

ORTHVILLE ECOI

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Milford ski ends season without a loss

SPORTS, 3B

Kensington park sharpshooters to cull deer

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

A deer cull at Kensington Metropark aims to reduce the herd by nearly 50 animals, but there are plans to spare one special doe.

There are currently about 120 deer in Kensington, a number deemed too high to maintain a healthy population in the area," said Tyler Mitchell, chief of natunearly 4,500-acre park

For this reason, park employees who are trained sharpshooters will cull the herd today, resulting in a closure of the park at about 4 p.m. The cull will end around midnight.

high, and deer overpopulate in that in place since 1999. Kensington has had

ral resources for Huron-Clinton Metroparks. "There is a lack of hunting pressure in the area compared to other areas. It's not a big part of the sporting culture around Milford."

Huron-Clinton Metroparks has con-"The carrying capacity of the land is tinued the deer management program

a deer cull for at least the last few years. Its necessity is based on an annual aerial survey, officials said.

The number of deer in in Kensington have generally increased year-overyear, Mitchell said. There have been up to 200 deer counted in an afternoon in

See DEER, Page 4A



Northville student among Michigan's first female **Boy Scouts**

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN



Donna Podpora, left, stands with Larry Podpora and their shop dog, Joey, at Donna & Larry's Flowers. After a year with most special events canceled, the couple looks forward to a stronger 2021 for their business. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Florists say customers should order early for Valentine's Day

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

For those who plan to surprise their sweetie with flowers this Valentine's Day, local shops have one piece of advice: order early.

Challenges from suppliers after nearly a year of the coronavirus pandemic

have local flower shops doing everything they can to prepare for Feb. 14, one of the biggest days in the business. Retailers are asking those who plan to order a dozen roses or other large bouquets to call or place those orders online to local shops as soon as possible.

Those who wait until the last minute may find nothing but thorns.

"The ones that are going to be tricky are the last-minute guys that walk in," said Colleen Siembor, a co-owner of Cardwell Florist; 32109, Plymouth Road in Livonia.

· Uncertainty in stock and purchasing patterns has left local flower shops

See FLORISTS, Page 3A

Community raises a glass, \$67K for Bakers

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

Chris Baker isn't crying into his beer. But, maybe there's a little something in his eye. It isn't from self-pity over the devastation the coronavirus pandemic has visited upon his three businesses, but from the outpouring of support he has received from his community.

A GoFundMe page titled "Raise a Glass to Give Back to the Baker Family," established a month ago with a goal of raising \$1,000, has garnered nearly \$67,000, with more than 400 donors paying it forward to a family long known for its generosity.

"It's humbling and heartwarming, I can't say enough. It makes me want to cry," Baker said. "I'm looking forward to

getting back on our feet, that is what small communities are all about, we're the heartbeat of America."

Baker isn't one to ask for help - he's one to give it. The owner of Bakers of Milford, the South Lyon Hotel, and the Comeback Inn in Highland is wellknown for lending his support to

See BAKERS, Page 6A

When she became one of the first females in Michigan to join a Boy Scout troop in February 2019, Northville High School student Emily Walker didn't consider herself a statement-making pioneer.

In fact, attention was the last thing the longtime lover of the great outdoors was seeking. Walker simply yearned to join an organization that put emphasis on camping and nature.

"I was involved in Girl Scouts since first grade or kindergarten, but once I got to middle school and high school, it wasn't very fulfilling anymore," Walker said Walker. "A lot of what we were doing wasn't fun for me, at least in my troop

"Boy Scouts focused more on camping, outdoors-type stuff, which is why I switched over once the rules were changed last year."

Boy Scouts of America (BSA) first announced it was going to include girls in 2017. It has since changed its name to Scouts BSA - a change instituted to welcome both boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 17.

Since the organization's program for its youngest participants, Cub Scouts, started including girls in 2018,

77,000 females have joined, according to Scouts BSA.

Walker said there was short adjustment period for the members of Troop 777 once she came on board.

"I was one of four girls to attend the Boy Scouts summer camp (in 2019), so it was obviously a bit new for the boys," Walker said. "You could tell they acted a little differently around us because it was so new.

"In my troop, after about the first month, they made us feel completely comfortable. Everybody got along well."

Scoutmaster Ryan Bright said the addition of Walker to Troop 777, which is based out of Northville's First United Methodist Church, has been beneficial for everyone involved.

See BOY SCOUTS, Page 4A

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2A | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | O&EMEDIA (NR)

Father shot in South Lyon armed robbery dies

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Kevin Stamper, critically injured Dec. 30 by a gunman robbing his South Lyon home, surrendered Tuesday to his wounds.

Police Lt. Doug Baaki confirmed that Stamper died after a new GoFundMe page to help pay for his funeral, posted Jan. 26, indicated Stamper was taken off life support.

Baaki said that he's not aware of a homicide involving a firearm happening for at least three decades in the small Oakland County city. And this homicide took two lives: Kevin Stamper, 43, and his son Dylan, 17.

They both suffered gunshot wounds when armed robbers attacked their home the night of Dec. 30. Dylan died at his Liberty Street home. His father was taken to a local hospital in critical but stable condition.

'Kevin has fought like hell for his life but unfortunately was taken off life support today," the GoFundMe page stated. "He is now with his son Dylan again. He leaves behind his daughter Makayla and so many friends and family.

"Everyone who knew Kevin loved him. You couldn't not love the big guy. We need to lay Kevin to rest by his son and give him the funeral he deserves. This has been hell on earth since Dec 30th and (it's) still just a fog."

Baaki said Kevin Stamper's autopsy was scheduled. Prosecutors will decide whether to amend charges for those already accused.

Obituary information through Phillips Funeral Home was pending as of Friday, but donations to help pay funeral expenses were being accepted, its website said.

Fadi Zeineh, 19, of Washtenaw County has been arraigned on 10 felony charges that include murder, assault, armed robbery and felony firearms.

Anthony Marshall Porter, 27, of Ann Arbor was arraigned on three felony charges of armed robbery and three felony charges of possessing a firearm in the commission of the alleged crime.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susanvela.



Kevin Stamper died Jan. 26 of injuries from a Dec. 30 shooting in his home. COURTESY OF FRIEND OF THE STAMPER FAMILY

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Historic Northville school board race nears dramatic conclusion

Ed Wright

Hometownlife com USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

Labeled a sore loser by some and a champion in the pursuit of justice by others, Kimberly Campbell-Voytal is not about to relinquish her battle to join the Northville Public Schools Board of Education even if the battle requires spending a significant amount of her own money.

Here is how one of the more remarkable 2020 elections at the local level has unfolded as of Jan. 29.

Order in the court

Education, claiming that her bid to win the final seat should be extended to one final

step. Unofficial re- Mazurek sults posted days after the election showed Mazurek received 7,856

votes, one more than Campbell-Voytal, giving him, temporarily at least, the fourth Campbelland final seat on Voytal the board of edu-

cation.

During a canvass of the unofficial results, however, Campbell-Voytal gained a vote, tying the election at 7,856 apiece.

"final certified member-elect," the Northville Public Schools Board of Education accepted his election certificate and seated him on the

board. Campbell-Voytal's ensuing request to the Michigan Attorney General's Office to bring a quo warranto action to remedy the denial

of her right to a second tie-breaking procedure - a process required by MCL 5 168.851 and 168.3852, the lawsuit states - was declined.

seeking a second tie- fice could have resolved

ing it becomes."

Campbell-Voytal said others are advocating that district residents put pressure on her to give up the fight.

"They want to wear me down until I give up," she said. "But I have a lot of supporters, too, who understand the laws allow for me to receive a second random draw.

"Hey, if there's a second draw and I lose, I'm totally fine with that. But I'm not going to simply give up now, knowing that the laws distinctly spell out that a second random draw is required."

Michigan Attorney Campbell-Voytal is General Dana Nessel's of-

On Jan. 14, Voytal filed a lawsuit in Wayne County's Third Circuit Court against the Wayne County Board of Canvassers and James Mazurek, one of her eight opponents in the Nov. 3 general election for four open seats on the Northville Board of

Following the procedure stated in MCL 168.851, the deadlocked candidates each drew a slip of paper out of a box on Nov. 25.

Mazurek drew the slip reading "elected;" Campbell-Voytal drew the slip reading "not elected."

The board of canvassers presented Mazurek with a certificate of election - too hastily, in Campbell-Voytal's opinion.

Against all odds

The "loser" of such random draws is entitled to request a recount, which Campbell-Voytal did. The three-day recount was granted on Dec. 7 and took place Dec. 10-12, revealing that each candidate gained five additional votes with seven "challenged" ballots.

On Dec. 16, each candidate picked up one more vote after a review of thechallenged ballots, leaving the race tied once again at 7,861 votes each.

Six days later, after securing candidate-written briefs and discussing the scenario among themselves, the board of canvassers' motion to determine who was elected failed after the four canvassers' (two Democrats, two Republicans) vote on the motion resulted in a 2-2 tie.

