



NORTHVILLE RECORD

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Green Oak Twp. company's products catch Oprah's eye this holiday season

David Veselenak

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

A local company's products caught the eye of one of the biggest media names this holiday season.

Midnight Kitchen Tools, the Green Oak Township company known for its

stainless steel ice cream scoop and pizza cutter, recently saw both its products placed on Oprah Winfrey's Favorite Things list for the 2022 holiday season.

"It's just elation. We're super excited about it," said company founder Michael Chou. "It's kind of like winning the lotto."

The company, which began in 2013 by

Chou, a Lyon Township resident, after he searched for a better way to scoop ice cream late one night. An aerospace engineer who works at the University of Michigan, Chou began tinkering with how to better get the ice cream from its container to a bowl. After launching the idea on Kickstarter, he raised enough money and began manufacturing the

ice cream scoop.

After selling online only through the company's website, Chou's company looked to sell on mega e-commerce platform Amazon. They've since worked their way up the rankings, getting solid reviews and moving up the pages.

See PRODUCTS, Page 4A

Plans to open sports bar on Six Mile in Northville Twp. return 3 years later

David Veselenak

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

After sitting vacant for years, it appears plans to bring life back to the former Brann's Steakhouse in Northville Township are coming to fruition.

It's been several years since Art and Jake's sports bar announced its intentions to locate a new restaurant at 39715 Six Mile. Announced before the COVID-19 pandemic, the restaurant has since sat vacant with weeds growing on the property and other issues.

But after several years, plans continue to move forward to renovate the building and reopen the space as a restaurant. Design plans were reviewed by the Northville Township Planning Commission at its Oct. 25 meeting, with commissioners expressing approval for the plans to renovate the building.

Originally, plans called for the current building to look completely different, said Jennifer Frey, township planner. Now, the bar owners plan to renovate the current building and make improvements to what is already on site, something needed given the current status of the building, Frey said.

"There's really been nothing done to it," she said. "Much of the plant

See PLANS, Page 6A



Casey Rosseau and her husband, Griffin, and son, Lawson, all of Birmingham, walk through the light installations during Wild Lights at the Detroit Zoo in Royal Oak in 2020. DETROIT FREE PRESS FILE

Get an early merrymaking start with these six November holiday events

Susan Bromley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Why wait until December to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year?

There are plenty of area holiday happenings in November to kick off a joyous season. We picked a few for you

to check out that look particularly merry.

Wayne County Lightfest

More than 100,000 lights and 50 animated displays make up a magical four-mile stretch of Hines Park in the Wayne County Lightfest, which opens Nov. 17 and continues 6-10 p.m. Wednesday

through Sunday evenings all the way through Christmas Eve. There is a \$5 cash fee for cars and more for commercial-sized vehicles.

The entrance to the Lightfest is 7651 North Merriman Road, which is on Merriman between Ann Arbor Trail and Warren Avenue in Westland, 2½ miles

See EVENTS, Page 4A

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Cheryl Phillips

hometownlife.com

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Northville woman receives Best Friend to Cats award from pet group

Staff report

Michigan Pet Alliance awarded Cheryl Phillips of Northville its Best Friend to Cats award.

"This annual award honors a nominated individual (or organization) who goes above and beyond to save, to provide care, to find homes or to advocate for Michigan's homeless cats," said Joe Dobesh, MPA CEO. "In this award category, Cheryl was a standout nomination for her dedication to TNVR and community cats."

Phillips has spent the last 10 years providing trap, neuter, vaccinate, return (TNVR) services to more than 1,150 cats in Michigan.

She has been instrumental in helping communities understand how to help community cats.

"I am humbled and honored to be the recipient of the Michigan Pet Alliance Best Friend to Cats Award. It is a labor of love, and it takes a village; together, through TNVR, adoption and humane education, we are making a difference in our communities for our fabulous felines, saving lives and reducing overpopulation," said Phillips. "I am proud to be a member of MPA, a leader in advocating and making changes to improve the standards of care for our pets."

In 2016, Phillips became the founder and executive director of GG's Foundation, a nonprofit with the mission to reduce overpopulation through TNVR and to fund spay/neuter, vaccinations, and



Michigan Pet Alliance awarded Cheryl Phillips of Northville its Best Friend to Cats award.

COURTESY OF MICHIGAN PET ALLIANCE

medical care for homeless, neglected, abandoned and abused community cats and to assist others' efforts to care for and place these rescued animals in suitable homes or other appropriate environments.

"Education and advocacy are pillars of our mission, to speak with one voice to improve lifesaving and standards of care for our state's pets," said Deborah Schutt, MPA chair. "Cheryl is one of our members who exemplifies these quali-

2022 award categories and recipients

Karen Brocklehurst Volunteer of the Year: Anne Grzywacz, Ph.D., CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, St. Clair Shores

Community Outreach Program: \$3,000 grant: Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance, Douglas

Fundraising Program: \$2,000 grant: Paws for Life Rescue, Troy

Elected Official's Friend of Homeless Animals Award: Representative Tommy Brann, Kent County

Best Friend to Dogs Award: Jennifer Clarkson, Bloomfield

Best Friend to Cats Award: Cheryl Phillips, Northville

On-Site Cat Training Grants: \$1,000 value to each: Little Traverse Bay Humane Society, Harbor Springs, Upper Peninsula Animal Welfare Shelter, Gwinn

ties in support of our mission."

In May 2021, Phillips was named Humane Hero of the Month by the Humane Society of Macomb. She is also the author of "GG's Journey: From Lost to Loved," a book about a rescue dog named GG and how she overcame sickness and breed discrimination to find a loving home.

For more information on the 2022 awards program and recipients, visit www.michiganpet.org.

City of Novi Public Hearing Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the **Zoning Board of Appeals** for the **City of Novi** will hold a public hearing on **December 13th, 2022, at 7:00PM** in the Council Chambers of the Novi Civic Center, 45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider:

PZ22-0057 (Moiseev, Gordon Associates, Inc) 48735 Grand River Ave - South of Grand River, East of Wixom Road, Parcel 50-22-17-101-014. The applicant is requesting two variances from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.18 and 4.19 to erect an accessory structure and generator in the front yard; and for a front yard setback of 30 feet (40 feet minimum required, variance of 10 feet). The property is zoned Light Industrial (I-1).

PZ22-0058 (AZD Associates, Inc) 1607 East Lake Drive - North of Thirteen Mile, West of Novi Road, Parcel 50-22-02-357-020. The applicant is requesting variances from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.5 for a front yard setback of 9.17 feet (30 feet minimum required, variance of 20.83 feet); a rear yard setback of 10.3 feet (35 feet required, variance of 24.7 feet); a side yard setback of 3 feet (10 feet minimum required, variance of 7 feet); a side yard setback of 2.75 feet (15 feet minimum required, variance of 12.25 feet); an aggregate total side yard setback of 5.75 feet (25 feet required, variance of 19.25 feet); and a proposed lot coverage of 47.4% (25% maximum allowed, variance of 22.4%). These variances would accommodate the building of a new home. This property is zoned Single Family Residential (R-4).

PZ22-0060 (Michael Jocz) 45144 Nine Mile Road, East of Taft Road and North of Nine Mile Road, Parcel 50-22-27-355-031. The applicant is requesting variance from The City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 4.19.1.E(i) for 1,688 square feet of garage space (maximum of 850 square feet allowed by code, variance of 838 square feet). This variance would accommodate the building of a garage addition. This property is zoned Single Family Residential (R-3).

PZ22-0061 (Ron Morelli/Benito's Pizza) 24270 Novi Road, East of Novi Road and North of 10 Mile Road, Parcel # 50-22-23-351-064. The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 5.2.12 to allow for a reduction of 30 required parking spaces for proposed a restaurant expansion in an existing multi-tenant development, 89 parking spaces are provided, 119 are required. This property is zoned General Business (B-3).

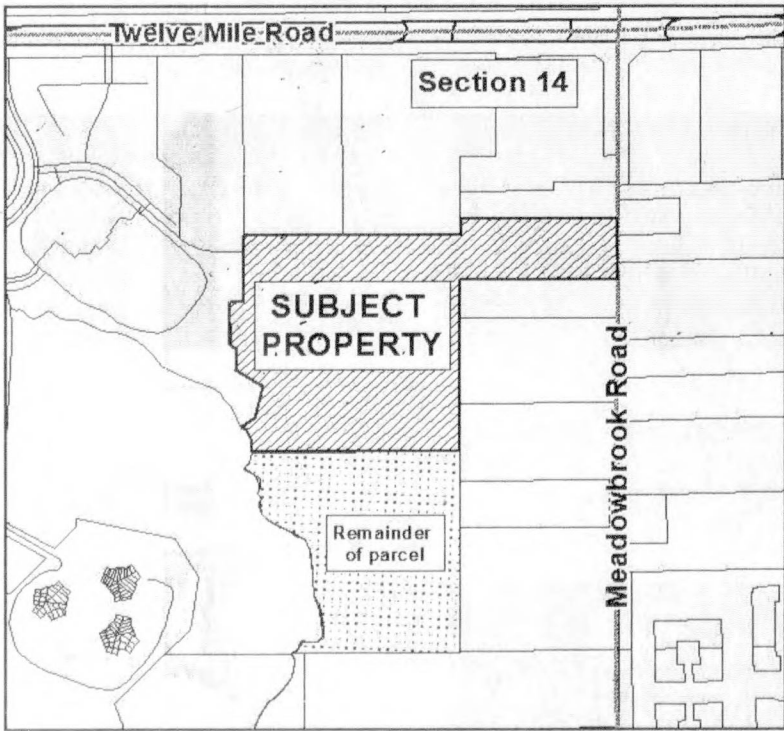
Publish: November 17, 2022

LO-0008790179 345

CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.** in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **JZ22-28 ELM CREEK PRO FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR A PLANNED REZONING OVERLAY (PRO) CONCEPT PLAN ASSOCIATED WITH A ZONING MAP AMENDMENT 18.737. TO REZONE FROM OST (OFFICE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY) AND RM-1 (LOW DENSITY MULTIPLE-FAMILY) TO RM-1 (LOW DENSITY MULTIPLE-FAMILY).** The subject property totals approximately 23.7 acres and is located west of Meadowbrook Road, south of Twelve Mile Road (Section 14). The applicant proposes to develop 68 residential units in two-story townhouse-style buildings.

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



Subject Parcel ID: Portion of 50-22-14-200-043

All interested persons are invited to attend this in-person meeting. Verbal comments may be heard at the hearing and any written comments may be made to the Community Development Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 during the City's regular business hours, Monday thru Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., and must be received by 4:00 P.M., **Wednesday, December 7, 2022**

Published on **November 17, 2022**
Novi Planning Commission
Michael Lynch, Secretary

Publish: November 17, 2022

LO-0008790180 347.5

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF NORTHVILLE

The City of Northville Board of Zoning Appeals will hold a public hearing to receive public input on a request regarding previous variances from the City of Northville Zoning Ordinance granted by the Board on October 6, 2021. The previous variances were conditioned upon the project as illustrated on the Engineer Plans dated July 26, 2021, and Architect Plans dated July 27, 2021. In preparing the construction plans, the applicant determined that the plans presented to the Board of Zoning Appeals are not ideal, and the addition of a retaining wall behind the residential units is needed. Therefore, the applicant is returning to the Board of Zoning Appeals with a request for the same variances that were granted in 2021, but with modified plans illustrating these requests.

The current request is for three variances for three lots zoned R-2, Second Density Residential District, located at 711 N. Center St., lot number 48-22-34-377-006 (middle lot - L2), and vacant lots 48-22-34-377-007 (southern lot - L1), and 48-22-34-377-005 (northern lot - L3), based on Engineer Plans revised on September 1, 2022. The three lots are part of a proposed three-lot residential development where the applicant would like to build a duplex building on each lot. The applicant is seeking a 0.03 FAR variance for lot L1, a 0.04 FAR variance for Lot L2, and a 0.01 FAR variance for Lot L3 from the requirement of Section 15.01 of the Zoning Ordinance, which allows for a maximum 0.36 FAR on a lot with a duplex building. They are also requesting a building height variance of 3.5-feet for Lots L1 and L2, and 5-feet for Lot L3 from the 30-foot maximum requirement in Section 15.01.

The public hearing will be held on December 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Northville Municipal Building - Council Chambers, 215 W. Main Street, Northville, Michigan, 48167, 248-449-9902. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment on the variance requests.

The variance application is available for review at the City of Northville Building Department during normal business hours of 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, local prevailing time or on the City website www.ci.northville.mi.us (Services, Building and Planning, Board of Zoning Appeals).

Written comments to the BZA pertaining to the proposed variance request must be submitted no later than 4:30pm, December 6, 2022 to the City Clerk at the above address, or using the City Hall drop box, or emailed to dmassa@ci.northville.mi.us.

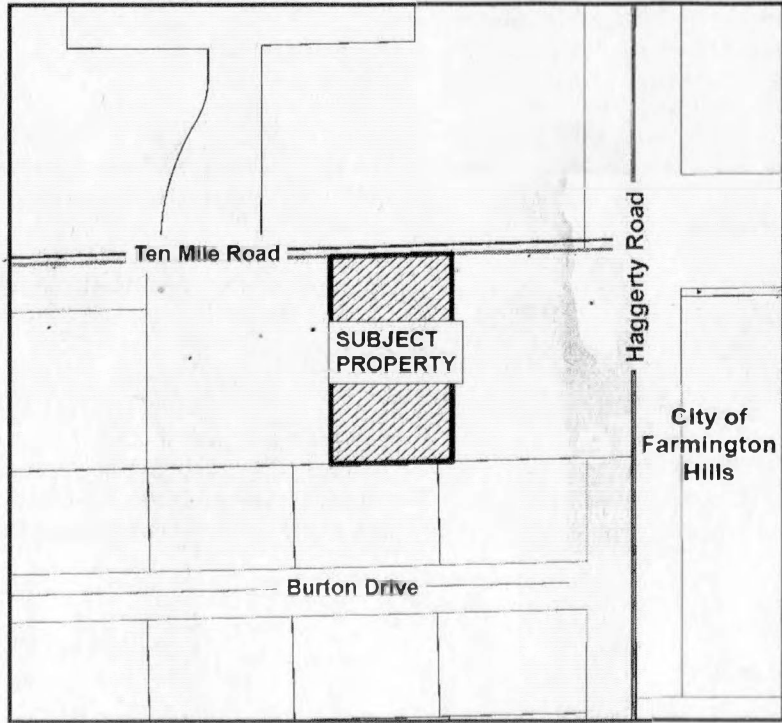
RYAN MCKINDLES, CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Publish: November 17, 2022

LO-0008790174 345

CITY OF NOVI PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission for the City of Novi will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.** in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **MAKING A RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR JZ22-27 MOE'S ON TEN ZONING MAP AMENDMENT 18.738, TO REZONE FROM B-1 (LOCAL BUSINESS) TO B-3 (GENERAL BUSINESS).** The subject property totals approximately 0.9 acres and is located at 39455 Ten Mile Road (Parcel 50-22-226-010). The subject property is west of Haggerty Road and south of Ten Mile Road (Section 25). The site is currently used as a restaurant.



