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'Residents suffering' in foreclosure crisis

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

With hundreds of Westland residents agonizing through home foreclosures, city leaders have indicated they want to help their constituents cling to the American dream.

"A lot of our residents are suffering," Charles Pickering,

Westland City Council president, said Monday.

He estimated that many property values have plummeted 10 to 30 percent during the last two years, but he said assessments often have remained artificially high.

Pickering, speaking during a council session, said foreclosures have created empty-home

blight conditions that invite crime and have hurt property values for all homeowners.

"That in my mind is the No. 1 issue in our community," he said.

Mayor William Wild, saying many analysts "are characterizing this crisis as the greatest economic challenge of our time," last week attended a U.S.

Conference of Mayors summit in Detroit to discuss the problem and ways to deal with it.

By working with lenders and homeowners, Wild said it is his hope that "we can protect this piece of the American dream."

According to Wild's office, Westland has had 424 mortgage-related foreclosures this year, alone, although the city

also has had 523 home sales.

During better years, however, Westland would typically see between 1,000 and 1,200 home sales, city Assessor James Elrod said. In another telltale sign of the problem, he said, many people hoping to buy are looking strictly at foreclosed homes, which they can usually get cheaper.

Pickering, in his unsuccessful mayoral campaign against Wild this year, said thousands of residents told him they are worried about losing their homes or seeing their property values plummet.

In one block, alone, Pickering said he saw three

Please see **FORECLOSURE, A4**

Good memories



Historian Jo Johnson and Mayor William Wild stand on the stairway and share a laugh during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the historic Octagon House. Councilman James Godbout stands at left.

Octagon House opens to the public

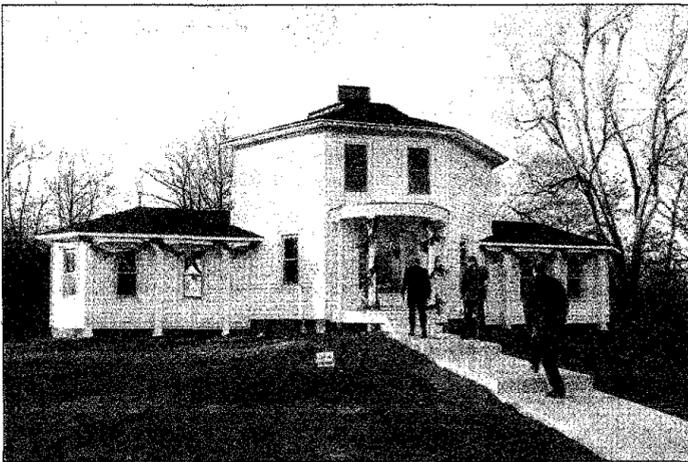
BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Almost a half-century after he married and left home, 75-year-old Melvin Guthrie Jr. came back Friday for a festive party marking the long-awaited opening of Westland's historic Octagon House, where he grew up.

"I've got all kinds of good memories of this house," he said, standing in a sunroom that was once a porch.

Guthrie Jr. lived in the home with his parents, Melvin Sr. and Vera, his older sister, Rosemary, and his younger brother, Thomas. They grew corn and sold it

Please see **OCTAGON, A2**



After a long renovation, the historic Octagon House in Westland is ready for visitors.



Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus arrive at the annual tree lighting ceremony and are greeted by Mayor William Wild and his son, Luke, 5.

TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Arrival of Santa Claus warms up chilly night

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Kerry Finley and sons Ryan, 5, and Kyle, 4, braved bone-chilling weather Monday evening to see Santa Claus and watch as a huge display of holiday lights came on, lighting up the front lawn of Westland City Hall.

Like a couple hundred other spectators, Finley expected to have to stand outdoors for the city's annual holiday ceremony. Instead, city leaders moved the tradition next door to Fire Station No. 1, crowding people inside the fire engine bays and raising the doors to let people see more than 100,000 lights switch on outside.

Finley and others literally warmed up to the change in location.

"I think it was a good decision," he said.

Finley's children enjoyed the holiday lights and a chance to see Santa and Mrs. Claus, even though the boys already had seen the jolly man in red this season.

"I told him what I want — a remote control Jeep," Ryan Finley said.

Westland author Nancy Spinelle read one of her Christmas stories Monday just before the St. Damian

Elementary School Choir performed holiday songs *Jingle Bell Rock*, *Joy To The World* and *Here Comes Santa Claus*.

As if on cue, the Clauses arrived not by sleigh, but in a big fire engine that rolled up in front of the station and dropped them off. Apparently the reindeer were elsewhere taking a long winter's nap in preparation for the gift-delivering task that lay ahead.

In the true spirit of the season, Mayor William Wild's administration wrapped up a scarf-collection effort to help city children who need a little buffer from the winter cold. Deputy Mayor Courtney Conover said "hundreds" of scarves had been collected and will be turned over to The Salvation Army, which will distribute them in places like the Norwayne neighborhood.

In another holiday tradition, city officials honored children who wrote winning essays on *What Christmas Means To Me*. The winners: Mackenzie Lago, 10, first place; Mark Markaj, 8, second place; Karley Lynne Buford, 10, third place; and Emily Rosowski, 10, and Stephanie Chapman, 9, honorable mention.

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Westland man killed in I-75 crash

A Westland man was killed Tuesday night during a three-vehicle crash on I-75 near the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit, Michigan State Police said.

The 11:17 p.m. accident closed off traffic for several hours as road crews worked to clear the accident scene, police said.

The investigation into what caused the accident was continuing. Authorities hadn't released the Westland man's name because relatives hadn't been reached, according to the MSP post in Detroit.

Alcohol was not a factor in the accident, according to police.

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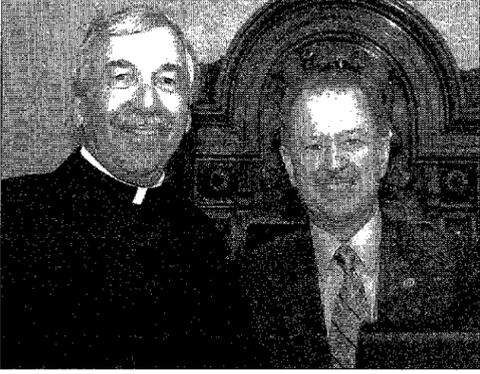
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Coming Sunday in Health



Surgeon trains to treat mass casualties in Israel

Teacher faces more charges, stiffer penalty



Let us pray

The Rev. Gerry Bechard of Sts. Simon & Jude Parish in Westland visits with state Sen. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, during a trip to Lansing, where Bechard recently gave the guest invocation for a Senate session.

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

A Wayne-Westland middle school teacher is facing additional tenure charges and a stiffer penalty as the result of a vote by the school board Monday evening.

The board voted 6-0 with Trustee Terrance McClain absent, to proceed with the amended tenure charges against longtime teacher James Zoltowski. The amended charges were filed with the State Tenure Commission on Nov. 28 by Superintendent Greg Baracy.

"The action the board took in amending the charges speaks

for itself," said Baracy.

The vote came after a brief closed hearing that had been requested by Zoltowski who has been assigned as a visiting teacher with no reduction in compensation since the first tenure charges were filed in September.

In its initial charges, the district contended that the Zoltowski had received numerous verbal warnings for "unprofessional and unethical" behavior and communication with staff, parents and students, dating back to 2004-05. The amended charges stem from his performance as a visiting teacher.

In addition to amending

charges, the district also is asking for a 180-day suspension without pay. Initially, it had asked for a 90-day suspension.

Zoltowski has been with the school district for 38 years. He was hired in 1969 and taught at Wayne Memorial High School until 1989 when he moved to John Glenn High School for one year. He also taught at Adams Middle School, and since 2006-07 had divided his time between Marshall and Stevenson middle schools.

A physical education instructor for most of his career, he was teaching technology when he was moved to visiting teacher status.

The district has asked the commission to approve the suspension. Under the Tenure Act, Zoltowski has 20 days from receipt of the school board's decision. An appeal would necessitate a hearing before an administrative law judge.

In response to the first round of charges, his attorney Bill Young said that Zoltowski would appeal. Young is representing Zoltowski on behalf of the Wayne-Westland Education Association.

"My client claims it didn't happen," he had said. "He will challenge the charges and say they didn't happen."

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AROUND WESTLAND

Concert, toy drive

The Westland Community Foundation is inviting the public to a Christmas reception featuring John Glenn High School's Glenn Singers 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 13, in the school's media center, on Marquette between Newburgh and Wayne.

The cost is to bring an unwrapped, new toy as a donation for children being helped by the Westland-based Salvation Army.

Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be prepared by

Chef Tony and his students from the William D. Ford Career-Technical Center.

A drawing will be held at 7 p.m. for a raffle for a new truck.

Attire is business casual. Anyone planning to attend should call (734) 595-7727.

Wrestling Club

Westland Bottle Rockets is a wrestling club for ages 5-14. The club meets on Monday and Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m. in Gym 4 of John Glenn High School, 36105 Marquette, west of Wayne Road, Westland,

Michigan. The club runs from November through March and costs \$20. For questions or more information, contact Judy at judylaw1122@yahoo.com or calling (734) 634-4595.

Surplus food

The City of Westland will distribute surplus federal food 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 20, at the Dorsey Community Center, 32715 Dorsey, south of Palmer, to eligible residents living north of Michigan Avenue.

The pickup time and location for Westland residents

south of Michigan Avenue is 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 10 - or the second Monday of each month - at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis, between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt. Call (734) 729-1737 for more information.

Senior citizens living in Taylor Towers will collect their food at Taylor Towers and should contact the building manager about the distribution day. Greenwood Villa residents pick up their food items at Greenwood Villa.

The December distribu-

tion will include frozen beef, noodles and tomato sauce. This program is administered by the Wayne County Office of Senior Services. All food allocations, distribution sites, and dates of distribution are determined by that agency.

Further more information, call the Dorsey Center's surplus food hotline at (734) 595-0366.

Holiday Fest

The 20th annual Family Holiday Fest and Tree Lighting, hosted by Wayne County Parks and the Friends of Nankin Mills, will be held

4-6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, at the Nankin Mills Interpretive Center, 33175 Ann Arbor Trail, Westland.

The old-fashioned celebration will feature indoor holiday crafts and unique seasonal games, such as fruitcake bowling, from 4-5:15 p.m. and a short outdoor community tree lighting and sing-a-long with an indoor visit from Santa Claus afterwards.

There's a \$4 per person charge for crafts and games. Call (734) 261-1990 for more information or visit the Web site at www.nankinmills.org.

OCTAGON

FROM PAGE A1

alongside Newburgh, then a dirt road near where the house stood.

"This means a whole lot to me," Gutherie Jr. said Friday, during an invitation-only, ribbon-cutting ceremony that came two days before the restored Octagon House was formally opened Sunday to the public. "It makes me feel

good that this house has been restored."

The eight-sided house, built in the mid-1800s and flanked by two additions from the 1930s, has made two moves since Gutherie Jr. lived there - first to Warren

Road near Hix and finally to the Westland Historic Village Park, where it has stood since April 2002 off Wayne Road near Marquette. Gutherie Jr.'s son, Melvin Gutherie III, who also spent some years in the house with his own family, also returned home Friday.

Westland historians and countless volunteers have worked tirelessly to restore the two-story Octagon House, one of the city's most historically significant buildings. The 10-room, two-bath house was crowded Friday with spectators who wanted to tour it.

"It's a very important day for all of us," said Jo Johnson, who chairs the Westland Historical Commission.

Visitors marveled at the

house, sparsely decorated with antiques such as an old stove, refrigerator, dolls and glass-enclosed war relics. A Christmas tree and decorations had been put up by the city's new garden club.

"This is a big day. We've been waiting for this day for a long time," Mayor William Wild said, shortly before cutting a ceremonial red ribbon with Westland Historical Commissioner William Tremper. "These are the kinds of things that make Westland a great city."

The Octagon House is situated near the Westland Historical Museum and other historic buildings, including the 1800s-era Rowe House, a Greek Revival-style

house next in line for renovations. As Friday's celebration approached, volunteers rushed to finish getting the Octagon House ready.

Local historian Georgia Becker earlier sold T-shirts, coffee mugs and other items with her late husband, Howard, to raise money to renovate the Octagon House.

"I love it," she said of Friday's grand opening. "It's been a long time coming, and Howard would be thrilled."

City leaders have said the Octagon House, open to the public 1-4 p.m. Saturdays, eventually could be used for events such as wedding receptions.

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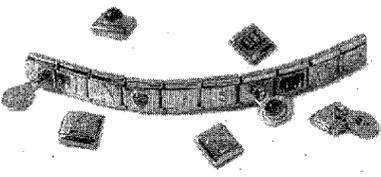
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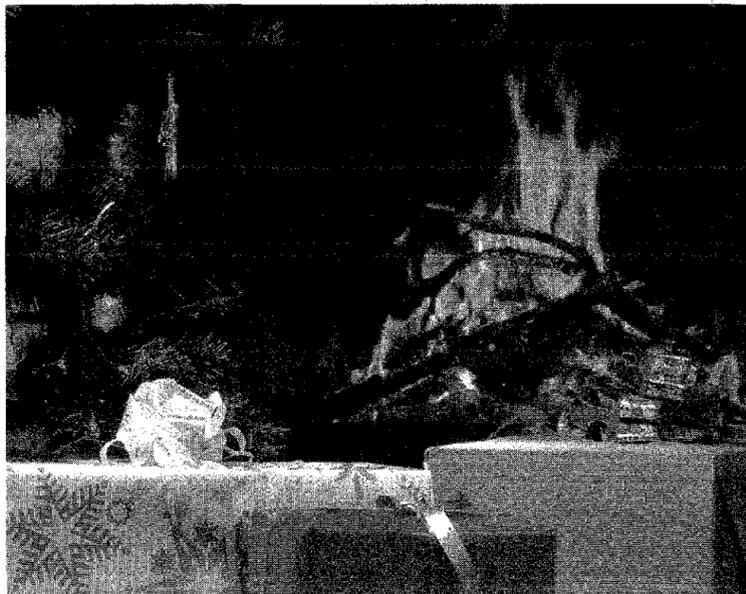
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Dance company shows skills at recital

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Dancing will take over the stage at John Glenn High School Friday evening as the John Glenn Dance Company presents its fall recital.

The show will be presented at 7 p.m. and will feature 22 dance numbers, ranging from solos to group performances and covering a variety of styles — jazz, lyrical, classic ballet, tap and hip hop. Tickets are \$5 and available at the door.

"The girls are responsible for choreographing their own solos, so all of the solos are choreographed by students," teacher Sheri Grove said.

This is the second year for the dance company. It has 12 female members — freshmen to seniors and beginners to advanced dancers. Grove

and Carey Christian decided to bring it back the Dance Company last year.

"Carey and I were talking about how dance was an important part of our experience when we were at Glenn," said Grove. "We decide to offer it as an extracurricular to give those who dance outside of school an opportunity to showcase their talents at school. If you're not in cheerleading or on the step team you didn't have that chance until now."

