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THURSDAY, JULY 29, 2021 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

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Police cadet for Milford, Novi gains citizenship

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Blerim Sefa is pursuing an American Dream that he could soon realize thanks to a persevering spirit mixed with smarts and a strong work ethic.

The Albanian immigrant became a

U.S. citizen in June, and he's now working as a police cadet for both Milford and Novi police departments so that he can become a full-time police officer.

It's been a long road, especially since the 28-year-old Farmington Hills resident left the Albanian capital of Tirana in 2015 thinking he'd keep striving to be-

come a mechanical engineer.

He was in his early 20s then. A West Bloomfield Township cousin helped him get settled. He found a job. Sefa successfully tested for a driver's license.

Coming from a country that considered America a land of opportunity, he was ready to return to school until a lo-

cal college rep started talking to him about tuition fees.

"I did not know you have to pay for school here. I'm like, 'What is that for?' I was a little bit shocked. I did not expect that in America," he admitted with a

See CADET, Page 8A

Get ready to throw some shade during Big Tree Hunt

Susan Bromley Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The search is on for the most majestic trees in Michigan (and maybe the country) in the Big Tree Hunt.

ReLeaf Michigan seeks your assistance in identifying the state's largest trees, with the biggest in each of hundreds of species to be registered in a state database, in a contest that has been extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ashley Laux, project forester for the non-profit ReLeaf Michigan, said the biennial contest had more than 700 submissions in 2018-19 from 81 of the state's 83 counties and is hoping for even more this go around after the contest extension.

"There is a lot of scientific data that big trees provide and there is huge value in knowing where those trees are," Laux said, citing also the climate, cultural and historical information that can be gleaned. "Michigan's trees are hundreds of years old and when you look at trees and the surrounding environment, you can understand what happened historically in that region and we can make better management decisions around our forests and how we manage the land."

Many entries come from southeast Michigan, with oaks the majority species, but all tree species are wanted and there is a special prize category for white pine in addition to prizes for largest tree in each county and more.

Michigan's Big Tree database currently has 547 trees standing tall as state champions of their species, with several from the Hometown Life com-

See TREES, Page 7A



Northville native and Miss Michigan 2021 Vivian Zhong strikes a pose on West Main Street. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Northville's Miss Michigan stood up to racist comments

Ed Wright Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Well on her way to becoming a pediatric oncologist, Northville's Vivian Zhong frequently visited the cancer ward at the University of Michigan's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital prior to

the COVID-19 pandemic, sometimes dressed as Disney's Mulan, other times to entertain the patients with her classical piano skills.

Sometimes Zhong was simply compelled to visit the cancer-stricken kids to talk and offer any comfort and encouragement she could provide.

A dynamic speaker with head-turning looks, it was not surprising when the kind-hearted 2015 graduate of Northville High School was crowned Miss Michigan June 19 in Muskegon.

"The second I won, it was surreal be-

See MISS MICHIGAN, Page 7A

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Five file for South Lyon City Council

Mayor will run unopposed in November

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

South Lyon Mayor Dan Pelchat will run unopposed on the November ballot, the only candidate to file for the city's top elected office by the July 20 deadline.

However, there will be a contest for city council, with five candidates vying for only three seats.

Incumbents Glenn Kivell and Carl Richards are attempting to re-up for another four-year term with newcomers Jim Hamade, Alex Hansen and Lori Mosier hoping to get their first opportunity to serve. Rose Walton did not file paper-

work for reelection.

Hamade and Mosier both had failed bids for city council in 2019, when Steve Kennedy and Maggie Kurtzweil were re-elected and joined by then-newcomer Lisa Dilg.

Mosier retired two years ago after working as a bookkeeper for the City of South Lyon for 25 years and said she is running for council to continue her involvement.

"I like to be involved in the community and I still have something to give to the city," she said.

Hansen is new to South Lyon, moving here last August, but is not new to trying for political office. The former Howell



Pelchat

resident ran an unsuccessful campaign for Livingston County Commissioner in 2018.

The branch manager of a local credit union said he wants to serve on city council to give back to the community.

"My expertise in the banking industry and education in finance would work toward improving infrastructure in South Lyon," he said, specifically citing road improvements as something he would like to work with other council members on.

Richards said he hopes to continue on council as his work "isn't finished."

"It's a tremendous amount of work. I do more than is necessary, but the ba-

sics are quite a lot," the retired machine shop operator said. "You have to donate hours of time to research and make a responsible vote."

Pelchat plans to continue his work in a third term for mayor, uncontested for the first time. The South Lyon Schools IT technician has enjoyed working with the team at city hall.

"We have a great group of people and the job's not done," he said. "This was a tough term for the community and we are making progress on the infrastructure. I certainly want to be part of the team that sends it out to the voters next year."

Kivell and Hamade could not be immediately reached for comment on their campaigns.

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Supporters of former President Donald Trump, including those who believe the 2020 election of President Joe Biden was fraudulent, gather at the northeast corner of Eight Mile and Haggerty on July 20. PHOTOS JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Pro-Trump protesters converge in Novi

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

More than eight months after Joe Biden defeated Donald Trump in the presidential election, supporters of Trump begged to differ in Novi.

At least 200 protesters gathered at all four corners of the intersection of 8 Mile and Haggerty during the evening rush hour on July 20 for an event dubbed by the Michigan Conservative Coalition as the "Trump won" rally.

Many held signs that asserted as much, including "Trump won, Democrats cheated," "Jesus is my savior, Trump is my president" and "Trump now, save America."

A man with a bullhorn rallied the crowd with chants including, "America first," "The best is yet to come," and "Save the USA! Trump 2021."

Among the crowd was Roman Zubar of Bloomfield Township, who said he wanted the country to come back to normal and Biden serving in the Oval Office wasn't part of that.

"If Biden won, he deserves it. But if he cheated, it's off to prison he goes," Zubar said.

Zubar said he was suspicious of the election results due to being an election challenger at the TCF Center in Detroit, where he wasn't allowed to get closer than six feet to ballot counters because officials "played the COVID card" and also speculated that 70 ballot boxes that arrived in a vehicle in the early morning hours of Nov. 4 came from Mars.

Zubar said he was also in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6 when Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol, but he didn't go into the building. He was at the Novi rally to make people aware "the election was not what it should be and there was plenty of evidence."

David Dudenhoefer of Detroit was at the Novi rally with his 8-month-old daughter, Paloma Mia, both adorned in pro-Trump attire, as well as Paloma's grandmother, Canton resident Kathy Gamache.

"I'm supporting patriots who know in their hearts that our election had suspicious activity that has led us to believe the election may very well have been stolen from the rightful winner," Dudenhoefer said. "It's even more amplified by the drastic change in policy direction our country has taken."

Dudenhoefer had a failed bid for Congress when he ran against Rashida Tlaib, D-Detroit, who represents the 13th District.

He said he wants a look taken at the "breakdown of all four levels of the chain of custody, including the poll books, qualified voter files, the election results tapes from the machines, and the ballots."

Cathryn Neracher, a Northville Township resident who plans on running for the state's 20th District House seat next year, came to the rally for a host of reasons, citing vaccination rights and concerns about what is being taught in schools regarding critical race theory.

"You see buzzwords and you know that is what's being taught," she said. "I know our nation is not more perfect

than others... I just want to bring awareness and for people to not have to fear if they say they're conservative they might lose their jobs or be called a racist or bigot or homophobic. I want them to be free."

In a press release preceding the event, Michigan Conservative Coalition President Rosanne Ponkowski said Lansing had failed to "seriously investigate the 2020 elections," despite evidence to the contrary, including a Michigan Republican-led investigation which concluded there is no basis for claims of widespread election fraud.

"With more revelations about Arizona's and Georgia's troubling election processes coming out nearly every day we need to let Michigan's elected representatives and, frankly, the world know that we demand a forensic audit in Michigan," Ponkowski said in the release. "Until this critical forensic audit is conducted, voters will not trust Michigan elections again. Who won in 2020? Let's find that out."

In Michigan, Biden beat Trump by more than 154,000 votes.

Nationwide, Biden scored 306 electoral college votes to Trump's 232. In the popular vote, Biden garnered more than 7 million votes than Trump.

Locally in northwest Wayne and southwest Oakland counties, Biden also was a clear winner although Trump did score a few "wins," getting more votes in Milford and Lyon townships, as well as Commerce and White Lake.

Mariah Parkyn, a Brighton resident and Trump supporter, said while she doesn't trust the election results, she stands strong in her faith as a Christian and "the truth will reveal itself."

She wants an audit and said she would trust the results "when people get together for a civil conversation."

Michigan's 11th Congressional District Republican Committee indicated on social media the events would continue weekly.

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Milford councilman pleads guilty in damaged utility pole incident

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A Village of Milford councilman caught some media attention after he crashed into a utility pole and then drove away in his damaged vehicle.

A Novi District Court judge moved the case over to 52-3 District Court in Rochester Hills, and that's where Councilman David Pehrson pleaded guilty July 21 to a misdemeanor charge of failing to report an accident.

He paid \$525 in fines and costs as part of his sentence.

Justice was served, said Pehrson, who vowed to continue serving his community to the best of his ability.

According to police and court reports, a person was walking north on Main Street near the south end of the business district, the evening of March 12 when he heard a crash and saw a white truck on a pole. The truck reversed and then drove off.

Police said they were dispatched to Huron and Main streets because someone was reporting that a white truck drove away after smashing into a pole. Arriving officers found the pole, along with several car parts and car fluid, near the intersection.



Pehrson

A passerby stopped as they were securing a white Ford grill and a U.S. flag front decal plate inside a patrol car when a passerby stopped. He claimed to know where the rest of the vehicle was.

He had driven past an apparently freshly-damaged white Ford F-150 truck with a front end severely wrecked.

The man led officers to Pehrson's home where a damaged Ford F-150 was in the driveway.

An officer said in the report the damaged car seemed to be the one responsible for the damaged pole.

Pehrson eventually talked to an officer and admitted to striking the pole. He said had been getting lightheaded and showed the officer his supplements for testosterone boosts, Plexus meal replacements and Keto diets.

Pehrson initially was charged with a misdemeanor or of failing to stop to report a property damage accident. He pleaded guilty to the lesser charge.

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



Andrew Atala, right, talks about earning more than 100 Boy Scout merit badges as his brothers George, center, and Matthew listen. The siblings want to earn every possible Scouting merit badge.

JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Brothers in Northville Boy Scout troop set to earn every possible merit badge

David Veselenak Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Woodworking. Plumbing. Gardening. Journalism. Camping.

These are just a few of the topics George and Andrew Atala learned about the last few years in achieving a pretty rare feat: the two boys have or are about to earn every single Boy Scouts of America merit badge possible.

"Scouts always gives you a lot of things to learn, a lot of different skills," Andrew said. "Ever since I earned my first merit badge, I always wanted to learn more. And you think, 'This one's cool,' and you do it. And there's a cooler one and a cooler one until, like, you do them all, like I did."

The two, members of Troop 755 in Northville, set out to each earn all of the 137 merit badges offered by the organization. The badges have several requirements for Scouts to complete and cover a myriad of subjects.

The organization requires Scouts earn 21 merit badges to earn the highest award in Scouting, the Eagle Scout award. Both boys have already earned their Eagle award, with Andrew doing his project at St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia and George donating duffel bags to foster children in Detroit.

George, 16, earned his last badge earlier this year while Andrew, 14, is on the last requirements on his last badge, which he hoped to earn this month. Both boys will have completed the same badge for their final one: Bugling.

"You have to learn 10 songs. You have to learn how to play it," George said. "Basically, you're learning how to play an instrument. And obviously people take lessons for that. I was on YouTube all day."

Once George earned that final badge, he said he realized how valuable earning more badges could be, especially to help prepare him for adulthood.

"Once I got that amount, I just learned so much from doing so little (of the) merit badges and it just felt so great," George said. "Like you just scratch the surface of literally 137 different topics and you can really see what you enjoy."

The Boy Scouts of America said it doesn't keep track of how many Scouts earn every merit badge it offers,

but provided some related statistics regarding how many badges were earned in the last year.

Badges that could be earned at home did especially well — a time period where many Scouts did their badge work at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic — with badges like Family Life and Personal Fitness being atop the list of most badges earned.

With in-person meetings limited, working with counselors became a new challenge to navigate. Instead of the brothers — both Detroit Catholic Central High School students — meeting with merit badge counselors in person, there were a lot of Zoom meetings with others to discuss their progress.

The pandemic ended up having a bit of an upside when it came to earning merit badges, Andrew said — the brothers were able to connect with people in places they normally wouldn't.

"It was more diverse because we could talk to people in different states as well," Andrew said. "So I thought that was pretty cool as well."

Scouting has become a family affair for the Atalas. Their father, Bassel Atala, serves as an assistant Scoutmaster in their troop, and younger brother Matthew has begun his journey in Scouts as well.

So far, he's earned 10 and hopes to keep going, especially after seeing the things his older brothers have done.

