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Review of January plane crash

NEWS, 4A

Maybury Farm goat named after police officer in Northville Township

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com | USA TODAY NETWORK

They're both triplets!
When Northville Township Officer Adam Micek learned there was a new set of triplets at Maybury Farm, he mentioned that he was a triplet, too.

The police officer, 28, and the baby Nigerian Dwarf goat were introduced.

With the badged and non-badged triplets getting along and Micek's birthday just around the corner, the buckling was nicknamed "Adam."

"I think it was more of a joke that one should be nicknamed after me," Micek said. "Well, here we are today. I think it's kind of neat."

A Salem High School graduate, Micek hopes to retire as a law enforcer. He wouldn't be surprised if the day he met a triplet goat ultimately nicknamed after him becomes one of the best stories of his career.

Micek recalled that he responded to an April 25 call at Maybury Farm on Eight Mile Road in Northville Township and learned there were some new triplet goats in the barn.

He's the middle child of the triplets his mother gave birth to on a May 2 nearly three decades ago. His new friend and namesake has two doe sisters.

Micek said he always enjoyed being a triplet because that meant he always had a friend nearby. He plans to visit the farm every chance he gets and expects his friendship with a certain dwarf goat will grow in the years to come.

Buckling Adam is one of about 20 baby lambs and goats wobbling and toddling around the farm this spring. The farm has more than 100 animals, with 11 species represented.

They have registered names, which sometimes are shortened. Nicknames are definitely rare, giving Adam some star status.

"All three of the triplets are really just adorable," Executive Director Diana Wallace said. "This time of the year, because we have so many babies, all of them are stars. (But) he's getting a lot of press."

Wallace likes that children visiting Maybury get to mingle with visiting police officers.

"They're human beings just like everybody else,"



Northville Township Police Officer Adam Micek holds the Nigerian Dwarf goat Adam, a fellow triplet, who was born at Maybury Farm. Micek visited his furry little buddy on May 5.

PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Adam the Nigerian Dwarf goat perches on the back of a friend at Maybury Farm on May 5.

she said. "For us, it's a partnership that we're working on together - to bring the community, the farm, the police department all together. It's a good thing, a very good thing."

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

Quarantines just got a lot shorter in South Lyon, Huron Valley

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com | USA TODAY NETWORK

A South Lyon father lobbied the school board May 4 for a new strategy to avoid the quarantines that sends kids home, including the one that just grounded his daughter.

His suggestion appeared to be a version of musical chairs - moving kids every 15 minutes, so they aren't within the 6 feet of distance of another student that would mandate a quarantine if one should test positive for COVID-19.

While South Lyon board members couldn't commit to that, they and the Huron Valley school board to its north both approved reducing quarantine time by half to 7 days with a negative PCR test.

"The CDC publicizes two options, one was resolved today (with guidance changed from 14 days of quarantine to 10 days)," South Lyon Superintendent Steve Archibald said. "The other is return after 7 days with a negative PCR test result, taken after 5 days of quarantine."

After more than a month of 14-day quarantines and thousands of hours of missed face-to-face instruction, both school boards took the second option.

Archibald said in the last three months, there have been a total of 101 school-associated cases, which resulted in 1,390 school-associated quarantines. But only 14 of the quarantined students subsequently tested positive, 12 of them in the first four days of quarantine, and two within eight days of quarantine. The low numbers, he said, supported lowering the days of quarantine.

The consensus was the same in Huron Valley.

"The bottom line is we're not seeing even moderate levels of transmission in school facilities or related to school activities," Superintendent Paul Salah told the school board in requesting the quarantine reduction. Since April 5, when the district increased the quarantine period from 10 to 14 days, about 1,400 individuals were quarantined. Each 14 day quarantine results in 60 hours of missed face-to-face instruction, Salah noted, resulting in a "tremendous burden" for students and staff, and just over the past month, equals a missed 85,440 hours of in-person instruction.

"Quarantines are doing more harm than good with the transmission rate," Salah said.

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

Novi man charged with using prisoner names on unemployment claims

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com | USA TODAY NETWORK

A Novi man faces federal charges after he received more than \$300,000 because he allegedly made fraudulent claims for unemployment benefits in the names of prisoners and parolees.

Terrell Dwayne Mason, 39, was charged with mail fraud, wire fraud, money laundering and aggravated identity theft because of the alleged scheme that apparently started in spring 2020.

Federal prosecutors said in their May 5 complaint that Mason filed more than 40 fraudulent claims, predominantly in the names of people with criminal records and ineligible to receive the pandemic specific unemployment dollars.

According to the court complaint, Mason met a Michigan unemployment insurance employee when he began dating one of the state worker's relatives.

Deemed "the insider," the state employee told investigators in February that Mason claimed to have several friends having difficulties with their unemployment

claims. Mason gave the insider 20 or 30 names and other information.

"The insider approved the claims without properly vetting them," the complaint said. "The insider told agents that they took Mason's word on the claims but denied any knowledge that the claims were in the name of prisoners."

"The insider explained that they never would have approved any of the claims if they knew that the claims were related to prisoners because prisoners are not entitled to (pandemic unemployment assistance) benefits."

The insider also denied receiving cash or compensation from Mason, not including a gift of about \$100 in value.

FBI agents and other investigators had become aware of a suspected unemployment fraud scheme the month before. It involved five prisoners at a federal correctional institution in Milan.

That led them to Mason, who then had an address on Brownstone Drive in Novi.

The complaint documented that Mason was discharged from the Milan facility "on or about April 23, 2020, or two days before a PUA claim was filed using his identity on April 25, 2020."

Records showed that the claim requested wages from about March 21, 2020, to at least April 23, 2020 - a time range when Mason was incarcerated.

Around the same time that they talked to the state worker, agents executed a search warrant on Mason's Novi home.

They found Mason there along with an iPhone, dozens of credit and debit cards held in names other than Mason's, notebooks containing names, birthdates and social security numbers, multiple fake driver's licenses, magnetic card readers and other suspicious items.

Agents said, without detection, Mason's scheme was set to net about \$800,000.

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



Huron Valley abandons Suburban graduation, prom plans

Susan Bromley hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

With the clock ticking down on the end of the school year, Huron Valley officials abandoned previously announced plans for graduation and prom at commercial venues.

Superintendent Paul Salah confirmed that commencement ceremonies for Milford and Lakeland High seniors will not be held at Suburban Collection Showplace, or Eastern Michigan University.

"We had secured Suburban, and they are not comfortable with current capacity limitations and rules," Salah said. "We were hoping the guidelines would change, but they didn't. We tried every-

thing from securing multiple large venues to working with legislature to get language that would allow us to host indoor commencement, but we are still waiting... We can't wait any longer."

Instead, district officials will abide by the wishes of seniors as revealed in a survey to graduate with their entire class. Salah said that the school district has more latitude in hosting large events than the commercial venues do.

Each high school will have an outdoor graduation ceremony at their respective high school's football stadium on June 6, Lakeland at 11 a.m. and Milford at 4 p.m. Each school has between 300-320 graduating seniors. A rain date is set for June 13. The district will host indoor graduation ceremonies for Harbor High

on May 24, and for International Academy West on May 26, both at the Lakeland fieldhouse, each with about 80 graduates.

Salah said if the health department changes guidance on COVID-19 restrictions or the legislature takes action, the district will be prepared to adapt as they have for the entire school year.

"I feel great about these plans," Salah said. "Our primary goal for months has been to find a way to honor our seniors in the way they deserve and we've continued to explore every possible option to make that happen... We can't control all the elements, but we can say, we've left no stone unturned in making graduation plans."

As far as prom goes, Salah said a sur-

vey of seniors revealed they "were less than enthralled" about restrictions that would have put them in cohorts, unable to dance in large groups, wearing wrist bands and with other restrictions.

Salah said due to the opposition to restrictions, prom will not be hosted by the district, but is being organized by parents and students. "It's primarily parent and student-led prom activities, with the district supporting them and helping," Salah said. "We are supporting them with questions on planning, in terms of getting the word out to the entire school body."

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

Hope-generating Northville non-profit seeking vital donations

Ed Wright hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Northville-based Living and Learning Enrichment Center is proving to be as resilient as the young adults with autism or related challenges that it has assisted since 2015.

Through tireless fundraising efforts orchestrated by founder Rachelle Vartanian, the non-profit organization cleared the initial financial hurdles to purchase the 14-acre former Don Massey Estate in Novi — a move that was necessitated when it outgrew its former downtown Northville location.

It has been slowed, but not stopped, by the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced Vartanian to cancel three pivotal live fundraising events, including a classic car show.

The latest obstacle is a May 31 deadline to raise \$150,000 that will allow contractors to make the estate compliant with Americans With Disabilities Act regulations and make the facility operational.

Vartanian, a former special educa-



The former Massey Mansion on Griswold near Old Baseline Road is becoming the new headquarters of the Living and Learning Enrichment Center.

tion teacher and the parent of a son who was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome when he was 5 years old, said she is so committed to the Living and Learning Enrichment Center that she sold her home, downsized her possessions and borrowed from her retirement account.

Now, she is asking for donations to help the center become operational.

"We're so close," she said. "We got the keys to estate last January ... and then COVID hit. We need the \$150,000 to pay the contractors for the ADA-compliance work by May 31 or they have to move on to other jobs they have scheduled. I am determined to make this happen."



Living and Learning Enrichment Center worker Mary Anne Cronford, left, works with students Nicole Sawle and Rosemary Jiddou, right, on May 6 labeling cartons of eggs for sale. The center has its own chicken coop and it sells eggs produced there to local markets. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

The center is a place of hope for young adults with challenges, Vartanian emphasized. It is a space that offers not only social support for autistic and similarly challenged people, but job skills training and confidence-building — assets that can help them secure a degree of normalcy in their lives.

"Life doesn't get easier for these young adults once their schooling is done," Vartanian explained. "This place will give them somewhere to come and learn vital job skills and even work at a market where we sell goods that are produced on the grounds."

Among the more than 25 programs offered at the center are an IT academy/cybersecurity training program, an artisan market, summer camps, a lavender farm, alpaca farm, doggie daycare with dog walking and job-skills classes — all focused on assisting challenged young adults with transitioning from special education to the real world.

