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# VILLE RECORD

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020 ■ HOMETOWNLIFE.COM K1 PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

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## Parks set summer schedule



People enjoy Kensington Metropark's Martindale Beach on April 28 while implementing social distancing protocols. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Pools, splash pads set to return in mid-June

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Pools and splash pads at the metro Detroit metroparks could be open in a month.

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"We're already making adjustments to our summer schedule and policies in light of the COVID-19 emergency," Amy McMillan, Huron-Clinton Metroparks director, said. "These changes are necessary to help everyone stay safe and healthy while providing the broadest possible access to Metroparks facilities."

The water features are expected to be open by mid-June to early July, accommodating repairs that couldn't be completed during the state's stay-at-home

See PARKS, Page 2A



Claire McCaffrey and her daughter, Audrey, 4, enjoy a picnic lunch at Kent Lake.

"I hate to live life afraid, but we do have to be careful, more careful than before."

Colleen Carstens Kensington park-goer, on the reopening of pools and splash pads in mid-June

## Plans move forward for Lyon Crossing

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The Watermark Residential housing and Szott auto dealership will nearly complete development at Lyon Crossing, about 20 years after big box stores including Walmart and Lowe's began moving into the area between Interstate 96 and Grand River Avenue.

A recession more than a decade ago slowed progress, but the coronavirus pandemic and resulting economic devastation won't stop it.

"These are crazy times and as you can imagine, half our deals are only going one of two ways - they either go on or fall off," developer Tony Antone told the planning commission. "One of the reasons both of these have stayed on track is because Lyon is willing to have meetings virtually for a fall groundbreaking."

Antone initially brought plans before the commission early in the year and will now go to the township board for approval.

The plans for the developments have been modified and may see more modifications before they are finalized, but the majority of concerns regarding density of the housing development and traffic were addressed to the commission's satisfaction.

The housing development has been scaled down from 340 apartment units to 304, and will be spread across 19 two-story buildings on 19.63 acres on the north side of Lyon Center Drive West.

The auto dealership will be in a 13,000-square-foot building with

See PLANS, Page 3A

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Despite that, the state says it will keep the site open.

"Suburban is still accepting patients

and is remaining open at this time," said Michelle Grinnell, a spokeswoman for the alternate treatment facilities opened by the state.

As of May 12, the facility had six patients infected with the coronavirus receiving care. The facility has treated a total of 10 patients since it opened, far fewer than even its modified capacity,

which was reduced to 250 when it became clear the original 1,000 beds would not be needed.

Having such a small number of patients, Grinnell said, is indicative of the measures residents took to help stop the spread of the coronavirus, which has

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Eric Rugeja, of Livonia, hopes to catch a bass from Kent Lake, off Kensington's Martindale Beach, on April 28. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Angela Smith, of Fowlerville, and her daughter Delilah, 5, enjoy Kensington Metropark on May 13. PHOTOS BY SUSAN BROMLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



From left, Charlotte Berens, Colin Eickhoff, Karen Eickhoff, Caroline Berens, and Crystal Berens enjoy Kensington Metropark in Milford on May 13.

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## Parks

Continued from Page 1A

orders meant to mitigate the spread of coronavirus. The anticipated openings are "subject to change."

The parks have remained open during the pandemic and on multiple sunny, warm days this spring, lines of vehicles waited to enter Kensington's full parking lots. Metropark officials said they would close individual parks to new visitors on days that became too crowded.

The news that pools and splash pads would reopen throughout the 13 parks operated in southeast Michigan by Huron-Clinton Metroparks was received with dropped jaws by Kensington park users.

"I feel like we're going from nothing to everything," Carolyn Blair, a Fenton resident and mom of Owen, 7, and Jack, 4, said. "Pools are super close (proximity for users) and there's spitting, they're too confined."

"It's great that they want to open, but it's too soon," Angela Smith, a Fowlerville resident who brought daughter Delilah, 5, to the beach. "Kids are the healthiest of all of us, but we don't know what the virus will do, it's about limiting exposure. It's stupid to open something so public. Kids don't know the concept of washing hands and faces, we have to do it for them."

Tyler Norman of Novi, father of Blake and Cameron, said it was "too soon to reopen water features without a vaccine."

Others left open the possibility they would consider using park pools and other water amenities under the right circumstances.

Crystal Berens, a Milford mother of two, was unsure whether she would let her children use a splash pad by July, but leaned toward no if there were to be an abundance of people present.

"There are much less people here than in Livonia, but I don't want to pass (the coronavirus) on to people who would be devastated to get the virus," she said.

Her friend, Karen Eickhoff, who brought her son Colin to the park, said she would use the water features "as long as they are taking proper precautions and cleaning regularly."

Kensington has "Splash n' Blast" which the park's website promotes as "the ultimate relief from the warm, summer sun and loads of fun for the entire family." It includes two 240-foot twisted water slides and a spray ground with palm trees and cannons that spray water.

Colleen Carstens, who was enjoying the afternoon at the park with her 7-year-old son Ronan and 4-year-old twin daughters Shea and Mave, took the news as a possibly good sign.

"I hope their optimism is on target," Carstens said. "It would be great if that's where we're at with this whole COVID mess."

Still, she said she definitely wouldn't feel safe yet taking her three children to a public pool. Using the splash pad, she said, would depend on how many others were also using it.

"I hate to live life afraid, but we do have to be careful, more careful than before."

Other park changes are coming soon, too:

■ Beginning May 15, all Huron-Clinton Metroparks will resume normal tolling operations. Regular daily admission is \$10, or an annual pass is \$40 for access to all 13 parks.

■ Park attendance will be limited to 60% of normal parking capacity.

■ Access to lakes and rivers will remain open with ability to use watercraft normally permitted, including canoes, kayaks, motorboats and sailboats. Boat rental areas will remain closed.

■ Park bathrooms are being reopened, but will remain open based on the ability of staff to restock toilet paper, soap and disinfecting supplies. It is recommended that park visitors wear a face mask in public restrooms.

■ Interpretive programming is scheduled to restart June 16, but with changes to support social distancing.

■ Annual fireworks shows are canceled, as well as all summer concerts through July 4 at Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek metroparks.

For full details of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks' current COVID-19 precautions, visit [metroparks.com/march-13-2020-metroparks-implements-covid-19-precautions](http://metroparks.com/march-13-2020-metroparks-implements-covid-19-precautions).

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at [sbromley@hometownlife.com](mailto:sbromley@hometownlife.com).





The land to the left of the Tractor Supply Co. in Lyon Crossing store is slated for development. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Plans

Continued from Page 1A

630 parking spaces for customers, staff, inventory and temporary storage of vehicles, located on just over 7 acres on the south side of Lyon Center Drive West.

The planning commission had previously requested that a driveway for the dealership be aligned with the Tractor Supply Co. drive across the road, but that was not in the most recently submitted plans. Szott hopes to work something out with the Tractor Supply Co. before a final plan is approved.

The planning commission is also hoping for better sidewalk connectivity at Lyon Crossing, particularly because of the new apartments coming in. There are gaps in the sidewalk that total more than 600 feet, between the roundabout and detention basin, and in areas in front of Taco Bell and Belle Tire.

Commission Chairman Mike Conflitti expressed concern over walkability, particularly after Antone confirmed that he still hopes to bring more restaurants in along Grand River.

"No one wants to cross a roundabout," Conflitti said. "I'm afraid people will be jaywalking across the roundabout to get from the apartments to restaurants, something will have to be figured out on walkability."

One option that was discussed was a "gateway treatment," or signs installed next to the road that make it appear narrower and draw motorists' attention to pedestrians.

"Given that we are putting in 700 to 1,000 residents, we should really push and fill these gaps as soon as we can," Planner Brian Keesey said. "Lyon Crossing was not planned to have development on the south side of road. That connectivity becomes infinitely more important. We should push for a solution to fill these gaps as quickly as we can."

However, the planning commissioners expressed overall approval with both plans, praising the architectural design and noting reduced traffic volumes.

"We sit in front of many developers, and you guys took our advice and came back with a solid solution," Commissioner Jim Chuck said. "This is a win-win-win. I've lived in this community 14 years and drove by a lot of weeds and grass. The community wins, Kajaian (the developers) win, the owners and landlord wins."

Chris Alexander, representing Watermark Residential, also noted once ground has been broken, the company expects construction of the multi-family housing units to take two years.

"We are well-positioned to work through this short-term issue that has gone on with COVID-19," he said.



The Lyon Crossing retail development in Lyon Township is about to grow.

### CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE ELECTRONIC MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. on the Zoom Video Conference electronic meeting platform to consider TAFT KNOLLS III JSP19-34, FOR PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN, SITE CONDOMINIUM, WETLAND PERMIT, WOODLAND PERMIT AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN SECTION 22, SOUTH OF ELEVEN MILE ROAD AND EAST OF TAFT ROAD AND IS ZONED R-4 (ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL). The applicant is proposing to construct up to 13 units in a single-family residential development (Site Condominium).

Plans are available for review by contacting the Community Development Department at the following email address: [bmcbeth@cityofnovi.org](mailto:bmcbeth@cityofnovi.org).



Subject Property Parcel ID: 50-22-22-100-012

#### Special Instructions for Remote Meeting Procedure:

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak the City will be utilizing the video/audio conferencing platform ZOOM to conduct the June 10, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

In order to connect to the meeting through ZOOM a member of the public needs to do the following:

- Install Zoom App on mobile device or phone. A link to download the Zoom App may be found online at [Cityofnovi.org](http://Cityofnovi.org)
- Click the link provided to join the meeting

Members of the public participating in the public comment via ZOOM will wait in a virtual queue until called during the public comment period.