"I want to follow them because when I saw the pictures of them whitewater rafting and going on these crazy adventures, and them smiling all the time, it was just like, 'Wow, that is so cool, I want to also do that,'" Matthew said.

Andrew said the first badge he earned, First Aid, is a demonstration of how important the skills learned for a merit badge can be. He used those skills to save someone's life when attending St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia, helping a fellow parishioner until first responders could arrive.

Having those skills, he said, is crucial. And completing a merit badge to learn those skills helped him save that person's life.

"It's not just a merit badge," Andrew said. "It's more of a life lesson rather than just a badge."

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

Judge sends former firefighter's arson case to trial

Susan Vela Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A former Northville firefighter left a New Year's Eve party, telling his girlfriend he wanted to visit her Canton home to check on their dogs soon after they rang in 2019.

That may have been Patrick Nolan's intent, but his truck's infotainment system placed him outside his Plymouth Township home on Sheffield Court between 12:30 and 12:34 a.m.

He would return to the party, where his truck was at at about 2:15 a.m., when someone called 911 to say Nolan's township home was an inferno.

35th District Court Judge Ronald Lowe opined that he knows from watching the courthouse burn in 1997 that a building can burn for some time before anyone sees evidence of a blaze.

After listening to prosecutors present that timeline information in the courtroom, Lowe sent Nolan's arson case to the higher Third Circuit Court for trial. If convicted on the two arson charges, Nolan could spend the rest of his life in prison.

"At best, the state has a circumstantial case," Lowe said. "The difficulty for you, Mr. Nolan, is that they put that many pieces together."

His decision concluded an all-day July 23 preliminary exam that included several witnesses and plenty of photos. The photos, in the judge's opinion, proved arson burned down Nolan's home.

Predicting that any jury will be disappointed to learn there's no obvious smoking gun, he noted that Nolan had the incentive, opportunity and expertise to burn down his insured home for financial gain.

An insurance representative who investigated Nolan's fire claim testified that the former firefighter told her he had cashed out a 401(k) account and had maxed out credit cards.

Kim Campbell of Citizens Insurance said in court that he told her he worked as a Northville firefighter for about a year and a half before the city terminated him in September 2018. He became self employed and worked as a snow plow contractor.

While attending a Christmas concert, Nolan also allegedly approached a personal acquaintance who works for another insurance company about who would get the insurance money and how would the payout happen if a house burned.

Those who investigated the case also testified that Nolan was living with his girlfriend in Canton when his township home burned. The home had spent a few months on the market.

Nolan told at least two of those testifying that he had returned to his township home briefly at about 6:45 p.m. New Year's Eve, just to check on a basement sump pump.

His truck's infotainment system placed him there between 6:52 and 7:20 p.m., a window of opportunity if he wanted to prepare the home for arson, prosecutors asserted.

Michigan State Police investigator Jason Mercier testified that he smelled gasoline when he visited the destroyed home. He found evidence of gasoline in several places, including on carpeting, a couch, and a basement shelf.

Gregory Lotoczky of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive testified that he was talking to Nolan inside the home's kitchen area when the former firefighter led him to a landscaping brick that suggested a forced entry.

Nolan appeared for his preliminary examination in a jail jumpsuit. He seems to be having medical issues, with Lowe at one point asking if he needed to lay on his back.

The case against Nolan has involved Michigan Attorney General investigators who emphasize that fire ignited in three separate unconnected areas of the home, gas vapors were ignited with an open flame, a human caused the fire and Nolan's truck was outside the residence less than two hours before a neighbor called for help.

Defense attorney Adam Clements said during his closing statements that, given the duration of the investigation, there should have been more evidence against his client.

Lowe lowered Nolan's bond to \$50,000.

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Novi police chief receives prestigious award

Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police

Novi Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety David Molloy in receiving the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP) Presidential Medal.

The medal was presented to Molloy by current President Ronald Wiles at the recently concluded the MACP Summer Professional Conference Awards Banquet.

The presidential medal is awarded for outstanding and extraordinary professional and personal service to the criminal justice system, the law enforcement profession and the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

The recipient's activities shall be of such significance as to demonstrate a personal dedication and commitment above and beyond normal professional duties and interactions. Criteria for the award may include:

1 Long term contributions to the criminal justice system and law enforcement via membership and involvement on committees, boards or related bodies;

2 Sponsorship or stewardship of significant grant programs or legislation important to law enforcement; significant training accomplishments, or other widely recognized criminal justice endeavors or accomplishments.



Molloy

Molloy has been a leader in the police community with service to better the police profession. He was appointed Chief of Police in 2005, then appointed Director of Public Safety in 2010.

Molloy has earned a bachelor of arts degree in criminal justice from Saginaw Valley State University and a master's degree from Eastern Michigan University.

He is a graduate of the School of Police Staff and Command, the Center for Excellence in Police Management Studies, the 228th session of the F.B.I.'s National Academy, and the Senior Executive Institute at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business.

For the past 13 years, he has served as an assistant

adjunct professor at Madonna University teaching criminal justice ethics, criminal justice administration and other criminal justice courses.

In addition, he has been a long-time instructor for the MACP's New Chief and Police Executive School and as an instructor for the School of Police Staff and Command programs at both Eastern Michigan University and Michigan State University teaching hundreds of police executives.

Molloy is a 20-year member of the MACP. He served as the president of this association in 2018-19 and was one of the key leaders who helped grow the MACP's accreditation program and the advancement of the FBI's National Use-of Force Data Collection program for recording law enforcement use of force.

He is also a member of the IACP and the Police Executive Research Forum.

Molloy has also served as the president and executive board member for both the Oakland County Association of Chiefs of Police and Southeast Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

Former GM plant land in Livonia to be redeveloped

David Veselenak

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

Maureen Miller Brosnan could not have been more happy to participate in her first groundbreaking since becoming Livonia's mayor in 2020.

The fact that it was for a project that's expected to make a major impact in the city made it that much sweeter.

Brosnan, along with many other community and business leaders, were on hand July 21 on the property near Amrhein and Eckles near the border with Plymouth Township to celebrate the ongoing construction of a new 364,000-square-foot industrial building on part of the site of the former General Motors spring and bumper plant,

which was purchased by the Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response (RACER) Trust after GM's bankruptcy and then later by developer Ashley Capital.

"For all of us, this is important. Because this is an area that was a contaminated piece of property that did not see a ready opportunity to redevelop," Brosnan said. "The fact that we had RACER Trust come together with Ashley Capital, it was the ideal mix."

The construction of the new building marks a significant achievement for the property: it's the final parcel to be redeveloped on the site of the former plant, which closed its operations in the early 1990s and was left mostly without activity since.

The site is now teeming with life, anchored by one of the largest companies in the world. Amazon opened a 1 million-square-foot fulfillment center on the property back in 2017, and Republic National Distributing Company, opened a warehouse on the property back in 2019.

The new project was approved for Brownfield tax credits by the city council at the end of 2020.

Combined at the three sites, the total number of jobs on the property once the new building is completed is expected to number more than 1,700, Dan West, president of the Livonia Chamber of Commerce, said.

Susan Harvey, a senior vice president of Canton Township-based Ashley



Livonia Mayor Maureen Brosnan-Miller, fifth from left, Wayne County Executive Warren Evans, second from left, and others toss some dirt at the groundbreaking for the Ashley Capital Livonia West Commerce Center on Amrhein in Livonia on July 21. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

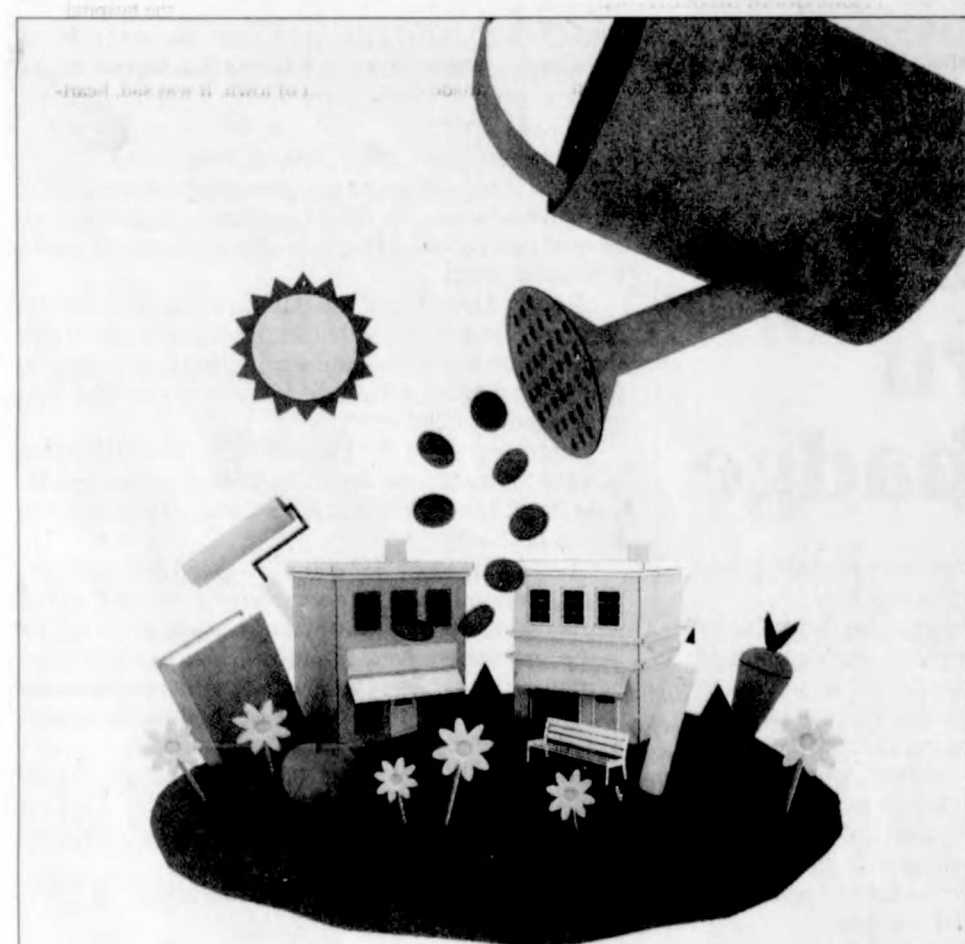
Capital, said work is expected to be completed on the project by next spring. She said while there's no tenant yet for the space, they are marketing the building and expect to land a company to fill it in the future.

"We have expressions of interest in it, but Ashley Capital does almost everything we've ever built on a speculative basis. So that's not new for us and it's worked out," she said.

Seeing the redevelopment of the space isn't just a benefit for Livonia, but for all of Wayne County, said County Executive Warren Evans, who attended the groundbreaking as well.

Having attractive business opportunities is what drives people to want to locate to Wayne County, he said. "I want the employees, when they come, to see Wayne County in a way that says, 'I want to buy a home here. I want to live here.' That's how you cycle the economy and do good things," he said. "I'll tell anybody: We have 43 different communities in Wayne County. If you can't find somewhere that you like in the 43 communities, then there's probably something wrong with you."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728.



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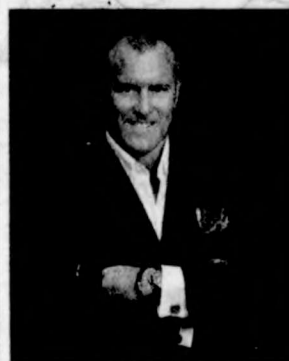
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JULY 2021

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VOLUME 31, ISSUE 7.4

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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

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.

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extravagant or expensive habits. Except



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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'Huge transformation'

Remodeled Big Boy reopens in Brighton

Jennifer Timar Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Brighton Big Boy reopened after an extensive remodel of the longtime diner at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Challis Road.

"Before it had an old-school diner feel, but we are making it more contemporary," Patrick Blake, marketing manager of Big Boy Restaurant Group, said July 22.

The Warren-based firm has 78 Big Boy locations in the country and is remodeling all 30 stores that it both owns and operates, in Michigan and Cleveland, Ohio, Blake said. The others are operated by franchisees.

Customers will notice the changes.

The buffet, salad bar and pie display case are gone. Instead there are more booths and tables. The restaurant will now seat up to about 140 customers.

"We got rid of (buffets) really to emphasize our meals, our menu items," Blake said.

The restaurant will add new menu items, including pizza.

Big Boy's history dates back to the 1930s. The company's headquarters moved to Michigan in the 1980s when the company was purchased by the Elias Brothers. The company filed for bankruptcy in 2000. Ownership later transferred to investors, including Big Boy Restaurant Group and Frisch's Restaurants, which owns the Big Boy trademark in several states.

The Brighton location had been owned by franchisees before being purchased by previous company owner Big Boy Restaurants International. It was remodeled in 2015 to update the 1976 building.

Nostalgia for Big Boy diners was felt by some in Brighton in 2015 when a large Big Boy statue, which once stood at the top of a sign at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Challis Road, was removed because it did not comply with the city's ordinance.

Blake said being a corporate-operated location has its benefits.