Subject Parcel ID: 50-22-25-226-010

All interested persons are invited to attend this in-person meeting. Verbal comments may be heard at the hearing and any written comments may be made to the Community Development Department, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI 48375 during the City's regular business hours, Monday thru Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., and must be received by 4:00 P.M., **Wednesday, December 7, 2022**

Published on **November 17, 2022**
Novi Planning Commission
Michael Lynch, Secretary

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LO-0008790179 347

Election updates: School board, House, Senate races

From Staff Reports
HometownLife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICH.

All vote totals are unofficial until certified by the county board of canvassers.

Koleszar wins western Wayne house seat

Updated 9:52 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

Plymouth Democrat Matt Koleszar looks poised to serve another term in the state house. Koleszar beat his opponent, Northville Republican Cathryn Neracher, 28,064 to 23,669.

Koleszar will serve two years as the District 22 house representative. The district includes parts of Livonia, Plymouth and Northville.

-Hometown Life reporter Shelby Tankersley

Bayer wins big in 13th Senate District

Updated 9:10 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

State Sen. Rosemary Bayer will return to Lansing in her current role and in a new district.

Bayer defeated challenger Jason Rhines to represent the 13th state Senate district, garnering 76,196 votes to Rhines's 57,207 votes. Those totals include the entire district, save for one Wayne County precinct that had not yet been counted as of Wednesday morning.

The 13th Senate District includes Plymouth Township, Plymouth, Northville, Northville Township, Novi Township, West Bloomfield Township, Walled Lake, Keego Harbor, Sylvan Lake and Orchard Lake as well as parts of Farmington Hills, Novi and Commerce Township.

-Hometown Life reporter David Veselenak

Public transit millage gets OK from Oakland County voters

Updated 8:40 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

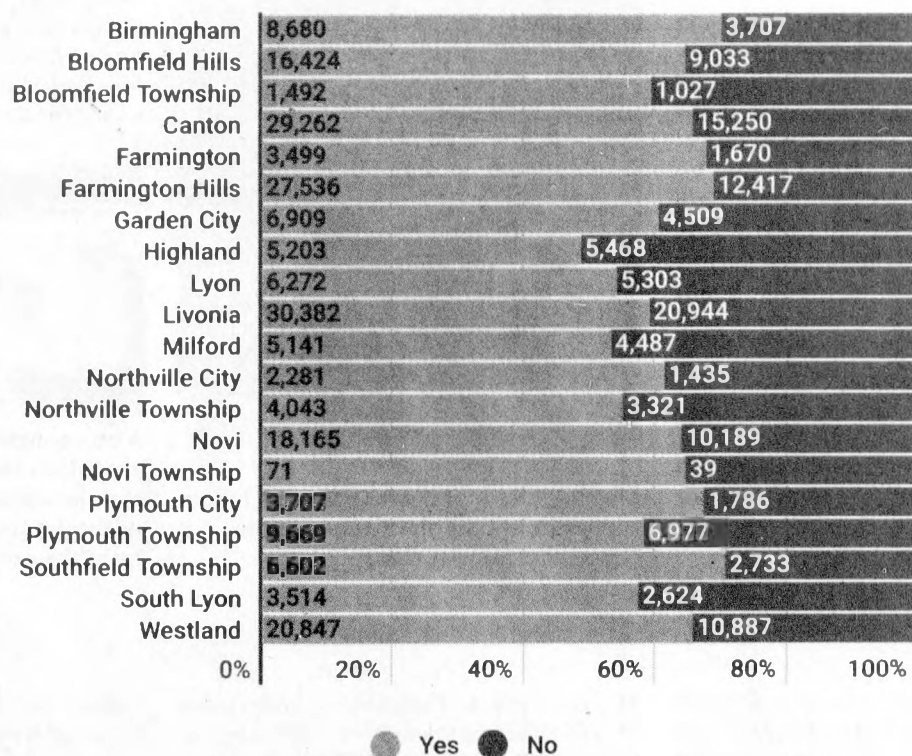
It appears Oakland County residents will pay more on their property taxes after the county-wide transit millage appears to have been approved.

With 96% of votes in, the millage request has received 330,938 "yes" votes compared to 247,221 "no" votes. With an approval, a 0.95 mill levy to help fund public transit will be levied across the county to support transit services.

-Hometown Life reporter David Veselenak

How communities voted

Vote totals (unofficial) in Hometown Life communities for Proposal 3 to enshrine reproductive rights in the Michigan Constitution.



Shink shows lead in 14th District Senate race

Updated 8:17 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

It appears Salem Township could be represented by a Democrat in the state Senate next year.

Democrat Sue Shink has the lead over Republican Tim Golding for the 14th state Senate district seat, which stretches from Salem Township and across western Washtenaw County and most of Jackson County. Most recent results as of 7:55 a.m. show Shink with 57,544 votes, compared to Golding's 53,136 votes across both counties. All precincts are in in Jackson County, while about 38% are still being fully counted in Washtenaw County.

-Hometown Life reporter David Veselenak

District 23 voters send Morgan to Lansing

Updated 9:56 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

Democrat Jason Morgan won the District 23 state House seat. Morgan, of Ann Arbor, received 24,256 votes. His opponent, Republican Richard Sharland of Plymouth, earned 13,004.

Morgan will serve a two-year term in Lansing.

The 23rd district includes most of downtown Ann Arbor, the City of South Lyon, Superior Township, Salem Township, and parts of Plymouth, Northville, Lyon and Ann Arbor townships. The district includes parts of Oakland, Wayne and Washtenaw counties.

-Hometown Life reporter Shelby Tankersley

Western Oakland County sending Runestad back to state Senate

Updated 7:43 a.m. Nov. 9, 2022

It appears state Sen. Jim Runestad will run his way back to the state Capitol come January.

Runestad, a Republican, will continue to serve in the senate, representing the new 23rd district. That area includes South Lyon, Lyon Township, Highland Township, Milford, White Lake, Clarkston, Waterford Township and Wixom. With 88% of precincts reporting as of 7:40 a.m., Runestad had 73,804 votes, compared to Democratic challenger Una Hepburn's 49,204 votes.

-Hometown Life reporter David Veselenak

with 4,985 votes, Scott Morrell with 4,893 votes and Andrew Augustine with 4,377 votes.

-Hometown Life reporter David Veselenak

Theis earns another Senate term representing District 22

Updated 1:15 a.m., Nov. 9, 2022

Republican Lana Theis is easily the winner of the 22nd District state Senate seat, with 60,353 votes to Democrat Jordan Genso's 33,445. Falling far behind were Libertarian Jon Elgas with 1,742 votes and US Taxpayers Party Victoria McCassey with 790. The district represents Livingston County, Whitmore Lake, Fenton and Holly.

-Hometown Life reporter Susan Bromley

Conservative Maddock easily wins in state House District 51

Updated 12:30 a.m., Nov. 9, 2022

Republican Matt Maddock retained his seat in the state legislature in the 51st District, with 27,244 votes to Democrat Sarah May-Seward's 19,766.

The 51st District includes Highland Township, Milford Township, and White Lake Township as well as parts of Commerce Township and Springfield Township.

-Hometown Life reporter Susan Bromley

Breen wins second term in state House District 21

Updated 12:30 a.m., Nov. 9, 2022

Democrat Kelly Breen defeated Republican Dave Staudt to retain a seat in the state legislature representing the 21st District. Breen received 22,669 votes to 16,979 for Staudt. Libertarian James Young received 521 votes.

The 21st District represents Novi, western Farmington Hills, and eastern Lyon Township.

-Hometown Life reporter Susan Bromley

Novi school board adds two newcomers

Updated 12:15 a.m., Nov. 9, 2022

With two seats available on the Novi Board of Education, voters elected Betsy Beaudoin with 6,949 votes and Jason Michener with 6,047 votes. Missing the cut was Chris Hollman with 5,558 votes and Latasha Keller with 4,082 votes.

Both Beaudoin and Michener are new to the school board. Current board members Kathy Hood and Bobbie Murphy did not seek reelection.

-Hometown Life reporter Susan Bromley



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF NORTHVILLE

The City of Northville Board of Zoning Appeals will hold a public hearing to receive public input on the following variance from the City of Northville Zoning Ordinance. The variance will be considered for premises zoned R-1B, First Density Residential District on property located at 916 Novi St., Northville, Michigan, 48167, parcel number 48-22-34-428-018. The applicant is seeking a variance to build a roof over their front porch slab in the front yard setback. The variance needed is approximately 11.0 feet from the front yard requirement in Sections 3.04 and 15.01. Also, the existing house is non-conforming per Section 22.01, and the project will require expansion of a non-conformity.

The public hearing will be held on December 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the City of Northville Municipal Building - Council Chambers, 215 W. Main Street, Northville, Michigan, 48167, 248-449-9902. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment on the variance requests.

The variance application is available for review at the City of Northville Building Department during normal business hours of 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, local prevailing time or on the City website www.ci.northville.mi.us (Services, Building and Planning, Board of Zoning Appeals).

Written comments to the BZA pertaining to the proposed variance request must be submitted no later than 4:30pm, December 6, 2022 to the City Clerk at the above address, or using the City Hall drop box, or emailed to dmassa@ci.northville.mi.us.

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Products

Continued from Page 1A

"At the time, there weren't many scoops that were kind of high end like us," he said. "We're able to kind of go through the rankings a lot quicker that way."

After years of solid sales and great reviews, it began to get noticed even more. Winfrey put the ice cream scoop on her favorite things list first back in 2016, the first major validation Midnight Kitchen Tools received.

This time, she's placed both the original scoop and the pizza cutter — launched in 2020 — on her list for holiday gift giving.

"No one expects pieces like these to be so fancy-schmancy-looking!" the description on the website states about the two pieces. "This set comes with a pizza cutter and an ice cream scoop that are made from stainless steel and have ergonomic handles."

Both are made to last forever, Chou said, and each piece has plenty of love in it.

"Each one is hand polished after it's formed. Actually, every scoop is a little bit different in that way," he said.

"There's a lot of care in it."

While the products are manufactured overseas, they are designed and shipped out of a non-descript warehouse in the Colonial Industrial Park off 10 Mile east of Rushton. There, the 2,500-square-foot warehouse is packed with boxes ready to be shipped directly to customers, as well as to Amazon, which fulfills orders for the products.

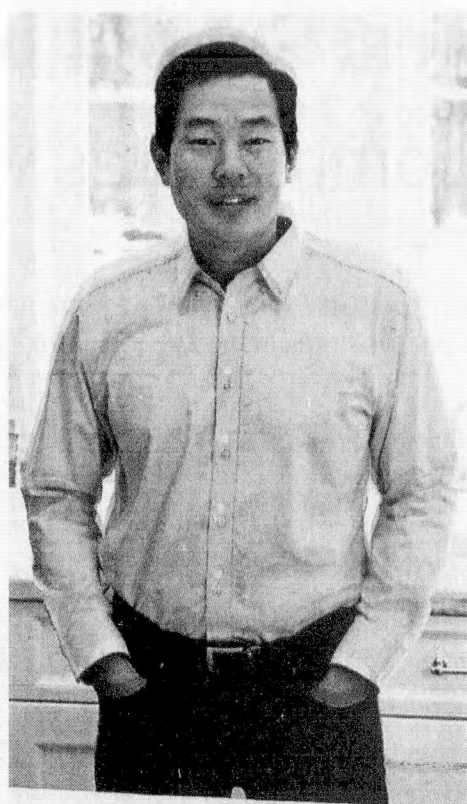
While the company currently only has the two products, Chou said he's hopeful another product could launch in the next several years.

The holidays are typically the biggest time of year for the company, Chou said, unsurprising as people look for unique gifts for loved ones or coworkers. Sales continue to grow as word-of-mouth expands on the quality of the items, he said.

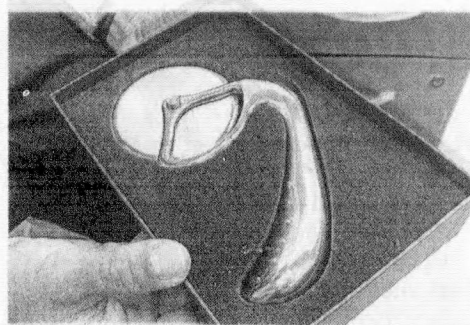
"I'd say we do 50% of our sales during this time," he said. "(Customers) buy it, they love it, they tell someone else about it."

To purchase a set or one of the pieces individually, visit Amazon or the company's website, midnightkitchentools.com.

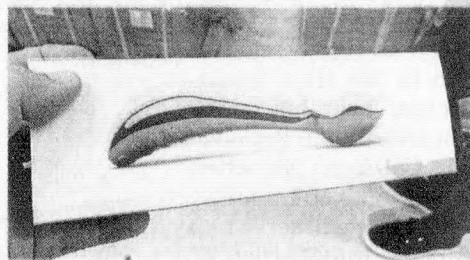
Contact reporter David Veselenak at dveselenak@hometownlife.com or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.



Michael Chou, of Lyon Township, is the founder of Midnight Kitchen Tools. COURTESY OF MICHAEL CHOU



A pizza cutter made by Midnight Kitchen Tools. The kitchen gadget, along with the company's signature ice cream scoop, was recently listed as one of Oprah Winfrey's favorite things for the holiday season. PHOTOS BY DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



A box containing a Midnight Kitchen Tools ice cream scoop. Made of stainless steel, the ergonomic scoop is designed to better deliver ice cream from the container.

Events

Continued from Page 1A

south of I-96. Children can drop off a letter to Santa in a giant mailbox at Perrin Park, mid-way through the show, as well as take advantage of food trucks and a restroom.

