



## Plymouth Christian Academy has answered its biggest question

SPORTS, 1B

# NORTHVILLE RECORD

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2023 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Family finds kindness after losing home and grandmother

Susan Bromley  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Samantha Reynolds has had a devastating week.

She lost her Lyon Township mobile home to a fire and then two days later, her grandmother with whom she had shared that home died.

But on Wednesday, homeless and grieving, Reynolds was counting her blessings. Hundreds of strangers donated money through a gofundme as well as clothes and items for her three children.

"The community has definitely come together for us," Reynolds said. "Even when the house was on fire, a neighbor came out and wrapped a blanket around my daughter and held me while I was crying. It's a tragic

See KINDNESS, Page 7A

## Residents share concern over land swap between Novi city, schools

David Veselenak  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

NOVI - Liz Harper is worried about what a land swap between the city of Novi and the Novi Community School District will mean for the wooded area behind her home.

A potential swap in the works for several years would see the city trade some land it currently owns to the Novi schools for some land it currently owns across the city. But some residents spoke out in caution of a plan they say could lead to the selling of undeveloped land for more housing.

"To me, it's just one more step in allowing it to be developed," said Harper,

See LAND SWAP, Page 3A



Tapper's is finishing a new building at Eight Mile and Haggerty in Novi.



A new car wash is under construction in the shopping center on the northwest corner of 10 Mile and Meadowbrook.



A crew works at the Sakura Novi site. A groundbreaking is planned for spring for the mixed-use development off Grand River Avenue.



A new hotel under construction at 13 Mile and the M-5 freeway. The website for the hotel indicates it's taking reservations for guests beginning in late April. PHOTOS BY DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Several big projects under development in 2023 in Novi

David Veselenak  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

NOVI - Several development projects that have taken years to begin are finally underway in Novi.

Plenty of projects across the city are moving forward, with some potentially opening in the coming weeks. Here are a handful of some of the more noticeable projects taking place in the city and their current status, according to Mike McCready, the city's economic

development director.

### Tapper's Jewelry at Eight Mile and Haggerty

Perhaps the most recognizable development in the city is the new Tapper's jewelry store being constructed on the northeast corner of Eight Mile and Haggerty roads.

Replacing the former Big Boy that closed several years ago, the store will sell high-end jewelry. Signage appears on the building, including the back of it

facing Interstate 275. Crews continue to work inside the building to prepare it for its opening.

McCready said the company's original goal was to open by Valentine's Day, but wasn't sure if that was still taking place. A message seeking more details on opening was sent to the company but not returned.

The project was originally reviewed by the city's planning commission in 2021.

See PROJECTS, Page 3A

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# Morrow pleads guilty to White Lake murders

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

Steven Dean Morrow pleaded guilty on Monday to two counts of murder in the deaths of two Highland Township men last May.

Morrow, 18, of Highland Township, pleaded guilty as charged in front of Oakland County Circuit Court Judge David Cohen. Besides the two murder counts, the plea also included two counts of armed robbery and four felony firearms charges.

Sentencing is set for 3:30 p.m., March 13 in front of Cohen. Morrow faces up to life in prison without parole in the deaths of Cameron Duckworth, 20, and Drake Mancuso, 16.

Duckworth and Mancuso were found shot to death the morning of May 21 near a pond in the Cedarbrook Estates Mobile Home Community in White Lake Township.

According to police, Morrow and Jes-

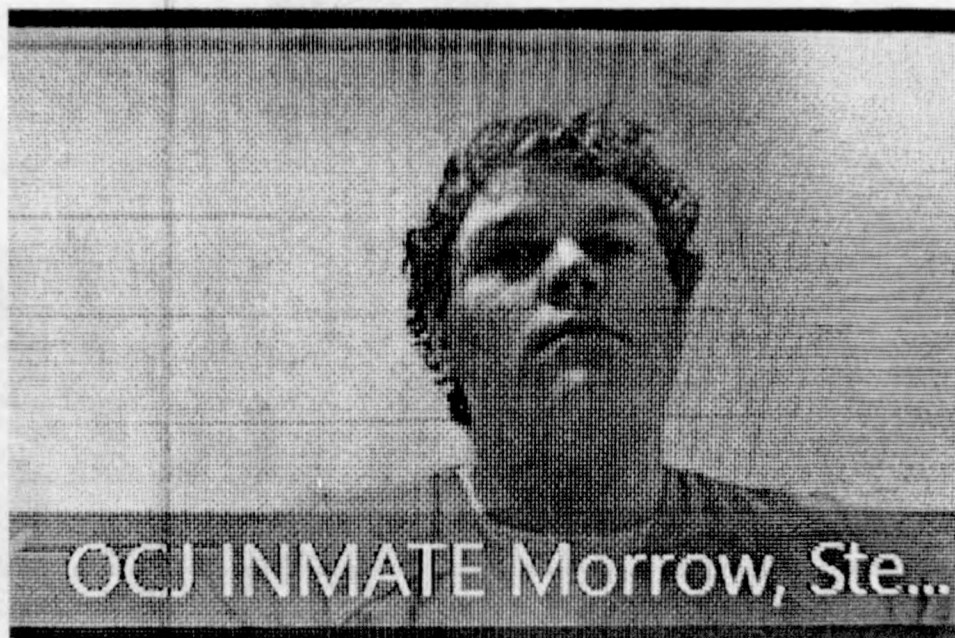
se James Wright, 18, of White Lake Township had devised a plan to rob Duckworth and Mancuso, acquaintances of theirs. Wright drove all of them to Cedarbrook Estates, a manufactured home community along LeGrand Boulevard, south of M-59, and then remained in the car while Morrow drew a pistol and fatally shot Duckworth and Mancuso.

Morrow returned to the vehicle that Wright was driving, and they fled from the area to dispose of evidence, police said.

Wright pleaded guilty in front of Cohen on Jan. 18 to being an accessory after the fact.

Last week, Cohen had ruled an alleged armed robbery committed by Morrow just days before the May 20 murders would be admissible at his trial.

Defense attorney Steven Lynch did not immediately return a call for comment, nor did the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office.



Steven Dean Morrow, as seen at a pretrial hearing held via Zoom on Feb. 1, 2023. Morrow pleaded guilty Feb. 6 to eight felony charges in the murders of Cameron Duckworth, 20, and Drake Mancuso, 16, last spring.

SUSAN BROMLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Detroit man killed after being struck by vehicle in Farmington Hills

**Shelby Tankersley**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

FARMINGTON HILLS - A Detroit man was killed by a vehicle while walk-

ing in Farmington Hills Monday night.

A driver struck the man just before 7 p.m. on Eight Mile Road near Inkster Road. The victim, 61, was taken to a nearby hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

Farmington Hills police say the driver, a 63-year-old Detroit resident, is co-operating with the department's investigation. Officers say alcohol does not appear to be a factor as it relates to the driver.