Vartanian started the center in 2015 in the Farmington Community Library. The demand for its services has increased so rapidly that a move to a more spacious setting like the Massey estate became necessary.

"Living and Learning is a place for

teens and adults who have autism or related challenges to feel safe and it's a place where they feel accepted and they're allowed to be who they are and not be ashamed of it and feel good about who they are," Vartanian said.

"The unemployment rate for young adults on the autism spectrum is 90% — and that was before COVID. We want to crush that number."

The 6,253-square-foot Massey estate has four bedrooms and six bathrooms and was built in the 1920s. Don Massey was a world-renowned Cadillac dealer. He died in 2011 at the age of 83.

"The first time I walked the Massey Estate, I knew that's where we had to be," Vartanian said. "It gives enough room to do micro-businesses, offer programs like recycling pallet-making and grow vegetables and have bee and alpaca farms. It's a perfect fit."

"This is a place where these young adults and learn how to socialize and build lasting relationships through experience. It's a place where they can learn to live the most independent life possible. We're almost there. We're almost in the door. We just need a little more financial support from the community."

Vartanian said donations could lead to naming opportunities at the center.

To make a donation to the Living and Learning Enrichment Center, visit the organization's website.

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

CITY OF NOVI NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONSIDERATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION DISTRICT UNDER ACT P.A. 210 OF 2005, AS AMENDED

Notice is hereby given that Sakura Novi, LLC and Robertson Sakura Novi, LLC have submitted a request to the City of Novi for the establishment of a Commercial Rehabilitation District under the "Commercial Rehabilitation Act P.A. 210 of 2005," and an application for issuance of a Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate.

The proposed project consists of the four following parcels:

Parcel Number 1: Tax ID Number 50-22-23-126-006, described as follows:

T1N, R8E, SEC 23 PART OF E 1/2 OF NW 1/4 BEG ON N SEC LINE DIST N 89-34-00 E 433.70 FT FROM NW COR OF SD E 1/2 OF NW 1/4, TH N 89-34-00 E 613.40 FT, TH S 00-17-20 E 891.25 FT TO CEN LINE US-16 HWY, TH N 71-44-00 W ALG SD CEN LINE 650.70 FT, TH N 682.62 FT TO BEG EXC US-16 HWY 10.20 AMN412

Parcel Number 2: Tax ID Number 50-22-23-226-008, described as follows:

T1N, R8E, SEC 23 PART OF NE 1/4 BEG AT PT DIST N 89-00-00 E 99.53 FT FROM N 1/4 COR, TH N 89-00-00 E 165.14 FT, TH S 00-49-20 E 527.55 FT, TH S 89-00-00 W 165.14 FT, TH N 00-44-20 W 527.55 FT TO BEG 2 AMN410B-1

Parcel Number 3: Tax ID Number 50-22-23-126-011, described as follows:

T1N, R8E, SEC 23 PART OF NW 1/4 BEG AT PT DIST S 89-00-00 W 65.61 FT FROM N 1/4 COR, TH S 00-44-20 E 527.55 FT, TH S 89-00-00 W 61.82 FT, TH N 71-53-30 W 170 FT, TH N 01-00-00 W 471.87 FT, TH N 89-00-00 E 224.89 FT TO BEG 2.58 AMN410B-3

Parcel Number 4: Tax ID Number 50-22-23-226-007, described as follows:

T1N, R8E, SEC 23 PART OF N 1/2 OF SEC BEG AT N 1/4 COR, TH N 89-00-00 E 99.53 FT, TH S 00-44-20 E 527.55 FT, TH S 89-00-00 W 165.14 FT, TH N 00-44-20 W 527.55 FT, TH N 89-00-00 E 65.61 FT TO BEG 2 AMN410B-2

Pursuant to Section 3 (3) of said Act, a public hearing shall be held for the establishment of a Commercial Rehabilitation District on Monday, May 24, 2021 at 7:00 pm or as soon thereafter, during which any property owner within the proposed Commercial Rehabilitation District, and any resident or taxpayer of the City of Novi may appear and be heard in relation to the consideration of the aforementioned Commercial Rehabilitation District.

If you have any comments regarding this proposal, they may be presented in writing to the City Clerk's office or at the public hearing.

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 will be utilizing the video/audio conferencing platform ZOOM to conduct the May 24, 2021 City Council 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.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 you 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. 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/cccomment

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

Cortney Hanson, CMC, MPMC II
City Clerk

Northville voters say yes to non-homestead millage proposal

Ed Wright hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Residents of Northville and Northville Township voted May 4 to renew a non-homestead operating millage proposal, 5,676-1,515, allowing Northville Public Schools to receive its full operational dollars currently authorized under Proposal A.

The State of Michigan assumes that all school districts levy the maximum allowable operating millage would not have compensated the school district for lost revenues if the millage had not passed.

A failed millage would have cost Northville Public Schools an estimated \$10 million in operating revenue based on estimated 2021 taxable values, the district stated.

This millage applies only to non-homestead property such as businesses, rental properties and second homes.

Election results are unofficial until certified by the board of state canvassers.

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

hometownlife.com

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Apartments could come to vacant spot along Haggerty

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Changes in the office landscape could result in a new place to live on the eastern side of Northville Township.

There had been plans to construct a new office/medical building on the north end of the property near Cantoro Italian Market, 15550 N. Haggerty. But given the current changes in the office work space climate, the owners of the property just north of Five Mile have proposed a new structure containing luxury apartments instead.

"To the north (of the market and parking lot) was a pad that was phase 2 of the (planned unit development) to be developed as an office building. It was a three-story office building. The first floor was going to be dedicated to storage facilities for the Cantoro Market," said Jennifer Frey, Northville Township's planner. "Then it was going to be a mixture of general office and medical office. And that was probably three or four years ago, so obviously a lot has changed relative to the office market during that time."

The plan would see the structure built on the vacant land near the north end of the current parking lot and would consist of several stories of luxury boutique apartments.

The hope is to offer services that would connect residents to the nearby Italian market — it has a Plymouth Township mailing address but is physically located within Northville Township — which opened its doors in 2014.

"We're proposing luxury amenities and services and those luxury amenities and services take advantage of Cantoro's that's there, the walkability to that," said Mark Abanatha, one of the representatives for the project.

The changes were discussed by representatives of Cantoro's and the Northville Township Planning Commission during its most recent meeting April 27. The discussions were just that and no action was taken at the meeting. To make those changes, an amendment would be needed to the site's current planned unit development, which was



The lot along Haggerty just north of Cantoro's in Northville Township.
PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



The apartments would be near Cantoro's market and restaurant on Haggerty.

originally approved several years ago. Those changes would formally come during a site plan review at a future planning commission meeting.

The petitioners said they wanted to bring the concepts of the project before the township to better gauge how to move forward.

"We wanted to meet with the planning commission on an early basis. We wanted to review the project with you ... and get your input, get you involved in the project early on," Abanatha said. "We've spend a tremendous amount of time on this design and we did that for a

couple of reasons: One, it's a very important project equally for us as well as the community and we wanted to put our best foot forward in terms of the presentation that you see so you really grab the image and importance of the design we're trying to put forward."

Some of the commissioners expressed some concern over the design, including Jayne Watson. She said the materials making up the building weren't something she thought were the most inviting.

"I'd love to see it have some more warmth and attention to detail on the

materials," she said.

More tax revenue

Pivoting the space from an office building to a residential building would benefit the township financially, said Bob Jacobs, another representative for the project.

An analysis done by the company showed the township could receive as much as \$300,000 more annually in tax revenue for the community.

Given its uniqueness, it would be a property that would attract plenty of people looking for a higher-end lifestyle.

"It is incredible that this could be there and it could be a great great asset to the community as well as the owners of the property," Jacobs said. "(There's) nothing that is quite like that is in the surrounding areas. But there is a market for this."

Commissioner Matthew Wilk said it appears such a complex would be similar to another area project: dozens of new, luxury apartments are currently under construction up Haggerty Road in Livonia.

Those apartments are a part of the mixed-use development between Seven Mile and Eight Mile roads that has seen several restaurants and other businesses open on the Livonia/Northville Township border.

Being new to the commission, Wilk said he would lean on some of the more senior commissioners when it came time to discuss the project more in-depth.

"I think those are going to be very similar projects," he said. "They're touting they're walkable to First Watch and you're touting your walkability to Cantoro's."

"I think as a new commissioner, I think I'll be relying heavily on the opinions of people who were around the first time."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

OfficeMax closing Novi store

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Those who usually purchase ink and other office supplies at the Novi OfficeMax will need to head somewhere else beginning in June.

The store, located in the shopping center on Haggerty just north of Eight Mile, has "store closing" banners hanging in the shop. A company spokeswoman confirmed the store's closure via email.

"The OfficeMax store located at 21071 Haggerty Rd. in Novi is scheduled to close on June 12, 2021," wrote Shera Bishop, a senior communications specialist for the company, in an email to Hometown Life. "This location is having a closing sale that began last month."

Sales are taking place throughout the store, ranging from 5%-40% on all items. Parts of the store are already fairly empty.

The closure of the Novi store comes as OfficeMax's parent company, ODP Corporation — which also owns Office

Depot — has closed nearly 150 stores in the last year, including eight in the beginning of 2021, according to the company's first quarter earnings report released May 5. The closure also comes months after an offer came from Staples to purchase the company, which was rejected.

The Novi store has signage at its front door directly customers to head to its Northville Township Office Depot location in the future, which is located at 17335 Haggerty, just north of Six Mile in the shopping center with REI, Kroger and Barnes & Noble.

In addition to the Northville Township location, the company has Office Depot and OfficeMax stores in Farmington Hills and Canton. Other area stores have also permanently closed, including those in White Lake Township and Livonia, according to the company's website.

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

Semitrailers ablaze in Lyon Township

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK

Two semitrailers loaded with carpet and vinyl flooring were ablaze when Lyon Township firefighters arrived at Mohawk Industries Inc. in the early hours of May 7.

Firefighters said in a Facebook post that the Automation Boulevard building was filled with smoke. They were able to slow down the fire and get it under control.

South Lyon and Novi firefighters assisted.

