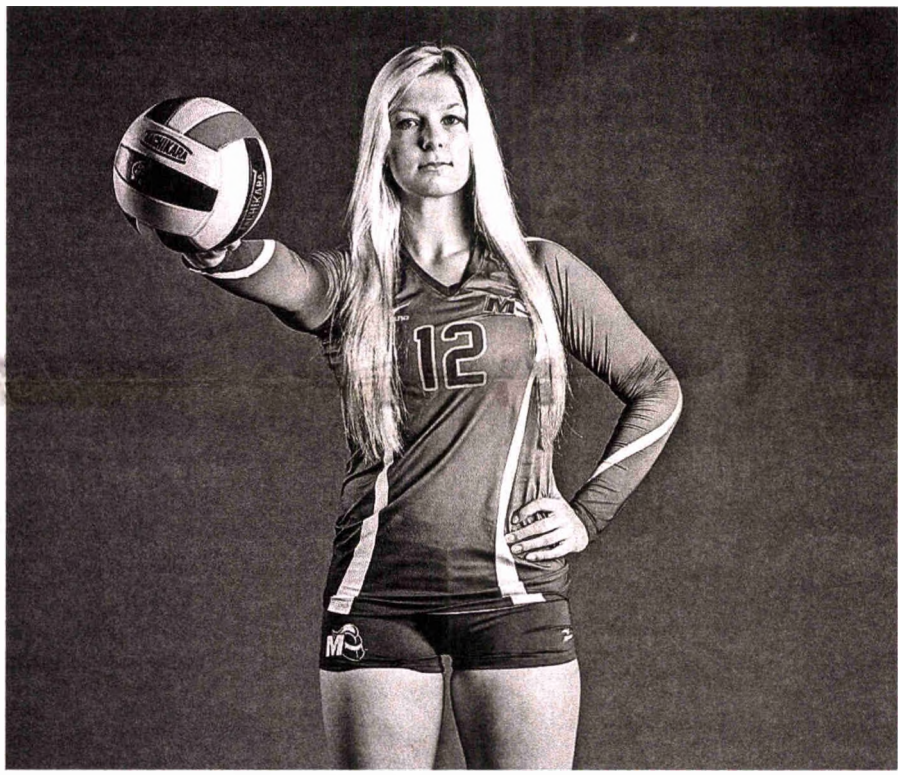
The Crusaders' lineup features other standouts, such as sophomore libero Deanna Krumholz, 5-10 junior outside hitter Karlie Kelly, 6-3 senior right-side hitter Katie Breault and 6-1 senior all-conference middle hitter Miranda Fuerst.

Crusaders' catalyst

But there is no denying that the former Spartan standout is a major catalyst for Abraham's team.



Showing her incredible vertical jump to bring the hammer down during a recent Madonna University women's volleyball game is Amanda Hawkins.



Livonia Stevenson alum Amanda Hawkins is poised and confident entering NAIA pool play for Madonna University.

After a summer devoted to training and improving her vertical jump, which helps the 5-11 middle get up to hammer the ball over taller opponents at the net, Hawkins tallied 343 kills and enjoyed a stellar .337 hitting percentage.

Fuerst had 305 kills and a .332 percentage. Kelly led MU with 489 kills from the outside. Abraham said the way Hawkins has

gone after her business since joining the Crusaders in 2014 is no surprise.

She came over from Stevenson highly regarded; she was a key player on the 2013 Spartans — the final team coached by the late, great Kelly Graham, who passed away in July after a half-year fight against Lou Gehrig's disease. That season, Stevenson reached the Class A quarterfinals.

"We run a little faster offense than they do in high school, of course," Abraham said. "Once she adjusted to that, and she did that right away, very consistent and strong ever since."

"But she was very good in high school for Kelly Graham, and I just like the way she competed at Stevenson, and the way she competes to win right now."

Among reasons Hawkins continues to excel at the collegiate level include dedication and endless toil in the gym. Of course, don't forget to throw in a boatload of talent.

"I liked her (recruiting her at Stevenson) because she has a good arm swing and she's fast, has a good game sense, has a good feel for the game," Abraham noted. "Out of high school, that's what I saw. I knew she could hit the ball hard and was smart."

"She's been developing ever since, it just keeps progressing. She's certainly one of the better middle hitters in our conference (WHAC) of course and nationally she's got good statistics."

No matter how it plays out this week in Iowa, Hawkins and her teammates won't forget to have a little bit of fun along the way.

"It will be my third year going, and like all the other years it's been really exciting and it's just great competition out there," said Hawkins, daughter of Livonia's Jetonna and Christopher Hawkins and owner of a 3.8 grade-point average. "It's great for our team to get out there and compete, and I think we're going to play at a really high level."

With Amanda Hawkins front and center, that certainly should be the case.

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CHIEFS

Continued from Page B1

sheer willpower, every moment she's on the court she does her best.

His take on Wolfbauer was just as glowing.

"Madison Wolfbauer led the team in double-doubles, she led the team in rebounding" Heitmeyer said. "This year we look for her to be guarding, in man, the opponents' best players as well as being a real presence on the boards."

About Butler, he called her a "gamer" who comes up biggest in crunch time.

"Last year at Wayne Memorial, when we won 45-40, she made some big second-half baskets," he said. "She can shoot outside jump shots as well as get to the rim."

Church, meanwhile, "brings a lot of attitude, grit and grace to the team. Great character kid. She came up big with seven points against Novi in the district semifinal. Great defender."

Canton's seventh senior, Templeton, "shows a lot of leadership with the team, she's someone who had a great scrimmage against Mercy last week. She comes to practice and has been working really hard."

Stepping up

Although the seniors will loom large in Canton's season, coaches are optimistic that the roster's four juniors are

ready to do their part.

At the top of the list is point guard Alaina Heitmeyer, who in 2015-16 backed up recent graduate Natalie Winters. The Chiefs also lost Madison Archibald to graduation.