Farmington Hills police are encouraging people with information about the crash to call the department at 248-871-2610.

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com).

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## City task force looks to buy Westland mall property

**Shelby Tankersley**

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

WESTLAND - The Westland Shopping Center was something special when it opened.

Its first patrons in 1965 were met with a building designed by noted architect Hudson's, nice restaurants, and an SS Kresge store. The mall was so popular that Nankin Township residents elected to name their new city - Westland - after the mall when they incorporated in 1966.

Tom and Kim Zarembo said they've been coming to the mall since 1972. It's a place their relationship blossomed as teens.

"We have strong, vivid memories of the Westland mall," Tom Zarembo said. "We came here window shopping."

But the busy storefronts of the 1960s, '70s and '80s are long gone. According to its website, there's a combined 55 stores and restaurants in a fa-

cility meant to accommodate over 120 stores. On a weekday, many of the stores still in business aren't open in the afternoon.

"It's just deteriorating on all fronts," Mayor Mike Londeau said. "The signage is fading, the lighting is bad at night and the security - or the lack thereof - leaves people feeling unsafe."

Londeau recently announced a task force made up of city administrators that will explore purchasing the mall property. The group will work with industry experts and stakeholders to determine cost, development opportunities and more.

"We're interested in the property, not the mall itself," Londeau said. "We'd want to see a mixed use, public-private partnership there."

Namdar Realty Group, which owns the mall and is based in New York, declined an interview request. Westland Shopping Center management also asked Hometown Life to leave the property for speaking with customers earlier this month, citing a "no media" policy.

The mayor described the mall as an

"eyesore" and said it's something residents complain about. He thinks a downtown-like development would create opportunities for the community to come together and "bring Westland into the future." Londeau said he's inspired by the downtowns in nearby cities such as Plymouth and Northville.

"It's a draw. That's what brings people to the city," he said. "It has a downtown feel, a hometown feel. There's so much you can do."

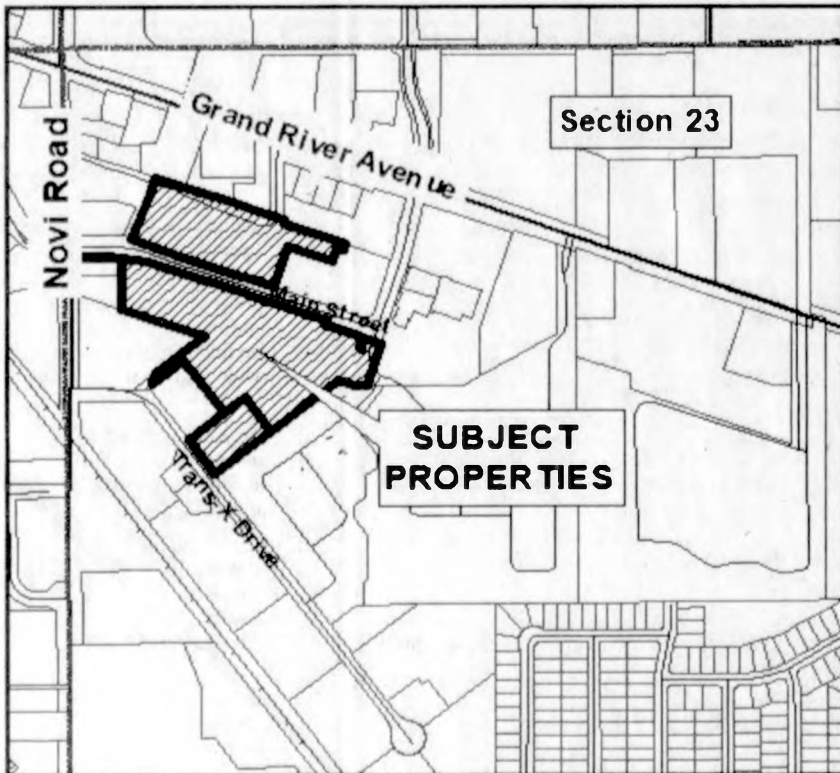
Londeau said his administration is also open to purchasing outlot properties at the mall, such as the closed Panera Bread and Ashley's Beer and Grill, along with some of the mostly unused parking lot. He thinks even partial redevelopment would help "bring that property back to life."

"It's a new approach to an old problem," he said. "We want to take a closer look and see what we can put together ... Maybe the mall is willing to talk to us; maybe it's something they want to look at."

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com).

### 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, February 22, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.** in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **TOWNES OF MAIN STREET, JSP 20-35, LOCATED NORTH AND SOUTH OF MAIN STREET, EAST OF NOVI ROAD (SECTION 23) FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR REVISED WETLAND PERMIT.** The applicant previously received preliminary site plan approval to develop 192 townhouse-style dwelling units on the 17.7 acre area. The subject properties are zoned TC-1, Town Center One. The applicant requests a variance from Chapter 12 of the Code to allow required wetland mitigation to be provided outside the city. A request to terminate ingress-egress easements on the north side of the property will also go to City Council. Plans are available for review at the Community Development Department in the Novi Civic Center.



**Subject Property Parcel ID's:** 50-22-23-176-035, 50-22-23-151-039, 50-22-23-151-013

All interested persons are invited to attend. 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, February 22, 2023.**

Published on **February 16, 2023**  
Novi Planning Commission  
Michael Lynch, Secretary