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

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Lyon Township firefighters rake through plane crash response

Susan Vela hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A plane crash killed one family and destroyed the home of another.

Still reeling from the memories and the what-ifs, Lyon Township firefighters spilled their guts regarding their response to the Jan. 2 crash and fire along Dakota Drive.

Their commanders, including Chief Ken Van Sparrentak, were proud of their performance.

But for an after-action report that will help guide future responses, Assistant Chief Reggie Madeline wanted their views on what could have been done better.

They came up with 13 brutal points in the name of improving future responses associated with places like Oakland/Southwest Airport and beyond-the-norm challenges like hazardous materials.

"Knowledge of where equipment is on the truck: we should not be hunting for things at an incident," the report suggested in areas for improvement.

"A greater sense of urgency is necessary," another point stated. "Attic access was not made until 20 minutes after arrival. If we did have an attic fire, 20 minutes would have been too late."

Pumping skills, cell phone use, better radio traffic ... With a father, mother and child dead, the firefighters were their harshest critics.

"They were really beating themselves up," Madeline said. "Is it something that they really did that bad? Probably not. With the outcome and everything that happened, they're being harsher on themselves and beating themselves up thinking what could I have done better to change the outcome of this."

"To be honest with you nothing that we could have done was going to change the outcome. I think the outcome was decided before we arrived."

Report summary of events

The after-action report included a tense timeline of their response. Here's a snippet:

15:41:21 Plane Crash
15:42:42 First 911 call to OCSD. Caller states plane hit his neighbor's house, a single person Cessna, and it's on fire
15:43:22 LTFD dispatched
15:43:54 Reporting party advising occupants are still inside, and plane is on fire
15:44:28 Caller advising address is 57693 Dakota
15:45:06 Caller states all occupants are out of the house involved
15:45:17 HVA en route from Novi. OCSD 1117 reports plane fully involved, house is on fire, with pilot possibly still inside the aircraft

The after-action report provided a summary of the response and documented the 18 points that firefighters considered their strengths.

Strengths included clear and calm radio communications, quick calls for mutual aid, response times and professionalism.

"There's always room for improvement but I thought the actions they took that day were practically flawless," Van Sparrentak said.

The small Lyon Township Fire Department has about 10 full-time personnel and nearly 20 paid, on-call firefighters. South Lyon and Green Oak Township firefighters also responded to the plane crash, remaining on the scene for several hours. Green Oak's foam extinguished hot spots.

In the days afterward, they also were invited to participate in the critical incident stress debriefing that the Lyon Township fire chief arranged with Oakland County.

"There's a lot of stress involved in scenes like that and seeing victims like that," said Van Sparrentak, who has served nearly eight years as township fire chief but never responded to a plane



A plane crashed into a Lyon Township home on Jan. 2.
COURTESY OF LYON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

crash into a township home before.

COVID-19 prevented Lyon Township firefighters from their annual visit to the Oakland/Southwest Airport for a tour, rundown of operations and exposure to planes and their fuel systems.

Yet their routine training gave them some knowledge of dealing with flammable liquids and hazardous materials.

"They did all they could...absolutely," Oakland County Central Services Director David VanderVeen said. "They were the first responders. They did respond ASAP and did all they could."

VanderVeen said the Oakland/Southwest Airport's man on duty the afternoon of Jan. 2 is an on-call firefighter for South Lyon.

He learned from the Federal Aviation Administration that a plane should have arrived earlier. Then, his pager started going off.

Madeline lives near the airport and Dakota Drive. His pager went off. He heard the dispatch for a plane crash. He looked out the window and saw the smoke.

"I got ready and I started heading toward the station," he said. "I heard my first truck get en route. As soon as they

called the route, I just (went) right to the structure itself. A plane did crash."

Madeline was the first on the Dakota Drive scene, which was less than a mile from Lyon Township's Grand River Avenue station.

Oakland County businessman David Compo, his wife Michele and their son Dawson were returning from Georgia when their small Piper plane slammed into a home.

A preliminary report from the National Transportation Safety Board indicated David Compo, of Northville, encountered landing problems and lacked some key training.

The Mudzwovas - Pride, Danielle and their two children - safely escaped their burning home, which was wrecked by the blaze. They would like to rebuild.

Lyon Township firefighters are responsible for about 33 square miles populated by approximately 20,000 people.

Van Sparrentak said firefighters respond to about 1,500 calls a year.

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

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Why is an outdated will worse than no plan at all?

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How can I control the care I get (and do not get) in a medical emergency?

How can I protect my kids' inheritance from divorce, bankruptcy, and their own poor decisions?

How do I avoid heavy taxes from the new law on my retirement plans (like my IRA or 401k)?

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MAY 2021

31 Years Serving Michigan Seniors

VOLUME 31, ISSUE 5.2

YOU ARE SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR PROMISES**FOR RICHER, FOR POORER, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH****SO ARE WE**

THE BIG DANCE - 1963



Betty and Wilma were like sisters. Without the sister drama. Since their first day at Lansing Central High, two years ago. Now Betty was organizing a dance with some Lansing Tech Junior

ROTC guys.

She had her

eye on Barney,

a fella who

made that

uniform look

good. And

Barney had a

friend, Fred,

a shy guy, just

like her friend

Wilma. Anything

can happen at a

dance, you know.

When will

Saturday get here?

ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

That dance was

just rehearsal for

the Big Dance.

Wilma and Fred,

Betty and Barney

would lead

through their lives.

After graduation,

the guys got

their union cards

and entered the

wonderful world

of GM's Lansing Car

Assembly. The ladies

followed.

Betty and Wilma

did not stay long

in the steno pool.

Wilma loved to

get things just

right. Call it

perfectionism

if you want to,

that talent got

Wilma assigned to

Quality Control. Eventually

she headed the plant's

QC efforts. Betty's

organizational skills

landed her in the

plant manager's

office, as

executive

secretary.

Betty and Wilma

did not stay

long in the

dating pool,

either. Fred

and Barney

knew a good thing

when they saw it.

Before long they

"put a ring on it"

and got busy

raising families too.

It was a sad day

in April 2004 when

the Olds plant

shut down for good.

They were all

retired, but it

still hurt. The

guys made a

pilgrimage to

the old place

every springtime.

Both couples

were doing fine.

Their homes

were paid off

and worth about

\$175,000. With

\$200,000 in

savings and

\$75,000 of life

insurance, they

felt secure. Not

to mention

having prepaid

their funerals.

Each couple

had three kids

and three

grandchildren.

They even like

the in-laws!

NOTHING GOOD LASTS FOREVER...

GATHERING CLOUDS

Just few years ago. Another perfect spring.

Bright sunshine, crisp air with a bit of warmth,

the smell of new growth, green leaves.



Two women of a certain age. Maybe sisters. Alike in many ways. Both were mothers and grandmothers. Respected. Looked up to. Reliable volunteers for church and school. You want it done right? Get Betty and Wilma on the case. Rapidly approaching their 50th wedding anniversary. Time flies.

You have friends like these women. Middle-class people who enrich the world. Generous spirits. Authentic kindness. Get it done attitude. Nice homes, colorful gardens. Debt Free.

Comfortable cash cushion (not that the kids would know). Coupon clipping and natural thrift. No

extravagant or expensive habits. Except

spending on their grandchildren.

But what is going on with Fred and Barney? Why does Fred put the car keys in the

refrigerator? Barney gets so confused with the simplest things. And it is getting worse.

2020... THE STORM BREAKS

Betty and Wilma are now their husbands' primary caregivers. Barney and Fred, after many years as partner and confidant, father and grandfather, best friend and "accomplice," have

fallen victim to Alzheimer's Disease. Heart-breaking. Life-changing. COVID isolation on top of it all. No description necessary.

Wilma and Betty take their wedding vows seriously. Better or worse. Richer or poorer. Sickness and health. They said it. They meant it. They lived it.

Maybe the kids don't get it. But these women took JFK at his word: "We choose to do these things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

Alzheimer's is hard. Alzheimer's plus COVID is even harder.

Yes, the kids have their own families and challenges. They live out of state. They would like to help, but... TRAVEL BAN. Now they think it is a good idea for Dad to be "placed".

What is it with kids these days?

A REAL LIFELINE... TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

A pleasant Sunday, May 2021, both women were reading the same article. An account in The Michigan Elder Law Reporter describing the Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly, known as PACE.

The Reporter claimed that PACE provided free, at-home care. All pharmacy needs with no co-pays, donut holes, delays, or frustrating paperwork. Specialist care. Respite

care. Durable medical equipment. Supplies. Occupational and Physical Therapy. The list went on and on. It even claimed that PACE was intended to help folks just like her. On purpose. Family members caring for loved ones at home. Staying at home.

Most outrageous, though, was the bald statement that their life savings, home, life insurance... their security, need not be sacrificed. Their lifetime of shared work could be preserved for themselves, their children, their grandchildren. How could that happen?!

They remembered similar articles in the Reporter... published over 2020. And the warning that the special COVID rules would expire, but were then extended to November, then extended to April 2021, then extended "until further notice."

TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN A WOOD, AND I - I TOOK THE ONE LESS TRAVELED BY...

And this is where Betty and Wilma made different choices.

Betty said to herself, "Stuff and Nonsense! I pity anyone foolish enough to believe this... Promises, promises! Too good to be true! I don't believe it! Fiddle Faddle."

Wilma thought, "I heard of this last year and didn't act. Could this be my second chance? Maybe I should find out more..."

Five years quickly passed.

AND THAT HAS MADE ALL OF THE DIFFERENCE

Another fine spring morning. Betty and Wilma are still best friends. But not so much alike anymore. They made different choices. They got different results.

PRIDE GOETH BEFORE A FALL

PROVERBS 16: 18

Betty was physically exhausted. Twenty-four hours a day. Seven days a week. Constant caregiving for Barney took a heavy toll. Emotional stress was worse. Bankruptcy. Lifesavings did not last long paying home health care workers. Cashing in the life insurance? No, she didn't mind. That money was long gone.

Betty was still bound and determined that her Barney would never wind up in one of "those places." Then the cash ran out. She gritted her teeth and took a loan against the house. Twice. Plus a line of credit. In desperation, she turned to cash advances on the credit cards.