When public comment is permitted, members of the public will be called one at a time, as would happen during an in-person meeting. A meeting coordinator will determine the order of public speakers. If you want to speak, you must use the "Raise Hand" feature in order for our moderator to know they need to be unmuted. When you are unmuted you will have three (3) minutes to share your comments to the public body. At the conclusion of your comments or your three (3) minutes, you will be re-muted and then removed from the queue.

Participants may also choose to submit comments that can be read into the record. Comments can be submitted via an electronic form on [www.cityofnovi.org](http://www.cityofnovi.org). Comments shall be done prior to 7 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The electronic form can be found at: [www.cityofnovi.org/pccomment](http://www.cityofnovi.org/pccomment)

In compliance with Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-75, as of the date of this notice, Planning Commission members are expected to log in Zoom. There may also be some City personnel at City Hall overseeing this meeting.

Novi Planning Commission  
Michael Lynch, Secretary

Publish: May 21, 2020

### City of Novi Public Hearing Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Zoning Board of Appeals for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on June 9, 2020 at 7:00PM to consider:

**PZ20-0018 (Behavioral Care Solutions) 39465 Fourteen Mile Road, West of Haggerty Road and South of Fourteen Mile Road, Parcel #50-22-01-200-037.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Code Section 5.4.1 to locate a loading zone in the side yard. Section 5.3.11 for a drive-through lane that does not meet ordinance requirements for separation of drive through and egress lane, by-pass lane width, encroachment into minimum side yard parking setback, and minimum number of stacking spaces. This property is zoned Office Technology (OST).

**PZ20-0020 (Defrim & Elvira Cizmja) 45605 Nine Mile Road, West of Taft Road and South of Nine Mile Road, Parcel # 50-22-33-200-034.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Code Section 5.11 to install a fence with driveway gate. By code a fence shall not extend toward the front of the lot nearer than the minimum front yard setback. This property is zoned Single Family Residential (R-1).

Publish: May 21, 2020

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As she awaits the flyover by the Michigan Air National Guard 127th Wing on May 13, Novi Ascension Providence Hospital nurse Gabrielle DoPico, right, takes a group selfie of some of her compatriots from labor and delivery. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

# Air National Guard shows thanks with flyover

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As the coronavirus continues to make an especially stressful work environment for health care professionals, military servicemen and women are the latest group saying thank you to what's become known as the "front line" of the pandemic.

The Michigan-based Air National

Guard 127th Wing unit out of Selfridge Air National Guard Base conducted a flyover of metro Detroit hospitals to show appreciation May 13.

The flyover included St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia and Ascension Providence Hospital in Novi, among other spots in southeast Michigan.

In Livonia, cars were lined up and down Five Mile Road as four planes flew overhead. Much of the St. Mary Mercy

staff came outside to watch.

Bob Stine, a registered nurse working with coronavirus patients, said the community's support has been heartwarming.

"We are so happy to be part of this whole team to fight this COVID-19 that's really hurting this whole community," he said. "The flyover is very supportive and we really do appreciate that."

As the community has rallied around

health care professionals with donations, meals and messages, staff in Livonia have been overwhelmed by the support.

"I have absolutely been amazed at the outpouring of support by our community," said Sarah Gilbert, the senior vice president of operations at the hospital. "Knowing that the Michigan National

See FLYOVER, Page 5A



## Thank you.

To the everyday heroes who continue to go to work, so we can stay home.

We appreciate you.

Hometown Life

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Beds were set up inside Suburban Collection Showplace on April 20 as the facility became a field hospital. It opened to patients April 24. DETROIT FREE PRESS FILE

## Hospital

Continued from Page 1A

infected more than 48,000 people and killed more than 4,600 statewide. Opening such a facility was done in preparation for a surge in coronavirus patients that could have overwhelmed established hospitals, but which did not happen.

"At the time the decision was made, there was a growing capacity issue with the current health systems," Grinnell said. "It was the best option for the situation we had."

The Suburban Collection Showplace remains the lone field hospital open in the state for treating COVID-19 patients. The TCF Center in downtown Detroit, which opened April 10 and could have treated as many as 1,000 patients at a time, but never had more than 20 at one time, halted operations in early May.

The state is paying \$1.1 million per month to rent the Novi facility, meaning if the lease is kept for the entire duration - through the end of September - the state will spend \$6.6 million to lease the facility. The state can cancel the agreement at any time by giving the center five days' notice, according to the lease agreement. The state could also extend the lease on a month-to-month basis at the same rate if needed.

Grinnell said because there is some federal involvement in these hospitals,

the federal government will cover some of the cost, though the exact amount wasn't available.

Grinnell said there's no timetable now for how long the TCF Center could be on a temporary pause: any future increase of COVID-19 infections could trigger a need for such facilities. Having such a small number of patients at the field hospitals, she said, showed that measures taken to halt the spread of the coronavirus worked.

"It is a sign that the stay-at-home efforts helped flatten that curve," she said. "We want to insure that the resources are there should the need arise and making sure we're prepared for whatever may come in the coming weeks."

The dwindling numbers of patients in field hospitals are reflective of other indicators of "flattening the curve." Several area hospitals are reporting their inpatient counts of coronavirus patients have seen a downturn: Beaumont Health reported 365 admitted patients with pending or confirmed COVID-19 as of May 12, down from more than 1,200 patients in early April. The St. Joseph Mercy Health System and Mercy Health - which has hospitals in Livonia, Pontiac, Ann Arbor, Howell, Chelsea, Grand Rapids and Muskegon - reported having 145 COVID-19 patients admitted as of May 12, down from a peak of 360 back on April 12.

"We, at the end of the day, view it as a success that these field hospitals are not filled with (patients)," Grinnell said.





Novi Ascension Providence hospital personnel await the flyover of the 127th Wing of the Michigan Air National Guard.  
PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



A ribbon showing appreciation for Ascension Providence hospital workers has been placed on a tree outside the Novi facility.

## Flyover

Continued from Page 4A

Guard is going to be flying over this afternoon is just another show of love."

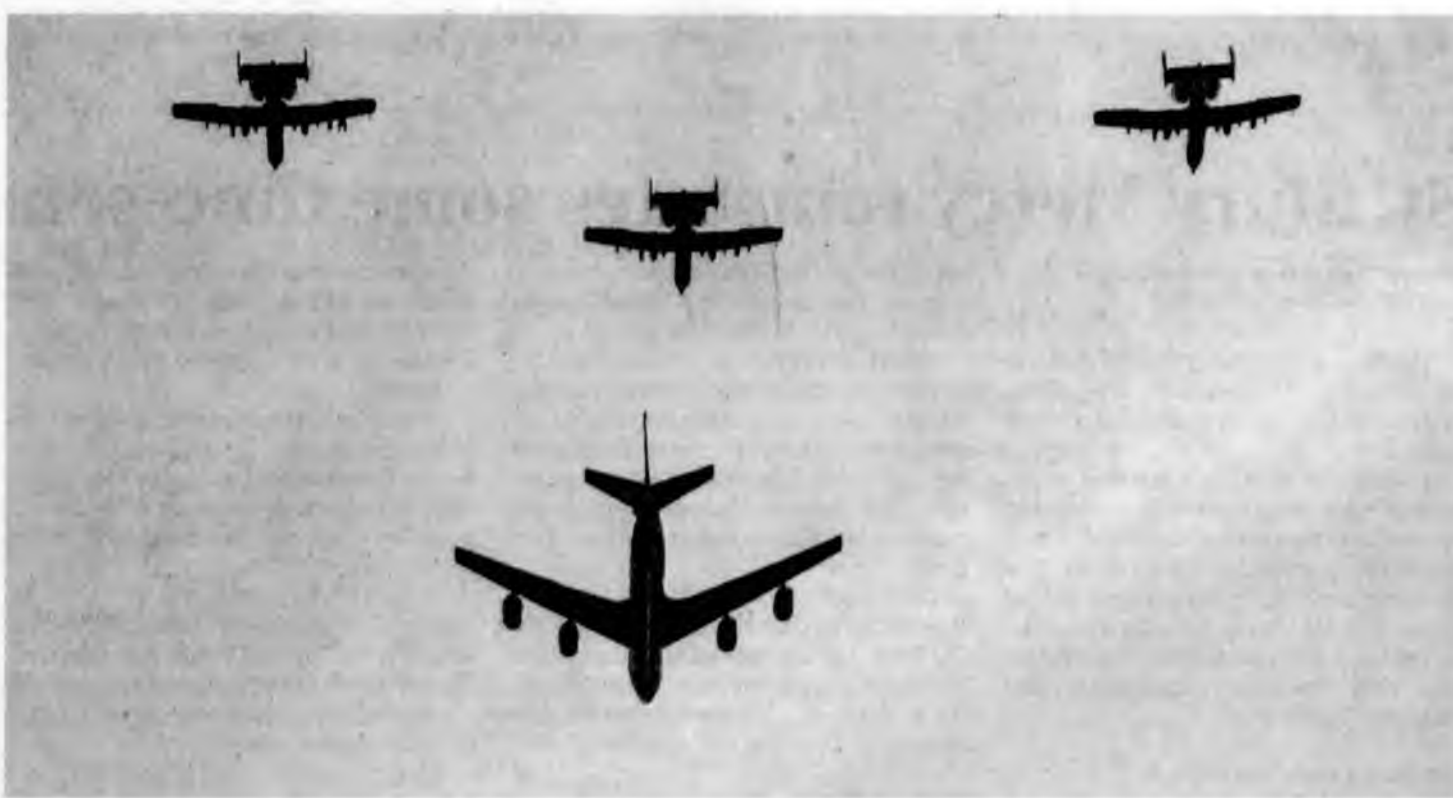
Gilbert said the pandemic has been stressful on the staff and they worry about their families, but they've continued to come into work and do their best.

"Our staff has just really rallied," she said. "They've been working a lot of overtime, long hours and extra shifts to take care of people."