Grove added that there hasn't been a dance company at the school in almost 15 years when dance was offered as a class.

Grove is the instructor and Christian is the coach. A 1990 Glenn graduate, she was a member of the dance team while at the school.

Also helping is student teacher Rachel Anderson. The



John Glenn Dance Company dancers freshman Anna Quillen (foreground), captain senior Megan Walker (right), and sophomore Petra Radman, freshman Amanda Cook and senior captain Ashley Hudy go through their ballet performance.

captains are Ashley Hudy and Megan Walker. According to Grove, some of

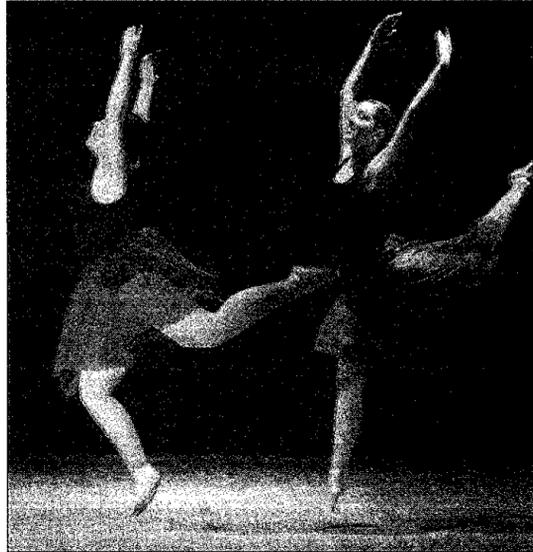
the dancers have been going to the Children's Dance Theater of Plymouth where owner/instructor Lynne Taylor has been teaching the girls a number for the show.

"We're also inviting alumni from last year's company to come back and participate in that number," added Grove. "Lynne is acting as their personal instructor and is doing it free of charge."

Dancers audition for the company each semester which meets 2:30-4:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursdays. The drama teacher at the high school, Grove admits it can become hectic when the Theatrical Guild begins rehearsals for the fall play and during rehearsals for the spring musical.

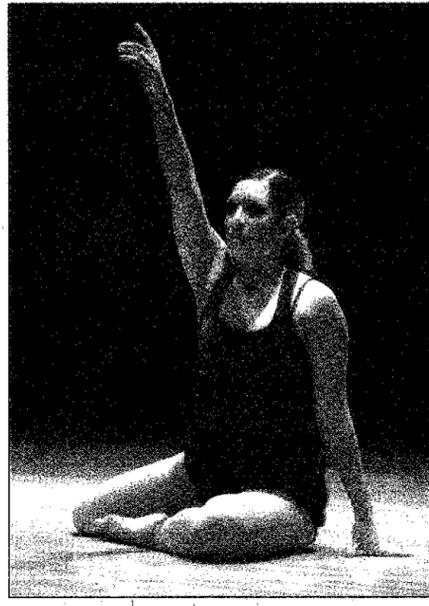
"I have to run them simultaneously when we're doing the plays," she said. "Carey will be with them in one room and I'm in the other."

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PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Glenn Dance Company captain seniors Megan Walker (left) and Ashley Hudy go through their dance moves during rehearsal for their upcoming show Friday night.



John Glenn Dance Company senior captain Ashley Hudy runs through her solo dance.

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FORECLOSURE

FROM PAGE A1

houses in a row that had been foreclosed.

"It was not unusual in some neighborhoods for there to be one on every block," he told the Observer.

Ultimately, city leaders

know that the long-term loss of homes not only affects residents, it also could hurt the city's tax revenues.

Pickering suggested that city officials should try to organize local seminars to help homeowners in trouble — similar to efforts being rolled out by state and federal officials.

He also said home sales could improve if the city does a one-year-only market study to help bring state equalized values — the figure at which properties are taxed — more in line with where they should be. The problems are causing some potential homebuyers to hedge.

"Those people who are trying to sell their homes — they can't," Pickering said.

Several banks have agreed to help pay for a toll-free "Hope Hotline" — (888) 995-HOPE — where homeowners are

advised of ways to get a better handle on their mortgage situation with help from financial counselors.

While many foreclosures have been attributed to predatory lending practices, Pickering stressed that many residents also are losing their homes because they lost their jobs or took substantial pay cuts — and they can no longer afford what they once could.

"It's a crisis," he said, adding that the problem affects homes from low-income to high-end neighborhoods.

City leaders agree that homeowners who find themselves in trouble shouldn't take cover and hope the problem will work itself out. Rather, officials said, those residents need to be as proactive as possible to find solutions.

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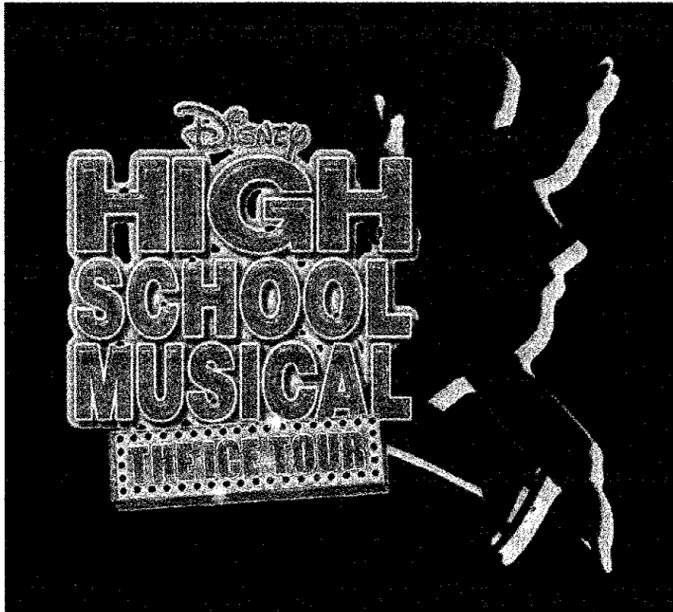


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Join **AM 910 Radio Disney** for the Radio Disney D-Tour, including holiday fun, games, and more! Win exciting prizes, enjoy cool music, face painting and a chance to win a family four-pack of tickets to **"Disney's High School Musical - The Ice Tour"** at The Palace of Auburn Hills, February 29, 2008 through March 2, 2008!



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RELIGION CALENDAR

If you want to submit an item for the religion calendar, fax it to (734) 591-7279 or write: Religion Calendar, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. Deadline for an announcement to appear in the Thursday edition is noon Monday.

DECEMBER

Dysfunctional families seminar

Motivational speaker Susan McKenna and therapist, Arnold Keller, Director of Psychotherapy and Counseling Services in Northville will explain how to determine if you came from a dysfunctional family, what it is doing to your life now and most importantly, what you can do to change it or at least how you can change how it affects you, year after year 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7, at Ward Church in Northville. No charge. To pre-register for the class or other class dates, call (248) 348-1100.

Cookie walk

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, at St. Michael's Orthodox Church, 26455

W. Chicago, between Beech Daly and Inkster roads, Redford. Christmas cookies of all kind will be available for sale by the pound. For more information, call (313) 937-2120.

A Jangling Christmas

The Handbell Choirs of St. Michael the Archangel Parish of Livonia invite the public to a special handbell Christmas concert, A Jangling Christmas, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, in the church, 11441 Hubbard Rd., south of Plymouth Rd., Livonia. The concert also features the St. Michael's Women's Acappella Choir as well as the St. Michael's Teen Choir, all under the direction of Music Minister, Cindy Stempin. There is no charge. All are welcome. For more information, call (734) 261-4555, ext. 200.

Nativity displays

More than 200 Nativity displays from around the world in a Celebration of the Christmas Creche 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 8-9 (\$7 per person at the door, \$5 per person for groups of 10 or more; Preview party

and lecture by Bengt Swenson 6:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 (tickets start at \$50 and benefits the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology, RSVP required by calling (313) 824-4710) at their building, 15415 E. Jefferson at Somerset, Grosse Pointe Park. The nativity displays are from the private collection of Bengt and Elaine Swenson.

Christmas concert

Christmas Joy concerts take place 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, and 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at Ward Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 40000 Six Mile, Northville. No charge. Childcare provided through age 4. Ward Church welcomes The Chamber Choir of The First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16. For more information, call (248) 374-7400.

Course in Miracles

Introduction seminars based on A Course in Miracles spiritual self-study book 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8; 6:30-9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12, 28660 Five

Mile, between Inkster and Middlebelt. Understanding A Course in Miracles takes place 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 24, and Dec. 15. For more information, contact Jim White at (734) 259-0207 or send e-mail to love.com@hotmail.com.

New schedule

9 a.m. Sunday school for all ages and Faith Forum, 10 a.m. Worship Service with Communion and nursery, at Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), 30650 Six Mile, Livonia. All visitors welcome. For more information, call (734) 427-1414 or visit www.holy-crosslivonia.org.

Getting through the holidays

A workshop for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, sponsored by St. Michael the Archangel Parish 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, in St. Michael's School, 11441 Hubbard, south of Plymouth Rd., Livonia. The guest speaker is Dr. Kelly Rhoades, Chair and Professor of Hospice Education at Madonna University. The program is open to all.

Annual Christmas concert

3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, features choirs and instrumentalists at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, 14175 Farmington Road, north of I-96 service drive (Schoolcraft), Livonia. For more information, call (734) 522-6830.

Christmas concert

St. Aidan Adult Choir and friends perform a concert 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at the church on Farmington road, north of Six Mile in Livonia. Proceeds from this event help provide assistance to our Christian Service Commission in the preparation of Christmas Baskets for those in need. Admission is \$5 and 2 non-perishable food items.

Advent/Christmas hymn festival

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church presents Savior of the Nations. Come, a hymn festival 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at the church located on Five Mile, west of I-275, Livonia. The public is invited. A free-will offering will be received and refreshments follow the performance. The Advent season begins on the first Sunday in December and continues for the four Sundays before Christmas. It is a traditional Christian liturgical season of waiting and preparation for the coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, in the manger in Bethlehem.

Composed by Lutheran composer Michael Burkhardt, the work includes 10 hymns and anthems in special arrangements for Chancel Choir, brass quartet, woodwind duo, the Trinity Bells handbell ensemble, organ, piano and congregation. Organist Ann Buland and pianist Susan Harrison lead the festival.

Reformed Protestant services

The doctrines and teachings of Reformed Protestantism will be preached 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14, at a worship service of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) at the Cherry Hill School, 50440 Cherry Hill, corner of Ridge, Canton. Rev. Sean Humby of Ohio will preach. For more information, call Margaret Waldecker at (313) 530-6170 or Humby at (937) 252-1156, or visit www.westminsterconfession.org. Weekly Sunday services will begin on Jan. 6.

Cookie walk and bake sale

10 a.m. till sold out Saturday, Dec. 15, at Timothy Lutheran Church, 8820 Wayne Rd., south of Ann Arbor trail, Livonia. Christmas cookies of all varieties will be available for sale by the pound along with various bake sale items

Boar's Head Festival of Music

Ancient professional celebrating Epiphany presented by Cherry Hills Presbyterian Church with the Livonia Symphony Orchestra and Dearborn High School's Choral Group 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15, and 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at the church, 2410 Cherry Hill at Telegraph, Dearborn. Tickets are free but a free will offering will be accepted. Advance tickets are recommended. Call (313) 563-4800. The interdenominational experience features the Christmas story, the Yule procession and trimming of the hall.

Stranger in the Manger

The Jesus Jammers Choir performs a Dr. Seuss style musical about the birth of Jesus 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15, at Memorial Church of Christ, 35475 Five Mile, Livonia. Call (734) 464-6722.

Messiah

A special presentation of Messiah by G.F. Handel under the direction of Tim Schoenherr, 9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Rd., Farmington Hills. Concert features The Orchard United Methodist Church Chancel Choir accompanied by local musicians in a full Baroque orchestra and solo vocalists from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater, and Dance. The presentation includes favorite choruses from the Christmas portion, such as "And the Glory of the Lord" and "For Unto Us A Child is Born", and concludes with the "Hallelujah," a gospel version of the Hallelujah Chorus. For more information, call (248) 626-3620. Everyone is invited to join in this celebration.

Christmas concert

Sing Out is scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, on Warren Rd. in Canton. The concert features selections by two parish chorales as well as skits performed by St. John Neumann volunteers (the S.J.N. Players). There will also be sing-alongs for the audience.

Mystery of the Manger

Victory Voices Choir performs Christmas musical 6:30 p.m. Sunday,

Dec. 16, at Memorial Church of Christ, 35475 Five Mile, Livonia. Call (734) 464-6722.

Choir cantata

Mt. Vernon Baptist Church presents a Christmas choir cantata, One Small Child, 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at the church, 8828 Wormer, Redford. Everyone is welcome. Call (313) 537-7480.

A Christmas flourish

A celebration of the season featuring a concert by the Birmingham Concert band and the choir of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, in the sanctuary of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1800 W. Maple, Birmingham. No charge but donations to the Band's Music Scholarship Fund are appreciated.

Christmas Eve service

7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 24, at Memorial Church of Christ, 35475 Five Mile, Livonia. Call (734) 464-6722.

Christmas Eve worship

5 p.m. Children/Family service, 7 p.m. Lessons & Carols and Candlelight, and 11 p.m. Festival Worship and Candlelight Monday, Dec. 24, at Newburg United Methodist Church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. Call (734) 422-0149.

Worship service

10:45 a.m. Sundays, Adult Sunday School at 9:30 a.m., Children's Sunday School during worship, Youth Group 5-7 p.m. and Catechism for Grownups 5:30-6:30 p.m., at Trinity Church of Livonia, 34500 Six Mile. For information, call (734) 425-2800.

UPCOMING

ENDOW

Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women sessions 7-9 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 17 to March 6, (explores Pope John Paul II's Muller's Dignitatem-On the Dignity and Vocation of Women), in Bixmal Hall church building at St. Aidan Catholic Church, 17500 Farmington Rd., Livonia. Second session begins 7-9 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 14, to March 3, (explores Pope John Paul II's Letter to Women), in conference room in parish office. Registration required for both sessions. \$60 for materials for each session. Contact Michele Schmidt at (734) 367-0353 or send e-mail to mtschmidt@sbcglobal.net.

ONGOING

Upper Room Ministries

Meets 6 p.m. Sundays, in Room 111 in Our Lady of Loretto School on Beech Daly and Six Mile in Redford. Upper Room Ministries is a spirit filled, charismatic ministry sponsored by Living Water Church in Livonia. All faiths welcome to attend. For information, call Pastor Luke Willis at (734) 425-6360, or Bishop Dan Strength at (734) 812-1099.

F.I.R.E. ministries

With theme scripture, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Luke 3:16), is organizing in Livonia at Living Water Church, 11663 Arcola in the Inkster and Plymouth roads area at 7 p.m. Fridays under the leadership of Luke Willis. F.I.R.E. Ministries. For more information, call (734) 425-6360.

