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Canton's quality of life comes at a cost

Darrell Clem
Staff Writer

Canton taxpayers this year are on track to spend \$4.1 million to subsidize four recreation and arts facilities — money local officials say is well-spent to maintain a quality of life residents have come to expect.

The annual amount spent collectively on the Summit on the Park recreation center, the 400-seat Village Theater at Cherry Hill and the Pheasant Run and Fellows Creek golf courses has spiked \$1 million since 2012, but declined \$158,000 compared to last year.

Closer scrutiny shows that each Canton household, on

average, will pay \$116 this year to subsidize the four facilities. Further broken down, the amount is \$45 per resident.

Canton officials gave detailed figures after the Observer requested a financial analysis to show what taxpayers are shelling out for facilities that collectively draw tens of thousands of visitors — including

repeat patrons — every year.

Residents overwhelming have indicated support for Canton's recreation and cultural facilities and other amenities such as parks and walking trails. A survey conducted in 2014 by an outside firm, Leisure Vision/ETC Institute of Olathe, Kan., found that 95 percent of respondents either

“strongly agree” or “agree” that local amenities make Canton a more desirable place to live.

“It's a big, important component of what makes Canton Canton and what makes it attractive to people,” Supervisor Phil LaJoy, the township's top

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Emma Stephens is one of four winners of a culinary scholarship offered by Karl's Cabin.

Four P-CCS grads earn Karl's Cabin scholarships

Maria Taylor
Correspondent

After Peter and Louis Poulos' father died, the two brothers wanted to do something to keep his memory alive.

Something for the community where he'd lived.

Karl, their dad, had been a chef and the founder of the Plymouth restaurant Karl's Cabin. “He was always really big on promoting education, professionalism — loved food, the whole spirit of the culinary industry,” Peter said. So the brothers decided on a scholarship, aimed at helping culinary students from the area.

The scholarship is offered through the Plymouth-Canton Educational Excellence Foundation. Gretchen Ward is the foundation's executive director. She met Peter at an event he was catering and, when he mentioned his idea, she was quick to jump on board. Ward called the Poulos brothers “ter-

rific guys” and strong supporters of local initiatives. “They have a really deep history within our community,” she said.

Karl's Cabin dates from 1945, when it opened as a log cabin roadhouse called Rusceak's Rustic Tavern. It led a rough-and-tumble existence throughout the '50s and '60s, earning a reputation for rowdy patrons, brawls and traveling musicians looking to strike it big on the country circuit — including a young fellow by the name of Johnny Cash.

Karl Poulos purchased the restaurant in 1981, opening it in late 1982 as a family restaurant and banquet facility. Karl was the cook. His wife Sophia managed the front of the house.

Peter and Louis didn't plan to carry on the family business. Both went to Michigan State University, Peter for law and Louis for engineering. But tradition, it seems, ran in their

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Diana Woodward leads the Plymouth-Canton culinary program.

Voters face ballot measure on Merit Commission

Darrell Clem
Staff Writer

It's hardly as riveting as the U.S. presidential race or as critical as electing the Canton Township Board of Trustees to lead the community.

It has no financial implications and certainly wouldn't usher in a tax increase.

Some might actually call it a yawner.

Still, Canton voters will decide a November ballot measure that would amend an antiquated ordinance pertaining to a three-member Canton Merit Commission that oversees hiring, promoting and firing of full-time, non-union employees.

Kristin Kolb, Canton's corporation counsel, said ordinance language hasn't been amended since voters approved a referendum in 1978 to create the commission, whose members are appointed. One ballot proposal to change the wording failed in 1992.

“It lost by two votes,” Kolb said.

Officials believe voters rejected it because they simply didn't understand it.

Officials say the ballot measure, if approved, would allow Canton to alter ordinance language to reflect changes in local policies and procedures, along with advances in technology, that have occurred since 1978.

Kolb said the ordinance even needs updating to reflect federal law that protects employees on the basis of race, religion, national origin and sex, among other areas.

And while the Canton Merit Commission oversees full-time, non-union employees, Kolb said that was never properly stated in the original ordinance.

“There was nothing in the original ordinance that made that very clear,” she said.

Township Supervisor Phil LaJoy said the ordinance refers to certain positions that have long since been eliminated or changed.

For example, Canton no longer has a personnel direc-

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Hoben principal takes on human resources post

Joanne Maliszewski
Staff Writer

If life is a circle, then Liz Vartanian-Gibbs could be living it.

When she was a Salem High School student, she worked in the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools district office of personnel — what it was called then — as a co-op student. On July 12, the P-CCS Board of

Education confirmed her appointment as assistant superintendent of human resources. This is one of three jobs to be filled in the district administration. The remaining two are positions that remained unfilled from the previous



Vartanian-Gibbs

year.

“I feel like I am full-circle back here,” Vartanian-Gibbs said.

If you recognize her name, you should. She just completed 13 years as principal of Hoben Elementary School in Canton. Before that, she was the mathematics curriculum leader for elementary education. And even before that, she was an elementary teacher at Tonda,

Isbister and Hoben.

In her days as a P-CCS student, Vartanian-Gibbs attended Fiegel Elementary and East Middle schools. She is sort of homegrown, you could say. She would have it no other way.

“I believe in P-CCS,” she said.

Vartanian-Gibbs has

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Canton to host Senior Games

Area seniors are invited to enter the inaugural Canton Senior Games, scheduled for Aug. 23-25 at various locations in the Canton community. A variety of fun and challenging activities for men and women age 55 and older will be available during these three days of competition.

This year's events include sports tournaments (golf, pickleball, tennis, billiards); cards/Wii games (euchre, pinochle, Wii bowling); and field games (bean bag toss, bocce ball, Frisbee toss, softball throw, basketball shot, soccer kick, football toss).

Registration is now available online at www.cantonfun.org or in person at the Canton Club 55+ at the Summit, 46000 Summit Parkway. All participants must register by Wednesday, Aug. 10.

Registration fees are

as follows:

» Field games/cards/Wii games/billiards fees for each event are \$2 for Canton residents and \$3 for non-residents.

» Pickleball tournament and tennis tournament fees are \$4 for Canton residents and \$5 for non-residents.

» Golf tournament fees are \$49 for Canton residents and \$54 for non-residents.

An awards ceremony has been scheduled for noon Friday, Aug. 26, at the Summit. Participants can take part in the boxed lunch for just \$6 for Canton residents and \$7 for non-residents.

For more information about the Canton Senior Games or to confirm event times and locations, contact Canton Club 55+ at 734-394-5485.

COST

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elected official, said. "We have a little bit of everything for everybody."

Canton Leisure Services Director Debra Bilbrey-Honsowetz said the survey — consistent with previous surveys — shows residents rely on local amenities to improve their quality of life.

"This is the residents telling us — not us telling the residents," she said.

Even though taxpayer subsidies for the Summit, the Village Theater and the golf courses have increased during a five-year analysis, Canton's financial position has actually improved as a once-bruising recession fades further in the rearview mirror. A new audit by an outside firm, Plante Moran, shows Canton had a general fund balance of nearly \$7.1 million as 2015 ended — up sharply from \$2.5 million just four years earlier.

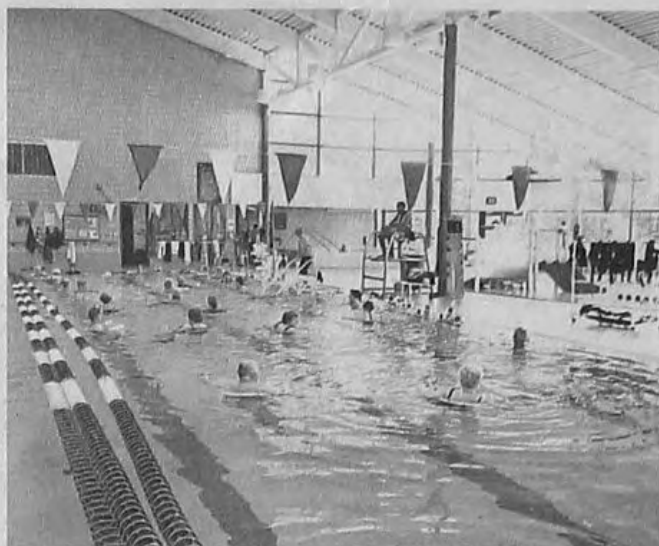
Canton has increased some user fees to offset costs, but officials say they strive not to charge so much that services become cost-prohibitive for residents.

According to the five-year analysis, Canton spent \$3.1 million in 2012 — including operating costs and debt owed — for the four facilities. That rose to \$3.2 million in 2013, \$3.3 million in 2014 and \$4.3 million in 2015, before dropping to a projected \$4.1 million this year.

Officials say spending has partly increased as Canton sought to pay for building improvements and equipment purchases that had been delayed during the last recession.

Here's a closer look at facilities:

» Taxpayers are expected this year to spend \$1.5 million to subsidize the Summit on the Park. That's \$538,500 less than last year, but slightly



CANTON TOWNSHIP

The aquatic center has received a makeover since the recession.

higher than the prior three years. Expenses increased as the 20-year-old facility received a facelift such as aquatic center improvements. Costs also rose as Canton complied with federal minimum wage increases.

"Our part-time wages went up," Budget and Finance Director Wendy Trumbull said, raises that ended a decade of stagnant wages.

Greg Hohenberger, Canton Leisure Services operations manager, said the Summit has a half-million visitors a year — including repeat patrons — who work out, swim and attend senior citizen programs and special events such as a holiday tree-lighting ceremony.

» Taxpayer subsidies amounting to \$1.1 million are budgeted this year for the Village Theater, marking a steady increase from \$874,890 in 2013. The theater opened in 2004 and is Canton's arts hub with live performances, fine arts exhibits, art classes, youth theater, a community band and special ceremonies for the Martin Luther King Jr. and Veterans Day holidays, among other events.

More recently, the Village Theater has partnered with the Michigan Shakespeare Festival, drawing visitors from

communities such as Plymouth, Ann Arbor and Livonia. Last year, the theater's audience members and program participants totaled 82,981, down from 99,817 the previous year, according to an annual report from Canton Leisure Services, but Hohenberger said the numbers fluctuate and long-term usage remains steady.

Jennifer Tobin, Canton arts coordinator, said the Village Theater has an economic impact on Canton when groups such as the Michigan Shakespeare Festival are in town. Moreover, she said the theater is a quality-of-life issue in Canton and helps bring together the community's diverse population through multicultural performances.

"I think this is what truly makes Canton stand out," Tobin said, adding that "the arts are the perfect way" to unite a community. "What better way to get to know our neighbors than through the arts?"

She said the theater, along with Canton's nature trails, golf courses and other amenities, make Canton strong.

"We are the envy of communities across the state and beyond," she said.

» Taxpayer dollars totaling just over \$1 mil-

lion are allocated this year for the 27-hole Pheasant Run golf course, though in most recent years the subsidies have hovered in the upper \$900,000 range. Hohenberger said the number of golf outing rounds was 35,263 last year, just slightly lower than the two previous years.

LaJoy said Pheasant Run, dating back to 1995, and the Summit have been catalysts for residential and business growth south of Ford Road, boosting Canton's property values and offering amenities that draw new residents.

Taxpayer subsidies for Canton's other 27-hole golf course, Fellows Creek, amount to \$454,662 this year — similar to the previous three years, but up more significantly from \$180,177 in 2012. The golf course dates back to the 1970s and has had fluctuations in usage and costs. Hohenberger said the number of golf outing rounds was 42,054 in 2015, up from 36,734 in 2014 and 39,793 in 2013.

As Canton allocates money for recreation and arts offerings, Bilbrey-Honsowetz said, officials have tried to respond to community demands. When tennis courts at Freedom Park needed repairs, she said, officials chose to shift to pickleball.

"We had a demand for pickleball courts," she said.

Going forward, Bilbrey-Honsowetz said Canton is committed to providing recreation and arts amenities that enrich the community, while reining in costs as much as possible. It's a balancing act officials say the community has handled for years, even during recession years.

"We have a responsibility to meet the needs of our residents," she said.

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Kroger finishes \$2.5M makeover at Michigan Avenue store

Darrell Clem
Staff Writer



KROGER CO. OF MICHIGAN

Kroger employees are celebrating a \$2.5 million makeover of the store at Michigan Avenue and Canton Center.

Kroger has finished a \$2.5 million makeover of its store at Michigan Avenue and Canton Center, boosting the workforce to 130 after the company hired an additional 30 employees.

The renovations gave the 60,319-square-foot store a facelift across most departments, ushering in a specialty cheese shop and an improved deli, bakery and pharmacy, among other amenities.

"It pretty much touched every department in store," said Rachel Hurst, consumer affairs manager for The Kroger Co. of Michigan.

The project came after Kroger already completed an expansion and renovation of its store at Ford and Canton Center roads. Hurst

said the grocery chain has made strides to invest in locations with a strong customer base.