On the other hand, Gilbert said, the hospital is starting to see a decline in cases and is getting back to some sort of normalcy. She said it's nice to see the hard work and sacrifice pay off.

"It would be easy just to give up and stay home, but they came through," she said. "I feel very blessed to work at this hospital and (in) this community."

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448. Follow her on Twitter @shelby\_tankk.



Aircraft with the 127th Wing of the Michigan Air National Guard fly over St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia on May 13 to show appreciation for healthcare employees during the coronavirus pandemic. MELANIE MAXWELL/DETROIT FREE PRESS



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# Panel to study how to reopen schools

David Jesse Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A new group will make recommendations on how Michigan's schools can safely open this fall, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Friday.

The 20-person Return to Learning Advisory Council — which will be comprised of students, parents, front-line educators, administrators and public health officials — will provide the state with recommendations on how to safely, equitably and efficiently return to school in the fall, Whitmer said in the announcement.

The governor closed school buildings March 16, and on April 30 she announced that buildings would remain closed for the duration of the school year.

"It's critical we bring together experts in health care and education, as well as students, educators and families to think about how and if it's possible to safely return to in-person learning in the fall and how to ensure the more than 1.5 million K-12 students across Michigan get the education they need and de-

serve," Whitmer said in a statement. "This panel will use a data-informed and science-based approach with input from epidemiologists to determine if, when and how students can return to school this fall and what that will look like."

She did not close the door on summer school, but in a press conference announcing the change, she said the panel was looking at a template on how to open schools that could be applied in the summer or fall.

As far as when it opens, she said that depends on Michiganders staying home and keeping the COVID-19 virus under wraps.

"It's dependent on how we perform in the interim," she said, describing herself as hopeful schools would be open in the fall. She wouldn't commit to saying she expected them to be open. "The facts and actions of the people of Michigan are going to dictate that."

Michigan will partner with Opportunity Labs, a national nonprofit, to develop the plan. The group already has a detailed "Return to School Roadmap" published on its website, outlining a series

of steps schools need to take as they reopen — everything from limiting the number of entrances to developing a plan to assess students' learning progress and loss since they were last in school.

"We look forward to supporting the advisory council in its work to ensure the safest possible return to school in the fall," said Dr. Mario Ramirez, managing director of Opportunity Labs, a practicing emergency physician and former acting director of pandemic and emerging threats for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services during the Ebola epidemic.

Jobs for the panel will include:

- Performing outreach to make sure everyone's voices are included in the discussion of how the 2020-2021 school year will take place.

- Ensuring experts in public health and epidemiology are informing the discussion of safely returning to school.

- Recommending actions to remove statutory/administrative barriers to delivering education before day-to-day life is back to pretty much normal.

- Recommending actions to develop

and improve systems for remedial support for students who experienced learning loss during the spring and summer.

"I want to thank all of the parents who have been burning the candle at both ends these last few months trying to help their kids stay on track with their schoolwork while juggling their other responsibilities during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. I know it hasn't been easy," Whitmer said. "My hope is that by organizing a formal process informed by public health experts, we can give school districts much-needed direction heading into the 2020-2021 school year."

Anyone interested can apply for the Return to Learning Advisory Council by going to Michigan.gov/appointments and click 'apply now' under boards and commissions. You will be able to choose the appointment information tab within the application. Applications are due by Wednesday.

Michigan is also getting support for the panel from the Council of Michigan Foundations, the C.S. Mott Foundation and other philanthropic organizations.

## St. Mary Mercy reinstates some time-sensitive services

Shelby Tankersley Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

The St. Joseph Mercy Health system, which includes Livonia's St. Mary Mercy Hospital, is working toward a "new normal."

The health system reinstated some services previously on hold during the coronavirus pandemic, including time-sensitive surgeries and procedures. The system's emergency rooms and virtual appointments are continually available.

For the past two months, the system was only treating coronavirus and emergency patients.

### Finding a new normal

Dr. Matthew Griffin, St. Mary Mercy's chief medical officer, said it may be a

while before the system goes back to normal, but reinstating some procedures is a step in the right direction.

"We'll continue in phase two for probably quite a period of time," he said. "I know that's frustrating for all of us because we don't really know how long it'll be. A lot of it depends on when we reopen the state and people start to get closer to starting to live in the new normal."

Griffin said St. Mary Mercy has been "one of the busiest hospitals for COVID." The hospital has treated and discharged 317 coronavirus patients since March. On May 15, the hospital had 26 active cases and 33 under investigation.

### Financial struggles

A slow return to normal will also help

the system return to a typical financial state. In March, Trinity Health lost \$50 million and in April lost \$84 million because of a 70% decline in outpatient services.

"While we do see an increase in COVID patients and a fair amount of activity on the inpatient side, we saw a decline in other services and revenue," said Dave Spivey, the president of St. Mary Mercy.

In an effort to cut costs, the Livonia hospital furloughed 150 positions, which were "by and large" non-clinical. Spivey said he's hopeful to bring all of those staffers back as the hospital starts to offer more services.

### Keeping every patient safe

Griffin said he fears people have been

afraid to seek medical treatment.

"We know that there are patients who have died from COVID but we also fear there are many patients who had less than ideal outcomes or died because they failed to seek medical care," he said.

With that in mind, the partial reopening will include visitor restrictions, deep cleaning and a mask requirement for everyone in each campus. Staff who work with coronavirus patients do not work with other patients, and coronavirus patients are separated from other patients.

"What we have are clear pathways and clear, safe entryways for patients," Griffin said. "Initially they are screened to ensure they don't have COVID and then they come into the facility to get the care and procedures that they need."

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Livonia Franklin's Evan Pittenger sacks Stephenson quarterback Ray Kastl. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## GIRLS SOCCER

### How Novi's 2018 state title ignited a dynasty

Colin Gay [Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Coming out of a 4-1 state semifinal win against Troy in 2018, Novi was not known as the powerhouse like now.

The Wildcats came into the state final with four losses and as the underdog, playing against heavy favorite Grand Blanc, who won 25 of 27 games that season.

All Novi head coach Todd Pheiffer heard about in the 2018 season was Grand Blanc: their 17 Division 1 athletes, their No. 1 ranking, their likelihood to win it all according to coaches and media from around the state.

Then the Wildcats got some bulletin board material.

Pheiffer came to practice ahead of the state title game, saying Midland head coach Rodrigo Barassi, having just lost to the Bobcats, 1-0, in the semifinal, guaranteed to reporters an easy victory for Grand Blanc in the finals.

Abbey Pheiffer, a sophomore goalkeeper at the time, remembers that was all she and her teammates were talking about. They were annoyed and angry about the comments made, but that it created a sense of focus, a sense of drive.

"We need to prove to them that we're not just a team that got here by chance," Abbey Pheiffer said.

And that was what the Wildcats showed.

After scoring its first goal late in regulation, the Wildcats being forced to fend off a feisty Bobcat offense in the final three minutes, bringing pure ecstasy, and relief, across the Novi bench, having just secured what people deemed as impossible.

Little did they know that this one win would ignite a dynasty.

Novi has not lost a game in more than 700 days — dating back to before the 2018 playoffs — finishing the 2019 season with a second-straight state title.

The Wildcats had expected that trend to continue well into the 2020 season, with 16 returning players, including 12 seniors. However, a chance of a three-peat for Pheiffer and her Novi teammates was thwarted when the season was canceled due to the emergence of the coronavirus.

In his 20 years coaching soccer, Todd Pheiffer has never had to deal with anything like this. He said, in the back of his mind, there is always that

See DYNASTY, Page 2B

## Franklin LB hopes for D1 chance in college football

Andrew Vaillencourt  
[Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

It's been a strange spring for nearly everyone in sports as the world adjusts to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

One area that's faced especially difficult challenges is football recruiting.

Evan Pittenger, a junior at Livonia Franklin, picked up four scholarship offers in April to play football in college. He first received an offer on April 10 from Lawrence Tech, and followed that up with offers from Trine, Olivet and Northern Michigan.

"I was just waiting for that first offer and then the Lawrence Tech offer came and a bunch of other coaches started DMing me and texting me," Pittenger said. "That's when everything started to roll. I didn't know what to say when the Lawrence Tech coach called."

See FOOTBALL, Page 2B



Pittenger takes the ball down the field against King in the 2019 playoffs. He received four scholarship offers in April to play football in college, from Lawrence Tech, Trine, Olivet and Northern Michigan.

TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## How 'The Last Dance' reminds me of high school athletics



Colin Gay  
[Hometownlife.com](http://Hometownlife.com)  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

Life continues on hold in Michigan due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It seems people want an escape or to move forward.

People want life to return to normal.

But there was a two-hour period each week where COVID-19 thoughts seemed to disappear. For the past five weeks, we were back in the 1997-98 NBA season, following Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls' quest for its sixth title in eight years.

For me, ESPN's 10-part documentary "The Last Dance" was a history lesson, a glimpse into what I missed.

I witnessed the majesty of Jordan

himself, watching as supporting pieces like Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman created this team that was deemed unstoppable.

I witnessed a fan frenzy, the emergence of a true superstar without the help of Twitter and Instagram. I witnessed media coverage, watching as reporters tried to cover a legend who was confident and dominant, knowing he was the best player in the world, yet in-

credibly reserved.

I witnessed the opponents: the Reggie Miller, the Patrick Ewings, the Larry Birds. I was introduced to the "Bad Boy" Detroit Pistons teams, and the traumatizing 1991 Eastern Conference Finals.

For two hours each Sunday night, I watched the heartbreaking yet heroic

See ATHLETICS, Page 5B



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## Football

Continued from Page 1B

The special moment was exciting for Pittenger, who plays tight end and line-backer for the Patriots. Last season, he recorded nine catches for 146 yards and a touchdown on offense and totaled 70 tackles, 12 tackles for loss, four sacks, a forced fumble and one interception on defense.