New worship schedule

Regular church service 10 a.m. Sundays with Communion and Nursery, 9 a.m. Sunday School for all ages and Faith Forum, at Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), 30650 Six Mile, Livonia. Call (734) 427-1414. All visitors welcome. Visit www.holycrosslivonia.org.

Sunday worship

11 a.m. Sunday worship service, 9:30 a.m. Sunday school, 7 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study, at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, 6500 N. Wayne Rd. at Hunter, Westland. For information, call (734) 721-0800.

Worship services

10 a.m. Sundays Divine Liturgy followed by a fellowship/coffee time, at Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church, 36075 W. Seven Mile, between Newburgh and Wayne roads, Livonia. Church school for children and adults begins at 9 a.m. Sunday. Vespers are celebrated 5 p.m. Saturdays. Visitors are always welcome. For more information, call (248) 476-3432 (church), (248) 477-4712 (rectory) or Web site at www.orthodoxlivonia.org.

Singers wanted

Riverside Park Church of God is looking for voices to join their choir. If you like to sing and love God (or just want to get to know God) join in. For more information, call (734) 464-0990.

Pancake breakfasts

The Ushers' Club of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Livonia continue their 30-year tradition of all-you-can-eat pancake breakfasts on the third Sunday of each month from 8:30 a.m. to noon. The breakfasts are served in the school cafeteria at 11441 Hubbard, south of Plymouth Road. Adults, \$5; children ages 4-11, \$3; children under age 3, free; and family (2 adults and all children), \$15. Everyone is welcome.

Men's breakfast

Ham & eggs, hash browns, pancakes, and more when you come to the Men's Breakfast at 8 a.m. on the first Saturday of every month at The Senate Restaurant, located off Haggerty Road between Five Mile and Six Mile in Northville. All men are invited for fellowship and food. Sponsored by Riverside Park Church of God, 11771 Newburgh, Livonia. Call (734) 464-0990.

MOPS meetings

The Hosanna-Tabor Mothers of

Preschoolers (MOPS) group began meeting this fall at a new time at the Lutheran church, 9600 Leverage, Redford. Meetings continue the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:30 a.m. Join in for teaching, discussion, creative projects and presentations. For more information, call (248) 470-5202 or send e-mail to nikki.tiernan@gmail.com.

Bible studies

Regular Bible Study program continues at 7 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month, focus is on St. Paul's Letters to the Romans, at St. Michael's Catholic Church on the corner of Plymouth and Hubbard roads, Livonia. To register, call (734) 261-1445, Ext. 200.

MOPS groups

Mothers of Preschoolers meets on the first and third Friday mornings or first and third Wednesday evenings at Calvary Baptist Church, 43065 Joy Road, Canton. For information, call (734) 455-0022, Ext. 4, or send e-mail to cbcwomensministries@hotmail.com.

LOGOS Youth Club

Calling all youth grades 4-12 to join the LOGOS Youth Club at Northville First United Methodist Church. Recreation, dinner, Bible study and music Wednesdays, 5:15-8:15 p.m. began Wednesday, Sept. 26. For information or registration, visit www.fumcnorthville.org or call (248) 349-1144.

HeartCry

The support group provides hope and help for mothers of prodigals at 7 p.m. on the second, fourth and fifth Wednesdays of each month, at Calvary Baptist Church, 43065 Joy Road, Canton. The group is using the book, The Hope of a Homecoming, by O'Rourke and Sauer (\$12). For information or to register, call (734) 455-0022, Ext. 4.

Worship change

The early service for the Anglican Church of Livonia is at 7:45 a.m. at Trinity Church, 34500 Six Mile, west of Farmington Road and next to Stevenson High School, Livonia. The 10 a.m. service (with Sunday School) will continue to be at the Livonia YMCA at 14255 Stark Road, between Lyndon and the I-96 service drive.

Women of the word

Bible study meets 9:15 a.m. and 6:45 p.m. Tuesdays, at Calvary Baptist Church, 43065 Joy Road, Canton. Choose from Covenant, a Precept Upon Precept class, or The Truth Project (new from Focus on the Family). To register, call (734) 455-0022, Ext. 4 or visit www.vchurches.com/cbcwomen.

Bible study

Get a new life, study Scripture 9-10:30 a.m. Saturdays at Blessed Sacrament Monastery on the northwest corner of 13 Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. Focus of study is Romans. Come once or more often. Call (248) 626-8253 for more information.

Fellowship Dinners

6 p.m. Thursdays. Dinner catered by The Cookie Lady, Susan Navarro. \$6. At St. James Presbyterian Church, 25350 W. Six Mile, Redford. Call (313) 534-7730.

Thrift Shop

9:30-11:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays at St. James Presbyterian Church, 25350 W. Six Mile, Redford.

Registration

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Early Childhood Center is now taking registrations for the fall program at 14175 Farmington Road, north of I-96, Livonia. It is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday. Loving and caring programs are offered for toddler, preschool, pre-K, and child care. Call (734) 513-8413.

Morning prayers

7:30 a.m. Tuesday-Friday, at New Beginnings United Methodist Church, 16175 Delaware, corner of Puritan, Redford. Please join in as participants start day with prayer. Call (313) 255-6330.

J.O.Y. meeting

The J.O.Y. Builders (Just Older Youth, ages 50 plus) meet 11:30 a.m. the third Thursday of the month for lunch, fellowship and fun, at Riverside Park Church of God, 11771 Newburgh at Plymouth roads, Livonia. Call (734) 464-0990. All are welcome to join in. There is no charge, although organizers ask that you bring a luncheon dish to share.

Higher Rock Cafe

Second and fourth Friday of the month, doors open at 7:30 p.m., live bands begin at 8 p.m., presented by Salvation Army of Wayne/Westland, 2300 S. Venoy, between Michigan Avenue and Palmer. For information, call (734) 722-3660 or visit www.tsa.higherrockcafe.com.

Uplifting church services

Want a unique church experience? Join in Sunday mornings at 10:45 a.m. for a service that will lift your entire family, but be prepared for what will happen after just one service. An open discussion 7 p.m. Wednesdays. Classes available for all ages, child to adult. Riverside Park Church of God is at 11771 Newburgh (corner of Plymouth Road), Livonia. Call (734) 464-0990.

Worship service

10 a.m. Sundays, at The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, 29425 Annapolis, Westland. Sunday School for children. For information, call (734) 728-3440.

Youth wanted

Twens and teens age 12 and up are invited to join in various youth activi-

Please see RELIGION, A7



Passages

Obituaries, Memorials, Remembrances

1-800-579-7355 ♦ fax: 734-953-2232

e-mail: oebits@hometownlife.com

BARBARA ANN PEVEER

Age 65, November 29, 2007. Beloved wife of George. Daughter of Helene Warson. Grandmother to Fallon. Also survived by several aunts, uncles and cousins. Visitation Saturday Dec. 8, 4-9pm and Sunday Dec. 9, 2-9pm with a 3pm Rosary at the John N. Santeiu & Son Funeral Home, 1139 Inkster (between Ford and Cherry Hill). In state Monday Dec. 10, 9:00am until 10:00am Mass at Sts. Simon and Jude Catholic Church, 32500 Palmer (south of Cherry Hill, east of Venoy).

DONALD V. GREENACRE

Age 83 of Orion Twp. formerly of Rochester died December 2, 2007. Beloved husband of the late Helen N. Greenacre. Loving father of Carole McSwain of Lapeer and Jon Greenacre of Australia. Dear grandfather of Jolianne Post, Roxanne (Michael) Martin and Melanie Greenacre. Great-grandfather of Dana and Alexandria Thiel, Lauren, Callee, William and Dallas Martin. Loving brother of Nancy Zmyslony of Colorado. Dear friend of Audrey Brewer of Watford. Also survived by a host of friends and relatives. Donald was a past member of the Waterford Aerie Eagles and a former Chaplain at the Rochester Eagles. Funeral from Lynch & Sons Funeral Directors Bossardert Chapel 39 West Burdick, Oxford Thursday 1 p.m. Interment Christian Memorial Cultural Cemetery. Friends may visit Thursday from 11am until time of service. Memorials to the Humane Society of Genesee County appreciated. www.lynchfuneraldirectors.com

DOYLE FRED TODD

Age 61, passed away December 2 from cancer. Avid golfer and hunter. He leaves behind his loving wife Emilie, along with numerous children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He will be remembered for his astounding wit and humor and will never be forgotten. No visitation, there will be a celebration of his life on December 6th at the American Legion Post No. 32, 9318 Newburgh Road, Livonia, from 5-10 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations to the family will be received.



JOHN KELLY PIERCE, JR.

Suddenly December 2, 2007. Age 22 in Kalamazoo. Senior at Western Michigan University and member of the Rugby Club Team. Beloved son of Diane S. Marshall (Pete) and John K. Pierce, Sr. Dear brother of Sarah Marshall, Sean Marshall and Brett Marshall. Grandson of JoAnn and the late Milton Strong and the late Charles "Bud" and Jean Pierce. Also survived by many loving relatives and friends. Family will receive friends at A.J. Desmond & Sons (Vasu, Rodgers & Connell Chapel), 32515 Woodward (btwn 13-14 Mile) Friday 2-8pm and Saturday 11am until funeral service 2pm. Memorial tributes to or the American Red Cross, P.O. Box 4002018, Des Moines, IA 50340-2018. View obituary and share memories at: www.DesmondFuneralHome.com

MIKE VOELKER

Ypsilanti, MI. Age 55, died December 1, 2007. He was born October 30, 1952 in Detroit, the son of the late Weldon & Ruth (Wiener) Voelker & was raised in Farmington. Survived by his loving wife Susan, of 32 yrs; daughter, Angela (Chad Ward) Voelker; sisters, Jane (Dieter) Stefankovic, Marilyn (Viada) Savovich & Donna (Kevin) Thrift & brothers, David (Pam) Voelker & Eddie Voelker. Funeral was held December 6, 2007 at Stark Funeral Service. Please sign his guest book at: www.starkfuneral.com

JOHN GOTTIS, JR.

Age 80, formerly of Farmington, MI. Passed Nov. 30, 2007. Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, MI



KATHERINE LYNNE MESTER

Formerly of Royal Oak, born October 10, 1970, died in a fatal car accident in Rhinebeck, NY. Her daughter, Isabel Katherine, was born following the auto accident. Katherine is survived by her loving husband, Professor Joseph Luzzi of Bard College, Annandale, NY; her parents, the Honorable Fred M. and Lynne M. Mester of Bloomfield Hills; her siblings, David & Jeneth Mester and Karen Mester of Bloomfield Hills. Kathy taught Pilates in the Hudson Valley, NY area. She received her A.A. in Liberal Arts from Dutchess Community College and was completing her B.A. at SUNY New Paltz. She worked for many years in the performing arts in New York City. After graduating from Cranbrook-Kingswood Academy, she completed studies in acting from the Neighborhood Playhouse, New York. She was a member of Actor's Equity and performed for Williamstown Summer Theater Stock in Williamstown, MA. Her many stage credits included "Bee-luther-hatchee," "The Boy Friend," "Marat/Sade," "Of Mice and Men," and "The Visit." She was especially glad to return to Michigan to perform in "Bee-luther-hatchee" at Meadowbrook Theater at Oakland University. Visitation Thursday 2-8 p.m. at the Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W 11 Mile Rd. (4 blks. E of Woodward), Royal Oak. In state Friday 10:00 a.m. until time of service 11:00 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Katherine and Isabel Mester Educational Foundation. Share your memories at: www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com.

LUCY KATE CASSIDY

Age 72, of Fairfield Glade, TN, passed away Nov. 29, 2007 at the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville. A memorial service will be held at a later date. She was born April 3, 1935 in Inman, SC, the daughter of Bruce Daniel and Ola Denton Eppley. Lucy was a Registered Nurse and enjoyed reading, sewing, bowling and being a homemaker. She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Donald James Cassidy; son, Ronald James Cassidy of Euless, TX; daughter, Melinda Sue Hersback of Troy, MI; grandchildren, Harold James Hersback, Mya Leigh Hersback, Ryan Gilchrist, Jessica Cassidy; sisters, Christie Whitfield of Greenville, SC and Inez Young of Clinton, TN. She was preceded in death by her parents and son, Michael Jay Cassidy. Crossville Memorial Funeral Home & Crematory, Inc. was in charge of the arrangements.

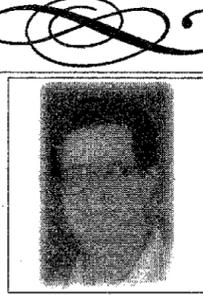
SERGE GRATCH, PhD

December 4, 2007 Age 86. Beloved husband of Rosemary. Dear father of Susan (Pat Gleason), Mary, Lucia, Karen, Elizabeth (Matt Waldsmith), Ann, Barbara Cohen (Warren), Amy, Ellen (Andras Komaromy) and Thomas (Lisa Kumar). Grandfather of Zak, Julian, Ellen, Michael, Charley, Laura, Mina, Chloe, Preston and Maya. Private memorial service will be held in the spring. Memorial tributes to Beaumont Hospice, 3601 W. Thirteen Mile Rd., Royal Oak, MI 48073 or Paws With A Cause, 4646 S. Division, Wayland, Michigan 49348. A.J. Desmond & Sons (248) 549-0500. View obituary and share memories at: www.DesmondFuneralHome.com



MARIE (Massolia) CHYTRY

Nov. 24, 1934-Nov. 26, 2007 Beloved wife for 31 years of the late Donald J. Chytry. Loving mother of Laura M. (Robert) Beck. Dearest grandmother of Christopher J. Chytry and Holly M. Beck. Dear sister of Margaret McWade of Ft. Lauderdale, FL; John (Eulalia) Massolia of Melvindale; and P. James (Nancy) Massolia of Fenton. Loving aunt to many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by loving parents, Pete and Marie Massolia. For Marie, family always came first throughout her life, and we, her family, will miss her smiles, hugs, and laughter. Arrangements by Griffin Funeral Home, Westland. Interment St. Hedwig Cemetery, Dearborn Heights, MI.



ROBERT J. WILSON

Age 72, of Novi, December 2, 2007. Beloved husband of Stephanie (nee Kobe). Loving father of Susan and Joseph. Dear brother of Joseph Dolan. Also survived by many relatives and friends. Funeral service Thursday, Dec. 6th at 10:00 a.m. at Heeneys-Sundquist Funeral Home, 23720 Farmington Rd., (btwn 9 & 10) Farmington, MI. (248-474-5200). Visitation Wednesday, 2-8pm, with a 7pm scripture service. Memorials may be made in Robert's name to Our Lady of Hope Cancer Center c/o of St. Mary Mercy Hospital 36475 S. Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48154.



OBITUARY POLICY

The first five "billed" lines of an obituary are published at no cost. All additional lines will be charged at \$4 per line. You may place a picture of your loved one for an additional cost of only \$6. Symbolic emblems may be included at no cost (example: American Flags, religious symbols, etc.)