"Alaina's had a great summer of basketball," said Rob Heitmeyer, who also happens to be Alaina's dad. "The coaching staff loves her style of play, her teammates enjoy being on the court with her. I know she's looking forward to doing what she can for this team this year."

Hult is looking forward to Alaina Heitmeyer having what could be a breakout season.

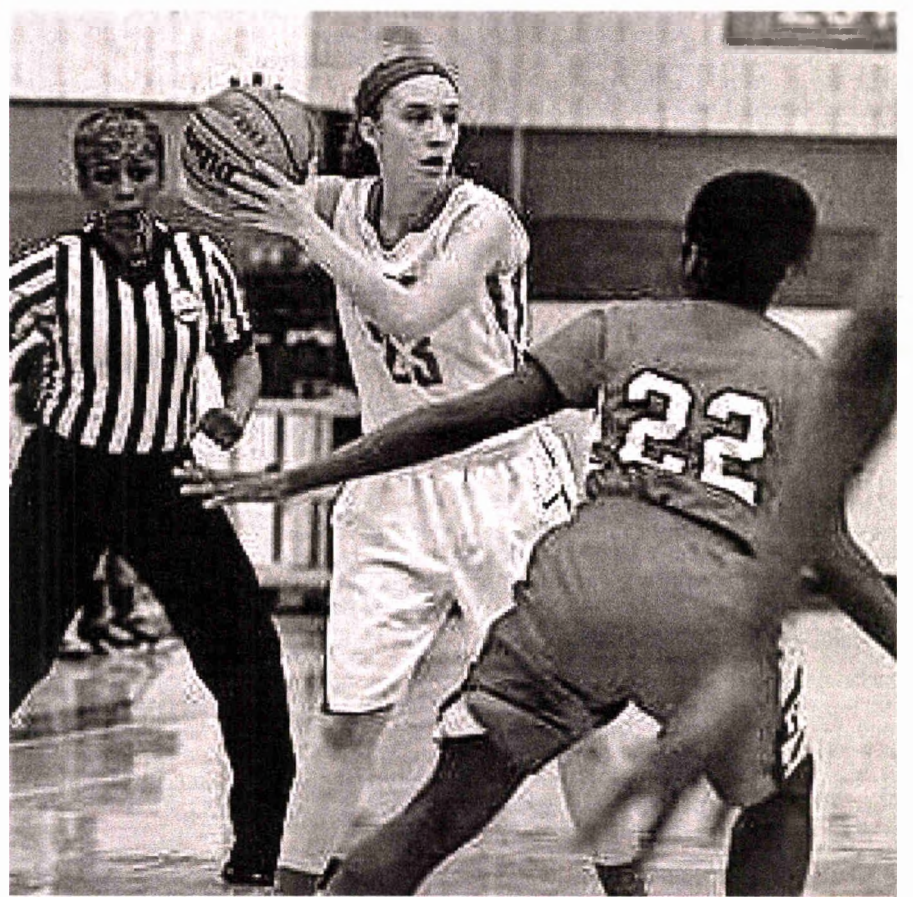
"She just needs some confidence and she finally gained it," Hult said. "I'm really excited for her to be able to lead the team."

Forwards Ashley Criscenti, Carli Vaughan and guard Abby Sokol, all juniors, round out the roster. All three are drawing raves for their work ethic and growth as players.

"We're looking to get most everyone in every game," Heitmeyer said. "As a result of having a deep bench, we want to make sure we use that deep bench and the athleticism that's on this team, to really make our opponents play for 32 full minutes."

If that plays out, the Chiefs could become a "triple threat" to their rivals, too.

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Shown during a game from last year is Canton's Brianna Finn. She is one of seven seniors the Chiefs will lean on in 2016-17.

JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO

HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY

Early Rice outburst freezes CC, 5-1

Brad Emons
hometownlife.com

Despite being on the eve of Thanksgiving, Birmingham Brother Rice's hockey team started their holiday dinner a little early.

The Warriors brought their 'A' game to the table carving up rival and three-time defending MHSAA Division 1 champion Novi Detroit Catholic Central, 5-1, before a packed house Wednesday night at USA Hockey Arena's Olympic Rink.

Three first period goals by Rice (2-1) proved to be the proof in the pudding as host CC (1-3) dropped its third straight.

"It was awesome, the crowd got into it early and it was really fun to see," Jack Clement, a third-year senior defenseman for the Warriors. "We just came out with a lot of energy. We have a lot of seniors on this team. They've been showing great leadership all year. We just came out and battled. We really battled from the get-go and it was really cool."

Just 1:12 into the opening period, Rice's Nick Dudley scored unassisted to make it 1-0. And at the 8:38 mark of the first, Mitch Schultz scored from Michael McInerney and Ryan Giniel to give Rice a two-goal cushion.