He's hoping, however, that those four offers are just the beginning. He has his sights set on earning a Division I scholarship offer, something he feels he can do with a strong senior season this fall.

"That's what I'm striving for, that's my goal," Pittenger said. "I'm trying to prove that I belong at that D1 level."

He's received interest from a couple D1 schools so far in Air Force and Navy, while also hearing from Illinois State, Saginaw Valley State and others. He went to a camp at Western Michigan and is interested in the Broncos.

Due to the current situation, however, Pittenger and other rising seniors are unable to attend camps and attend junior days, which are some of the most critical junctures in one's recruiting journey.

It's put Pittenger and a number of his own teammates, who are also hoping to play in college, in a tough position as they weigh their current options.

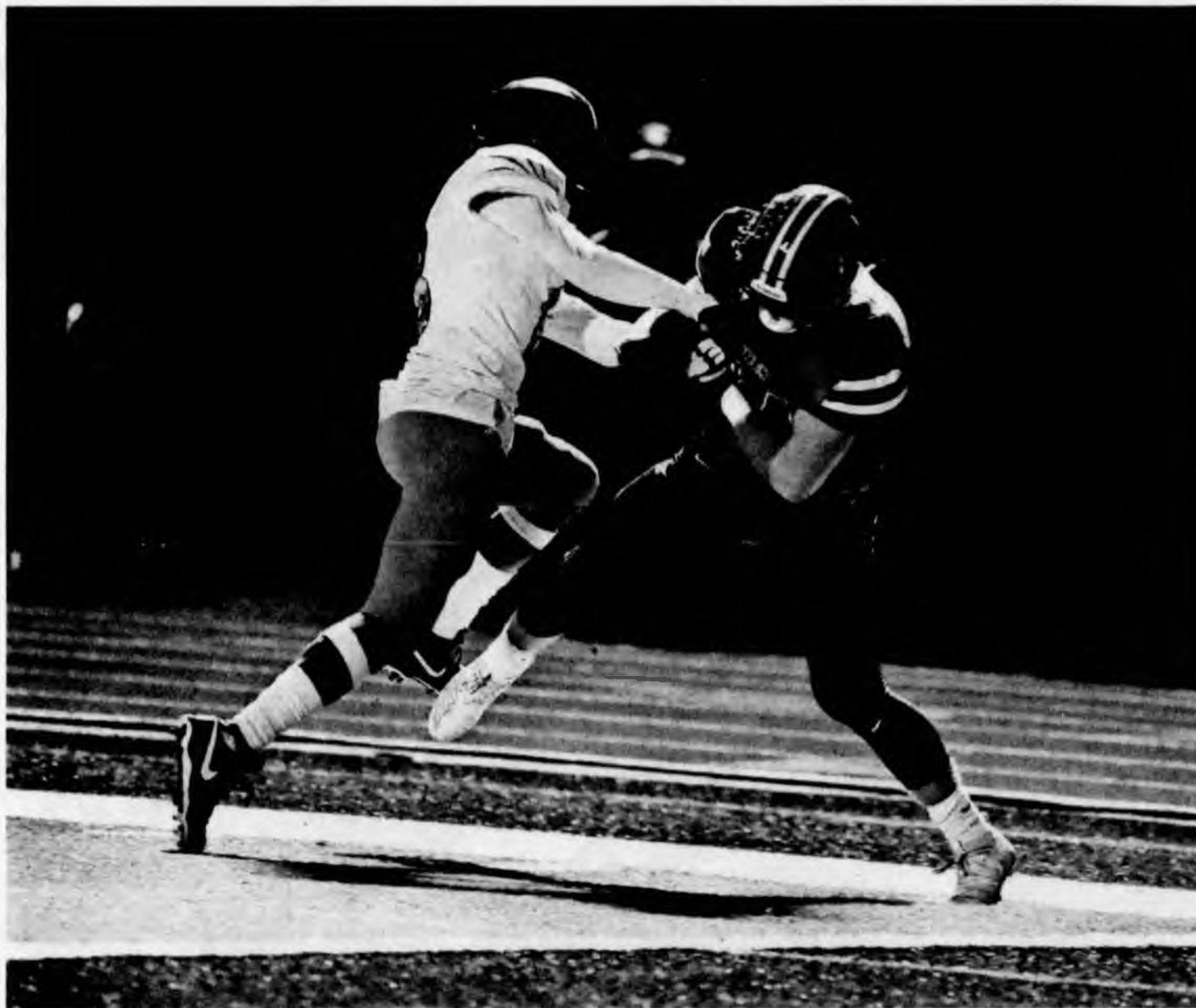
"It's already real different because most schools during spring recruiting, they come in and sit down and talk to the kids, give them all the camp information," Livonia Franklin head football coach Chris Kelbert said. "They're kind of doing it virtually. ... The biggest thing they're going to miss out on is the ability to go to camps and perform in front of those coaches. They're probably not going to have those opportunities."

Pittenger is mainly being recruited as a linebacker. He's 6-foot-1 and 215 pounds, which is a solid size for the position.

"I feel like I know the game very well and I play with a lot of heart," Pittenger said. "I want to win every single play, every single game."

Kelbert added that one of Pittenger's best traits is his leadership both on and off the field.

"Leadership is the No. 1 thing right now," Kelbert said. "In this offseason



Livonia Franklin's Evan Pittenger secures a touchdown catch against Belleville. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

he's already done a couple things. We do a weekly meet and he gets that organized and gets the kids on board."

He also said that Pittenger absolutely has the potential to play D1 football, but that he would benefit from a strong senior campaign and by getting a touch faster.

"His speed is definitely one of those things that could propel him over the top, and his strength which is difficult for everybody right now," Kelbert said. "The weightlifting is the biggest thing people are missing out on in this lockdown. You can have some dumbbells in your house, but not many people have a

full gym in their house so they can train the way they need to train."

To help improve his speed and agility, he also plays basketball and runs track for Franklin.

Last summer, Pittenger was able to attend a camp at Wayne State and the Pro Bowl Combine in Florida, which invited 650 kids from around the country to participate. He had plans to attend several more this summer, but most have been canceled.

High schools can't begin any summer team activities until June 1 at the earliest, but it will depend on school facilities being open for use. Teams normally

get 15 days to participate in football activities like team camps and 7-on-7 tournaments.

Both Pittenger and Kelbert are hopeful that the fall football season will go on as scheduled.

"That would be awful (if football was canceled)," Pittenger said. "Me and my friends were talking about this earlier today how the seniors don't have graduation and prom, but we'd rather lose graduation and prom than lose football season."

Contact reporter Andrew Vaillencourt at [availlenc@hometownlife.com](mailto:availlenc@hometownlife.com) or 810-923-0659.

## Dynasty

Continued from Page 1B

aspect of "What could have been?"

But as he looks back at what Novi's 2020 class accomplished during their four years with the program, that is not the thing is his most focused on.

"It's tough, but we try and reflect on everything that's good, that our program has accomplished," Pfeiffer said. "I think about the last four years these seniors have been a part of the program. We've experienced a lot of things kids or coaches rarely get to experience."

### Big target

Senior Avery Fenchel had watched her older sister play for Novi girls soccer prior to joining the team in 2017.

From the stands, she could sense from the moment the team took the field, the team had a target on its back.

After winning the state championship in 2018 as a sophomore, Fenchel came out for the 2019 season saying that target had been greatly magnified.

"It wasn't anymore, 'Oh, we can just beat Novi.' It's, 'We can beat Novi and they are the No. 1 team in the state. We can beat them both,'" Fenchel said. "It put an even bigger target on our back and made us compete harder every game."

Abbey Pfeiffer said there was a sense of nervousness heading into the 2019 season. Fenchel described it as Novi being faced with their opponents' best each and every night, trying to secure what people deemed as impossible, much like the Wildcats did against Grand Blanc.

But that did not happen. The Wildcats won 28 of 29 games in the 2019 season -- tying once.

Novi outscored opponents 14-1 in the playoffs on its way to the team's second straight state title, with the help of graduating seniors Lauren Calhoun and 2019 Miss Michigan Soccer recipient Jessie Bandyk.

Senior Michelle Jecman thinks Novi has always had the talent to succeed, but the long-term dominance is mostly due to the chemistry on and off the field.

"The girls are really willing to work for each other," Jecman said. "Everyone, from the goalie to the defense and up to the forwards, is very strong and capable players who work well with each other



Novi captured the Division 1 state title in 2018 with a 1-0 victory over Grand Blanc at Williamston High School.

HOMETOWNLIFE.COM FILE

so we can build and pass the ball from the back to the forwards as a unit and as a team."

Todd Pfeiffer describes it as more of a family atmosphere.

"There's a lot of people that say, 'Oh, you know, our team's a family,'" Pfeiffer said. "But everything I have witnessed with this group in particular, these seniors, seeing things like players adapting to new positions, willing to take on new things for what's best for the program, best for the team, they are willing to do, and that's part of the reason why they have been so successful."

### Stopped by COVID-19

Going into the 2020 season, the Novi girls soccer team felt it had even a larger target on its back, with a chance to win three straight titles like the program did from 2005-07.

"There's nobody except for ourselves that want us to win three times in a row,"

Fenchel said. "Every other team is going to try and stop us."

Novi had its rallying cry, an opportunity to prove, as a team, that it had the talent to beat other teams' best day in and day out.

But the Wildcats did not lose. They did not get stopped by an opponent. They got stopped by COVID-19.

"They didn't get to end on their terms," Todd Pfeiffer said. "No matter what would have happened in the state tournament -- win, lose, whatever -- they still would have been able to go out on their terms."