"There's more stability now."

He said he hopes the remodeled store



The iconic Big Boy statue stands next to the entrance of the Brighton Big Boy restaurant.

and new additions to the menu will attract more young families. The restaurant often attracts seniors and people with nostalgia for old Big Boy diners.

"We essentially lost a whole generation," Blake said. "We want to cater to young families, too."

He said some restaurants now feature beer, wine or liquor sales. They will not do that in Brighton.

In addition to new dining room booths, interior decor and kitchen equipment, the restaurant is also adding menu item.

When it reopens, the restaurant will add pizza and boneless wings for dine-in, carry-out and delivery through third-party online food ordering services.

It will also feature Big Boy's new line of burgers, including a mushroom Swiss, a green Chile and a "Frontier" burger.

Blake said more new menu items will be released in August.

The restaurant will be open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., but he hopes to expand hours in the future.



Patrick Blake, Big Boy Restaurant Group marketing manager, talks about the Brighton restaurant's past, and the rebranding that has made it more appealing for a younger generation. PHOTOS BY GILLIS BENEDICT/LIVINGSTON DAILY



A mixture of the comfort of a familiar layout combined with new decor and signing make a bright nod to nostalgia at the Brighton Big Boy, shown July 22.

It will hold a grand opening with more special offerings Aug. 12.

General Manager Larry Cope said the restaurant is still looking to hire staff for both back and front of the house.

"Pretty much like with restaurants in general, staffing has been an issue. Now that unemployment is coming to an end, more people are getting interest-

ed," Cope said.

He said they increased starting wages to compete with other employers. Kitchen positions start around \$16-18 an hour.

"This (remodel) is definitely a huge transformation from before. I feel it's more modern, but also telling a story at the same time."

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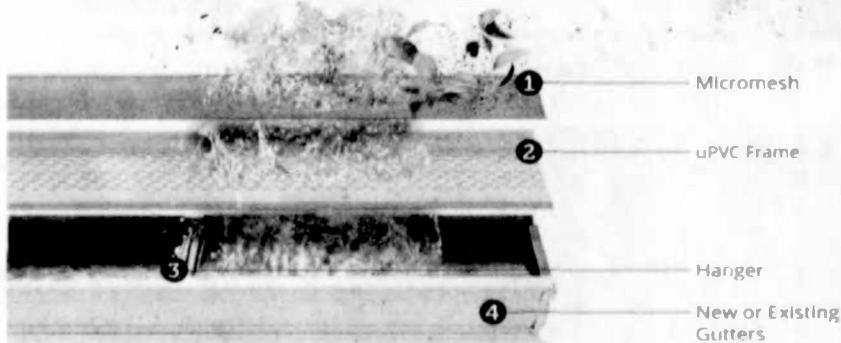
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Trees

Continued from Page 1A

munities, including ones making the list in just the past year.

Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield Township have several, among them "Big Daddy," the moniker given by a family to the Norway spruce that graces their yard on Brookdale. The tree has a girth of 140.4 inches and stands 92 feet tall.

Another Norway spruce at 21937 Novi Road in Northville was damaged by a lightning strike, but was still standing strong in late October, registered with a girth of 176 inches and height of 84 feet.

Also making the list is a white fir at 58955 Ten Mile in South Lyon that was observed last October with a girth of 109 inches and height of 60 feet.

The represented species in the Hometown Life communities also include English, willow and scarlet oaks in Northville, a dawn redwood and saucer magnolia in Bloomfield Hills, a green

ash in Bloomfield Township, and an American beech in Livonia.

According to the 2020 National Register of Champion Trees, Michigan currently holds only one title, for a white willow in Lansing which was last measured a decade ago with a trunk circumference of 389 inches, a height of 67.67 feet, and a crown spread of 81 feet.

"Since there are hundreds of tree species that don't yet have registered champions, the Big Tree Hunt is a great opportunity to add to this list and get Michigan trees noticed nationwide," Laux said.

Michigan has four tree species that have no registered state champion: Striped maple, mountain maple, choke cherry and white/paper birch.

Any size of these could be a potential winner.

The overall largest trees on the National Register are found in California, home to the Sequoia Giant and Redwood Coast species.

The Big Tree Hunt contest, which offers prizes for identifying the biggest trees in Michigan, is open to partici-

pants of all ages. Trees are scored in a point system, taking into account circumference, height and crown spread.

All accessible trees are eligible and can be found in yards, parks, or on hiking trails.

Even if the tree submitted is not as large as a currently listed state champion, Laux said it is important to still submit, since the title-holding trees may have died or since been removed.

The contest, held every two years since 1993, helps ReLeaf Michigan track vital historical living landmarks and can land eligible trees on the National Registry, updated every spring and fall by American Forests, the nation's oldest conservation non-profit.

More contest details and the entry form are available online at releafmichigan.org. The contest will accept submissions until the deadline of Aug. 19, 2022. Email bigtreehunt@releafmichigan.org or call 800-642-7353.

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



This white fir tree made it into ReLeaf Michigan's Big Tree Hunt for its height and girth. The tree is near the corner of Griswold and Ten Mile in South Lyon. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Miss Michigan

Continued from Page 1A

cause I knew it was the final time I'd be competing," said Zhong, 24, who will start medical school in the fall. "When the reigning Miss Michigan told me I'd be competing in the 100th Miss America Pageant, it was almost too much to take in. I looked for my mom in the audience, but couldn't find her right away."

Zhong will be in the running to become Michigan's first Miss America since Farmington Hills native Kirsten Haglund earned the title in 2008.

"I was 10 years old the year Kirsten won and I remember telling my mom, 'I want to do that someday,'" Zhong recounted. "To be in a position to compete for Miss America 14 years later, it's an amazing feeling."

What is somewhat surprising is that Zhong was not immune to the anti-Asian-American hatred that spread throughout the United States during the coronavirus pandemic. During her recent tenure as a student at New Orleans-based Tulane University, where

she recently secured a master's degree in pharmacology (Zhong earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan), Zhong was frequently taunted by remarks like, "Go back to China!" and "You're not welcome here!"

"I was shocked when I first heard those comments, but I realized that I just had to stand strong and show them I was not afraid and that I am an American citizen and deserve every right every other person in this country deserves," Zhong said.

"I was less worried for myself than I was for my mom and grandparents. When the videos of the violence against Asian-Americans first started to surface, I called my mom to make sure they were OK. It's a very sad situation, but at the same time I'm proud to be an Asian-American and in a leadership position where I can speak out against those acts of violence."

Zhong's strong attachment to pediatric cancer started when one of her childhood friends was diagnosed with leukemia.

"My close friend ultimately beat her cancer with chemotherapy and radiation, but passed away just before her

21st birthday because of complications created by the treatments," Zhong said. "Ever since I've been advocating for more non-invasive treatment options and I fundraise for more dollars for this cause because there's such a lack of funding for pediatric cancer research."

Zhong, who competed against 21 contestants in June, said serving as Miss Michigan is the equivalent of a full-time job, but one that she embraces with all her heart and soul.

"There will be a lot of speaking engagements and volunteering for my social impact initiative, which is helping kids battling cancer," she said. "The most important legacy I want to leave when my year is over is to have raised as much money as possible for childhood-cancer research."

"The first big event that I participated in was Northville's Fourth of July Parade. Getting an opportunity to ride in the parade was such a special homecoming, seeing the community so supportive of me."

Zhong said the support she has received from Northvillians who she has cultivated lifelong friendships with has been priceless.

"I loved growing up in Northville, attending the downtown concerts and going out to eat at downtown restaurants with my parents," Zhong said. "It's such a special community. So many people have helped me along the way. My first-grade teacher (Ms. Beck) at Moraine Elementary School has been super supportive. She's invited me to speak about leadership and read books to her class. Friendships like that are so heartwarming."

Zhong said the exhilaration she feels when she looks ahead to the upcoming year filled with volunteering and guest speaking is off the charts.

"As Miss Michigan, I will continue my work with state and national programs including the Miss America organization's national platform, the Children's Miracle Network, to advocate for children suffering from cancer."

The 2021 Miss America Pageant will be held at Mohegan Sun resort in Connecticut, but that a date has yet to be cemented due in part to fluid pandemic restrictions.

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

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COVID-19 vaccines for employees 'right thing to do,' says Henry Ford Health COO

Christina Hall Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Days after hundreds of people protested outside five Henry Ford Health System hospitals, the COO and president of health care operations said July 21 that "we have never been more committed" to the system's decision to require COVID-19 vaccinations of its employees.

The decision "is the right thing to do for the health and safety of our patients, our workforce and the communities we serve. If health care is not going to lead on this issue, who will?" COO Bob Riney said. "They depend on us and trust us to ensure a safe and healthy environment and we pledged to honor that promise."

The hospital system is believed to be the first in Michigan to require COVID-19 vaccinations of all its team members, students, volunteers and contractors. It includes those working remotely. The announcement came June 29. Employees have until Sept. 10 to be fully vaccinated.

Riney said hospital officials expected the decision would be met with opposition, but said that has been "largely eclipsed by the widespread support and feedback" they have received from employees, patients and the communities they serve.

He also said the protests earlier in July were not unexpected as are others



Bob Riney, Chief Operating Officer at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, in 2020. DETROIT FREE PRESS FILE

that may occur at other health systems. One was July 24 at Trinity Health, which announced a similar vaccine mandate July 8, with proof of vaccination due by Sept. 21.

OSF HealthCare, which operates OSF St. Francis Hospital & Medical Group in Escondido, announced it will require all of its employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by the end of September.

This does not apply to Michigan Nursing Association (MNA) bargaining unit members. All employees in Michigan who are not MNA members will be required to be fully vaccinated by Sept. 30, said Shelli Dankoff, media relations

supervisor for OSF HealthCare.

"We did not make this decision lightly," said Mike Cruz, COO of OSF HealthCare, which has nearly 24,000 employees in 150 locations in Illinois and Michigan.

"As health care providers, it is our ethical obligation to be vigilant about the safety of our patients. Vaccinations are credited with the decline in COVID-19 hospitalizations and cases across the country and throughout our Ministry, and we firmly believe that vaccination against COVID-19 is the best way to keep our patients and Mission Partners safe."

The health system, like others, has existing vaccination policies requiring employees to get a flu shot every year and stay current with other vaccinations, such as measles, mumps and rubella.

Like Henry Ford Health System and Trinity Health, there will be exemptions for the COVID-19 vaccine for religious or medical reasons if they are requested, documented and approved. Employees of all three health systems who don't receive a COVID-19 vaccine or exemption face losing their jobs.

Officials said just over 70% of Henry Ford Health System's 33,000 employees have had their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, up 2% from the June 29 announcement.

They expect that number to grow

through August, though vaccinations in the general public are waning. They said physicians and leadership have the highest vaccination rate, with physicians exceeding 90%, and entry-level positions, such as housekeeping and dietary, as well as remote workers have the lowest vaccination rate.

As of July 8, Trinity Health said nearly 75% of its 17,000 employees in 22 states had received at least one dose of vaccine. Dankoff said about 65% of all OSF HealthCare employees are vaccinated.

Riney said that since Henry Ford Health System's announcement, 20 other hospitals or health systems across the country announced they too would require COVID-19 vaccines of their employees. In all, he said, 41 hospitals or health systems have announced vaccine requirements for their employees.

And he expects that number to grow, particularly if the U.S. Food and Drug Administration grants full approval to the vaccines.

Riney said the health system is holding listening sessions and answering questions for employees who have questions.

"The math is the math. We see where we have high vaccination rates, we're keeping the virus and its new variants at bay, and where we have lower vaccination rates, we're seeing slow but concerning trends once again," Riney said.

CANADIAN BORDER

What vaccinated Americans should know before crossing

Janelle James Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

After nearly a year-and-a-half of being closed for nonessential travel, the Canadian border will reopen for fully vaccinated U.S. citizens starting Aug. 9.

In Michigan, that includes the land border crossings at Detroit's Ambassador Bridge, the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron and the Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge.

But there's plenty to know before you plan your next trip to Canada. We answer your frequently asked questions:

Question: When is the Canada border opening?

Answer: Starting 12:01 a.m. Aug. 9, Canada will open its border to U.S. citizens for nonessential travel. Travelers must be fully vaccinated 14 days prior to travel and show proof of vaccination.

Entry to the country will be denied to U.S. travelers who are not fully vaccinated and all other foreign nationals.

Q: Who will be allowed to enter

Canada?

A: According to the Canadian government:

"On August 9, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. EDT, fully vaccinated citizens and permanent residents of the United States (U.S.), currently residing in the U.S., will be permitted to enter Canada for discretionary (non-essential) travel. Entry to Canada will continue to be prohibited for U.S. travellers who are not fully vaccinated and for all other foreign nationals, unless they already meet an exemption set out in the Orders made under the Quarantine Act."

Q: How do I show proof that I am vaccinated?

A: Travelers must show a paper copy of their vaccination documentation in English or in French. A translation will be accepted as long as a copy of the original document is provided. Documentation can also be shown digitally through ArriveCAN.