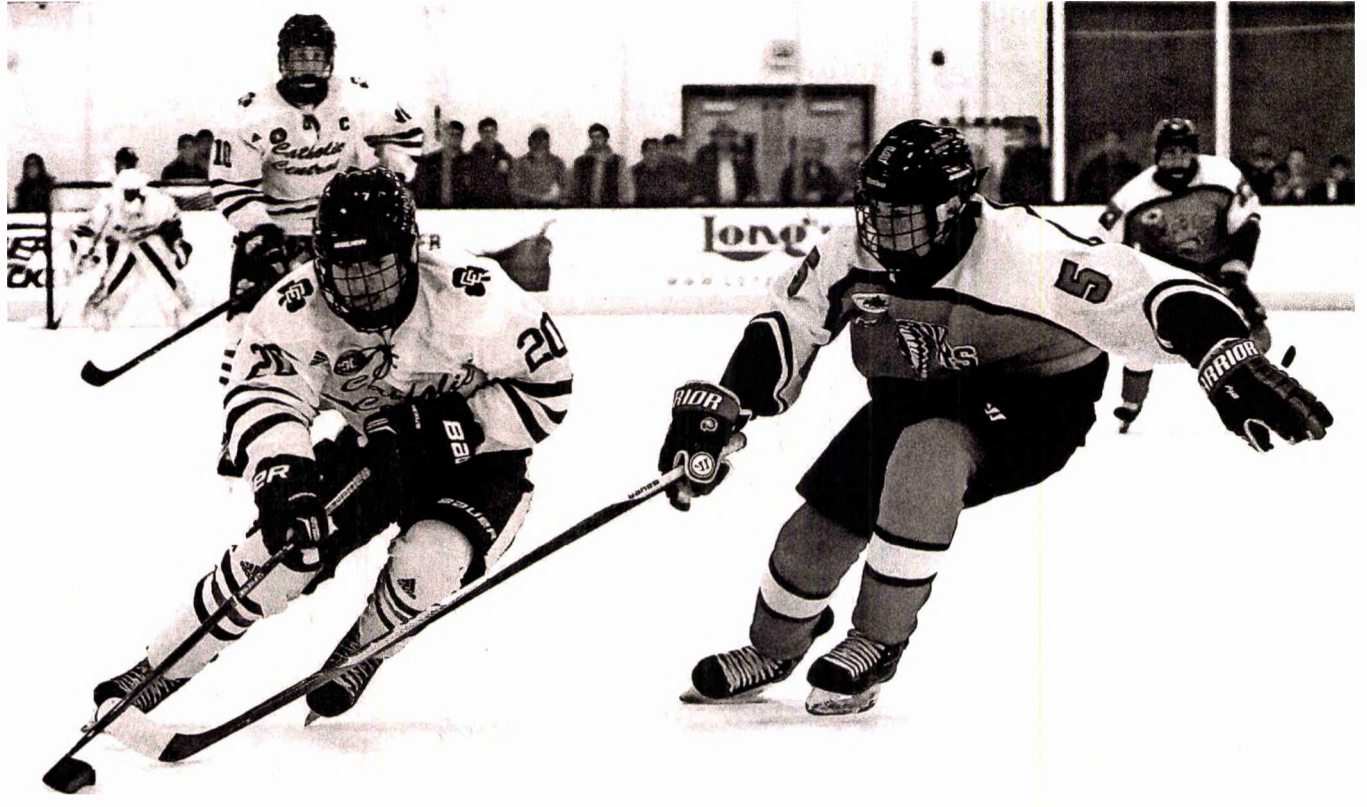
"I'd have to go back and look at the film to see the goals against, but from my memory the goals that were scored ... one starts with a bad turnover in our own zone," CC second-year coach Brandon Kaleniecki said. "You just can't have it against a team like this and we have possession of the puck. Another one starts with an offensive zone face-off, which we talked about. So that one bothers the coach because we talked about it. We knew what they were going to do and we didn't execute what we needed to do. And sure enough, back of the net and it's 2-0."

The Warriors' third goal of the period came at 13:31 on a power play as Clement beat CC starting netminder Sean Finstrom with assists going to Will Duncan and Dudley.

"They have a good power play, they moved it around," Kaleniecki said. "We kind of knew what they were looking to do. They found a way and got one through. So on that one you kind of tip your hat to them and how well they played, too."

Meanwhile, the 3-0 start by the Warriors proved to be better than expected.

"The boys came out hard," Rice first-year coach Kenny Chaput said. "We had emphasized after Saturday's game (1-0 loss to Livonia Stevenson) that we had to get things to the net and they did a really good job of getting pucks to the



Catholic Central's Mitch Morris (left) tries to turn the corner on Rice defenseman Will McLellan.

SCOTT CONFER

net. It helps to get the lead and not play from behind. And it helped with confidence and everything getting those early goals."

Kaleniecki decided to shake things up entering the second period by making a goalie change as Joe Pernecky replaced Finstrom.

And the Shamrocks showed some life offensively cutting the deficit to 3-1 when Nicco Zervos banged home a rebound after John Zielinski's shot caromed off the back boards.

After successfully killing off a penalty, Rice answered by converting on a two-on-none break as McInerney scored unassisted at the 10:17 mark to make it 4-1.

"We had a lot of momentum going early in that second period and we felt like the tide was turning," Kaleniecki said. "We felt like we were going in the right direction. I felt good potentially where we could go from that with the power play. We had a couple opportunities to get some good looks and we mishandled the puck, then make a poor pass. You name it, we did it. And then sure enough we turn it over and they get the two-on-0. That stuff will kill you. It took out a lot of steam out at that point when we were building some

momentum, but they were a better hockey team by far tonight."

After leading 4-1 after two periods, Rice put it away just 20 seconds into the third as McInerney notched its second goal of the game off an assist from Alec DeLuca.

"We got in the dirty areas today," Clement said. "That's why we put up five (goals) today. It was good."

Chaput liked the way his team performed throughout the 54 minutes in the defensive zone. Goalie Ryan Hoffman turned aside 17-of-18 CC shots.

"Coming into the year we thought we're a little young on defense, a little inexperienced, but they've played really, really well," the Rice coach said. "They didn't panic when under pressure and our goaltending was very, very solid, too. Ryan did a great job back there keeping control of things."

Chaput, who served last season as an assistant under Lou Schmidt, has now taken the reins at Rice full-time and it appears the Warriors haven't missed a beat.

"It's been awesome, they made it really easy," Clement said of the transition. "Coach (Chaput) really hasn't changed much. Coach (Lou) Schmidt was a great coach and coach Chaput is

following that great tradition."

After winning its season opener Nov. 17 against Port Huron Northern, 6-0, CC was swept in a two-game weekend series by national prep power Culver Military Academy (Ind.), 5-1 and 6-0.

And the Michigan Interscholastic Hockey League North Division loss to Rice stings even more. The Shamrocks have now been outscored 16-2 over their last three games.

"It's a game we want to remember, I would say that," Kaleniecki said. "It's a game we want to learn from because there's a lot of things in this game that we need to learn from if we're going to be a good hockey team. We've got a long way to go, so it's a game we don't forget. If anything, it's a game we've got to mark down and remember, look at and see the areas we need to improve on, and there are a lot of them."