Kroger formally unveiled the latest remodel

ed store Wednesday. "It's a very well-performing store," Hurst said.

The store has certified cheese stewards

who also can help customers choose matching wines. It also has expanded its deli selections and added made-to-order sandwiches.

During Wednesday's celebration, the first 400 customers received a \$10 gift card and a reusable shopping bag. Store manager Jason

Renkiewicz said the project marked a \$2.5 million investment in the Canton community. The store also has a BestBank branch.

"Customers notice the changes as soon as they walk through the doors," Renkiewicz said, adding that the store remained open during the remodeling project. "We replaced existing equipment and made updates in almost every department to create a more efficient and attractive shopping environment."

The Kroger Co. of Michigan was incorporated in 1909 and has its headquarters in Novi. It has 19,000 employees, 126 Kroger stores, 69 fuel centers, 103 pharmacies and the company's Michigan Dairy.

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HR POST

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accepted the position formerly held by Monica Merritt, who was made district superintendent, effective July 1. Vartanian-Gibbs has a number of degrees, including a doctorate in educational leadership.

Education has long been Vartanian-Gibbs' love. She keeps in mind Whitney Houston's blockbuster, "The Greatest Love of All," particularly the opening lines: "I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way..."

That's why she directed her career to elementary children. "I wanted to work with the youngest learners," she said. "To make sure they had the essential pieces of the puzzle."

The hop from building principal to central office

came as Vartanian-Gibbs was feeling it was time to do something different. But she wanted to stay in the district she loves.

"Once Monica was there (as superintendent), I knew I wanted to work under her leadership to learn and grow," she said.

That doesn't mean she feels any less for her role as a principal. "I loved the connection with families," she said. "We created a true community, a culture with everyone working so diligently to support the children. Everything was about the kids."

For Vartanian-Gibbs, serving in human resources is a perfect fit. "It's the heart and soul of the district," she said. "It's important to continue to hire, train and maintain the staff."

That's one of the reasons Merritt selected Vartanian-Gibbs. "She brings an incredible amount of experience in the district to this posi-

tion and her record at Hoben as a student-focused leader made her the perfect fit to join the administrative team in this important role," Merritt said. "Her career investment in this district is vital to the goal of bringing stability to the central office team."

Vartanian-Gibbs adheres to the concept that if you hire the best people, "everything else falls into place."

She brings with her to central office experience leading a school and working with teachers, maintenance employees - you name it. "I know what people need at the building level," she said. "I know what the day-to-day work at the buildings is."

Vartanian-Gibbs plans to bring to the position the attitude of "what do I do as a human resources leader to help this district, to help teaching and learning?"

"I think it is about

being connected to others," she said. "You have to listen well and understand the needs of every person. The question is, 'What are we going to do to help others?'"

Vartanian-Gibbs said her strengths are in relationships - maintaining and improving them. "I always have a connection with people - from the top to the bottom," she said.

She plans to use her skills in problem-solving. "When I find out there's a problem, I look at the past history and seek advice," she said. "I'm good at finding answers."

Two weeks into the job, Vartanian-Gibbs said she wants district families to know that she wholeheartedly believes in the P-CCS district and in the staff. "I'm here just to make it better each day," she said.

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MERIT

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tor but, rather, has a human resources manager who handles similar duties.

In a 7-0 vote Tuesday, the township board approved the ballot measure to correct the problems. The decision was needed because the board has to notify Wayne County by Tuesday of any local referendum on the Nov. 8 ballot.

"This ordinance is so outdated that it's

ridiculous," Trustee Tom Yack said.

Now, local officials have to educate voters about the referendum. Kolb said the proposal will be at the end of the ballot - after a flurry of political races that are certain to command more attention.

While it requires a vote, officials say the issue is essentially a bookkeeping measure.

"The citizens will not see any changes," Kolb said.

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Champions program marks academic success

A report card for the new Champions Program at John Glenn High School in Westland would contain only the highest marks possible.

Last month, the program marked the second celebration of students who successfully increased their grade-point averages by at least 0.5 with a banquet attended by more than 600 at the Hellenic Banquet Center. As teachers, mentors, parents, school and city officials and benefactors celebrated the accomplishments of students, several remained in awe of the success of the pro-

gram. This semester, 567 students joined the program, which awards students who succeed with improving their grades by half a point \$200. Of those who signed up, 533 improved their grades, none had their grades diminish and 159 made their goal and marched across the stage to receive their checks from Glenn Shaw Jr. who, with his wife Patty, founded the program.

"I simply could not believe the numbers when they were calculated. To have 94 percent of these students bring their

grades up in the program was more than we ever expected," Shaw said.

During the evening presentation, a few students related their success stories and explained how involvement in the program motivated and helped them. One young woman increased her grade-point average from 0.8 to 2.8, with a story that Shaw said simply brought tears to the eyes of all who heard her speak.

Another student who had been "doing things I shouldn't" and failing his classes also saw the same level of remarkable

grade improvement and credited the program for helping him and keeping him in school.

"We stay involved with these kids. We don't just have them sign up and then move on. We check on them. We communicate with them. They know that we really care about their success," Shaw said. "This couldn't have happened without the help from these great mentors and the involvement of the parents. I believe that is the key to our success."

Shaw, his wife and his family fund the program personally, with some contributions

from other donors.

"There is no public or tax money used for this," Shaw said.

The evening celebration also saw the awarding of scholarships to several area students. Wayne County Community College District awarded a total of \$26,800 in full-year scholarships, while Schoolcraft College awarded two scholarships to students in the Wayne-Westland district. The Westland Community Foundation awarded 10 \$1,000 scholarships to local students and four \$500 scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Continued from Page A1

blood. "We were both kind of unhappy in the corporate world," Peter said. When they heard their parents were getting ready to put the restaurant up for sale, they decided to jump in.

The brothers have co-owned the restaurant for 19 years, with Louis serving as kitchen director and Peter as head of guest relations. Both helped out at the restaurant when they were growing up, so they know what it's like to be a young person in the industry.

And when it came time to judge the scholarship entries, the up-and-coming generation of chefs had them impressed.

In order to qualify for a Karl's Cabin scholarship, students had to be a high school senior or graduate, enrolled in culinary school or a culinary arts program with a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA. Each applicant also had to submit an original recipe and an essay on why he or she chose to pursue culinary arts as a career. "They wanted to see their creativity, get to know each student as a chef and get a really good picture of who they were awarding the scholarships to," Ward said.

Originally, Karl's Cabin had put aside funding for two awards of \$1,000 each. Six students applied, which Ward said is a great turnout for the first year. But when Peter and



Culinary students learn step-by-step.

Louis looked over the applications, four of them really, really stuck out.

"We didn't have the heart to give it to just two," Peter said. "So of course, being the bleeding heart kind of guys we are, we decided to do two more."

This year's recipients are Paul DiNicola, Zachary Chouinard, Brynna Samuels and Emma Stephens. All graduated from the Plymouth-Canton high school culinary program and will be attending Schoolcraft College this fall, two as freshmen and two as sophomores.

Diana Woodward is head of the Plymouth-Canton culinary program. "It's a very intense, high-pressure program, almost a college-simulated curriculum," she said. As part of their

training, Woodward's students run a full-service restaurant at Salem High. "Everything is made from scratch, in-house," she said. "We butcher our own products that come in every day."

Woodward also heads up the culinary team that competes every year in the ProStart high school competition. Stephens, 18, of Canton was captain of the team that took second at nationals this year. "She was all in, all the time," Woodward said, "even dropping other activities, like pom, to focus on culinary."

Stephens got interested in the culinary field in middle school, partly through watching Food Network on TV. She aspires to become a private chef, maybe a pastry chef, and

her recipe entry was a dessert she created for the national competition: a white chocolate truffle with caramelized ganache.

DiNicola, 19, of Canton has wanted to be a chef since the second grade. He's going into his second year at Schoolcraft and he credits his Italian heritage for the career choice.

"My grandma on my father's side was an Italian immigrant," he said. "I have home videos of me making homemade pasta with her and pizza. Everybody is so happy when they're cooking." After graduation, he wants to travel to Italy and spend time working in several restaurants, "trying to learn as much as I possibly can."

For his scholarship recipe, DiNicola chose a dish he'd been working on for six months: braised lamb shank pasta in a tomato-Parmesan puree. "Because I'm Italian, I like pasta," he said. "Also, I was trained in French cooking, so I combined the two and I think it worked out pretty well."

DiNicola and Chouinard both work at the Country Club of Detroit in Grosse Pointe Farms. Previously, DiNicola worked at Karl's Cabin — as have a number of Woodward's students. "We have a great relationship with Karl's," she said. "I send them someone to work and they know that they're going to be good."

Samuels and Stephens both joined on at Karl's Cabin after winning their scholarship. The

two were looking for a summer job and it was the perfect opportunity. "When we presented (the awards) to them, they applied for positions here," Peter said, "and we were so glad to bring them on for summer help."

All four recipients will be working with chefs at Karl's Cabin to create and serve a six-course fundraiser dinner Aug. 31, with 100 percent of the proceeds going toward next year's scholarship fund.

The dinner will be a celebration of Michigan produce available in the month of August. Woodward helped the students put together the menu and said they're all really passionate about locally sourced food. "The kids all contributed flavors that they liked," she said. "They wanted to do something really progressive and interesting." Some of the dishes include watermelon gazpacho shooter, steak and shrimp with potatoes and Swiss chard and brown butter cake with fruit sorbet.

Tickets are \$49 per person, available online at <http://bit.ly/29YD1qd> or by calling 734-455-8450. The dinner will be held at Karl's Cabin Restaurant & Bar, 6005 Gotfredson Road.

It's a casual event, despite the fancy fare. "This is about supporting the local community," Peter said. "We're not trying to do anything stuffy — it's meant to be fun. The kids are going to put together an amazing meal for the night and we are excited."

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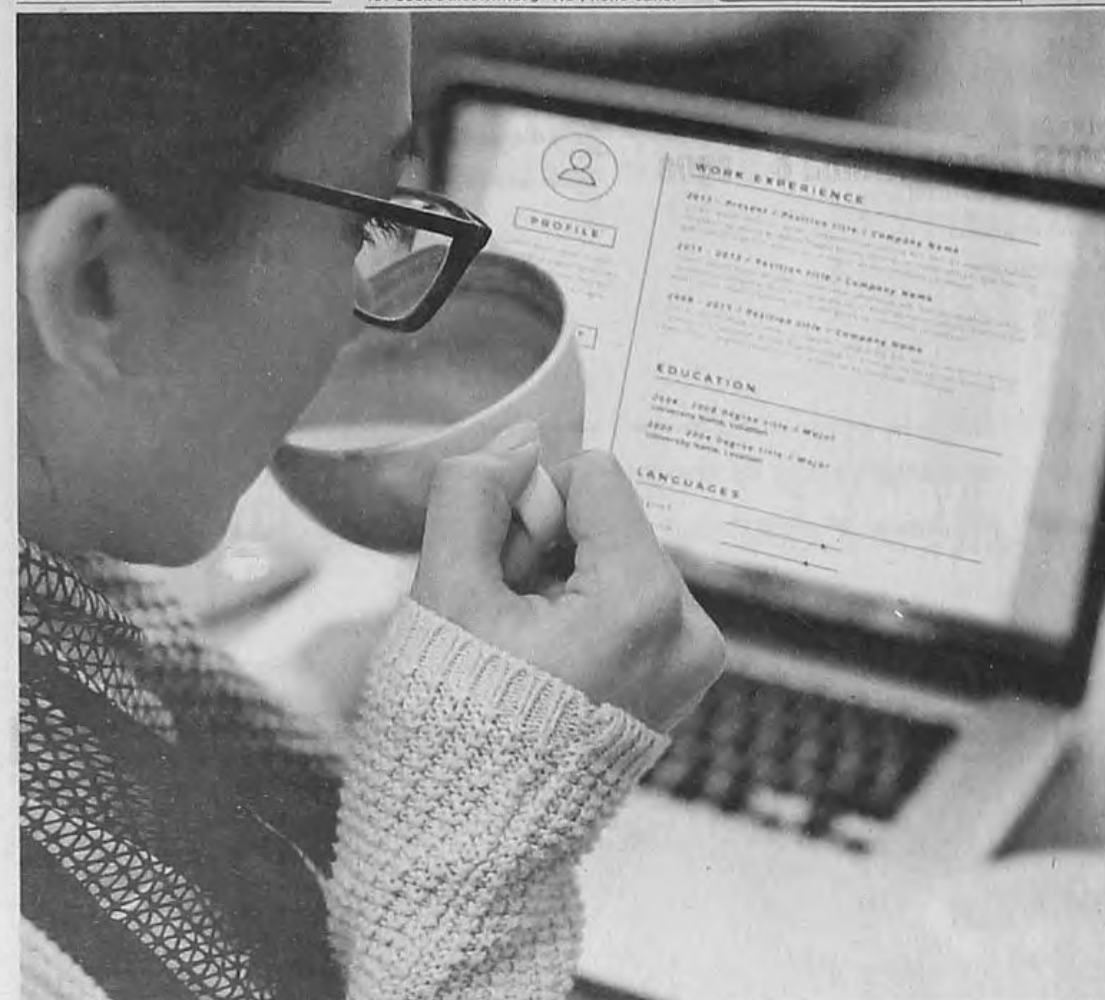
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CAREERBUILDER

Stylish, tasty and more: Sidewalk sales beckon in Plymouth

Sidewalk sales in downtown Plymouth drew crowds of eager shoppers Friday and Saturday. Bargains galore beckoned with business owners and managers pleased with turnout.