Q: What vaccines are acceptable in Canada?

A: Those who have received the

Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccines will be allowed to enter.

Q: Will the same safety precautions be in place for air travelers?

A: The Canadian government has eliminated temperature checks for passengers on domestic and international flights. That said, masks remain required at Canadian airports and on board all flights to and from Canada.

Q: Will I have to quarantine upon arriving in Canada?

A: Only travelers who show symptoms of COVID-19 will be mandated to quarantine after arriving to Canada. Those who arrive by plane will no longer be mandated to quarantine for three days upon entry into Canada.

Q: What safety measures remain in place in Canada?

A: U.S. travelers must abide by the health measure set in place, including wearing a mask in public entities, carrying proof of vaccination and monitoring for any symptoms of COVID-19.

Q: Can my children cross the border

if they are not vaccinated?

A: Unvaccinated children 12 and under are allowed to cross the border if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian who is vaccinated.

Q: Can I travel to Canada if I am unvaccinated for health reasons?

A: U.S. citizens who are unable to be vaccinated for health reasons will still qualify for eased quarantine and testing requirements offered to fully vaccinated travelers.

Q: When will the US-Canada border open for non-US residents?

A: Canada plans to open its borders to fully vaccinated travelers from any country starting Sept. 7, "provided that Canada's COVID-19 epidemiology remains favourable."

Q: Can Canadians cross the border?

A: The U.S. extended land border restrictions for nonessential travel until at least Aug. 21, as well as ferry crossings with Canada and Mexico. It is unclear when the U.S. will lift these restrictions.

Canadians are able to fly into the U.S. with a negative COVID-19 test.

Cadet

Continued from Page 1A

laugh. "That was a little bit of a sad day."

But Sefa focused on the opportunities rather than the setback. He kept working as many jobs as he could handle. He stayed in touch with his family and the Albanian woman who would become his wife.

When he was finally able to enroll in college classes, he kept in mind a metro Detroit police officer who pulled him over for speeding when he was still a new license holder.

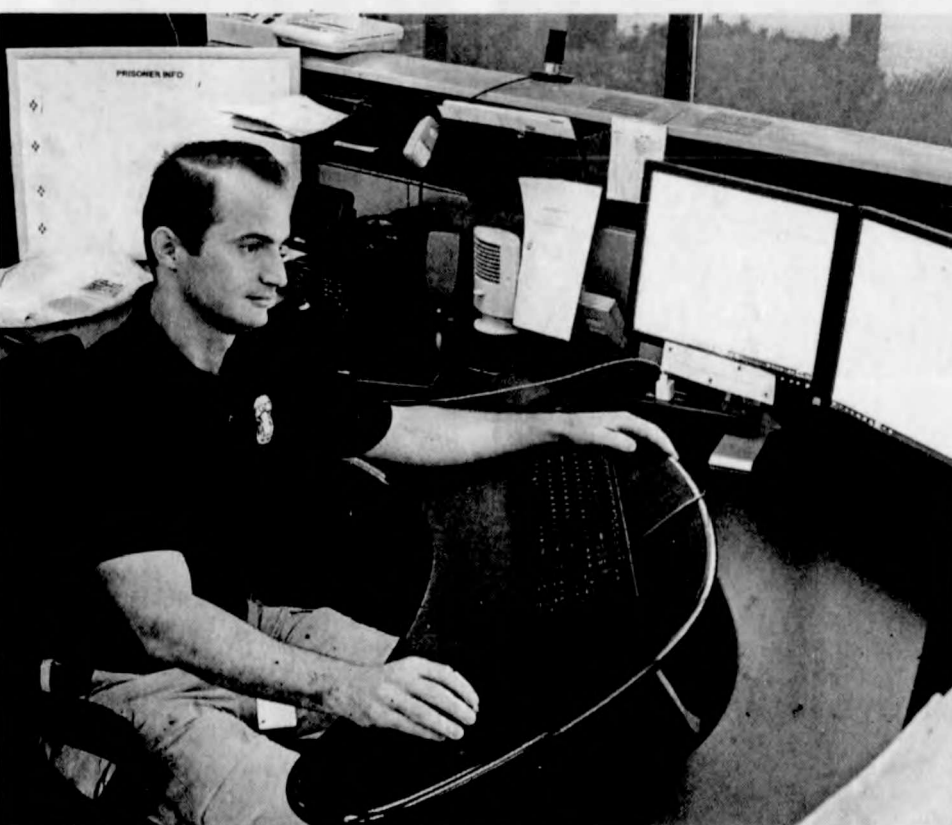
Sefa was honest about being confused regarding the speed limit. The officer returned his driver's license, gave him a verbal warning and asked him if he needed help with directions. Sefa's phone with a GPS screen was on the passenger seat.

"He was really, really nice," Sefa said. "That left a really good impression in my mind. I was like, I want to be like this gentleman."

Their encounter prompted Sefa to start researching police work as a profession.

Still working as many jobs as he could handle, Sefa began taking classes at Oakland Community College in fall 2016 and soon enrolled in an introduction to criminal justice class. He was a good student in Albania. He continued to be a good student in the United States.

A class exercise led him to a cadet opening with the Milford Police Department. He didn't think he could get it because he wasn't a U.S. citizen yet. But he applied and, after the interview, some-



Blerim Sefa works at a console at the Milford Police Department on July 19. JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

one called to say the department was interested in hiring him.

Sefa called his loved ones back in Albania.

"I freaked out," Sefa said "I was jumping, literally jumping. I was like, 'Oh, my God! I can't believe they just hired me and I'm not even a citizen.'"

Sefa departed from his native Albania, a former Communist country, after winning a coveted diversity visa in an annual opportunity that includes back-

ground and medical checks. He also had to pass a drug test and deal with similar checks to become a police cadet.

His first day with the department was in early 2019, just a few months before he received his associate degree. He is one of the department's longest-serving civilian employees.

"I'm really, really happy that we have found him," said Meghan Harp, the department's police services coordinator.

Sefa, she said, is very dependable

and always willing to pick up an extra shift. He also helps her train new cadets, who are responsible for tasks like greeting visitors, entering data, and answering non-emergency calls.

She's proud of his accomplishments and excited to see what his future holds.

Sefa has gone from knowing absolutely nothing about Milford to claiming a Milford police department family that will always hold a special place in his heart because of how welcoming and supportive his colleagues have been. He has worked through language and cultural differences to continue striving with the department's support.

He became a Novi police cadet in January 2020 and received a bachelor's degree from Ferris State University at the end of last year. The pandemic delayed his citizenship but he has that status now.

Sefa hopes to enter the police academy in the fall. He'd like to work for a local police department or a federal agency.

"My mind was the finish line, not where I currently am," said Sefa, who is anticipating his wife's move to the United States this summer. "I would just keep looking ahead, keep working hard, too. I worked two, three jobs — sometimes four including DoorDash, Uber, my construction job, my restaurant job. I made it. I am a few months away from being finally at my dream job and fairly debt free."

Like so many men and women entering the police field, Sefa likes helping people. He also speaks Spanish.

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



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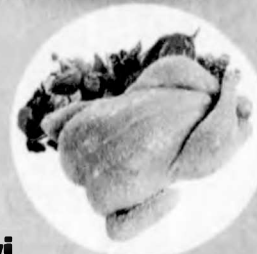
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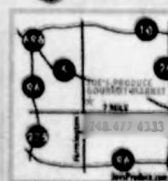
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Underdog mentality



Farmington High School cross country runner and upcoming senior Peter Baracco, right, talks to his father, Tony, who is also the team's assistant coach, after a run July 21 at Drake Park in Farmington Hills. PHOTOS BY JOHN HEIDER/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Farmington senior sets sights high, remains grounded

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Peter Baracco made his final turn, running toward the parking lot at Drake Park in Farmington, completing his July morning workout. He admitted he was a bit tired, regaining his breath as sweat beaded on his forehead.

It's the name of the game, he said with a smile.

The Farmington senior always had confidence, whether it was evading taggers on the playground or using his God-given, high-endurance speed on the soccer field or basketball court. It's a confidence that boiled over into accolades from the first time he stepped onto a cross-country course in seventh grade to now, heading into his senior season with the Falcons.

But there's a clear distinction between confidence and settling. Ahead of his final races as a Falcon, there's no way Baracco's lining up already satisfied.

"I still want to be the underdog going at it, nothing to lose," Baracco said. "I kind of like that feeling."

As a junior, there weren't many times Baracco was an underdog.

After finishing second to Salem's Talha Syed in the first dual meet, he did not lose a cross country race until the state final, finishing fourth behind Hartland's Riley Hough, Ann Arbor Skyline's Hobbs Kessler and Plymouth's Patrick Byrnes.

That momentum continued to build in the spring, capping off his first full track season with a second-place finish in the 3,200-meter, finishing less than a second behind Hough in the final, confirming his position as one of the top returners in the state as a senior, something he never thought he would get to.

"Even in sophomore year, top 10 in the state was scary to me," he said. "But in the back of my mind, I knew I wanted to eventually, possibly (be) a state champion and stuff. It seemed very far away until now."

What was once unfeasible is now Baracco's goal, setting his eyes on two Farmington school records — the 3,200-meter, which he is one second behind; and the one mile, which he's within three seconds of breaking.

But the ultimate prize is a state title,

See UNDERDOG, Page 2B



Peter Baracco finishes his race at the MHSAA finals at MIS on Nov. 6, 2020.

Vintage base ball sends Cornshuckers back in time

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Mike Fini's hobby is basically time travel.

Each weekend, the 27-year-old — donned in a green jersey with "Canton" blocked in yellow lettering across his chest — goes back 154 years with the "Marbles" nickname persona to play the game he loves: base ball; set up in an open field without ball counts or gloves.

It's America's pastime set in America's past time.

"Civil War reenactments are really cool, but the outcome is always predetermined," Fini said. "Where here, we are recreating the game as it was played but people are taking the field are still trying to win that baseball game."

Fini was introduced to vintage base ball at an early age, being dragged to games at Greenfield Village in Dearborn each summer when he was 7. He later took the field himself, simplifying the game to its pure essence: just playing a game with his closest friends.

But it was even more than that. Each time he took the field, Fini was learning something. He was gaining an idea of how such a beloved game originated, something incredibly different than the modern game.

Fini's goal was bringing this closer to home, establishing the Cornshuckers Base Ball Club of Canton in 2016, facing teams around the East Coast and Midwest with players between the ages of 22 and 50, united by a pure love of the game.

The idea of vintage base ball seems simple.

"Oh yeah, we play this game that's the 1860s version of baseball," Fini introduces. "They are like, 'Oh that's cool. I'll come out.'"

Then the changes start to happen.

Players leave their batting and fielding gloves at home, catching a lemon-peel baseball — a half an inch bigger and a half an inch heavier than a normal baseball — with their bare hands. Without the stipulation of strikes or balls, pitchers slowly underhand the ball to the hitter at about 20 mph, playing full nine-inning games that usually time out in less than two hours.

"On one hand, it's like baseball and it looks similar," Rob "Who" Stolz said, who's been playing with Fini on different teams since 2014 before joining the Cornshuckers. "There definitely is a huge adjustment of keeping just the basic fundamentals of fielding a ground ball or catching a fly ball."

Playing without a glove, Stolz feels vintage base ball gives you more chances to improvise, especially in the

See BASE BALL, Page 2B

Amateur golfers share secrets to hole-in-one success

Colin Gay Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Average golfers can sink a hole-in-one. It just doesn't happen very often.

According to the Professional Golfers' Association, the odds for a hole-in-one are 12,500-to-1 for what the association deems as an "average golfer."

After Fox Hills Golf Club in Plymouth

saw 23 golfers record aces in 2020, the club has seen 12 holes-in-one through July 10, shots spanning from a 9-year-old at a golf camp to a Inkster resident who recorded the second ace of his golfing career.

Here's the stories of three shots that fell in on the first try and the lessons learned from the seemingly once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Lesson 1: Start young

Thomas Fliss inadvertently had his top golf moment when he was learning the game.

Fliss first picked up the game at age 4, taking lessons at Fox Hills, which he would continue each spring and summer, developing his swing and a love for the game.

On June 23, in the middle of the Fox Hills Golf Camp, Fliss, 9, used a driver on the ninth hole of the Strategic Fox course, hitting it well, but not realizing what happened until his fellow campers and instructors told him.

"I didn't know it went in because we couldn't see the hole — the green went

See GOLFERS, Page 7B

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Lions near bottom in ESPN Future Power Rankings

Kirkland Crawford Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's pretty well known at this point: the Lions are in the beginning stages of a rebuild.

New general manager. New head coach. New quarterback. The reset button has been pressed in Allen Park.

And so, fans will be looking toward the future, which isn't exactly a new concept for Detroit sports fans these days.