CC also went 0-for-5 on the power play.

"Special teams as a whole has to be a ton better to have any chance," Kaleniecki said. "We need special teams to be in a positive moment, a positive for our team and tonight obviously we weren't."

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COLLEGE MEN'S CLUB HOCKEY

Gutsy weekend for Schoolcraft

Ocelot icers battle host Ferris State to 6-6 tie, 7-2 victory

Tim Smith
Hometownlife.com

With each passing week, the Schoolcraft Ocelots become more comfortable with life in the American Collegiate Hockey Association.

Still just in its second year as a program, the Ocelots continued to grow as a squad Nov. 18-19 at Ferris State University, earning a 6-6 tie Friday and following up the next night with a resounding 7-2 victory.

"The pace of this game was much quicker than Friday night and we had a great defensive effort," Ocelots men's club hockey coach Rob Lindsay said, about the Saturday contest. "I made some line changes for this game to see if we could get all four lines clicking and that's exactly what happened."

"We controlled the game at both ends of the ice. Our penalty kill was really good tonight and we put the puck in the net when we were shorthanded."

Also helping the cause was goalie Matt Monendo, a Livonia Franklin product. He earned the victory with a stellar performance against the Bulldogs' D2 squad.

"Matt Monendo was outstanding between the pipes," Lindsay said. "He

made some really huge saves in our 7-2 win. This was a big confidence builder."

After a scoreless first period, Schoolcraft got on the board in the second minute of the middle stanza when forward Vinnie Glenn (Livonia Stevenson) scored on an assist from linemate Jacob Stanley of Westland.

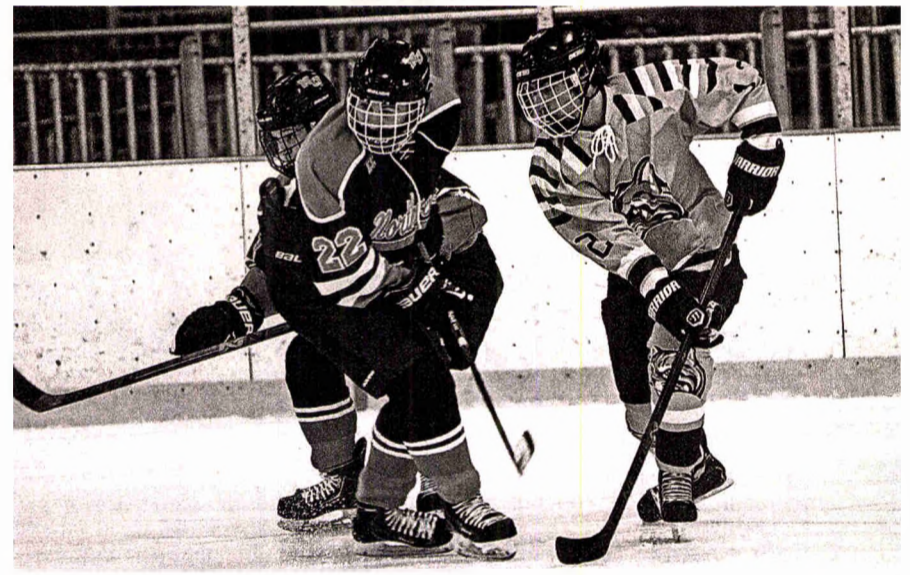
By the time the middle period was over, the Ocelots were up 4-1 and in control. Also scoring in the second were forwards Andrew Lindsay (Trenton), Sheldon Varhol (Garden City) and Stanley.

Netting goals in the third were forward Zack Nelson (Livonia Franklin), Lindsay (second of the game for the team captain) and forward Zach Nichols.

Drawing two assists for the Ocelots was forward Owen Hund (Garden City), with single helpers by Stanley, Glenn, defenseman Scott Pohl (Livonia), Nichols and Lindsay.

"We were beating Ferris to the loose pucks and winning the 1-1 battles," coach Lindsay noted. "I was very excited for the boys and it was a well-deserved win."

"The boys played with confidence and they did things with the puck that you normally don't see. Looking for-



Schoolcraft forward Zach Nichols (No. 12), shown from earlier this season, scored a goal in each of two weekend games against Ferris State.

KELLY DOBSON

ward I see us getting a bid to the ACHA Playoffs if the boys keep working on our systems."

On Friday, the Ocelots let an early 4-1 lead evaporate, with the Bulldogs scoring four goals in the second to take a 5-4 lead.

It was 6-5 for Ferris State midway through the third. But Andrew Lindsay netted the equalizer at 16:39 (from Nichols and Hund) to send the contest to overtime. After a hard-fought, five-minute OT, the teams settled for the draw.

Other Schoolcraft goals were registered by forwards Spencer Kovacs (Livonia Churchill), Andrew Nowak (Livonia Stevenson), Nichols, Stanley and defenseman Zack Finzel (Livonia Stevenson).

"We have to play three solid periods," he said. "We were playing too much perimeter hockey in the second period and weren't getting enough shots to the net."

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PREP SWIMMING

Mercy finishes second at Division 1 state championship meet

Marty Budner
hometownlife.com

Mercy may not have returned home with the coveted state championship trophy that it won in 2013, but the Marlins did continue an impressive streak as they placed third or better at state for the 12th straight season.

Rockford, which was ranked fourth heading into the state finals, rallied in the final four events to win the Division 1 girls swimming state meet, which concluded Nov. 19 at Oakland University with 249 points. Top-ranked Mercy finished a close second with 239 points. Since 2005, Mercy has raced to six state titles, finished second four times and placed third twice.

Saline was third in the highly competitive meet with 231.5 points, followed by Ann Arbor Skyline (221) and Northville (201). The combined Harrison-Farming-

ton team was 13th overall with 66 points and Bloomfield Hills placed 30th with 8.5 points in the 37-team meet.

Rockford touched first in two of the final four events to overtake Mercy and register its first state title in program history.

The Rams began their historic comeback by winning the 200-yard freestyle relay by nearly a half-second over Brighton. Mercy was fifth in that race.