In her pride, she did not share the burden with Wilma or her children. She chose a solitary journey. Until the inevitable day when the house of cards collapsed. She reached for the phone to call her eldest child. She never imagined living in a senior housing project. Well, at least the bill collectors have stopped harassing her.

SHE IS CLOTHED WITH STRENGTH AND DIGNITY; SHE CAN LAUGH AT THE DAYS TO COME.

PROVERBS 31: 25

Wilma stood at the kitchen window. Watching her grandchildren play in the yard. The last few years had been tough. Fred did not recognize her or their children. She was making the best of a bad situation. But her health was good. The PACE folks were a blessing. No worries. PACE aides came out to help with Fred several times a week. During COVID so many years ago, they even helped with her grocery shopping. And housekeeping. Plus all the medical support. Wilma's future was secure.

She did not face it alone. No Poverty. Life savings protected. No Charity. PACE was a return on all those tax dollars.

No Waste. Her legacy will endure for years. "Well," she thought, "sometimes 'too good to be true' turns out even better."

I HAVE FINISHED THE COURSE.

I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH

2 TIMOTHY 4: 7

Several months later.

Betty's funeral. Wilma

thought about her best

friend. It was tragic. Betty

ran the race. Betty fought

the good fight. At the

ultimate cost to herself,

she did what she believed

was necessary. Rapidly

pouring out the savings

and accomplishments of

a lifetime. All gone in the

blink of an eye.

Is there anything more tragic than needless suffering? Striving to do something that did not have to be done at all? Wilma had to say it: "Betty killed herself with work and worry, all to keep Barney out of 'those places.'"

And where is he going now? One of "those places." When a good person refuses the helping hand, it is more than sadness. When refusal leads to catastrophe, it is more than regret.

The next year.

After the preacher's

kind words at the

cemetery, Wilma

turned from Fred's

grave. Wilma

too ran the

race, fought

the good fight.

Wilma had been there for Fred to the ultimate

end. Hospice at the house. Familiar PACE folks

who supplied the hospital bed. Hoyer lift and

other necessary equipment and services. Given

fair warning, the kids made it in from out of

town. It was sad, heart-breaking. But not tragic.

Surrounded by family and friends. Secure. At

peace. What did the Lord have in store for her

now? Wilma did not know. But she looked

forward to finding out.

THE DIFFERENCE

Most people, reading this article, will choose

Betty's path. Most people, faced with long-

term care costs, close their eyes. Reject reality.

Hope for the best. As lifesavings evaporate

like a snowflake on a hot griddle. Why does

the caregiver spouse die first, almost half of

the time? Why do hard-working, prudent,

frugal, middle-class folks accept nursing home

poverty? Most of the time?

NOT CHANCE. YOUR CHOICE

There is nothing inevitable about losing

your home, cottage, business, lifesavings,

independence, security. All of that is a choice.

Despite what "everybody else" says. For over

thirty years, people have told me, "I've never

heard of this before!" "If this is real, why

doesn't everyone do it?" "My lawyer/financial

advisor/brother-in-law/accountant/tax person/

banker/best friend/fill-in-the-blank never said

anything like this..."

Well, here you are. Now you know. No

excuses. Wilma or Betty? You have the

information, insight, inspiration. It is your turn.

Ignore the message? Invite poverty? Or get

the freely offered information. To make wise

decisions. For you. For your loved ones.

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Northville Township police review 16 complaints in 2020

Only three were found to be at least partly valid

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Northville Township police commanders vetted 16 civilian complaints in 2020 and found at least three of them partially or completely valid.

Hometown Life has been reviewing civilian complaints filed against law enforcement agencies in western Wayne and Oakland counties by making use of the Freedom of Information Act.

Those critical of police service and police encounters always have the option of having a commander investigate by filing an official civilian complaint with the department.

Typically, a police leader interviews the officers involved and reviews such things as reports, camera footage and recorded audio before there is a determination on whether the civilian was right.

For Northville Township's 2020 complaints, three required no further action because the complainants were satisfied. For example, their lost property was found or they received the information they needed.

Nine reports for alleged misconduct and improper investigations were deemed unfounded. Those complaints also included claims of being wrongfully targeted and treated. Some criticism seemed minor - for example, a complaint about patrol cars using light bars in a "geriatric neighborhood."

Most of the complaints were regarding service.

Complaints deemed at least partially credible were as follows:

A woman called police in June to say a patrol vehicle pulled out in front of her

Nine reports for alleged misconduct and improper investigations were deemed unfounded. Those complaints also included claims of being wrongfully targeted and treated. Some criticism seemed minor - for example, a complaint about patrol cars using light bars in a "geriatric neighborhood."

and her daughter near Cady and Center streets.

"The driver saw you and your family prior to entering the crosswalk where you were located and braked," Public Safety Director Todd Mutchler responded in a letter. "The driver saw that you had also stopped and in an effort to clear the intersection, he proceeded eastbound on Cady Street."

In September, a complainant was upset with three employees who did not sign some forms, moved a COVID-19 mask below the nose to be understood, and apparently used a mocking tone.

Signing the submitted forms is not department policy, and Mutchler said he reviewed audio and camera footage and found no proof of mocking behavior.

For the mask matter, Mutchler said his employee violated department policy requiring face masks while inside public safety headquarters. The employee had lowered the mask below his nose and mouth.

Another man complained about service during a November arrest. Mutchler acknowledged he should have been provided a COVID-19 mask upon arrest and served lunch at noon. The man alleged he contracted COVID-19 while in police custody.

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

Northville Schools accepting Schools of Choice applications

Northville Public Schools is accepting Schools of Choice applications for the 2021-22 school year.

The availability is limited to five openings in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at Northville High School.

This application process is limited to incoming juniors who are applying for the full IB Diploma Program. Applications will be accepted May 10 through 4 p.m. June 4.

Completed applications, including all forms and recommendations must be mailed or hand delivered to the Northville Public Schools Human Resources Department, 405 West Main St., Northville, MI 48167.

The district is unable to accept electronic applications.

Applicants found to be ineligible for

the Diploma Program will be notified on or before June 18.

Should the number of applications approved by the Diploma Program Review Team exceed the five openings specified for Section 105 and 105c Schools of Choice students, the school district will use a random draw (lottery) to select the applicants who will be offered enrollment.

If necessary, the lottery will take place at 8:30 a.m. June 16 at the Northville Public Schools Board of Education offices at 405 West Main, Northville. Families applying for limited Schools of Choice are welcome to attend the lottery drawing.

Selected students will be informed regarding placement no later than June 18.

Contractor faces theft charges

Kayla Daugherty Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Highland man is facing criminal charges after police say he stole credit cards and checks from two families whose homes he was working on.

Kenneth Hill, 33, was charged early last month with three counts of uttering and publishing and two counts of larceny from a building in two separate cases.

He is also charged with forgery, larceny of \$20,000 or more and fraudulent use of a financial transaction device.

In one case, Hill "drained" a woman's checking account, a Livingston County Sheriff's Office deputy said in an April hearing that led to charges.

The woman said she realized a total of five checks were taken from her check book, four of which were forged using her husband's signature totaling just under \$10,000.

In January, Hill attempted to purchase \$26,861.22 worth of merchandise from Ohio Power Tool.

The purchase was declined, the dep-

uty testified.

The deputy said when the woman called the company, she was "advised Hill created a fake email account under her husband's name," to purchase from the store.

Another woman hired Hill to fix plumbing in her home. She discovered missing checks and credit cards after receiving a \$4,145 bill from Home Depot.

Hill admitted to purchasing tools using a stolen credit card, the deputy said.

The woman said two checks were fraudulently written out to Ken Hill, one for \$800, another for \$1,800.

Bill McCririe, Hill's attorney, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Hill was scheduled to appear in front of Livingston County District Court Judge Daniel Bain for a probable cause conference.

He faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$15,000 fine if convicted as charged.

Contact Kayla Daugherty at 517-552-2848 or kdaugherty@gannett.com. Follow her on Twitter @KayDaugherty92.



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First-time drunken driving expungement closer to vote

Angie Jackson Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Bills that would open up criminal record expungement eligibility to first-time drunken driving convictions in Michigan are a step closer to a Senate vote.

The Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee on Thursday approved the bipartisan legislative package, sending the bills to the full Senate. The House passed the bills 93-17 in March.

This is lawmakers' second attempt to reform drunken driving expungement in recent months. A similar bill passed the Legislature during last year's lame duck session, but Gov. Gretchen Whitmer exercised what's known as a pocket veto by neither signing nor expressly vetoing it. She did not give a reason for declining to sign the bill.

Lawmakers who back the bills introduced this session said they want to give a second chance to people with one misdemeanor operating while intoxicated conviction who have proven that

they've changed.

"Some people ... it's been 30 years and they haven't even picked up a drink, let alone gotten behind the wheel of a vehicle," Rep. Tenisha Yancey, D-Harper Woods, told the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee.

Yancey, who introduced the legislation with Rep. Joseph Bellino, R-Monroe, said the proposal is a "full circle type of thing" for her. She said she struggled at times to find housing and work because of convictions for crimes when she was a teenager, but she eventually became a licensed attorney. Yancey also shared that her father was killed by a drunken driver when she was a teen, and she said it's not lost on her that it is "a very serious crime." Operating while intoxicated convictions involving injury or death would not be eligible for expungement.

The Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan and the Michigan Sheriffs' Association oppose the bills. In February, Mothers Against Drunk Driving wrote a letter to lawmakers saying it

opposes expungement of any impaired driving convictions in principle "because the practice undermines the seriousness of the violent crime of impaired driving and reduces accountability."

Most other traffic offenses, as well as convictions for other types of crimes, are eligible for expungement under new laws that took effect April 11. Lawmakers' latest proposal excludes first-time drunken driving convictions from the forthcoming automatic set-aside process, meaning a judge would decide whether to grant the expungement.

Attorney General Dana Nessel has expressed support for the bills. During a House Judiciary Committee hearing in February, she shared anecdotes of people with one-time drunken driving convictions from her work as a criminal defense attorney. She said no other misdemeanors that carry a punishment of up to 93 days in jail are treated as seriously as operating while intoxicated when it comes to court costs and fines, licensing sanctions and probation requirements.