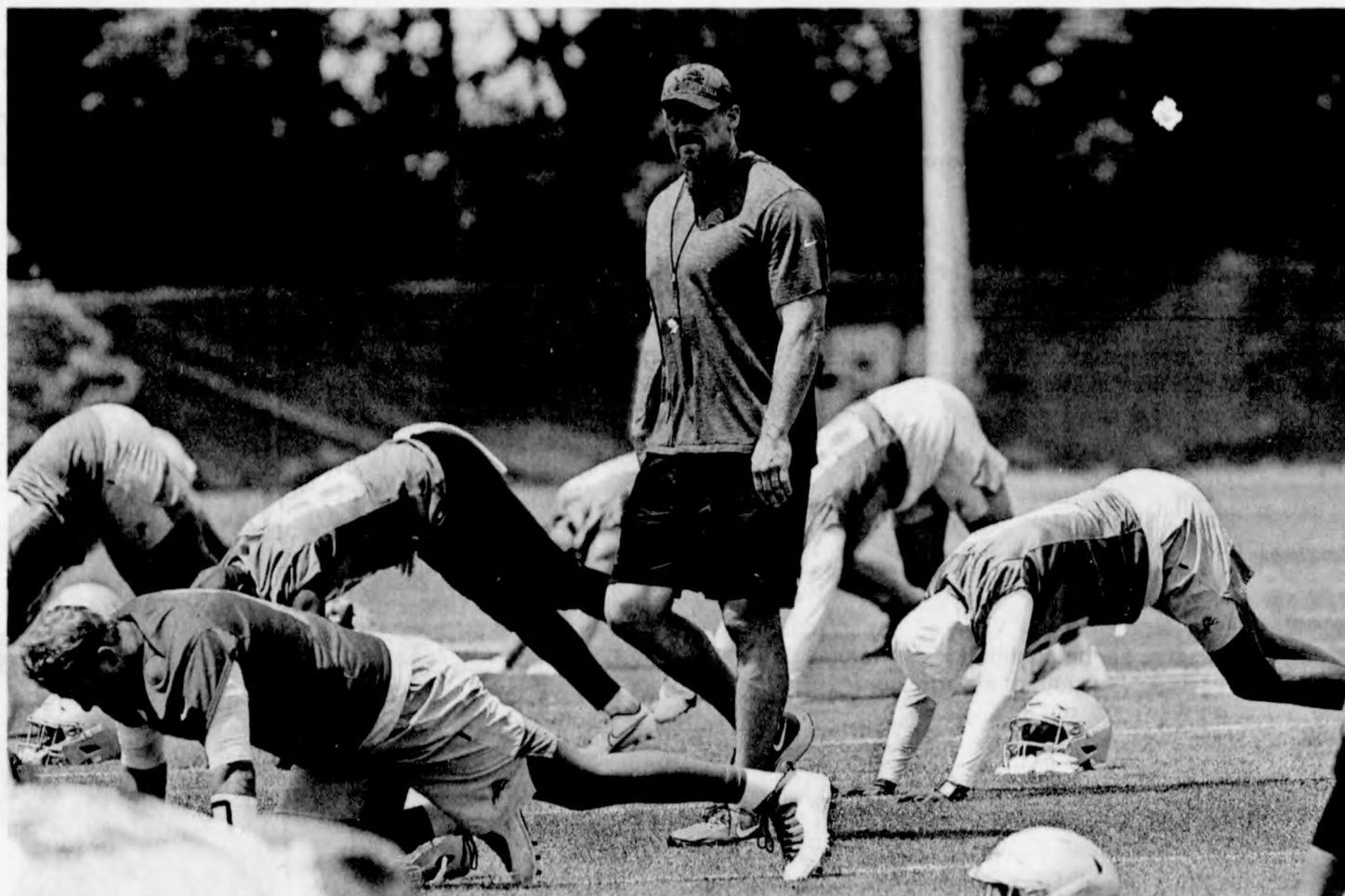
ESPN provided a bit of a road map for all 32 NFL teams, providing their "Future Power Rankings" which takes into account roster, drafting ability, front office and coaching skill.

According to ESPN's panel of experts — writer Jeremy Fowler, analysts Louis Riddick and Field Yates and sports analytics specialist Seth Walder — Lions fans will need plenty of patience.

The Lions were ranked second-to-last, 31st, in the power rankings, with a score of 65.1 on a 100-point scale.

They ranked lowest in overall roster (minus the quarterbacks) at 59.3, also 31st in the league. So yeah, there is work to do.

"Perhaps no franchise is positioned to play the patient game more than Detroit, as new general manager Brad Holmes and coach Dan Campbell have little pressure on them this season or likely even next," Yates wrote. "Detroit has extra draft capital ahead with much better cap flexibility starting in 2022; it plans to build the roster through the trenches, as was evidenced through its 2021 draft class. This is going to take a while, but there appears to be a blueprint."



Lions coach Dan Campbell watches players stretch during minicamp practice June 9 at the Allen Park practice facility.
KIRTHMON F. DOZIER/DETROIT FREE PRESS

And speaking of Campbell, he presents perhaps the team's biggest worry. The coaching staff graded out to a 66.8 (impressive considering they've coached zero games together, but those little details only make these rankings

harder), good for 25th in the league.

Riddick, who interviewed for the Lions' GM job last year, is impressed with Campbell's staff.

"Now, the question for me is how players will take to his leadership style.

This is an intense guy who talked about biting kneecaps at his introductory news conference. Leadership comes in many different forms, and only time will tell if his style will pay off," Riddick wrote.

Base ball

Continued from Page 1B

field: making plays by using either hand, using a heightened athletic ability and creativity that rarely comes into effect in modern baseball.

"It's more of a blank slate to kind of just feel it out and play it as you go along," Stolz described.

Fini first started playing for vintage base ball teams in 2014, starting his own league closer to home two years later. Canton never had an actual team over 150 years ago — something many vintage base ball teams base their teams around the country — but established a club based on the area's history of agriculture, formally being known as a sweet corn capital.

The Cornshuckers Base Ball Club joined a group of 20 teams in the state of Michigan, 30 teams in Ohio and numerous throughout the Midwest and the East Coast, traveling around, establishing themselves to the vintage base ball community, what many say is the biggest pull of this game.

"It's really a reputation-based thing where everybody's just a big family," Stolz said. "You just get to meet so many different people from all over every time that you play. You might talk to them for 20, 30 minutes after a game, but it's like you're best friends."

There's a level of camaraderie that's different in this game. It's a group of players united on the nostalgia of what was, playing a competitively, yet laid back and friendly, getting together afterwards with a beer in hand and reminiscing on the evolution of baseball with people of all ages.

All Fini wants to do is to continue that camaraderie, to bring more people in the Canton area into the community.

No matter the age, the Cornshuckers founder hopes that history will still con-



Vintage base ball is played without batting or fielding gloves, along with no strike or call counts at the plate.
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MIKE FINI

Cornshuckers schedule

July 31: Greenfield Village Lah De Dahs at Walnut Grove.

Aug. 14-15: World Tournament at Greenfield Village.

Sept. 4-5: Ohio Cup.

Learn more about the team at facebook.com/cornshuckersbaseball.

tinue to be remembered and made.

"I just want to be able to play as long as possible," Fini said.

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6710. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17.



Members of the Cornshuckers Base Ball Club of Canton play 1867-style base ball.

Underdog

Continued from Page 1B

something Farmington head coach Jeremy Auer thinks is attainable for his senior, especially after the leaps Baracco made as a junior.

"He got to a spot where felt he could compete with just about anybody," Auer said. "In track season, he pretty much showed it."

"Nobody ran away from him, even a state champion and one of the fastest guys in the country, lost to him by a second and he had the lead until 30, 40 meters to go. He controlled the race late."

Despite all the success, Baracco's personality has remained intact, keeping the energetic, fun-loving personality that Auer first saw when they first met.

"There's big stuff coming down the road, no mistake about it... but he doesn't feel he has to do something or show he's worthy of that," Auer said. "His confidence comes from within."

It's a confidence that rubs off on those around him.

No matter the time Baracco personally runs, he's out on the course cheering for his teammates, keeping them engaged in what they are doing for the team as a whole.

Even before the state meet, Baracco remembers encouraging his teammates that a certain level of nervous energy is good before races.

"I keep telling them, 'It's OK to be nervous. That's what makes a race a race and not just practice,'" Baracco said. "There's a point where you can be too nervous and be scared. That's really what you don't want. It's OK to be nervous."

"We have each other, so that makes it easier to get through."

No matter where Baracco's at, Auer sees someone doing the best for both himself and his team, keeping himself level-headed and engaged with large goals looming at the end of each season.

"Obviously his low stick helps us but in terms of executing and doing all the little things they need to do to get better, he's helped more than I can," Auer said. "He's an ambassador for his coaches. They want to be more like him and he wants to spend more time with them."

The cross country seasons is coming. But Baracco's training remains the same.

He'll run with his teammates at Drake Park four days a week, working toward a better finish than the 16th-place the Falcons had a season ago; something Auer feels is possible, extending the hope even to the top-10.

Baracco has plenty to think about outside of Farmington, whether it's the state title he's pursuing — likely facing off against Hough for the top spot — or the start of his recruitment, visiting Michigan and Michigan State then broadening his search outside of state borders.

But right now, all Baracco wants to do is compete and have fun running, putting in the work now to prepare for the future, whatever that may entail and however far away that may feel.

It's worked for him in the past. He's counting on it working again starting this fall.

"That's what I'm hoping for," Baracco said.

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

Tucker has 'now' plan for MSU

Rainer Sabin Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

INDIANAPOLIS — It's safe to presume Big Ten media days was not on Mel Tucker's bucket list. The event can be a tedious exercise for any coach, let alone one with the kind of high-wattage tunnel vision Tucker has for all things football.

Tucker would prefer to keep his focus on roster building, Xs and Os and recruiting. After all, his Michigan State program, as he likes to say, is the "aggregation of marginal gains."

In Tucker's universe, every second, minute and hour should be devoted toward making the Spartans bigger, stronger, faster and better.

But Tucker found himself relishing his time on the dais Friday inside Lucas Oil Stadium.

His appearance at the conference's media junket was a benchmark experience and yet another reminder that some things are still new for a coach 17 months into his tenure.

"Lots of people tell me, 'It's like Year 1 for you,'" Tucker said.

Tucker rejects that notion because it suggests Michigan State remains at a standstill as a victim of its unfortunate circumstances — the most obvious being the pandemic that gripped the nation a month after Tucker arrived in East Lansing.

No one would dispute the coronavirus crisis more adversely affected the Spartans than other teams because it coincided with a regime change in East Lansing. The transition from Mark Dantonio to Tucker was ill-timed, clumsy and protracted.

But Tucker sees positive momentum everywhere he looks, which is why he vehemently disputes he is still in his rookie season at MSU.

"No, it's not Year 1, it's Year 2," Tucker said at his first Big Ten media day. "We gotta get this thing moving."

When Tucker was hired, he promised he'd sleep fast and burn the midnight oil. The Spartans have since been in a constant state of activity.

The team is the definition of a work in progress, exhibiting the kind of permanence of an Etch-a-Sketch drawing.

"We do have a chip on our shoulder. We really do. We have got to lot to prove. ... There is a sense of urgency."

Mel Tucker Michigan State football coach

Change has been continual since Tucker introduced the competitive culture he believes will revive Michigan State.

There are 34 new scholarship players, including 15 transfers from other college programs. Tucker has spent the past eight months turning over the roster with the goal of infusing MSU with better talent. After Dantonio built the Spartans into a national contender, he watched his proud program quickly deteriorate.

This past April, no Michigan State players were selected in the NFL draft for the first time since 1940 and preliminary grades from two major scouting services indicate only two upperclassmen on the current team are positioned to be chosen in 2022 ... as late-round picks.

It's no surprise then that Michigan State went 2-5 last fall and is predicted in one media poll to finish last in the East Division for the second straight year.

"We do have a chip on our shoulder," Tucker acknowledged. "We really do. We have got to lot to prove... There is a sense of urgency."