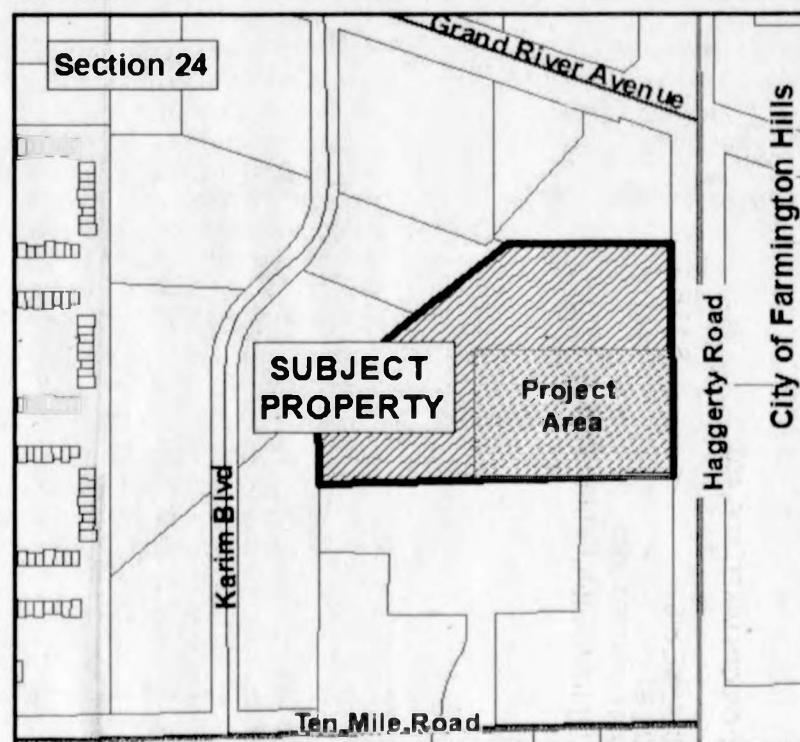
Publish: February 16, 2023

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### 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, March 8, 2023, at 7:00 P.M.** in the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider **JSP22-32 PORSCHE OF NOVI, FOR SPECIAL LAND USE, PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN, AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL.** The subject property totals approximately 8.15 acres and is located west of Haggerty Road and north of Ten Mile Road (Section 24). The property is zoned B-3 (General Business). The applicant is proposing to demolish a building at 24305 Haggerty Road in the southeastern portion of the site to redevelop as an approximately 19,170 square foot two-story car dealership along with associated parking, vehicle inventory, and site improvements. Two other buildings on the property, 24355 and 24315 Haggerty, would remain.

Plans are available for review by contacting the Community Development Department in the Novi Civic Center.



**Subject Parcel ID:** 50-22-24-476-022

All interested persons are invited to attend. 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, March 8, 2023.**

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Novi Planning Commission  
Michael Lynch, Secretary

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## Land swap

Continued from Page 1A

who lives in the Brookland Farms neighborhood in Novi Township. "I bought my home because of where it sits and because of the woods."

The proposed land swap gives each entity something it wants. The land involved in the swap would include:

- **Novi Middle School/Wildlife Woods**, with the district to gain full ownership of soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and property to the east of the Novi Middle School;

- **Bosco Field**, with the city to receive full ownership of Bosco Field with the intention to expand the Novi Parks System; and

- **Novi High School/Fuerst Park/Ella Mae Power Park**, with Fuerst Park to be squared off, and the school district to acquire the land south of the school's baseball fields, including their current softball/baseball fields and cross-country trails/wetlands.

Ben Mainka, Novi's school superintendent, said there currently are district entities sitting on city land and vice versa, and such a swap would help clear up ownership and maintenance issues.

"One of the challenges that we've had is that at our middle school, for example, we have tennis courts that are used and the dividing line between the city property and the district's property goes right through the center of our courts," he said. "That creates obvious challenges and makes it messy for ownership of such matters of who has access to use, who's maintaining, those types of things."

### No plans for district to sell land

The land swap was discussed at the Feb. 8 planning commission meeting, where commissioners held a public hearing on an amendment to the city master plan's future land use map. That hearing kicked off a lengthy process that will see the issue come back to the planning commission for another hearing later this year.

Mainka said the district plans on essentially utilizing the property as it currently stands, with no plans to sell land to potential developers. He cited the land near



A larger-than-usual audience at the Feb. 8 planning commission meeting in Novi. Many of the audience members were interested to hear about the proposed land swap between the city and Novi schools.

DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

the middle school where the district's cross country course is as an example.

"To be very forthcoming, our plan is really to use it in a similar matter to how it's been used, because right now, we intend to continue our use of our cross country course," he said.

Still, some residents who live near some of the land were concerned such changes could eventually lead to sales and development of wooded land, especially if it currently is zoned as residential property. John Kaley, who lives in Novi's Orchard Ridge Estates neighborhood, said the threat of potential development down the line could happen.

"They're not going to put condos there, which, we all know that. But they could sell the land in the future; it's zoned for residential," he said. "If they do sell the land in 10 years let's say, which they could, houses

could be built there."

The planning commission moved forward on the recommendation to open the master plan process.

Commissioners said they understood some concerns from the residents and promised plenty of opportunities to give feedback. Commissioner John Avdoulos said it's a process that's been going for a while and will continue.

"This is something the city is working with the educational department ...," he said. "This is going to be a continuous conversation."

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com) or 734-678-6728. Follow him on Twitter @davidveselenak.

Get the latest headlines for metro Detroit every morning in your mailbox by signing up for our daily briefings newsletter.

## Projects

Continued from Page 1A

### TRU Hotel at 13 Mile and M-5 freeway

Windows are installed at Novi's newest hotel currently under construction.

The four-story hotel at the southeast corner of 13 Mile Road and the M-5 freeway continues to rise up. It will be a TRU Hotel, a brand by Hilton. That project was originally approved in 2018 and will contain 98 guest rooms.

The website for the hotel states it is currently accepting reservations beginning after April 24. Other TRU hotels in the area operate in Troy, Sterling Heights and Chesterfield Township.

### Car wash at 10 Mile and Meadowbrook

A project that's been in the works for years, the parking lot of the Novi-Ten shopping center looks a lot different these days.

That's because a new car wash is currently under construction in the middle of it. The building is expected to be a Pure Car Wash, which also operates a location off Sheldon Road in Plymouth Township.

The new car wash is expected to have a drive-thru lane and 13 vacuum stations. It was first submitted back in 2018.

"It took a while for them to get going," McCready said. "It's under construction, it's moving along."

### Sakura Novi off Grand River Avenue

The long-talked about mixed-use Asian village development is expected to break ground later this spring.

The development will consist of retail and dining in the front of the complex near Grand River, and apartments along the back of the property. One of the first restaurants that will occupy the plaza was recently announced:

The Dancing Pine Korean Steakhouse, which will serve dishes such as steaks and sushi.

The development has undergone several changes since first being proposed in 2018, including the removal of One World Market from the site, which has opted to remain in its current home across the street and expand into the former Library Sports Pub and Grill.

### The Bond mixed-use development at Novi and Bond roads

Another project a long time in the works, McCready said he believes the mixed-use development off Novi Road south of Grand River will begin to take shape later this year.

The Bond development was first approved in 2018, with some minor changes made in 2020. Once built, it's expected to consist of several hundred apartment units and a single story retail building constructed on seven acres northwest of the Novi Cemetery.

McCready said work could begin as the weather warms up.