The Marlins then went one-two in the 100-back behind the efforts of junior Katie Minnich and senior Alaina Skellett who finished in 54.51 and 54.95, respectively. Rockford sophomore Morgan Kraus was third in 55.42.

In the 100-breast — the next to last event — Rockford senior Sydney McDowell won in 1:01.94 while Mercy did not place, which set up the final-relay showdown. The Rams held a slim lead and needed to finish ahead of Mercy to

win the title.

Rockford managed that exact scenario by placing second in 3:26.55 while Mercy splashed to fourth in a time of 3:28.21. Saline won that event in 3:24.44.

Mercy opened the meet with a third-place finish in the 200-yard medley relay as the team of Minnich, senior Allie Lobbia, Skellett and sophomore Annette Dombkowski touched in 1:45.08. Northville won in 1:43.10.

The Marlins' other All-State swimmers (top eight) were from junior Kendall Goit (fourth in the 200-free, seventh in the 100-free), freshman Kylie Goit (seventh in the 200-free), Minnich (sixth in the 200-IM), Skellett (third in the 100-fly) and Dombkowski (seventh in the 500-free).

Mercy's 200-free relay team included the Goits, freshman Lindsey Case and Dombkowski. The 400-relay foursome was the Goits, Skellett and Minnich.

Mercy's other scorers were Dombkowski (14th in the 200-free), junior Mya Loniewski (13th in the 200-IM, 14th in the 100-back), freshman Sarah Puscas (16th in the 200-IM, 15th in the 100-fly), junior Alexa Rybicki (12th in diving), Kylie Goit (10th in the 500-free), freshman Chloe Pulick (15th in the 500-free) and freshman Julia Coffman (12th in the 100-back).

Harrison Farmington sophomore Ashley Turak had a strong meet by placing second in the 50-free (23.08) and fourth in the 100-free (50.45) to earn All-State designation in those events. Harrison Farmington also scored in the 200- (10th in 1:37.85) and 400-free (11th in 3:35.10) relay events.

The lone Bloomfield Hills points came from sophomore Sydney Woods who tied with Saline senior Maddy Murphy for 10th place in the 100-yard backstroke. They each touched in 57.67.

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Taking a counteroffer is never cut and dry

BY MATT TARPEY
 CAREERBUILDER

In some cases, when your current employer finds out that you've received a job offer from another company, he or she will propose a counteroffer in an effort to keep you. The counteroffer frequently includes a considerable pay bump and sometimes a promotion.

Is it better to accept the counteroffer and stay with your current company? Here are some pros and cons to consider.

Money

The biggest advantage of taking a counteroffer is also the most obvious: It's probably a higher salary. Also, the fact that your employer is fighting to keep you may hint at your status with the company.

"When you're able to get a counteroffer from your employer, you've effectively forced them to put their money where their mouth is," says Dorianne St. Fleur, a human-resources professional, career coach and blogger. "It's a unique opportunity for you to leverage your competing offer to get a higher salary and/or bigger job responsibilities."

Retention costs

A higher salary may not always be indicative of greater



GETTY IMAGES

value to the company. In fact, the counteroffer might be an attempt to cut costs.

"The truth is that the cost of replacing an employee is higher than the cost of the raise," says Michele Mavi, director of internal recruiting and content development at Atrium Staffing. "In addition to the purely financial benefit to the company to keep you on board, they'll also be avoiding the administrative headache of replacing you. For many managers, the time, cost and disruption to their business might become things that they want to avoid at all costs."

Reason to leave

The proposition of more money may be tempting, but don't lose sight of what caused you to seek a new job in the first place.

"A bump up in salary is terrific, but what else do you need and want?" says career counselor and executive coach Roy Cohen. "Are you upset that you have been passed over for a promotion? Would you benefit from a flex schedule or the opportunity to work from home occasionally? Are the benefits better at the new company? What is missing from your current situation,

and is it likely to be available to you if you stay?"

Trust issues

Even if you get a counteroffer, your employer knows that you were looking for another job. Money aside, this may have planted seeds of distrust that you need to overcome if you accept the counteroffer.

"Employers are human, too, and remember: You just told them that you disliked your situation so much that you went through the process of seeking and almost accepting employment elsewhere," Mavi

says. "Things may not return to normal right away. There may be promotions that you aren't considered for, or you may not be asked to lead the big project you had your heart set on. That's not to say that with time, things can't go back to normal or that some people haven't been perfectly happy accepting counteroffers — it's just not the norm."

Co-worker dynamics

It's also worth considering your co-workers' responses to finding out you were prepared to leave. The feeling of disloyalty or betrayal may not be exclusive to your manager.

"If it becomes known that you accepted a counteroffer, your co-workers may become resentful of you and the morale of your department could change," says DeLynn Senna, executive director at Robert Half Finance & Accounting. "Other employees could start to believe that it takes threatening to leave to get a raise or a better title. Some employees could even go on the hunt for a new job so they can receive their own counteroffer."

Matt Tarpey is a writer for the Advice & Resources section on CareerBuilder.com. He researches and writes about job-search strategy, career management, hiring trends and workplace issues.