Winter, Wine & Whimsy, Novi

This is the second year for Winter, Wine & Whimsy, which is planned for Nov. 17-19 at Twelve Mile Crossing at Fountain Walk in Novi. The event billed as a holiday market features more than 40 local artisans, including a ladies night Thursday in which there will be a variety of free beauty services and the first 250 women can get a free giftbag.

But the overall event features fun for the whole family, including a tree lighting, Santa and reindeer visits, games,

crafts and a snowball arena for the kids, live music to be enjoyed by all, and a free Emagine movie theater showing of "White Christmas" for seniors 55 and over for those who register in time. Visit <https://cityofnovi.org/services/community-relations/holiday-market/event-schedule> for complete Winter, Wine & Whimsy details.

Wild Lights, Detroit Zoo, Royal Oak

Wild Lights is the Detroit Zoo's annual holiday hoopla featuring millions of stunning lights with many displays paying homage to the facility's inhabitants. New this year is an enchanted trail. The event kicks off on Nov. 19 this year and runs through Jan. 8, on select week-nights.

On most Fridays and Saturdays, Wild Lights is from 5-10:30 p.m. Sundays from 5-9 p.m. A variety of packages are available, with prices ranging from \$17-

\$65 per person. Tickets are limited and should be purchased in advance, although a limited number of gate tickets are available.

Holiday Lighted Parade, Northville

The theme is Lighting Up the Streets at the 2022 Holiday Lighted Parade in Northville, set for 6:30 p.m., Nov. 19. Bands, dancers, floats, and Santa will be followed by an official tree lighting at 8 p.m. in Town Square, Downtown Northville.

Christmas Parade, Milford

Milford's Christmas Parade, planned for 10 a.m., Nov. 26, features floats, bands and Santa all shown to their best advantage in a charming downtown with decked out businesses.

After enjoying the parade, get a jump start on your shopping before taking a Twinkle Tour that evening, with area

homes and businesses vying for best-decorated awards.

Holiday Stroll in Canterbury Village, Lake Orion

Canterbury Village's Holiday Stroll kicks off Nov. 23 and then runs week-ends through Dec. 23. The outdoor event promises to be "be the most memorable experience of the holiday season" as Canterbury Village is aglow with nearly a million festive lights and a 7-minute light show is choreographed to holiday music.

Professional Christmas carolers and live Christmas performances provide additional entertainment. Roaming holiday characters including the Grinch, Olaf, Frosty, Buddy the Elf, Anna and Elsa from Frozen and more will delight children, as will Santa. Tickets are \$14.99 per person and much be purchased online in advance of the date you choose.

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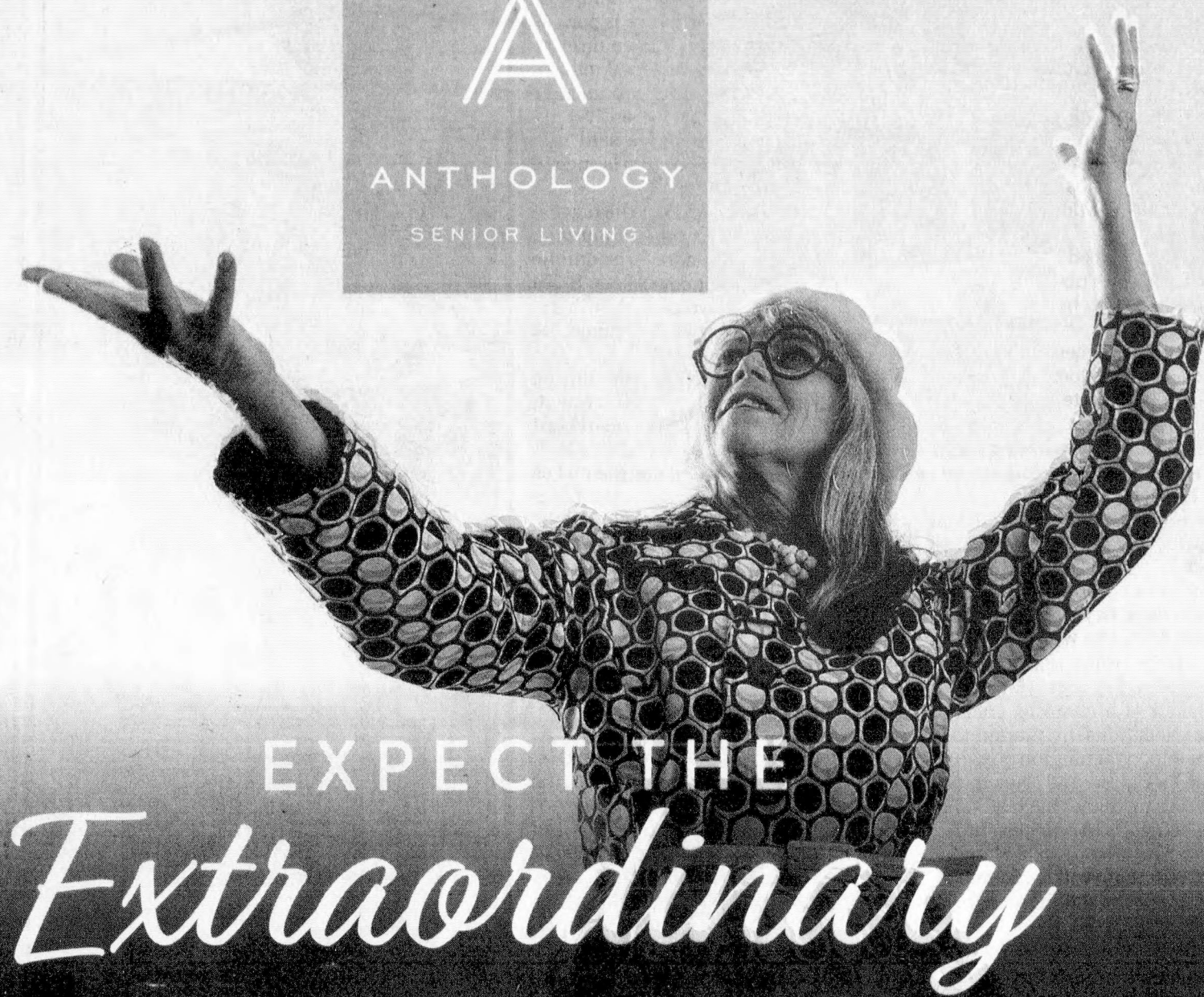
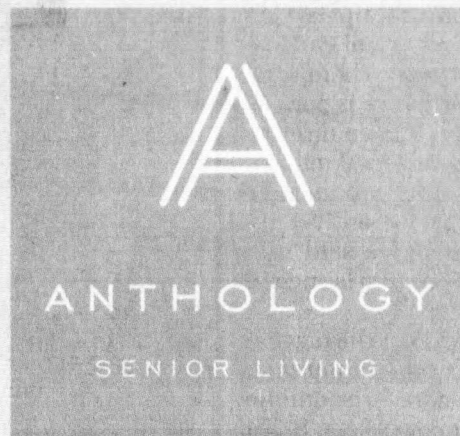
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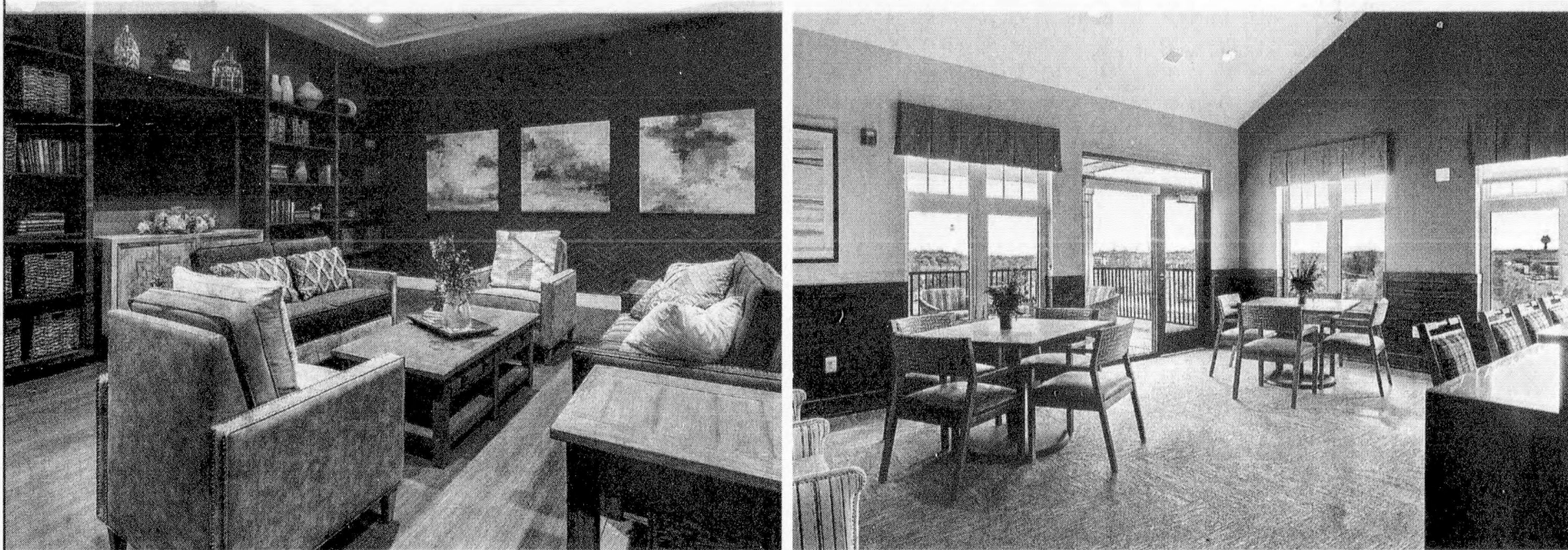
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A rendering of the proposed completed work of the Art and Jake's restaurant planned on Six Mile west of Haggerty. COURTESY OF NORTHVILLE TOWNSHIP

Plans

Continued from Page 1A

material is past its prime and past its shelf life."

Art and Jake's is a chain of sports bars that has locations in Clarkston, Shelby Township, Washington Township, Sterling Heights and Newnan, Georgia. It serves up dishes such as salads, chicken wings, sandwiches, burgers and more. Its owner told Hometown Life in 2020 that food is the main focus of the restaurant and menu items would rotate regularly.

There was no word on when work could begin at the site, or when the restaurant could open. Several messages sent to the company seeking more information were not returned.

Planning commission chairman Matthew Wilk said he believed the new designs would complement other buildings in the area well with the building materials, including the McDonald's next door.

"It fits the character of it," he said. "It's a good fit, I think, in my opinion."

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



Signage outside the former Brann's Steakhouse on Six Mile in Northville Township indicates a former completion date of 2020. Plans for renovating the restaurant continue through the Northville Township planning process.

DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated at right. Find the listed words in the grid. They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once. Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 21 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

Absinthe	Cold	Inns	Relax
Ales	Cordial	Julep	Rose
Bar stool	Crowded	Kegs	Sake
Beer	Crush	Lamb	Soda
Boag	Disco	Loud	Soft
Booze	Empty	Mains	Spirits
Brews	Enjoyment	Mates	Table
Bundy	Gin and	Music	Taste
Cans	Tonic	Noisy	Till
Cask	Glass	Ouzo	Toddy
Chaser	Hahn	Pies	Vino
Chips	Hock	Port	Wedges
Club	Home	Prawns	Wine

TODAY'S ANSWER

A few drinks with friends

Cheers!

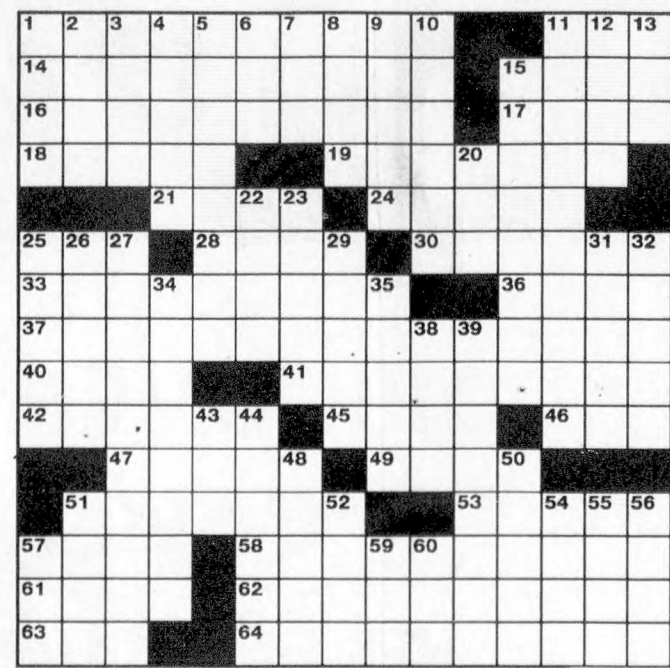
CLUBOMYSIONTROP
AFLCANBARSTOOLE
MUSICETHNISBAWY
CINOTDNANIGDEDS
DSKSDCCJHOMEDEC
LSAEHAUROUZOIBR
OTNAGLHIGYTPNOU
CWSNESORALMTFOS
OESPIHCROWDEDZH
RDWEKS KUBSWINEG
DGEKTWDMUITLTL
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ECESTIRIPSVSND S

NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

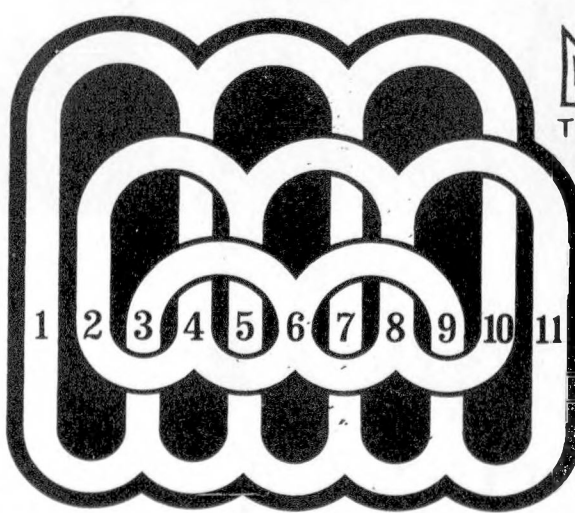
- One making long-distance calls
- Swiss partner
- Large racket
- Twenty-seven connection
- What ranch houses typically haven't
- Heads up
- Sounding stuffy
- Pushing the most
- Città che circonda il Vaticano*
- Coherence
- Prime minister after Brian
- Agricultural block
- Gung-ho
- Group taking in imports
- Mystic's reading material
- Time best forgotten
- Writing on jackets
- Paused
- Of the above
- Quick sketch
- Go with
- What bassoon music begins with
- Mozzarella alternative for lasagna
- They're assumed by many novelists
- What a seminarian may become
- Publisher of two Water Polo newsletters
- National litter cleanup program

- Nothing exciting
- Largest break in the California Coastal Range
- What can precede giving or taking
- Requiring conserving
- Go around
- One no longer crawling
- Where the Rhine rises
- Reset
- Some external adipose tissue
- It began as United Independent Broadcasters (1927)
- Dock denizen
- Yucca cousin
- Wades through
- Type of tabby
- Play adaptations
- Familial female
- Clue card designation
- What you might take a walk to get
- minute
- Eminent shock-wave studier
- Appropriate
- Haji's destination
- Depression on a trunk
- Chips or scratches
- You can buy them for about a buck
- Stop lying
- Precipitation
- Person paid to play
- Shared first
- Disclaiming postscript
- Clooney threw it in a '97 film
- Culinary go-between
- French writer of "Facts are stubborn things"
- Consumed
- Alternative to Peggy
- Three-syllable fruit
- Totally in
- Male mink
- Restrain
- Picked out
- Division sharer with ATL and PHI
- Cell ancestor
- Top



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PUZZLES & POSERS



ARCHERY

TRAVEL THRU THIS MAZE SCORING THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE POINTS.
1. START AND FINISH AT THE SAME NUMBER OF YOUR CHOICE.
2. ALWAYS FLOW WITH THE ARCHES.
EX: 1 MUST TRAVEL TO EITHER 3 OR 4.
-AT NO TIME MAY ANY PATH BE REUSED.