Deadlines:

Friday 4:15 PM for Sunday
Wednesday 9

RELIGION

FROM PAGE A6

ties held at Riverside Park Church of God, 11771 Newburgh Road (corner of Plymouth), Livonia. Come to one of the regular classes on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. or Wednesdays at 7 p.m. For details, call (734) 464-0990.

A healthy you

Join with others as you discover ways to keep minds and bodies healthy through a four-week class that is open to the public and free of charge at Riverside Park Church of God, 11771 Newburgh Road (corner of Plymouth), Livonia. Day and night classes available. To register, call (734) 464-0990.

Sunday worship

10 a.m. at Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, 29425 Annapolis, Westland. For information, call (734) 728-3440.

Sunday services

Pastor Dan Strength leads services at Living Water Church (Pentecostal Church of God), 11663 Arcola, one block west of Inkster Road on Plymouth

Road. Sunday School is 10 a.m. followed by worship at 11 a.m. Bible study 7 p.m. Wednesdays. Call (734) 425-6360.

Farmington Women Aglow

Meets the second Monday of each month 7-9:30 p.m. at the Longacre House on Farmington road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile, Farmington Hills. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Call Vikki for more information at (248) 497-7755. Farmington Aglow is a Christian women's groups.

Worship services

Sunday worship services are at 8 a.m. (traditional) and 10:30 a.m. (contemporary), at Grace Lutheran Church, 46001 Warren, between Canton Center and Beck, Canton. For more information, call (734) 637-8160. Sunday school and Adult Bible Study at 9:15 a.m. Adult Bible Study series: Heaven Can't Wait.

Worship services

Praise and worship 10 a.m. Sunday, at Westwood Community Church, 6500 Wayne Road and Hunter, Westland. Contemporary music and casual dress. Children church and nursery. Call (734) 254-0093. Doughnuts and coffee served.

Celebrate Recovery

Ward Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Northville launches Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered recovery program helping men and women find freedom from their hurts, habits and hang-ups (addictive and compulsive behaviors), meets every Friday evening for 6 p.m. dinner (optional), 7 p.m. praise and worship, 8 p.m. small group discussion, 9 p.m. Solid Rock Cafe (optional coffee and desserts). Child care during Celebrate Recovery is free and available by calling (248) 374-7400. For information, visit www.celebrater-recovery.com and www.wardchurch.org/celebrate.

Sunday service

All are welcome to attend worship service at 10 a.m. Sunday in the sanctuary at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 27475 Five Mile, one block west of Inkster, Livonia. For more information, call (734) 422-1470.

Worship service

At 10:30 a.m. Sundays at New Beginnings United Methodist Church, 16175 Delaware at Puritan, Redford. Congregation is hearing lessons from

Peter. Call (313) 255-6330.

Adult literacy classes

Adult and English as a Second Language literacy classes are available for those wishing to improve reading, writing and English conversational skills. Open to adults age 18 and over. Trained tutors available for day or evening. For information, call Merriman Road Baptist Church in Garden City at (734) 421-0472. Leave your name and phone number and someone will contact you.

Personal ministry

Due Season Christian Church is a nondenominational, multicultural, full gospel church that offers Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. and Tuesday night Bible study at 7:15 p.m. Services are currently held at Stevenson High School on Six Mile, west of Farmington Road, Livonia. All are welcome. For information, call (248) 960-8063 or visit www.DueSeason.org.

Scripture studies

From 7-8:30 p.m. Mondays in the lower level of Our Lady of Loretto Church, Six Mile and Beech Daly, Redford. Call (313) 534-9000.

TOPS

Stands for Take Off Pounds Sensibly, meets at 7 p.m. every Thursday evening at St. Thomas a' Becket Church, 555 S. Lilley, Canton. Weigh-in is from 6:15-6:55 p.m. It is a weight support group that encourages members to lose weight and keep it off. Call Margaret at (734) 838-0322.

Learner's Bible study

At 7 p.m. Mondays, in Room A101, at Ward Presbyterian Church, 40000 W. Six Mile, Northville. Call (248) 374-5920.

Church service

Loving God by loving people, meets at 10 a.m. Sunday at Westwood Community Church, 6500 N. Wayne Road at Hunter, Westland. Doughnuts and coffee served. Call (734) 254-0093 for information.

Eucharistic adoration

The monthly program of Parish Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration continues the third Wednesday of each month at St. Michael's Church of Livonia, corner of Plymouth and Hubbard roads. The church will be open for worship from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. followed by Benediction service. For information,

call (734) 261-1455.

Senior activities

Gathering for seniors 50 years and older at 11:30 a.m. on the third Friday of every month at Riverside Park Church of God, 11771 Newburgh at Plymouth, Livonia. For more information, call (734) 464-0990. Put together a salad dish and come out and meet other seniors. Lunch is served followed by fellowship with some games and stories.

St. James Presbyterian Church offers a Thursday dinner at 6 p.m. for \$5 prepared by Susan Navarro, The Cookie Lady, followed by Bible study at 7 p.m. and Chancel Choir rehearsal at 8 p.m.; Thrift store is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday; 10 a.m. women's study group second Saturday of the month, and Sunday worship at 10 a.m. (nursery available) and children's class at 10:15 a.m. at 25350 W. Six Mile, Redford. Call (313) 534-7730.

Unity of Livonia

Services at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sundays at 28660 Five Mile, between Middlebelt and Inkster roads. Call (734) 421-1760.

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Sunday Worship 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. • Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
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Pastor Beth Librande
Worship Service 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Nursery Provided

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10000 Beech Daly
313-637-3179
9:30 - Trad. Worship & Sun. Sch.
11:00 - Contemp. Family Worship
www.redfordaldersgate.org

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The WMUZ Word Station For additional information visit www.wardchurch.org

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Worship Service-English-9:30 a.m.
Sabbath School (all ages)-11:00 a.m.
Worship Service-Hispanic-12:30 p.m.
Wednesdays:
Prayer Meeting-7 p.m.

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734-453-0970
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Sunday Worship - 11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening - 6:00 P.M.
Family Night - Wed. 7:00 P.M.
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(Nursery Available)

For Church Directory changes and information regarding advertising in this directory, please call Donna Hart (734) 953-2153 the Friday before publication.

To mail copy: The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or Fax to (734) 953-2121

Inspire Theatre offers Christmas show

The theatre group Inspire Theatre is returning to Westland to present "Twas the night before Christmas."

Performing in borrowed space, the group was forced to find another home when the church where they were housed started growing. Their desire to return to Westland

was rewarded when Warren Road Church opened their doors and their chapel to host this original presentation.

Director Len Fisher, who wrote the show, says that this show has, along with great music, a smattering of most of the classic TV Christmas specials.

"It's fun, big, and oh, too much fun," says Fisher. Performances are 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 6-8, at Warren Road Church, Warren and Farmington in Westland. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call (734) 751-7057

Listings for the Community Calendar can be submitted by e-mail at smason@hometownlife.com. They also can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or faxed to her attention at fax at (734) 591-7279. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Craft show
Lathers Elementary School will hold a craft show from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, at the school, located at Harrison and Marquette in Garden City. There is a \$2 entry fee or two non-perishable food items.

Cookies with Santa
Academic Pathways Cooperative Preschool, located at Mt. Hope Church at 30330 Schoolcraft Road, is hosting "Milk and Cookies with Santa" at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14. Admission is \$4 per child, adults free. It includes cookies and milk/coffee, crafts, photo with Santa and a raffle ticket to win the signed copy of the Night Before Christmas Story that Santa will read to the children. Kids can wear their jammies if they choose. Reservations no later than Dec. 9 by calling (734) 261-9540 or by e-mail kidsfirst@academicpathwayspreschool.com.

Benefit concert
The Chancel Choirs of Divine Child High School in Dearborn will perform a benefit concert in the main chapel at St. John's in Plymouth Township at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8, for the Capuchin and Mannas Meal Soup Kitchens of Detroit. This will be a full Madrigal concert by 35 members of the choir in full madrigal attire. The evening will feature a student violinist performing in the lobby before the concert. Elizabethan readings accompanied by mandolin, and a wide variety of Madrigal and Christmas vocal selections. The price of admission includes a "sparkling" afterglow (sparkling cider and juice with pastries).

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



Wish You Were Here

Pat McKenzie of Garden City (second row, center) asked her extended family to pose with her Garden City Observer at the Thatch Restaurant near Magherafelt, west of Belfast, in Ireland. Joining her were: Sarah Ewing, Alan Ewing, Deen Hutchinson, Brian Hutchinson, Brian Scully, Alex Hutchinson, Anne Scully and Lorraine Hutchinson. "This was my first visit to Ireland. It was beautiful and really does have 40 shades of green. It also was the first time I'd met my 'Irish cousins,'" she wrote. If you go on vacation, be sure to take a picture with your Observer and send it to Sue Mason, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. Be sure to include your name and information about your photo.

Admission is a minimum donation of \$15. St. John is located at 44045 Five Mile in Plymouth. For more information, call (734) 414-1111.

Wrestling Club
Westland Bottle Rockets is a wrestling club for ages 5-14. The club meets on Monday and Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 p.m. in Gym 4 of John Glenn High School, 36105 Marquette, west of Wayne Road, Westland, Michigan. The club runs from November through March and costs \$20. For questions or more information, contact Judy at judyaw1122@yahoo.com or calling (734) 634-4595.

Free health class
A free health class, "Avoid Holiday Weight Gain," will be presented by Dr. Carol Ann Fischer, a holistic physician, wellness consultant and clinical nutritionist from 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11, at the Alfred Noble Library, 32901 Plymouth Road, Livonia. You can have your cake and eat it too - if you know the secrets. Are you confused about good and bad oil? Not sure if the carb diet will work? Is butter really better? Sugar substitutes vs. real sugar, is there really a difference? Exercise? Who has the time? Take a natural approach to a healthier, new you. The class will be held limited to 30 seats. Call (734) 756-6904 to make a reservation.

New Year's Eve party
Ring in the New Year with Jimmy Howard & Company at a New Year's Party at the Livonia Elks, 31117 Plymouth Road in Livonia Monday, Dec. 30. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; party goes until 1 a.m. Dinner (oven-baked chicken and port tenderloin) served at 7:15 p.m. Tickets are \$60 per person. Due to the Christmas holiday, tickets must be purchased by Dec. 19. For more information, call Linda at (734) 507-9173 or Mary Ann at (734) 654-0115, or e-mail parties.2go2@yahoo.com

Higher Rock Cafe
The Wayne-Westland Salvation Army presents the Higher Rock Cafe the second and fourth Fridays of the month at its facility at 2300 Venoy, south of Palmer, Westland. Doors open at 8 p.m. Visit www.tsa.higherrockcafe.4t.com or call (734) 722-3660.

Fish Dial-A-Ride
One-day-a-month volunteer drivers are needed to transport seniors and disabled who are unable to drive to medical appointments. Phone messenger volunteers are also needed to help set up rides to the medical appointments. This is also a one-day-a-month opportunity that can be done right from home. People interested in helping can call Gary Simon at (734) 751-4101 or contact him by e-mail at GCHS.MCMLX@yahoo.com.

ORGANIZATIONS

Friends of Eloise
The Friends of Eloise group meets at 6 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month in the dining room of the Kay Beard Building, on Michigan between Middlebelt and Merriman. All are welcome. For more information, call Jo Johnson at (734) 522-3918.

Toastmasters
The Westland Easy Talkers Toastmasters Club can help people overcome their fear of speaking in front of people by teaching public speaking in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. The club meets at 6:30 p.m. Monday at the Cozy Corner Family Dining, 35111 W. Michigan Ave. at Wayne Road, Wayne. For more

information, call Vicki Brannon at (734) 467-7224 or Curt Gottlieb at (734) 525-8445.

TOPS
TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) M128 of Westland meets at 7 p.m. Mondays at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, 6500 N. Wayne Road, at Hunter, Westland. For more information, call Pat Strong at (734) 326-3539 or Mary Lowe at (734) 729-6879.

Democratic Club
The Garden City Democratic Club meets at 7 p.m. the fourth Thursday of the month (September through June) in Room 5 of the Maplewood Center, Maplewood west of Merriman. For more information, call Billy Pate at (734) 427-2344.

Citizens for Peace
Citizens for Peace meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at Unity of Livonia Church on Five Mile, between Middlebelt and Inkster. The group is dedicated to working for creation of a U.S. Department of Peace. All are welcome. For more information, call Colleen Mills at (734) 425-0079.

MOMS club
MOMS Club, a non-profit support group, welcomes all western Wayne County stay-at-home mothers, offering children activities, weekly age-appropriate play groups, and family get-togethers. MOMS Club also performs service projects that benefit needy children in our community. For more information, call Birthe, (734) 458-8143 or Kimberiy at (248)231-6120.

Vietnam Vets
The Plymouth-Canton Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528, meet at 7:30 p.m. the second Monday of every month at the Plymouth VFW Post 6695, on South Mill Street, just north of Ann Arbor Road. If you served in the U.S. military between 1964 and 1975, even if not "in country" (combat zone) you are still eligible to become a member. Visit the Web site at www.mihometown.com/oe/PlymouthCantonVVA for more information.

In Harmony
The Wayne Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church, 36660 Cherry Hill, west of Wayne Road, Westland. Gentlemen interested in the chapter's Renaissance Chorus or who enjoy quartetting can call membership chairman Bob Wolf at (734) 421-1652, or attend a rehearsal.

Veteran's Haven
Veteran's Haven operates a car, boat, camper and real estate-donation program. Donations are tax-deductible. For information, call (734) 728-0527. Food is distributed to veterans once a month throughout the month and there is a supplemental food program from 9 a.m. to noon Wednesdays: The Veteran Haven's Outreach Center, 4924 S. Wayne Road two blocks south of Annapolis in Wayne. Any honorably discharged veteran in need can call (734) 728-0527.

Silver Strings Dulcimer
Musicians and listeners are welcome to visit a traditional music jam from 7-9 p.m. the first and third Thursday of the month at Good Hope Lutheran Church, 28680 Cherry Hill, Garden City, Acoustic instruments include hammered and mountain dulcimer, guitar, banjo, fiddle, harmonica, concertina, autoharp, recorder, penny-whistle, ukulele and upright bass. Call (734) 482-2902 or visit <http://geocities.com/ssdsociety>.

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WESTLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

The following vehicles have been deemed abandoned and will be sold at Public Auction December 11, 2006 at 11:15 AM the auction will be held at Westland Car Care Towing 6375 Hix Rd. Westland, MI, 48185. The vehicles will be sold as is, starting Bid is for Towing and Storage.