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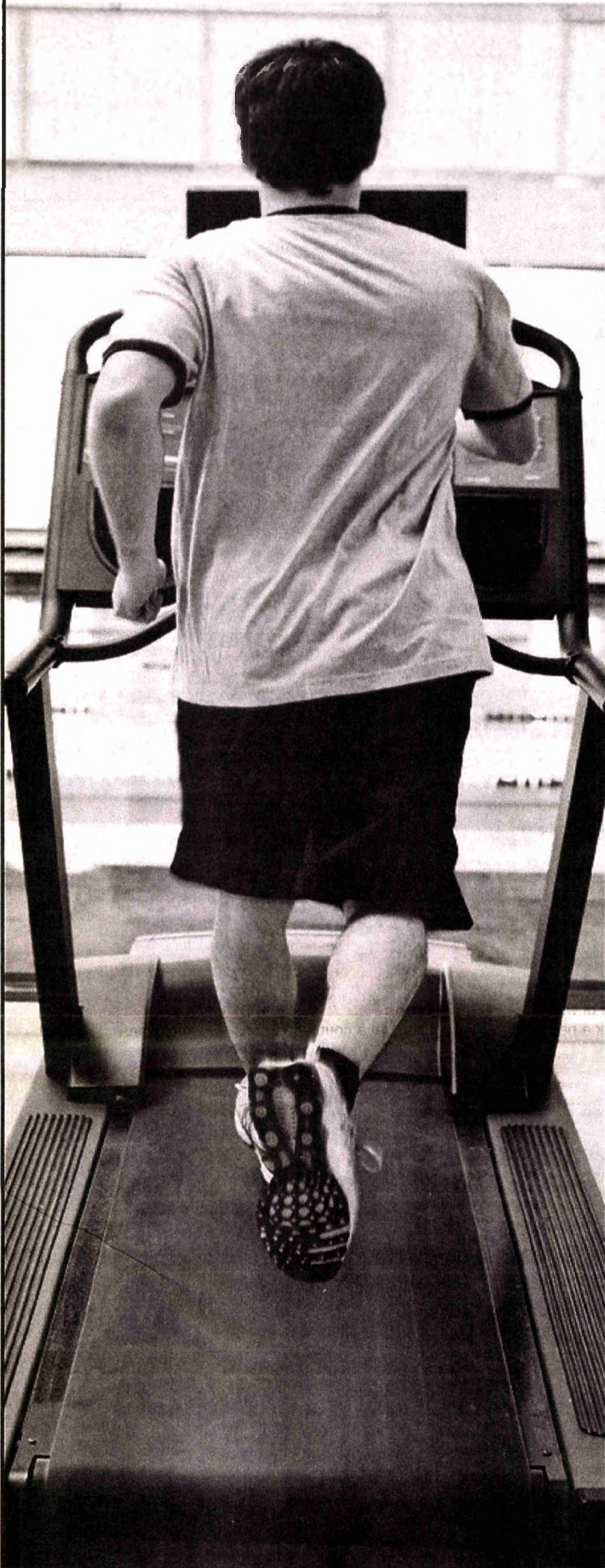
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SUNDAY PUZZLE CORNER CROSSWORD PUZZLER

- ACROSS**
- 1 Neighbor of Chile
 - 5 Chemist's outerwear
 - 12 Some captives
 - 20 Copies
 - 21 Magic's city
 - 22 Fearmonger
 - 23 Centennial State
 - pageant winner
 - 25 Start to chew
 - 26 Clinic fluids
 - 27 Enjoy a meal
 - 28 DVR biggie
 - 29 Baste, e.g.
 - 30 Text giggle
 - 31 Output of Tolkien
 - 38 Highly skilled people
 - 40 Prudential competitor
 - 41 "— found it!"
 - 42 Member of a noted racecar-driving family
 - 47 Surplus item
 - 51 Be a cast member of
 - 52 Oklahoma tribe member
 - 53 Placed in the middle, to a Brit
 - 55 The NBA's "King James"
 - 57 120-Down character
 - 61 Uru, neighbor
 - 64 Wildlife lair
 - 65 Proverb
 - 66 Add liberally
 - 67 Most August newborns
 - 69 Popular energy drink
 - 73 Anderson of "WKRP in Cincinnati"
 - 74 Rome's country, in French
 - 76 "Für —" (piano piece)
 - 77 Sun, e.g.
 - 79 — Moines, Iowa
 - 80 Prism, cone or sphere
 - 82 Beach shoe
 - 85 Stands for hot dishes
 - 86 Melody
 - 87 "Saludi," say
 - 91 Dutch genre painter Jan
 - 92 Port-au-Prince's land
 - 98 No. on a road sign
 - 100 Navigator Islands, now
 - 101 Cry upon release
 - 102 1991 Denzel Washington film
 - 109 Gave a meal
 - 110 Hubbub
 - 111 Chiang Mai native
 - 112 Johnny —
 - 113 Pool coverer
 - 115 Open ocean
 - 118 Parts of it appear at both the starts and ends of this puzzle's eight theme phrases
 - 123 Bel Air resident, e.g.
 - 124 Funicello of the screen
 - 125 Cry in church
 - 126 Nonclerical females
 - 127 "Possibly"
 - 128 Veg out, say
 - 7 Make swollen
 - 8 Magna —
 - 9 — par with
 - 10 Stick in
 - 11 Moreover
 - 12 Natural home
 - 13 With 84-Down, lunchmeat with pimiento
 - 14 Goal in Zen Buddhism
 - 15 Uno plus due
 - 16 French bud
 - 17 Knife of TV ads
 - 18 Oxalate, e.g.
 - 19 Vermont ski town
 - 24 Wearing a lounge robe
 - 28 Color a little
 - 30 Tibetan priest
 - 32 Ending for enzymes
 - 33 She sang "Smooth Operator"
 - 34 "— dam tootin'!"
 - 35 4G — (T-Mobile offering)
 - 36 Retaliate
 - 37 Like some criticism
 - 39 Singer Ochs
 - 43 Actor Greene
 - 44 — Z
 - 45 Luc's denial
 - 46 Chilling stuff
 - 48 Camera stand
 - 49 Fixed up
 - 50 Studmuffin
 - 54 West Germany's Ludwig
 - 56 Deprived
 - 57 Not genuine
 - 58 Wheel turner
 - 59 Little jerk
 - 60 Patients' gp.
 - 61 First groups of invitees
 - 62 Snappy reply
 - 63 Net minder
 - 65 California's — Woods
 - 68 Splinters
 - 70 MBA, say
 - 71 — ray Disc
 - 72 Feature of the word "go"
 - 75 — Kit (police tool)
 - 78 Tub traction aids
 - 81 Medit. land
 - 82 "Or — hear"
 - 83 From way back: Abbr.
 - 84 See 13-Down
 - 86 Shut angrily
 - 88 Structure of a plane without the engine
 - 89 Belfry locales
 - 90 Knotted
 - 93 Quarterback Boomer
 - 94 Spanish for "daddy"
 - 95 Ball caller
 - 96 "Sk8er —" (2002 hit)
 - 97 Chick- — A
 - 99 Hold dear
 - 102 Taj —
 - 103 Singer Menzel
 - 104 Drenched
 - 105 1953 Alan Ladd title role
 - 106 Disney mermaid
 - 107 Religious branches
 - 108 Die down
 - 114 Rent —
 - 116 Chop down
 - 117 — mo
 - 118 Animal gullet
 - 119 A, in France
 - 120 '75 TV debut
 - 121 Ang of film
 - 122 Certain M.D.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20					21							22									
23					24							25									
	26						27					28					29				
30						31	32				33	34	35				36	37			
38											40					41					
42											43	44	45				46	47	48	49	50
51																	53	54			
61	62	63																			
67																					
74																					
80																					
85																					
91																					
102	103	104																			
110																					
115																					
123																					
126																					