SUDOKU | CREATORS

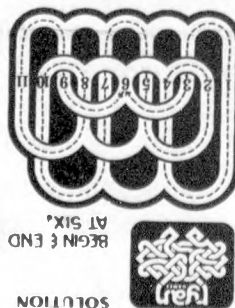
Insert numbers 1-9 in each box with every row, column and 3x3 box containing the digits just once. Difficulty level ranges from Bronze (easiest) to Silver to Gold (hardest) **RATING: GOLD**


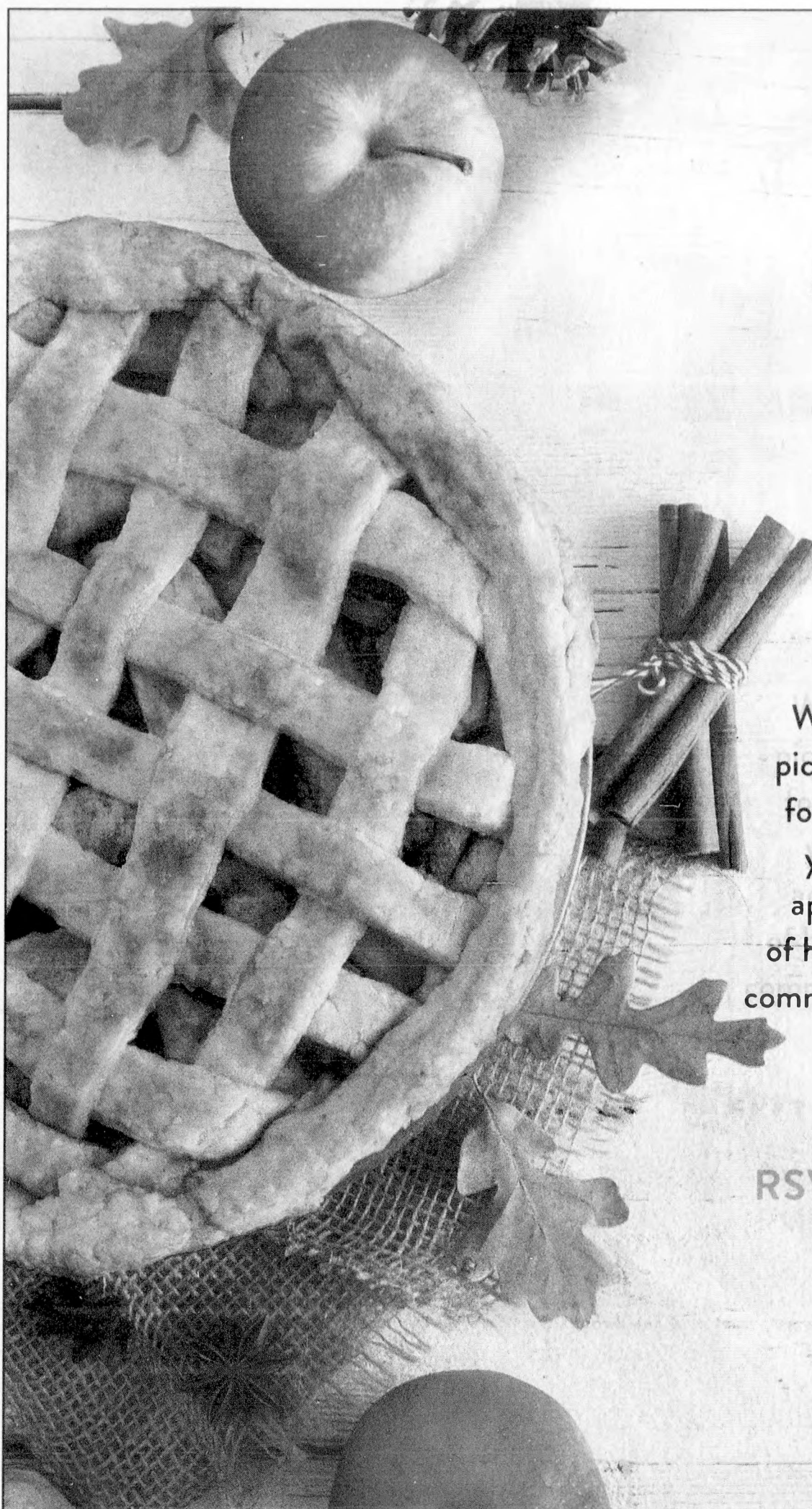
TODAY'S ANSWER

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

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

TODAY'S ANSWER





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With gratitude this Thanksgiving, come pick up a made-from-scratch pie and stay for a tour. When you call in to RSVP for your tour, you can choose between an apple or pumpkin pie. Come get a taste of how our assisted living and memory care community helps you continue your life story.

This will be a socially distanced event. Masks required.

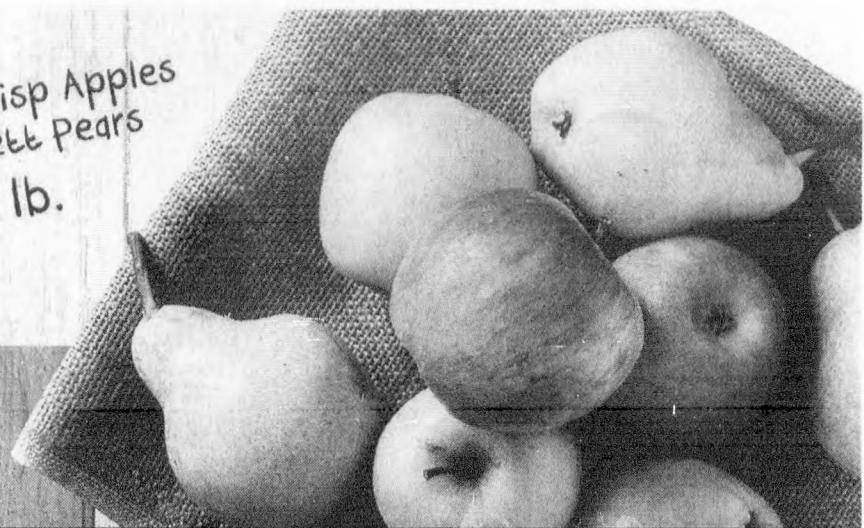
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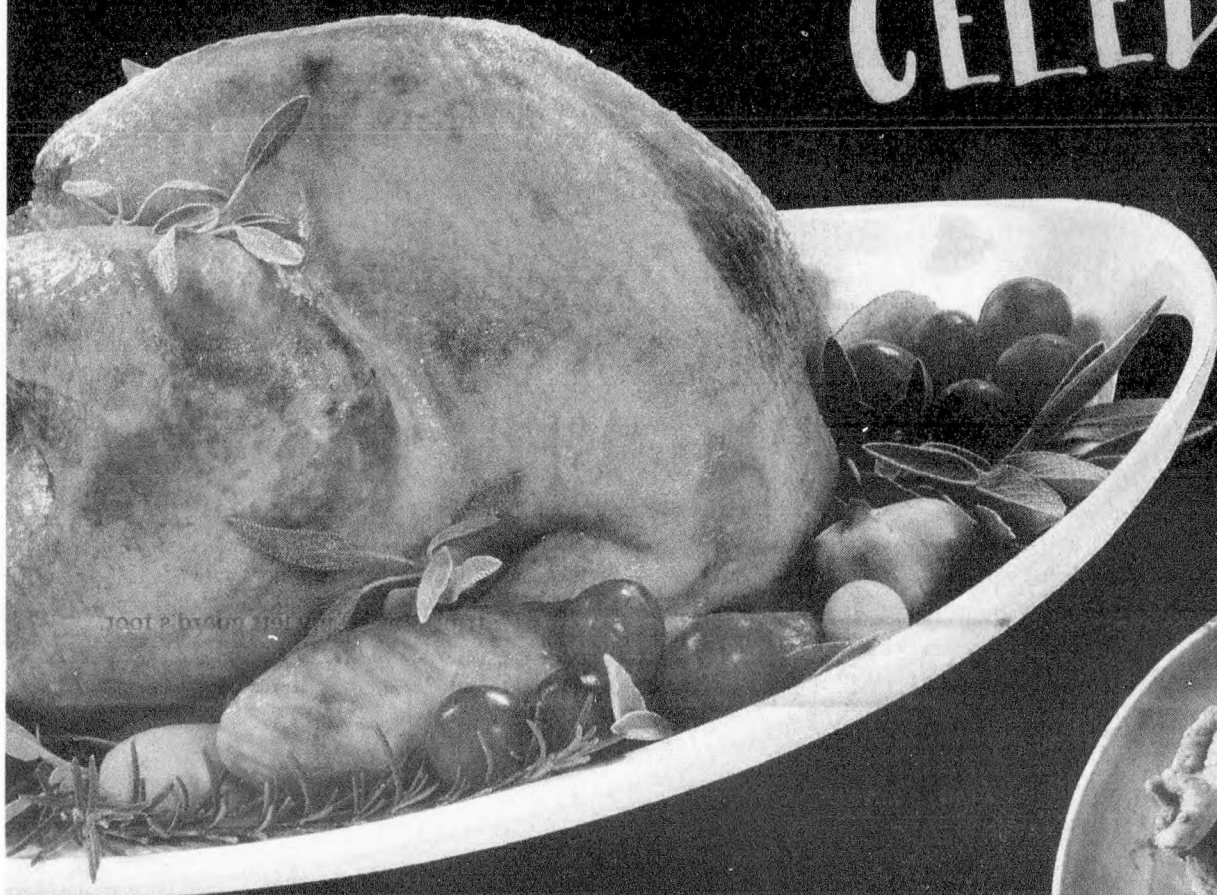




Honey Crisp Apples
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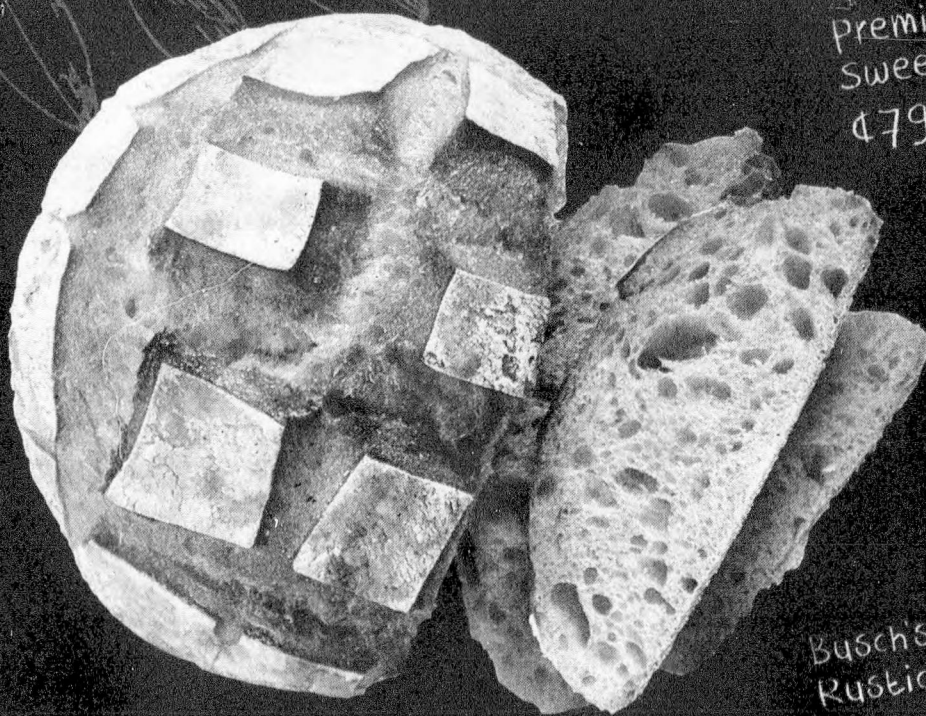
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SPORTS

Novi volleyball's Vellucci, Hoffman have family to thank for success

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

For Sarah Vellucci and Kaitlyn Hoffman, it starts with family.

The two Novi volleyball players made it official during a national signing day event Nov. 9 at the high school: Vellucci

joined Long Beach State, while Hoffman is headed to Ohio State.

Not bad for two players ranked in the top 10 of the 2023 class in Michigan, according to PrepDig.com.

But when you unravel the journeys it took to get to this day, it's awe-inspiring that both even made it this far.

Take Vellucci, for example.

It wouldn't have been shocking to see her join the family business.