For Jecman, it was her final opportunity to play soccer. After her four years at Novi, she knew she would be done playing, shifting her focus to academics and college at the University of Michigan.

"My fourth year on Novi soccer would have been like my senior year, my year to sort of say goodbye, to give it my all and know that that's how I would leave

my soccer career," Jecman said.

Fenchel is one of a few members of the Novi soccer team to commit to play soccer in college, signing to play at Ball State. Neysa Lyon is signed to play at Schoolcraft, Nevada Larson will play at Detroit Mercy and Sarah Katinas will play at Ferris State.

But for the four returning members of the varsity team, that streak remains alive. And even though there were no games played in 2020, the expectation for Novi remains.

However, it's something that Abbey Pfeiffer, an upcoming senior, who missed the end of her sophomore season with a torn ACL and was healthy and ready to go for the 2020 season, is not ready to think about yet.

"It will definitely be a challenge, but I don't think it's anything that we won't be able to handle."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at [cgay@hometownlife.com](mailto:cgay@hometownlife.com) or 248-330-6710. Twitter: @ColinGay17.





The Detroit Lions run onto Ford Field at the start of a game. GETTY IMAGES

## Lions announce preseason schedule

Dave Birkett Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

After an offseason made unrecognizable by the coronavirus pandemic, the Detroit Lions won't waste any time getting on the field this preseason.

The Lions announced dates and times for their four preseason games Friday, and will play their opener against the New England Patriots on Thursday, Aug. 13, the first day games can be played in the preseason outside of the Hall of Fame game.

The NFL has said it plans to open the regular season on time, but teams are making contingency plans in case the start is delayed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Typically, teams are allowed to open training camp 15 days before their first preseason game.

The Lions and Patriots held joint practices last summer in Detroit, and the teams are expected to practice together again this year, if possible.

The Lions play the entire AFC East in the preseason, with games at Ford Field against the New York Jets (Aug. 20), at the Miami Dolphins (Aug. 27) and home

against the Buffalo Bills (Sept. 3) also on the schedule.

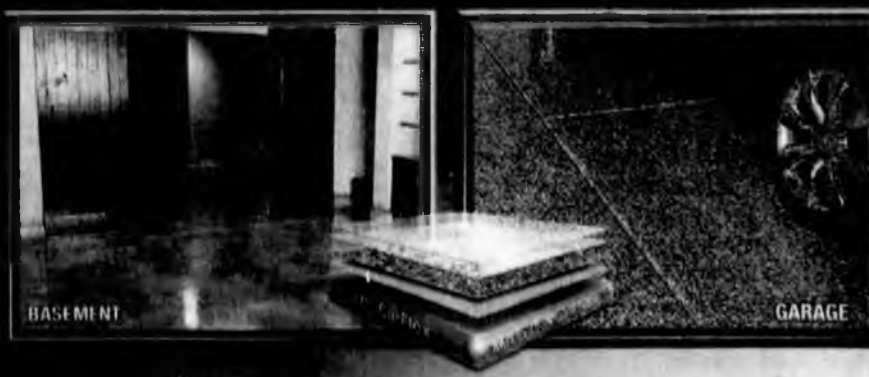
The Jets game will be broadcast nationally on ESPN (8 p.m.), and games against the Patriots and Dolphins kick off at 7:30 p.m. The Lions-Bills kickoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.

Michigan and Massachusetts have been two of the states hit hardest by COVID-19, with Boston mayor Marty Walsh saying this week he won't allow events to be played in front of large gatherings of fans this summer.

The Patriots play in Foxborough, Mass., about 30 miles south of Boston.

"I don't think they're going to ask me (how much time we need to get ready for the start of the season)," Lions quarterback Matthew Stafford said Thursday. "I think they're going to pick a schedule and go, 'Hey, here's when you get to be back and here's when we're stating, so saddle up.' And that's fine. That's fine with me. If they told us we had to start the season tomorrow and you had to fly to Detroit and go put the pads on, I'd be thrilled and happy to go do it. Just any opportunity at any time, with it being safe, I'm ready to go."

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# PPP forgiveness doesn't really work

Complex provision fails to address real needs



**Small Business**  
Rhonda Abrams  
USA TODAY

Congress and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin: If you truly care about the survival of America's small businesses, fix the forgiveness provisions of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and fix them fast. We need additional help for millions of small businesses that face annihilation.

PPP forgiveness provisions are, in a word, a mess. The PPP creates incredible confusion, pitting small-business owners against their employees, conflicting with the reality of many small-business PPP recipients and not addressing significant non-payroll expenses of small businesses.

When Congress enacted the PPP, rather than providing simple grants to the smallest businesses, it created a complex system. To qualify for loans to be forgiven, small businesses must rehire their workers for eight weeks. Even if they aren't open; even if there's no work.

## What's wrong with PPP?

That seems silly on the face of it, doesn't it? Sure, it works for small businesses that continued operating through the COVID-19 crisis or that quickly reopened at full or near-full capacity. For the overwhelming majority of small businesses still closed or facing significantly reduced demand, these provisions make little sense.

Worse, the forgiveness provisions are far from crystal clear. My accountant and a business lawyer gave opposite interpretations of a forgiveness provision. I've repeatedly been told that whether a business has met the forgiveness provisions would be "up to individual banks."

In what may be the absolute worst provision, the PPP pits small-business owners against their employees. A dental hygienist was laid off as patients



Many small businesses can't meet requirements of Paycheck Protection program's loan forgiveness provision.

ANGELA WEISS/ AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

stayed away, worried whether a teeth cleaning was safe. Nevertheless, her boss opened the office to meet PPP forgiveness provisions, giving hygienists an ultimatum: return to work or be fired. Because it's likely there will be vastly reduced customer demand, he offers only part-time work, and the pay won't cover her day care costs.

The Visual Capitalist website lists dental hygienist as the No. 1 most at-risk job for COVID-19. She'll put her life at risk and lose money. Or she'll lose her job — a job she loves. This is not necessary.

## What's the solution?

Fix the PPP forgiveness provisions ASAP, and enact programs to help all small businesses survive.

■ Allow the smallest businesses to convert PPP loans into a grant. If a small business received \$100,000 or less, let it file a simple form and have the loan automatically forgiven:

■ Extend the eight weeks forgive-

ness provision to Dec. 31, or eight months after the business reopens if still on lockdown. This enables businesses to rehire employees when there's actually likely to be customer demand, reducing conflict with employees.

■ Widen the use and percentage of forgivable funds to better match the reality of small businesses, enabling them to use the funds for rent, utilities, equipment maintenance/leases, insurance, operating expenses, etc.

■ Allow small businesses to deduct expenses they made under PPP as normal business expenses. Mnuchin says expenses covered by PPP forgiveness will not be tax-deductible. By disallowing normal business deductions, he is, in effect, taxing forgiven PPP dollars.

In addition to fixes in the PPP forgiveness provisions, more money, more programs and more time are needed. Facing such an uncertain future, small-business owners do not want to take on debt. Simple, straightforward grants are necessary.

In the first round of PPP loans, only 5.7% of America's small businesses received funding. Experts warn that it may take more than a year to get the virus under control. Small-business grant and aid programs must last throughout the duration of the COVID-19 crisis and recovery.

America must act fast to save tens of millions of small-business jobs. According to Main Street Alliance, "countries that elected direct subsidies to business have been spared the massive spike in unemployment we have experienced here in the U.S."

A coalition of more than 60 small-business organizations warned, "With little or no revenue coming in, entire sectors of the small-business economy face extinction."

That would be a disaster. Half of all jobs in America are in small businesses. If we don't save them, America will not recover from this crisis.

Rhonda Abrams is the author of "Successful Business Plan: Secrets & Strategies."

# IRS has new deadline for stimulus checks

If you want money faster, share direct deposit info



**Susan Tompor**  
Columnist  
USA TODAY

Still waiting on your stimulus stash? The IRS has a new deadline to urge you to act soon if you're considering entering direct deposit information online at "Get My Payment."

The Internal Revenue Service wants people to take action by noon Wednesday if they want a shot at receiving stimulus cash more quickly via direct deposit. Bank account information can be entered at "Get My Payment" at IRS.gov.

And in other news, the IRS said automatic payments will be sent soon to those receiving Social Security retirement, disability benefits, Railroad Retirement benefits, Veterans Affairs benefits or Supplemental Security Income. No specific timetable was given Friday.

If things go as expected, most eligible Supplemental Security Income or SSI and veterans will spot Economic Impact Payments via their Direct Express card no later than mid-May, according to a fact sheet dated May 5 from Direct Express, which is a prepaid card offered to those who do not have bank accounts.

Many people already have received stimulus payments of up to \$1,200 for singles and up to \$2,400 for couples, plus \$500 for dependent children ages 16 and younger.

The Treasury Department and the IRS said Friday that about 130 million individuals nationwide received payments worth more than \$200 billion in the program's first four weeks. But more than 20 million payments remained to be sent out.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus relief effort has triggered a great deal of frustration and confusion for many people who are still waiting for stimulus cash after watching neighbors receive their money in the past four weeks or so.

Many older adults are furious. Some claim it's highly unfair for those in need



While tens of millions of people still haven't received stimulus payments, the money is expected to continue going out via checks through June.

SUSAN TOMPOR/USA TODAY NETWORK

to be waiting weeks, while others who were working in the past few years received their money more immediately.

Several seniors who have direct deposit of their Social Security benefits wonder why the federal government hasn't been able to use that information to deposit their stimulus cash into their bank accounts yet. Many continue to wait.

Some seniors did get that money if they had provided bank account information earlier to receive direct deposit of a tax refund for 2018 or 2019 tax returns. But if you owed money or received a paper check for a tax refund, well, you could very well still be waiting.

All eligible taxpayers who filed tax returns for 2019 or 2018 will receive the payments automatically, according to the IRS.