"It's great," said Carol Uber, owner of Home Sweet Home on Ann Arbor Trail. She had tables out with home

accessories and more, which drew customers in.

Clothing was also featured, including Milano Menswear and, for the women, Maggie & Me down the street from Milano. Both offered significant markdowns.

Nearby was Katelyn Mark, a Kemnitz Fine Candies sales staffer, at a table outside that long-

time local business, also on Ann Arbor Trail. Mark is an Eastern Michigan University junior studying special education.

The events page of the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce website has more on community events at <http://www.plymouth-mich.org>.

— By Julie Brown



JULIE BROWN
Katelyn Mark, who's in sales at Kemnitz Fine Candies, chats with customers at the sidewalk sale Friday. She's an Eastern Michigan University junior studying special education.

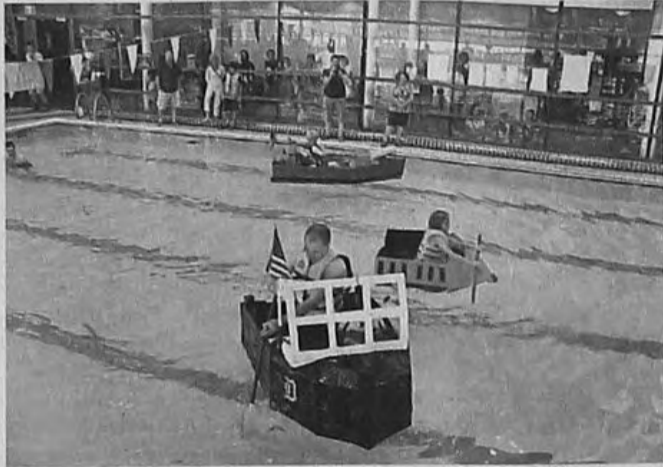
Cardboard boat race returns to the Summit

Families and businesses are invited to participate in the third annual Cardboard Boat Race, set for 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 6, at the Summit on the Park aquatic center.

Participants are encouraged to use creative teamwork to build a boat only out of cardboard and duct tape prior to the event. Boat specifications should be less than 5.5 feet wide by 10 feet long. Cardboard boats must be built at home and then transported to the Summit to compete.

Paddles will be provided for participants and boats can be raced by one or two individuals. Competitors will be divided into two age categories: ages 8 and under and ages 9 and above. Awards will be given out in both age groups to the fastest and most creative boats. In addition, the most dramatically sinking boat will receive the Titanic Award in each age group.

"All ages are encouraged to try their hand at



Canton's Cardboard Boat Race is returning.

this fun and challenging event," said Brad Chiason, recreation specialist. "The outcome is always both entertaining and inspiring. It's great to see teams working together and the competition makes it even more enjoyable. These races are really fun for contestants and spectators alike."

If you need assistance finding cardboard material, call 734-394-5467. The entry fee for this event is \$10 for Summit members, \$15 for Canton residents and \$20

for non-residents.

The Summit's Aquatic Center features a 25-yard lap pool, zero depth leisure pool, lazy river, water slide and hot tub. The Summit Swim School also offers a full complement of swim lessons for all ages and abilities.

Registration for this annual Cardboard Boat Race can be done in person at the Summit or online at www.summitonthePark.org. The Summit is located at 46000 Summit Parkway.

Canton volunteers sought for Detroit community clean-up

Canton Township is supporting the efforts of Life Remodeled's 2016 Denby neighborhood blight removal and beautification project Aug. 1-6.

Life Remodeled, a Detroit-based nonprofit organization, seeks to remodel lives along with neighborhoods, schools and homes utilizing a volunteer workforce. Goals for this year's project include mobilizing 10,000 volunteers from the community and region to remove blight on 300 Detroit city blocks surrounding Denby schools and board up 300 vacant houses in six days.

Volunteers will also remodel 50 homes in the community, as well as finalize the creation of a new park adjacent to Denby High School.

Each year, Life Remodeled selects a different Detroit neighborhood based on two criteria: significant need and

Volunteers will also remodel 50 homes in the community ... adjacent to Denby High.

radical hope. This year, the Denby neighborhood on Detroit's northeast side has been chosen to receive substantial investment from Life Remodeled and its partners.

"We hope that a large number of Canton residents and local business representatives are able to come out and participate in Life Remodeled's Denby neighborhood blight removal and beautification project," Canton Supervisor Phil Lajoie said. "This highly organized volunteer experience gives metro Detroiters an opportunity to work together to transform these neighborhoods from blight to light through volunteer-

fueled determination."

Interested participants are encouraged to volunteer for full-day, morning (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) or afternoon (1-5 p.m.) shifts during this special project. Volunteer activities include moving overgrown grass and weeds; cutting brush; removing refuse; painting; and planting. Life Remodeled and its partners will provide volunteers with tools and oversight on all projects, as well as lunch. No special skills are required to volunteer, but participants must be at least 14 years old. Project parking and check-in will take place at Eastland Center, 18000 Vernier Road, in Harper Woods, at the northwest corner of the mall facing Kelly Road.

Volunteers are asked to register online at <http://liferemodeled.com>. For more information, call 313-744-3052.



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RTA can't get votes for \$4.7B transit plan

Matt Helms
Detroit Free Press

It's up to Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan and top leaders in four counties to see if they can salvage a \$4.7 billion plan for expanded public transportation for the region after the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan board couldn't come up with the votes to put the proposal before voters.

The board Thursday couldn't overcome objections from Macomb and Oakland counties, leaving the proposal's fate in limbo even as time runs short for the plan to appear before voters in November.

Sending the proposal to voters required approval from seven of nine members of the RTA board, with at least one representative from each of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw counties on board with it. But the representatives — two each — from Oakland and Macomb counties voted no, leaving at most two weeks for the leaders of the counties to try to rescue the ambitious 20-year proposal to expand transit in a region that has underfunded public transportation for decades.

"This isn't the plan that we're looking for," Chuck Moss, an Oakland County representative, said during an RTA committee meeting Thursday morning. "It does not provide regional transit. ... What we have now is a regional taxation plan without transit."

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel say they can't support the plan unless the governance structure of the RTA board is changed and more services are provided to outlying parts of their counties that wouldn't be served

by the centerpiece of the plan, bus rapid transit lines along Woodward, Gratiot and Michigan avenues between Detroit and the suburbs. The plan also calls for express service to Metro Airport and a commuter rail between Detroit and Ann Arbor.

Patterson and Hackel say the structure of the RTA should be adjusted so that decisions on where to deploy funding and service require super-majorities or unanimous board votes and not simple majorities. That would make it more difficult for the RTA board to make major changes to the 50/50 split of federal transit funding now shared by the Detroit Department of Transportation and the suburban SMART system.

Moss said residents from northern and western parts of Oakland are "screaming bloody murder that they're going to have to pay" for transit that won't benefit their areas.

Voters in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw counties would be asked to approve a 20-year, 1.2-mill property tax to pay for the transit expansion, costing the average homeowner about \$95 a year.

Freman Hendrix, Detroit's representative on the board, said the plan should be approved.

"We've waited way too long and it would be unfair to the ... to the riders and the citizens in this region" if the plan isn't put before voters, Hendrix said.

Hendrix said Duggan told him that city leadership will do whatever it takes to reach a compromise with Oakland and Macomb's leaders, including extending rapid transit and bus routes, adding more stops and offering more on-demand and dial-a-ride options for outlying areas of the



This is the Louis Stokes Station at Windermere in East Cleveland where passengers are waiting by the RTA's HealthLine. It is a state-of-the-art bus-rapid transit system that offers rail-like convenience with the flexibility of a bus.

REGINA H. BOONE | DETROIT FREE PRESS

counties.

"Our eagerness is to do whatever is possible to work things out in a positive manner," Hendrix said. He expressed optimism that the Big Four regional leaders could work out their disagreements in time to salvage the plan.

Board chairman Paul Hillegonds said there could be as little as one week left to come up with agreements that overcome Patterson's and Hackel's concerns.

The RTA board "has taken this as far as it can and ... we essentially have one more week in which we could call an emergency meeting and I think it will be up to the four leaders — the three county executives and the mayor of the city of Detroit — to work through the governance issue, which is a stumbling block right now," Hillegonds said.

Hillegonds said RTA lawyers are still studying what it would take to adjust the RTA's governance without running afoul of the state law that created the agency.

"We're still working on that," he said. "That's partly a legal issue, but

it's also a political issue. Will the four leaders of Oakland, Wayne, Macomb and Detroit be able to agree on governance?"

Wayne County Executive Warren Evans said allowing residents to vote on the transit plan is critical.

"While individual concerns must be addressed, we cannot afford to once again delay development of true regional transit," Evans said in a statement. "Failure to place this millage on the ballot in November could impede the progress we have made in the region. I'm committed to working to address the concerns of our regional partners to bring them on board."

It was a stunning turn for a plan that appeared to have broad political support until the last couple of weeks, when Patterson and Hackel made their concerns public, taking some RTA board members and transit advocates by surprise, given that there had been years for either county executive to bring up objections.

Hackel and Patterson released a 19-page critique of the plan, but the

two main objections now center on veto power over major funding changes and providing a greater amount of localized transit service and routes that would move residents from more rural parts of Oakland and Macomb into the southern parts of their counties, where bus rapid transit lines run.

The bus rapid transit routes would run from Detroit to Mt. Clemens along Gratiot, to Pontiac along Woodward and to Metro Airport on a route that includes Michigan Avenue. The BRT routes wouldn't directly serve large swaths of the tri-county area, but RTA CEO Michael Ford said there are creative alternatives, including large vans that feed into major bus lines or BRT stops and enhanced local services such as on-demand and dial-a-ride services that could be provided to areas where BRT and fixed bus routes aren't justified.

Patterson said he could not support the plan as it stands.

"The current regional master transit plan abandons more than half a million Oakland County

residents in 40 of our communities, leaving them with little or no transit services but demanding they pay more than \$700 million in taxes over 20 years," Patterson said. "I support regional transit, but I won't be stampeded into a bad deal."

Patterson said the region will get only one chance to approve a transit plan and it has to be done right.

"I'd rather take the time to get the details right than be saddled with a system that doesn't work well because some were willing to abandon the interests of almost half of Oakland County's residents," he said.

Vicki Barnett, a Farmington Hills resident running in Tuesday's primary for a shot at challenging Patterson in the fall, called for the plan to be put to voters.

"A reliable, coordinated, regional transportation system is the key to the future success of our region," Barnett said in a statement released before the vote. "Millennials want it, workers need it and our growing senior population deserves it so that they can spend their golden years living independently in the community of their choosing."

"Add to that the clear economic benefits including increased community investment around transit hubs, connecting workers with jobs and making our region much more attractive to talented workers and the growing businesses who need them and the need for a dramatic improvement in our transit system is clear," she added. "It is time for adults to get it together, come to the table and reach an agreement to put the RTA proposal on the ballot."

Staff writer Brad Kadrich contributed to the story.

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Find the 2015 Rogue at Nissan of Canton

The 2015 Nissan Rogue is an appealing compact SUV with a robust exterior and a high-quality look. Its sporty appearance is complemented with updated interior features. You can check out the available models at Nissan of Canton located at 42175 Michigan Ave., just west of I-275.

Styling

Nissan has definitely succeeded in crafting a compact SUV that many find appealing. The Nissan-family look is in full force, with more than a passing resemblance to the bigger Pathfinder. The look is more aggressive than its competitors, with bulging wheel arches and a bigger nose than the Honda CR-V or Toyota RAV4. Seventeen-inch steel wheels are standard on the base S trim, with 17-inch alloy wheels standard on the mid-level SV trim and 18-inch alloy wheels standard on the top-line SL trim. New LED running lights up front and angular tail-lights make the Rogue distinctive even in the dark.