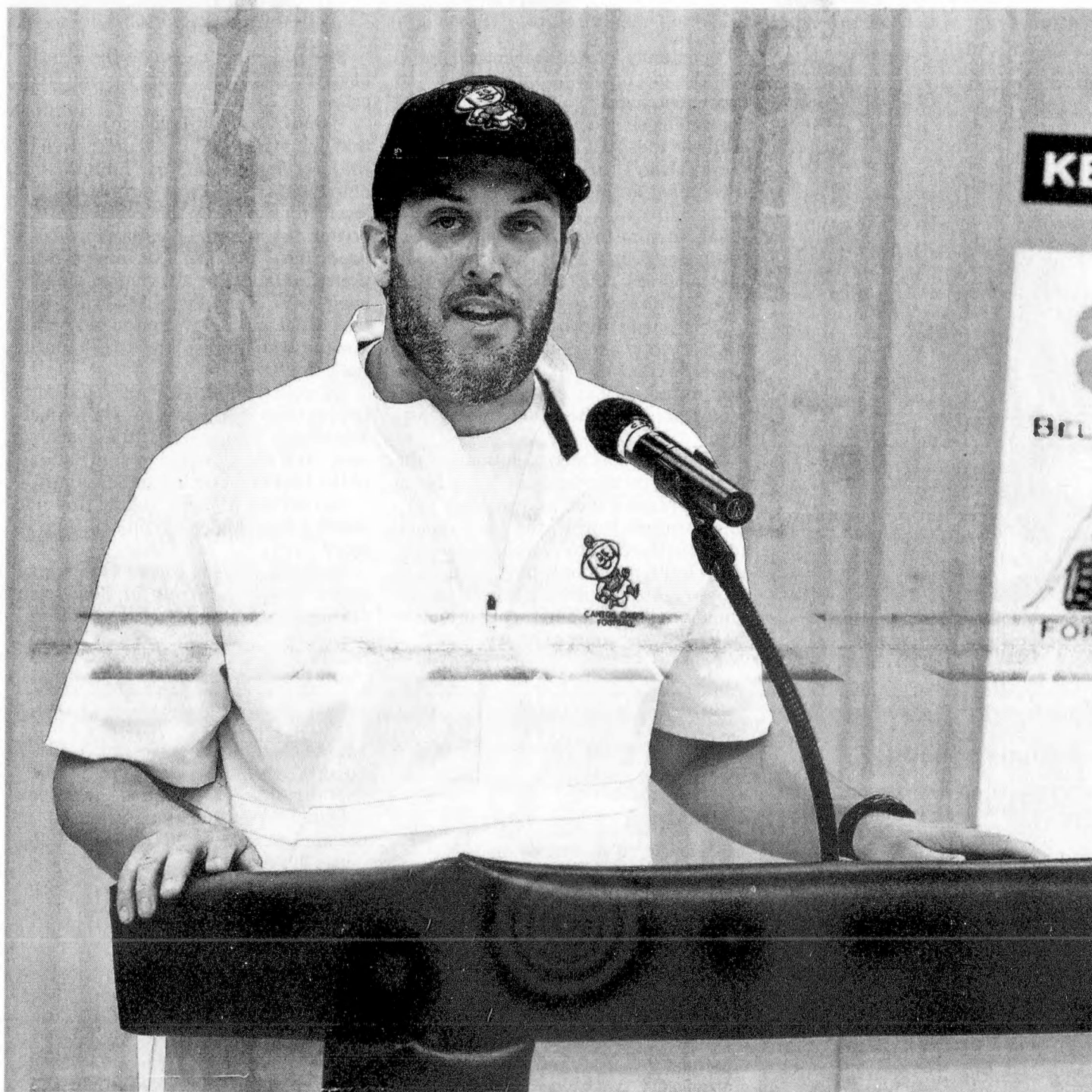
Her father, Mark, grew up playing in the North American Hockey League and has made a career out of coaching the sport. He most recently spent the past nine seasons coaching Novi's high school varsity.

Her uncle, Mike, bounced around the

minor leagues for years. And he even had a cup of coffee in the NHL with the Hartford Whalers. He went on to become a coach and climbed the ladder. He's currently an assistant with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Plus her cousins and brother have

See **SUCCESS**, Page 2B



Canton coach Andrew LaFata speaks with the media during the Kensington Lakes Activities Association Football Media Day on Aug. 12. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

How Andy LaFata quit coaching Canton football the right way

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

It's probably cliché by now that playing high school football is more about the life lessons you learn along the way than anything else.

But here's another lesson we can learn from former Canton coach Andy LaFata.

Yes, former coach.

He let his players know following Week 9's 50-14 victory over Livonia Churchill that he was stepping down. That's a 15-year coaching career at Canton, which includes leading the Chiefs for the past five seasons as the head

coach with a 29-20 record. We can call it 19 years if we include his 4 years as a player there.

For a long time, he's been driving from his home in the Lake Orion area to teach and coach at Canton. And if those 1 hour-plus drives (both to and from) sound exhausting to you, imagine the toll it's taken on him over the years.

That's why he interviewed for an opening at Lake Orion Community Schools 3 months ago. The interview actually took place the same day as Canton's pre-season scrimmage in August.

And Lake Orion let him know that it wanted to hire him mere hours before the Chiefs' Week 1 game kicked off.

Yes, that's quite a dilemma.

Should he stay or should he go?

"It was definitely the elephant in the room," LaFata told Hometown Life this week. "There was no way I could've said no to their offer. But I couldn't just leave the team and all of the good people that depended on me. But then they said, 'Hang on. We can work this out.' They subbed-out the job until the end of the football season. That right there told me everything I needed to know about the people there. It's tough leaving the good people at Canton, but I think I'm finding another group of really good people to work with here at Lake Orion."

See **LAFATA**, Page 3B

Why Cass Tech-Belleville's Div. 1 football semifinal will be historic

Mick McCabe

Special to Detroit Free Press

USA TODAY NETWORK

There he was, Steve Kossak — who learned he would be Clarkston's starting quarterback about 3 p.m. Friday when his mother told him — taking the second down snap at the 3-yard line and backing away from center with 18 seconds left and the Wolves trailing, 33-28.

This was the biggest play of his life, and suddenly he found himself on the ground.

"When I rolled out," he said, "I tripped over my left guard's foot."

Kossak's body language was terrible. It was as if he had just lost the game for his team.

"That's what I thought," he said. "Then it occurred to me that I needed to spike the ball."

Quickly, Kossak snapped out of his funk, took another snap from center and clocked the ball, stopping the clock with 6 seconds left and the ball at the 8-yard line.

Clarkston coach Justin Pintar had called for a pass play when Kossak tripped.

"We went from hopefully having three plays to try to win the game," Pintar said, "to having only one shot to win it."

Adams had called a timeout after the spike and it gave the Wolves a chance to be certain which play to run.

Parker Picot, Adams' all-everything quarterback/defensive back, had been switched to defend 6-foot-6 Brody Kossin, who had earlier caught a 14-yard TD pass from Kossak on a fourth-and-9 play.

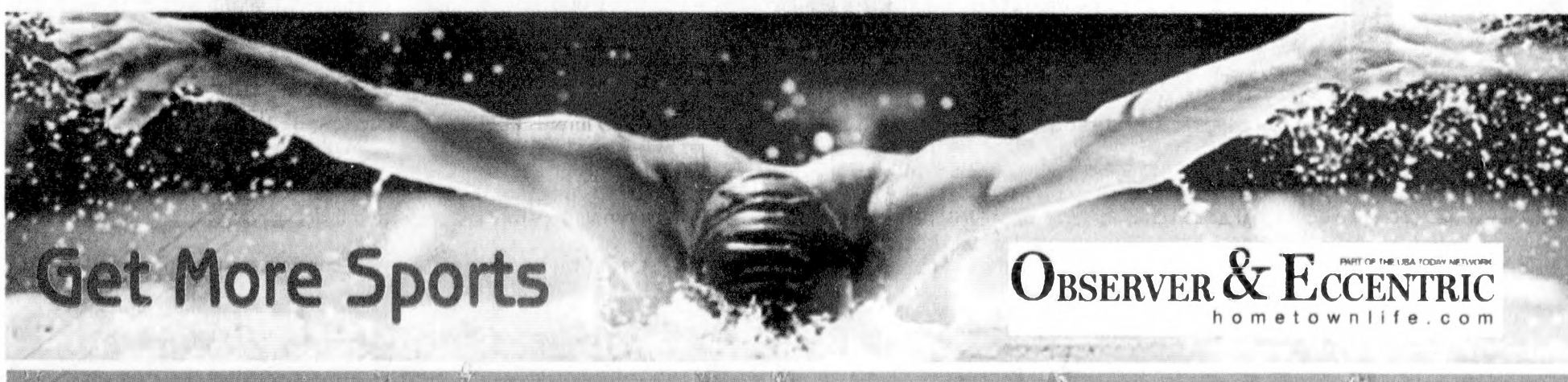
That is when junior sensation Desman Stephens realized he better be ready to become a local hero (if he hadn't already accomplished that, but more on that later).

"We knew Parker would be on Brody, who we usually throw the fade to," Stephens said. "So Stevie locked in and threw a great ball to the outside, and I caught it."

There were only 1.8 seconds left when Stephens caught the ball and gave Clarkston a 36-33 victory over Adams, sending the Wolves into Saturday's 1 p.m. Division 1 semifinal against Caledonia.

Pintar was quite surprised that Kossak was the starter, even though he took all of the snaps in Thursday's practice after starter Mike Hein's hip began giving him trouble.

See **SEMIFINAL**, Page 2B



Get More Sports

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Success

Continued from Page 1B

played or are still playing the sport. Surely, she would've been a natural given how much time she's spent in hockey rinks watching her family over the years, right?

"I do love hockey — I really do love hockey," Sarah said. "Part of me actually wishes I grew up playing it. But I can't actually skate, which is kind of crazy with my family."

Or is it?

Several of the Vellucci girls have actually grown up playing volleyball. Most notably, Sarah's cousin, Kelly Vellucci, garnered all-state honors after helping Livonia Stevenson make it to the elite eight in 2011. She later went on to play four seasons at Saginaw Valley State.

"All of my cousins played volleyball growing up," Sarah added. "So I went and watched them, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh. This is so cool!' So I kind of took after them, and I have them to credit with me wanting to play volleyball."

That led to Sarah signing up, and here we are.

She was one of 10 girls nominated for Michigan's Miss Volleyball award earlier this fall.

She's been one of the top liberos in the state for Legacy Volleyball Club over the years, though she was asked to play outside hitter for Novi because she's 6-foot tall.

The Wildcats saw their season end with a 3-0 loss to rival Northville in the Division 1 district championship. So she'll likely never hit again.

And as far as starting a last-minute hockey career, that's out of the question as well. She's graduating early from Novi so she can join LBSU's team next semester.

"I do love hockey. It's probably my favorite sport to watch, which is bad to say because I play volleyball," she joked.

Hoffman has her older sister, Molly, to thank for her success in the sport.

Growing up, whatever Molly was doing, that's what Kaitlyn wanted to do as well.

That's what led Kaitlyn to gymnastics at a young age. And when Molly gave up tumbling to try volleyball in middle school, Kaitlyn was right behind her.



Sarah Vellucci and Kaitlyn Hoffman with Novi volleyball coach Kacy Byron during a National Signing Day event Nov. 9.

PHOTOS BY BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Ohio State volleyball signee Hoffman with her family.

"I actually played basketball for 6 months, too, but it was not going well, so I just switched to volleyball after that," the defensive specialist said. "I had literally no idea that I'd get to this point. I think I always knew after my 13s year (in travel) that I wanted to play at the highest level I could, and it was always a dream of mine to go to a D-I school."

Kaitlyn's first foray into volleyball was at clinics. One clinic at Legacy Volleyball Club is what got her noticed.

She wasn't the best player on the floor. But she showed athleticism. And Legacy's coaches took note of that. She was asked to join one of their travel teams not long after that training session.

She got to play alongside some of the best players in Michigan. And being around players such as Ann Arbor Skyline's Harper Murray, the No. 1-ranked player in the country, was an eye-opener for Kaitlyn. Not only did playing with those types of athletes help elevate her game but it showed her what it took to be a Big Ten-caliber of player.

She ended her career as the eighth-best recruit in the state in the 2023 class.

"I think I was a little scared going into that, but I think I adjusted pretty well to the level of play," she said. "I think going onto the 13s team, I was surprised at the level it took to get up the level where everyone else was at. Like, Harper was so good. But I feel like I've always been pretty athletic. I've always had a really good work ethic. I've just always had that drive and motivation to get better and the want to spend the extra hours in the gym."

Of course, Kaitlyn's excited about joining Ohio State because of how much she enjoys being around the coaching staff. And she's excited to study at one of the best universities in the country.

But would it shock you to find out that's where Molly attends college as well?

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter, @folsom-brandonj.

Semifinal

Continued from Page 1B

Hein has a hip problem that flares up from time to time. Kossak actually had started three games before this, but Hein assured him he would be fine by Friday.

"Thursday is when it happened, but we're still kind of hopeful," Pintar said. "Our trainer didn't think it was very serious. He went home, but the next day he couldn't move it and couldn't do this and that."

Kossak got the news of his starting assignment from his mother because, well, moms know everything.

"His mom texted my mom," he said. "Well, I was just in shock. She told me. And I was like: 'OK, here we go. I guess I gotta get ready for the game.'"

Kossak started off like he was still in shock; not playing as well as he had earlier in the season.

"It was kind of slow at first, I thought it was nervousness," Stephens said. "Everybody was like: 'Oh, crap, this is going to be a long game.' But eventually he locked in and it was up from there."

That is when Stephens began to write his story in Clarkston lore.

After Adams had taken a 14-7 lead, Stephens returned the ensuing kickoff 83 yards to tie the game.

"They were kicking it left and they kept sending a bunch of pressure so we set up a return to the right side," Stephens said. "I followed my blocks and I got to the end zone."

Stephens, who has offers from Purdue and a slew of Mid-American Conference schools, is one of those guys who is as fast as he has to be in any particular situation.

Trailing 21-14, Stephens was handed the ball, but threw a 38-yard TD pass to Cole Church to tie the game.

"We kept running that end around sweep to me and we knew they might get a little greedy and try to come up on the run," Stephens explained. "But he actually guarded him pretty well. So I told him to keep going upfield because he kind of stopped. Then he wiggled by and got open."

That Stephens had the wherewithal to actually wave the receiver deeper was amazing.