For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702/4247 or smccllellan@michigan.com. Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

SUDOKU

	5		9	3			4		
			7				8		1
9				5					3
4			2				3	7	
			8				2	6	4
			7				6	5	8
2							1		6
			1				9	2	3
			3	4					9

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken 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 provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	2	1	9	5	4	8	3	7
7	4	3	2	6	8	9	1	9
8	9	5	7	1	3	4	6	2
3	8	2	9	4	9	6	7	1
4	1	9	6	2	7	8	3	5
5	9	7	3	8	1	2	4	6
9	3	8	4	7	5	1	2	6
5	1	6	8	9	8	9	7	3
2	4	7	2	3	1	4	7	2

THANKSGIVING WORD SEARCH

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

WORDS

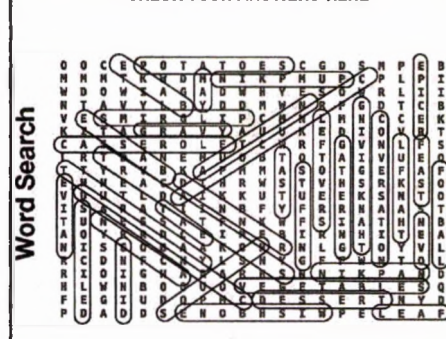
- ACORN
- AUTUMN
- BAKE
- BASTE
- CASSEROLE
- CONVERSATION
- CORNBREAD
- CORNUCOPIA
- DELICIOUS
- DESSERT
- DINING
- DINNER
- EAT
- FEAST
- FOOTBALL
- GATHERING
- GRAVY
- LEAF
- LEFTOVERS
- NAPKIN
- NATIVE
- OVEN
- PILGRIMS
- POTATOES
- PUMPKIN
- RECIPES
- SQUASH
- STUFFING
- TASTY
- THANKFUL
- THANKSGIVING
- THURSDAY
- TRADITIONS
- VEGETABLES
- WISHBONE
- YAM

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

Crossword Answers

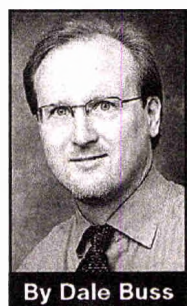
1	CHILE
5	GLOVES
12	HOSTAGES
20	COPIES
21	MAGIC
22	SCAREMONGER
23	STATE
25	START
26	FLUIDS
27	ENJOY
28	DVR
29	BASTE
30	GIGGLE
31	OUTPUT
38	SKILLED
40	COMPETITOR
41	"FOUND IT!"
42	MEMBER
47	SURPLUS
51	CAST
52	OKLAHOMA
53	PLACED
55	KING JAMES
57	DOWN
61	URU
64	LAIR
65	PROVERB
66	LIBERALLY
67	AUGUST
69	POPULAR
73	ANDERSON
74	ROME
76	FUR
77	SUN
79	MOINES
80	PRISM
82	BEACH
85	STANDS
86	MELODY
87	SALUDI
91	DUTCH
92	PORT-AU-PRINCE
98	NO. 1
100	NAVIGATOR
101	CRY
102	1991 DENZEL WASHINGTON FILM
109	GAVE
110	HUBBUB
111	CHIANG MAI
112	JOHNNY
113	POOL COVERER
115	OPEN OCEAN
118	PARTS
7	MAKE SWOLLEN
8	MAGNA
9	PAR WITH
10	STICK
11	MOREOVER
12	NATURAL HOME
13	WITH 84-DOWN
14	GOAL
15	UNO PLUS DUE
16	FRENCH BUD
17	KNIFE
18	OXALATE
19	VERMONT SKI TOWN
24	WEARING
28	COLOR
30	TIBETAN
32	ENDING
33	SHE SANG
34	DAM TOOTIN'
35	4G
36	RETALIATE
37	LIKE SOME
39	SINGER
43	ACTOR
44	Z
45	LUC'S DENIAL
46	CHILLING
48	CAMERA
49	FIXED UP
50	STUDMUFFIN
54	WEST
56	DEPRIVED
57	NOT GENUINE
58	WHEEL TURNER
59	LITTLE JERK
60	PATIENTS
61	FIRST GROUPS
62	SNAPPY
63	NET MINDER
65	CALIFORNIA'S
68	SPLINTERS
70	MBA
71	RAY
72	FEATURE
75	KIT
78	TUB TRACTION
81	MEDITERRANEAN
82	OR HEAR
83	FROM WAY
84	SEE 13-DOWN
86	SHUT ANGRILY
88	STRUCTURE
89	BELFRY
90	KNOTTED
93	QUARTERBACK
94	SPANISH
95	BALL CALLER
96	SK8ER
97	CHICK
99	HOLD DEAR
102	TAJ
103	SINGER
104	DRENCHED
105	1953 ALAN LADD
106	DISNEY
107	RELIGIOUS
108	DIE DOWN
114	RENT
116	CHOP DOWN
117	MO
118	ANIMAL
119	A
120	'75 TV
121	ANG
122	CERTAIN

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE



Car Report

PRESIDENT-ELECT TRUMP ASIDE, VW, KIA, GM – AND THE INDUSTRY – MOVE AHEAD WITH ELECTRIFICATION



By Dale Buss

Even as a new president moves toward inauguration in the United States as a staunch opponent of regulations aimed at climate change, it's full speed ahead for automakers in rolling out new electrically powered vehicles for global markets.