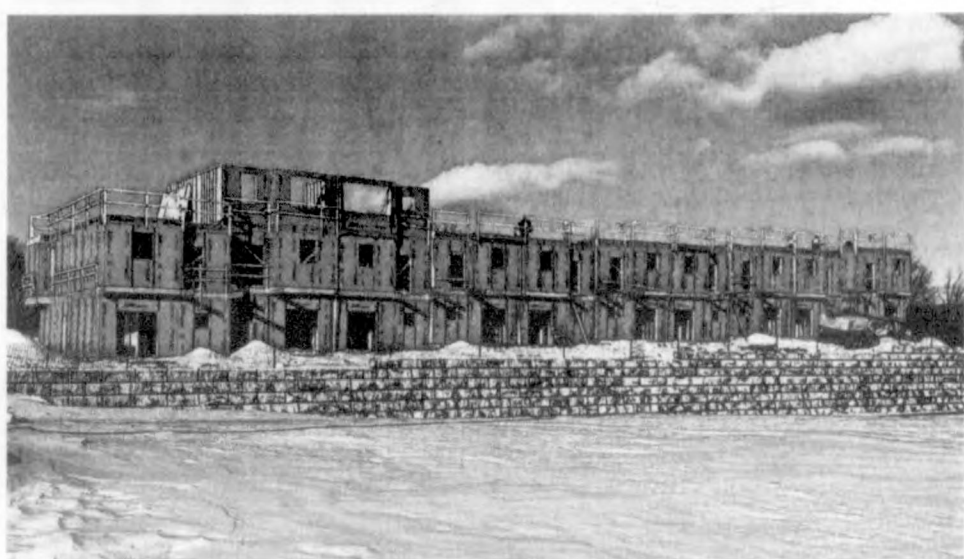
"We expect them to start in the spring sometime," he said. "It's going to be interesting to see how that area blossoms."

### New apartments off Haggerty Road

One of the more unique locations for residential development in the city has plenty of work taking place at the site this winter.

The previously vacant land off Haggerty between 12 Mile and 13 Mile roads has several hundred apartment units currently under construction. Dubbed Innova, the site is being developed by Farmington Hills-based Beztak. Units will be available across 10 buildings and will range in size from 809 to 2,123 square feet, according to a news release issued last year.

The project would be the first major residential development along that part of Haggerty in Novi. Other residential uses are located across the street in neighboring Farmington Hills. The site plan was reviewed and approved by the city's planning commission in the fall of 2020.



Apartment buildings are going up on a formerly vacant piece of property along Haggerty between 12 Mile and 13 Mile roads.

McCready said it's possible some units could be ready for rental when warmer weather is here, though signage on the property indicates fall for move-in.

"Talking to planning, they expect some of the units will be ready to move sometime in the summer," he said.

Contact reporter David Veselenak at [dveselenak@hometownlife.com](mailto:dveselenak@hometownlife.com) or 734-678-6728.



The land where The Bond mixed-use development is planned off Novi Road south of Grand River.

PHOTOS BY DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

### 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 **March 14th, 2023, at 7:00PM** in the Council Chambers of the Novi Civic Center, 45175 Ten Mile Road, Novi, MI to consider:

**PZ23-0001 (Catholic Central High School) 27225 Wixom Road, south of Twelve Mile, west of Wixom Road, Parcel 50-22-18-200-026 & 50-22-18-200-027.** The applicant is requesting variances from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance from: Section 3.1.1.E to allow the maximum height of the parking deck to be 42 feet (35 feet permitted, variance of 7 feet) at the stairwells and for the light poles; Section 5.3.12 to eliminate painted end islands within the parking structure; and Section 5.7.3.A to allow the height of the field light poles of 80 feet (25-feet permitted, variance of 55 feet). This property is zoned Residential Acreage (RA) and One-Family Residential (R-4).

**PZ23-0002 (Burlington - Allied Signs) 43480 West Oaks Drive, south of 12 Mile, west of Novi Road, Parcel 50-22-15-200-105.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Sign Ordinance Section 28-5(b)(1)a to be allowed a 250.027 sq ft illuminated wall sign (65 square feet maximum allowed, variance of 185.027 square feet). This property is zoned Regional Center (R-C).

**PZ23-0003 (Tim & Jennifer Kirk) 23070 Ennishore Drive, west of Meadowbrook, north of Nine Mile, Parcel 50-22-26-429-008.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.4 for a front yard setback of 24 feet (30 feet required, variance of 6 feet); for a proposed front garage addition. This property is zoned One-Family Residential (R-3).

**PZ23-0004 (Catholic Central High School) 27225 Wixom Road, south of Twelve Mile, west of Wixom Road, Parcel 50-22-18-200-026 & 50-22-18-200-027.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Sign Ordinance Section 28-5(a) for sign height of 10 feet (6 feet allowed, variance of 4 feet); Section 28-5(b)(2)a for a total signage of 41.15 feet (32 feet maximum allowed, variance of 9.15 feet) This property is zoned Residential Acreage (RA) and One-Family Residential (R-4).

**PZ23-0005 (Anne Ball & Mathew Norman) 317 Duana Avenue, west of Old Novi Road, south of South Lake Drive, Parcel 50-22-03-481-007.** The applicant is requesting a variance from the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance Section 3.1.5 for a side yard setback of 3.15 feet (10 feet required, variance of 6.85 feet); an aggregate total side yard of 8.23 feet (25 feet required, variance of 16.77 feet); for a proposed 2nd Story expansion. This property is zoned One-Family Residential (R-4).

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# New Crave Hot Dogs & Barbecue opens in Canton Twp.

Laura Colvin  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Sherrie Saksewski's initial experience at Crave Hot Dogs & Barbeque in Canton Township was all about the wings.

The new eatery, located at 5800 N. Sheldon Road, opened Feb. 4, offering fast-casual food, a self-pour beer wall and two axe throwing lanes.

"The wings were fresh and the sauce was so good," said Saksewski, who lives in Bellevue and came to Crave for lunch with friends on Thursday. "They were big; I ordered six, but I could only eat four."

"But then I ate the last two anyway," she added.

In addition to jumbo wings, the menu at Crave is focused on all-beef hot dogs, bratwurst and hot sausages - with many toppings to choose from - along with pulled pork and chicken, smoked brisket, sliders, sandwiches, salads and more. Six different barbecue sauces await diners at every table.

Staffers say the most popular menu items include the Memphis Dog, a jumbo all-beef hot dog topped with pulled pork, coleslaw and barbecue sauce, and the Mac 'n Cheese Brisket Bowl, a skillet filled with mac 'n cheese, topped with smoked brisket, sprinkled with cheddar and drizzled with barbecue sauce.

"We've had a lot of great feedback on the food," said Brad Fuchs, Canton Crave owner and COO. "It's something different that you won't find at a lot of places around here."

Fuchs and business partner Darrell Olds, both of Canton, decided to open Michigan's first Crave franchise after kicking around different business ideas during the early days of the pandemic. After learning about the opportunity online, Fuchs got up early one Saturday and drove 12 hours to Georgia to learn about the company.

"I tried the food and really liked it," he said. "I brought home \$500 worth so my family could try it, and they all said they loved it, too."

And that was that.

The Crave franchise was established in 2018 and is based in Long Island, New York.

The menu includes sides ranging



The new Crave Hot Dogs & Barbecue opened Saturday, Feb. 4 in Canton. PHOTOS BY LAURA COLVIN/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM



Brad Fuchs, COO and owner of Canton's new Crave Hot Dogs & Barbecue, demonstrates ax throwing.

from tater tots and sweet potato tater tots to corn bread, black bean & corn salad and mac 'n cheese. Pineapple upside down cake, toffee sticky cake and other options are available for customers who

still have room for dessert. Gluten-free menu options, including buns, are also available.