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	BODY	VIN#
1985	GMC		P/U	2GETEK14H7F1523406
1992	CHEVROLET	BLAZER	S/W	1GNCT18W2N0135269
1992	PLYMOUTH	SHADOW	4-DR	1P3XP4SKPNN126097
1993	DODGE	SHADOW	4-DR	1B3XP6838PNN126097
2001	SUZUKI	ESTEEM	4-DR	JS2GB41SP15201311
2000	CHRYSLER	VOYAGER	S/W	2C4GJ2537YR893120
1994	DODGE	INTREPID	4-DR	1B3HD56FXRF302862

Caution: Set the proper foundation for your investment club

The other day on my radio show, I was asked about investment clubs. The caller and a group of friends were thinking about forming one and wanted my thoughts. On the whole, I am very favorable to investment clubs. If run successfully, they can be profitable, educational and a lot of fun. In too many cases, though, when not run properly, they have disappointing results.

One caveat — never invest your entire portfolio through an investment club. You are going to have to make compromises to other members and that is not something you should do with an individual portfolio. Prior to participating in an investment club, it is important to make sure that you have your own independent portfolio geared for your goals and objectives. The investment club portfolio should be a supplement to your own portfolio.

There are a number of issues that need to be resolved, and



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

the first one is to focus on the goals of the investment club. Whether it is to invest in stocks, new issues, penny stocks or whatever, it is important to make sure all the club members are on the same page. Nothing will break up an investment club faster than disputes over how to invest. Another issue is how the club will be run. What is the responsibility of each member and how will the legal aspects be handled? After all, one of the goals of an investment club is to make money and whenever you make money you know there are tax issues.

Investment clubs typically require regular contributions and meetings. Those issues should be decided up front to avoid problems. Another issue is what happens when

a member wants out? What formula will determine how a member's interest is valued and how will payouts be administered?

In order to prevent adverse tax consequences or undue losses, there may be a provision that a departing member is paid off over time as opposed to a lump sum.

What happens if a member does not meet their responsibility by not paying dues or doing research? There has to be some sort of methodology to handle these situations.

The National Association

of Investors Corp. (NAIC) in Madison Heights can provide a wealth of information for investment clubs. The national organization publishes *Better Investing* magazine, which is dedicated to helping educate and inform investors. Anyone who has an investment club or is thinking of forming one should contact the NAIC at

(877) 275-6242 or www.better-investing.org. Another resource is the *Dummy* series of books — *Investment Club for Dummies* is excellent.

Investment clubs are great because they encourage people to be involved with their money. However, all the successful ones set the foundation before they begin investing

and that includes legal agreements, bylaws, rules and regulations.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit www.bloomassetmanagement.com. You can hear Rick from noon to 3 p.m. Sundays on WDTK-AM (1400).

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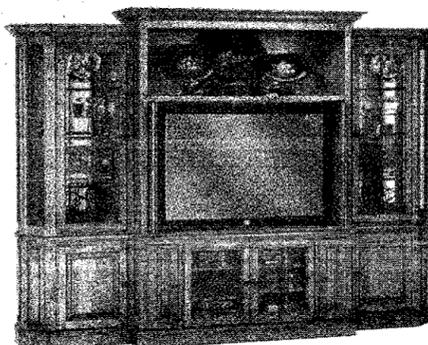
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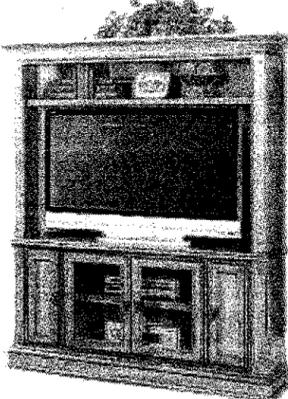
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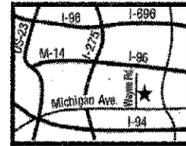
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OUR VIEWS

Charrette: vision worth looking at

In the gloom of what has become everyday life in Michigan, there was a bright spot last week when Westland's Downtown Development Authority held a design charrette for a portion of the Ford Road corridor.

The presentation gave the city's movers and shakers and average joes a vision of what the area along Ford from Wayne Road to Central City Parkway will look like in the future. And we have to say, we think it's going to look mighty fine.

The idea is to create a pedestrian-friendly shopping district with markets, stores, trendy boutiques, bakeries and coffee shops and possibly turning the five-lane thoroughfare into a boulevard.

If you look beyond the words, you will see that when it's done, Westland will have something it lacks — a downtown. It has a civic center complex, a major shopping district and a restaurant row. But when it comes to a downtown, there's nothing you can point to and say "that's it." This plan would provide that and more.

Many of the community activities — the summer festival, the Memorial Day and festival parades, community garage sales and the like — take place in the civic center area which would anchor the western end of the redesigned corridor. It's also an area with a strong residential component that would benefit from the improvements and further serve to draw in people from outside the community.

In the world of business, Westland isn't a powerhouse. It doesn't have large industrial plants. But it does have a strong base of small businesses and an even stronger commercial base. And that bodes well for the city.

Many years ago, then-mayor Eugene McKinney envisioned a road that would encircle the mall and create a shopping district. Only one leg of it was ever completed, but Nankin Boulevard did open up areas for development. This plan could help further connect the civic center, retail and restaurant areas, using Carlson to the bridge.

We realize it will take years — many years — for the redesign to happen. We're glad to hear city leaders say it will. We're also glad to see the Downtown Development Authority pursue the design charrette. To steal from the Pure Michigan ads, this vision is pure Westland and we like it.

The time has come to expand term limits

A proposal to extend term limits will not be on the Jan. 15 ballot; if it were on the ballot, it is likely that it would go down to defeat.

Proponents of term limits have done a good job of convincing a majority of potential voters, against all evidence, that term limits have been a boon to good government.

Term limits were approved as a constitutional amendment in 1992. The amendment limited the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general and state senators to two four-year terms. It limited state representatives to three two-year terms. The amendment was passed in the midst of a national movement that began in Oklahoma, based on the idea that office holders who remain in office too long are too vulnerable to lobbyists and develop power centers that are detrimental to democracy.

But during the recent partisan battles over the state budget, term limits have been cited as a major factor in legislative inaction.

While in theory term limits seem to hearken back to the ideal of citizen legislators, the reality is that term limits have robbed the Legislature of historical perspective, left legislators with little expertise in particular areas of state government and public policy, fostered an ability to see beyond narrow partisan positions for the greater good and robbed most of experience in crafting compromises that work. Term limits have shifted institutional memory, and power, to hired aides rather than elected legislators.

Professional politician needn't be a pejorative. The state needs some professionals in Lansing. Many legislators have admitted that their lack of experience has been a significant part of the problem. We have had a series of House speakers who have come to the position after a single term in office.

It is unlikely that voters would totally abandon term limits. The Michigan Chamber of Commerce has thrown its support behind a proposal that would allow legislators to serve a total of 12 years in either the House or Senate or a combination of 12 years in both chambers. Under the current law, legislators can serve up to 14 years in both chambers, but are limited to six years in the House, eight years in the Senate.

Ironically, this proposal did not make it to the ballot because of partisan wrangling over attempts by Democrats to append other reforms that the Chamber did not support.

We believe legislators need more time in office and urge the Legislature, the Chamber and others to continue making the case for extending term limits and bring it to the ballot for next November.



Thank you for support

The Salvation Army would like to thank several Westland businesses that have supported our Christmas 2007 efforts. With their support we will serve Christmas dinner to 100 senior citizens, visit almost 1,000 shut-in individuals in nursing and assisted-living facilities, supply Christmas toys, dinner and warm clothing to nearly 800 families.

While doing this special holiday outreach, we also have continued to provide after-school programs where 30 or more children participate each day in tutoring, recreational events and receive much needed individualized love and attention during a time of day when it is most critical.

Our Social Service workers have also maintained services such as utility and rental assistance, food pantry, services to the homeless and referrals to other community services.

Please allow us this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to the following businesses:

The Westland Shopping Center, Macy's, J.C. Penney, Sears, Kmart, Michaels, Kroger (various locations), Heartland Market, Value City, North Side Hardware of Wayne and The Palace Super Market, for welcoming our Red Kettle Campaign.

There also are several businesses in the Westland, Wayne and Romulus area that are supporting this campaign with our Counter Top Kettles. We will be publicly thanking them at an upcoming city council meeting.

It is our wish and our prayer that the communities we serve will support these businesses.

Thank you for your time and continued support.

Capt. Matthew O'Neil
Corps officer
The Salvation Army
Westland

Theft fosters mistrust

I had my purse stolen on Monday of last week in my child's school parking lot. My purse had less than \$20 in it, but had a lot of other things in such as driver's license, cell phone, credit cards, Social Security card, insurance cards, etc.

The thief never tried to use any of the cards. He couldn't because everything was canceled immediately. Yet my purse is still missing.

I have been a wreck all week, and have had to go through a mess trying to get everything canceled and replace.

I think you should do a story on the fact that when you get your purse stolen, it is more than getting "money" stolen! It ends up being a long time of c-p that you have to go through, from the feelings of mistrust and paranoia to the year you have to wait and continuously check your credit report to make sure this person is not trying to steal your identity as well.

Kelly Deron-Dolby
Westland

Decision was correct

I commend the Michigan Supreme Court and Secretary of State for upholding the Jan. 15 primary and maintaining a strong Michigan tradition of including the voice of the people in deciding who

the presidential nominees should be from each party. As the Republican National committeeman for Michigan, I have been through many election cycles and know that more participation by the voters is a better system that leads to a better result for democracy.

This was also a big victory for the McCain campaign. Sen. McCain won Michigan in 2000 after gaining the momentum from a strong victory in New Hampshire and appealing to Republicans, independents, and, yes, conservative Democrats who chose to vote in the Republican primary for a Republican candidate. Sen. McCain's campaign is on the rebound and I am confident that he will once again win the Michigan primary in 2008.

There are dozens of reasons why I am supporting Sen. John McCain for president of the United States. The following reasons are just a few:

■ John McCain has a 25-year pro-life voting record and has never voted for a tax increase.

■ John McCain will end pork barrel attachments vetoing any and all that come across his desk. He is also known as the deficit hawk in the Senate, demanding fiscally conservative values. With his foreign policy and military experience, John McCain is most qualified to be our commander in chief.

In fact, John McCain was the only Republican to criticize the failed Rumsfeld strategy and proposed the currently successful surge strategy for Iraq back in 2003. He does not need on-the-job training and is ready to lead from day one.

John McCain does not do a poll to see what's popular, he is guided by common sense principles. Finally, poll after poll shows McCain is the only Republican who can beat Hillary Clinton.

For these reasons I thank the Secretary of State and Supreme Court for doing the right thing and giving the voters of Michigan a chance to once again vote for the next President of the United States, John McCain.

Chuck Yob
Republican National committeeman
Michigan co-chair for John McCain 2008

All about choices

Mr. Power's "Judge nixes Dem/GOP plan reminiscent of Orwell" (*Observer*, Nov. 15) makes lots of sense to me.

Why in our supposed democracy only two parties are favored and promoted, parties that many view as one under two names? It certainly appears there is not much difference — only minor, cosmetic — between the two. For personal convenience or gain, politicians freely switch from one party to the other with no regrets.

Under former Soviet domination behind the Iron Curtain, countries, the so-called People's Democracies, had likewise two parties, communist and socialist, controlled from above by a common to both parties ruling clique, parties basically similar, differently only in name.

This scheme was intended to fool the ruled people into believing they have a choice in deciding how they wish to be governed, and to fool the outside world into believing these countries had democratic systems of government, when in fact they had not.

But politically savvy people there knew

better. When opportune time had arrived, they got rid of this kind of mendacious systems, and adopted true democracies. Now they have real choices, several, usually four or five major parties, representing ideas and interests of corresponding electorate.

It is wrong, certainly undemocratic, for the power-wielding elite to discriminate in various ways, including ignoring and omissions, against parties other than the Republican-Democratic, especially if it happens to be intentional for some mean-spirited reason.

Joseph Wira
Plymouth Township

Don't start war in Iran

Vice President Dick Cheney is now manipulating information to start a war in Iran so we can take over its oil, too. The American people don't need another war subverting our taxes to oil companies and government contractors. We need to focus on the issues at home. Creation of jobs, housing, better education and health care and new infrastructure in the U.S. are far more important.

Impeachment proceedings are long overdue.

Denise Berthiaume
Canton

Dissenting views needed

A free press (or media) is the hallmark of a free society. Media monopolized by a few large corporations severely curtails free speech and the information needed for a democracy to make choices, as evidenced by the lack of any serious balancing viewpoints permitted in the media, during the runup to the Iraq war.

We are again dangerously close to starting another war with Iran, with the same major media outlets (i.e., Fox News) playing their crucial role of not-so-subtle cheerleaders for war. The proposed rule changes by chairman of the FCC (loyal Bushie Kevin Martin) are apparently their reward for loyalty, and yet another insurance policy to ensure continued major media complicity.

When only money gets to talk, real democracy can no longer exist, because an informed electorate is no longer possible. I fear only manufactured consent will soon exist in what used to be the most free country in the world.

Dale Adcock
Redford

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content.

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Our fundamental purposes are to enhance the lives of our readers, nurture the hometowns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

QUOTABLE

"It's a way for students to showcase their talents and add to the festival atmosphere."

- Joyce Silagy about the windows students from Wayne-Westland and Plymouth-Canton schools have painted along Ford in Canton

Detroit needs to toughen up its homeland security

So Detroit got slammed again, this time in a survey that rated it the most dangerous city in America for having the worst crime rate, at least according to CQ Press, a division of Congressional Quarterly.

Detroit has the worst crime rate, based on the incidents of murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, vehicle theft and burglary. Just about as soon as the rating came out, so did critics of CQ — including the FBI, which cautioned that statistics shouldn't be taken out of context.

They're right, of course, because crime isn't about statistics. It's about people — and perception.

I live in a city completely surrounded by Detroit that is perceived by many people to be extremely dangerous. It isn't, but neither is it the safest city in America, or the state, or the metro region. I'd say that it is the safest town within the borders of Detroit, but that's about as far as I would go.

Yet, I don't live in fear because I know while there is a moderate chance that I might be the victim of a non-violent crime, like burglary or car theft, there is an extremely small chance that I will be a victim of a violent crime.

That's because crime is a complicated business. It isn't as simple as it may seem paraded on the nightly news. People rarely go about randomly shooting at each other, and when they do, that type of crime can occur anywhere, including Amish schools.

But when it comes to murder, at least, most victims have an association with the killer, whether it be a family member or the neighborhood drug dealer that everybody seems to know. As for perception, the worst type of crime a town can experience is random homicide: a thief spots a person in a car, goes over and pulls out a gun, shoots the person and steals the car.

What makes this so bad is that it could happen to anyone who just happens to be in the wrong place. And if that occurs a few times, that brands the whole town as unsafe

I don't live in fear because I know while there is a moderate chance that I might be the victim of a non-violent crime, like burglary or car theft, there is an extremely small chance that I will be a victim of a violent crime. That's because crime is a complicated business. It isn't as simple as it may seem paraded on the nightly news. People rarely go about randomly shooting at each other, and when they do, that type of crime can occur anywhere, including Amish schools.

under any circumstances.

But that kind of crime just doesn't happen often.