Nessel said it "violates the tenets of

fairness" that first-time operating while intoxicated convictions can't be expunged while a legislative package that took effect this spring allows for expungement of "pretty serious assaultive" crimes in some instances.

Expungement seals criminal convictions from the general public, including employers and landlords. An expunged drunken driving conviction would remain visible to law enforcement, prosecutors, judges and the Secretary of State. Yancey and Bellino said their bills would allow someone to apply for expungement of an operating while intoxicated conviction three years after their monitoring by the justice system ends. The Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee on Thursday also approved a bill sponsored by Sen. Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, that's tie-barred to their legislative package that would extend the wait time to five years.

Contact Angie Jackson: ajackson@freepress.com; 313-222-1850. Follow her on Twitter: @AngieJackson23

Don't overextend yourself purchasing a new home



Money Matters
Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

Hello Rick:

I'm writing you for a second opinion. I am a college graduate in my late 20s and I've worked for the same company for the last five years. I feel very secure in my job and, in fact, I recently received a promotion. Since graduation, I have lived with my parents and saved a bit of money. My dad said that as long as I fully fund my 401(k), I can live at home rent free. Therefore, I have been maxing out my 401(k) contribution. However, I'm now at the point where I'd like to buy my own place. I've been looking at condos in two different price ranges and needless to say, the higher priced condo is the one that I prefer. However, if I buy the more expensive condominium, I will

need to stop my 401(k) contributions and money would be tight. Despite this, I figure that with interest rates low, I should buy the more expensive condo because it would be a good investment. My dad thinks it is a mistake to stretch myself. I'm curious as to your thoughts. *Bruce*

Dear Bruce:

In reviewing your situation, I tend to agree with your dad in that I think it would be a mistake for you to overextend yourself. My decision is based upon a number of factors.

After looking at the numbers you sent me, the one glaring error I noticed is that you made the assumption that your property taxes will be the same as the previous owner's property taxes. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way.

Because homes get re-appraised at the time of purchase, your property taxes will be based on the price you pay which will result in a substantial in-

crease in your property taxes. This increase in property taxes is significant and will further exacerbate your cash flow problems. I also considered the fact that residential real estate does not always increase in value. In fact, there is one market dynamic that can cause real estate to go down. When mortgage rates rise, which eventually they will, it will negatively impact the price of real estate. Since we are living in an unprecedented time with historically low interest rates, there is a risk that when interest rates rise, real estate prices will fall.

The last issue I considered was the damage you would do to your retirement by not making contributions to your 401(k) plan. Putting money away for retirement at your age is an incredible opportunity that you do not want to miss.

When you consider how money compounds, you realize that time in the market is one of the keys to successful investing. As far as I'm concerned, sav-

ing for your retirement on a regular basis is not an option, it's a requirement.

Buying a condominium can be a wonderful way to improve the quality of your life. However, you cannot forget about your other responsibilities and monthly obligations. Saving for retirement should be looked at as another monthly bill. I know in today's world it's popular to live in the moment; however, I've seen too many people who have done that and unfortunately, many of them are paying the price by not having the financial resources needed to enjoy life. I prefer a little more modest approach and that is to live for today and save for tomorrow. Therefore, my advice is don't stretch yourself; buy the condo that allows you to save for your retirement and have a cushion.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial advisor. His website is www.bloomadvisors.com.

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Legendary Canton athlete battles glioblastoma with courage, grace

Ed Wright

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Smiles came easily for Kelly Holmes May 4 during her brief visit to Canton High School's softball field, the place where in 1992 she struck out a still-standing national record 24 batters in a seven-inning game.

"Whenever I go by a softball field, I remember the smell of the freshly-cut grass, the dirt, everything," said Holmes, who was inducted into the Canton High School Athletics Hall of Fame in 2018. "Being here brings back a lot of great memories."

In April 2020, Holmes, who starred as a pitcher for the University of Michigan's softball program for four years after graduating from Canton in 1993, was diagnosed with glioblastoma, an incurable form of brain cancer.

While Holmes accepts the reality that she won't strike out her current foe, she is determined to take it as deep into the count as possible.

"I feel great," said Holmes, looking fit enough to pitch at least a couple frames. "Last week I had an MRI and the doctors said they didn't think it could look any better than it did."

"When I Googled glioblastoma after the diagnosis, it was very discouraging. The statistics are pretty grim. But I'm going to fight it as long and hard as I can. Before my current health issues, I'd hear clichés like, 'Don't take anything for granted' and 'Don't sweat the small stuff'. Now I'm discovering how true those clichés really are."

Mound magic

Her success engine continued to churn at Michigan, where she finished out a sterling four-year varsity tenure by going 33-8 with a 1.16 earned run average her senior season.

The most intriguing gem of Holmes' magical mound

See **CANCER**, Page 3B



Kelly Holmes, who still holds the national high school record for most strikeouts in a seven-inning game, revisited the site of her famous achievement May 4.

ED WRIGHT | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



After striking out another batter Wildcat pitcher Reganne Bennett is congratulated by her teammates on May 5, 2021. JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Novi splits Canton, earns first win against Chiefs in 15 years

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

James Carlisle knew that Novi softball caught a break in its first game of a doubleheader against Canton.

The head coach watched his team record only one run on two hits against Canton freshman starter Emma Grau, while recording four errors in the field.

He knew the first game could have been much worse.

"I told the kids, 'An average team would have been beaten 20-0,'" Carlisle said. "I thought we learned from it and we just got better in the second game."

After a 3-1 loss in the first game, Novi regrouped and exploded in the second inning of Game 2, scoring four runs on four hits and an error to beat Canton, 4-3, earning the split with the KLAA opponent and earning their first win against the Chiefs in 15 years.

Grau, working with freshman Ella Fournier behind the plate, initially fed off the Wildcats' weak contact, recording nine fly outs and nine groundouts while

striking out three, setting down the final 12 batters of the game to get the win.

Carlisle preached a contact-first approach in the second game, urging his players to have better at bats instead of trying to tie the game in one swing.

"We were dipping a lot, and when you dip a lot, it's just popcorn, easy outs," Carlisle said. "There were too many kids going for the fences."

Coming into the second inning of Game 2 down 2-0 after an RBI double from Faith Cramton in the first inning — one of three hits of the day — and an RBI single in the second, Novi made its shift. The Wildcats' bottom of the order tied the game after three straight singles, a wild pitch and an error, taking the lead on a two-RBI triple by Allie Sharnowski.

"She's come up big all year," Carlisle said of his two-hole hitter. "She's got like seven home runs on the year, Reganne's (Bennett) got seven home runs behind her, so that's a great one-two punch. And Emma (Pranin) does a great job leading off and getting on base. We feel really confident, one-through-six, get-

See **SOFTBALL**, Page 2B

Late-starting Lakeland offense scorches Canton

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Lakeland's baseball players gathered in front of the dugout after the top of the fourth inning. The Eagles' offensive approach was not working against Canton sophomore right-hander Zachary Demianenko, who had set down nine straight to begin his first-ever varsity outing.

Their approach shifted: get the barrel on the ball earlier in counts. Expand the zone earlier in counts to put balls in play to take advantage of the young pitcher.

Andrew Platt went up to the plate with that approach in mind. Seeing a fastball, the junior grooved Demianenko's pitch down the right-field line for a stand-up double.

While Platt later scored on an RBI groundout, it was Matthew Hanneman who opened the floodgates for the Eagles offense. The junior turned on a first-pitch strike and crushed it over the left-center field fence for a two-run home run, helping Lakeland (13-1) to a 12-2 mercy win against Canton (8-9-1) at home.

"I think it sparked the offense even more," Hanneman, who drove in two runs and scored two runs for Lakeland, said. "Andrew started really well, and I just capped it off. We just kept on rolling after that."

In the fourth, fifth and sixth innings, Lakeland scored 12 runs on 10 hits — including three for extra bases — two walks and an error, using wild pitches to keep runners moving.

Of the 10 hits recorded, six came from the batter seeing three pitches or less in the batter's box.

"I thought we made some nice adjustments expanding our zone early," Lakeland head coach Brad Farquhar said. "The pitches we were hunting the first time around in the order were hit in a very small spot and (we) expanded our zone and put the ball in play, and it made a difference."

While Demianenko struggled later in his outing, Canton head coach Mark Blomshield saw a sophomore who did exactly what he was told.

Working with Demianenko over the winter months, Blomshield preached command, throwing strikes consistently to hitters no matter what. Early in his first outing against Lakeland, that's exactly what the sophomore did, striking out two while inducing one ground out and three fly outs in the first three innings.

Blomshield said his starter became nervous as the game continued when runners came on, tiring when he hit 60-65 pitches. But he saw all he could want from Demianenko.

"He had some good reports on JV, but... that was

See **BASEBALL**, Page 4B



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Livonia Churchill soccer teammates to reunite at Schoolcraft

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

After two school years shaped by a lack of normalcy, 15 senior athletes from Churchill High School gathered in the cafeteria for something normal: to sign a piece of paper.

Many had signed their letter of intent previously — participating in the action Thursday with a blank sheet of printer paper — and only a handful were making their college decision official for the first time.

But with each announcement, with each thank you, with each picture taken, the player signified a continued commitment to something they stuck with through the past two years. Churchill athletic director Marc Hage made that clear to each player being celebrated, along with each player watching: the signing represents years of hard work, something those younger players should strive to achieve.

For Churchill soccer players Paige Kroll and Christina Gallo, athletics proved to be more than just hard work and being successful on a particular field or court. It's how they got to know one another. It's what started a relationship that is now set to last past high school.

The pair met in gym class freshman year, both new to Livonia Public Schools, trying to find their place.

Kroll had been playing soccer since age 8, transitioning from gymnastics. Gallo started the sport in first grade, joining an all-boys team and disliking it initially until she eventually fell in love with the game again, following in the footsteps of the rest of her family.

From the moment they met, Kroll and Gallo became fast friends, both joining the Churchill soccer team.

"We could relate on a few things," Gallo said.

Both came into high school with similar views on college soccer: none.

Gallo came to Churchill viewing soccer as more of a hobby despite taking it more seriously in middle school.