How it drives

The Rogue's powertrain is a 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine making 170 horsepower and mated to a continuously variable automatic transmission. Front-wheel drive is standard and all-wheel drive an option. Handling is sharp. The thick steering wheel delivers excellent feedback to the driver. Brakes are very strong and firm, with excellent pedal feel and no noticeable fade. The standard front-wheel-drive Rogue gets an EPA-rated 26/33/28 mpg city/highway/combined.

Interior

Nissan paid a lot of attention to the interior,

creating a cabin that is inviting, attractive and comfortable for a variety of body types. Slide into the driver's seat and the combination of command seating and low dashboard creates excellent visibility to the front and sides.

Seating is flexible, spacious and comfortable.

The second row of seats is also quite spacious at 37.9 inches, with much more legroom than expected for a compact SUV, stadium-style layout and long, tall windows for rear seat passengers.

Ergonomics and electronics

Gauges are easily visible through the steering wheel and include a 5-inch color LCD, the largest in any Nissan product, to display a variety of customizable vehicle information.

A full complement of information and entertainment electronics are available, including navigation, satellite radio and Bluetooth streaming audio and phone connectivity. The Rogue features not only a backup camera but Nissan's Around View Monitor, which uses cameras to display a 360-degree live feed of the Rogue's environment on the touchscreen.

Cargo and storage

Pop the rear hatch (a power liftgate is optional) to reveal a spacious cargo area with low bumper liftover. The second-row seats fold flat in a 40/20/40 split, and the levers are accessible with a stretch from the cargo area to unlatch the seatbacks.

Fold the front passenger seat flat as well to get a cargo area able to accommodate an 8-foot ladder. For models without the third-row seat, under-floor storage is



The 2015 Nissan Rogue's bold, sharp bodylines offer a sporty and confident appearance, balancing its sleek style with an aggressive stance provided by large wheelwells and available 18-inch wheels and tires.



Nissan paid a lot of attention to the interior, creating a cabin that is inviting, attractive and comfortable for a variety of body types.

presented with two re-configurable dividers that can also act as package shelves.

The Rogue cargo volume area is 39.3 cubic feet of space available behind the second row of seats.

Some notable features of the 2015 Rogue include the following:

Exterior highlights

- » 17-inch steel wheels; 17-inch and 18-inch alloy wheels available
- » Halogen headlights
- » LED daytime running lights
- » Rear spoiler
- » Available power moonroof
- » Available fog lights
- » Available power

liftgate

- » Available heated outside mirrors

Interior highlights

- » Available front seat warmers
- » Six-way adjustable driver's seat
- » Six front storage areas
- » Available Nissan-Connect™ with naviga-

tion

- » Available Nissan Voice Recognition
- » Available Travel Link

Under the hood

- » 170-horsepower, 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine
- » Continuously Variable Transmission
- » Front- or all-wheel drive
- » Active Trace Control, Active Engine Braking and Active Ride Control

Safety features

- » Required in every new car: front airbags, anti-lock brakes and an electronic stability system
- » Blind spot warning
- » Lane departure warning
- » Forward collision warning
- » Rollover sensor
- » Child safety rear door locks
- » Traction control
- » Hill start assist
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- » Available Around View Monitor

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LETTERS

Edwards not authorized

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that never supports or opposes any candidate or political party. We were, therefore, dismayed to see that Ron Edwards, a candidate for Plymouth Township treasurer, used the League of Women Voters name in a campaign flier sent to local voters this week. To be clear:

1. Mr. Edwards is not a member of the League of Women Voters.
2. Mr. Edwards did not participate in the 2016 League of Women Voters candidate forum for Plymouth Township candidates held June 30, 2016.
3. Mr. Edwards did not respond to the League of Women Voters 2016 Voter Guide questionnaire.
4. Mr. Edwards was not authorized to use the name of the League of

Women Voters in his campaign material.

Angela Ryan, president
League of Women Voters of NW Wayne County

Work together

The United States of America is having a hard enough time with the upcoming presidential election that I certainly did not expect to see such malice so close to home. I have grown up in the Plymouth-Canton area since I was 7 years old. I know many business owners and have many friends in both of our communities. I graduated from Canton High School and now have kids attending the same school.

I am very proud to say I am from Plymouth-Canton, just like the name on our school district. I never even knew that there was competition between our communities until I became an executive director for a local nonprofit. Because

WRITE US

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

Web: www.hometownlife.com
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Email: jmaliszews@hometownlife.com

for me, it was always about the good people, the safe neighborhoods, the hometown amenities and the camaraderie.

I now feel like an outsider, watching what is going on in the city and township of Plymouth. When I mail a letter, it says "Plymouth" and there is one zip code! When I go to a restaurant, the drive-in, the orthodontist, the chiropractor, the fountain, the grocery store, McClumpha Park, the museum, a chamber event or to visit a business, I say "Plymouth!"

As a resident who lives in Canton, I see Plymouth as one! It is my sincere hope that our local cities and townships get back to working together and stop blaming one another, so that we can continue to make our world a better place.

Jill Engel
Canton Township

Appalled with post card

I was appalled to see a post card in the mail this week from a group nobody has ever heard of declaring: NOTICE: PROPERTY TAX INCREASE. This Plymouth

Township administration has now resorted to scare tactics, deception and, yes, I will say it: lies. They should be ashamed to stoop so low. Nobody can raise taxes in our community; Only a vote by the citizens can raise taxes.

A vote by the citizens is exactly what this administration will not allow. They passed a resolution two years ago to fund a study on the needs and wants of the community in regards to recreation. They have never done that study because they do not want to know what the citizens think. Ron Edwards proposed a resolution not to have anything to do with the city of Plymouth until after the 2016 election. This board passed that resolution (Curmi and Doroshewitz were the only two dissenting votes). That means until this administration is defeated, we are enemies of our closest neighbor. They won't even allow discussions.

I know this is not what the people of Plymouth Township want; they care about our whole Plymouth community. If you disagree with the policies

of this current board, you must get out and vote against them in the upcoming Republican primary Aug. 2. Take our township back.

Jackie Peters
Plymouth Township

PARC advocates change their tune

At the League of Women Voters Forum, I pointed out that PARC (the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex) was advocating a tax on Plymouth Township, that would raise township tax rates from 25-100 percent, depending on the legal organization of a tax district.

I received an email from Bob Dorshewitz, a staunch advocate and owner of PARC (he's on the incorporation papers), saying I was "justifying my position with a flat out lie." I enlightened Mr. Doroshewitz regarding the state laws governing the authority of the kinds of joint tax district PARC proponents want; that indeed allow taxation from 1-4 mills - 4 mills would double our tax rate in the township.

After my communications, Mr. Doroshewitz and his cronies have changed their tune. Now they say all they want is a discussion. If they don't plan to tax the township, there is no need for a discussion with the township - they can proceed with their project in the city. I find it impossible to believe that PARC advocates want a mere discussion about how to finance PARC after years

of advocating a tax on the township. This is reminiscent of our voting earlier this year to reject a gas tax, then having it imposed upon us anyway.

Multiple articles in this newspaper have reported that PARC wants to impose a joint taxation district to tax Plymouth Township and the city of Plymouth. The district would tax people's homes up to \$25 million to build a concert hall. Some people estimate the cost as up to \$40 million, given the scope of the project. Even at the \$25 million estimate, Plymouth Township would endure a tax burden of about \$19 million on people's homes - that is substantially more than our township operating budget for one year, which is \$14 million. This additional tax would also have a chilling effect on our efforts to attract businesses to the township to broaden our tax base.

In the meantime, PARC has failed to supply the township with a business plan or feasibility study to support their request to tax the residents of the township. PARC needs to demonstrate that it has a plan to become self-supporting after renovations lest the Township be perpetually burdened to keep it afloat.

At this point, any tax on the township to support PARC is a bad idea for township homeowners and taxpayers.

Mike Oliansky
Plymouth Township

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You are hereby notified that there will be a hearing in the matter of, James Burton vs. Allied Waste, et al, Case No.: 14-NW-CV01873, as a result of the wrongful death of John Porter Burton, born on October 6, 1938, formerly of Seneca, Missouri, on August 26, 2016 at 11:15 a.m. at Newton County Courthouse, 101 S. Wood, Neosho, MO 64850, pursuant to Mo. Rev. Stat. § 537.095. All persons who are members of the class entitled to sue or join in this action are entitled to be present and to present evidence. Contact Katrina Richards of The Hershewe Law Firm, PC, 417-782-3790, for more information.

Published: July 31, August 7, 14 & 21, 2016

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School officials share thoughts on finances

Superintendents hear results of MSU study

Julie Brown
Staff Writer

School districts in Michigan don't have a lot of say on their finances, according to a new study from Michigan State University.

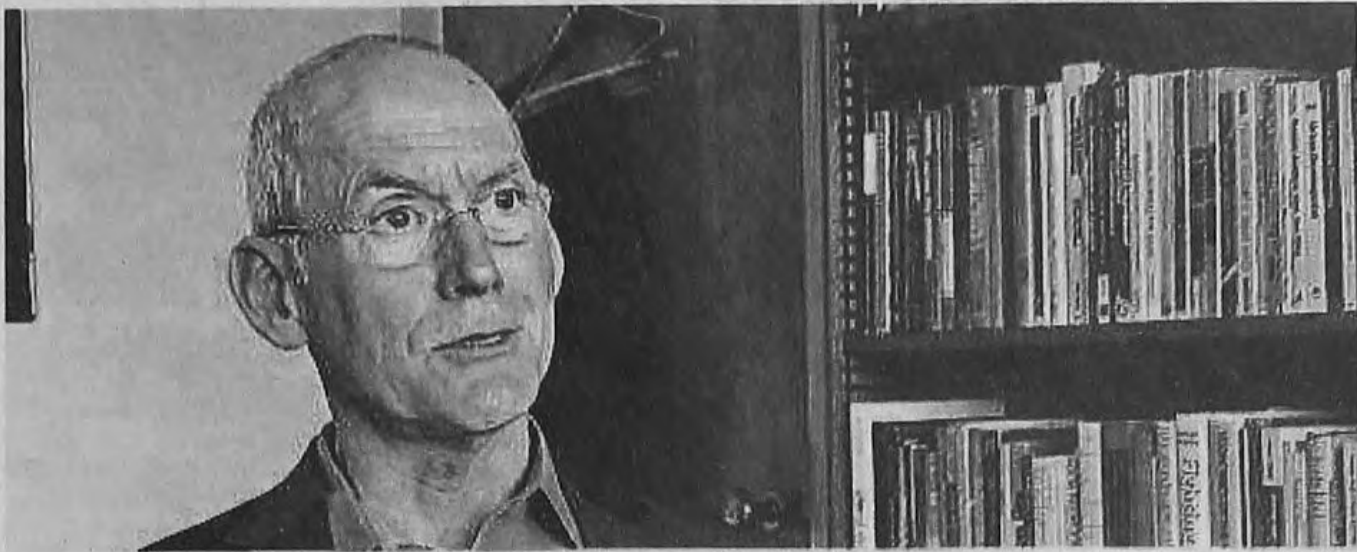
Major areas cited in the research are declining enrollment, higher shares of special education students and drops in state funding — which, the study notes, policy makers control.

These have made the difficulties in Michigan's low-income urban districts like Detroit even worse, according to David Arsen, professor of education policy in the MSU College of Education.

The research, to be published this fall in the *Journal of Education Finance*, is the most comprehensive study to date to determine what causes school budget deficits in Michigan. Arsen and colleagues estimated the relative influence of multiple factors on the fund balances of all Michigan public school districts over nearly 20 years.

Derek Fisher, superintendent of the Garden City Public Schools, has thoughts on the MSU research. "Almost all districts across Wayne County have experienced declining enrollment," Fisher said.

Fisher noted the recession of recent years caused Michiganders to leave the state and the birth rate is also declining, with most families of two children or less. "So it's not necessarily where the kids go," he said, noting some school children simply didn't get



David Arsen, professor of education policy in the MSU College of Education, studies school funding issues and related inequity.

born.

'It creates competition'

Of charter schools, Fisher said, "It creates competition. There are other choices. In my estimation and my studies, it's the birth rate" that influences enrollment more than charter schools, he said.

MSU's Arsen cited Michigan policies that relate to district fund balances and the role of local leaders. Arsen points to the state's emergency manager law and other policies that place sanctions on districts.

The research that Arsen and colleagues did found local spending decisions matter, but overall the impact is small. Study authors cite changes in the school district's per-pupil foundation allowance and their enrollment, especially where school choice and charters are prevalent.

Since Proposal A passed in 1994, Michigan has seen one of the nation's most dramatic shifts in financial responsibility for public schools

from local tax revenues to a centralized per-student funding system. Arsen said increased funds in the decade starting with 1994 and Proposal A "produced significant improvements in student achievement," with rural districts as big winners often.

Those achievements have lessened in more recent years, as has funding to schools in our state, he noted.