"Counsel to the Wayne Board then stated that the Wayne Board had not decided who is elected, a statement with which the Wayne Board Chair agreed," the lawsuit alleges.

On Dec. 31, while expressing doubts as to whether Mazurek was the breaking random draw and a monetary award for legal costs and damages.

The deadline for Wayne County Third Circuit Court Judge Timothy M. Kenny to make a determination on the case is dies," Feb. 2. said.

'No animosity'

Campbell-Voytal emphasized that she holds no animosity toward Mazurek and that her ongoing fight to secure a second random drawing is not costing Northville taxpayers a dime.

"The manner in which this has been handled by the Wayne County Board of Canvassers and the Northville Public Schools Board of Education has been wrong and unfair to Campbell-Voytal," Ms. said Mark Brewer, an attorney with the firm Goodman Acker "The decision on this case, will provide an important precedent for future elections in Michigan."

Campbell-Voytal said she has received both support and opposition related to her continuing quest to secure a second random draw, a process she and her attorney believe is her right.

"I'm trying very, very hard not to hurt the community," Campbell-Voytal said. "The only thing I'm seeking is a resolution to this. I've been tuning in to all of the school board meetings (since Mazurek was seated at the beginning of 2021). I wouldn't be human if watching him perform the duties of a school board member didn't bother me.

"The longer this carries on, the more disturb-

the case by declaring the requirement of a second draw, she said.

"But she declined our quo warranto and basically said that she wants it settled with local reme-Campbell-Voytal

During a Wayne County Board of Canvassers meeting on Dec. 22, Marepresentative zurek Rocky Raczkowski argued that "there is no provision in election law that would allow for a redraw following a tie vote that remains tied after the recount."

Raczkowski asserted Mazurek's case is solidified by a Dec. 18 email sent to the Wayne Board of Canvassers by Michigan Director of Elections Jonathan Brater that stated: "However, were this to be a recount in which the decision was to be made by the State Board of Canvassers, the **Bureau recommendation** would be not to re-draw because there is no provision in election law that would allow for a re-draw following a tie vote that remains tied after a recount."

Mazurek attorney Matthew Wilk argued at the Dec. 22 meeting that there is no reference to a second draw after a tie vote in MCL 168.851 and MCL 168.852.

"In the cases that have been mentioned (by Campbell-Voytal's attorney) this matter is not the same as there was not a tie vote after canvass; there was a draw by lot after a tie vote after a recount was conducted," Wilk said.

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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, February 24, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. on the Zoom Video Conference electronic meeting platform to consider the 2021-2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The draft Capital Improvement Program documents are available for examination and review by contacting the City Manager's Office, 45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 during regular business hours.

Special Instructions for Remote Meeting Procedure:

NOTE: THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD ELECTRONICALLY AS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, MCL 15.261, ET SEQ., AS AMENDED. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BODY AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE ELECTRONICALLY, AS DESCRIBED BELOW.

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the City may be utilizing the video/audio conferencing platform ZOOM to conduct the February 24, 2021 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 www.citvofnovi.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 un-muted 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 Comments shall be sent prior to 7 p.m. on the day of the meeting. The electronic form can be found at: www.cityofnovi.org/ pccomment

As of the date of this notice, Planning Commission members are expected to log in to ZOOM There may also be some City personnel at City Hall overseeing this meeting.

Novi Planning Commission Michael Lynch, Secretary



IRS partnership allows most to file taxes for free



Money Matters Rick Bloom Guest columnist

The IRS announced that this year's tax season will begin Feb. 12. That is the day the IRS will officially begin accepting tax returns.

Traditionally, the IRS starts accepting tax returns at the end of January. Last-minute changes to our tax laws are cited as the reason.

Tax returns will be due April 15.

Over the next few weeks, you will likely receive your 1099s, W-2s and other tax documents. No one wants to have problems with the IRS, which is why it is critical to make sure your tax return is accurate. Therefore, now is the time to make sure you have a tax file to start saving your 2020 tax information.

Although the IRS will not begin accepting tax returns until Feb. 12, that doesn't mean that you have to wait until mid-February to complete your return. In that regard, something you should consider is the IRS Free File program.

The program is a public-private partnership in which many leading tax software companies partner with the IRS to help taxpayers prepare and e-file their federal tax returns for free.

To qualify for the program, your adjusted gross income must not exceed \$72,000.

I have recommended the IRS Free File program for years. Many established tax preparation companies participate in this program.

In order to access the program, you must go through the IRS website, www.irs.gov/freefile. As with any other program, there are scam artists who will attempt to take advantage. Don't be fooled by other sites that say that you can file your tax return for free.

With the recent increase in the standard deduction, many taxpayers find that it is no longer beneficial to itemize their deductions. As a result, completing tax returns has become easier.

If you are looking to save money and your tax situation is relatively straightforward, I encourage you to consider the IRS Free File program. The hundreds of dollars you can save on tax preparation look best in your pocket.

One last note regarding tax returns: you are ultimately responsible for your own tax return. Whether you hire a professional or do it on your own, it is important that you file an accurate return.

Good luck.

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



Above at left, floral designer Colette Bielat works on an arrangement at Carwell Florist in Livonia on Jan. 20. At right. Tiffany Florist manager Bob Kupfer hopes to be able to keep a good supply of red roses Valentine's Day. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Florists "Th

"The big unknown is, "It's great for restau- normally send flowers are year was the biggest holi- Flower

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scratching their heads as to what to expect.

After flower shops closed down last March, many did not reopen until close to Mother's Day, and that was for curbside pickup. Couple that with churches not offering inperson Easter services last spring and a significant decrease in weddings last summer, and flower shops were left with surplus stock and no one to sell it to.

That was the case for Bob Kupfer, manager of Tiffany Florist in downtown Birmingham, last spring. While the shop was closed for several weeks, he was left with a cooler full of flowers that couldn't be sold. So he took them outside his shop at 784 S. Old Woodward and left them in a bucket for anyone who passed by.

"When we shut down, every day I would come here and put a bucket of flowers in the street," he said. "There's a ton of people who walk by here every day. We were giving away flowers for a long time."

Unknown factors

That won't be the case in February Kupfer said he is confident those looking to buy their sweetie some flowers for Valentine's Day will be able to, whether they order a week early or walk in Feb. 14.

Still, he said, it's best for customers to order ahead to make sure they can get exactly what they're looking for. who's going to be buying for Valentine's Day?" Kupfer said. "Do we need 10,000 of something or

1,000 of something?" Donna Podpora, who co-owns Donna & Larry's Flowers in Northville with her husband, Larry Podpora, said they are starting to get more clarity about what to expect for Valentine's Day as they got their shop at 1063 Novi Road decorated with hearts and stuffed bears.

"Even the suppliers are saying they don't know where they're going to get the flowers from at this point. They've got the orders placed. They don't know what's going to come in," said Donna Podpora, who's owned the shop for nearly 37 years. "They don't know what to charge us because they don't know what they're going to

have to pay, because they don't know what they're going to get.

"It's just so different." Valentine's Day and Mother's Day are widely considered the two biggest days for giving flowers, and flower shops across the region have prepped since before Christmas.

It's a big holiday for deliveries.

One issue with Valentine's Day this year isn't the result of the pandemic, but of the calendar: Feb. 14 is a Sunday, which several florists said is the worst day for the holiday in their industry.

While many shops that would usually be closed on Sundays this year will be open for walk-ins and deliveries, the holiday falling during the veekend will slow business.

rants, terrible for florists," Kupfer said.

'Flowers say what your heart wants to say'

Given the challenges many businesses have faced as the pandemic continues, it's more important than ever to support small flower shops, said Rod Crittenden, the president of the Great Lakes Floral Association.

The Haslett-based multi-state trade association works with and advocates for florists.

When customers go looking, it's important they keep local shops in mind, as they can provide a more personalized service than larger services that will outsource flowers.

"If you're ordering from a website, you need to make sure it's your local florist's website. It's easy to do," he said. "You just need to make sure you know who you're ordering from."

Crittenden said 2020 was a good year for most florists, especially considering the logistical challenges early on He said obtaining shipments of flowers from overseas at the beginning of the pandemic was difficult given travel restrictions.

Flower shops have always made deliveries, but it's become a bigger market since social distancing became the norm last March.

Flower shops across the region have reported increases in deliveries, though they do more home deliveries than office visits. With many offices closed, employers and others who would

having them delivered to employees' homes.

It's not just limited to businesses. Plenty of people are sending flowers to loved ones at home when they can't travel to see them. When seeking some normalcy, Siembor said, flowers are the perfect go-to option.

"People are wanting to feel better. They want to ease the tension, and flowers are a good way to do it," she said. "They're not able to go visit their families, so they send flowers."

Donna & Larry's Flowers, complete with their shop dog Joey, have offered curbside pickup and delivery since reopening last spring. While Mother's Day last

day they've seen business-wise, they're hopeful Valentine's Day will continue that trend.

While flowers can be considered a luxury item that will typically get cut from budgets when times are tight, they're important in that they can send a message that can't always be put into words, Larry Podpora said.

Now more than ever, he said, connecting loved ones is important.