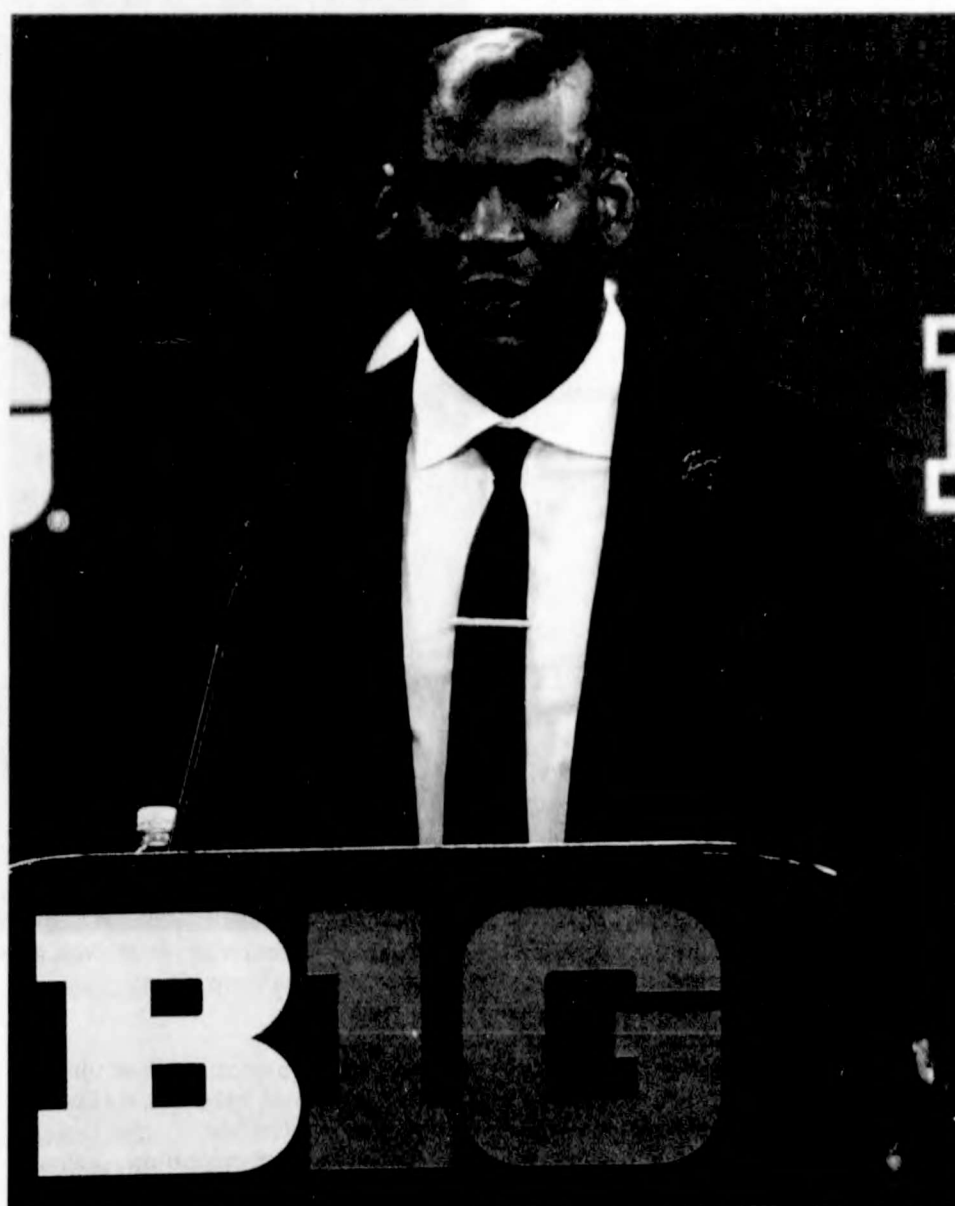
Receiver Jalen Nailor said Tucker calls it the "now" plan.

"This is the year that he really sees us doing these the big things that he has in mind and we have the guys who can do that," Nailor explained.

But Tucker will be afforded time to accomplish his mission.

Despite a "rough" 2020 season, as one young journalist termed it Friday, Tucker earned plenty of goodwill for beating rival Michigan as a 24-point underdog.

Around these parts, the shot of him masked up in a three-piece suit pointing at the Paul Bunyan trophy by his side



Michigan State football coach Mel Tucker speaks to the media during the Big Ten media days in Indianapolis on July 23. ROBERT GODDIN/USA TODAY SPORTS

became one of iconic sports images from last fall.

The win in the second week of his inaugural season showed he was ready to seize the moment on the grand stage and could make his first major impression without the Big Ten media days platform.

But all these months later Tucker seemed to appreciate finally being here Friday.

As he was about to be whisked away

by a media relations staff member during the afternoon, he interjected.

"It's not me," he said. "It's him. Blame him."

He then beamed a big mischievous smile.

Minutes later, Tucker's last session with the media did, in fact, end. His attention would soon shift again to football and the project 17 months in the making. The career coach was eager to get back on the job.

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Can Harbaugh, UM recapture football buzz?

Rainer Sabin Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

INDIANAPOLIS — When Jim Harbaugh returned to Ann Arbor almost seven years ago, his name rolled off the tip of everybody's tongue.

He was the talk of the college football universe, sparking intrigue as soon as he grabbed the reins of his alma mater's struggling program.

The buzz around Harbaugh and Michigan football was deafening. Wherever he went, he attracted attention. Whenever he spoke, he made headlines.

But now Harbaugh has slipped below the radar. His Twitter account is dormant. His podcast is defunct. His public appearances have been few and far between.

As Harbaugh has slipped into the shadows, his peers in the coaching industry have eclipsed him. Alabama's Nick Saban is abundantly more successful. Mike Leach is zanier. Lane Kiffin is a better instigator. Ryan Day has a higher trajectory.

Harbaugh's diminished status was reinforced when the Big Ten sent out an information packet on the eve of its media days spectacle. Included on Page 5 was a pronunciation guide for the Michigan coach's famous surname.

It's HAR-baw, just in case it wasn't clear after all these years.

And Harbaugh still resonates in this swath of football country. Here in Indianapolis, he was finally back in the city where he starred as an NFL quarterback and earned the name Captain Comeback for an uncanny ability to wiggle his team out of jams.

His Wolverines now find themselves in one of those challenging situations — deep in a hole after a damaging 2020 season that shook the program's foundation. The 2-4 slog through a truncated schedule last fall included embarrassing losses and a string of cancellations, leaving Michigan mired at its lowest point in Harbaugh's tenure.

Months later, not much has changed. The outlook is dim and the odds are as long as ever that this will be the year he achieves a breakthrough and makes it to Indy for the Big Ten's real showcase event: the league championship game.

A reporter eventually reminded Har-



Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh walks to the podium prior to speaking during Big Ten media days in Indianapolis.
ROBERT GODDIN/USA TODAY SPORTS

baugh of his shortcomings while presenting the final question during his main news conference.

"You win a lot of games, but you haven't beaten Ohio State. You haven't won a Big Ten championship game," he said. "Where do you think the program stands right now?"

As Harbaugh meandered through a response, he likened U-M to a climber aiming to scale the highest of mountains. Making it to the top is the only goal, Harbaugh said, and the benchmarks along the way include wins over the Buckeyes and Michigan State.

"We're going to do it or die trying," he added.

It was a good quote and once upon a time that kind of quip would have reached all corners of the internet.

But it rippled briefly before everyone

quickly moved on to something else.

The rhetoric from Harbaugh has grown stale. The grand statements don't have the same grist behind them. The big promises induce eye rolls instead of enthusiasm.

The doom and gloom surrounding the program are pervasive, edge rusher Aidan Hutchinson explained.

"You can't find a good thing on Michigan football on social media anywhere," he said. "And I love it. This is the first year in Michigan football that we have been seen as underdogs. We're usually ranked top 15, top 10 sometimes. This year we're not even ranked."

While Hutchinson seems to relish the idea of the Wolverines being discounted, it's doesn't say much for Harbaugh and Michigan that they find themselves in this position at this advanced stage of

his tenure. By now, Harbaugh should have made his alma mater into a perennial championship contender. The reality, however, is that Michigan is rebuilding.

The coaching staff has been reconfigured. A new defense has been installed. The program has initiated a culture change.

Combined, these developments would spark excitement under normal circumstances, in a more forgiving environment.

But it's Year 7 and the fan base has tabled its enthusiasm until the results improve on the field.

Even the media corps has grown weary. As Harbaugh sat at a table during the late afternoon, the large crowd of reporters that gathered in front of him had thinned substantially.



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Hockey journey brings former Brighton goalie closer to home

Bill Khan | Livingston Daily
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

BRIGHTON — After racking up considerable frequent flyer miles in his hockey journey since graduating from Brighton High School, being four hours from home will feel like playing in his backyard for Logan Neaton.

After backstopping Brighton to the 2017 state championship, Neaton spent the next season in Fairbanks, Alaska, playing in the North American Hockey League. He moved down the Pacific coast the following year to play for Prince George in the British Columbia Hockey League.

His performance earned him a Division I college scholarship in the Lower 48 with UMass-Lowell.

Playing time was scarce with four goaltenders on the roster, so Neaton transferred to Miami (Ohio) after playing only three games each of the last two seasons.

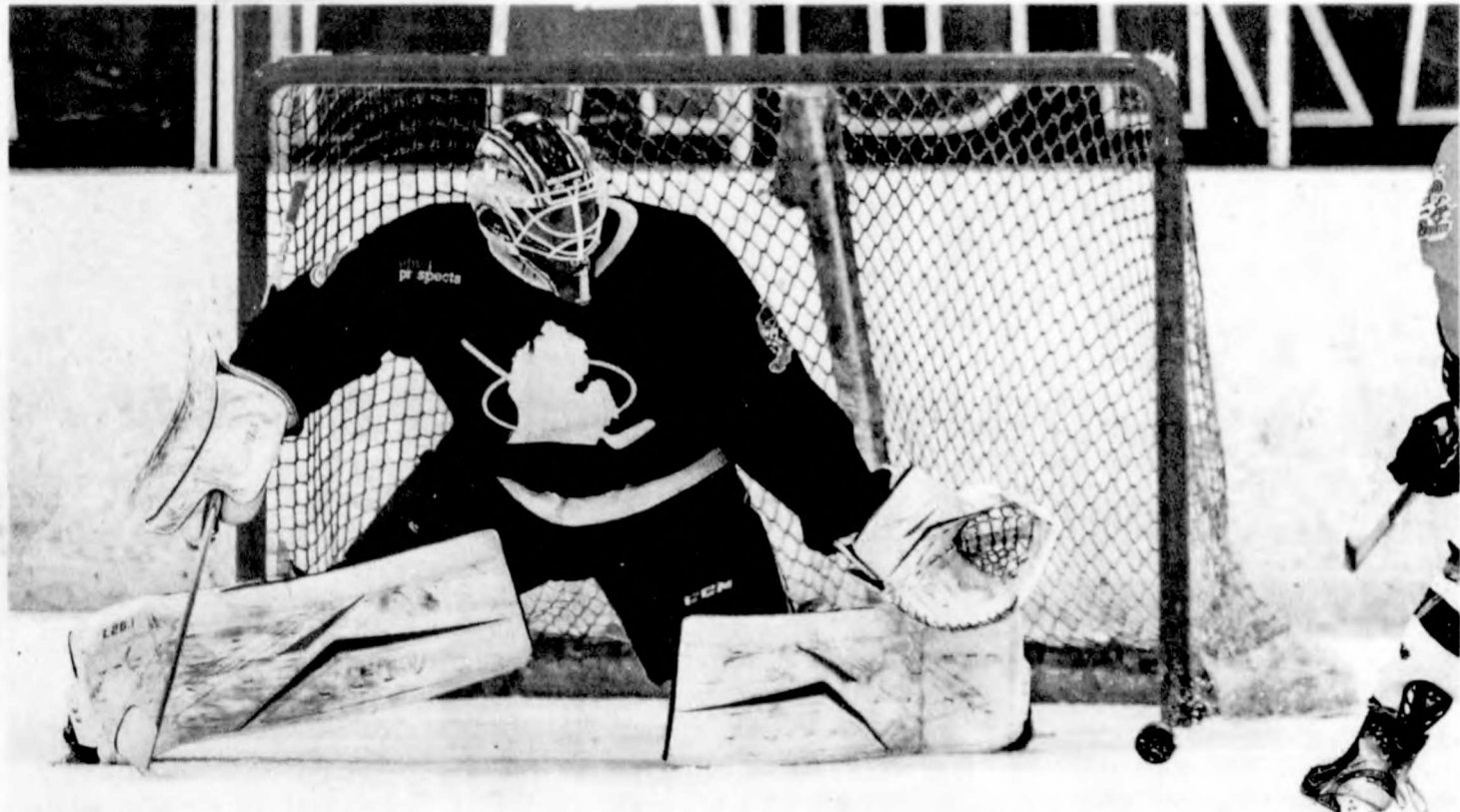
Miami is in Oxford, Ohio, 260 miles south of Brighton.

"This is the first time I'll be within driving distance in probably the last four, five years," Neaton said. "It's going to be good. Alaska to B.C. to Massachusetts, so I've been away from home for some time now. It will be good to be closer to home. My family is really important to me. For them to be able to come out and watch me play is going to be really good. I'm definitely grateful for them."

Neaton hopes there will be plenty of opportunities for his family to watch him between the pipes for the Red-Hawks.

At UMass-Lowell, he had only three starts and three appearances off the bench in his two seasons with the River Hawks.

"Things just didn't go my way," Neaton said. "That's hockey and that's life. It was a good learning experience for me. I felt like I definitely got a lot better. I still improved, even if I didn't get that much game experience. I think it's going



Brighton's Logan Neaton is playing in the Made in Michigan Elite League in preparation for his first season at Miami of Ohio.
TIMOTHY ARRICK/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

to bode well for me moving forward."

Neaton heads to a Miami program which returns Ludvig Persson, who played 18 games as a freshman, and Benjamin Kraws, who played eight games as a sophomore.