Crave offers a self-pour beer wall unique to the area. At the Canton location, customers can choose from 25 different beers, ciders, meads and IPAs - the majority from Michigan-based beer companies - as well as five different mixed drinks. Standard mixed-drink offerings will include a classic margarita, a rum punch and a variety of other options.

"How many times do you go out and end up waiting for a second beer to arrive while you're having a meal?" Fuchs said. "Here, you can just go to the wall and pour it yourself, no waiting. It's a beautiful concept."

"The glasses are ice cold, so you're always going to get a good cold beer every time," he added.

The concept is simple: Patrons who want to partake of the self-pour wall

provide identification and a debit or credit card, then receive a special purchase card to place in a slot for the chosen drink. The screen shows the price per ounce of that drink, and keeps tabs on the amount poured during a visit.

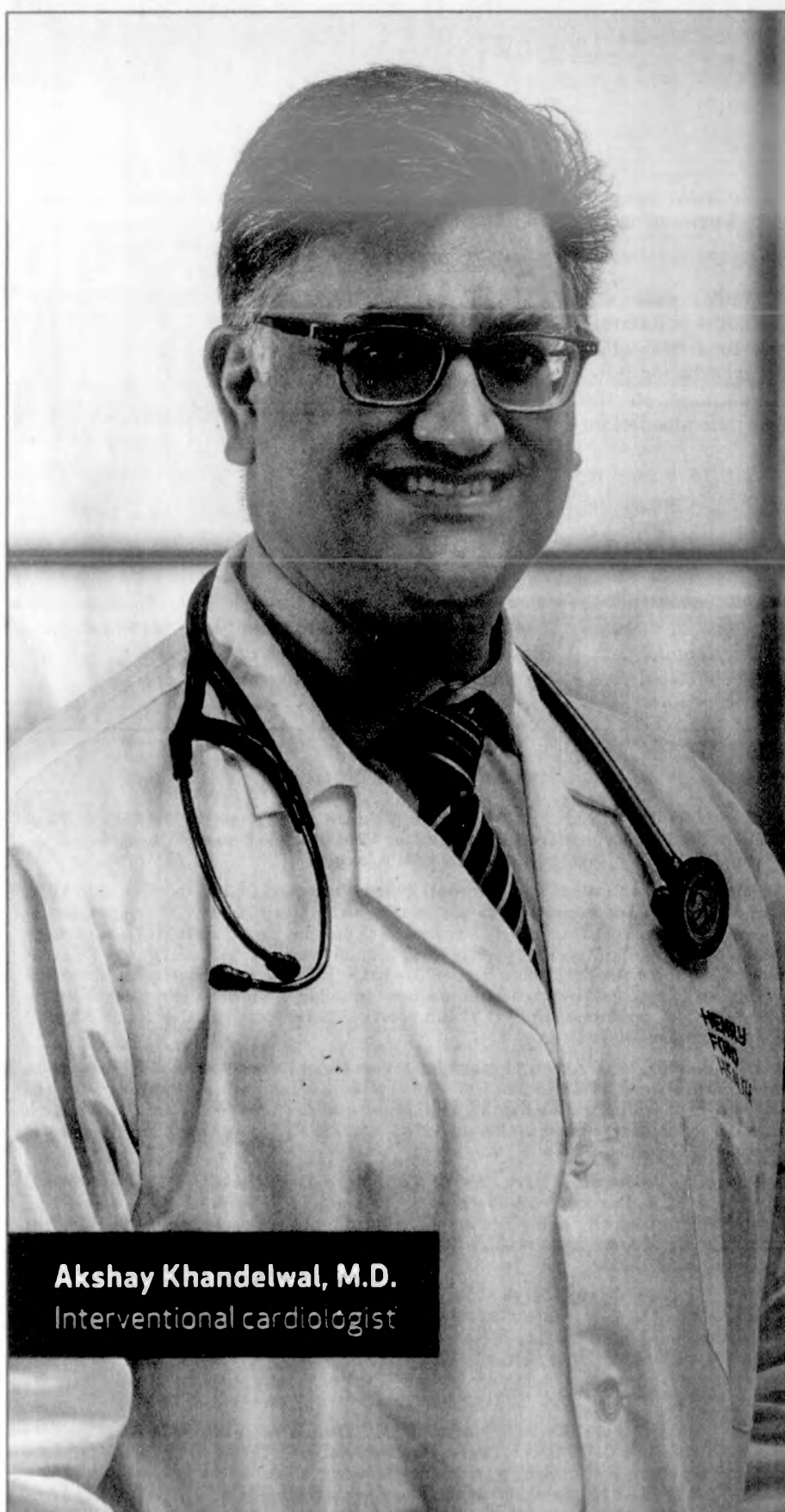
Once a customer pours 32 ounces, the card will be paused until the customer checks in with staff. After 64 ounces, the card is turned off for the duration of the visit to avoid overserving.

Crave also features 12 televisions and two axe throwing lanes.

Donna Avery, a first-time axe thrower from Canton who had lunch with friends at Crave on Thursday, was the first from her group to eagerly wield the axe.

"I loved it," she said afterward, basking in the glow of her cheering friends. "It feels so empowering when it sticks."

For more information, visit [iwantcrave.com](http://iwantcrave.com) or call the Canton location at 734-359-5102.



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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 15 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

Acid	Cuts	Life	Sprain
Airway	Doses	Meals	Staff
Arms	Dressing	Mend	Surgeon
Baby	Drink	Nauseous	Tape
Bite	Drug	Nurse	Tests
Body	Error	Pale	Tibia
Bone	Exercise	Pans	Tissue
Break	Form	Plan	Toes
Burns	Heartbeat	Radius	Tube
Care	Help	Ribs	Uma
Cast	Idle	Room	Vein
Cerebral	Iron	Sheets	Wait
Coma	Knee	Sick	Ward
Cost	Legs	Sleep	X-ray

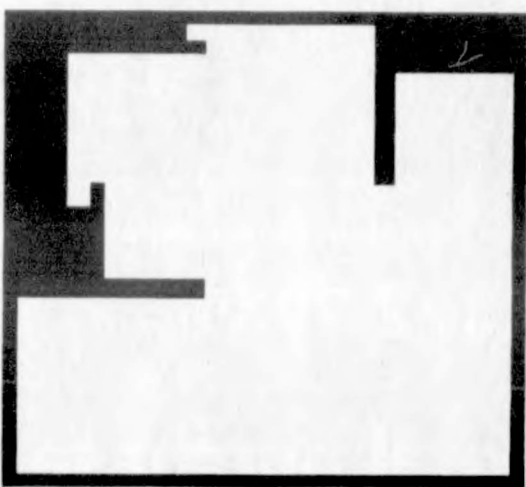
TODAY'S ANSWER

Well looked after

Hospital patient

NSHEETSTSNAPCDY  
ISULNASWUTIAWOA  
AGBDMOEEOHRLSSR  
RESICREXEETUBEX  
PLANRLOLSNILISO  
SSOARSPPFUDKKTLP  
EUDBMUHEARTBEAT  
CRWRCOBRNUKALED  
AGAEACACIDGCESMR  
SERARIEUSSITAPE  
TODKERMNDTSTOES  
UNBNBWOUNAIYVFS  
CFOIRAOREFRBEII  
TBDRAYRSMFOAILN  
ERYDLSLEEPNBNAG