"If they can't be with their families as much as they want to and things aren't normal, flowers are that intermediary," he said. "Whether it's a sweetheart of your mom or whoever, flowers say what your heart wants to say." unique in that they see people at their highest – proms and weddings and similar celebrations – and their lowest – at funerals. Emotions can run high, and that's been no different amid the pandemic, said Cardwell Florist co-owner and Livonia city council member Laura Toy.

shops

are

Given everything that's happened since last March, flowers have become a go-to for those looking for cheer others.

"People now, you notice more emotions," Toy said. "And they want something to be happy about. And flowers do that."

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4A | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | O&EMEDIA (NNNR)

NTSB: Pilot asked about ice before fatal crash

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

Experienced pilot and Oakland County businessman David Compo did not obtain an official weather briefing or file a flight plan for the fatal personal flight he, his wife and their son took Jan. 2.

A preliminary report released last week by the National Transportation Safety Board highlighted some oddities prior to Compo's small plane crashing into a Lyon Township home, killing the Compo family and setting fire to the other family's residence.

The NTSB report details the last hour of the Compo family's flight from Canton, Georgia.

The Northville family was supposed to arrive at the Oakland/Southwest Airport in New Hudson at 3:42 p.m.

At 2:57 p.m., while inbound at 7,000 feet, Compo connected via radio with a regional control center and asked if there were any reports of icing as he approached New Hudson.

The controller said there had been no such reports in the past hour and that a



The Compos' plane crashed into the home seen at rear Jan. 2 in Lyon Township. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

pilot landing at Willow Run Airport in Ypsilanti had reported "no icing" in the clouds, which were at 300 feet.

"The controller asked the pilot his intentions, and the pilot replied he would 'give it (the approach) a shot,' " the preliminary report said. "The pilot added that if he had to make a missed approach, he would proceed to Oakland County International Airport (in) Pontiac.'

Officials said Compo was cleared to descend to 4,000 feet and then to 3,000 feet.

The controller then told him to maintain 2,700 feet or above until "established on the final approach course." He was cleared for an approach and told to report back if missed the approach.

'The airplane continued to descend to about 1,900 (feet above mean sea level) and passed over (the airport)," according to the report. "It then appeared to climb slightly to about 2,000 ft. before it entered two descending left hand-spiral turns at decreasing airspeed.'

Soon after, the crash into the Dakota Drive home of the Mudzwova family happened. The plane was destroyed and there was substantial damage to the home. Compo and his passengers died in the crash, and the Mudzwova family's pet cat died in the resulting fire.

Compo was not "instrument rated," according to the NTSB's report. That means his pilot certificate did not show proof of the training required to fly solely by reference to instruments. He was flying a fixed wing single-engine Piper plane manufactured in 1964, according to the Federal Aviation Administration registry.

Contact reporter Susan Vela at svela@hometownlife.com or 248-303-8432. Follow her on Twitter @susanvela.

Boy Scouts

Continued from Page 1A

"While some were apprehensive of accepting girls into the Scouting program, I can only say it has made our program stronger, more inclusive, more diverse and really prepares our youth boys and girls - for the experiences that they will have as adults when they continue their education and enter the workforce," Bright said. "Allowing girls to join has helped our troop grow, while many units have experienced a decline in membership. ...

"Joining was an important step for Emily and an important step for our troop.

In Troop 777, Walker was the first female to become a senior patrol leader and is well on her way to achieving Eagle Scout status, the highest achievement in Scouting.



Northville High School senior Emily Walker is one of the first females in Michigan to join a Boy Scout troop. ED WRIGHT/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"Emily has never wanted to be seen as any different than anyone else (in the troop)," said Lisa Walker, Emily's mom. "All along, she has just wanted to be treated as an equal."

While the average time it takes an individual to attain Eagle Scout status is several years, Walker will secure her achievement in just over two years without cutting any corners.

"Most scouts start working toward Eagle Scout in sixth grade," Walker said. "Obviously, I had to get more done in a shorter time period, but I did it without skipping any timelines and without receiving extensions."

The first female Eagle Scouts were recognized earlier this year after earning the 21 merit badges necessary for the rank.

Walker's Eagle Scout project involved refurbishing an animal shelter at the site of a future group home for mentally and physically challenged individuals near Brooklyn, Michigan.

'We put up walls and re-did the roof so that the animals would have shelter," she said. "Once the group home opens it was delayed by the pandemic - the

people who live there will be able to have jobs, feeding and working with the animals.

Walker said her favorite merit badges were related to first aid and environmental work

A coxswain for the Northville Rowing Club, Walker said the University of Dayton is among her potential post-secondary education destinations.

Wherever she ends up, Scouting will be an experience she can always turn to for support.

"Scouting prepares you for life, there's no doubt about that," she said. With all the things that I've done through Scouting, it's helped get me out of my shell and made me try different things. I know I'm a better person, in general, because of Scouting. It will help me in my future experiences, both in work and in life."

Contact reporter Ed Wright at eawright@hometownlife.com or 517-375-1113.

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*Offer valid towards purchase of two high tech hearing instruments. **Gift card value \$20.00, valid at your nearest Kroger or Walmart location. Beltone 2021™ Tyler Mitchell, chief of natural resources for Huron-Clinton Metroparks, said deer culls at Kensington and Willow metroparks will improve the overall health of the deer herds and protect the parks' ecosystems. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE,COM

Deer

Continued from Page 1A

the 5.1-square-mile park over the years and the deer population has consistently been over 100 since surveying began. The carrying capacity for a healthy herd is 15 deer per square mile.

Deer proliferate in Kensington due to multiple factors, including a lack of natural predators. Wolves are not found in the Lower Peninsula, and coyotes seldom take on deer, preferring smaller, easier prey.

Deer also have rapid reproductive rates. A doe as young as 11⁄2 years old is fertile, and each pregnancy often results in twins due to the area's plentiful food sources, including invasive plants such as autumn olive that provide yearround nutrition and native plants the deer have eaten nearly to extinction.

Danielle Mauter, chief of marketing and communications for Huron-Clinton Metroparks, said at the time the deer management program began in 1999, Kensington had lost more than 70 species of native plants from deer grazing. Additionally, 40 plants once classified as common have been reclassified as uncommon



The albino doe that has been seen at Kensington Metropark will be spared from the cull because of its rarity. COURTESY OF DON PAVLICA

After the deer management program started, the natural resources staff has reestablished and maintained most of these plants

However, the main reason for the deer cull is to maintain the health of the deer population.

A cull, Mitchell said, is the most efficient, and most humane way to do that, as counterintuitive as it may seem. He said the park system has received backlash about the cull

As an alternative, birth control has

See DEER, Page 6A

KI (NNNR) HOMETOWNLIFE.COM | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | 5A

The Michigan Elder Law Reporter[™]

JANUARY 2021

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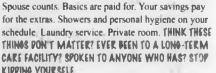
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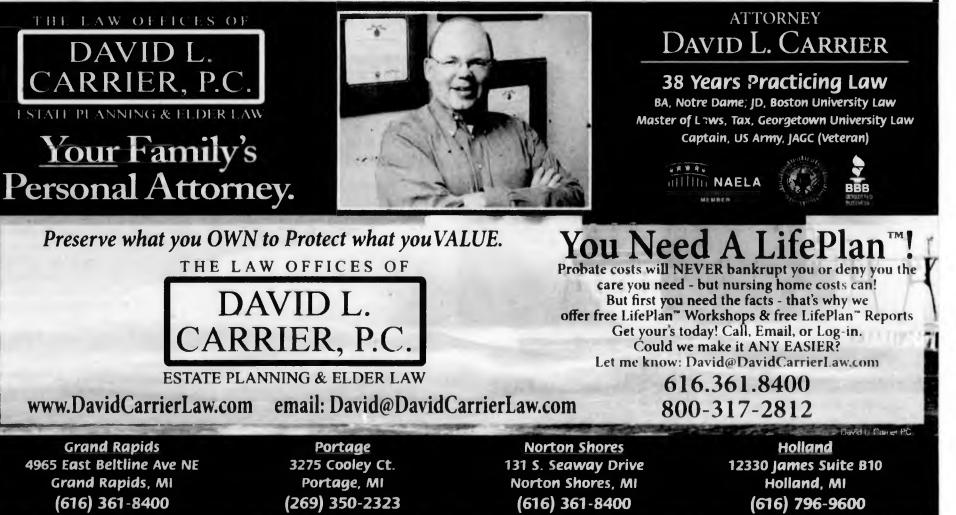
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Deer

Continued from Page 4A

been suggested as a means to reduce the deer population, with animals captured and surgically sterilized or injected with contraception.

"Financially, that's prohibitive," Mitchell said. "Wild animals are wild. To capture and handle and operate and then release a wild animal is very traumatic.

"I know culling is too, but it's ethical and quick."

During the cull, the sharpshooters will aim for antlerless deer. About 75 percent of the herd is female.

There is one doe, however, that they are taking special precautions to spare an albino that has gained the adoration of the public. Albinism is rare and makes an animal more susceptible to predators, but Mitchell and the parks system staff acknowledge the community's fondness for the doe.