When you look at a community the size of Detroit, along with its rate of poverty, it's not surprising that it has more than its share of violent crime.

Many factors cause crime, including poverty, lack of education and lack of opportunity, but I am firmly convinced the overriding problem is drugs — which themselves are directly related to those other factors.

Drugs are rampant. Sit in court in Detroit and see how many cases are directly related in some way to drugs. The presence of drugs — which, by the way, are not limited to the inner-city area — is rampant. If Detroit really wants to kill its crime problem, it should turn its attention in a huge way to eliminating drugs. Crack houses should be shut down as soon as they open. Drug dealers must be arrested immediately. If it takes a military-like operation to do that, so be it. This problem must be crushed in the strongest manner.

Take some of those resources we are squandering in Iraq and bring them home, where they can do some good.

That's real homeland security.

Greg Kowalski is editor of the Birmingham Eccentric. He can be reached at (248) 901-2570 or by e-mail at gkowsalski@hometownlife.com.



Greg Kowalski

'Millennials' are saying goodbye to dreary Michigan

He was laid off from his job as a research assistant at the University of Michigan when the professor lost his grant. She had a teaching degree from Eastern Michigan but couldn't find a teaching job in a time when schools were laying off teachers.

They now live in Chicago. The story of my son and daughter-in-law has been repeated hundreds of times in this state. It has become a Michigan cliché. Young people are leaving the state for jobs, a better urban environment, a more stable economy.



Hugh Gallagher

SEMScope, the quarterly publication of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, spotlights the situation with a special report on "keeping them here."

The stories focus on the millennials, a name given to those young people between the ages of 22 and 30. They are just emerging from college with degrees and college loan debts, looking for a future. More and more that future does not include the state of Michigan. It most especially does not include southeast Michigan.

But without those young people, the state will face ever more crushing economic problems. It will lose the tax revenue from those young professional incomes. An aging population will put stress on an already overstressed health system.

The magazine asks some young people who have abandoned the state why they chose to live in other cities. The obvious first answer is that there were jobs in those cities. Though some actually moved to another city before having a job, trusting that conditions there would make it easier to find a job than conditions in metro Detroit.

The other reasons are telling. Those other cities have viable, exciting urban centers, not just big event venues where suburbanites drive in and then drive out as quickly as their cars can negotiate the freeways. In fact, the young urbanites don't need cars in these other cities, because Washington, Boston, Chicago and even Phoenix have intelligent mass transit systems. Those other cities meld the old and the new, they transform the existing into something new and vital. They are places where people walk their neighborhoods, drink coffee at the local java joint, pick up a book or magazine at the local bookstore, buy groceries at the local market, go running or biking through the local park.

The magazine looks at some cities that

The other reasons are telling. Those other cities have viable, exciting urban centers, not just big event venues where suburbanites drive in and then drive out as quickly as their cars can negotiate the freeways. In fact, the young urbanites don't need cars in these other cities, because Washington, Boston, Chicago and even Phoenix have intelligent mass transit systems. Those other cities meld the old and the new, they transform the existing into something new and vital.

are prospering — Atlanta, Raleigh-Durham, Denver. The young are flocking to these places because the new jobs are there, but so, too, is the new (old) lifestyle. In Denver, the magazine also notes a strong commitment to protecting the area's parks and open land. Time and again, young people say they want urban places that are close to recreation areas or incorporate parks into their planning. Young people run, bike, hike, kayak, etc.

As Lou Glazer, president of Michigan Future Inc., notes in the magazine it is not just sunbelt cities. Chicago, Toronto and Minneapolis have all been able to attract young professionals.

Chicago is a place of real neighborhoods, where people live, work, dine, shop. My son, his wife and their new daughter take full advantage of the Lakeview neighborhood on Chicago's northside. They live a block from Lincoln Park, part of Chicago's Lake Michigan waterfront, that the city leaders long ago recognized as a vital component to a healthy urban life. Every day, people jog, bicycle and walk baby strollers. They dine in local restaurants of every conceivable ethnic variety. The neighborhood has great locally owned businesses and national chain stores.

Of course, Chicago is not a perfect city. It has, like Detroit, a racial divide. It has its share of crime. But it also has a rich mix of people, constantly busy streets, booming local businesses and a general sense of optimism about the future.

Here in metro Detroit we're apparently happier grumbling, doing nothing and saying goodbye to our children, except when they come to visit on the holidays (if they can tear themselves away from their more vibrant cities).

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of the Observer Newspapers. He can be reached by e-mail at hgallagher@hometownlife.com or by phone at (734) 953-2149.

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Sounds of the Season

Free Concerts at Schoolcraft College

December 9—Wind Ensemble
Sunday, 7:30 p.m.
Schoolcraft College Radcliff Center
1751 Radcliff Street, Garden City

Featuring the works of John P. Sousa, Dimitri Shostakovich, Hector Villa-Lobos, Elliott Del Borgo, LeRoy Anderson and the holiday favorite *Christmas Song* by Mel Tormé and Robert Wells.

December 10—Jazz Band and Synthesizer Ensemble
Monday, 7:30 p.m.
DiPonio Room inside the VisTaTech Center
Schoolcraft College main campus
18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia

The Jazz Band performs holiday favorites by Chick Corea, Dave Brubeck, and Stevie Wonder. The Synthesizer Ensemble's selections range from the traditional to the modern, including *Lacrymosa* from Mozart's *Requiem Mass*, a dramatic rendition of the 1980s hit *Africa* by the pop group Toto, and a special arrangement featuring vocalist Josh Marois, whose voice is electronically transformed to sound like a full choir.

December 16—Choral Union
Sunday, 3 p.m.
Recital Hall inside the Forum Building
Schoolcraft College main campus
18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia

A choral concert entitled *A Winter's Tale* featuring choral music and poetry readings that capture the spirit of the holiday season. A suggested, but not required, admission donation of one canned or boxed non-perishable food item, which will be donated to the Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan, would be appreciated.

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Thursday, December 6, 2007

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

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TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Eye on the basket

Lutheran Westland's Katy Ramthum drives to the bucket defended by Plymouth Christian's Peggy Abraham during Tuesday's non-conference girls basketball. Lutheran Westland earned its first victory of the year with a 37-25 win. See a roundup of girls games on page B2.

First-team All-America NAIA honors MU's Tihomirova

Madonna University's Lubovj Tihomirova became the school's eighth first-team All-America women's volleyball player, which was announced Tuesday by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

The junior outside hitter becomes the first MU player to garner a first-team All-America honor since 2005 when fellow Riga, Latvia, native Natalja Tinina, along with Ashley Frost, also earned the award.

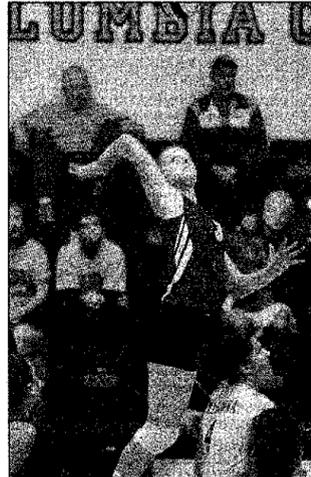
She joins an exclusive All-America list of Crusaders which also includes Shelley Stanton (2002), Brandy Malewski (2000), Kelly McCausland (1995, 1996), Kari Van Deusen (1993) and Dana Finley (1991, 1992).

Tihomirova was selected earlier this season as both the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference and NAIA Region VII Player of the Year. She became the first Crusader since the 2005 season to be selected to the all-tournament team at the NAIA National Championships.

Tihomirova posted 82 kills, 15 blocks and an ace, while accounting for 91.5 points for the Crusaders, who went 3-2 in the Nationals.

For the season, Tihomirova posted a new MU single season record with 967 kills, tops in the WHAC. She also hit at a .311 clip, also best in the conference while posting 142 total blocks and accounting for 1,094 points.

MU, which earned its sixth straight trip to the national tournament this season, finished with a 35-12 overall record and captured the program's 11th straight WHAC



MU SPORTS INFORMATION

Madonna University's Lubovj Tihomirova, a junior outside hitter from Riga, Latvia, earned first-team All-America honors in women's volleyball.

crown.

Madonna senior Jacqui Gatt (Livonia Churchill) was also named honorable mention All-America and was runner-up for Libero of the Year in the NAIA. The WHAC and Region VIII Libero of the Year led the conference with 899 digs (5.9 per game).

Gatt, who carries a 3.77 grade point average in sports management, also was named to the Daktronics

Please see **TIHOMIROVA, B2**

Sidelines

Blazer icers win

Heather Sartorius notched a pair of goals and added one assist Saturday as host Livonia Ladywood defeated host Plymouth-Canton-Salem, 4-2, in a Michigan Metro Girls High School Hockey League game at the Arctic Pond.

Ashley Ballarin also had a goal and two assists for the Blazers, now 2-3-1 overall and 2-1 in the league.

Abby Kienbaum had the other goals, while Maria Rotondo chipped in with two assists for the Blazers, who led 2-0 after one period and 4-1 after two periods.

Goalie Michelle Wynienko stopped 20 P-C-S shots.

Kelsey Nikkila scored both goals for the Penguins, now 0-3 in the league.

CHS alumni hockey

The annual Livonia Churchill High School alumni hockey game will be from 5-6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 28 at Eddie Edgar Arena's B Rink.

The Churchill varsity boys hockey team will also be playing Franklin at 6 p.m. at the A Rink.

Those interested should e-mail Churchill coach Pete Mazzoni at pmazzoni@livonia.k12.mi.us.

Hole-in-one club

On Nov. 25, 16-year-old Livonia Churchill High junior Matthew Charnley used an 8-iron to ace the 172-yard, No. 13 hole at Willow Metropark Golf Course in New Boston.

MU trio lauded

Three Madonna University women's soccer players were named recently to the 2007 NSCAA All-Region second-team including junior Ashley Stoychoff and sophomores Lauren Hess (Livonia Ladywood) and Gina Leone.

Hess and Stoychoff were named first-team All-Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference for the 8-7-2 Crusaders with five and four, respectively. Leone helped anchor the MU backline as the Crusaders finished 7-4-1 in the WHAC.

John Glenn wins opener vs. Belleville

Westland John Glenn made an early season statement Tuesday with a season-opening 66-59 boys basketball victory at Belleville.

Senior forward Earl Hardison led the victorious Rockets (1-0) with 22 points and seven rebounds.

Senior guard Keshawn Martin chipped in with 12 points, while senior forward Stefan Marken finished with 11 points.

Marken and Derrick Crosby each grabbed seven rebounds.

Glenn led 33-27 at the half and 50-43 after three quarters.

"Belleville is hard to guard and they're athletic, so we made it an emphasis to get back five-on-five defensively to give us a chance," Glenn coach Dan Young said. "We were able to get enough stops to hold them off."

Glenn was 10-of-12 from the foul line, while Belleville was 9-of-11.

The Tigers (0-1) finished with four players in double figures led by Kourea Hayes' 12 points.

Kyle Gupton added 11, while Vinnie Boyd and Ricky Love each added 10.

"Anytime you go to Belleville on the road and get a win, it's a good start," Young said. "They've got a lot of basketball tradition. Our guys have worked hard leading up to this point and it's a good start."

Glenn returns to action Tuesday, Dec. 11, at home against Novi.

Crusaders whip Alma College, 76-66

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Madonna University turned up the offense in the second half Tuesday to lift the Crusaders to a 76-66 nonconference win over Alma.

MU (4-6) made just 13 of 30 field-goal tries in the opening 20 minutes, but still led 32-24 at the break. The host Crusaders maintained a comfortable lead in the second half, when they connected on 17-of-32 attempts (53 percent).

Leading the way with 14 points was senior point guard Charlie Henry (Canton Agape Christian), while senior guard Jon Battle helped the cause with 13 points. Contributing 12 points each were senior forward D.J. Bridges (Canton) and junior guard Cedric Sims (Wayne Memorial).

Tallying 20 points for Alma (0-6) was

Matt Brown.

On Saturday, Rocky Mountain scored 17 points in overtime to post a 102-93 victory over Madonna in a nonconference men's basketball contest at Havre, Mont.

The Crusaders (3-6) trailed 48-45 at halftime but forced OT with a 40-37 margin in the second half only to let the game slip away when the visitors went on their scoring surge.

Bridges led all scorers with 28 points while Battle and Henry contributed 23 and 18, respectively, for MU.

On Friday, Madonna defeated NAIA Division I Montana State University-

Northern 89-85, thanks to a 54-36 rally in the second half.

Netting 22 points each for the Crusaders were Bridges and Battle, with Sims adding 19.

Battle was named WHAC Player of the Week (Dec. 3) for the second time this year after averaging 20.7 points during a three-game stretch.

Ocelot men falter

Schoolcraft's men's basketball team lost 78-73 Saturday to Black Hawk (Ill.) College-East, despite 21 points from Greg Leavell and 18 from Marvin Walker in the Highland CC (Ill.) Tournament.

On Sunday, Lincoln Land (Ill.) defeated Schoolcraft, 85-62, dropping the Ocelots to 1-6 overall.

Spartans earn runner-up finish

PREP WRESTLING

Patriots 3rd at Glenn

Livonia Franklin captured four out of five matches in Saturday's Rocket Team Invitational at Westland John Glenn.

The Patriots opened with a 60-6 win over Dearborn before losing to eventual champion Clarkston, 47-17. Franklin also defeated Belleville (32-30), Walled Lake Central (58-23) and Roseville (44-27).

Dan Woodall (189-215) went 5-0 on the day for Franklin, while Matt Hintz (135), Brandon Smith (140), Brandon Billiau (145), Don Stratz (152-160), Jared Pieknik (119), Garrett Hay (160-

171) and Mike Modes (285) each finished 4-1.

"If you had told me that we would be 4-1 and only lose to Clarkston, I would have been happy considering we graduated 10 seniors," Franklin coach Dave Chiola said. "But everyone showed room for improvement. The past three years I think we peaked at this tournament. We definitely have room to grow and improve."

"We only have about three kids with any real varsity experience and it showed. A lot of mental mistakes, a lot of hesitation and not the aggression that I'm used to. They're very good and enthusiastic, but it will take some time to jell."

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Clarenceville impresses; Vagnetti ignites Chargers

Livonia Clarenceville played "lights out" first-half defense Tuesday night and parlayed it into a season-opening 58-39 boys basketball victory at Dearborn Heights Annapolis.

Junior guard Jamie Stewart led the victorious Trojans (1-0) with 23 points and 11 rebounds.

Haniyf Mark, a 6-foot-2 junior forward who sparked the first-half offensive and defensive effort, finished with 16 points and six blocks. He hit a pair of 3-pointers to open the game as the Trojans raced out to a 15-4 first-quarter lead.

Jeremy Gainer chipped in with 11 points for Clarenceville, which held a 30-10 halftime advantage.

"It was one of our better defensive efforts, the first half we contested every shot," Clarenceville second-year coach Corey McKendry said. "Haniyf also had an outstanding game."