PUZZLES & POSTERS



CAN YOU MAKE TWO STRAIGHT LINE CUTS WHICH WILL DIVIDE THE BLACK OUTLINED FIGURE INTO EIGHT SHAPES WHICH ARE IDENTICAL IN SHAPE BUT UNEQUAL IN SIZE.

CLUE: SECONDS THINK

SNIP  
DECISION

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: BRONZE

TODAY'S ANSWER

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

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

NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Bugs Bunny or Bart Simpson  
6 It got new tails in 2009  
10 One in the Swahili family  
14 Where "curry" comes from  
15 Short podcasts  
17 Name related to Henry  
18 "Patience"  
19 Her first film (1981) was director George Cukor's last  
21 Work forces  
22 Dearie  
23 Portrait on gold medals  
26 It runs in many purses  
27 Starter home?  
28 Supported  
31 One known for its cast of characters  
33 Think too much of  
35 Protégé's request  
37 Didn't duck  
38 Seal meals  
39 They come with Truth in Savings booklets  
40 More than toast  
41 Income for S&Ls  
42 Round part  
43 "Wonderful!"  
46 Crystalline structure  
49 Unsurprising conclusions of whodunits  
51 Dancing school lesson  
55 Aristotle wrote of his animals  
56 ABC's *Never Too Young* (1965) was an early one

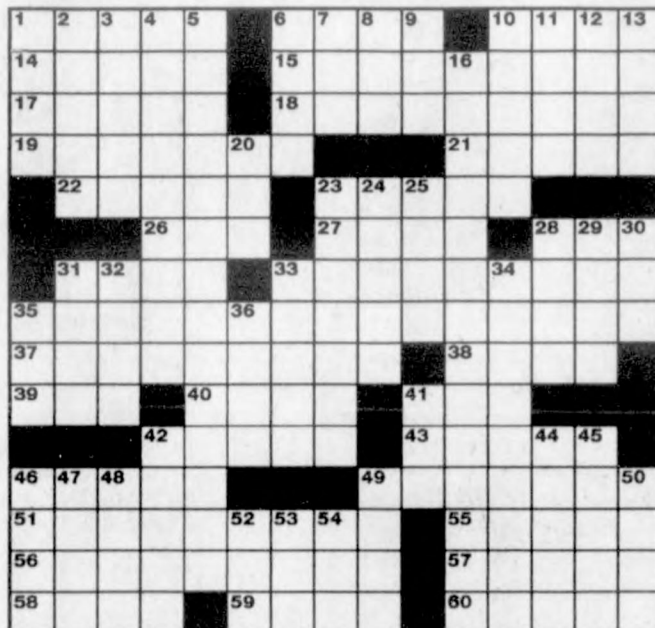
- 57 Rub candidate  
58 Follows a pattern, say  
59 Where to admire butter sculptures  
60 Diffuse

DOWN

- 1 Part of the Fruit of the Loom logo  
2 One announcing an interjection  
3 Intimate  
4 About two dozen nanometers  
5 Seek the most approval  
6 Encouraging word  
7 One from Rheinland (in more ways than one)  
8 Certain course, for short

- 9 He achieved EGOT the same night as partner Andrew (2018)  
10 Railway pricing adjective  
11 Seattle school, familiarly  
12 Mom of Artemis  
13 privacy  
16 Getaways that go without saying  
20 Zeedonk parent  
23 State of mind of song  
24 Ancient venue for poetry competitions  
25 Regular guy  
28 Auroral (polar phenomenon)  
29 Piano pieces  
30 Some board members: Abbr.  
31 Farm fare  
32 Farm fare  
33 Not-so-long limo  
34 Hasn't settled

- 35 DreamWorks first-run licensee  
36 Beach bash serving  
41 Eastwood's beer (briefly) in *Gran Torino*  
42 Part of many racetrack names  
44 Accessory for golfers and dealers  
45 Make up  
46 It means "boosters"  
47 "Of serious faith, and inward"  
48 Merger partner of Mayer  
49 Big boss  
50 Ejecta  
52 "Take me out!"  
53 Freeway Series AL team  
54 Restraining order

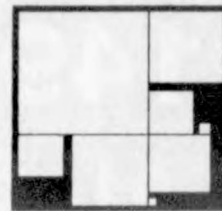


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TODAY'S ANSWER



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## Kindness

Continued from Page 1A

event and I've been really distraught, but the beauty behind what has been done... Strangers we have never met trying to help in any way they can is so heartwarming. It's mending my broken heart. It sounds sappy, but it really is the truth."

Reynolds, a certified nursing assistant at Wellbridge of Novi, was at work when the fire started around 8:30 p.m., Feb. 3 at the home she shared with her grandmother, her three daughters, her boyfriend, and her uncle in the Kensington Place Mobile Home Park. Reynolds' boyfriend, Josiah Simmons, was home at the time of the fire with their 7-month-old baby Amiyah and daughter Christine, 11.

### A fire ignites panic and a father's instincts

Simmons recalls he was playing a video game with headphones on to keep down the noise. Christine was asleep on the couch; Eva Reynolds, Samantha's 80-year-old grandma who was under hospice care for congestive heart failure and kidney failure, was in her bedroom.

Simmons said he had the headphones askew with one off the ear so he could hear if Eva Reynolds needed him, but was not expecting the loud boom that came from her room. He jumped up and ran down the hallway, where he saw the door to Eva's room lit up with flames.

"I hear Grandma screaming and I got back there, and at that point, the fire was on her walls, her bed, the floor, and she was on fire," Simmons said. "I got in there and I was just stuck — I couldn't move. I was in shock. I tried putting out the fire. I slapped the fire off her and hit everything and part of me broke down."

In a panic, he picked up Eva Reynolds and yelled for Christine to grab the baby. They all escaped the house safely.

### Firefighters rescue Voldemort and Charlie

Moments later, Oakland County Sheriff's deputies arrived, followed closely by Lyon Township firefighters.