'We recognize there is public interest in that particular animal and she is special," he said. "We respect people's desire to see and photograph that animal and we will try to stay away from her habitat. The shooting team knows they are not to knowingly take the albino deer, we have put measures in place to avoid that."

The doe may be the offspring of an albino buck that was killed in a 2015 deer cull at the park that resulted in public fury. While Mitchell noted the DNR offers no special protection to albino animals, the park system will take measures to protect Kensington's albino doe from suffering the same fate as that of her possible father.

We respect people's interest, we serve the public and landscape and we are doing what is right for the herd and

ecosystem," he said. "We have no desire to upset people.

"If we can make adjustments, and allow people to have an experience with an albino animal, that is what we would like to do."

The deer harvested from the Feb. 4 cull, as well as a Feb. 11 cull planned at Willow Metropark in New Boston, will be donated to Sportsmen Against Hunger, which will distribute the venison to local food pantries.

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at sbromley@hometownlife.com or 517-281-2412. Follow her on Twitter @Susan-Bromley10.

Bakers

Continued from Page 1A

various community causes, sports teams and individuals for decades now along with his family.

Tracy Borders, Baker's girlfriend, had to hide his phone on the day shortly before Christmas when she started the Go-FundMe page without his knowledge.

In the call for help, she wrote, "Everyone in one way or another has felt the effects of this pandemic, but some have been hit harder than others," and noted owners of restaurants, bars and banquet halls had suffered a major blow.

She said Baker had remained positive and through the years had done much for the community. While she said he would never want to accept anything in return, she challenged anyone who had ever received a toast on the house to give back.

More than 400 people answered the call and posted good wishes as well, expressing their gratitude for all the family had done over the years.

"In my 26 years of living in Milford I haven't seen a family give back to its community more than the Baker family has," Todd Meek wrote. "I consider it an honor to pay it back a little bit."

"Hoping your family makes it through this difficult time," Shelly Dettore wrote. "My children have grown up going to Baker's and have so many memories. Showers and communion parties. You're a part of many important events in many people's lives. Hope to have many more family gatherings in



Chris Baker raises a glass at Bakers of Milford on Jan. 15. He and his family hope to get back to serving customers at their three restaurants soon with help from the community via a GoFundMe page. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

your great restaurants!"

KOHLER. Walk-In Bath

Joell Beether, executive director of the Huron Valley Chamber of Commerce, said it's fabulous to see the community's support, but she was not surprised by it after almost two decades of knowing Baker.

"Anyone would have only the most positive things to say about him," she said. "He gives back to everybody. You would be hard-pressed to find a nonprofit organization that has not received a donation from one of his establishments. If you look at the list, local res-

taurants are also donating to him, and that speaks volumes about the person you are dealing with."

Toni Vulaj, owner of Americus Coney Island, also suffered a blow to his business, but stepped up immediately to help Baker.

'The Baker family is synonymous with Milford, going back to their dad, mom, and they have been in Milford forever and a day and always contributed to the community," he said. "They never know how to say no, they always opened their doors for you. ...

"For 25 to 30 years, the first person you always called was the Bakers. If they got on board, you knew you would be successful. They've done so much good in the community."

Baker is the son of Cathy and Paul Baker. Paul Baker was a special education teacher turned restaurant owner, who at different points owned the Goat Farm in Novi, PB Potter's in New Hudson, and the South Lyon Hotel. He opened Bakers of Milford in 1996.

Chris Baker graduated from Lakeland High in 1993 and had plans to be a doctor, but after graduating from Albion College in 1997 instead followed in his late father's footsteps, including being named Huron Valley Citizen of the Year.

Baker loves his community, and that community clearly returns the sentiment.

"I guess you take it day by day," he said. "Sometimes you just realize, there is no reason for negative thoughts and actions. I'm not happy about the shutdowns, but I get that COVID is a real thing.

"Let's get through this together and move forward and the sun will come up tomorrow."

He is looking forward to seeing his customers and friends again, thanking them personally, and sharing a drink.

"I want to thank everyone in person," Baker said. "I am going to personally respond to all these people. I look forward to raising a glass and having a drink with each and every one of them.

"It might be a lot of drinks."

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at sbromley@hometownlife.com or 517-281-2412. Twitter: @SusanBromley10.





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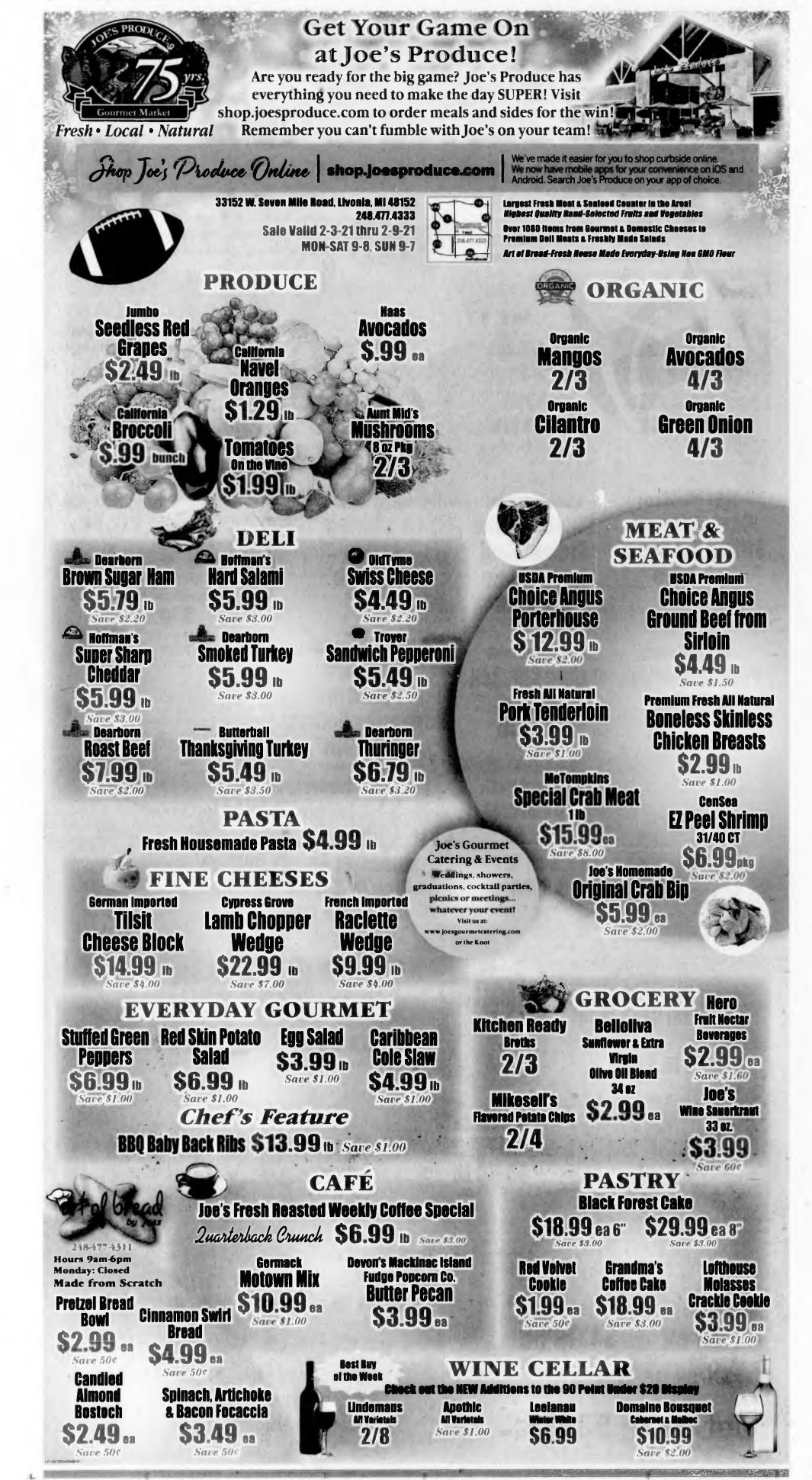
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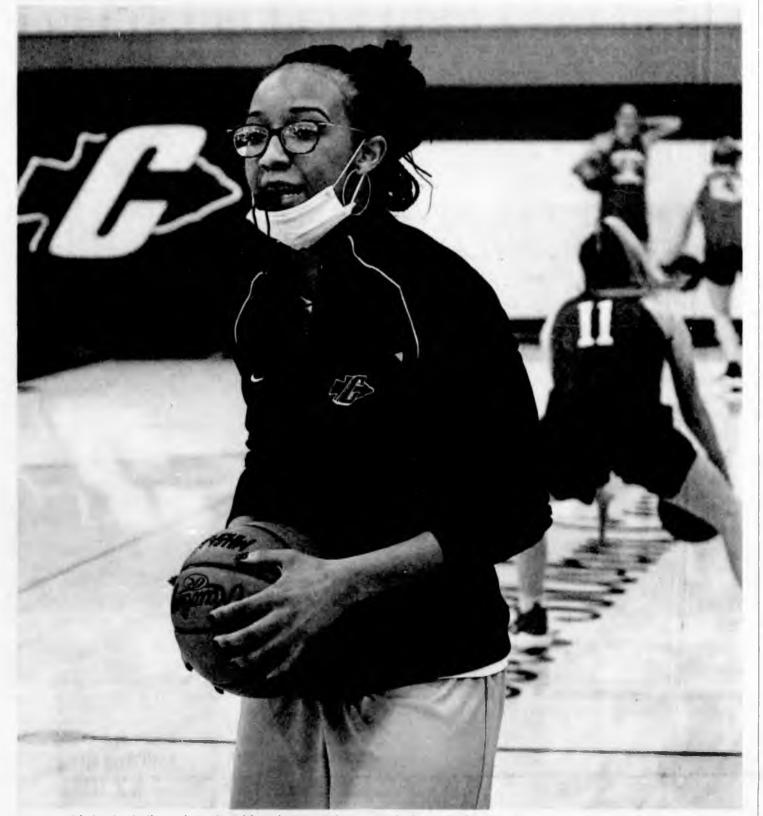
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Observer & Eccentric Media | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | 18 (NNNR)