Clarenceville was 8-of-14 from the foul line, while the Cougars (0-1) were 11-of-17.

Renaldo Wallace, a 6-5 senior forward, led Annapolis and all scorers with 27 points.

CHURCHILL 68, GARDEN CITY 45: On Tuesday, senior guard Andrew Vagnetti tallied 19 of his game-high 23 points in the first half to lead host Livonia Churchill (1-0) to a season-opening triumph over the Cougars (0-1).

Churchill led 48-22 at intermission as senior center Ryan Rosenick tallied 11 of his 13 points in the first period.

BOYS BASKETBALL

Senior forward Shauntez Robinson came off the bench to contribute 11 points and six rebounds.

Churchill was 24-of-48 from the field and 17-of-27 from the foul line.

Vagnetti was 9-of-11 from the free throw line. He also hit a pair of triples.

Joe Felice led Garden City with 15 points, while Ron Pummill added nine.

LUTHERAN WESTLAND 59, PCA 45: Brandon Bekius won in his debut as coach Tuesday as host Lutheran High Westland (1-0) got untracked in the second half to beat Plymouth Christian Academy (0-1).

Senior forward Robert Seltz paced the victorious Warriors, who outscored PCA 30-21 in the second half, with 13 points. Sam Ahlersmeyer, a junior forward, added 11. Senior forward Nate Bachert contributed eight points.

Trevor Zinn led the Eagles with 10 points.

The Warriors were 7-of-13 from the foul line, while PCA was 11-of-15.

"It was a tough game, we matched up well because both teams are small," Bekius said. "We played better the second half. The first half we were kind of sloppy. We ran our offense and created a few more turnovers."

LIGHT & LIFE 57, HURON VALLEY 33: Jeremy Anderson scored 20 points and James Klein added 11 Tuesday as host Taylor Light & Life Christian (1-0) downed Westland Huron Valley Lutheran (0-1) in the season opener for both teams.

Junior forward Kyle Tacia and sophomore forward Bryan Gruenewald each tallied nine for the Hawks, who couldn't overcome a 29-10 halftime deficit.



Laker contributors

The Grand Valley State men's and women's cross country teams placed third and fourth, respectively, at the NCAA Division II Nationals held Nov. 17 at Missouri Southern State in Joplin, Mo. James Gale (left), a 2003 Livonia Churchill High grad, was 64th overall and 54th in the men's team race with a 10-kilometer time of 32 minutes, 17 seconds. Freshman Megan Macerati (middle), also of Churchill, placed 38th overall in the women's 6K in 21:48.2, while junior Kelly Gibbons (Livonia Stevenson) took 49th overall in 22:01.2. Adams State (Colo.) was the women's team champion, while Abilene Christian (Tex.) captured the men's team title.

Lady Ocelots stay unbeaten

The victories continue to pile up for the Schoolcraft's women's basketball team.

The Lady Ocelots captured their seventh and eighth games last weekend over Sinclair CC (Ohio) and Lakeland CC (Ohio), respectively, in the Schoolcraft College Classic.

On Friday, the Lady Ocelots won 78-68 and the team followed up the next day with a 76-66 triumph over Lakeland.

Balanced scoring helped Lady Ocelots both nights with

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

four players reaching double figures in scoring.

Against Sinclair, Adrena Walker-Price tallied 14 points with Antoinette Brown (12), Brittney Ivey (10) and Sheray Brown (10) also contributing plenty of scoring.

Heidi Warczinski scored 16 to lead Saturday's victory, with Tayler Langham (Salem) and Shana King each tallying 11 points, while Antoinette Brown scored 10.

Texas-Brownsville eliminates MU spikers in NAIA nationals

Madonna University seniors Jacqui Gatt and Amy Szymanski had their outstanding college volleyball careers end last Friday, with this season ending just like their other three with the Crusaders - a loss at the 2007 NAIA Volleyball Championship.

Gatt, a Livonia Churchill alum and Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference Libero of the Year, and Redford's Szymanski (Livonia Ladywood) were disappointed along with their teammates and coaches as MU lost 3-1 to the University of Texas-Brownsville at Columbia (Mo.) College.

Madonna (35-12) started with a 30-25 victory, but then lost the next three, including heart-tugging scores of 30-28 and 32-30 in games two and four, respectively. The Crusaders nearly forced a deciding game five, rallying from a six-point deficit to go up 30-29.

The Scorpions (36-8) then scored three points in succession to spoil the comeback bid.

"Our girls played their hearts out and it is always tough to see your season come to a close," said MU assistant

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

coach Ed Tolentino.

For MU, junior outside hitter Lubovj Tihomirova paced the hitting attack with 19 kills, with sophomores Mary McGinnis and Stephanie Parslow contributing 13 and 11, respectively.

For Tihomirova, the total padded her new MU season record in kills which she just set at nationals. She ended the year with 965; the previous record-holder was Kelly McCausland (893 in 1995).

As usual, sophomore setter Inta Grivalds had a splendid match, tallying 50 assists, while Gatt registered 18 defensive digs to lead in that category. Szymanski helped the cause with three digs in limited action.

"Jacqui is one of the best defensive players I have ever worked with, at any level," Tolentino said.

He said both seniors' leadership qualities will be sorely missed, but that they left a positive impact on the players who will return in 2008.

Madonna advanced out of pool play into Friday's round

of 10 with Thursday's 30-26, 30-27, 30-26 win over Olivet Nazarene University (Ill.) as Tihomirova (16 kills) and McGinnis (15 kills) led the hitting attack. Freshman outside hitter Amanda Lenart contributing a career-high seven.

On Wednesday, the opening day of pool play, MU split a pair of matches, upsetting No. 8 Mount Vernon Nazarene (Ohio) in a five-game thriller.

Against MVNU (39-3), the Lady Cougars drew even at 2-2 with a 30-28 triumph in Game 4 to set up the deciding game - won by the Crusaders, 15-11. Madonna lost 30-27 in the opener and took a 2-1 edge with 30-24, 30-27 wins in the next two games.

Tihomirova paced the hitting attack with 26 kills, with McGinnis and junior middle hitter Whitney Fuelling contributing 21 and 13, respectively.

Where the Crusaders really had an edge against the Lady Cougars was in the defensive digs category. MU tallied 102 digs (41 by senior outside hitter and Livonia Churchill alum Jacqui Gatt), compared to 67 by MVNU.

Grivalds tallied 57 assists

and 16 digs.

The later match with Concordia (Calif.) didn't go quite as well, with the Pool C-favored Eagles (28-5) earning 33-31, 30-19, 30-26 wins.

Bright spots for MU included Tihomirova (13 kills) and Grivalds (26 assists).

TIHOMIROVA

FROM PAGE B1

NAIA All-American Scholar Athlete team along with teammate Amy Szymanski (Livonia Ladywood), a senior, and Whitney Fuelling, a junior.

Szymanski, a Redford native, carries a 3.66 GPA in nursing and was a 2006 selection to the NAIA Champions of Character team.

Fuelling, a first-team All-WHAC pick, carries a 3.56 GPA in nursing. The Milford native ranked third on the Crusaders in total kills with 459 this season.

Both Gatt and Szymanski made their second appearances on the Daktronics NAIA Scholar-Athlete team, while all three were Academic All-WHAC.

Stevenson stops Clarenceville; Ladywood bounces Edsel Ford

Pat Cannon earned his first victory as Livonia Stevenson girls basketball coach Tuesday night as the Spartans rolled to a 57-31 win at Livonia Clarenceville.

Freshman Sarah Smith and sophomore Tasi Newton each scored 14 points for the victorious Spartans, who led 28-16 at halftime before breaking it open with a 16-5 third-quarter run.

"We did a good job defensively on them," said Cannon, who also received eight points from junior Kaylee McGrath as Stevenson evened its record at 1-1.

Ashley Hall scored 10 to lead Clarenceville (1-2), while Amanda Moody tallied eight. Cheney Kemp chipped in with 10 rebounds and blocked six shots.

LADYWOOD 62, EDESEL FORD 38: A 22-5 first-quarter run sparked Livonia Ladywood (1-2) to a non-league win Tuesday at Dearborn Edsel Ford (0-2).

"We played harder, shot better and played more as a team," said Ladywood coach Andrea Gorski, whose team lost its first two games to Flint Powers Catholic and Grosse Pointe North.

Alex Serowoky scored 10 of her team-high 15 points during the opening period for the Blazers. All 12 Ladywood players scored as Jenna Anastos and Amber Drabicki chipped in with 10 and nine points, respectively.

The Blazers shot 25-of-60 from the floor (41 percent) and 11-of-19 from the foul line.

Edsel was only 11-of-35 from the field (31 percent) and 13-of-26 from the stripe.

Char Carr and Erin Moylan tallied 12 and 10, respectively, for the Thunderbirds.

FRANKLIN 48, HARTLAND 34: On Tuesday, stellar defense enabled Livonia Franklin (3-0) to beat the host Eagles (2-1) in a non-conference game.

Junior guard Brianna Taylor paced the victorious Patriots with a game-high 17 points. Twin sister Brittany Taylor and Ashley Price each contributed 10, while Samantha Floyd added seven. Nicole Emery led the defense with three steals.

Meredith Kussmall and Jamie Leasia each scored seven for Hartland, which couldn't overcome

GIRLS BASKETBALL

a 23-16 halftime deficit.

The Eagles were 13-of-23 from the foul line, while Franklin was 3-of-7.

"We played good defense when they (Hartland) came back," Franklin first-year coach Dave McCall said.

JOHN GLENN 44, FARMINGTON 32: Westland John Glenn (2-1) rolled to a 31-10 halftime advantage Tuesday en route to a non-conference victory against the host Falcons (0-3).

Brittany Brown paced the Rockets with 17 points, while Brittany Holbrook added nine points and 13 rebounds.

Melanie Lockhart scored eight for the Falcons, who outscored Glenn 22-13 in the second half.

"We experimented with a zone (defense) in the second half and it did not work well at all," Glenn coach Mike Schuette said. "We had trouble getting back momentum, but the first half we played very well."

The Rockets made 13-of-23 free throws, while Farmington hit 14-of-20.

LUTHERAN WESTLAND 37, PCA 25: Junior guard Allyson Yankee had 19 points, four assists and four steals to propel Lutheran High Westland (1-1) to a non-conference win Tuesday over visiting Plymouth Christian Academy (1-1).

Becca Refenes, a 6-2 junior center, contributed 12 points, 20 rebounds and three assists. Rachel Stork also grabbed 10 rebounds and had three assists.

"We got off to a slow start tonight, but we were able to apply some pressure, get some turnovers and pick the tempo up more to our liking," Lutheran Westland coach Kevin Wade said. "We're still learning. We still make silly mistakes and we don't see the whole floor yet, but it will come."

Megan Greve scored seven for PCA, who trailed by only one at halftime, 16-15.

GREENHILLS 38, HURON VALLEY 15: Forward Jackie Walker scored 13 points to lead Ann Arbor Greenhills (3-0) to a non-conference win Tuesday at Westland Huron Valley Lutheran (2-2).

Katie Kipfmiller scored four for the Hawks, who trailed 15-6 at halftime and 28-12 after three quarters.

"They (Greenhills) are the better team, but we did not push the ball well enough or run our offense very well," Huron Valley coach Eric Ruth said.

Hoop Shoot champs

Winners of the 39th annual Livonia Parks and Recreation and Livonia Elks Lodge No. 2246 Hoop Shoot contest, which attracted 45 youths ages 8-13 last Saturday at the Livonia Community Recreation Center, include:

Justin Raju, Boys 12-13 (19-of-25); Jacqueline Shields, Girls 12-13 (11-of-25); Matthew Freed, Boys 10-11 (19-of-25); Natalie Spala, Girls 10-11 (19-of-25); Jeren Murray, Boys 8-9 (13-of-25); and Emma McCammon, Girls 8-9 (9-of-25).

The six division winners advance to the Southeast District Finals Saturday, Jan. 5 at the Flat Rock Community Center against eight other finalists from the metro area.

Stevenson hockey alums

Livonia Stevenson's inaugural alumni hockey game for all former players will be at 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 4 at Eddie Edgar Arena.

The Stevenson-Franklin varsity game follows at 8 p.m. Alumni area encouraged to stay after and watch the varsity game and receive refreshments.

Interested alumni should contact Kyle Zagata at (248) 924-0789; or e-mail k.zagata@yahoo.com.

LHA needs Bantams

The Livonia Hockey Association is in need of Bantam-age players born 1993 or 1994 interested in playing in the LHA.

For more information, call the LHA office at (734) 422-5172.

McClendon at Bullpen

Detroit Tigers hitting coach Lloyd McClendon will conduct a one-day hitting camp 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at the Bullpen Baseball Academy, located at 33085 W. Nile Mile Road, Farmington.

The cost is \$55. To register, call or email The Bullpen at (248) 427-1819 or bullpenbaseball@sbcglobal.net with player information.

MU softball camps

Madonna University softball coach Al White is hosting a hitting camp 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday, Dec. 22.

He also wants prospective participants to sign up for Madonna's softball fundamentals camp, of which there will be two sessions. The first is 9-11:30 a.m. on Saturdays beginning Jan. 5 through Jan. 26; the second is set for 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sundays beginning Jan. 13 through Feb. 3.

The fundamentals camp sessions will focus on all aspects

of fast-pitch softball, White said.

For more information, call White (734-432-5783).

Softball coach wanted

Livonia Ladywood is seeking a varsity girls softball coach for the 2008 season. Those interested should fax a resume to Ladywood athletic director Sal Malek at (734) 591-2386.

Baseball coaching clinic

The Kensington Valley Baseball Softball Association, in conjunction with University of Michigan baseball coach Rich Maloney and his staff, will conduct a coaches clinic on 2-7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, in the Scranton Middle School gym, 8415 Maltby Road (west of Rickett and south of Lee) in Brighton.

This clinic is open to all house, community and travel baseball head coaches, managers and assistants. The clinic is for KVBSA members as well as non-members and anybody interested in baseball in December.

The cost of the clinic is \$5 per person and can be paid in advance or at the door. To register send an email to jeff.david@kvbsa.com or hjn@umich.edu.

Further details about the clinic and additional informa-

tion regarding the KVBSA are available at www.kvbsa.com.

Recumbent cyclists

The Wolver-Bents Recumbent Cyclists will stage a bicycle ride at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8 and 22 at Willow Metropark's Washago Pond Shelter, located off I-275 (Exit 11).

For more information, call (734) 487-9058; or visit www.wolverbents.org.

Baseball lessons

The Bernie Carbo Pro Secrets Baseball Academy will be staging individual, small group and team skill sessions in power pitching, hitting and fielding.

Marketing showcase sessions for high school players are available.

Former Phillies minor league All-Star Mark Rutherford will be the featured instructor.

For more information, call (734) 421-4928.