Simmons asked Assistant Fire Chief Reggie Madeline to save the family's dog, a pit bull named Voldemort, who



**Eva Reynolds, center, with her granddaughters, baby Amiyah, 5-year-old Zaynah, and 11-year-old Christine. Eva died less than 2 days after the family lost their trailer in a fire. PHOTOS COURTESY SAMANTHA REYNOLDS**



**Lyon Township firefighters responded to a blaze on Charlevoix Street in the Kensington Place Mobile Home Park in New Hudson on Feb. 3. The trailer is severely damaged.**

was in the back of the home in a kennel. He was happy to oblige and was rewarded with lots of kisses from the dog.

The family's cat, Charlie, who had burrowed into a couch, was also saved. The mobile home, which was uninsured, is likely a total loss.

Madeline said the OCSO fire investigations unit has determined the fire likely stemmed from cigarette smoking near an oxygen tank.

"The fire began in the bedroom where the grandmother was on home oxygen and was a smoker," Madeline said.

"They don't mix well."

Eva Reynolds was taken to the hospital, where she died two days later. Madeline said it was determined she died as a result of her existing medical conditions.

### Grandma was 'everything'

Her death came as a shock to Samantha, who said her grandmother had been in great spirits following the fire. Eva Reynolds took an unexpected turn Sunday. Samantha received a phone call at 2 a.m. that her grandmother had died.

Samantha said Eva Reynolds was an amazing woman who was her "everything," and with whom she had lived off and on since she was a "terrible teenager."

"If it wasn't for my grandparents, I don't know what I would have done," Samantha, a 2009 South Lyon High School graduate, said.

Samantha's grandfather, to whom Eva was married for 60 years, died two years ago.

### The kindness and caring of community

Without her grandma, Samantha has found comfort in a community that's ensuring she and her family have a place to live.

The American Red Cross paid for the family to stay in a Red Roof Inn in Farmington Hills for a few nights. When those funds ran out, donations to the gofundme started rolling in.

Samantha will use some of the nearly \$20,000 raise to pay the cremation costs for her grandma. She also plans to honor Eva's wish to have her ashes spread in Kentucky, where she was born and raised.

Samantha said her children, which also includes daughter Zaynah, 5, who was not home at the time of the fire, have been on an emotional roller coaster and she is trying to pass on to them a lesson she learned from her grandmother.

"If you get in a situation that is distressing and concerning, you do what you have to do to get out of this situation," she said. "We are staying positive and we're not going to stay down... All I can really say is I'm so grateful and thankful for everyone that has helped us."



**The Walmart Supercenter at 39500 Ford Road in Canton.**  
DAVID VESELENAK/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Local Walmart stores evacuated after bomb threats

Susan Bromley

Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Walmart stores in Canton, White Lake and Rochester Hills were evacuated Monday after a man threatened to blow up the locations with bombs.

According to the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, the White Lake Walmart store at 9190 Highland Road and the Rochester Hills Walmart at 2500 S. Adams Road received phone calls at about 11 a.m. with a man "threatening to blow up the store unless a cash ransom was paid."

The stores were evacuated and deputies responded to each location with explosive detection K-9s. No explosives were found in the Oakland County stores and they were expected to reopen in the afternoon. A similar threat was also phoned in to the Walmart in Canton.

Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard believes the threats may be part of a larger effort to disrupt the retailer.

"We've seen similar things happen in different parts of the country," Bouchard said. "In the other threats, they were not credible. But out of an abundance of caution, explosive-detection dogs were sent to check the stores. We will be working with other authorities locally and nationally to investigate."

Canton police were not immediately available for comment.

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at sbromley@hometownlife.com.