SPORTS

GIRLS BASKETBALL



High school athletes rally in Lansing to 'let us play'

Brian Calloway Lansing State Journal USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

LANSING - Ethan Dunn should be gearing for the stretch run of his junior season on the court for the East Lansing basketball team.

Charlotte freshman Lyndi Miller and Fowlerville senior Brendan Young should be doing the same right now.

Cole Riedel would normally be getting ready for the wrestling postseason with his St. Johns teammates.

All instead are waiting for current COVID-19 restrictions to be lifted to allow for their seasons to actually get started.

They were among hundreds gathered from all across Michigan at the Capitol building Saturday afternoon as part of the latest "Let them play" rally fighting for all winter high school sports to get going.

"It's very important to me," Dunn said. "It's very painful for myself and everyone else, I'm sure - especially the seniors to have their season taken away like this and not have the opportunity. Some use it as a coping mechanism, others want to play at the collegiate level and others might not get a chance again to play this sport. It's very important to me to come out here and show support."

Basketball and wrestling join hockey and competitive cheer as the contact winter sports not being allowed under the latest COVID-19 orders that were released by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on Jan. 22. Those sports are currently stuck in a non-contact state until Feb. 21, which has added to the frustration

New-look Canton team preps for unusual season

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

Kayla Bridges has an idea of what she wants Canton to look like.

She was a four-year varsity player for the Chiefs girls basketball team from 2007-11, making two final-four appearances under then head coach Brian Samulski her junior and senior seasons while losing only nine games in those final two seasons combined.

Spending the last six seasons in the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park working as the junior varsity coach at Salem in 2015 before taking an assistant coach job with Plymouth in 2016, Bridges watched Canton crumble: going from a 17-win team in 2015-16 to winning only two of its past 42 games.

Bridges took the Canton girls basketball head coaching job, after six seasons under Robert Heitmeyer, with the goal of re-instilling those lessons and standards that were expected from players

"I know how much work it takes to get to those points and the little steps, the little goals you have to set for yourself and your team in order to get to that finish line," Bridges said.

Bridges took her first head coaching job in August, anticipating a normal

See CANTON, Page 2B

when she was a student.

season after a summer filled with

to those in attendance.

"It's been hard to practice and not have anything to work for," Miller said. "Everyone is losing their momentum to want to get better and want to do better. Everyone is losing hope for things to change

Saturday's rally was part of an intensified effort over the last week for high school sports to be played. Since the MDHHS announcement, the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan, Competitive Cheer Coaches Association of Michigan, Michigan Wrestling Association and Michigan High School Hockey Coaches Association have written letters to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and state officials pushing for their sports to get back in action.

The Senate took action Thursday, passing a resolution urging Whitmer

See RALLY, Page 2B

High school athletes plead for winter sports season

Colin Gay Hometownlife com USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Ian Kimble grew up in Livonia, what he calls a "high school hockey city."

He remembers watching Livonia Stevenson win a state title in 2013, beating Hartland in front of the entire Livonia community.

Kimble's goal was to make it to that game with teammates he had played

with since he started playing hockey. But as the days continue without a winter season starting, Kimble now sees his senior season in a Spartans uni-

form in jeopardy. "Growing up in Livonia all my life, been playing with some of these kids for almost 15 years now, and this is the last chance at our main goal, which is a state championship," Kimble said. "For it to be taken away, it just hurts."

Under normal circumstances, the high school hockey season would have started two months ago. But with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and Michigan's stringent response in fighting the spread of the coronavirus, the season has yet to start.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, along with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, has repeatedly delayed the start of contact See SEASON, Page 4B

sports; the latest announcement extends it to Feb. 21.

"Whether it is contact sports or it is bumping up that number for in-person dining, these are actions that will increase contacts and could create spread, and that's why we have to be smart and incremental as we move forward," Whitmer said



2B | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021 | O&EMEDIA (NNNR)

MHSAA hopeful for return of winter contact sports

Colin Gay Hometownlife com **USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN**

Two weeks into non-contact practices for wrestling, basketball, hockey and cheer teams throughout the state, Michigan High School Athletic Association Executive Director Mark Uyl said he thinks winter sports teams should immediately be able to return to contact practices and competitions.

"We've got the data from the pilot program, we've got the data from the other states," Uyl said in a press conference Friday. "Now we have the actual data from our winter sports over the past 14 days, and we firmly believe that now is the time to take the next step to allow those four winter sports, to allow

diately and for winter competition to also begin immediately."

On Jan. 22, the state announced nonprofessional contact sports would remain shut down until Feb. 21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Uyl said working with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Elizabeth Hertel, who took over the position after former director Robert Gordon resigned Jan. 22, has been "a very clear change," catching her up to speed on data accumulated by the MHSAA.

While MDHHS has not provided any specifics as to where the numbers have to be for a return for winter contact sports, Uyl said the fact that Hertel and

those contact practices to begin imme- her team are communicating ahead of time is a step in the right direction.

'The previous four days of communication this week with the health department has been better than it probably has been over the past four months," he said. "We're hoping for some new information and answers from the decision makers very soon. Certainly, the entire community's work is hopefully going to bear fruit very soon."

Since the extension, the MHSAA community has been extremely vocal about its desire for contact sports' return to action.

Uyl said he has been encouraged by the public's response to the extension.

"When it's all said and done, our MHSAA community numbers about

half-a-million people," Uyl said. "It's been very reinvigorating this week to see so many within that community really speak out, to really ask direct question of 'What are the numbers that are preventing us from playing?'

Since the start of the postponement, Uyl has been frustrated. He said MHSAA member schools have had accountability and have been following epidemic protocols. However, to him, teams not regulated by the MHSAA have been like the "Wild West," not following protocols to a tee and leaving the state for competition.

"We have been naïve to think folks are going to stay in their basement and they are not going to seek that activity," Uyl said.

Rally

Continued from Page 1B

and the MDHHS to allow for all winter sports to be played.

And athletes from across the state have pleaded their cases on social media with the #LetUsPlay and #Let-ThemPlay tags in the last week.

"Sports are a lot bigger than just playing," Young said. "It's what we all grew up playing and we have all these friendships that we've built through sports and especially being my senior year, I want one last chance to play with my friends and the guys I've been growing up with my whole life. I'm sure all these kids feel the same way."

The rally Saturday was the third at the Capitol building fighting for high school sports and included former Detroit Red Wings player Darren McCarty speaking and ex-NFL standout Andre Rison calling in to lend their support to the movement.

"I played basketball, football, I ran track," Rison said in his message via phone to the crowd. "I know how much sports means to our communities across the state of Michigan, and I know how much it means in a household, especially during these times. Sports can change a lot of things for the better."

The first rally took place in late August when football, soccer, girls swimming and volleyball were among the sports still sidelined in a majority of the state. Those seasons were eventually cleared to play. Football, girls swimming and volleyball finished their seasons this month after a two-month COVID-19 related pause. The second rally took place in December - nearly a month into a pause in activity ordered by MDHHS that put all sports activity on halt. A week following that rally, the MDHHS announced the fall sports tournaments in football, volleyball and swimming could resume under a pilot rapid testing program.



A large group participates in the "Let Them Play" rally on Saturday at the Capitol in Lansing. The rally was aimed at getting high school athletes back in action for winter sports. PHOTOS BY NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

"It's been hard to practice and not have anything to



Earlier this month, the MDHHS provided clearance for the non-contact winter sports - boys and girls bowling, boys swimming and gymnastics - to start their seasons.

People in attendance Saturday hope the latest rally further gets their message across and action is taken to allow all athletes to play.

work for. Everyone is losing their momentum to want to get better and want to do better. Everyone is losing hope for things to change." Lyndi Miller

"I hope they see that there is enough people here that care about what we're here to do and that they see (that) and change their mind," Riedel said.

"Sports touch a lot of kids' hearts," Young said. "You can see it's very important to a lot of people around the state of Michigan and I just hope they rethink the decision."