Payments also are automatic for those who receive Social Security retirement, survivor or disability benefits

(SSDI), Railroad Retirement benefits, as well as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Veterans Affairs beneficiaries who didn't file a tax return in the last two years.

The problem is all the money isn't arriving at once or even close to the same time. The program's payments will be spread out from roughly April 10 through June. Some will receive checks; others will get the money via direct deposit.

Many will receive checks if the IRS doesn't have direct deposit information associated with a tax refund for 2018 or 2019. If you owed taxes those years and paid, the IRS would still need direct deposit information.

One way around this is to supply the IRS with direct deposit information via "Get My Payment."

To be sure, the "Get My Payment" tool has had its fair share of technical issues that generated a great deal of an-

ger among many users.

The IRS has updated that tool, which went online April 15, and some had success later in the game.

To use the "Get My Payment" tool, you need information from your 2019 return, if filed, and your 2018 return. You'll also need such things as your payment status and your bank account information.

The IRS stated Friday that the number of paper stimulus checks flowing into mailboxes will increase sharply starting later this month.

The noon Wednesday deadline is designed for those who want to avoid waiting weeks or months to get a check.

The IRS wants people to visit "Get My Payment" by noon Wednesday to check on their payment status and, when available, provide direct deposit information online at IRS.gov.

"For many taxpayers, the last chance to obtain a direct deposit of their Economic Impact Payment rather than receive a paper check is coming soon," the IRS stated.

"Time is running out for a chance to get these payments several weeks earlier through direct deposit," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig in a statement.

After noon Wednesday, the IRS said it will begin preparing millions of files to send to Bureau of Fiscal Service to handle the paper checks that will begin arriving through late May and into June.

The "Get My Payment" tool does not solve all problems or apply to everyone.

For example, the IRS has had to consider the possibility of identity theft. So it will not allow you to change direct deposit bank account information already on file with the IRS.

"If we issue a direct deposit and the bank information is invalid or the bank account has been closed, the bank will reject the deposit," the IRS stated.

"We will then mail your payment as soon as possible to the address we have on file for you. 'Get My Payment' will be updated to reflect the date your payment will be mailed. Typically, once the payment is mailed, it will take up to 14 days to receive the payment, standard mailing time."

Follow Susan Tompor on Twitter @tompor.



# Whitmer: No full stadiums before vaccine is available

Evan Petzold Detroit Free Press  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer doubled down Friday on her stance on fans attending sporting events this fall: No full stadiums until a vaccine is available.

"We're going to be in a new normal for quite a while," Whitmer said during her weekly news conference, "and it doesn't mean that sports is over. Sports is not over."

"We need a vaccine, and we need mass quantities available to be able to test and acknowledge we have some immunity built up. We're not there yet. Until that happens, I think all the organizers of these leagues understand how important it is that we act responsibly here."

Whitmer's response echoed her comments from a radio interview May 12, in which she stated she doesn't think capacity crowds at events will be allowed



Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on Friday said, "We're going to be in a new normal for quite a while, and it doesn't mean that sports is over." COURTESY OF MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

home against the Chicago Bears. While Whitmer is adamant about limiting fans, the NFL has said it plans to play the 2020 season with patrons in attendance.

Other leagues also are reopening. MLB owners pushed a proposal to the players' union Monday which could lead to an early July opening day with an 82-game season and 14-team postseason.

"Major League Baseball is pursuing a shorter season in stadiums where people can watch the games on television, not in person," Whitmer said. "That may be how we have to operate for a while."

The NHL and NBA seasons have been postponed since March and remain without a timetable to return to competition, though daily conversations are percolating throughout each league. As of Wednesday, 10 of the NBA's 30 teams have taken part in voluntary workouts.

"We can have sports," Whitmer said, "just the way we observe them might look different for a while."

this fall.

There are more than 50,000 cases of COVID-19 in Michigan and more than 5,000 people have died. Of those deaths, more than 2,000 come from Wayne County, where Detroit's major professional teams play. Right now, Michigan's stay-at-home order runs through May 28.

The MLB, NBA and NHL shut down

team activities in March, but the NFL has continued its offseason as scheduled, albeit with a virtual draft and virtual offseason programs. The league released its full schedule May 7 with no delays planned, though the schedule is reportedly built to allow late changes.

The Lions still plan to hold training camp this summer, begin the preseason Aug. 13 and open the season Sept. 13 at

## Athletics

Continued from Page 1B

rise of a basketball player from North Carolina, who defined a game, who developed a superstardom that players on high school courts across the metro Detroit area, across the country and across the world strive for.

The aspect of "Be like Mike" has not left.

But for me, the most impactful part was to see this history lesson through the eyes, primarily, of one man.

Is there a bias to it? Sure there is. Jordan saw it through the eyes of the self-described best player of all time, taking every slight — even ones that may have been embellished — as fuel for the next game, the next buzzer beater, the next ring.

But with Jordan came the stories of Pippen, of Rodman, of head coach Phil Jackson, of general manager Jerry Krause. Each piece woven together into a sportswriter's dream getting an inside look at what it took to get to the aptly-named "Last Dance" season.

To me, watching the stories of the players and coaches involved in the Bulls organization during this time, seeing who it impacted, who it inspired, I think back to the sideline at high school football and soccer games, the bleachers at high school basketball games.

With a notebook out and pen at the ready, I remember watching as high school students tried to replicate what generations have done prior, who gave their all each game to try and give those

on the roster and the coaching staff, and those on the bench something to remember.

I watched players showcase their skill, I watched nearby coaches, trying to put their students in the best position to succeed. I watched their drive, trying to peel back the layers of the player or the coach, trying to find out what their backstory was that brought them to that point.

I came into each game knowing this: each one had a story to tell.

No matter the level, sports unite a community, whether it's at the high school, college or professional. Sports create memories. Sports define legacies.

But sports themselves are a stage for telling the stories of people, through their own eyes. To tell the story of what drives them to success, of what drives them to take the field or the court each day.

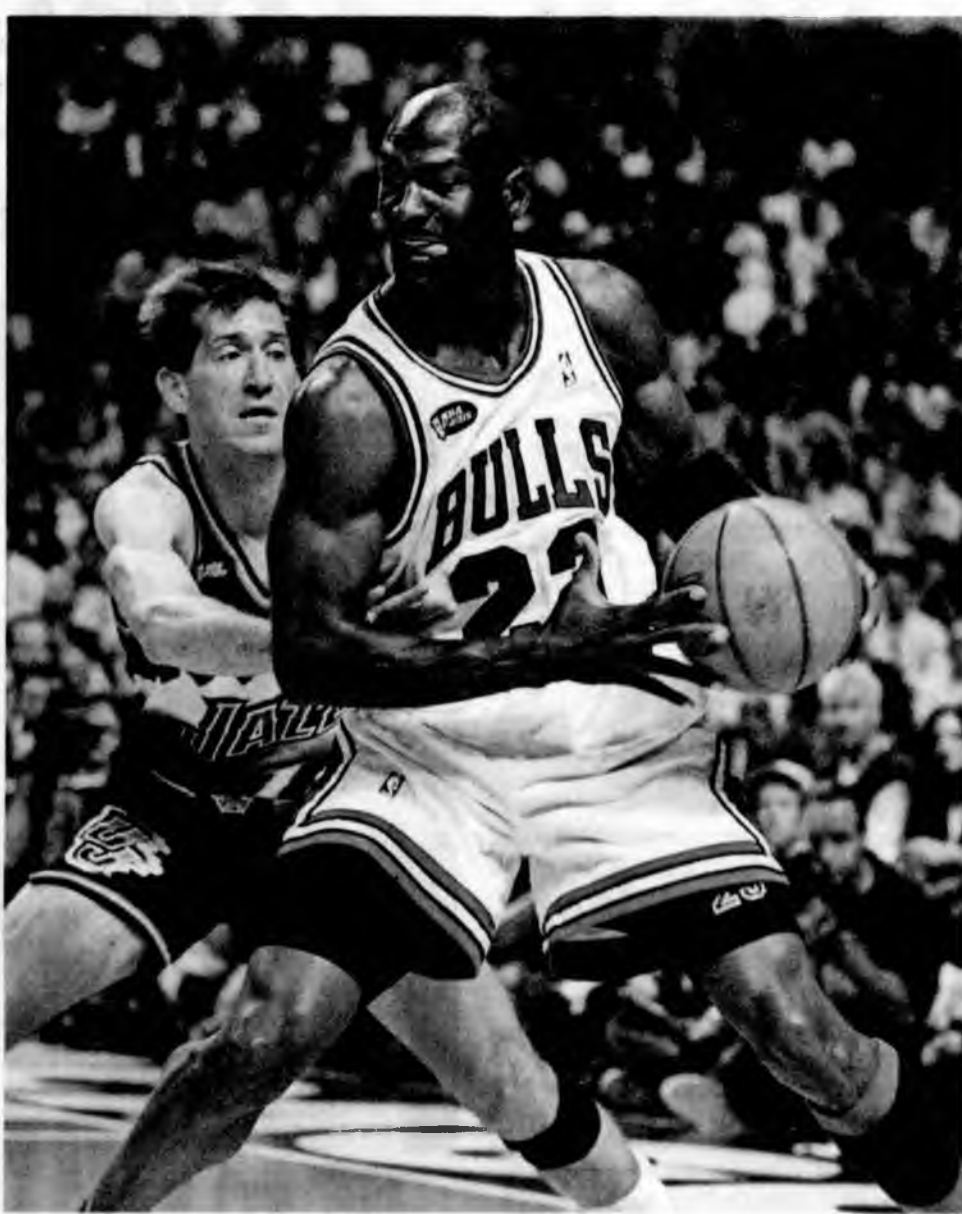
While this documentary may tell the story of professionals, this aspect can be seen at each and every level.