"I was excited to make new friends and get more experiences, just have fun," Gallo said. "I didn't expect it to (get



Staff, students and family members gather at Livonia Churchill High on May 6, 2021 to celebrate those student-athletes signing National Letters of Intent. JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

me to) college or anything."

Even though she started scoring right away — recording her first goal in her first ever varsity game — Kroll still viewed college soccer as more of a pipe dream.

"It was kind of last minute," she said. "I always thought, 'Oh, it would be fun to play in college,' but I never really thought about it."

But both ended up finding a college home with Schoolcraft College.

Kroll knows she will be more comfortable with Gallo in the same locker room as her starting next season, but hopes to make new friends during this transition too, learning different techniques and tricks on the soccer field as well.

Kroll had the mentality for four years at Churchill, saying she stuck with the team because of the people. She developed an increased level of confidence and positivity in her abilities on and off the field, crediting coaches and teammates for that development.

"I feel like everybody was similar,"

Kroll said. "There were obviously really good players and new players, and I think the coaches really helped bring everyone together and play together."

Joining the Schoolcraft soccer team after already enrolling in the school in the fall, Gallo is hoping for a good experience.

But she knows it will be better because it will be with her Churchill teammate.

"We are both going in at the same time with the same experiences," Gallo said. "It will be helpful to have someone do it with me."

Churchill's 2021 signees

Gavin Brooks, football, Concordia University

Payton Pilarski, lacrosse, Hope College

Jordan Garcia, football, Siena Heights

Lawrence Hattar, football, Ferris State

Jimmy Targosz, football, Michigan

Tech

Grace McConnell, cheerleading, Grand Valley State

Madison Johnson, volleyball, Olivet

Cameron Kruse, cross country and track, Madonna University

Abbie Haupt, cross country and track, Madonna University

Sidney Martin, dance, Madonna University

Garrett Englehart, wrestling, Olivet

Sarah Marasco, soccer, Lawrence Tech

Emily Reed, soccer, Thiel College

Paige Kroll, soccer, Schoolcraft

Christina Gallo, soccer, Schoolcraft

Benjamin Johns, soccer, Macclesfield FC

Invi Bella, wrestling, Olivet

Alex Wilson, soccer, Tiffin University

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.



Wildcat Allie Shernowski motors into second base. JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Canton freshman Emma Grau made the start with freshman catcher Ella Fournier behind the plate. JOHN HEIDER | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Softball

Continued from Page 1B

ting on base and producing."

After Canton cut its deficit down to one in the sixth, scoring on a wild pitch, Carlisle didn't want to take any chances. He took the ball from his starter Emma Pranin and gave it back to his Game 1 starter: Reganne Bennett.

Despite the three runs allowed on two hits, three walks and four errors, the Novi

sophomore struck out 11 in seven innings of work. When Bennett took the ball in game two, she shut the door again: walking one and striking out two for the save.

Canton head coach Al White came into the 2021 season with two seniors and a roster filled with freshmen and sophomores he did not know. He said it's still a process, learning what each of his players can do — especially without being able to use senior Anna Halliday, the team's No. 1 starter, on the mound due to injury.

But with Canton softball's past successes in the KLAA, White knows, each

game, he will see the best showing from each opponent.

"Canton has always beaten these teams, and everybody loves to beat Canton," White said. "I tell these girls all the time... That's what we get girls. And it's not your fault. It's teams ahead of you used to beat these teams really bad."

This was true for Carlisle's team. He called this a "program win," securing the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park sweep in 2021 for the first time in 15 years with wins over the Chiefs, Plymouth and Salem.

But the Novi head coach knows there's still work to be done, shown by what the Wildcats showed in the first game.

"We're a young, young team. People forget about that: a lot of freshmen and sophomores out there," Carlisle said. "I'm very proud of them. They are fun to coach. They practice hard and they play hard."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

Cancer

Continued from Page 1B

résumé was chiseled in an April 1992 game against Walled Lake Western. With the Chiefs' starting catcher sidelined with an injury, Holmes struck out 24 Warriors — five in the first inning alone — over seven frames to lead Canton to a 7-2 victory.

The 29-year-old accomplishment returned to the spotlight last month when University of North Texas pitcher Hope Trautwein struck out all 21 batters she faced in a seven-inning perfect game against Arkansas Pine Bluff — the first such feat in the history of Division I softball.

Holmes' 24-strikeout effort — amazing considering it only takes 21 outs to win a seven-inning game — is still the national record, according to the National Federation of State High School Association website. Tampa (Fla.) Cambridge Christian's Alea White flirted with the mark when on Feb. 12, 2015, she fanned 23 Tampa Bayshore Christian hitters.

"As the game went on that day, I knew I had a lot of strikeouts, but I was so focused on the game, I wasn't counting," Holmes recounted, smiling. "I remember the Michigan State softball coach was there recruiting me.

"It was a tough assignment for our backup catcher because it was her first varsity start. A few Walled Lake Western players reached base on dropped third strikes and Western actually scored a couple of runs, but we ended up winning, which was the important thing. The same girl was my catcher our senior season and she was outstanding."

Holmes' biggest fan (along with her mother, Karen) is her father Bob Holmes, who missed his daughter's record-breaking performance due to his duties as the varsity boys track-and-field coach at Livonia Franklin High School, where he also taught.

"When Kelly got home that day, I asked her how many strikeouts she had," Bob Holmes reflected. "When she told me, I said '24? Wow!'"

A principal financial analyst within DTE's Regulatory Affairs Department, Holmes' life was staggered on April 25, 2020, when she suffered an out-of-the-blue seizure.

"I wasn't sure what was going on," she said. "Then I suffered a second seizure, so I went to the hospital to get some tests."

Since her glioblastoma diagnosis, Holmes has endured brain surgery and cycles of radiation and chemotherapy. While her body has been pushed to the limit, her mind has remained upbeat, for the most part, she said.

"I have been blessed with the amount of support I've received from my family and friends," she said. "Last spring, during one of the worst periods of COVID, a group of my friends arranged for a drive-by at my house. I've been able to stay connected with former teammates — both at Canton and the University of Michigan — through social media."

Holmes said she still exercises regularly and has continued to work regular hours for DTE in a virtual setting.

"One of the few good things about the pandemic is that it has allowed me to work from home," she said, chuckling.

Holmes said her athletic background has helped her persevere through the trials and tribulations of battling an undefeated opponent.

"If there's one experience I can look back on as giving me self assurance that I can get through this it's probably my senior year at Michigan," she said. "I was one of two No. 1 pitchers, but the other No. 1 was injured early in the season so I pitched pretty much every game."

"We ended up making it to the College World Series and I was the winning pitcher in Michigan's first-ever World Series victory. Memories like that help give me strength."

Holmes said she enjoys passing on her knowledge of pitching to young players and she loves watching college softball on TV.

More than anything these days, she simply loves living, regardless of the obstacles that have been placed in her path.

"Again, it's a cliché, but I sincerely appreciate every day now," she said. "Every day is a blessing."

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

The Walled Lake Western side of the scorebook from the 1992 game shows the 24 strikeouts (K's) Kelly Holmes recorded. ED WRIGHT | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Kelly Holmes was a standout pitcher for the University of Michigan following her stellar career at Canton High School. SUBMITTED

INNING	TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL
1	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Walled Lake Western	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Canton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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South Lyon East soccer continues surge, beats LVC rival Milford

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

With 19 minutes left in the game, Pete Stoyanovich knew South Lyon East was not out of it, trailing, 2-1, against Lakes Valley Conference rival Milford.

After a missed set near goal, the Cougars head girls soccer coach clapped his hands in encouragement, telling his players to keep working.

"It'll come," he preached.

It came. After sophomore Kaylie Samluck tied the game on a tap in near goal with 13 minutes to go, Emma Pompo took over.

In the final minutes of the game, the South Lyon East junior used a burst of speed to race and beat a Milford defender down the right sideline. While the ball seemed destined to go out-of-bounds, she hit a cross, landing perfectly into the chest of sophomore Alyssa Melquist, bouncing off and landing in the back of the net for the game-deciding goal, keeping the Cougars (8-0-1) undefeated with the 3-2 win against the Mavericks (4-2).

As his players celebrated, Stoyanovich shook his head, telling an assistant coach: "That's the way it's supposed to look." But Pompo's game-winning assist — one of two on the day — was not shocking.

"Go watch her run in the state track meet and you'll see how fast she is," Stoyanovich said. "She's a tremendous runner and she really makes it hard for those outside backs to defend her. She's had a terrific year. She assisted another two goals for us — she leads the conference already.



South Lyon East girls soccer remains undefeated after nine games played in 2021. COURTESY OF JILL OHLAND

She's been pretty unstoppable out there."

Milford head coach Tommy Hipple knew he would have his hands full attempting to stop Pompo, who would consistently beat the Mavericks' outside backs down the sideline to set up plays for teammates like Melquist, who finished both of the junior's assists.

But Hipple had more than that one problem.

Milford came into the contest with a

short bench with players quarantining due to COVID-19, using five-six freshmen on the field at one time, including two call-ups from the JV team.

However, Mavericks junior Michi Hooks kept her team in the game offensively, hitting both of its goals, including a 25-yard slice hitting the top-left corner of the net that South Lyon East's goalkeeper could do nothing with: a goal that Hipple thought was "gorgeous."

"She has just been our rock," Hipple said. "Whenever we need anything, she's like, 'All right, I'll take over the game.' She's such a level-headed kid and doesn't look for the attention. She just finds a way to put it in the back of the net."

Hipple's bench became shorter after Samluck's goal when Milford goalkeeper Alexis Barber was hit in the back of the head and taken off the field on a golf cart. Hipple said Barber was in much better spirits after being removed from the game and taken away from the field.

In the final 12 minutes of a tie game, South Lyon East took advantage when it needed to.

"Honestly, we didn't think it would be this tough with all those girls in quarantine. They got up on us early and it gave them a lot of hope," Stoyanovich said. "The way the girls came back and battled in the second half was great."

This was something the South Lyon East head coach saw in his team against rival South Lyon: turning a one-goal deficit off a penalty kick into a 5-2 victory.