ADULT HOCKEY STANDINGS

LIVONIA OVER 30 HOCKEY STANDINGS (as of Dec. 2)
 D&G Heating & Cooling 12-6-3/ 27 points
 Steate excavating 11-5-5/ 27 points
 LaSalle Bank 10-7-4/ 24 points
 Zascak Enterprises, LCC 8-8-5/ 21 points
 Hunt's Ace Hardware 8-7-4/ 20 points
 Livonia Auto Body 6-9-5/ 17 points
 Coldwell Banker/GSG Plumbing 6-9-5/ 17 points
 Daily Restaurant 4-4-1/ 9 points



Mission accomplished

With the help Livonia Ladywood High students and varsity girls golf coach KelliAnne Nagy, soldiers in Iraq can fine-tune their golf swings. For the past two months, Monica House, 35, of Highland, has been on an ambitious mission to gather and ship golf balls overseas while her husband, a passionate golfer, and other soldiers can continue to hone their skills. House was able to collect a total of 16,000 balls, but the \$1,300 shipping fee was picked up by Ladywood students who donated the money while holding a Jeans Day at school. Instead of wearing the school uniforms, they were allowed to wear jeans if they donated money. Nagy (middle), along with Ladywood golfers and basketball players (from left) Val Dimilia, Alyssa Anastos, Jenna Anastos, Kaitlyn Vitale and Courtney LaValley, loaded the 137 boxes into Nagy's mother's mini-van and took them to the post office. "It was pretty exciting and the guys have now received the golf balls and are having a great time," Nagy said. "It was for a great cause and the young ladies at Ladywood really stepped up to the plate to make it happen."

THE WEEK AHEAD

BOYS BASKETBALL
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 Dearborn at Churchill, 7 p.m.
 Friday, Dec. 7
 Redford Union at Churchill, 7 p.m.
 Stevenson at Franklin, 7 p.m.
 Wayne at Belleville, 7 p.m.
 Whitmore Lake at Clarenceville, 7 p.m.
 Luth. Westland at G.P. Univ.-Liggett, 7 p.m.
 (St. Joseph Michigan Lutheran Tourney)
 Flint Int. Acad. vs. Howardsville, 6:30 p.m.
 Huron Valley at Mich. Lutheran, 8 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Michigan Lutheran Tourney, 3:30 & 5 p.m.
GIRLS BASKETBALL
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 John Glenn at Franklin, 7 p.m.
 Dearborn at Stevenson, 7 p.m.
 Luth. Westland at Huron Valley, 7 p.m.
 Sacred Heart at Clarenceville, 7 p.m.
 Friday, Dec. 7
 Churchill at Redford Union, 7 p.m.
 Stevenson at Farmington, 7 p.m.
 Milford at Wayne, 7 p.m.
 G.P. Univ.-Liggett at Luth. Westland, 7 p.m.
 Saginaw Nouvel at Ladywood, 7:30 p.m.
PREP HOCKEY
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 Ladywood vs. G.P. South at G.P. Civic Arena, 7 p.m.
 Friday, Dec. 7
 Churchill vs. Franklin at Edgar Arena, 6 p.m.
 Stevenson vs. Canton at Arctic Edge, 8 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Ladywood vs. H.W. Regina at Arctic Pond, 6 p.m.
PREP WRESTLING
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 John Glenn, Monroe at Novi CC, 5:30 p.m.

Crestwood, Annapolis at Lutheran Westland, 6 p.m.
 Friday, Dec. 7
 Franklin at Novi Assembly Meet, 1 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Avondale Team Tournament, 9 a.m.
 Garden City Christmas Inv., 9:30 a.m.
 Clarenceville Tournament, 10 a.m.
 Berkeley Invitational, TBA
BOYS SWIMMING & DIVING
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 Dearborn at Stevenson, 7 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Rocket Relays at John Glenn, 1 p.m.
PREP BOWLING
 Thursday, Dec. 6
 Wayne vs. John Glenn at Westland Bowl, 3:30 p.m.
GIRLS FIGURE SKATING
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Team Competition at Ply. Cultural Ctr., 11 a.m.
MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
 Friday, Dec. 7
 (St. Xavier, Ill. Tournament)
 Madonna vs. Trinity Christian (Ill.), 7 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 (St. Xavier, Ill. Tournament)
 Madonna vs. St. Xavier (Ill.), 2 p.m.
WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Madonna at Goshen College (Ind.), 1 p.m.
ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE
 Friday, Dec. 7
 Whalers vs. Windsor Spitfires at Compuware Arena, 7:05 p.m.
 Saturday, Dec. 8
 Whalers vs. Barrie at Compuware, 7:05 p.m.
 TBA - time to be announced.

Stevenson kickers lead All-Observer field

FIRST TEAM

GK - SASA MISKOVIC, SOPH., SALEM: Only a sophomore, the Novi Catholic Central transfer made a sudden impact on the Rocks and the WLAA as he recorded nine shutouts and was voted to the WLAA's All-Lakes Division team.

"Even though he's only a sophomore, Sasa was one of the top goal-keepers in the state this year," said Salem coach Ed McCarthy. "He has great size for a goalie, he's good at coming out to get the ball and he has tremendous quickness."

F - COLIN ROLFE, SR., PLYMOUTH: Rolfe was in the running for the state's "Mr. Soccer" award after completing a sensational season in which he netted 28 goals and 22 assists. The four-year varsity player finished his career with a school-record 65 goals and earned an athletic scholarship to the University of Louisville.

"Colin is such a dynamic player," said Plymouth coach Jeff Neschich. "He was very good as a freshman, but he improved year after year due to his strong dedication to the sport and our program. He played forward and mid-field — wherever we needed him."

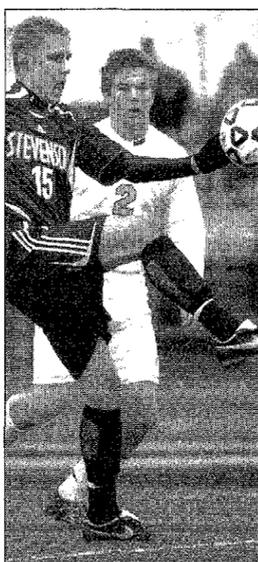
MF - BRIAN KLEMCZAK, JR., STEVENSON: The Spartans co-captain capped off three excellent seasons as a starter, leading the team with eight assists and totaling seven goals and 22 points (third best in both categories).

Klemczak did all that in addition to his strong commitment to defense.

"Brian's high level of fitness allows him to cover a lot of ground and to excel at both ends of the soccer field," said Stevenson head coach Lars Richters. "He is an outstanding student-athlete (4.3 GPA) and a tremendous person away from the field."

Klemczak earned All-Western Lakes, All-District, All-Region and All-State (second team) honors. Meanwhile, he captained last summer's Michigan Wolves team to a second-place finish at nationals.

D - SCOTT ZECH, JR., CANTON: With a stunning combination of speed, skill and instinct, Zech was one of the state's premier defenders in 2007 and one of the mainstays in Canton's drive to capturing the WLAA championship. Zech is a two-year All-State honoree and is well on his way to a third



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Livonia Stevenson's Brian Klemczak (left) continued to be a major factor in the Spartans' success again this season.

next season.

D - KEVIN COPE, JR., SALEM: Primarily a defender, Cope was called upon on several occasions to spearhead the Rocks' offense off set pieces. Three of the third-team All-State performer's four goals were game-winners, including one against cross-campus rival Canton. Cope was voted on to the WLAA's first-team All-Conference contingent.

"Kevin is one of the top one-way defenders in the state," said McCarthy. "He's great in the air and he's a very flexible player who we can bring up into our attack."

D - DYLAN GREEN, SR., STEVENSON: Green, a co-captain and second-year starter, earned team MVP honors for Stevenson while netting five goals and five assists from the back line.

For his efforts, he received selection to the All-Conference, All-District, All-Region and All-State (honorable mention).

"Dylan has the ability to be a talented forward," noted Richters. "But he has always placed the team's needs first. As a result, he has developed into a solid, intelligent and skillful back player."

MF - PAT NOLAN, SR., CANTON: A senior captain, Nolan was one of the

main reasons the Chiefs enjoyed such a stellar 2007 campaign. He earned All-WLAA honors thanks to his all-out-effort style and knack for making big plays and scoring timely goals.

D - RON BERGER, SR., GARDEN CITY: Berger was Garden City's defensive anchor for two seasons, starting every game and being a big reason for the team's 9-8-1 record. In addition to clearing the ball out of danger numerous times in front of the Cougars' goal (he collected three saves), he chipped in with a goal and three assists.

"He is 6-1 with good vertical clearing and (passes) well with his head," said Garden City coach Bill Torni. "The other teams' set plays were hindered by this ability."

He was player of the game seven times and was named the Cougars' MVP, as well as being selected to the all-Mega White and all-district 6 teams. The Livonia Meteors club player intends on continuing with soccer in college.

MF - JEREMY STOYCHOFF, JR., SALEM: The Rocks' junior mid-fielder earned All-Lakes and All-District honors thanks to his hustling, unselfish play. While he didn't rack up flashy stats, his skillful passing ability generated plentiful scoring opportunities for his teammates.

"Jeremy has outstanding vision and a tremendous ability to find the open player with passes," said McCarthy. "He's a very good defender, too."

F - BRYSON MACHONGA, SR., PLY. CHRISTIAN: Machonga has been an assist machine for the Eagles the past four years, having racked up 54 helpers the past two seasons alone, including 28 with 13 goals in 2007. The captain earned Division 4 All-States honorable mention status.

"Bryson has been a consistent player throughout his career at Plymouth Christian, but he saved his best for last in his senior year," said PCA coach Larry Machonga. "Bryson plays with a lot of confidence and he and Ross (Gerulis) helped lead us to the championship this season."

MF - JOEY D'AGOSTINO, JR., STEVENSON: The second-year starter played virtually every minute of every match for Stevenson, finishing second on the team in assists and sixth in points. His contributions earned him All-Lakes Division honors, as well as All-District selection.

"Joey is a very smart player

ALL-AREA BOYS SOCCER

2007 ALL-OBSERVER BOYS SOCCER FIRST TEAM

GK - Sasa Miskovic, Soph., Salem
 F - Colin Rolfe, Sr., Plymouth
 MF - Brian Klemczak, Jr., Stevenson
 D - Scott Zech, Jr., Canton
 D - Kevin Cope, Jr., Salem
 D - Dylan Green, Sr., Stevenson
 MF - Pat Nolan, Sr., Canton
 D - Ron Berger, Sr., Garden City
 MF - Jeremy Stoychoff, Jr., Salem
 F - Bryson Machonga, Sr., Ply. Christian

SECOND TEAM

F - Nick Chastine, Sr., Red. Thurston
 D - Adam Bedell, Soph., Churchill
 D - Adam Zehel, Sr., Lutheran Westland
 MF - Brian Chambers, Sr., Garden City
 MF - Ryan Matthey, Sr., Franklin
 MF - Adrian Fyionenko, Jr., Stevenson
 D - Vinny Carozza, Sr., Churchill
 F - Tyler Floyd, Sr., Plymouth
 MF - Ryan Baglow, Sr., Lutheran Westland

F - Sheriff Hassanien, Jr., Canton
 D - David Kalvelage, Sr., John Glenn
 MF - Tim Maher, Sr., Red. Thurston
 D-MF - Matt Parent, Sr., Clarenceville

COACH OF THE YEAR HONORABLE MENTION

Churchill: Max Washko, Jan Guerin, Ben Zukowski, Matt Regan.

Franklin: Zain Qureshi, Steve Trapp, Travis Matthey, Joel Boettcher.

Stevenson: Nate Sergison, Kendall Snow, Conner Burton, Justin Collins.

John Glenn: Khalid Suleiman, Jacob Gates, Sergio Pavan, Jeff Thompson, Nelson Kenne.

Wayne: Stephen Maynor, Tim Hubbard, Alex Balli, Stefan Harrison, Eric Schmitt.

Plymouth: Trevor Floyd, Mike Korona, Evan Yoder, Austin Kaczanovsky.

Canton: Logan McGraw, Mark Edwards, Tim Belcher, Joel Langdon, Kyle Breitmeyer, Brandon Burt, Phil Rollings.

Salem: Josh Pascarella, Dan Radosevich, Scott Dreaver, Jace Bearden, Matt Caluogina.

Garden City: Joe Clor, Chad Hallam, Tyler Arban.

Thurston: Chris Clay, Luke Toppa, Doug Weldon, Jake Cravens.

Redford Union: Jon Kappler, Chris Gibbs, Dorian Bradford, Josh Thompson.

Liv. Clarenceville: Phil Strachan, Matt Garant, Daniel Pepa.

Lutheran Westland: Josh Kruger, Micah Hausch, Aaron Berninger.

Huron Valley Lutheran: Aaron Howell.

Plymouth Christian: Jordan Machonga, Ross Gerulis, Spencer Ward, Brent Zinn, Trevor Zinn.

Canton Agape: Brandon Pierson, Donald Mullett, Mark Mullett, Joel Ruffin, Jared Miller.



Sasa Miskovic
Salem



Colin Rolfe
Plymouth



Brian Klemczak
Stevenson



Scott Zech
Canton



Kevin Cope
Salem



Dylan Green
Stevenson



Ron Berger
Garden City



Jeremy Stoychoff
Salem



Bryson Machonga
Plymouth Christian



Joey D'Agostino
Stevenson



Brady Thom
Stevenson



George Tomasso
Canton coach

with good skill level and the ability to keep possession of the ball," Richters said. "He has a knack for positioning himself in just the right places. When he wasn't on the field, we simply were not the same team."

D'Agostino, meanwhile, was captain of the Michigan Wolves 15U team that won the national championship in summer 2007.

D - BRADY THOM, SR., STEVENSON: Thom,

a co-captain and second-year starter for the Spartans, was a major factor why Stevenson gave up just six goals in 20 games this season, said Richters. That perhaps was why teammates honored him with the team's "Unsung Hero Award."

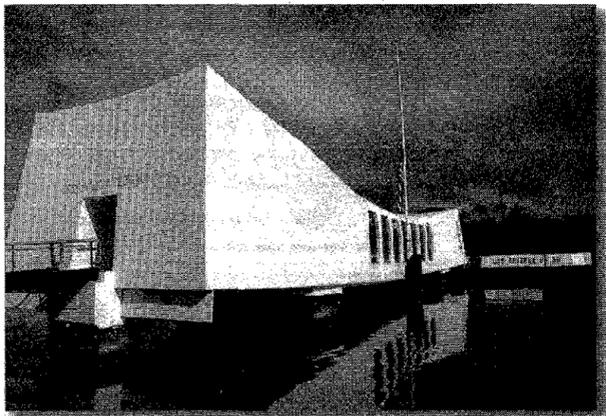
"Brady is one of the nicest young men to go through our program," the coach continued.

"He had the respect of everyone on the team for his willingness to do whatever the team needed without looking to take any of the credit."

COACH OF THE YEAR
GEORGE TOMASSO, CANTON: Tomasso led the Chiefs to the Western Lakes Activities Association championship in 2007.



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