"He kind of kept answering with big plays," Pintar said. "He's a really talent-

Semifinals schedule

Here are the 11-player matchups, with games Saturday at 1 p.m. unless noted.

Division 1

Caledonia (11-1) vs. Clarkston (10-2) at East Lansing.

Belleville (12-0) vs. Detroit Cass Tech (9-3) at Novi, Friday, 7 p.m.

Division 2

Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central (12-0) vs. Dexter (12-0) at Portage Northern.

Birmingham Groves (9-3) at Warren De La Salle (11-1) at Troy Athens.

Division 3

DeWitt (9-3) vs. Muskegon (10-2) at Greenville.

Detroit King (8-3) vs. Mason (12-0) at Westland Glenn.

Division 4

Edwardsburg (11-1) vs. Grand Rapids South Christian (12-0) at Battle Creek Harper Creek.

ed kid and his football IQ is really excellent. A lot of kids would have panicked and just thrown it."

It seems sacrilegious to be this deep into the story without having mentioned Clarkston sensation Ethan Clark, who has run for over 2,500 yards this season and over 5,000 for his career.

He gained 212 yards and on the final drive, it was Clark who led the charge to get into position for Kossak's TD pass.

"He tends to kind of heat up as games go on," Pintar said. "It was weird because it was a game he had over 200 yards and it didn't even feel like it was that good."

With a runner like Clark, Kossak didn't have to win the game for Clarkston — but in a way, he did just that.

"He didn't throw as well as he's capable of," Pintar said, "other than the couple of touchdowns on fourth downs that we needed to have."

But the most impressive thing about Kossak was something he didn't do after he tripped and fell to the ground.

"Most kids would shut down after that, they would be so dejected," Pintar said. "And he put it on the back burner

Goodrich (11-1) vs. Riverview (12-0) at Rochester.

Division 5

Gladwin (12-0) vs. Grand Rapids Catholic Central (11-1) at Ithaca.

Birmingham Detroit Country Day (8-3) vs. Frankenmuth (12-0) at Lapeer.

Division 6

Negaunee (12-0) vs. Reed City (11-1) at Gaylord.

Clinton (12-0) vs. Grand Rapids West Catholic (11-1) at Coldwater.

Division 7

Traverse City St. Francis (12-0) vs. New Lothrop (10-2) at Clare.

Napoleon (12-0) vs. Jackson Lumen Christi (9-3) at Chelsea.

Division 8

Iron Mountain (11-1) vs. Ubly (12-0) at Petoskey.

Clarkston Everest (9-3) vs. Ottawa Lake Whiteford (12-0) at Woodhaven.

and moved on to the next play."

And the play after the play after is the one Kossak will remember for the rest of his life.

"My friends texted me the play," he said. "I've probably watched it 30 times."

Historic semifinal in Division 1

For the first time since 1989, we will have a Friday night semifinal when Detroit Cass Tech and defending Division 1 state champ Belleville meet at Novi. The 7 p.m. game will be televised by Bally Sports.

The last semifinal played on a Friday night was the infamous "Ice Bowl Game" between Farmington Hills Harrison and East Grand Rapids at Flint Atwood Stadium.

When Harrison coach John Herrington gave his starting lineup to the P.A. announcer he asked: "Do you want our goalie?"

Before the start of the second quarter, referee Joe Kavulich stopped the game, saying it was unsafe to continue. But former Michigan High School Ath-

letic Association executive director Jack Roberts ordered the game to continue.

Harrison won, 3-2, and the next week defeated DeWitt in a thriller, 28-27, in the final game of Mill (The Thrill) Coleman's illustrious career.

Clinton pulls off stunner in Division 6

With 10:06 left to play in the third quarter, Clinton trailed Warren Michigan Collegiate, 24-6, and coach Casey Randolph could have been forgiven if he began to think about where he was going to spend this week deer hunting.

"It didn't look good, for sure," Randolph said. "We would stop them and stop them and then they would rip off third-and-long runs of 65 and 57 yards. We felt we had things adjusted, but kids would make simple mistakes and they took it house."

Collegiate was about to add another touchdown when Nik Shadley managed to come up with the play of the season and wound up with the ball at the Clinton 7-yard line.

"Honestly, he had the tackle, ripped the ball and was able to jump on," Randolph said. "I don't know how he kept ahold of it because he's all of 140 pounds. He's a tough nut. I think that was the backbreaker for them and springboarded us into having a chance to make the comeback."

That led to a 93-yard drive with Andy Fair passing to Bradyn Lehman.

Clinton looked to be in serious trouble again when Collegiate scored with 8:21 left in the fourth quarter for a 30-18 lead. Then Shadley caught a 20-yard TD pass.

"We never stopped playing the game, we never hung our heads," Randolph said. "We kept playing defense, kept grinding towards some different things offensively that allowed us to move the ball quicker."

A high snap from the center forced the Collegiate punter to run, but he went nowhere, leading to a 5-yard Lehman run for a 31-30 victory.

Making the comeback more impressive: neither team runs a spread offense that features quick-strike touchdowns and it occurred in a Division 6 regional final.

"Especially in that high caliber of a game and the type of offenses both teams run, we're both dominantly power run offenses," Randolph said.

MEET THE 2022 ALL-KLAA FOOTBALL TEAM

Bryce Underwood, Belleville, QB, Soph.
 Jeremiah Beasley, Belleville, LB/RB, Jr.
 Dennis Crawford, Belleville, DB/WR, Sr.
 Jeremiah Warren, Belleville, DL/OL, Sr.
 Camden Weaver, Belleville, DL/OL, Sr.
 Nathaniel Johnson, Belleville, OL, Jr.
 Julian Johnson, Belleville, WR, Jr.
 Kevin Simes, Belleville, WR, Jr.
 Ronald Jackson, Belleville, QB/DB, Jr.
 Brayden Lane, Belleville, K, Soph.
 Mychal Yharbrough, Belleville, DB/WR, Sr.
 Hunter Harding, Brighton, LB, Sr.
 Griffin Bell, Brighton, LB, Sr.
 Ryan Velarde, Brighton, DB, Sr.
 Nick Thalacker, Brighton, DL, Sr.
 Andrew Stewart, Brighton, DB, Sr.
 Jack Gregorich, Brighton, DB, Sr.
 Mason Millhouse, Brighton, WR, Sr.
 Ashton Tomassi, Brighton, WR, Sr.
 Colin McKernan, Brighton, QB, Sr.
 Carson Shrader, Brighton, RB, Sr.
 Jack Storey, Brighton, OL, Sr.
 Antonio Correa, Canton, LB, Sr.
 Andon Locke, Canton, LB, Sr.
 Devon Pettus, Canton, RB, Jr.
 Caleb Williams, Canton, DB, Jr.
 Adam Saleh, Dearborn, QB/DB, Sr.
 Noah Dobert, Dearborn, RB/DB, Sr.
 Cameron Smalley, Dearborn, OL/DL, Sr.
 Hassan Sareini, Dearborn, LB/RB, Jr.
 Evin Fencil, Dearborn, DE/TE, Jr.
 Ali Homayed, Dearborn, OL/DL, Jr.
 Brady Isaacson, Dearborn, DE/TE, Jr.
 Hussein Beydoun, Dearborn Fordson, RB/DB, Sr.
 Mohamed Traboulsi, Dearborn Fordson, DE, Sr.
 Mstafa Aljanaby, Dearborn Fordson, WR, Soph.
 Joey Mattord, Hartland, OLB/RB, Sr.
 Chase Kern, Hartland, LB, Sr.
 Vincent Cox, Hartland, OL/DL, Sr.
 Mitch Cavanaugh, Hartland, WR/LB, Sr.
 Luke Dibert, Hartland, DT, Sr.
 Jaxson Wilson, Hartland, DE/TE, Sr.
 Bobby Kanka, Howell, DE/TE, Soph.
 Nolan Nelson, Howell, OL/DL, Sr.
 Carter Kraft, Howell, LB, Sr.
 John Lovich, Howell, DB, Sr.
 Jayden Allen, Livonia Churchill, WR, Sr.
 Justin Lynch, Livonia Churchill, OL, Sr.
 JD Bates, Livonia Franklin, QB, Sr.
 Tyler Garrett, Livonia Franklin, WR/DB, Sr.

Jacob Gorla, Livonia Franklin, DL, Jr.
 Owen Hawley, Livonia Franklin, OL, Sr.
 Jon Jasionowski, Livonia Franklin, DB, Jr.
 Drew Kelbert, Livonia Franklin, TE, Jr.
 Cordel Mabins, Livonia Franklin, RB, Sr.
 Dominic Simpson, Livonia Franklin, DB/RB, Sr.
 Sam White, Livonia Franklin, LB, Sr.
 Charlie Davidek, Livonia Stevenson, DL/OL, Sr.
 Ar'Jon Thompson, Livonia Stevenson, QB/DB, Jr.
 Aiden Nolan, Livonia Stevenson, WR/DB, Jr.
 Owen Reed, Livonia Stevenson, LB/TE, Sr.
 Nihad Ajdarpasic, Livonia Stevenson, DL, Sr.
 Bryce Cunningham, Livonia Stevenson, OL/DL, Jr.
 Max Anderson, Northville, S, Sr.
 Evan Deak, Northville, OLB, Jr.
 Graham Gilmartin, Northville, OL, Jr.
 Zach Groot, Northville, CB, Sr.
 Ferris Jordan, Northville, DL, Jr.
 Hunter Ladach, Northville, OLB, Sr.
 Caleb Moore, Northville, RB, Jr.
 Luca Prior, Northville, QB, Sr.
 Angelo Rodriguez, Northville, WR, Sr.
 Niko Krall, Novi, LB, Sr.
 Luke Aurillia, Novi, WR/DB, Sr.
 Preston Phimister, Novi, OL/DL, Sr.
 Caleb Walker, Novi, QB, Jr.
 Boden Fernsler, Novi, WR, Jr.
 Cole Shires, Novi, RB/LB, Jr.
 Martez Langford, Novi, RB/DB, Sr.
 Jaxson McCaig, Plymouth, RB/LB/DB, Jr.
 Luc Damiani, Plymouth, WR/DB/K/P, Jr.
 Orlando Daniels, Plymouth, TE/DE, Sr.
 Evan Cosgrove, Plymouth, RB/LB, Sr.
 Robert Jones Jr, Salem, RB, Sr.
 Dwayne Jones, Wayne Memorial, WR/RB, Jr.
 Xavier Spadacini, Westland John Glenn, RB/LB/DB, Sr.
 Damon Powers, Westland John Glenn, RB/LB/DB, Jr.
 Connor LeCourt, Westland, John Glenn, TE/DE, Sr.
 Mike Boyd, Westland, John Glenn, OT/DT, Sr.

LaFata

Continued from Page 1B

LaFata's final day teaching at Plymouth-Canton Community Schools is in early November.

So, yes, he stuck it out. But he told virtually nobody about his new job.

Not his 3-6 team, which was enduring quite the rebuild with 19 new juniors and sophomores starting for the first time. It would've been easy to walk away from that situation, especially when the injuries started piling up.

Not former Canton coach Tim Baechler, a Michigan High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Famer who mentored LaFata over the years.

Not even his assistants.

"We were shocked when he actually told the coaching staff after Week 8," eighth-year Canton assistant Steve Robb said. "I don't even know if his mom knew, and she's one of our biggest fans and comes to all the games. I don't think anybody knew. We expected Andy to tell the kids leading up to Week 9 against Churchill. He didn't. His focus was on preparing for the game. He didn't want any distractions for the players. We played well, and he told them after the game. That's the kind of guy Andy is. He's a players-first coach, and that was the way he handled it with our team."

LaFata hasn't had a fall Friday night off since 2007. By the time he was a junior at Eastern Michigan University, he was making the drives from Ypsilanti to the Chiefs' practices and working as an assistant under Baechler.

And those drives could've been a lot worse had Robb gotten his way.

Twice, Robb tried luring LaFata away from Canton to work on his staff when he was a head coach elsewhere.

"I first met him in about 2010 when he was about 22 years old," said Robb, who just finished his 44th year coaching. "I was impressed. Even back then, he was one of the best offensive line coaches I've ever been around. I thought that right away when he was 22 years old. I tried to steal him and get him to come to Milan with me. And then I tried to get him to come to (Dearborn) Divine Child with me. He's just a great teacher of technique, and he real-

ly knows his Xs and Os."

While LaFata hasn't ruled out getting back into coaching in the future, he has no immediate plans to coach. He hasn't been asked to join Lake Orion's football staff, nor has any of the other nearby teams asked him to come aboard.

"There's no athletics involved with this decision," he added. "It was just a career decision."

LaFata said being done with football has been a surreal feeling as this was his first week not game-planning for an upcoming opponent. The Chiefs missed qualifying for the postseason for the first time since 2007.

And that, right there, speaks to why leaving Canton was such a hard decision.

There will always be talent within the program. Competing for a state championship is always a possibility.

"If this was a football decision, I never would have left," LaFata said. "But with the opportunity to work at Lake Orion, I had to do what was best for myself and my family. I drove to Canton every day for the past 6 or 7 years. When you add my young kids into the mix, it was just how many years can you keep on doing this? Without kids, I can do it. With two young kids, it's getting to be a little much. Sometimes I couldn't get to our JV games because that meant missing another night with them."

"I had to ask myself: What do you want your next 15 years to look like? That's how I looked at it. I had been there for 15 years and got everything I could have ever asked out of it. What more is out there? It's time to try and find that. I didn't want to leave the kids I know there. But had I stayed, there would've been the next group of kids that I wouldn't have wanted to leave, too."

Quitting a job is never easy.

But LaFata, gracefully, stuck the landing.

Even though life would've been easier for him had he quit coaching in Week 1, he grit through the rebuilding process. He showed up to practices. He game-planned with his assistants. He gave the Chiefs everything he had. And he kept the distractions away from them until after the season.

LaFata did it the right way, and his players will only benefit from having watched how he handled such a challenging experience.