To Stoyanovich, that's what winners do, and that's what the Cougars have been doing on the soccer field all season long.

"We're continuing this run. I don't think our school has seen anything like this," Stoyanovich said. "The girls are believing in themselves more and more. That was a huge win."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to LivSports@hometownlife.com.

Obituaries

Maureen Ann Haran (Fugelsang)

Maureen Ann Haran, age 79, born in Mineola, NY, on January 24, 1942, passed away peacefully with family by her side at her son's home in Linden, MI, on May 5, 2021. Maureen grew up in Floral Park, NY, and attended high school at Our Lady of Wisdom Academy. A couple of years after graduation, she met the love of her life, Gerald "Gerry" Haran, and they were united in Holy Matrimony on November 17, 1962. In 1965, Maureen and Gerry welcomed their first of five boys in the span of seven years. Maureen had her hands full raising the boys, first in Farmingdale (on Long Island), and later in Monroe, NY. As the family grew, she enjoyed bowling and "kibitzing" with the neighborhood wives on High Ridge Road. She was a peacemaker in what could, at times, be a chaotic household. She reminded the boys to treat their brothers well and stick up for each other, but also be empathetic because they never knew what others were going through. The boys remember she would sometimes let them stay home from school on their birthdays and take them to shop for toys. When they got older, she went to stenography school at night. The instructors told her class that many would not achieve certification, but she persisted, succeeded and began a career in court reporting. With Gerry's job transfer to Detroit in 1981, Maureen began recording depositions in the metro area. She was a member of the National Court Reporters Association and served a short time with the Federal Grand Jury in Detroit. One notable "job" of hers in the Grand Jury was the John DeLorean cocaine-conspiracy case in the early 80's. She later became the household breadwinner and put the boys through Catholic school at St. Agatha in Redford. Maureen loved watching her sons' sports events and then her grandkids' events. Demonstrably proud of her boys, their wives, and their families, she beamed at their accomplishments, but was modest when it came to her own. She was self-deprecating and quick to laugh at herself, especially after rattling off incorrect names of her boys or grandkids — a regular occurrence! All agree she was her happiest at family gatherings, playing games and making memories. Her laugh was infectious, and she laughed as hard at the last telling of a family story as she did at the first.

Maureen was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, Gerald Haran; her parents, Genevieve and Edward Fugelsang; step mother Florence Fugelsang; brother Edward Fugelsang; and sister Jean (Fugelsang) Moll. She is survived by her brother William Fugelsang and (5) sons Douglas (Lisa), Patrick (Karen Lee), Andrew (Holly), Matthew (Leah) and Edward (Karen). She has left many fond memories with her (12) grandchildren: Taylor, Allyson, Thomas, Bailey, William, Hayden, Noah, Mark, Luke, Kevin, Paul and Sierra, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A viewing will be held 2-8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12, at O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home 41555 Grand River, Novi; the funeral will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 13, at the Church of the Holy Family 24505 Meadowbrook, Novi.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you consider donating to the American Cancer Society (cancer.org). Expressions of sympathy www.obriensullivanfuneralhome.com.



The Memories Remain

Allison Anne Bars

MILFORD - Allison Anne Bars, 39, of Milford, Michigan passed away at home on May 7, 2021, after enduring a long-fought battle with a rare form of neuroendocrine disease. Allison was born on April 5, 1982 to parents Michael L. and Cynthia S. (Needham) Bars. She graduated from Milford High School in 2000 and spent her legal career as a skilled prosecutor in Wayne, Livingston, and most recently Eaton County.

Allison's life and legacy will endure forever in the hearts and minds of all who she touched. Blessed daughter of Cynthia S. Bars of Milford, MI and Michael L. Bars (Pam) of Beaufort, SC. Dearest sister and beloved best friend of Michael J. Bars (Cherie) and adoring aunt of Michael G. Bars, residing in Washington, DC. Also survived by her loving siblings, brother Bryan Bars (Kaylan) of Charleston, SC and sister Jessica Ritter of Northville, MI, nephew Avery Caldwell, and her protective and ever-boisterous cat, Teddy.

Allison's full obituary can be viewed at LynchAndSonsMilford.com



Robert "Bob" Kotrych

HIGHLAND - Robert "Bob" Kotrych of Highland, MI passed away on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 after years of failing health.

Bob was born on June 18, 1942 in Detroit, MI to Valentine (Raczka) Kotrych and Joseph Kotrych.

In his younger years, Bob lived on Oxbow lake with his family including two brothers, Tom and Jerry and sister, Lorraine. He developed a love of the outdoors, especially boating and camping near the many lakes of Michigan.

Bob's dad and siblings moved to Detroit where they lived with his paternal grandmother after his mom grew ill. He graduated from Mackenzie High School. After graduation, he attended Detroit Institute of Technology while working as a delivery driver for Stroh's. In 1966, he moved on to Ford Motor Company's Wixom Assembly Plant working as an Inspector, retiring in 2007.

Bob married Bernice (Collins) Miller in 1972 and soon afterward, they bought an acre of land in rural Highland Twp. Being exceptionally talented in anything that came his way, Bob built their house on that acre, doing most all of the work himself. They lived there 1976 until his passing.

Bob loved music and gardening. He was an expert water skier and enjoyed snow skiing. He was always there to lend a hand to anyone who needed it. He loved animals and provided the best home ever for several dogs and cats throughout the years. He loved being with family and enjoyed the many family gatherings at their house.

He was a beloved husband, brother, step-father and grandpa. He was a friend to all and will be remembered as a gentle soul with an infectious laugh.

He is preceded in death by his parents, grandma (Belkowski), and wife, Bernice (2018). He is survived by his brothers, Thomas Kotrych (Linda) and Jerry Kotrych (Mary); sister, Lorraine Kotrych; 3 nieces, 2 nephews; step daughters, Yvonne 'Chery' Nicholas (Allen), Janet Black (Terry), and Denise Short (James); 7 step grandchildren and 16 step great grandchildren as well as a host of family and friends. He is loved and will be missed by many.

Donations may be made to the Humane Society of Huron Valley at <https://www.hshv.org/give/donate/> in memory of Bob and his love of animals.



Reganne Bennett brings high expectations to Novi softball

Colin Gay

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Reganne Bennett's softball scouting report is something to behold.

In the pitcher's circle, she has five pitches in her arsenal. There's a 69-mph fastball answered with a 49-mph changeup. She also adds a riseball, a screwball and a curveball, all the while hitting her spots consistently.

In the batter's box, Bennett has a swing that makes the ball sound different off the bat, using a power that sprays the ball to all fields and over fences.

In other words: Good luck to her opponents. They're going to need it.

It's something softball coach James Carlisle has never seen before in 30 years of coaching, but it's a potential he heard about from the moment he took the Novi head coaching job in 2019. It was the balance of intimidation from both opposing batters and opposing pitchers alike that dumbfounded him.

It's nowhere near normal, especially for Novi softball. But it's fun to watch.

"When I saw her throw, I was like wow, she is the real deal. There's no hype. It's all real. Everything about her is the truth," Carlisle said. "Some people like trying to blow up numbers and stuff like that, but everything about her is the real deal."

Bennett's stats really don't have to be inflated.

Through 76.2 innings of work in her first season with Novi, Bennett has recorded 166 strikeouts — a rate of 2.16 strikeouts per inning pitches — and four no-hitters, posting an ERA of 0.548. With the bat in her hands, the sophomore has posted a .543 average with six home runs and 36 RBI.

Bennett makes it look easy on the softball field. But those are skills showcased after hours of work on and off the field, hours spent in the car traveling from Michigan to South Carolina for club softball.

All opposing pitchers and hitters see is the finished product.

"People are like, 'I can do that,'" Carlisle said. "No, you can't."

Finding her stride

Bennett grew up in a tee-ball household.

Her mother, Jennifer, played college softball at Siena Heights, starting each of her three children in baseball at an early age. Both of Reganne's brothers play baseball, including Brendon, who's a freshman on Novi's varsity team.

But softball never really clicked for Reganne Bennett early on, joining a travel-ball team at 11. She always had the velocity in the circle and the power in



Reganne Bennett joined Carolina Elite this fall, traveling from Michigan to South Carolina each week for practices and games. COURTESY OF JENNIFER BENNETT

her bat, but she struggled with control while honing in on the talents given to her.

"I struggled a lot in the beginning," she said. "I knew I had a lot of potential, but I had to work very hard for it."

To reach that potential, Bennett had to do some traveling.

After impressing coach Dana Fusetti in a tournament game, Bennett was handed a flyer to join Carolina Elite, a South Carolina softball 16U National team. And when Fusetti needed an extra player in another game in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Bennett and her family — on the way home from the tournament — turned around, joining the team and never looking back.

"Everyone on the team is just great," Bennett said. "They always stay engaged. We can give each other criticism, help each other out, figure out how we can make each other better, and that's one of the biggest things."

"They (also) have the weather that helps."

As a Novi sophomore, Bennett was able to be a virtual student due to the COVID-19 pandemic, finding a way to balance schoolwork and her place on Novi's volleyball team while traveling for softball each weekend.

Jennifer Bennett said much of the scheduling came down to Reganne, developing organizational skills to be able to complete everything she needed to do, while also knowing in the back of her head that there would not be much free time in the fall and spring months.

With Carolina Elite, Reganne Bennett has worked to become a better overall

player, while facing some nationally-ranked teams and players in the process.

She said the biggest change has been in her change-up, working with pitching coaches to develop that pitch into being an effective weapon instead of a pitch that hung down the middle of the plate.

Steve Bennett helped his daughter Reganne apply the lessons learned in South Carolina at home too, working with her on pitch-to-pitch concentration. But it's something he doesn't really need to pressure her on.

"She wants to meet her full potential," Steve Bennett said. "To do that, you have to enjoy the process of getting better, and she does. We don't have to ask her to do work."

"She asks us to catch for her, which used to be pretty enjoyable — not so much anymore."

This development was something Carlisle was waiting to see when Bennett put on a Novi uniform, knowing that the amount of work put in, even during the pandemic, would pay off for her and her high school team.

"I never once worried about her. I didn't think there would be any drop off at all," Carlisle said. "The only thing that I selfishly thought about was that I lost her for a year."