Garden City's Fisher said of policy makers, "They have equal expectations for all students as far as academic performance," whether that's the Grosse Pointe district or Detroit. Fisher cites Proposal A and "having it (school funding) driven by property values, the disparities that exist. The state needs to look at that formula."

A recent study by a Colorado consulting firm commissioned by the Michigan Legislature recommends a "base cost expenditure" of \$8,667 per student for Michigan schools.

Garden City's current per-pupil allocation is \$7,517 per student. Fisher

and colleagues are hopeful for the proposed \$114 increase that will bring Garden City up to \$7,631

Fisher is proud of the Garden City teaching and administrative staff and their efforts. "Absolutely. That goes without saying," Fisher said, including his reference of the "hard work of our teachers."

Also proud of her team is Michele Harmala, Wayne-Westland school superintendent, where the per-pupil allocation for 2016-17 is \$7,511. "I commend our staff here in Wayne-Westland. They took it upon themselves to make sure programs stayed intact," she said of recent employee contracts, including teachers.

Harmala noted Wayne-Westland has declining enrollment and its leaders cannot cut expenditures at the same rate as others. "So that has a significant negative impact. You make guesses about the kids you will have," she said, adding Wayne-Westland's enrollment predictions have proven fairly accurate.

'Certainly clarifies the issues'

Harmala is sharing Arsen's study findings with colleagues. "I think David Arsen certainly clarifies the issues in the ways I have seen them. He's now put the data behind them," she said.

She lauded local representatives and senators for being open in discussions and asking good questions. "Our legislators should just keep advocating for the needs of their local districts," Harmala said.

Of declining birth rates and charter school competition, "I would say both have an impact," she said. About 12 percent of resident Wayne-Westland students attend charters at various locales, with district officials not knowing who those charter students are.

"They both have an impact on our funding. They both matter," she said of birth rates and charter schools.

Added Harmala, "We provide very high-quality programs for limited dollars," with almost 88

percent of the Wayne-Westland budget used on salaries.

"By and large, the staff sacrificed to save the district," she added.

Harmala added in an email of the study, "It is data-based research that concludes through careful, empirical research that state policies are having a direct and substantial negative impact on local school districts. This research, paired with the Michigan Education Finance Study, should be a 'wake-up call.' Michigan can be in the top 10 educationally with the investment of necessary and appropriate financial resources."

Arsen cites in the research the Detroit Public Schools, where the district faces more than \$500 million in debt after many years of enrollment loss and six years of emergency management.

The three-year study was partially funded by the ACLU of Michigan and the U.S. Department of Education. Arsen's co-authors, all MSU graduates, are Thomas A. DeLuca of the University of Kansas, Yongmei Ni of the University of Utah and Michael Bates of the University of California-Riverside.

Arsen and a colleague, Michael Addonizio, a professor of education policy at Wayne State University's College of Education, recently penned a guest column for the *Detroit Free Press*. That related to the Michigan Legislature-commissioned study by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates in Colorado, which looked at school financing in Michigan.

jcbrown@hometownlife.com
Twitter: @248Julie

Charters, special ed: MSU professor shares his expertise

Julie Brown
Staff Writer

David Arsen of Michigan State University has extensive thoughts on charter schools in Michigan.

"The key thing is how are the school choice policies designed," said Arsen, a professor of education policy and educational administration, as well as coordinator, Education Policy Unit for MSU's College of Education.

He's not opposed to choice in general; Arsen noted it's also key how charter schools interact with school financing

policies.

There's a higher concentration of low-income students at urban charters. "You see it in the suburbs as well, rural," he said.

"Inter-district choice has put a strong financial pressure on," he said of public schools. Public districts such as Bloomfield Hills offer no competition for charters, he said.

"The kids overwhelmingly move from lower to higher of socioeconomic status," Arsen said of charter enrollment. "There's no overall regulation of the supply of charters" in Michigan.

He also noted in school finance the totally different issues when it comes to school facilities. Arsen has studied school finance and student achievement for years, including work with researchers from MSU and other institutions.

He said other states handle charters differently and Michigan laws could change to lessen socioeconomic impact. "You could moderate that," Arsen said, pointing to Massachusetts as a state where student achievement has risen considerably.

He and colleagues

find school facilities and special education the two main areas most "broken" in education. Special education students have different rights than others under federal law for services they must receive, he said.

"The feds don't provide all the money. They leave it mostly to the states," Arsen said of special education funding, which has spawned litigation in Michigan.

He noted county-level intermediate school districts, such as Wayne County's RESA, a regional educational service agency, and their role in special education mill-

ages which vary widely based on location.

"All of this funding is coming from local property taxes at the county level," which must be shared equally in the ISD, Arsen said. "If you get to Wayne County, man, that's tough," due to smaller high-end socioeconomic communities in Wayne.

"In each one of the counties, they're doing it differently," he said of ISDs, noting such funds help local districts a lot.

A couple of his colleagues are examining regular education funding going to special education. Arsen noted that

data was difficult to find.

"From my standpoint, it shouldn't come to this. This should be handled at the state level," Arsen said, citing federal mandates being difficult for local officials to handle.

Macomb County has stepped forward on special education funding, Arsen said, adding, "I think Wayne County's a little slower."

Of charters and severely disabled students, Arsen added, "Charters just can't do it (educate) effectively."

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Senior golf outing scheduled for Canton's Pheasant Run Golf Club

Area seniors are encouraged to warm up their back swing because Canton Club 55+ is once again hosting its annual Senior Golf Scramble on Tuesday, Aug. 23, at the Pheasant Run Golf Club, 46500 Summit Parkway.

Area seniors ages 55 and over are encouraged to hit the links for 18

holes of golf in this four-person golf scramble that includes a continental breakfast, lunch, plus a cart, all for a fee of \$49 for Canton residents and \$54 for non-residents. Come as a foursome, a twosome or as a single player.

Check in will begin at 8 a.m., with a shotgun

start scheduled for 9 a.m. Lunch at the clubhouse is planned at 1:30 p.m. Prizes for several on-course contests will be awarded, including men's and women's closest to the pin. Additional door prizes will also be available. First place will be decided by a blind draw.

"We welcome all senior golfers to join in on all the fun of our annual tournament, which is played on one of the most scenic courses in the area," Canton adult specialist Stephanie Diago said. "This annual

event is always a great way for area seniors to get outdoors and enjoy a good round of golf."

Registration is currently underway. Seniors are encouraged to reserve a spot by calling 734-394-5485 or register

in person through Wednesday, Aug. 17, at Canton Club 55+, located in Summit on the Park, 46000 Summit Parkway.

For more information, go to www.cantonfun.org or call 734-394-5485.

Family day, movie coming to Heritage Park

Area residents are invited to unleash their inner child and join Canton Leisure Services for fun activities and a little friendly competition that the whole family can enjoy during the second annual Family Field Day & Movie in the Park. It's scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 12, in Heritage Park, west of Canton Center, between Cherry Hill and Palmer roads.

Featured activities on the north side of Heritage Park include classic favorites, such as potato sack races, shoe kicks, three-legged races and wheelbarrow races. You can also learn about family fitness opportunities that take place throughout the year through the Fit Family Challenge.

"This is a great way to reconnect with family and neighbors at Heritage Park for some friendly competition and summer-time fun," said Laura Mortier, Canton recreation specialist.

"The experience and memories are what excites everyone. It's about families building those traditions in a healthy way and actually spending time together that determines the success of this Field Day. We are committed to delivering unexpected fun and lasting memories for participants, all experienced while taking part in this special outdoor health and wellness activity followed by a movie in the park."

This is a great photo opportunity, so attendees are reminded to bring a

camera. No pre-registration is required. The \$10 per family fee is required to be paid on-site. This event is open to the public and all ages are encouraged to attend, even grandparents.

Following the Family Field Day events, a special showing of Disney's animated movie "The Good Dinosaur" (rated PG) will be held outside in the park on the big screen starting at dusk. Food, snacks and popcorn will also be available for purchase on-site. Individuals who are not able to attend the Family Field Day activities are still encouraged to attend the free movie.

For more information about Family Field Day & Movie in the Park, go to www.cantonfun.org or call 734-394-5460.

Lori Shapiro Petra Boonstra Lisa Saullies

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COLLEGE SPORTS

Ocelot fishing club is the 'reel' deal

Ocelot duo earns draw with mighty Penn State

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

In a modern-day "David vs. Goliath"-caliber showdown, diminutive Schoolcraft Community College actually tied mighty Big Ten powerhouse Penn State University in an athletic event earlier this month — and that's no fish story.

Well, actually it is a fish story given that the eye-opening draw unfolded on Lake Chautauqua in upstate New York during a College Fishing Western Conference event.

The Schoolcraft Fishing Club's duo of Anthony Gilmore and C.J. Hatton reeled in five bass with a combined weight of 13 pounds, 3 ounces — the

identical result registered by Nittany Lions Derek Horner and Clayton Frey.

The Ocelots ultimately came out on the short end of a fine-print, tie-breaking formula — Penn State entered the tournament before Schoolcraft, thus, giving it the first-place prize of \$2,000 — but it didn't diminish the performance of Gilmore and Hatton, who earned a second-place prize of \$1,000, which will be deposited into the two-year-old club's bank account.

There were 64 boats (with two fishermen per craft) entered in the event, making the Ocelots' effort even more impressive.

See FISHING, Page B3



Schoolcraft Fishing Club members Anthony Gilmore (left) and C.J. Hatton tied for first at a recent FLW tournament and qualified for the 2017 national event.

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RIO OLYMPICS

FAST-LANE LEGACY



COURTESY OF @ADIDAS_SWIM

With help from friends, Canton native Allison Schmitt has persevered some rough patches on her road to the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Peter Baugh
Correspondent

The University of Georgia swimming team was nervous. The Bulldogs were sitting on the Texas A&M pool deck in College Station, anxiously waiting for the 2009 NCAA Championships to begin.

As head coach Jack Bauerle looked around, his eyes fell on Allison Schmitt. To his surprise, the star freshman was giggling.

"Schmitt, did someone tell you a joke?" he called out. "What's going on?"

"No, I'm just so happy," she told her

With help, Schmitt set for third Olympics appearance

coach. "I can't wait to just start."

Schmitt won the NCAA title in the 500-yard freestyle that year, and she went on to have one of the most successful careers in the history of Georgia athletics.

Looking back, Bauerle clearly remembers Schmitt's joy before her first NCAA Championships.

"That's how she viewed competition," Bauerle said. "She looked at it in a good anxious way ... she just had fun with it."



Schmitt

The same love of competition carried Schmitt, now 26, far beyond her hometown of Canton Township and the University of Georgia campus. The passion has brought her American records. It has made her one of the greatest swimmers in U.S. history. And Aug. 5, it will take her to her third Olympic

Games.

Her competitive spirit has given her the highest of highs. And it's shown her

how far she can fall.

Personal

Looking through Allison Schmitt's Instagram account, there is no indication that something was once wrong. She wears a friendly smile in many of the photos. Other images show beautiful scenery, swimming pools, family and friends.

What the photos do not display is the pain that Schmitt was hiding. She kept that to herself.

"To me, it seems like everything has

See SCHMITT, Page B2

FARMINGTON SWIMMING

Gators capture fifth straight city meet title

Dan O'Meara
Staff Writer

Farmington Glen Aquatic Club extended its championship streak to five in a row, winning the city swim meet July 16 by 448 points over host Woodbrooke Hills.

The Gators accumulated 1,589 points; Woodbrooke Hills 1,141; Beechview Swim Club, 1,086 and Piemontese Club, 326.

Piemontese participated for the first time, replacing Kendallwood Swim Club, which closed last year.

Farmington Glen was led by six double winners: Madeline Greaves, Hannah Gurgel, Ryan Gurgel, Brody

Jamieson, Trevor Jones and Jack Tomlinson.

The Gators also won four of the six relay races. Beechview had four double individual winners and won the other two relays.

CITY MEET RESULTS

Glen double winners: Madeline Greaves, girls 11-12, 50-meter backstroke, 34.69; 50 freestyle, 29.91; Hannah Gurgel, girls 8U, 25 backstroke, 22.17; 25 butterfly, 19.95; Ryan Gurgel, boys 11-12, 100 IM, 1:19.49; 50 butterfly, 33.84; Brody Jamieson, boys 13-14, 50 backstroke, 32.06; 50 freestyle, 28.06; Trevor Jones, boys 13-14, 100 IM, 1:09.20; 50 butterfly, 30.06; Jack Tomlinson, boys 8U, 25 backstroke, 23.80; 25 freestyle, 18.39.

Beechview double winners: Emme D'Errico, girls 9-10, 50 butterfly, 37.68; 50 freestyle, 34.12; Emily Evers, girls 11-12, 100 IM, 1:19.37; 50 breaststroke, 41.05; Drew Hoelscher, boys 15-18, 100 freestyle, 58.87; 50 butterfly, 29.06; Ashley Turak, girls 15-18, 100 freestyle, 1:00.11; 50 butterfly, 30.21.