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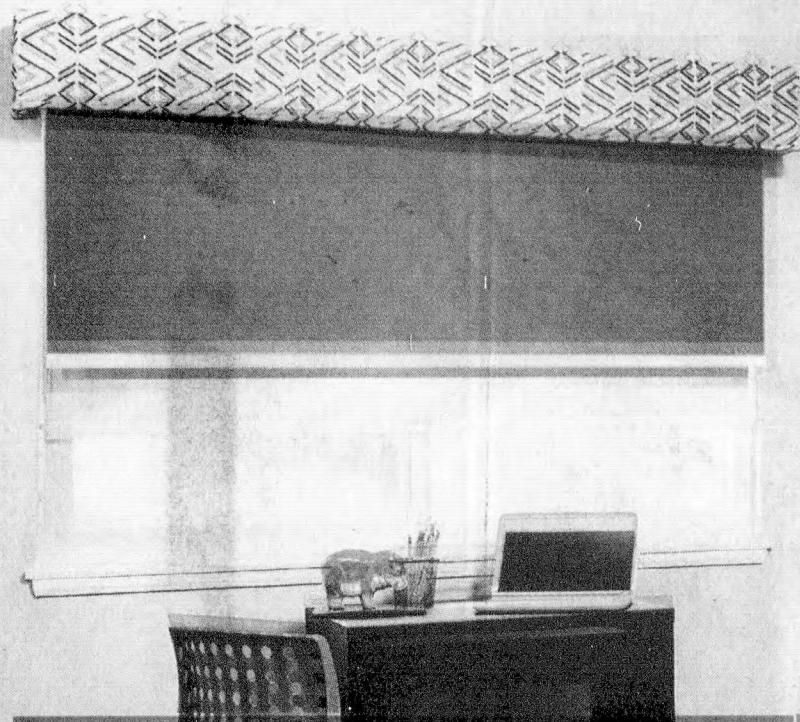
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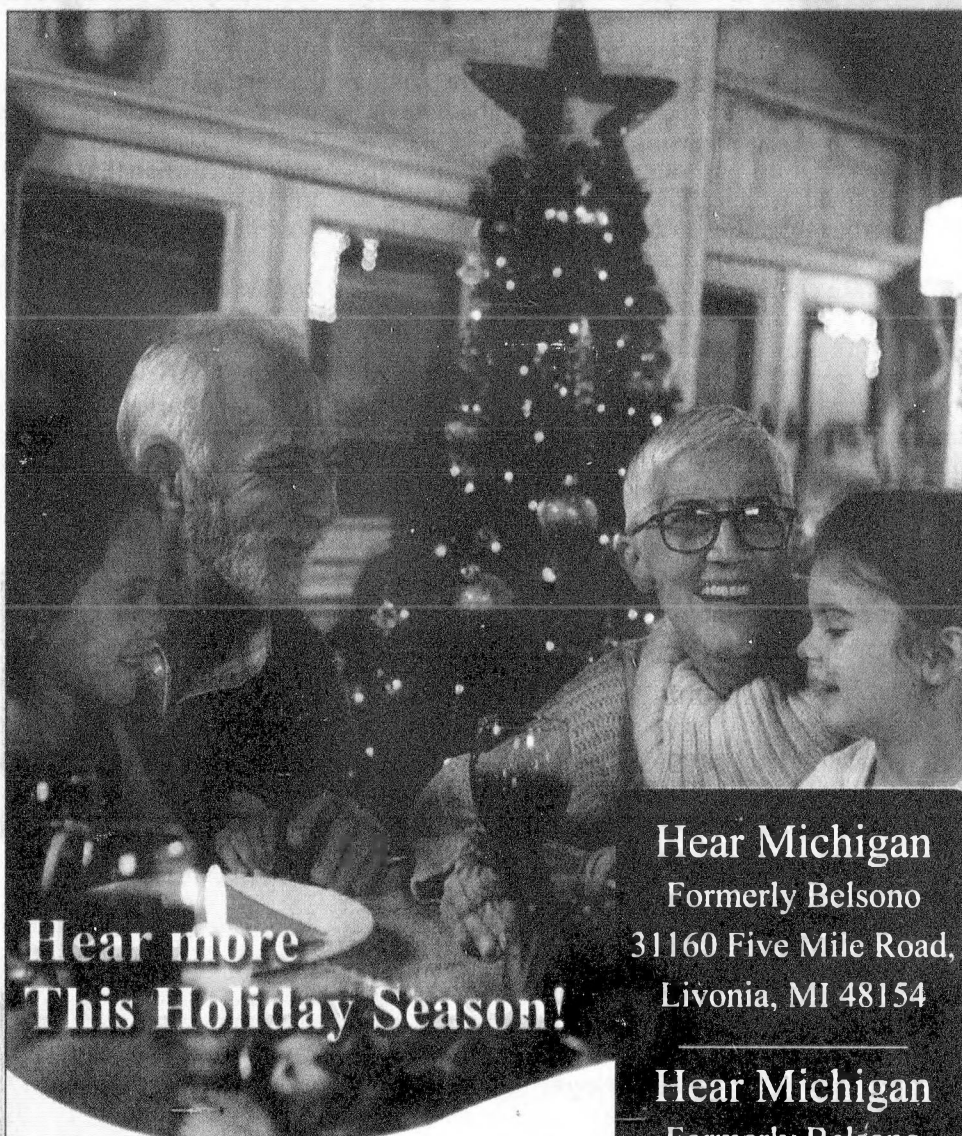
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This undersized sophomore helped the Falcons win a regional title

Brandon Folsom
Hometownlife.com
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Somebody needed to make a play.
Anybody.
It didn't matter who.
The defense just needed to get off the field without giving up a score.

Joshua Woods had been putting the Birmingham Groves football team on his back all night long throughout the Falcons' 32-25 victory over Livonia Franklin in the Oct. 11 Division 2 regional championship.

Whenever the Patriots put points on the scoreboard, the senior running back countered with some fierce rushing.

Woods plowed through a pile, broke five would-be tackles (yes, seriously, five) and raced 48 yards to erase an 18-17 halftime deficit and put the Falcons ahead once and for all with 27.8 seconds left in the third quarter.

And then he busted a 78-yard TD run to make it a two-score lead midway through the fourth. However, as he crossed the goal line, with two Patriots draped on him, he suffered an injury so severe that he never saw the field again. He spent the rest of the night getting his calves worked on by trainers on the sideline.

Of course, Franklin responded with quarterback JD Bates tossing an 18-yard TD pass to Dominic Simpson.

And then the Patriots got a stop on defense because, honestly, Woods wasn't there to carry the load.

Franklin's offense took over on the 31-yard line with one timeout and 2:31 remaining.

One score, and this Round 3 playoff game was headed to overtime.

"They're (Franklin) a great team, and they're well-coached," said coach Brendan Flaherty, who's in his 22nd season leading Groves. "I just knew we had to come up and make a play. But, honestly, we've been preparing for overtime all week. We were ready to go for overtime if we had to. I just thought somebody would rise up and make a play, and they did."

Here's what you need to know about Bates.

He's the perfect QB. Which is saying something because he entered this season with an almost impossible task. He was asked to replace Zac Olesuk at the position after Olesuk had just led the Patriots to a state semifinal in 2021.

Game after game, Bates found his groove. And the senior never, ever made mistakes. He's one of the best game managers, and we don't mean that in the way an NFL analyst talks about middle-of-the-road QBs. He just handles each key down and distance with moxie. He's always prepared for the pressure. And he rarely turns over the ball.

Groves gave Franklin over 2 minutes to go 69 yards to knot the score and force overtime. If you're picking anyone to make that happen, it's going to be Bates.

That's why it was shocking when the least likely of defenders came up with a game-clinching interception at midfield, which allowed the Falcons' offense to kneel out the remaining 88 seconds and punched their ticket to next week's state semifinal game against defending state champion Warren De La Salle. It's their third final-four trip under Flaherty.

Or was it really that shocking?

Coming up with the heads-up interception was Aiden Leung, who had actually fallen on a game-saving fumble in the red zone against rival Birmingham Seaholm in last week's district final.

And it was easy for Franklin to pick on Leung.

For one, on the opposite side of him is future all-state cornerback Chris Little. Little is about as shut-down as they came in high school. Time after time, he's come up with interceptions and drive-ending



Birmingham Groves' Josh Woods rushes during a Division 2 football regional final Nov. 11 at Livonia Franklin.
BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

pass breakups. There's no way the Patriots were wanting to throw toward Little Island.

"I wouldn't throw toward him or his way," Flaherty agreed.

And, for two, Leung is just a sophomore. A 5-foot-8, 150-pound one at that. He doesn't have a ton of experience playing varsity football, despite being on the team a year ago.

Plus, Leung got banged up earlier in the game. He had actually missed about a half dozen plays before he was sent back out on defense for the game's last stand.

It wasn't surprising to see Franklin pass his way two plays in a row on that final drive. But nor was it surprising to see him read Bates' eyes and put himself in a position to ensure the Falcons the win.

"It's just amazing," Leung said. "It's so special just to be able to play with these guys and to just play football, really."

Hometown Life actually interviewed Leung a week ago but foolishly didn't use his quotes in the story.

So let's correct that, huh?

Leung doesn't look like much of an athlete because of his size, but he's one of the best at Groves. He started at catcher and center field for the Falcons' baseball team last spring.

Getting a taste of being a Big Man on Campus inspired him to give an extra effort during the off-season. He went to as many voluntary baseball and football

workouts as he possibly could.

When fall camp came around, he battled to get on the depth chart. And he even found himself in a three-way battle for one of the starting cornerback spots with Max Young and Carlos Jones.

By Week 3 of the season, he had won that starting spot. He had done enough to impress defensive backs coach John Curran. And Curran knows a little something about coaching that position. He's only been doing it at Groves since 1994.

"I just started doing a lot better and was a lot more confident in my playing, and they put me there," Leung said. "But I just felt like I could hang with guys. I'm on the smaller side, but with the position I play, I felt like I needed the confidence to hang with them (Young and Jones). We were rotating through the first few weeks. And I've just been trying to fit in."

So that's two game-saving defensive plays Leung has made in as many weeks, both of which led to the Falcons hoisting trophies immediately afterward.

But perhaps his best play of the postseason was the one he made after Groves beat Franklin.

Teammates Malachi Coleman, Avery Gach and Morgan Goldberg surprised Flaherty by dousing him with water after the trophy ceremony. In order to sneak up on Flaherty, someone needed to stand in front of the orange Gatorade bucket and make sure it stayed hidden. And that was Leung.

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS SCORES FROM REGIONAL FINALS

Saturday

Division 1

Belleville 33, Novi Detroit Catholic Central 10
Caledonia 42, Grand Ledge 14

Division 3

Muskegon 27, Zeeland West 20

Division 5

Gladwin 26, Oakridge High School 8

Division 6

Negaunee 18, Gladstone 12
Reed City 6, Millington 0

Division 7

Traverse City St. Francis 63, Ithaca 0

Division 8

Iron Mountain 34, Evart 33
Uby 49, Fowler 7

8-Player semifinals

Division 1

Martin 42, Brown City 8

Division 2

Mendon 30, Morrice 14

Friday

Division 1

Clarkston 36, Rochester

Adams 33
Detroit Cass Tech 35, Macomb Dakota 21

Division 2

Birmingham Groves 32, Livonia Franklin 25
Dexter 42, Midland 7
Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central 21, East Lansing 17
Warren De La Salle 55, Harrison Township L'Anse Creuse 7

Division 3

DeWitt 29, Linden 16
Detroit King 22, Birmingham Brother Rice 12
Mason 42, Trenton 24

Division 4

Eddies Edwardsburg Michigan 24, Hastings 14
Goodrich 40, Orchard Lake St. Mary's Prep 20
Grand Rapids South Christian 28, Whitehall 21
Riverview 45, Dearborn Divine Child 35

Division 5

Birmingham Detroit Country Day 44, Flat Rock 7
Frankenmuth 49, Flint Hamady 7

Grand Rapids Catholic Central 42, Portland 19

Division 6

Clinton 31, Warren Michigan Collegiate 30
Grand Rapids West Catholic 37, Lansing Catholic 7

Division 7

Jackson Lumen Christi 7, Lawton 6
Napoleon 14, Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central 7
New Lothrop 29, Elkton-Pigeon Bay Port Laker 20

Division 8

Clarkston Everest Collegiate 30, Sterling Heights Parkway Christian 6
Whiteford 38, White Pigeon 26

State semifinal schedule

11-player

All games Saturday at 1 p.m. unless noted.

Division 1

Caledonia (11-1) vs. Clarkston (10-2) at East Lansing.

Belleville (12-0) vs. Detroit Cass Tech (9-3) at Novi, Friday, 7 p.m.

Division 2

Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central (12-0) vs. Dexter (12-0) at Portage Northern.
Birmingham Groves (9-3) at Warren De La Salle (11-1) at Troy Athens.

Division 3

DeWitt (9-3) vs. Muskegon (10-2) at Greenville.
Detroit King (8-3) vs. Mason (12-0) at Westland Glenn.

Division 4

Edwardsburg (11-1) vs. Grand Rapids South Christian (12-0) at Battle Creek Harper Creek.
Goodrich (11-1) vs. Riverview (12-0) at Rochester.

Division 5

Gladwin (12-0) vs. Grand Rapids Catholic Central (11-1) at Ithaca.
Birmingham Detroit Country Day (8-3) vs. Frankenmuth (12-0) at Lapeer.

Division 6

Negaunee (12-0) vs. Reed City (11-1) at Gaylord.
Clinton (12-0) vs. Grand Rapids West Catholic (11-1) at Coldwater.

Division 7

Traverse City St. Francis (12-0) vs. New Lothrop (10-2) at Clare.
Napoleon (12-0) vs. Jackson Lumen Christi (9-3) at Chelsea.

Division 8

Iron Mountain (11-1) vs. Uby (12-0) at Petoskey.
Clarkston Everest (9-3) vs. Ottawa Lake Whiteford (12-0) at Woodhaven.

8-player

Division 1

Merrill (12-0) vs. Martin (12-0) at Superior Dome, Marquette, Saturday, 11 a.m.