Lessons learned

Reganne Bennett holds herself to a high standard. She didn't really know how that standard would translate to the KLAA.

All she knew was, after losing her

freshman year to the pandemic, Novi softball was united in a way that it really hadn't been before. The team's message was clear: it was their season.

"We got last year taken away from us," Bennett said. "We have to be cautious of what we are doing outside, so we can get our season and go as far as possible."

In her first ever game for Novi, Bennett shined, striking out 19 on the mound, while recording five hits — including a home run — at the plate.

Bennett views herself as one of the leaders on the young Wildcats team, not vocally, but more as an example: keeping them motivated by her personal success on the field so the team can find success as a whole.

Carlisle knows his team's confidence is high just because Bennett is in their lineup.

With Bennett, along with players like Allie Sharnowski, Novi has won 16 of its first 20 games this year, finding a level of success that it really hasn't had before.

"We're going to turn the corner," Carlisle said. "Her and the kids we have now, it started three years ago when we started getting competitive with the big dogs. But you have to have that thrower. You have to have that thrower in the batch. Now we have that. This team's going to take this program to another level."

Bennett's main focus right now is on Novi. But those around her know what's coming.

Both Jennifer and Steve Bennett are preparing with Fusetti, learning about the recruiting process and what that will look like for their daughter. Carlisle knows college coaches can't reach out to Reganne directly until September, but knows the attention will come.

"Come Sept. 1, her phone is going to be ringing off the hook," Carlisle said. "I know a lot of people in college and know a lot of people who are interested, let's put it that way. You'll find out Sept. 1 when the phone starts ringing."

Right now, though, it's just a game for Reganne Bennett. It's a game that bonds her and her family, her and her Novi teammates.

Bennett's next goal is to make a play-off run, using that scouting report to get the team as far as she possibly can.

"I would like to go as far as possible and win a state championship," Bennett said. "For volleyball, we placed third, and that was super fun, an incredible experience. I would love to do that again."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @ColinGay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

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3 search tips for graduating college seniors

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If you're a student who is about to graduate from college, you're probably thinking about joining "the real world" and getting your first full-time job.

In your last weeks as a student, you actually have a leg up on many other job seekers. Here's why:

1. Alumni want to help

Anyone who's ever graduated from college knows what it's like to be in your position. In fact, no one knows it better than the people who graduated from your school before you. And now, many of them run or work at successful businesses. Alumni are generally open to speaking with students, sharing their wisdom and helping where they can.

Research past graduates who are at companies you're interested in or perform the type of work you're looking to pursue. Then reach out and request a 15-minute informational interview call to ask some questions and get to know them.

2. Use your school's career resources

Most schools have career centers that help connect students to job fairs, networking events, mock interviews, resume-writing

workshops and more. While the offerings may vary, these offices are direct lines to career resources and opportunities like alumni events, networking groups and other ways to stay in touch with alumni.

Sign up for their email lists, follow them on social media and offer to volunteer with them. Doing so will connect you with other engaged alumni and help you network with them organically.

3. You don't have experience, and no one expects you to

Many college graduates are rightfully concerned that they are headed into a job market without much real-world work experience. This is one of the few situations in life where this isn't only acceptable, it's expected.

Just because you are inexperienced in the job market doesn't mean you don't have anything to offer. Whether you're sharing your resume with someone or creating a profile on your school's alumni website, include any experience you think could be applicable to the type of work you're looking to do, such as academic, extracurricular, internships or on-campus work-study programs. Include anything that illustrates your leadership, teamwork, organizational abilities and other soft skills that will help you stand out in the job market.



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SoftPath Technologies LLC has multiple openings for Software Engineer to work in Northville, MI and various anticipated locations throughout the U.S. May require extended travel and/or relocation. Research, analyze, design, develop, test, install and maintain computer applications software/systems applications. May be in a mainframe or in a client/server environment. Bachelor's Degree for foreign equivalent in Computer Science, Engineering (Computer, Electrical, Mechanical, or related Engineering field), Mathematics, or related field. Will accept any suitable combination of education, training and experience no prior prof exp. req. annual salary \$63,315.00. Mail resumes to: SoftPath Technologies LLC, 21800 Haggerty Road, Suite 204, Northville, Michigan 48167.

Software Engineer: Masters Degree

SoftPath Technologies LLC has multiple openings for Software Engineer to work in Northville, MI with potential for placement at various client sites throughout the United States to Research, analyze, design, develop, test, install and maintain computer applications software/systems applications. May be in a mainframe or in a client/server environment. Master's Degree or equivalent in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Information Technology or a related field required. Will accept any suitable combination of education, training and experience no prior prof exp. req. May require extended travel and/or relocation. Annual salary 79,248.00. Mail resumes to: SoftPath Technologies LLC, 21800 Haggerty Road, Suite 204, Northville, Michigan 48167.

VU Acquisitions, LLC: Troy, MI: Cost Estimator, Tooling Cost estimation for plastic injection molding. Utilize MRP software system to store mfg. info. on SQL server. Need Bachelor's in Business Admin. or Mechanical Engng. 2 yrs exp. in job offered. Need proof of auth. to work indefinitely in U.S. Send resume to: Alexia U., VU Acquisitions, 2151 Livermore Rd., Ste. 200, Troy, MI 48063.

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THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

"OH GEEZ!"

ACROSS	50 Safe sword	93 Cellar, in ads	4 Children's author	40 Rock singer	80 Good egg rating
1 Gets married again	52 Question about one's relentless following	95 Makes accused	Madeline L'—	Nugent	81 Israeli weapon
7 Playmate for Spot	56 Thinks alike skills?	99 Tooth doctor's org.	5 Abbr. for a handyperson	46 "Wow, neat!"	84 ABC a.m. show, for short
11 Fed. loan agency	59 Sch. in the Nutmeg State	100 Expectant father	6 Refused the request	48 Gets mature	85 Police vehicle
14 The — & the Papas	60 Saturated	103 Latin I verb	7 Blast from a lighthouse	49 Cpl.'s boss	86 Reagan-era scandal
19 Greek Muse of astronomy	61 Royal daughter	105 Fore and —	8 Pet collar attachment	51 Austin-to-Houston dir.	87 Positive vote
20 Take way too much of, for short	66 Berlin article	106 Way to pack fresh fish	9 Homer Simpson cry	53 Dir. opposite	88 Auction offer
21 That lady	69 Effortless	109 Heroic American spy's petty bargaining?	10 "Be right there"	54 Santa — winds	89 Doc treating sinusitis
22 Scarlett of Tara	70 Prefix with chic or tourist	112 Whopper dropped in water?	11 Carpet style	55 Be a debtor	90 Ski resort in S. Vermont
23 Equipping a ranch with light, horse-drawn vehicles?	71 Love-letter "hugs"	116 — about (around)	12 Big icy chunk	56 Impersonated	91 Positive vote
25 Anatomical sacs	72 Cab	117 British islet	13 Gl's' force	57 Silver-haired	92 Cartoon gorilla of 1960s TV
27 Playa — Rey	73 Indigo, e.g.	118 City in central Florida	14 Coffee flavor	58 Increase	93 Lions, 49ers or Steelers
28 Qatari capital	74 Goose flocks making people chuckle?	119 Dancing woman's moves?	15 "Now I remember"	59 Gp. patrolling shores	94 Most ogreish
29 Brie exposed to heat?	81 Suffix with event or context	123 Suppressed	16 Italian sports car	62 Division: Abbr.	96 Cartoon gorilla of 1960s TV
31 Cooing bird wearing fancy duds?	82 Wove rattan into	124 Lyric poem	17 Cultural exhibition hall	63 Errand runners	97 Lions, 49ers or Steelers
34 Port in Iraq	83 Tire marks	125 Discontinues	18 Encl. with a manuscript	64 Top Olympic medal	98 Canonized Fr. woman
35 "I'm — loss"	84 Big brown beast seeking handouts of salmon?	126 Money, informally	24 "Can't, I'm already late"	65 Mauna —	100 Cotillion gal
36 Dark film style	90 Steak or ham	127 Filled cookies	25 Diminish	66 Info to input	101 "That's — haven't heard!"
37 Forest cats	91 — Claire (magazine)	128 Abel, to Eve	30 "MacGyver" network	67 Chopped down	102 — & Noble
41 Bar brew	92 Berlin article	129 Sing like Ella	31 Faux — (slip)	68 Knights, e.g.	104 Scampi food
43 Months before Octs.		130 Neighbor of Colombia	32 Without assurance of payment	72 Eta-iota link	107 Inuit dwelling
45 Pre-Q queue		DOWN	33 Disappear as if by magic	74 Look intently	108 Greenish-blue colors
47 Prez Lincoln		1 Wipe	38 On the — (hiding out)	75 Wholly	110 Accord maker
48 Furrier John Jacob —		2 Very learned	39 Kobe sash	76 Heart chart, in brief	111 Be choked by
		3 Disparity in work pay		77 — AFTRA (showbiz union)	112 Merely OK
				78 Due to waging	113 Sci-fi vehicles
				79 Sport- — (off-roader)	114 Overhaul
					115 Fed. agents
					120 U.S. "Ltd."
					121 — long way
					122 — Na Na

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10		11	12	13		14	15	16	17	18	
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For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702-4247 or smcclellan@michigan.com.

SUDOKU

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

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

5/1

Here's How It Works

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!

SURF THE NET

Can you find all the words hidden in the grid? Read backwards or forwards, up or down, even diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

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

AUDIO
AWARD
BANNERS
BROWSER
BUG
BUTTONS
CHAT
CURSOR
DATA
DELETE
EMAIL
FAVORITES
FILE
FORMAT
FRAMES
GAMES
GRAPHICS
HARD DRIVE
HOME PAGE
HOST
HTML
HTTP
ICON
JAVA
JOYSTICK
KEY
KEYBOARD
LINK
MENU
MODEM
MOUSE
PASTE
RAM
ROM
SCRIPT
SERVER
SHIFT
SOURCE CODE
SPONSOR
TEXT
TOOLS
UNDO
UPLOAD
VDU
VIDEO
VIRUS
WINDOW
WWW

[illegible]

2	2	3	6	4	8	7	5	9	1
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