From left, basketball players Tori Briggs of Fowler, Lyndi Miller of Charlotte, Grace Pribble of Grand Ledge and Megan Zeitz of Dansville listen to speakers.

Canton

Continued from Page 1B

restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But as the calendar turned from 2020 to 2021, Canton is still in the same predicament as it was when she first started: working on skill development in non-contact settings, with the state barring any contact practices or competition until at least Feb. 21.

As a new coach, Bridges said, the team needs time to adapt to what she is bringing in, whether it's new offensive game plans or practice structures. They need time to understand and learn these things before buying into the system, something really Canton has not had the luxury of doing.

"The girls have some doubts about the certainty of the season and what it's going to look like going forward," Bridges said, "You don't know if the risk is going to pay off in the long run if we don't end up having a season.

"It's really up to us to kind of take advantage of the time we're given and be grateful we even have that.

But Bridges does have the luxury of having experience on her side.

Of the team's six seniors heading into the 2021 season, three - Kate Burns, Emerson Kilgore and Noel Blain - have been with the varsity team for the past three seasons

Blain, who has been a four-year varsity player for the Chiefs and has signed to play college soccer at the University of Dayton next fall, knows that the varsity style of basketball is not something that can be mastered in practices, especially in non-contact settings.

"It's super fast," she said. "The girls are all up on you all the time, like you just have to be ready. There's no free shots or easy makes, scores, anything like that."

Since Bridges arrived, Canton's practices have been focused on speed: practicing sprinting into shots, getting players basketball conditioned, something that, with the lack of time scrimmaging and actually playing the game itself, many teams are turning toward.

"You can't really scrimmage, practicing things as hard on defense," Burns said. "So if we are the faster team, coming off of non-contact practice more in shape, it could be huge in a game."

Along with the process of just getting in shape, Bridges has players model different offensive and defensive sets in her playbook, walking through possibilities of what players can do in a given play and how teammates can respond to their decisions.

With this, Bridges hopes that Canton will have an idea of what to do when a specific situation comes in game action.



Blain

"I think there is going to be some sort of learning curve, just a growth period once we do return to full contact and we are able to play some games," Bridges said. "I think it's one of those things where every team has to deal with it right now, so we can't pull the 'Woe is me.'

To Kilgore, who will play soccer at Madonna starting next season, Bridges has a different approach than the program's previous coach had.

Even though the practice style may be different, Bridges is the example of



what a successful player can be coming out of Canton: having played four years at Wayne State while earning a bachelor's degree in exercise science and a master's degree in public health.

"I think she's a very big role model for all the girls who are hoping to play college basketball, knowing you can come out of the Canton basketball program and still make it to the college level if you try hard," Kilgore said.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Twitter: @ColinGay17.

DeWitt's Zimmerman named Free Press Coach of the Year

Mick McCabe Special to Detroit Free Press USA TODAY NETWORK

As each football season approaches, Rob Zimmerman is always optimistic. But this past August he was downright giddy when speaking about expectations for this DeWitt team.

'They had an unbelievable offseason even though it couldn't be through us," he said. "The leadership on this team -I've never seen anything like it. They were working like crazy on their own at different kids' houses in their weight rooms. And the communication with our captains, I just knew that we had a great shot to be really, really good. They were so driven.

"Our team in 2013 that lost in the finals, their mindset was: 'We are playing in the state finals.' These guys were saying: 'We're going to win it."

They did win it — the Division 3 state championship, the first in school history, earning Zimmerman, 54, the Free Press All-State Coach of the Year award.

Hired just six weeks before the 1999 season began, Zimmerman's first season on the job produced a 4-5 record.

DeWitt has had 21 consecutive winning seasons since then and it culminated this season with the state title.

"Obviously they had had a great deal off success prior to me getting here," Zimmerman said. "So the kids still expected to win. I just came in and we tried to work as hard as we could."

There are several reasons for Zimmerman's success and No. 1 on the list is pure determination and hard work.

"I was driven to be a successful coach," he said. "I think my work ethic is probably the thing that has got me to where I'm at.'

Zimmerman has a career record 229-65 overall and he is 222-45 at DeWitt, including 18 conference championships with 15 district and 13 regional titles. The Panthers have been to 12 semifinal games and have five appearances in the state finals.

Perhaps the most amazing aspect to Zimmerman's career at DeWitt is he is coaching in a closed district. Every play-



DeWitt coach Rob Zimmerman coaches his Panthers against Grand Ledge. MATTHEW DAE SMITH/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

er on the DeWitt team lives in DeWitt. In this day and age of schools of choice where many of the most successful programs have players covering five or six zip codes, that is not the case at DeWitt.

"To me, that's the that's greatest accomplishment for us for what we've done without having school of choice kids," Zimmerman said. "We have very few move-ins because DeWitt, socioeconomically, it's expensive enough that it makes it more difficult. You can't go run and rent an apartment in here."

Zimmerman has been able to turn that into a positive. There is a unique kind of pride the DeWitt players have in their program. As youth league players, they idolized the varsity players. It is important for them to eventually play for DeWitt's varsity.

That feeling is evident in the coaching staff that continually features former players as assistant coaches.

"There's a ton of guys across the state that played for us that have a huge amount of pride in the program," Zimmerman said. "The ones that go into education or even have jobs around here, so many have wanted to come back and I'm just so proud of that.

"They understand the expectations.

They went through it and they want it to continue."

The biggest expectations are the ones Zimmerman placers upon himself. He attends clinics and watches film of a variety of teams.

"I took trips all over to go see different college programs that I had an interest in learning what they were doing offensively," he said. "I try to work harder every year, if it's possible, to get better."

It all culminated this season, a season unlike any other in the history of high school football in Michigan. There were starts and stops on this roller coaster season, attempting to play games in the midst of a pandemic.

Following the championship game, Zimmerman looked relieved more than anything. He finally had his state title and the postgame celebration was something he will never forget.

"There were two things for me," he said. "Seeing the joy in the kids' faces, knowing how hard they had worked. And for me individually, my dad (Bob) never missed a game I've coached. He doesn't move around very well anymore, but we were able to get him and the family down on the field for afterward."

Milford ski teams finish regular season undefeated

In the final head-to-head contest of the season, the Milford ski team was able to capture a perfect season for both its boys and girls teams.

Facing the Walled Lake Central girls team, Milford, beat the Vikings, 24-59, while also earning a 26-52 win against Walled Lake Northern. Maddie Melody helped the Mavericks with a pair of second-place finishes, while Riley Watts finished fifth in each meet. Ellie DeYong finished eighth and ninth, respectively.

"It is great to see the young ladies go after a trophy, that makes you 'Queen of the Mountain," head coach Marty Neighbors said. "They know what they have to do in divisionals and it will be up to each one, doing their part to make that happen."

Earning 27-57 and 32-48 wins against Walled Lake Central and Walled Lake Northern, respectively, the Milford boys ski team goes into the divisional round undefeated as well, helped by a sixth and fourth-place performance by Carson Chamberlain, a 10th and third-place performance by Max Wilkerson and an eighth and 17thplace performance by Peyton Chamberlain.

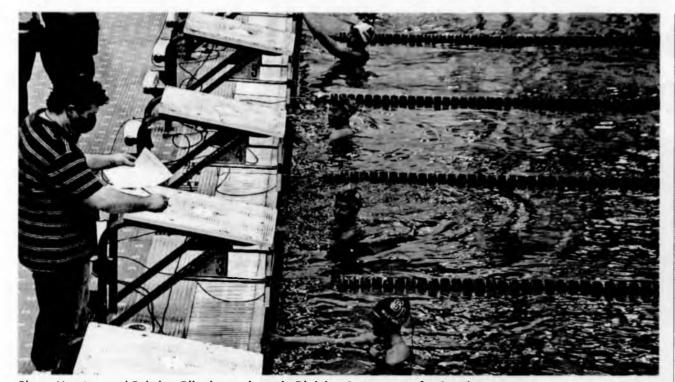
Along with the help of key finishes by Joe Antrim, Jack Hannert, Ben Youngblood and Spencer Blaz, Milford placed all seven of its skiers in the top-24 in the giant slalom

"They to are also heading into divisionals, knowing full well, the task in front of them," Neighbors said. "Consistent finishing, with a competitive touch are required to maintain their record and shoot for the 'King of the Mountain' honors."

Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

3DAYBLINDS





Sierra Newton and Sabrina Oliveira each made Division 2 state cuts for South Lyon. COURTESY OF CARRIE HANSHAW

South Lyon swim and dive finishes season at Division 2 state meet

The 2020 Michigan high school girls swim and dive season was long and full of uncertainty, but swimmers from across the state were able to find closure at the Michigan High School Athletic Association state meet.

For South Lyon, the season saw the rise of three seniors to the state team who had never made it to this level in their high school career. The team also accomplished its goal of being repeat Lakes Valley Conference champions for the fourth-straight year - something no other South Lyon team has done in recent history.