"They've got a freshman who had a really good year coming back," Neaton said. "He's obviously going to get a lot of opportunity. But it's just one of those things where I've got to come in and compete and do what I can every day to get better and hopefully get an opportunity. I guess that's all you can ask for is a little bit of opportunity."

Because COVID restrictions cut short the 2019-20 season, Neaton has three seasons of eligibility remaining. He hopes he doesn't need the third year to impress the Winnipeg Jets, who own his

NHL rights after drafting him in the fifth round in 2019.

"Obviously, right now my focus is trying to help Miami win," Neaton said. "That's my goal right now. I'm just trying to improve every day. Hopefully things will go my way when I get there and I'll take care of business and worry about (the NHL) in the future."

Neaton said the Jets were supportive while he went through the transfer process. Winnipeg had two other prospects transfer colleges in the spring.

"I've got a good relationship with them," Neaton said. "They've helped me with this process, as well, helping me find a new place to play. I'm really grateful for all their guidance and all their support through all of this. They've

done a great job. They're a good organization full of good people. I'm incredibly grateful to be part of it."

Neaton is playing hockey this summer in familiar surroundings in the Made in Michigan Elite League at his former home rink, the Kensington Valley Ice House in Brighton. The league includes major college and pro players, as well as some top junior and high school talent.

"There's definitely a little bit of nostalgia," Neaton said. "Obviously, I have some great memories here. This is definitely where my hockey career started to take off. Once again, full of great people who do the right things every day to help me develop, help me improve, more importantly help me grow as a person, which was big for me."

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Obituaries

Frances Louise (Dick) Moran

Moran, Frances Louise (Dick) July 21, 2021 Age 85.

Loving wife of Edward Clark Moran of 66 years.

Dear Mother of Clark (Tina) Moran, Jacklyn Moran, Susan (Greg) Raymond, Mark (Sandra) Moran and Robert Moran.

Sister of Ada (Ronald) Ferguson, Lewis Dick, the late Margaret and the late Frank Dick.

Grandmother of Derek (Lauren) Moran, Adam (Julie) Moran, Madison Moran, Hunter Moran, Jennifer McQuillan, Jessica Moran, Taylor and Paige Raymond, Reece, Andrew and Kendall Moran.

Great-grandmother of Logan, Austin, Devin
Visitation: Sunday, July 25, 2021 from 4:00-8:00 pm. Celebration of Life beginning at 7:00 pm @ the O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home. 41555 Grand River Ave Novi, MI 48375.

She was a homemaker and childcare provider to family and friends who became like family. Loving and giving care giver to family and family friends, loving sister, caring mother to her children, their spouses, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Graveside and Interment services 11am Friday, July 30, 2021 at Hillman-Rust Cemetery, Hillman, MI.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference, living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; taking this world as it is and not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen



Nancy Louise Roberts

HIGHLAND - Nancy Louise Roberts, age 85, of Highland, passed away Friday, July 23, 2021. Left to cherish her memory are her loving husband, Kenneth Roberts; her four children: Steven (Betty) Roberts, Richard (Susie) Roberts, David (Janet) Roberts, and Susan (Michael) Probst; her 14 grandchildren, and her 24 great-grandchildren.

Nancy was born September 2, 1935, at a farmhouse in Milford, the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Edward and Edna (Stubbe) Wiles. She was raised on a farm in Wixom and attended Northville High School, where she spent years participating in the Northville Jaycees. She and Kenneth Roberts were married on June 18, 1955, and shared 66 wonderful years together. Nancy worked as a school bus driver, trainer, and state license tester for 25 years. Nancy and Kenneth spent 18 wonderful winters in Florida, and Nancy was named "Friend of the Fair" at the Oakland County Fair. In her free time, Nancy could be found playing a game of euchre, or attending one of her many grandchildren's sporting events. She was very loved, and will be greatly missed by all.

Nancy was preceded in death by her parents, Edward and Edna Wiles; and her two brothers: Donald and Robert Wiles.

Memorial Visitation will be held Monday, August 2, 2021, from 3:00pm until 8:00pm and Tuesday, August 3, 2021, from 10:00am until the time of the Memorial Service at 11:00am at the Highland Chapel of the Elton Black & Son Funeral Home, 3295 E. Highland Road, Highland.

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James Haught

NORTHVILLE - Passed July 20, 2021 at the age of 89. James had lived in the Northville area since 1959. He was born to Harold and Pearl Haught in Cambridge, Ohio on October 7, 1931. Mr. Haught grew up in the Marion, Michigan area and graduated from Marion High School in 1949.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War and was a crew member on B-25s. He was employed by General Motors in Flint before, and after, his military service. He married Dorothy Burch in Las Vegas, Nevada in 1965. Mr. Haught was a supervisor for CMS Energy in the natural gas compression department, retiring in 1987, after 28 years. He enjoyed many happy retirement years traveling with Dorothy and spending winters in Florida. He loved outdoor activities with his dune buggy, motorcycles and snowmobiles. James was predeceased by his wife Dorothy (Burch) Haught and brother Donald Vernon Haught. He is survived by his nephew Bryan (Debbie) Haught and step-children Linda Conrad and Larry (Pat) Burch. The family will receive visitors at the L.J. Griffin Funeral Home, Northrop-Sassaman Chapel, 19091 Northville Road (at 7 Mile Rd.) on Friday, July 23, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. until the time of Military Honors at 2:00 p.m. Memorial donations should be made to a charity of your choice. His final resting place will be at Oakland Hills Memorial Gardens.



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James "Jim" Arthur Chase

MILFORD - James "Jim" Arthur Chase, 77, of Milford, Michigan, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, July 20th, 2021, at his home surrounded by his family. Jim was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, athlete, entrepreneur, and friend to all who knew him.

He is survived by his loving wife of 41 years, Debra (née Schwenk); his son, Steven; his son, Eric (Lindahl) of South Bend, Indiana; his son, Scott (Anastasia) of Royal Oak, Michigan; his brother, Carl of Maui, Hawaii; his grandsons, Miles and Spencer; and his granddog, Harper. Jim was preceded in death by his parents Donald and Mary (née VanderWeele), and his daughter Stephanie.

Jim was born in Battle Creek, Michigan on September 25th, 1943. He attended Galesburg- Augusta High School. He was an avid athlete, earned a total of 13 Varsity letters, and held the school record in the High Hurdles for 51 years.

He proudly graduated from Michigan State University in 1965 with a B.S. in Natural Science, and remained a lifelong Spartan fan and football season ticket holder.

He married his wife Debbie on February 27th, 1980. They welcomed two children, Eric and Scott, and established their family in Milford, Michigan.

In 1980 he founded his corporation Chase-Nedrow Industries in Wixom, Michigan, which specializes in the design and manufacturing of precast refractory products. In 2020, he received a lifetime achievement award from Harrison Walker.

Jim was a Tennessee Squire, a member of Baypointe Country Club, Michigan Manufacturers Association, Michigan State University President's Club, Harley Owner's Group, VFW, Moose, Elks, the American Legion, and the Ancient and Honorable Order of Turtles. He was also the Detroit Chapter President of the American Foundry Society from 1982-1983.

A true sports fan, he held season tickets for the Detroit Pistons, Red Wings, Tigers, and Lions. He enjoyed travelling out west on his Harley, and to Arizona and Florida with his wife Debbie. On the weekends, Jim could be found cheering on Spartan teams to victory at Chasers in Michigan or Hog Heaven at "the Lake".

A memorial service is planned for August in Rochester, Indiana. In lieu of flowers, those wishing to make an expression of sympathy are asked to consider a donation in memory of Jim Chase to the Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools Foundation. Donations may be made online at <http://bit.ly/GACSFfoundation>, or mailed to 1076 N. 37th St., Galesburg, Michigan, 49053.



Golfers

Continued from Page 1B

up and then it went down; you could see the flagpole and stuff, but couldn't see the hole," Fliss said. "I just acted like it was a normal golf shot on the green."

Thomas had been introduced to the game by his father, mother, grandfather and uncle, but the feat was a first for the golfing family as Michelle Fliss, Thomas' mom, made it clear that no one had come close to a hole-in-one.

To Thomas, though, it helps with success being the age he's at: starting early.

"I think it's easier when you start golf earlier, like when you are a younger kid, and you progress and progress," Fliss said. "Then you get a lot better."

But Fliss, who lives in Canton, is satisfied for now. When asked if he had any other things he wanted to accomplish on the golf course, all he could do was chuckle.

"No, I don't think so."

Lesson 2: Keep golfing

Dave Denzel has been golfing more in 2021 than in the last two years combined.

The Farmington Hills resident is originally from Cadillac and has not found someone to play with in the area. Now, he's been out four or five times this year, exploring courses including Fox Hills.

"This was the first time I was ever on the course," Denzel said. "I didn't even know it, but my partner in crime said, 'Let's go out here.' He's been out here a few times. He said it's a very nice golf course if we want to get in something quick and still have the rest of the day."

Each time he plays a round, the 58-year-old's goal is to score under 90, which he did June 27. But he did more than that, even without knowing the course he was playing on.

On the third hole of the Strategic Fox course, Denzel, using a pitching wedge, hit the ball 106 yards – using the back tees – watching the ball land and do the unthinkable.

"It happened to hit in front of it and it just happened to roll forward and in," he said. "Then I think the whole course heard me."

The hole-in-one made Denzel want to continue golfing even more, using the July 4 holiday weekend to play more games Up North. Even though the self-described "OK golfer" achieved what he didn't think he could do, Denzel said it has not changed his luck much on the course.

"I can't say that my game was any better though," Denzel said.

Lesson 3: Hope for the best

Nathaniel Taschler already had a



Dave Denzel, of Farmington Hills, recorded his first hole-in-one June 27 during his first trip to Fox Hills Golf Course. COURTESY OF DAVE DENZEL



Thomas Fliss, 9, of Canton, shows off the ball he used to make a hole-in-one at Fox Hills Golf Camp. COURTESY OF MICHELLE FLISS

"Just keep hitting it. I would say a lot of it's luck. You just have to hit it good and, hopefully, it gets toward the hole."

Nathaniel Taschler

hole-in-one. It happened in high school, playing for the Dearborn boys golf team in 2009. He remembers it going in, but never saw the path the ball took to get there.

On July 4, playing Fox Hills with his brother Jacob, Taschler, who live in Inkster, had the chance to watch his second disappear in the cup.

Heading into the third hole of the Golden Fox course, Taschler watched his brother take his swing, putting the ball right on the green with the same club he was using: an 8-Iron. With that in mind, Taschler put a "nice, easy swing" on the ball, watching sail 139 yards and take two hops on the green, falling in the hole.

Nathaniel Taschler turned to his

brother Jacob, making sure he did what he thought he did, celebrating something as rare as lightning striking the same place twice.

"It doesn't," Taschler said when asked if the excitement changed from the first time he recorded a hole-in-one.

"That was still as cool as the first time." It's not like Taschler views himself as a pro or anything.

The 29-year-old has been playing for 15 years, starting off and peaking, he said, as "decent" in high school. Now, it's more of having fun on the course, hitting as many good shots as he does bad.

"Just keep hitting it," Taschler said when asked what advice he would give to get a hole-in-one. "I would say a lot of it's luck. You just have to hit it good and, hopefully, it gets toward the hole."

"There's a lot of luck involved when you're not a professional golfer, but I'll take it."

Contact reporter Colin Gay at cgay@hometownlife.com or 248-330-6700. Follow him on Twitter @Colin-Gay17. Send game results and stats to Liv-Sports@hometownlife.com.