Glen relay winners: Mixed 400 200 freestyle (Jack Tomlinson, Brendan Golitz, Mya McEvilly, Hassan Ezeddine, 2:23.24;



ARLEEN DUARTE

Farmington Glen Aquatic Club won its fifth consecutive city championship, scoring 1,589 points in the four-team competition.

Mixed 400 200 medley (Annie Kindseth, Ameliya Heard, Ryan Gurgel, Hannah Gurgel), 2:46.67; Girls 52U 200 medley (Bella Feenstra, Julianna Petrak, Madeline Greaves, Viv Kindseth), 2:15.47; Boys 52U 200 medley (Brody Jamieson, Matt Lane, Trevor Jones, Jared Visser), 2:08.57.

Beechview relay winners: Girls 66U 200 freestyle (Grace Xu, Hailey Stewart, Dayna Borregard, Ashley Turak), 1:55.84; Boys 66U 200 freestyle (Brendan Paul, Dillon Hess, Drew Hoelscher, Drew Hinckley), 1:45.18.

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YOUTH HOCKEY

New hockey club set to debut this fall

HB Hockey Club will serve as developmental pipeline program

There will be a new youth hockey club debuting for the 2016-17 season, formed from a merger of three long-standing organizations.

The new HB Hockey Club will be a developmental pipeline program with a unified club culture, launched under the storied history of HoneyBaked Hockey.

HoneyBaked Hockey has been one of the most successful Tier I (AAA) Hockey programs nationally since the mid-90s. Over the years it has grown to eight boys teams and four girls teams.

Given the changing dynamics in hockey, the time is now right for the Suburban Hockey Club (founded in 2007) and pioneering Michigan Icebreakers Girls Hockey Club (founded in 2003) to merge with HoneyBaked Hockey into one new association: HB Hockey Club.

"We are very excited about the opportunities ahead of us by the formation of one club," said Geoff Benetts, general manager of Suburban Ice in Farmington Hills. "There is so much that can be done in terms of player and coach development and enhancing the experience for players at all levels in the program."

"While it is sad to turn the page on both the Suburban Hockey Club and Michigan Icebreakers girls program, they really will live on as part of the HB Hockey Club and much of what has made them successful will still be a huge part of the new program."

The new unified club will create efficiencies and synergies to improve the development and competitive experience for players, as well as provide



opportunities for coaches and players to start out in the "Learn to Play" program and progress inside the club to whatever level that they strive to attain.

This change also creates opportunities for coaches at different age

groups and competitive levels to work together to improve the experience for all players.

"We have always had in 'informal affiliation' between the programs, with many players and coaches advancing to the Tier I HoneyBaked level," HB director Lyle Phair said. "With the direction that USA Hockey and MAHA have been heading, it made sense to formally create one association that would allow us to operate more efficiently and create a better experience for the players and families moving forward."

The eight Tier I boys teams and four Tier I girls teams will continue to wear the HoneyBaked Hockey name on their jerseys. Tier I (AAA) teams will stay skating at both Hazel Park Ice Arena and Suburban Ice Farmington Hills.

Teams at the Tier II level for boys and girls will now be called HB, and will wear uniforms featuring the newly created HB Hockey shield logo. Below that, teams will be formed at the 10U, 12U and 14U B/Tier III (house/recreational) level and those teams will also be designated as HB.

The 8U program within the HB Hockey Club will consist of three different levels of play: Level 1 (for 4-8 year old players learning to play), Level 2 (for 5 & 6 year old players) and Level 3 (for 7 & 8 year old players).

The HB Hockey Club Tier II, Tier III, B League and 8U programs will all skate exclusively out of Suburban Ice Farmington Hills at 23996 Freeway Park Drive.

For more information, visit www.hbhockeyclub.com.

Bombs away! Farmington team advances



SUBMITTED
For the second consecutive year, the 14U Farmington Bombers baseball team recently won the District 4 championship and advanced in the Little League playoffs. They beat Waterford to advance. Pictured are (back row, from left) coach Chris Brendel, Jason Stockmeyer, Jack Donehue, Mike Crawley, coach Paul Donehue, Garrett Gendjar, Gabe Smith, head coach Greg Gietek, (front row, from left) Matt Kohls, Jack Johnson, Issac Brendel, Chris Ihm, Brandon Strickland, Jack Stanley and Luke Thomas.

SCHMITT

Continued from Page B1

gone right in my life," Schmitt said. "I've had a perfect family, perfect friends, I graduated from college, I had successes in my sport. Everything seemed to be going right, and something didn't feel right. And I didn't understand. I didn't think depression. I didn't think that was even a possibility."

It turned out to be a reality.

Schmitt began to struggle emotionally after the 2012 Olympics. Fearing that she would sound ungrateful, she did not talk about her feelings.

"She kind of went through every day just feeling like she had to go through it, not because she wanted to go through it," said Michael Phelps, one of Schmitt's closest friends.

The depression affected Schmitt's swimming. Since the 2012 Olympics, she has not competed at a major international competition.

"She was so far down, really struggling both in her performances and also outside of the pool," said Bob Bowman, Schmitt's coach at North Baltimore Aquatic Club. "It was a very long process to work through those issues."

At a meet in Austin, Texas, in January 2015, Phelps approached Schmitt. Phelps and Schmitt have trained with each other for 10 years, and Bowman says the two are "like brother and sister."

Phelps could see that Schmitt wasn't herself. The 22-time Olympic medalist told her that he would listen when she was ready to talk about her feelings. If she didn't want to open up to him, he would find someone else to help her.

Schmitt remembers beginning to cry on the pool deck.

"The way he said that really got to me," she said.

Two days later, Schmitt was on her way to a psychologist.

Schmitt's mood began to improve, and she realized that asking for help was not a sign of weakness.

After her cousin died by suicide in May 2015, Schmitt has made her struggles known to the public. She hopes it can help others going through similar struggles.

"It's OK to not be OK," she said. "It's OK to ask for help, and I think asking for help shows that you're human, shows that you're strong. Because I think life is a bigger thing than anything we've ever experienced, and it's something that we can't get through alone, and we'll always have to ask for help in some sense."

When Bowman took the head coaching job at Arizona State, Schmitt and Phelps moved with him to continue their training. The two swimmers live together in Tempe, along with Phelps' fiancée and son.

Like Schmitt, Phelps has also gone through rough times since the London Games. He went to rehab after a DUI and has been public about his emotional struggles. Now, the two are able to help each other.

"I can trust him with anything," Schmitt said. "I'm able to ask him for help, and I think that now we both have good days, we both have bad days. We're able to see that in each other and help each other out. Sometimes I think that he



Allison Schmitt of Canton will swim in two relays at the Rio Olympics.

can read me more than I know myself."

"Her and I are pretty much an open book for one another," Phelps added. "If I'm in a bad mood and she sees it, it's kind of like she cries whatever it is out at me. And it's the same for her. She pretty much wears it across her forehead, and I can always tell when something's going on."

Bowman agrees that Schmitt and Phelps' friendship is mutually beneficial. He said that the two hold each other accountable and are supportive.

Phelps feels that he and Schmitt are both bad about compartmentalizing their problems, and it's something that they help each other with.

"I think I've kind of helped her make sure that she gets everything in the open and doesn't sit on it and let it keep eating her until she kind of puts herself in a dark hole again," he said. "I think that's some place that neither of us want to get back to."

Looking back at what Schmitt has gone through, Bowman notices major changes.

"She's just so much more at peace now," Bowman said. "And I think she's learned quite a bit about herself, about life and has been able to deal with some very difficult things in a very positive way."

Rio

Moments after touching the wall in the 200-meter freestyle at 2016 Olympic Trials, Allison Schmitt smiled and grabbed Katie Ledecky's outstretched hand. The two hugged. It was official: They would be teammates at the Rio Olympic Games.

Schmitt finished fourth in the event, giving her a spot on the 800-meter freestyle relay with Ledecky, Missy Franklin and Leah Smith.

"Just looking up and knowing that I'm going to yet again represent the U.S. at my third Olympic Games was definitely happy tears," Schmitt said. "I was grateful that I was able to share it with the people that have helped me get to where I am today."

Though Schmitt won the 200-meter freestyle at the 2012 Olympics with an American record, she will not swim the event individually in Rio, as only the top two finishers at Olympic Trials qualify. While she would have liked to defend her title, she is excited for the relay nonetheless.

Schmitt enters the games with six

Olympic medals — three gold — and has a good chance to add to her total in Rio. The foursome of Ledecky, Franklin, Smith and Schmitt are heavy favorites in the 800-meter freestyle relay and have a legitimate shot at setting a world record.

Bowman, who is also the head coach for the U.S. men's team, feels good about the relay's chances in Rio. He has watched Schmitt practice going into the Olympics and likes what he has seen.

"She's training very, very well," he said. "She's in a good place mentally, so I feel good about it."

Like Bowman, Phelps believes Schmitt is in a good place going into Rio. "She's positive, she's happy, she is swimming well," he said. "And that's when she swims her best is when she's in a good mood."

Schmitt also qualified for the 400-meter freestyle relay team and is "ecstatic" about having the chance to compete in two of the three relays at the Olympics.

"I love relays," she said. "I think it's so much more fun when there's a team of four of you going into the ready room and swimming together and cheering around. We all know all the dedication, sacrifices we've made throughout the years, and to be able to come together and represent your country together is an amazing feeling."

It is likely that Schmitt will leave Brazil with two new medals, adding to her already impressive resume.

Bauerle says her veteran presence will be vital in Rio.

"To have her on the relays, the experience of her on the relays, is a little bit comforting for all of us," he said. "She's such a great team person."

Helping Others

Bauerle, who will serve as an assistant coach for Team USA at the Olympics, remembers Schmitt's personality on the Georgia team. He can look back on her leadership and strength in and out of the pool.

"She's an amazing person," he said. "She was the star of our team, but she didn't act like it, and she was as friendly to the best kids on the team as she was to the (other) swimmers on the team. It didn't really matter to her."

Schmitt's caring personality didn't stop once she graduated. She has continued to lead, and was named a captain of the women's Olympic team.

"She's a very positive influence on

people around her," Bowman said. "She's very sensitive to how other people feel, and if she senses somebody needs some help, she's the first one to offer it. And she's also a good example of what to do and how to behave and how to go about your business on these national team trips."

Bowman has noticed Schmitt help first-time Olympians like Abbey Weitzel and Caeleb Dressel.

Bauerle says that he and Bowman weren't the only people happy that Schmitt made the team. He feels her experience and personality will be invaluable to the swimmers around her.

"I think the biggest gift she has is just making others feel good," he said. "She's great, she's great for this team."

Legacy

Bob Bowman does not hesitate to say that Allison Schmitt is one of the best female swimmers in American history.

"Not only will she have three Olympic Games on her resume, but she'll have a very impressive medal tally," he said. "Even if she doesn't win a medal this time, it would be impressive. But I have a feeling she's going to add to that maybe a couple times."

Bauerle is constantly reminded of Schmitt's legacy at Georgia. A donor endowed a scholarship to the school in her name, and Bauerle expects her to someday be inducted into the school's Circle of Honor.

The Bulldogs coach calls swimming a rugged sport. He feels that it's a grind, and that success is nearly impossible without hard work and dedication. He sees Schmitt's longevity in the sport as an accomplishment.

"If you make it (to the Olympics) one time, you're a great swimmer," Bauerle said. "If you make it twice, you're exceptional ... If you make it three times, it's an absolute achievement."

Coaches have a tremendous impact on athletes, but Bauerle says that athletes help the coaches grow, too. He describes Schmitt as fun to coach and is thankful for the attention she has brought the Bulldog program.

For Schmitt, each trip to the Olympics is unique. She has her eyes on making the podium, but she sees the experience at the games as something more than success in the pool.

"Looking back at the past two Olympics, the memories I have ... (are) beyond medals or records, and more the friendship and the memories that we've created with our teammates," she said. "I'm looking forward to the journey."

At age 26, Rio is likely the last stop in Schmitt's Olympic journey. Through all the medals and records, all the disappointments and failures, Bowman is thankful he had the chance to coach Schmitt.

"Allison is just such a great representative of the sport and one of the most special people I know," Bowman said. "It's just been an honor, really, to have coached her for so long. It's just a thrill for me to be able to help her go to one more Olympics, and I'm really excited for what happens next for her, because I think she's got a good plan and has her life in a very good place."

Peter Baugh is a student journalist at the University of Missouri

COMPETITIVE CHEERLEADING

Building self-esteem is Force's No. 1 goal

Ed Wright
Staff Writer

Winning gold medals is nice, but it takes a back seat to confidence-building for the orchestrators of the Champion Force Garden City Cheer program, which is headed by founder Jenn Wicker.