I admit, I will miss Sunday nights: brewing a fresh cup of coffee and being transported away from present day to witness the dominance of a team, as a 23-year-old, I pretty much missed.

For the past five weeks, Sunday nights were that escape. Sunday nights were normal.

"The Last Dance" was that time machine I needed.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at [cgay@hometownlife.com](mailto:cgay@hometownlife.com) or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17. Send game results and stats to [Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com](mailto:Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com).



Michael Jordan during the 1998 NBA Finals. ROBERT HANASHIRO/USA TODAY FILE

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### How to interview candidates in these difficult times

 Eric Titner  
[thejobnetwork.com](http://thejobnetwork.com)

Interviewing is always a challenging affair – both for hiring managers and for candidates – but things get especially tricky when events in the world make it difficult to even meet up. A global pandemic, like that being experienced as the ongoing coronavirus impacts the world, certainly exceeds the criteria for a tough interview situation.

On top of the widespread health and economic impacts the pandemic has had across the planet, creating a tsunami of despair and uncertainty, there has also been a wave of social changes taking place that many of us have never experienced before. The concept of responsible social distancing, which more and more individuals, businesses, towns, cities, states, and even countries are adopting as each day passes, makes holding interviews a real logistical challenge.

Thankfully, we live in the digital age – where once holding interviews in a time of maintaining social distance would have been nearly impossible in bygone eras, today it's a different story. There are now plenty of options for employers to connect with candidates. However, along with these advances come some potential issues and concerns.

The logistics of setting up an interview remotely aren't too difficult to work through. Once the primary questions regarding what type of interview you'd like to hold (audio, video, etc.) and the platform you'd like to use (Zoom, Teams, Skype, Webex, and even the telephone, etc.) are answered, all you need to do is schedule a time and make sure everyone involved has the right software.

That said, some of the nuances and



GETTY IMAGES

benefits of meeting candidates face to face can be lost. Simply put, there's just something beneficial about being in a room with someone and having the opportunity to gauge synergy and body language in person in order to fully evaluate someone during an interview. After all, you're looking to hire someone who you and your team will likely be interacting with on a regular basis, so you want to make sure they're a good fit. So, while moving candidates through the

early stages of your company's HR pipeline and interview process can benefit from existing technology, actually hiring someone based solely on remote interactions can be tricky.

Also, using technology to interview during difficult times brings up some other concerns. Regardless of what side of the "virtual interview desk" you happen to be on, note that even the best computers and software are prone to unforeseen technical glitches. Make

sure that your setup is operational and running smoothly prior to the actual interview – things like video freezes, poor audio connections, and disconnects, while understood as things that "just happen" to all of us, certainly won't help make an interview successful. Make sure that other things like what you're wearing and the backdrop of your video environment (make sure nothing embarrassing is lurking in the background) are appropriate as well.

Doing a run-through beforehand is highly recommended, especially if you're not used to talking in front of a camera or holding video meetings. It is a different experience from a face-to-face conversation, and like most things in life, practice is always helpful. If you can connect with someone you trust who can offer you an honest and helpful critique of your performance, even better.

What's the bottom line when it comes to interviewing in difficult times, like during the coronavirus scare? Everyone is doing the best they can, and interviewees understand that your circumstances are as strange as theirs. The work world should and will push forward, and the need for businesses to interview in an effort to appropriately staff their teams and meet their goals remains essential. Just do your best to remain as welcoming and professional as you would in a face-to-face setting. Although there are events that occur during a global pandemic that may make hiring and interviewing seem less important than before, in light of the seriousness of what's going on around the world, the reality is that life goes on – even in the most difficult of times.

Eric Titner has been an editor and content creator for more than a decade. His primary professional focus has been on education- and career-related topics.

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## THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

## CROSSWORD PUZZLER

## ACROSS

1 Chartbusters  
8 Farthest  
point in an orbit  
14 Uncommon  
20 Salary  
reductions  
21 Child raiser  
22 Add insult to  
injury, maybe  
23 Question in  
1 Corinthians  
15:55  
26 Europe-Asia  
border river  
27 Wood splitter  
28 Ski lift part  
29 Prefix with  
lock  
30 Supplicate on  
behalf of  
35 — polloi  
(commoners)  
37 Sermon topic  
38 Suffix with  
Sudan  
39 Massage  
40 Old booming  
jet, for short  
41 "— changed  
man!"  
43 Designer  
Geoffrey  
45 Salon  
colorists  
47 "Is this  
actually  
happening?"  
50 Oviedo locale  
53 Situated over  
56 Brine source

57 New  
Hampshire  
academy  
58 "I'm going  
through the  
same thing!"  
61 Shipping  
charge, e.g.  
62 Steering part  
on a ship  
63 Long (for)  
64 Vikings' org.  
66 Refusing to  
be cheerful  
71 Regarding  
72 Agree  
76 Pop's mom  
77 Actress Amy  
79 SSNs, e.g.  
80 Pressing tool  
81 Fig treat from  
Nabisco  
83 Seeming  
eternity  
85 DNA-studying  
partner  
of James  
Watson  
87 "My turn is  
coming right  
up"  
91 He KO'd  
many rivals  
93 Ball —  
hammer  
94 Forrest Gump  
player  
95 "Quantum  
Leap" actor  
98 Bend down  
100 Abrupt  
101 Body pouch

102 Secretive  
U.S. gp.  
105 She bleats  
106 Part of  
UCLA  
109 33rd prez  
110 Restaurant  
bill addition  
112 Crucial  
component  
116 Long (for)  
118 Boyfriends, in  
Paris  
120 Dir. opposite  
7-Down  
121 Viking org.  
122 Tune whose  
opening lyric,  
and lyricist,  
begin eight  
answers in  
this puzzle  
128 Motion  
detector part  
129 Agee of the  
old Mets  
130 Small eating  
alcove  
131 Waiters take  
them  
132 Like training  
at the  
location itself  
133 Occupy fully

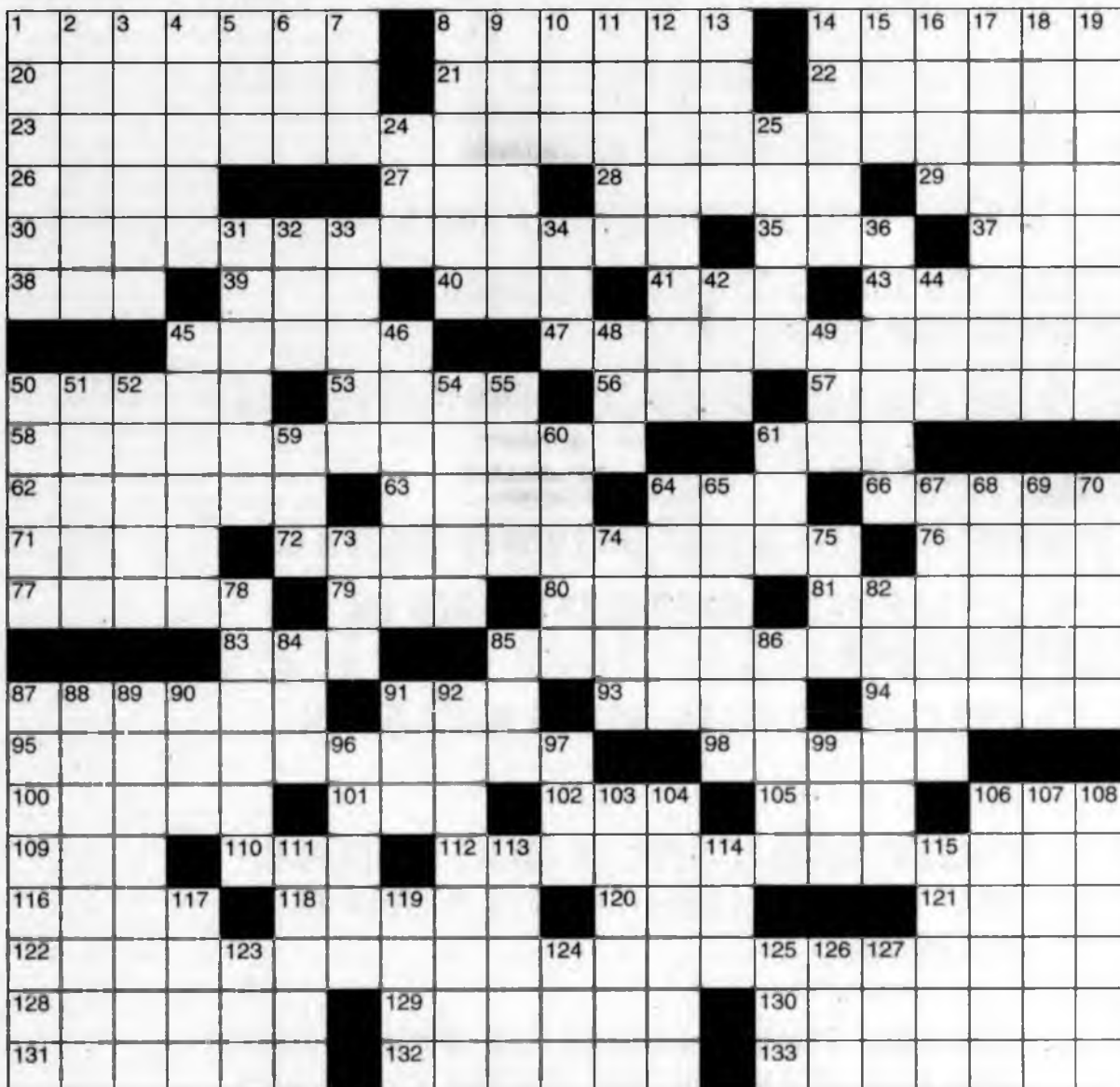
## DOWN

1 Wedded  
partner  
2 Chennai,  
before 1996  
3 "Sure thing,  
cap'n!"

4 La — (Milan  
opera house)  
5 Crude abode  
6 Biblical verb  
suffix  
7 NYC-to-  
Miami dir.  
8 High points  
9 Peeling tools  
10 Raw metal  
11 Allstate rival  
12 Put into a hall  
of fame  
13 Kett of old  
comic strips  
14 — Gyra  
(jazz fusion  
band)  
15 Prefix with  
gender  
16 Utah ski spot  
17 Slide in again  
18 Go on with  
19 Train  
operator  
24 Bam feed  
25 Cymbal pair  
in a drum kit  
31 Nathaniel  
Hawthorne's  
Hester  
32 Feel remorse  
over  
33 James —  
Garfield  
34 Consumer  
protection  
agcy.  
36 Wild Alpine  
goats  
42 Soccer great  
Hamm