At the Division 2 state meet at Northview High School, South Lyon divers, Molly Younkin and McKenzie Valencia finished 12th and 14th overall in the state, competing with teammates Reese Linton and Ellie Peitz. Each of these divers will return to the team next season.

In the swimming competition, seniors Meghan

Bandy, Melanie Hesterman and Emily Sherry all made their first appearances at the state meet, helping the Lions to a 15th-place finish.

Hesterman, Bandy, Emma Cusumano and Sierra Newton finished in 10th place in the 200-Free relay with a 1:41.12, while Bandy, Cusumano, Sabrina Oliveira and Sierra Newton finished in 12th place with a 3:43.04.

Newton, a sophomore, earned All-State honors in two events, finishing eighth in the 100-Free and tied for sixth in the 50-Free. Oliveira placed 18th in the 100-back, while Cusumano placed 17th in the 200 IM.

"The swimmers and divers from all schools did an amazing job at this competition," South Lyon head coach Bob Crosby said. "Although the results may not have been what everyone had hoped to achieve, it was great to see everyone compete and get some closure to an unusual season."

South Lyon pompom team wins Mid-American title

The South Lyon pompom team won the 2020 Mid-American Large High Kick championship with its performance "Fire and Ice" Nov. 7 at South Lyon East.

In their first time competing in the same competition, the South Lyon junior varsity team came in third place, dressed as bees dancing to hip hop music.

"These girls have worked so hard to get here," head coach Emily Thomas said. "Showing up every practice having to wear their mask through three-hour practices was not easy, but they never complained and were just so happy to get to perform at football games and prepare for the competition"

Competing during the COVID-19 pandemic, each coach, spectator and team walked in one at a time to watch their respective team at South Lyon East, with masks required.

Next, both teams are preparing for the state competition in March.

Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.



The South Lyon junior varsity pompom team came in third place at the 2020 Mid-American Large High **Kick Championships.**



The South Lyon varsity pompom team finished as 2020 Mid-American Large High Kick champions. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHELLEY THOMAS

Season

Continued from Page 1B

Athletes and coaches are getting more and more vocal in their frustration, questioning if there's a return in sight for winter sports like basketball and hockey, which

said. "I kind of saved it all for senior year. If I don't get to have it, I'm not satisfied with how I went

went harder," Hampton

off." Hampton and the rest of the Franklin basketball team are making sure their voices are heard, releasing a video on social media pledging to follow



were unable to finish the season last year.

Making the pledge

In four years with the Livonia Franklin girls basketball team, Sami Hampton learned to be a better person. She learned to be a leader on and off the court, playing for the teammates next to you and on the bench, while creating friendships in the process.

She does not want her junior season to be her last in a Patriots uniform.

"I wish I would have

Obituaries

James Donohoe, Sr.

Passed peacefully surrounded by his family on January 27th, 2021 at the age of 90. Married to and survived by the love of his life for 65 years, Joanne Donohoe (nee Foley). Loving father to his three children, Marilyn, James Jr., and Kathleen. Grandfather of eight, including three NHS grads: Erin, Emily, and Sarah. Member of St. Kenneth's Parish; Army veteran, Korea. For more information, visit the funeral website at www.Harry/WillFuneralHome.com/Livonia

Hany J Will Funeral Homes

COVID-19 protocols, something they feel they have already done.

Many teams are following suit with players flooding social media with the hashtag "LetUs-Play," pledging adherence to mask-wearing and social distancing policies to be able to play a season.

Livonia Stevenson hockey senior Brenden Heard said he and his team have been going above and beyond the basic protocols such as going to separate places in the high school to eat lunches to lessen expo-

sure to possible cases, not using locker rooms and spacing out rinkside to put on equipment for practices, staying away from groups of friends and family to make sure they are not exposed.

"It's a quarantine on top of another quarantine," Heard said. At Novi High School,

basketball senior Bryce Lubin said the Wildcats had team managers cleaning balls multiple times per practice and players would sanitize their hands between drills, maintaining the six feet social distancing rule.

"It was like we were doing all the right things," he said

With all the precautions taken, winter athletes were encouraged by the signs given from the end of the fall high school sports season.

Using a pilot COVID-19 antigen testing program, the MHSAA and MDHHS found that of 5,376 people tested three times per week, a total of 57 came back positive.

Spartan forward Brenden Heard, right, confers with his goalie Brenden Stroble during Stevenson's playoff game in March. Athletes have taken to social media using #letusplay in a plea to start the winter sports season. HOMETOWNLIFE COM FILE

not an option, many athletes view this as progress and as a basis for starting a 2021 winter season.

"I just want everyone to see it can work," Kimble said. "The numbers are out, the science is out: it's showing it can work through fall sports. I think it can work with winter sports too."

More than just the game

Heard knows that he could have played hockey anywhere this school year. He could have played with a travel team, going to other Midwestern states that allow youth sports to play in tournaments and games. But Heard said that was never on the table.

"I want a state championship," he said, "It's the only thing that's been on my mind since last year March when we lost to Trenton. That's the only thing I've been thinking about."

Livonia Franklin junior Emily Burton said she While mass testing is takes pride in representing Franklin - her school. her community. She said it hit her specifically at away games, putting on her Patriots jersey and, even if they lost, knowing the team fought hard either way. But to the players, it's

more than just what happens on the court. It's the bonds formed through the shared experience, but bloomed more off the court.

"When you play a sport, you have friends, you have a family," Livonia Franklin junior Sammy Provenzano said. "They are a built-in family; they are there for you."

Lubin said Novi basketball is the "core reason" why he has the friends he does, explaining those relationships built are a big reason why he continues to play.

And when players were away from that community and nothing concrete ahead, it brought a level of loneliness and isolation.

"During a pandemic, there are not many things to look forward to," Livo-

nia Franklin junior Kalin Bates admitted. "Having basketball and athletics and games to prepare for, that really gives us something to look forward to and prepare for. Right now, it's really hard to find that."

No matter what the season brings, Northville girls basketball player Avery Tolstyka – one of three seniors on the team - wants to make sure her leadership is felt in her final practices with the team, something she has built up through her years with the program.

"The other seniors and I are really trying our best to really give them hope that we are going to have a season," Tolstyka said. "We're not trying to give them any of our negativity or we're not trying to show them that we are upset because I feel that will only negatively impact the team during practice, which will ultimately affect the season if we have one."

As one of six seniors on Novi's basketball team, Lubin knew the team would be his in

2021. He knew he would be one of the leaders of the group.

But through the uncertainty, through the starting and stopping, Lubin realized something he had heard his entire life was true:

"Play every team like it's your last, live every -day like it's your last because you never know what's going to happen," Lubin said. "That is just so true to this year.

"I remember in March, when everything got shut down, I didn't think there was any way that it would impact this season. If I would have known what I knew now, I would have just focused and gave it my all. I think I did those things, but I would be more locked in and appreciative of the practices and the games and the time spent with coaches and teammates.

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

Would-be travelers are counting the days

Hawaii and France top post-pandemic wish list



On Travel Christopher Elliott USA TODAY

Harry Wenkert has big travel plans. He and his wife just booked a cruise to Venice, the Greek Islands, Turkey and Croatia for September.

September 2022, that is.

As the COVID-19 lockdowns continue, a lot of Americans are asking: Where will I travel when the pandemic ends? And when can I go?

It's not Wenkert's only trip. Between now and next year, he hopes to visit relatives in Colorado and California. When? "As soon as it's safe to travel," says Wenkert, a retired pharmaceutical industry marketer in Pittsburgh.

Where will you go after the pandemic?

Where will you go? And when will you go there?

"The reality is that the world will reopen in phases," says Misty Belles, a spokeswoman for Virtuoso, a travel adviser network. "That will likely dictate where and when people travel again."

Belles already has her first post-pandemic trip selected: She's visiting Paris.

"I'm using the downtime to brush up on my French," she says. "I miss Paris, my soul misses Paris. It's where I return again and again.'

Virtuoso polled its travel agents about the top destinations next year. Topping the international list: France, Australia and Greece. Closer to home, Mexico, California and Hawaii are on its customers' itineraries.

I asked a cross-section of travelers where they would go once they get the "all clear." Their responses spanned the safe to the exotic. But they all had one thing in common: They will travel again, and they'll do it as soon as possible. The urge to travel is stronger than ever after months of lockdowns and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warnings

Old favorites rank highly for 2021

Sandy Hill is planning a trip to an old favorite: Honolulu.

"Specifically, Waikiki Beach," says



Hawaii's Waikiki Beach is the first destination on the mind of San Francisco resident Sandy Hill. OKIMO/GETTY IMAGES

away.'

If these post-pandemic escapes seem a little unimaginative, it's because they are. They're a safe bet, and Louisa Gehring, who owns a travel agency in Cincinnati, knows why.

"Travel has been banned for almost a year," she says. "People understand that a destination may not always be just a flight away. If they only had one more trip, it would be to an old favorite, rather than somewhere completely new and exotic.'

Her clients have booked a lot of European vacations for the second half of 2021, including France, Italy and England.