"The No. 1 thing I like to see is the young girls coming in here to feel more confident about themselves when they leave," said Wicker, a former gymnast who has coached cheerleading for the past 11 years. "We also teach them skills and routines. We ask the girls to do their best and if we win, that's a bonus."

"I'm very proud of these girls for what they've accomplished, because we only get to work with them one day a week for a few hours. They're very hard workers and they take pride in their performances."

Building self-esteem and excelling in competitions has gone hand-in-hand for Wicker's program, which qualified three squads for a national tournament in Myrtle Beach, S.C., during the last week in July.

The Force's trio of teams that qualified to head south were two elite teams (representing Divisions 5 and 6) and a Division 4 all-star squad.

"Some of these girls had never cheered before this year, so they've come a long way in a short time," Wick-



Pictured is the Garden City Force Elite Division 6 team.

er said. "I also have girls who have been with me for several years. It's exciting to see their confidence and skill level grow every year."

The teams practice in the Maplewood Center in Garden City, the city that draws most of the participants.

"We also have girls from Westland and other nearby communities," Wicker added.



Here is the Garden City Force's Division 4 all-star team.



This is the Garden City Force Elite Division 5 team.

The program is not affiliated with the Garden City High School cheerleading program.

The age range for competing cheerleaders is 7-17, Wicker said.

"We'll be competing against teams from Texas, California, Arizona and a

lot of other states," Wicker said. "Michigan teams actually very, very well at the national competitions."

Wicker's teams compete in both a fall and spring season.

ewright@hometownlife.com

EXTREME SPORTS

ROCK AND RAUL ALL DAY LONG

Instructor passionate about training triathlon competitors

Marty Budner
Staff Writer

Raul Sosa believes anyone can tackle a triathlon.

"Everybody can do it," said Sosa, head coach for the Beverly Hills Club triathlon team. "All you have to do is put in the work and put in the time. I highly recommend it."

Sosa should know. The 54-year-old Troy resident has participated in more than 50 triathlons, including 10 full Ironmans — the mother of all triathlons — which consist of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26.2-mile run. He is well aware of what they're about and what it takes to train for such a grueling event.

However, Sosa also recognizes everyone may not have the time nor energy for an Ironman. In that case, there are alternative events for the beginner triathlete.

For instance, half-marathons are scaled-down versions of the Ironman — 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike and 13.1-mile run. The Olympic district triathlons include a one-mile swim, 25-mile bike and 6.2-mile run. The smaller and popular sprint triathlons consist of a half-mile swim, 12-mile bike and 3.1-mile run.

Sosa is adamant that triathlon training can not only help you physically, but can provide a huge boost to your daily lifestyle.

"The benefits of doing triathlons are that it gives you a healthy lifestyle," Sosa said. "You learn to be a little more disciplined, you will be more committed to train and you will challenge yourself. I try to implant in everyone's mind to believe in yourself."

"If you work hard, you are always going to make it," he added. "Besides being fun, it is something where you can apply all those different elements to your daily life. It can teach you to reach a goal, do your best and don't give up."

Willing to train anyone

Sosa, whose been at his full-time job at Fiat Chrysler Automotive in Auburn Hills for 28 years, is willing to train anyone at his part-time job at the Bever-



Tyler Smith of Birmingham (right) cheers athletes competing in the Olympic-distance event as they head out of the Detroit River.

ly Hills Club.

The Mexico native, who came to the U.S. in 1988, says it's just a matter of getting to know a person and what they're capable of. He will get to know the trainee through one-on-one interviews, then set an agenda and make sure each individual has the proper regimen to complete the task at hand.

Everyone can be taught how to run and bike. The biggest challenge is swimming, because not everyone comes from a swimming background.

"Everybody is welcome to join our team," said Sosa, who also works as a bike instructor at Lifetime Fitness. "Based on what I learn about the person, I will advise a training program for them based on their strengths and weaknesses."

"I will make sure they improve and help them out to reach their fitness goals or do their first ride or get a new personal-best time," he added. "I just want to help them. I customize their training programs based on their ability levels. We do a lot of practicing."

Sosa's recruited 20 triathletes who

are fully engaged in their sport since he began working at the Beverly Hills Club. Most of them have participated in a series of triathlons — in Brighton, at Belle Isle and in Portage — held throughout the state over the past couple of months.

In fact, Sosa and two team members are qualified for the nationals, set for Aug. 13 in Omaha, Neb.

Sosa and Berkeley resident Jamie Badhorn, 27, are qualified in the Olympic-distance competition, while team captain Stacey Smith of Birmingham is qualified in the sprint event. If they finish among the top 18 in their respective events, they would qualify for the U.S. national team, which competes on the international circuit.

Two other BHC team triathlon members — Jon Hartzell of Bloomfield Hills and Trevor Garrison — participated in their first full triathlon May 14 in Texas.

Set your own pace

Sosa likes to joke that it's not a rock and roll session with him, it's "Rock and Raul."



Raul Sosa leads a spin class for the Beverly Hills Club triathlon team.

"It works very well and everyone gets involved with it to a point that people are hooked to the sport," he said. "It keeps them healthy, it gives them a fitness level they didn't think they could ever reach."

"People like to be challenged. I have very fast runners, I have medium runners and I have some that are working hard to improve. I want to make them feel that they can do this."

"I just try and encourage people and tell them that your pace is the best pace; concentrate on yourself," he added. "When you are racing, do your own race and continue. Don't worry about what others are doing. That is a key motto that I have."

Sosa says there's nothing like triathlon training and being in top physical and mental shape. His goal is to implant that same feeling in all of his trainees.

"I love the sport. It is my passion. I love the three disciplines and I love to be healthy," he said. "I can tell you my three important things in life are my family, my job and to compete in triathlons."

FISHING

Continued from Page B1

"It's pretty intense waiting for all the boats to come in when you're in first place like we were," admitted Gilmore. "Our flight (there were four flights of 16 boats) came in around the middle, so we had to wait a while. You just keep your fingers crossed and hope for the best."

Gilmore, who is a graduate of Livonia Stevenson High School, founded the club in 2015. Hatton is a graduate of South Lyon High School.

The team also consists of Garrett Paquette of Canton, Zach Fadden of Plymouth and Shamus O'Hare.

"In order to compete in the FLW (Fishing League Worldwide) college tournaments, you have to be recognized by your school, so I approached someone in the student activities department at Schoolcraft and they agreed to do it," Gilmore said.

"Schools aren't restricted as far as the number of participants they can enter in a tournament; it's just a matter of having enough boats."

The Ocelots have two boats at their disposal — each owned by members

of the team. The newer of the two vessels carried a price tag in the neighborhood of \$60,000, Gilmore said.

"My boat is 14 years old, so it's not as valuable as the new one, but it gets the job done," he added.

Like any competitive activity, successful fishing requires practice and experience, Gilmore emphasized.

"The best advice I'd give to a young kid who is thinking about getting serious about fishing is to join a youth club like I did," Gilmore said. "You really have to get dialed into your equipment, too. A bad cast is a wasted cast and time management is important because you're only out there eight hours. There's a lot involved, including line sizes and weights. And decision-making is really important."

College Fishing is free to enter. All participants must be registered, full-time students at a college, university or community college and members of a college fishing club.

Gilmore said the club has received important sponsorships from Lesley Hodge of Remax, Chris at Lagoon Marine, Mizmo Baits and Cruncher Baits.

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CRESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**CLASS OF 1976**

40th reunion is 6 p.m. Saturday,

Oct. 15, at Kicker's Allstar Bar & Grill, in Canton. For more information, go to <http://bit.ly/Crestwood76>.**DEARBORN HIGH SCHOOL****CLASS OF 1976**

40th class reunion and golf

outing is Sunday, Aug. 13. For more information, go to <http://www.dhs1976.myevent.com>.**DETROIT CODY CLASS OF 1966**

50-year reunion, 6-11:30 p.m. Sept. 10 at Laurel Manor in

Livonia. For more information, call Gary Berriman at 313-300-4470 or Barbara (Doherty) Kalinski at 734-320-6545.

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Holiday deadlines are subject to change.**BAILEY**

SHIRLEE MARIE (nee SNELL) Age 85, died on July 23, 2016. Shirlee was born in Viroqua, Wisconsin on November 2, 1930. Due to a sibling illness in her immediate family and challenging economic times, Shirlee was raised by and ultimately adopted by her uncle and aunt, Lee and Frankie Snell, and was their only child. Shirlee attended St. Francis nursing school in LaCrosse, Wisconsin and became a registered nurse. While working in Madison, WI as an RN, she met her future husband Jim Bailey on a blind date. Shirlee and Jim raised two boys (Curt and Tom) while moving to various locations following Jim's sales engineering career. She relished her role as homemaker and mother, maintaining a beautiful home, volunteering at school, and shuttling her sons to all their athletic endeavors. We look back in awe at everything our Shirlee did for us and we are forever grateful for her loving care. Shirlee also had a passion for interior decorating with a special interest in antiques. She used her skills to decorate her many homes and to organize estate sales for her nursing club; proceeds funded scholarships for community members interested in pursuing nursing degrees. Shirlee cared deeply about her community. As founding residents of Celebration, FL, an innovative Disney community, Jim and Shirlee received the inaugural Good Neighbor award. As wife, mother, neighbor, antique collector, or estate sale coordinator, Shirlee took on each role with a conscientious work ethic, an attention to detail, and an emphasis on quality. Her love for her family was unconditional and unlimited. Her positive influence will live on through the family members she has left behind. She is survived by her loving husband Jim, her sons Curt (Jenny) and Tom (Jenny) and her grandchildren Ben, Danny, Pippa, and Roland. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, September 10, 2016 at 10:30am at First United Methodist Church of Birmingham, 1589 W. Maple Rd., Birmingham, MI 48009. Donations may be made to Seasons Hospice Foundation, First United Methodist Church of Birmingham or the Alzheimer's Association. Please share a memory by signing Shirlee's guestbook at www.cremationmichigan.com.

DECLERK

DENNIS GEORGE passed away unexpectedly on July 21, 2016 at the age of 80. He is survived by his beloved wife of almost 33 years, Barbara Carey DeClerk, and by Barbara's four sons, Michael Carey (Michele), Patrick Carey (Tricia), Timothy Carey (Michelle) and Christopher Carey (Maren). He was "Grandpa DD" to 11 grandchildren (Michael, Franklin, Alexandra, Jameson, Robert, Ethan, Andrew Caroline, Madison, Maxwell and Julia). He was the brother of Jacqueline Cornelle (Charles). Family will receive friends Tuesday, August 9, 6 - 8 p.m. at A.J. Desmond & Sons (Vasu Rodgers & Connell Chapel), 32515 Woodward Avenue (between 13 - 14 Mile), Royal Oak, MI, 248-549-0500. Funeral Mass will be Wednesday, August 10, 10:00 a.m. at Holy Name Catholic Church, 630 Harmon at Woodland, Birmingham, MI. Visitation at church begins at 9:30 a.m. Family suggests memorials to Child Safe Michigan, 4415 Springer Avenue, Royal Oak, MI 48073 or Lawrence Technological University, 21000 West Ten Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48075. Dennis was born in Detroit, but lived his early years in Grosse Pointe. Recently, he split his time between Bloomfield Hills and his home in the Harbor Springs, Michigan area. He was a proud graduate of Grosse Pointe High School and Lawrence Technological University. He also served in the Air Force. Dennis was devoted to his family and his profession. His greatest love was for his wife, Barbara. High school sweethearts who drifted apart, they were fortunate to find each other later in life. Once they did, there would be no separating them again. They were married for almost 33 years before his passing. His love for Barbara knew no bounds and he would do almost anything for her. When they were together, their love for each other was palpable to all who were around them. Through Barbara, he became a second father to her sons, Michael, Patrick, Timothy and Christopher Carey. He accepted them as if they were his own and took enormous pride in referring to them as "my sons." He was generous and patient with them and could always be counted on to help when any of them was in need. He loved being included in their golf games and their annual golf tournament, The Carey Cup. One of his greatest pleasures was his annual Christmas tradition of presenting his sons with a gift in which he had hidden other gifts. He took enormous joy in preparing each year's gift within a gift. Dennis had a long career in the construction business, never really retiring from the work of building something from nothing. His first job was in his father's company, DeClerk Industries, and ultimately he was a business owner of his own. His most notable enterprise was Stress-Con Industries. Through these endeavors, he contributed to the construction of many great landmarks and projects in the City of Detroit and throughout the State of Michigan. Dennis was a "doer." Never content with what was, there was always another project around the house that needed to be done. Dennis wasn't content to sit still, but always wanted to make things better for those around him. He was full of life, vitality and wit. He never stopped smiling and loved to poke fun at everything around him. He could always be counted on to make colorful comments about the situations he was in, but it was impossible to be offended by anything he said, because everything was done in a spirit of innocence and fun. Dennis was generous to those who knew him and could be counted on to help with difficult situations his friends and family found themselves in. In recent years, he began to play golf on a more regular basis with his sons and grandchildren and his favorite playing partner, his brother-in-law, Robert Barrett (Jane). Dennis was also ruthless in gin rummy. An excellent player, he gave no quarter to Barbara or his sons and grandchildren when they played cards, often winning hands within a few moves in the game. Dennis will be greatly missed. It was a joy and an honor to have him in our lives. Share memories and sign guestbook at AJDesmond.com

FELIX

ELIZABETH C. "BETSY" passed away on July 21, 2016 in Lexington Kentucky at the age of 88. There will be a Memorial Service on August 13, at 10 a.m. at Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

GRZESZKIEWICZ

JULIA D. "LOLLY" passed away peacefully on July 12, 2016. She was preceded in death by husband Walter F. Grzeszkiewicz. Lolly was born in Wilkes Barre Pennsylvania on January 16, 1926 the eleventh child of Sophie and Aloysius Smydo. She moved to Michigan to be near her siblings and married Walter in 1956. She was an active member of the St. John Bosco Altar Society and enjoyed numerous hobbies. Lolly was ahead of her time. She happily believed in physical exercise, becoming an active swimmer, health club member and an enthusiastic walker until her late 80s. She was truly a "free spirit", always speaking her mind with a joy for life and a curiosity for discovering new cultural experiences. Her sunny disposition will be greatly missed by nieces and nephews too numerous to mention. A Memorial Service will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday August 6th at St. John Bosco Catholic Church. Contributions may be made in her memory to St. John Bosco Catholic Church.