Volkswagen is completing its pivot from "clean diesel" to electrification. A Chinese startup called NextEV has launched an electric car it claims is the world's fastest completely battery-powered automobile, with big plans to create a lifestyle brand to match the car's speed.

And Kia will be bringing its first hybrid vehicle, the 2017 Niro Hybrid, to American showrooms soon – and has come up with a cutting-edge digital "chatbot" to help market and explain the car.

Trump's term may cause the industry to hit the pause button in certain ways as carmakers look for the new Republican administration to go easier

on them in terms of fuel-economy and emissions requirements. But the horse is far out of the barn, to use an old-mode metaphor, in terms of the industry embracing electric cars.

For example, General Motors is bringing out its all-electric Chevrolet Bolt right now, and Tesla is pushing ahead with plans for huge output of its own mainstream-priced EV, Model 3, in a year or so.

Since Dieselgate, Volkswagen, too, has pivoted toward EVs. And CEO Matthias Mueller just announced that the company may actually build its own EV-battery factory.

VW also disclosed plans to make EVs in the US by 2021 as part of a new push to become a major player in the American market and to become a significant factor in a battery-vehicle segment where Volkswagen had been an afterthought until lately.

Kia has launched NiroBot, a new bot for Facebook Messenger, to deliver instant access to comprehensive product information for the Niro.

The gambit is part of a growing wave of brands using chatbots, which USA Today defines as "a largely automated, interactive experience

that assists consumers with questions and sells them goods and services."

Earlier this month, for instance, Twitter announced that it will launch its own chatbot, which already is being used by Pizza Hut, Spotify, Tesco, Evernote and other brands. And Uber users can hail a cab via chatbot. Meanwhile, Staples, Mastercard and Bank of America are just a few of the brands that have launched bots in recent months.

"Where brands were once defined by their visual expression and human interaction, we're now entering a stage where brands also will be defined through digital voice," said Dylan Stuart, partner at Lippincott, a creative consulting firm. "As chatbots cross the digital divide from transactions to relationships, the face and nature of branding is evolving."

Facebook is now selling ads on the popular messaging service to brands that can reach people they've interacted with, routing Facebook users to Messenger. People who have started conversations with brands on Messenger will be invited to "converse" with a chatbot.

Messenger now works on Android Auto, meaning that users will be able to listen to and reply to texts from friends on Messenger using voice commands.



The all-new 2017 Kia Niro Hybrid Utility Vehicle

For Kia, the NiroBot on Messenger will allow the brand to "talk" with consumers about comprehensive information about the new EV, interior and exterior galleries, multimedia product overviews and the ability to schedule a test drive.

"Kicking off our pre-launch strategy by breaking new ground with our bot for Messenger [will] make the new-car research process much easier and more efficient for shoppers," Kimberley Gardiner, director of marketing for Kia Motors America, said in a news release.

"The user-friendly interface combines the experience of being in a showroom with the convenience and mobility today's car buyers are looking for as users interact with the NiroBot at their own pace and focus on the specific areas that

interest them most."

Certainly Trump was far from the minds of Next executives as they pulled the wraps off the NIO EP9, which boasts 1,360 horsepower, zero-to-160-mph speed of 7.1 seconds and a lap record for EVs at the famous Nuerburgring circuit in Germany.

The NIO EP9 was introduced at the swanky Saatchi Gallery on Kings Road, London, though it will first go on sale in its native China.

The car will go on sale in China first and then around the world, the company said. "This visionary electric brand will help users rediscover the 'joyful lifestyle' of car ownership by creating inspiring vehicles that deliver superior performance, a new benchmark for aesthetic design and unique user experience," the statement said.



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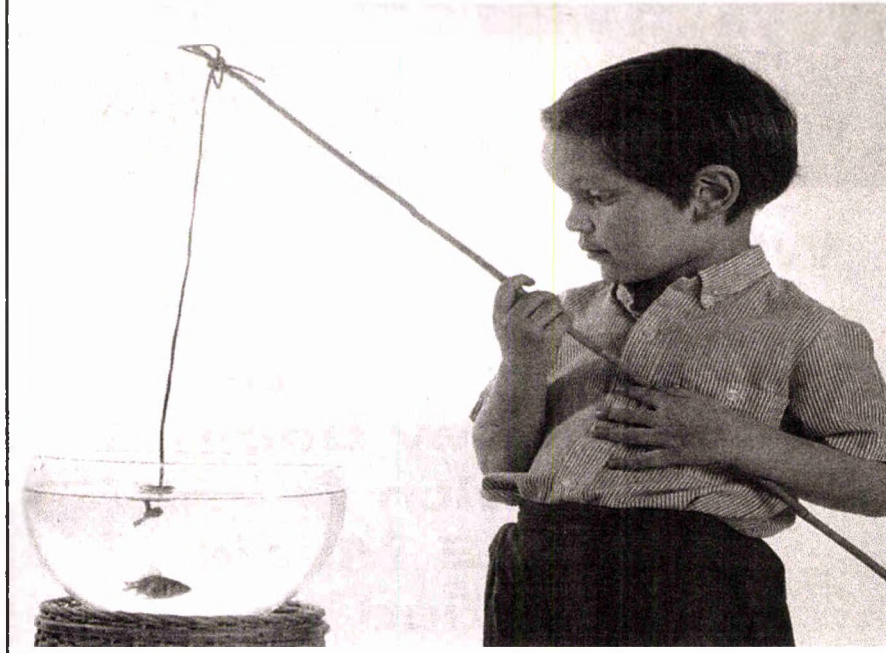
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