Someone asked me where I would go when the pandemic ended, and I immediately thought of Hawaii, too. My kids would spend 12 hours on a plane so they could hang out at the Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, the world's largest openair mall. I also would love to take them back to Waikiki Beach for an afternoon of bodysurfing and then buy them shave ice

But I found myself answering slightly differently. I wanted a quiet week in a cabin near Waimea Canyon State Park on Kauai. No internet, no phone service. It's highly unlikely I'll make it, but I can dream, can't I?

Craving something more exotic after the pandemic ends?

Some travelers are planning something more exotic, at least by our standards. Andrew Cunningham is headed to Thailand. He and his family were supposed to visit last April but had to cancel. "We intend to revive this plan once the flowers and the incomparable views the pandemic comes to a standstill," from every angle take your breath says Cunningham, a pest control expert

from Chicago.

Cunningham says Thailand makes more sense than ever - and not just because it has some of the lowest infection rates in the world.

"It offers so much excitement for our entire family," he says. "We planned on going to see some amazing shows, temples, and even sanctuaries that you will never find here in the United States."

He'll need to be patient. Thailand may be one of the last countries to open for tourism. Most foreign nationals are barred from entering the country until further notice.

The travel insurance company World Nomads has seen a lot of demand for far-flung locations, according to Christina Tunnah, its general manager for the Americas.

"People are thinking big and far away to satisfy their pent-up wanderlust," she says

World Nomads' customers, who tend to be a little more adventurous than average, have island fever.

'We've seen a spike in sales to French Polynesia, including Tahiti, and the Turks and Caicos Islands," says Tunnah. "The Dominican Republic and Bermuda are also popular choices."

A different world awaits

The "when" of travel will be a little more difficult than the "where," according to Lise Barnard, a health intelligence analyst at WorldAware, a security company.

"The post-pandemic travel land-

uals, As a result traveling and its associated risks will vary between countries and individuals."

Barnard told me many people might decide against traveling since there may still be a lot of uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 disease projections. Older travelers and people with underlying chronic illnesses who are more susceptible to coronavirus, may want to stay home even if local health authorities allow travel.

Whether you want to experience something new or return to a favorite destination, one thing is clear: The moment you get the green light to plan a vacation, you'll probably call your travel adviser or open your computer to check rates - if you haven't already done so.

Where travelers plan to go this year

During the fall, Travel insurance company Generali Global Assistance polled travelers to see which domestic and international destinations they are targeting for post-pandemic trips.

Top 5 domestic destinations

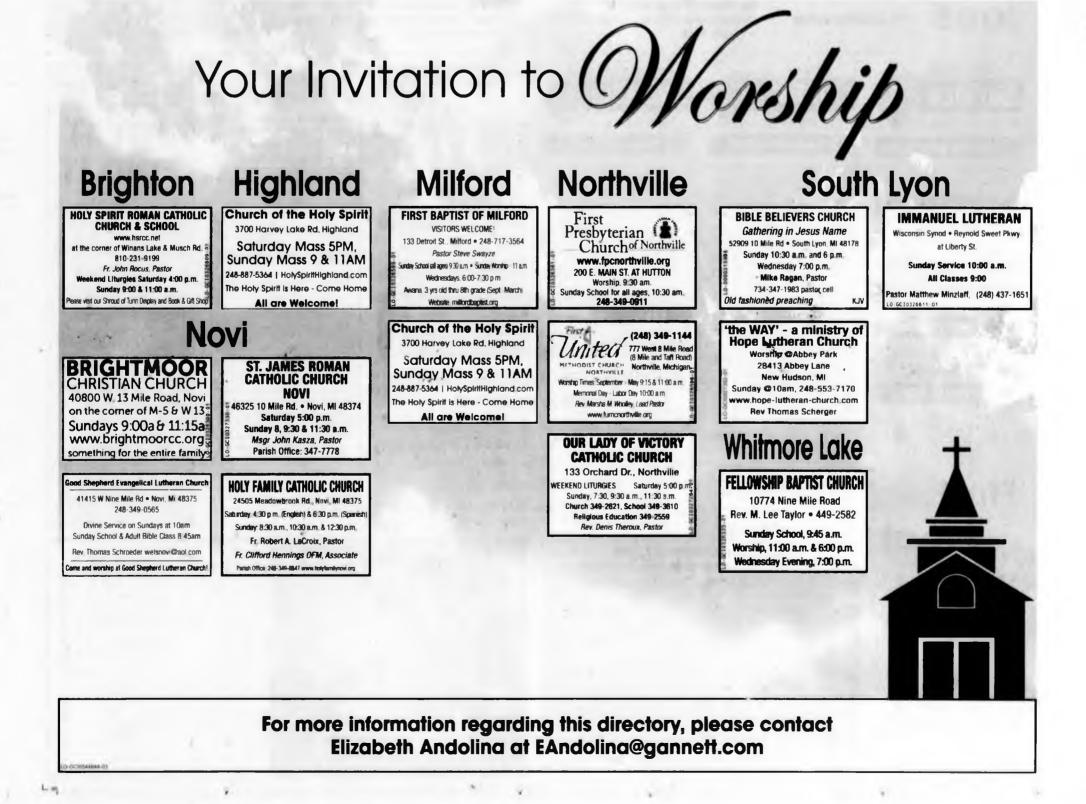
- 1. Florida (27.8%)
- 2. California (15.4%)
- 3. New York (15.1%) 4. North Carolina (11.4%)
- 5. Texas (7.3%)

Top 5 international destinations

1. France (10.6%)

Hill, the director of a nonprofit in San Francisco. "There is something magical about Hawaii. The beauty and scent of scape will without a doubt look different from the world we left when lockdowns started happening globally in March 2020," she says. "Defining the end of the pandemic will be different for individ-

2. Mexico (8.9%) 3. Italy (8.9%) 4. Germany (7.0%) 5. Canada (6.7%)



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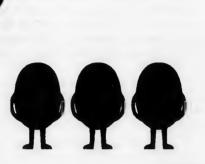
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hen you're applying for a job, standing out from the crowd is always a challenge. But this tough task can suddenly seem insurmountable when you're applying for an extremely competitive position. Here are five tips to help you stand out from that pile of other applicants.

I. Get personal

JOBS

Feeling like you're submitting

difference. Start by seeing whether you know anyone who currently works for that employer. Whether it's an old friend or an acquaintance on LinkedIn, having someone who can hand-deliver your resume or put in a good word for you can really help to put your name at the top of the interview list.

If you can't track down someone who can refer or recommend you, you should still make an effort to be as personal as possible in your application materials. Skip that generic "To Whom It May Concern" and see if you can find the name of the person you'd be working directly for, or even the hiring typos and errors is absolutely necessary. Now's also a great time to polish your materials and make sure that they're memorable and impactful. Ensure that you include quantifiable achievements in your resume. Start your cover letter off with an engaging and captivating story.

3. Go above and beyond

You should never hesitate to go the extra mile, show some initiative and share other materials that a potential employer might care about. Send them a link to your portfolio or personal blog. Complete a sample specifically for that Share that amazing Excel spreadsheet you built – complicated macros and all.

4. Polish your social media presence

Your work examples and official career documents will only take you so far. More than likely, hiring managers will look you up on social media. Before even submitting your stuff, ensure you've taken the time to clean up your profiles.

5. Follow up

You know all of that intense competition we talked about? It's also pretty overwhelming to the hiring manager. Don't be surprised if you don't hear back immediately about that job you're so excited about. This is why following up is so important.

If you haven't heard anything (whether that's a "yes," "thanks, but no thanks" or "we've received your submission" email) in about a week or two, feel free to reach out personally and check in on a timeline for a hiring decision. Make an attempt to use the most personalized email address you can find. If you can't hunt one of those down, a general "info" or "careers" address will suffice.

Craft a friendly message just asking for an update on the hiring process for that specific position, reiterate your excitement about the opportunity, and thank them for

your materials into cyberspace is always frustrating, especially when you put so much time and effort into them.

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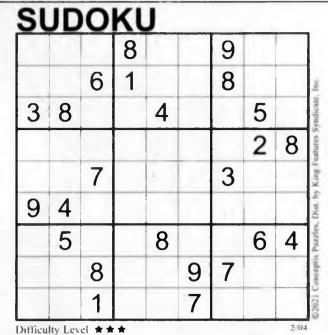
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Here's How It Works:

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Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must till 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!

SAME BOTH WAYS Can you find all the palindromes hidden in the grid? They are hidden horizontally, vertically and dusonally. The words will always be in a straight like. Cross them off the list as you find them. T KMINIMBDEIFIED OTAVATORR XYM R Т R Ε HANNAHXA G XEA OSTDIDTLCR P RA B D OUEAUENEA G A 0 W B A PLTECVFXA P Ε DHM Ε EPUOADEA P N N AAB R E IULRSRLJOGKVR Ρ OPUKBOOBOY P DY Ζ EDDERKNT N D G R E Т R TATORPADEW 0 U OR V TOTBOBSAYENODB E FROTORDEDATEEI SEXESAGASEJKKTB NUNUCIVICXSEMUM ABBA ANNA BIB BOB BOOB CIVIC DAD DEED

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