ROSENBUSCH

ROBERT S. 91, of Bloomfield Hills died peacefully at home on July 25, 2016. Beloved husband of the late Katharine (Evans), Robert (Bob) is survived by his loving sister, Rosella Rankine of Fraser and his three daughters, Ruth (Felix) Martinez, of Puyallup, Washington, Rhea of Bloomfield Hills and Kristeen (Ken Liming) of Silver Spring, Maryland. He is also survived by two grandchildren, Samantha and Kurt. Born in Detroit, Michigan on September 13, 1924 Robert graduated from Southeastern H. S. in June 1943 and immediately entered the U. S Army to serve in Italy during WWII. After the war he attended the University of Michigan receiving a BA in Political Science and Masters of Business Administration. During college he worked at Stroh's Brewery. The majority of his career was at Chrysler, retiring as a salary administrator in October 1979. After retiring he devoted himself to his family and grandchildren. He loved music, especially classical, show tunes and Frank Sinatra. A private memorial service is planned for family members. Contributions in memory of Robert can be made to the USO or Doctors without Borders.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
DR. "ZAC" ZACHARIAS
- August 1, 2006
So lonely for you
all these years
Miss you so, my dear,
Love Mariann



Paying tribute to the life of your loved one.

Paying tribute to the life of your loved one.

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www.hometownlife.comEmail event information for this calendar to Sharon Dargay, sdargay@hometownlife.com.**AUGUST CONCERT****Time/Date:** 1 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 15**Location:** Unity of Livonia, 28860 Five Mile, Livonia**Details:** Kim-Char Meredith, a mainstream pop/rock singer and songwriter, will perform at the church. \$15 suggested donation. Advance tickets available**Contact:** unityoflivonia.org; 734-421-1760**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL****Time/dates:** Week 1, 6-8 p.m. Aug 1, 3 and 5; Week 2, Aug. 8, 10 and 12.**Location:** Faith Community Wesleyan Church, 14560 Merri-man, Livonia**Contact:** Katelyn: 734-620-4778 or Melissa: 734-765-1827**Details:** Serengeti Trek - "Where kids are Wild about God." For grades K-6, enjoy exciting games, Bible stories, tasty snacks and unforgettable music. Plus, you'll meet lots of new friends.**WORSHIP IN THE PARK****Time/Date:** 11 a.m. Sunday, through Aug. 21**Location:** Cherry Hill Village Schoolhouse grounds, located at Ridge and Cherry Hill roads, Canton**Details:** St. Michael Lutheran Church holds outdoor services with childcare provided**Contact:** 734-459-3333, connectingwithGod.org**GRIEFSHARE****Time/Date:** 5-7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 21-Nov. 6**Location:** New Life Church, 33111 Ford Road, Garden City**Details:** Grief support group provides help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. Cost is \$20 and includes workbook.**Contact:** 248-766-5977**PICNIC****Time/Date:** 12:30-2 p.m. Aug. 7, immediately following Worship in the Park**Location:** St. Michael Lutheran Church, at Cherry Hill Village Schoolhouse grounds, located at Ridge and Cherry Hill roads, Canton**Details:** Hot dogs, cookies, chips and water will be provided and a praise band will perform**Contact:** 734-459-3333**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL****Time/Date:** 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Aug. 1-5**Location:** Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 34567 Seven Mile, Livonia**Details:** "Surf Shack - Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love," is the theme for the program, which is for youngsters in preschool through sixth grade. Preschoolers must be potty trained. Includes songs, crafts, games, science, Bible stories, snacks and more. Cost is \$10 per child with a \$25 maximum per family**Contact:** Judy Cook at 248-442-8822; judy@emmanuel-livonia.org**YOUTH SOCCER****Time/Date:** 1:30-3 p.m., Aug. 15-19**Location:** Crossroads Church/Trinity Church Grounds, 34500 Six Mile, Livonia**Details:** Soccer camp for boys and girls ages 5 and up, any skill level. \$25 per student; non-refundable. Includes water bottle, instruction, snacks. Register at www.crossroad-snow.org**Contact:** info@crossroad-snow.org, or Pastor Steve at 248-890-5718**ONGOING CLASSES/STUDY****Congregation Beth Ahm****Time/Date:** 1 p.m. Wednesday**Location:** 5075 W. Maple, West Bloomfield**Details:** "Drop In & Learn," which runs year-round, features lectures on DVD on Jewish history, culture, philosophy, and related topics, followed by brief informal discussion. No charge, no reservations required**Contact:** Nancy Kaplan at 248-737-1931; nancy-len879@att.net**Our Lady of Loretto****Time/Date:** 6:30-7:30 p.m. Monday**Location:** Six Mile and Beech Daly, Redford Township**Details:** Scripture study**Contact:** 313-534-9000**St. Michael the Archangel Parish****Time/Date:** 7-8:30 p.m. second and fourth Thursday, through May**Location:** 11441 Hubbard, just south of Plymouth Road, Livonia**Details:** Gary Michuta, author

RELIGION CALENDAR

and Catholic apologist, leads a study of Isaiah. Bring your own Bible

Contact: 734-261-1455, ext 200 or on line at www.livoniast-michael.org.**Faith Community Wesleyan****Time/Date:** 4-5 p.m. every Saturday**Location:** 14560 Merriman, Livonia**Details:** This informal class includes fellowship, discussion and question and answers. All ages welcome. Bibles available if you don't have one**Contact:** pastor Tom Hazelwood at 734-765-5476**ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH****Time/Date:** 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday**Location:** 23300 W. Chicago Road, Redford Township**Details:** An informal and ongoing study of the Orthodox faith and life. RSVP to Orthdox Joshua Genig at joshua.genig@gmail.com or 630-936-6386**EXERCISE****Time/Date:** 6:45-7:45 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday**Location:** Clarencville United Methodist Church, 20300 Middlebelt, south of Eight Mile, Livonia**Details:** Instructor Wendy Motta, a seven-year Zumba practitioner, teaches Zumba through drop-in classes. Each costs \$3. Participants should bring water, a towel and wear athletic shoes. For more information, email Motta through zumba.com**Contact:** 313-408-3364**FAMILY MEAL****Time/Date:** 5-6 p.m. every Thursday**Location:** Salvation Army, 27500 Shiawassee, Farmington Hills**Details:** Free meal**Contact:** 248-477-1153, Ext. 12**HEALING SERVICE****Time/Date:** Arabic service, 3-4 p.m. first Tuesday of the month; English service, 3-4 p.m. third Tuesday of the month**Location:** The Antiochian Orthodox Basilica of Saint Mary, 18100 Merriman, Livonia**Details:** The service includes prayers of petition and intercession, hymns, Scripture readings and the anointing of the sick. Offertory candles are available for a free will offering in the vestibule of the church.**Contact:** Rev. George Shalhoub at 734-422-0010 or email Stacey Badeen at sbadeen@tbosm.com**MOMS****Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church****Time/Date:** 9:30-11:30 a.m. second Tuesday, September-May**Location:** 14175 Farmington Road, Livonia**Details:** Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) is aimed at mothers of infants through kindergartners**Contact:** Ethanie Defoe at 248-227-6617 and Jody Fleszar at 734-658-2463**Dunning Park Bible Chapel****Time/Date:** 9:30-11:30 a.m. first and third Tuesdays**Location:** 24800 W. Chicago Road, Redford**Details:** MOPS is a place where moms can build friendships, receive mothering support, practical help and spiritual hope.**Contact:** Amy at 313-937-3084 or Kristen at 734-542-0767**PET-FRIENDLY SERVICE****Time/Date:** 1 p.m. Sunday**Location:** Dunk N Dogs, 27911 Five Mile, Livonia**Details:** All Creatures ULC sponsors the service, which is conducted in an informal setting. Pet blessings are available after the service.**Contact:** 313-563-0162**PRAYER****St. Edith Church****Time/Date:** 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday**Location:** Parish office, 15089 Newburgh, Livonia**Details:** Group meets for singing, praying and short teaching. Fellowship with snacks follows**Contact:** Parish office at 734-464-1223**Contact:** 734-464-1223**St. Michael Lutheran Church****Time/Date:** 6-7 a.m. Monday-Friday**Location:** 7000 N. Sheldon, Canton**Details:** Praying silently or aloud together; prayer requests welcomed.**Contact:** 734-459-3333 for additional information**RISEN CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH****Time/Date:** 1-4 p.m. third Saturday of the month**Location:** 46250 Ann Arbor Road, between Sheldon and

Beck roads, Plymouth

Details: Recycle your cell phones, laser cartridges, inkjet cartridges, laptops, iPods, iPads, tablets, eReaders on the third Saturday of each month. Use the doors on east side of church.**Contact:** Lynn Hapman at 734-466-9023**SINGLES****Detroit World Outreach****Time/Date:** 4-6 p.m. Sunday**Location:** 23800 W. Chicago, Redford, Room 304**Details:** Divorce Overcomers group is designed for individuals going through divorce, those who are divorced or separated.**Contact:** The facilitator at 313-283-8200; lef@dwo.org**Steve's Family Restaurant****Time/Date:** 9 a.m. second and fourth Thursday**Location:** 15800 Middlebelt, 14 mile north of Five Mile, Livonia**Details:** Widowed men of all ages may attend the Widowed Friends Men's breakfast. This is an informal "peer" group where men have an opportunity to meet with others.**Contact:** 313-534-0399**SUPPORT****Apostolic Christian Church****Time/Date:** 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily**Location:** 29667 Wentworth, Livonia**Details:** Adult day care program at the church's Woodhaven Retirement Community. Funding available from TSA, AAA 1-C Older Americans Act.**Contact:** 734-261-9000; www.woodhaven-retirement.com**Connection Church****Time/Date:** 7 p.m. Friday**Location:** 3855 Sheldon, Canton**Details:** Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery for all hurts, habits and hang-ups. Child care is available for free**Contact:** Jonathan@Connectionchurch.info or 248-787-5009**Detroit World Outreach****Time/Date:** 7-8:30 p.m. Tuesday**Location:** 23800 W. Chicago, Redford; Room 202**Details:** Addiction No More offers support for addictive behavior problems**Contact:** 313-255-2222, Ext. 244**Farmington Hills Baptist Church****Time/Date:** 7-9 p.m. second Tuesday of the month except January, July and August**Location:** 28301 Middlebelt, between 12 Mile and 13 Mile in Farmington Hills**Details:** Western Oakland Parkinson Support Group**Contact:** 248-433-1011**Merriman Road Baptist Church****Time/Date:** 1-3 p.m. second and fourth Thursday**Location:** 2055 Merriman, Garden City**Details:** Metro Fibromyalgia support group meets; donations**Contact:** www.metrofibrogroup.com; or call Ruthann with questions at 734-981-2519**Fireside Church of God****Time/Date:** 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday**Location:** 11771 Newburgh, Livonia**Details:** Fireside Adult Day Ministry activity-based program for dependent adults, specializing in dementia care. Not a drop-in center**Contact:** 734-855-4056 or 734-464-0990; www.firesidechog.org; or email to adm@firesidechog.org**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church****Time/Date:** 10-11 a.m. Saturday**Location:** 16360 Hubbard, Livonia**Details:** A twice-monthly drop-in Food Cupboard (nonperishable items) is available