44 Summer, in  
Soissons  
45 Royal crown  
46 Worried  
48 E-cig's lack  
49 Busy insect  
50 Its capital is  
Damascus  
51 16 ounces  
52 Lindley of  
"The Ropers"  
54 NYC stage  
awards  
55 Small bunch  
of flowers  
59 Spock and  
Sauss: Abbr.  
60 Alternative to  
"his" or "her"  
61 Go by plane  
64 Nary a soul  
65 Backyard  
borders  
67 Open, as a  
present  
68 Language of  
"mea culpa"  
69 Be a rapper?  
70 BoSox rivals  
73 Freud's "one"  
74 Ensnare  
75 "Cannon" has  
three  
78 The Brady  
kids, e.g.  
82 Restated  
84 Gambling  
parlor, briefly  
85 Chick — -A  
86 Prefix with  
lock  
87 "No kidding?"

88 Artist  
known for  
illusions  
89 Boston area  
with the  
Paul Revere  
statue  
90 UFO crew  
91 Alias abbr.  
92 Find by  
chance  
96 In line with  
97 One or more  
99 Be indebted  
103 "Belt out that  
tune!"  
104 She founded  
the U.S.  
Shakers  
106 Crude abode  
107 First phases  
108 Long looks  
111 Letter-shaped  
girders  
113 PSATs, e.g.  
114 "No kidding!"  
115 Deep-seated  
117 To be, to  
Claudius  
119 Regarding  
123 Blue Jays, on  
scoreboards  
124 Abbr. for  
someone  
with only one  
given name  
125 34th prez  
126 Firewood  
box  
127 Repub.  
west of  
Zambia



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

## SUDOKU



Difficulty Level ★★

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

## MEDITATION WORD SEARCH

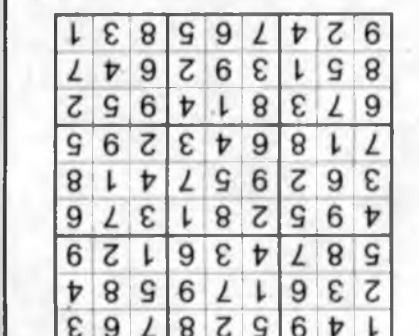
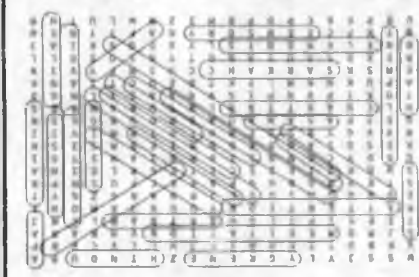
W S S J Y L Y G R E N E Z H I N D U P A  
V K B U T I B O B I S J V L L V C E B P  
S J M B M E D I T A T I O N V H R A R A  
T I P Y T F T L G O A R T N A M L C M J  
R A T T E N T I O N Y U D N J A M O H T  
E D D A S R S H S L J R N A N G Z G Y T  
S T E Y M S O U G P A P E C F U S N P R  
S W H R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

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

## WORDS

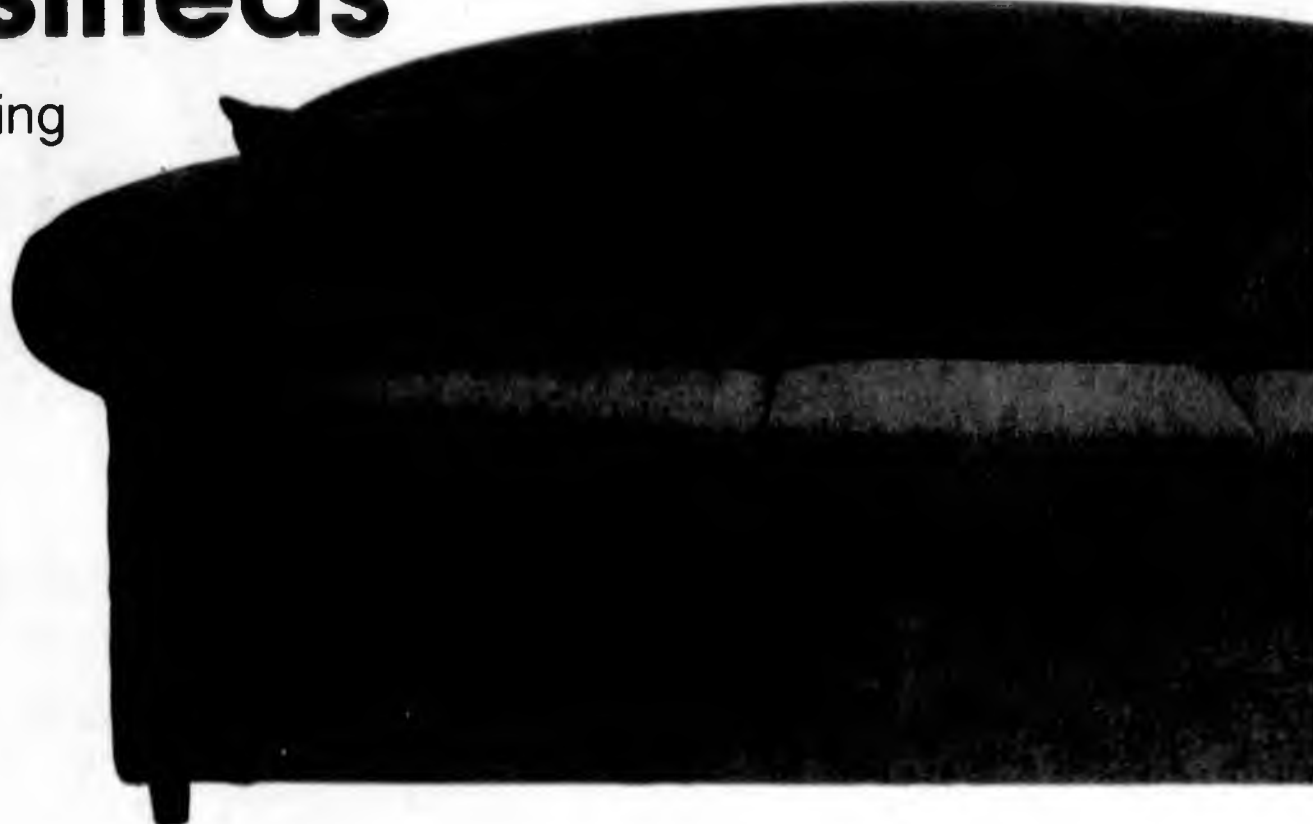
ASANA  
ATTENTION  
AWARENESS  
BALANCE  
BREATH  
CATCHES  
CHAKRAS  
CHANTING  
COGNITIVE  
COMFORT  
DEVELOPMENT  
ELEMENTS  
ENERGY  
HEALING  
HINDU  
HYPNOSIS  
IMAGERY  
JAPA  
MANTRA  
MEDITATION  
MENTAL  
MINDFULNESS  
NIRVANA  
SACRED  
SENSORY  
SESSION  
SPIRITUAL  
STRESS  
TRAINING  
TRUST  
YOGA  
ZEN

## ANSWER KEY



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# HOME

## Pantry Sheet Pan Nachos



**PREP: 15 MIN   BAKE: 5 MIN   SERVES: 8**

**1 CAN (15 - 16 OZ.) REFRIED BLACK OR PINTO BEANS**

**1 PACKAGE (1 OZ.) TACO SEASONING**

**1 BAG (11 - 13 OZ.) CORN TORTILLA CHIPS**

**1 CAN OR JAR (15 OZ.) QUESO BLANCO OR SALSA CON QUESO**

**1/3 CUP DRAINED PICKLED JALAPEÑO PEPPER SLICES**

**1 CUP SALSA**

**1/3 CUP DRAINED CANNED OR THAWED FROZEN CORN**

**1/4 CUP DRAINED CANNED SLICED BLACK OR GREEN OLIVES**

**1/4 CUP CHOPPED GREEN, RED OR WHITE ONION**

**1] PREHEAT OVEN TO 325°. IN SMALL SAUCEPAN, HEAT BEANS AS LABEL DIRECTS; STIR IN TACO SEASONING.**

**2] ON LARGE RIMMED BAKING PAN, SPREAD CHIPS; TOP WITH BEAN MIXTURE, CHEESE SAUCE AND JALAPEÑOS. BAKE 5 MINUTES OR UNTIL HEATED THROUGH; TOP WITH REMAINING INGREDIENTS AND SERVE IMMEDIATELY.**

\*APPROXIMATE NUTRITIONAL VALUES PER SERVING: 359 CALORIES, 17G FAT (4G SATURATED), 8MG CHOLESTEROL, 1491MG SODIUM, 45G CARBOHYDRATES, 6G FIBER, 3G SUGARS, 1G ADDED SUGARS, 8G PROTEIN



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