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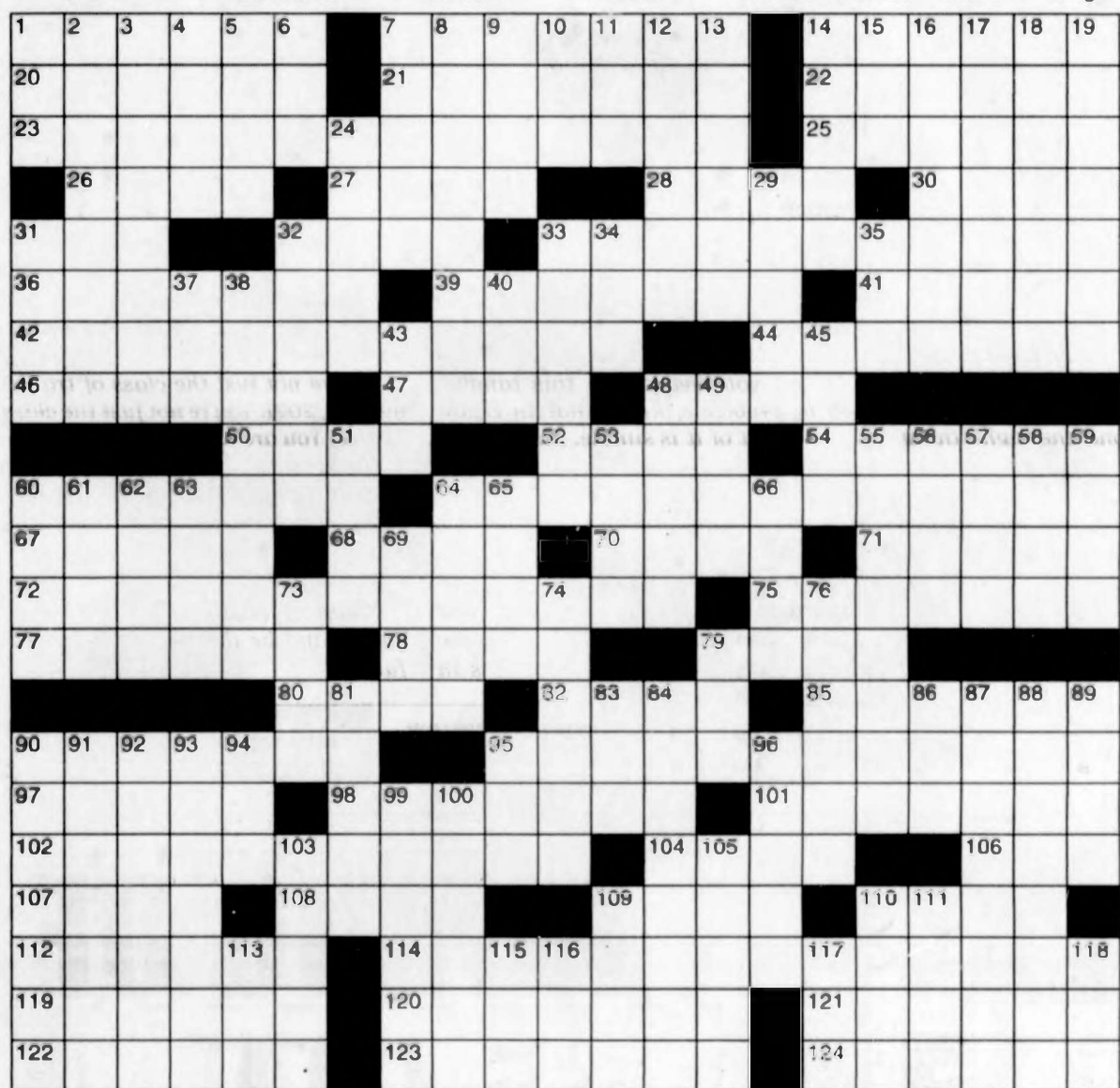
THURSDAY PUZZLE CORNER

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

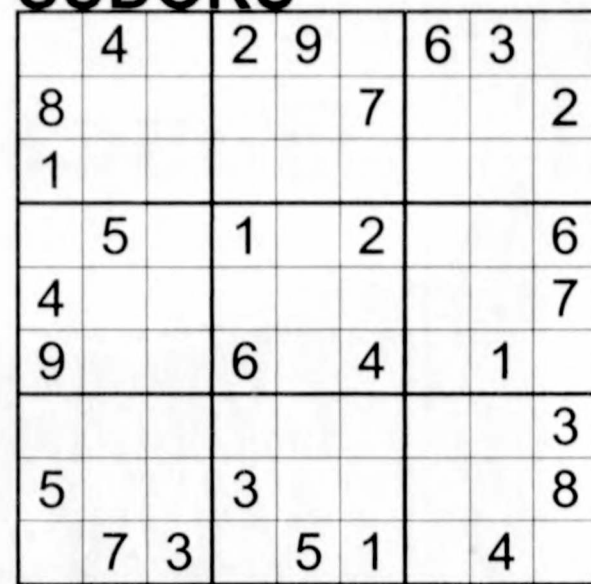
OFF THE GRID

- ACROSS**
- 1 Imperfection
7 1970 Simon & Garfunkel hit
14 "— Lot" (Stephen King novel)
20 Geronimo's tribe
21 Scenting compound
22 Push forward
23 Footballer from a major Kansas city?
25 Dwell (in)
26 Corp. VIPs
27 Pimples
28 "The — of the Ancient Mariner"
30 Fashion designer Tahari
31 Actor Brynner
32 Strong urge
33 Footballer ejected from a nightclub?
36 She helped Theseus
39 Imparted fizz to
41 Critical
42 Not on a footballer's right?
44 For the most part
46 Aristocrat's home
- 47 Formerly
48 Liberal —
50 Mai — (rum drinks)
52 Salvador the surrealist
54 Hard hitter, biblically
60 Ship shelters
64 Footballer with a rod and reel?
67 PC-sent greeting
68 Hearing things
70 Fast shark
71 Bamboozles
72 Footballer working as a sound technician?
75 Matching pullover and cardigan
77 Old Chrysler
78 Think meditatively
79 "Uh, pardon me ..."
80 Like Goodwill
82 Apple variety
85 Humiliated
90 Expand, as a house
95 Footballer on a plane trip?
97 Thin pancake
98 Envious
composer in "Amadeus"
- 101 Iterate
102 Visit a footballer?
104 Labor
106 Young fellow
107 Flush (with)
108 Sony Bravia or Sharp Aquos
109 Pool hall item
110 Piece of office furniture
112 Plaything for Fido or Fluffy
114 Declaration when a footballer arrives?
119 Angry speech
120 One casting a ballot
121 Urge on
122 Makes a sly verbal attack
123 Ecstasy
124 Feds, e.g.
- DOWN**
- 1 "See-saw, Margery —"
2 Fanciers of fine dining
3 Winkle-removing procedure
4 Iterate
5 Greek consonants
6 Vietnamese festival
7 Common infant illness
8 Girl played by Lily Tomlin
9 Bamboozles
10 Anger
11 Quick escape
12 Stuck going nowhere
13 When typical workdays start
14 Self-indulgent binge
15 Have existence
16 Experience a huge failure
17 Remove hair from, as one's legs
18 Like doctors' practices
19 In an aerodynamic way
24 Early Mexican
29 '80s Golden Arches burger
31 Bulldogs' school
32 Scared (of)
33 Kennel club
34 Rowing need
35 TiVo device
37 — minimum
38 Connect-the-points puzzle
40 Abbr. limiting a list
43 Canon — Rebel
45 Exec. helper
48 Make — out of (rebut)
49 Skating place
51 "It's finally clear"
53 Woeful cry
55 Relatives of xylophones
56 Clickable screen image
57 Some ring wins, for short
58 Sommer of "A Shot in the Dark"
59 Take it easy
60 A helmet protects it
61 Take — from (do as suggested by)
62 Units of absorbed energy
63 Vigor, in music scores
64 "Oedipus complex"
65 Egyptian goddess of fertility
66 Black-clad teen, maybe
69 High point
73 Blowout win
74 Enshrouded
76 Mink's cousin
79 "Mein Gott!"
81 "Such a pity!"
83 Erstwhile space station
84 Troublemaker
86 Rear, at sea
87 Marine animal's pelt
88 Title girl of old comics
89 Like green or purple hair
90 Doesn't reject
91 Embedded, as a nail
92 "Taking Woodstock" star — Martin
93 Source of flowing water
94 Tennis divider
95 Shark feature
96 Tot's wheels
99 Pollen bearer
100 Lowest parking garage tier, perhaps
103 "Absolutely!"
105 Earthy hue, to a Brit
109 Post-O string
110 Fender flaw
111 Latin "Lo!"
113 Lyrical verse
115 Sales staffer
116 Outer: Prefix
117 Rio carmaker
118 Hi — image



For assistance or suggestions on the Puzzle Corner, contact Steve McClellan at (517) 702-4247 or smccllellan@michigan.com.

SUDOKU



Difficulty Level ★★★

7/29

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!

G-WHIZ

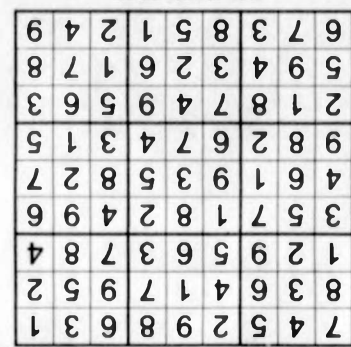
Can you find all the words beginning with G? Read backwards or forwards, up or down, even diagonally. The words will always be in a straight line. Cross them off the list as you find them.

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

GABLE
GAG
GANNET
GARGOYLE
GENETIC
GENIE
GENRE
GENTLE
GEOLOGY
GERBERA
GHEE
GHETTO
GHOST
GIFT
GIGGLE
GIRAFFE
GIST
GIZZARD
GLAND
GLARING
GLASS
GLEN
GLIDE
GLUTTON
GNOME
GOAL
GOAT
GOBLIN
GOING
GOLD
GORY
GOSH
GOSSIP
GOTHIC
GRAB
GRACIOUS
GRAMMAR
GRANDEUR
GRANULE
GRASP
GRAZE
GREEN
GUARD
GUAVA
GUEST
GUN
GURU
GUSTO
GUT
GYMNAST
GYMSLIP
GYROSCOPE



ZINM-D



SELL YOUR CAR
ADOPT A PET
GET A JOB
FIND A HOUSE
BUY A BOAT
FIND A TREASURE
GET A MASSAGE
HIRE A HANDYMAN

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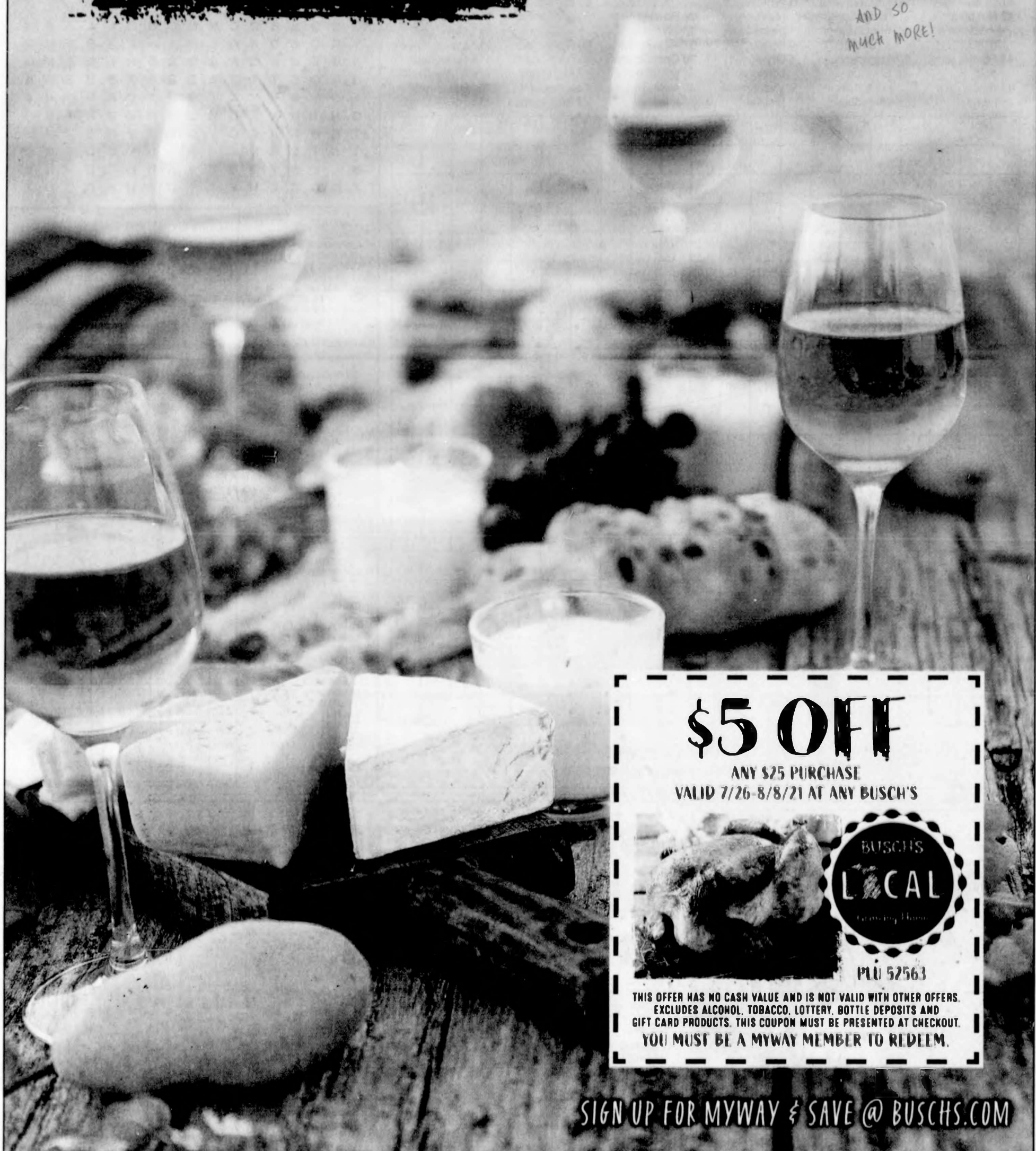
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