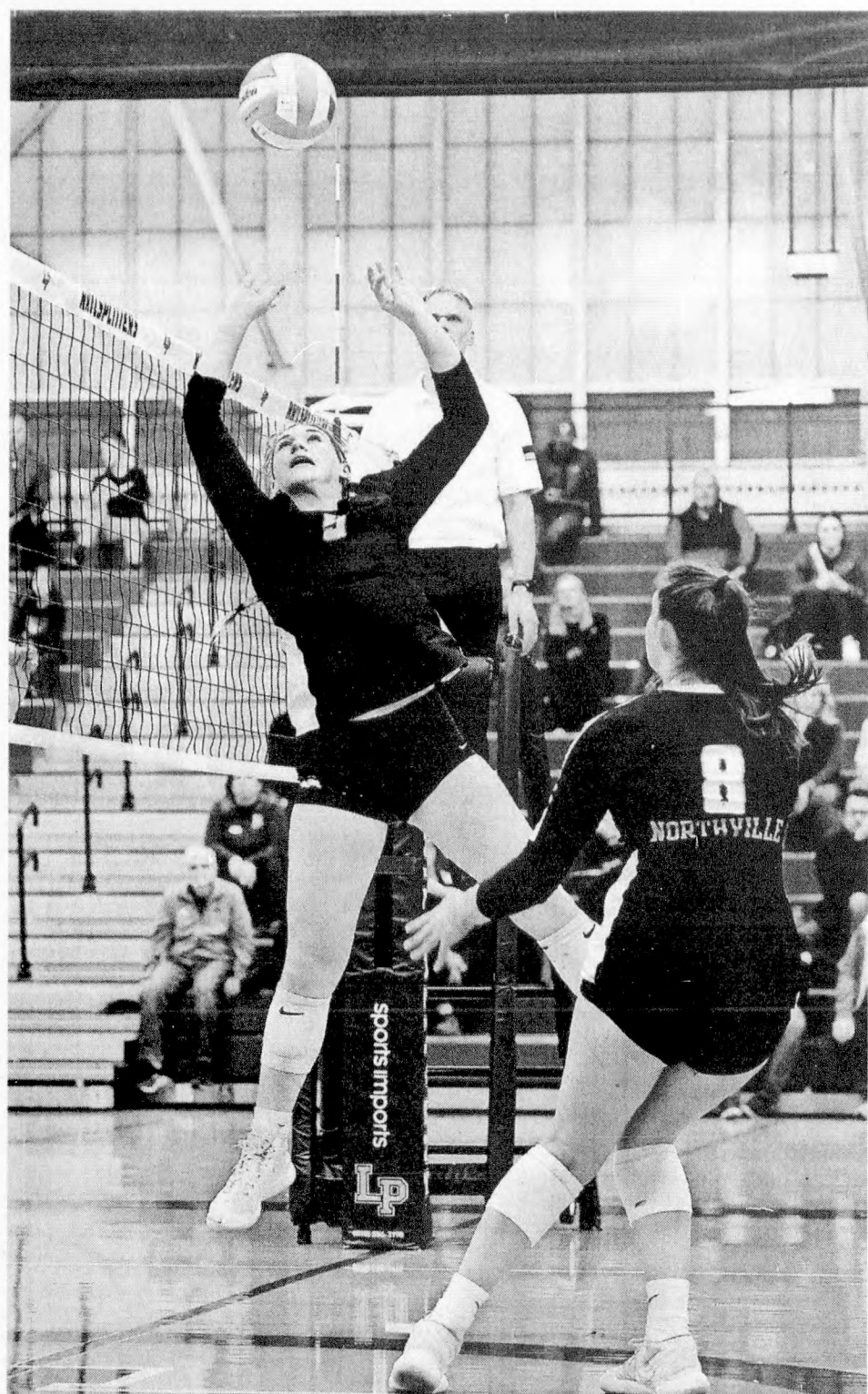
Division 2

Mendon (10-2) vs. Powers North Central (12-0) at Superior Dome, Marquette, Saturday, 2 p.m.



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Northville's Ella Craggs sets during the Division 1 volleyball regional semifinal Nov. 8 at Lincoln Park. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

Former Mercy player helps Mustangs edge Marlins in regional semifinals

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Around and around and around Sarah Lindstrom spun.

It's become a post-game tradition for the second-year Northville volleyball coach following important victories. And Tuesday's 3-1 win in the Division 1 regional semifinal over No. 8 Farmington Hills Mercy was definitely an important victory for the second-ranked Mustangs.

What's the tradition?

Lindstrom carries with her a pink staff that has a purple unicorn head attached to the end of it. Her team huddles around her while she spins in circles. When she finally stops, she taps the unicorn end of the baton on the head of whomever she deems worthy enough for her Player of the Game honor.

And absolutely no one in Lincoln Park's gymnasium was surprised that the majestic unicorn picked Ella Craggs this time around.

It wasn't because Craggs had the best game out of all the Mustangs. Though, as their starting setter the sophomore certainly played a big role in pushing them past the Marlins in a state championship-caliber match.

You could actually argue that right-side hitter Mallory Reck was the top performer, as, time and time again, the sophomore came up with clutch kills to help the Mustangs pull out each close-call set.

While the final score may have looked like an easy win, it certainly wasn't. Northville edged Mercy 25-22, 25-23 and 25-21 in the sets they won and fell just 25-23 in the third set. And Reck came up with three pivotal kills and a key tip down the stretch of the final set to ensure her team would face Allen Park in Thursday's regional final.

Yeah, yeah, Reck played awesome, but you want to know why Lindstrom picked Craggs as the Player of the Game instead, right?

That's because Craggs used to be a Marlin.

And she didn't let playing against her former squad get the best of her on such a big stage.

"It's a really personal match for me, obviously," the 5-foot-9 setter said. "And it felt really nice that we came out so strong and were able to finish. I was definitely really nervous for this game, but I'm really glad we were able to pull through. We knew they were a really tough matchup and one of the hardest

we had to get through, so I think we can just keep going from here and, hopefully, just push through to Battle Creek."

Craggs, who is actually the younger sister of former Detroit Catholic Central power forward Cooper Craggs, who is now playing basketball at Oakland University, is an All-American setter for the Pontiac-based Michigan Elite Volleyball Academy.

But since she was just a freshman on a talented roster a year ago, she played outside hitter on Mercy's varsity.

That wasn't why she transferred to Northville this past summer. She actually thought being in a public school setting like Northville's was a better fit for her personality. And it has been.

But she's definitely happy about playing her natural position again, which she hasn't taken for granted. She was one of four Mustangs recently named to the Kensington Lakes Activities Association's all-conference team.

And for her to step up, keep her nerves in check and play heads-up against her former team, it said everything you needed to know about PrepDig.com's fifth-ranked recruit from Michigan in the 2025 class.

"You know what, for her to be doing what she did today in this setting and against that team, I think it just speaks volumes of her maturity and composure," Lindstrom said. "All we really talked about today was, 'Hey, trust your hitters. You have more than (Michigan Miss Volleyball nominee Abby Reck).'"

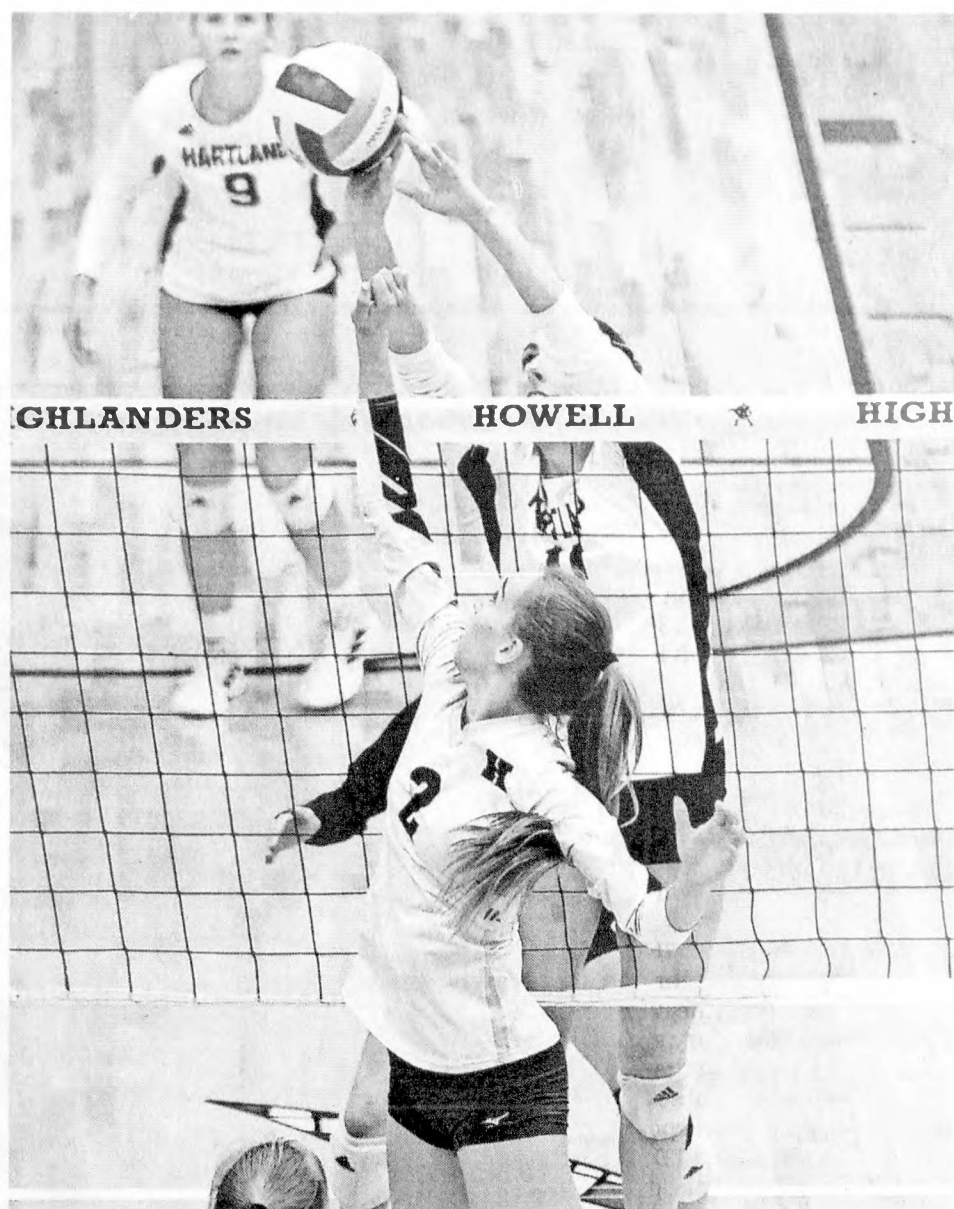
"We didn't even want the first ball to go to Abby tonight. We wanted everyone else to know how deep we run, and I just think she did a great job moving the ball around. Her setting decisions were there. She got after it early in the front row and showed them (Mercy) that she can be offensive and aggressive, and that was her holding their blockers. You saw her hold the middle blockers and get one-on-one matchups left and right, and Ella made our hitters look better than they are sometimes, and she did a great job of that tonight."

Northville will be favored in the regional championship.

And a victory means they'll need just three more to claim a state title.

That's five more unicorn spins from Lindstrom for those keeping score at home.

Twitter: @folsombrandonj.



Howell's Chloe Kiser (2) and Hartland's Cameron Herman (11) made the All-Kensington Lakes Activities Association volleyball team. DAN ZEPPA/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

MEET THE 2022 ALL-KLAA VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Adriana Lane, Belleville, libero, Sr.
Daria Igonin, Belleville, setter, Sr.
Khayla Moore, Belleville, OH, Sr.
Lea Gage, Brighton, setter, Jr.
Abigail Mainka, Brighton, OH, Jr.
Sydney Low, Canton, MH, Sr.
Angelina Konini, Canton, libero, Sr.
Katya Salame, Dearborn, OH, Jr.
Malak Saad, Dearborn, libero, Jr.
Dunia Salah, Dearborn Fordson, OH, Sr.
Celina Bazzi, Dearborn Fordson, setter, Jr.
Cameron Herman, Hartland, OH, Jr.
Faith Martin, Hartland, libero, Jr.
Kaitlyn Schram, Hartland, setter, Jr.
Ruby Earl, Howell, OH, Sr.
Chloe Kiser, Howell, setter, Sr.
Erica Maladecki, Livonia Churchill, libero, Sr.
Madeline O'Connor, Livonia Churchill, OH, Sr.
Sophia Turchan, Livonia Churchill, DS, Sr.
Alivia Jonika, Livonia Franklin, OH, Sr.
Katelyn Orlowski, Livonia Franklin, libero, Jr.
Bella Nuoffer, Livonia Franklin, OH, Sr.
Grace McBrien, Livonia Stevenson, MH, Sr.
Apryl Kruse, Livonia Stevenson, OH, Sr.
Natalie West, Livonia Stevenson, setter, Soph.
Erin Cahill, Livonia Stevenson, libero, Jr.
Abby Reck, Northville, OH, Sr.
Taryn Rice, Northville, libero, Sr.
Avry Nelson, Northville, MH, Jr.

Ella Craggs, Northville, setter, Soph.
Sarah Vellucci, Novi, OH, Sr.
Kaitlyn Hoffman, Novi, OH, Sr.
Sumire Katsumata, Novi, libero, Sr.
Tara Creekmore, Plymouth, OH, Soph.
Kirei Quan, Salem, OH, Sr.
Elise Hudak, Salem, MH, Jr.
Alaina King, Wayne Memorial, MH, Jr.
Jasmyn Johnson, Westland John Glenn, setter, Sr.
Allison Thaxton, Westland John Glenn, OH, Jr.

Honorable Mention

Belleville: Payton Mann (Sr.), Morgan Bennett (Sr.). Brighton: Megan Jagst (Sr.), Emily Kramer (Jr.). Canton: Kennedy Parks (Sr.), Ella Binder (Sr.). Dearborn: Tamara Gomez (Sr.), Samantha Rechlin (Sr.). Dearborn Fordson: Sarriah Ajami (Jr.), Tia Basma (Jr.). Hartland: Emerson Seog (Jr.), Julia Harper (Sr.). Howell: Reese Williams (Sr.), Emerson Baum (Jr.). Livonia Churchill: Addison Kostoff (Soph.), Tabitha Miller (Sr.). Livonia Franklin: Kenzie Mahoney-Cottonham (Jr.), Megan Glotzhober (Soph.). Livonia Stevenson: Casey Maxwell (Sr.), Hayden Brose (Jr.). Northville: Lauren Mackeller (Sr.), Ashlee Gnau (Jr.). Novi: Reganne Bennett (Sr.), Elena Rinkel (Sr.). Plymouth: Hannah Simko (Soph.), Kenda Elmy (Jr.). Salem: Lexie Wisniewski (Sr.), Sarah Nelson (Jr.). Wayne Memorial: Kaylee Szyndlar (Fr.), Kamari Robinson (Fr.). Westland John Glenn: Madison Inman (Sr.), Alexis Warrington (Fr.).

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