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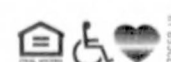
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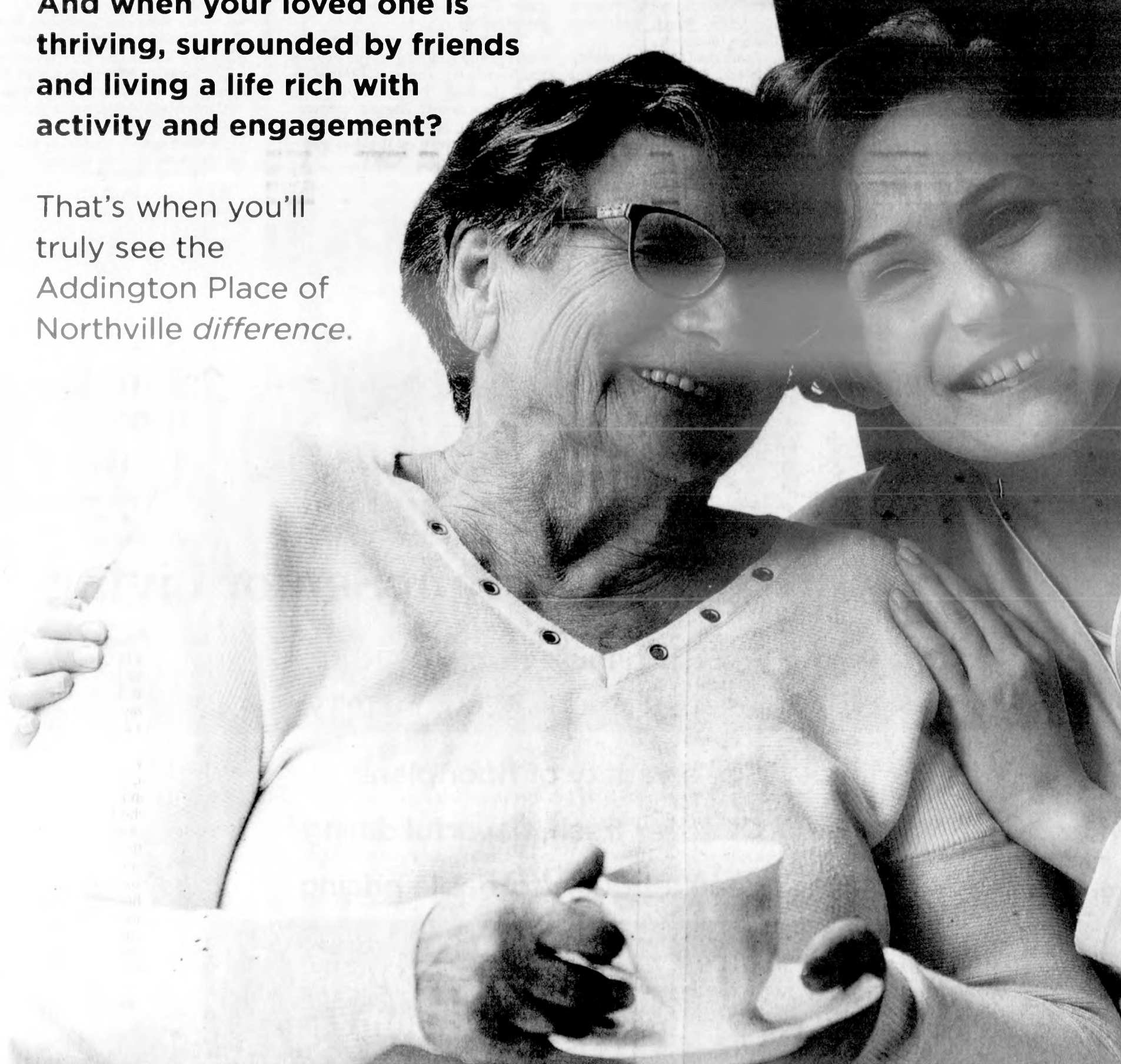
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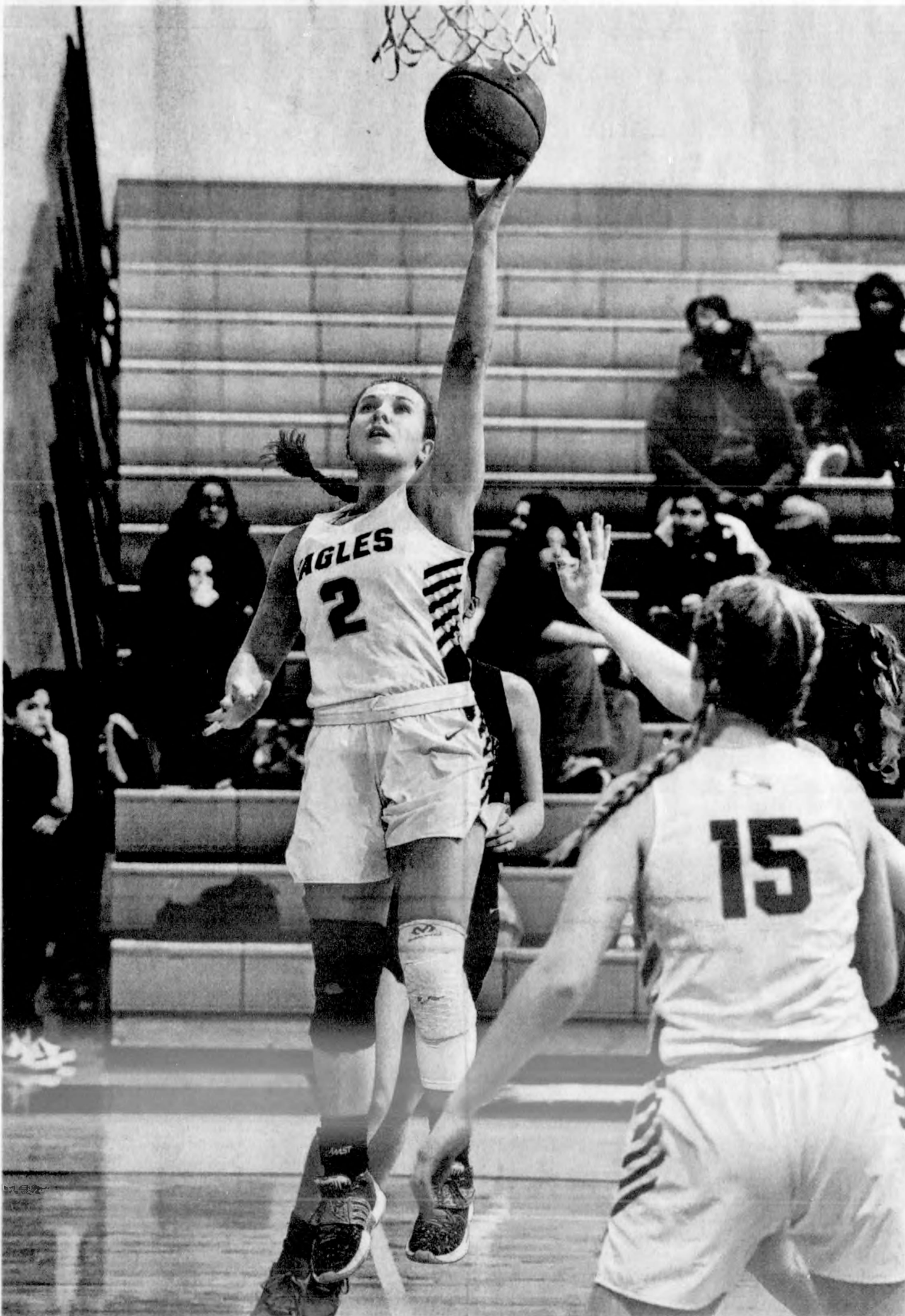


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# SPORTS

## GIRLS BASKETBALL



Plymouth Christian Academy's Morganne Houk attempts a layup during a girls basketball game Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023. TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## PCA has answered its biggest question

**Brandon Folsom**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

There's that iconic scene from "The Office," which has since become a popular meme online, where Pam Beesly is asked to spot the difference between two pictures and she responds with the classic line, "They're the same picture!" Right now, if Pam was watching highlights of former Plymouth Christian

Academy star Anna Fernandez playing point guard and current senior Morganne Houk playing the same position, she'd be shouting, "They're the same!" The Eagles have come a long way since last year's loss to Fowler in the Division 4 state championship. Not only did they say farewell to Fernandez, a four-year starter who graduated and joined Wheaton College's women's basketball program, but they had to figure out who was going to re-

place her at point guard. Houk, who just recently reached the 1,000-point mark for her career, was an obvious choice. She's always been a steady ballhandler and one of the better shooters in metro Detroit. The problem? The small forward/shooting guard had no experience actually bringing the ball up the floor and getting the Eagles' offense rolling.

See QUESTION, Page 7B

## 23 wrestlers around Hometown Life won district titles

**Brandon Folsom**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Over 100 individual wrestlers around Hometown Life have moved on to the regional tournament. That includes the 23 grapplers listed below who became individual district championships on Saturday:

### Division 1 144 pounds

**Clayton Jones, Detroit Catholic Central:** The senior pinned Salem's Ryan Mahy in 4:34.

### 150 pounds

**Dylan Gilcher, Detroit Catholic Central:** The senior beat Dexter's Matthew Joyce by technical fall, 17-2.

### 157 pounds

**Darius Marines, Detroit Catholic Central:** The junior pinned Ann Arbor Pioneer's Everett Peck in 1:53.

### 165 pounds

**Cameron Adams, Detroit Catholic Central:** The senior beat teammate Tatum Bunn by decision, 6-1.

### 175 pounds

**Steven Shellenberger, Detroit Catholic Central:** The senior pinned South Lyon's RJ Green in 2:33.

See WRESTLERS, Page 2B

## Where Canton's new football coach is from will surprise you

**Brandon Folsom**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Don't even bother asking Casey Bess.

Not even the new Canton football coach knows the answer yet.

"That's the million dollar question everyone has been asking me," said Bess, who was hired Feb. 3 to replace Andy LaFata as the Chiefs' next head coach.

Obviously, if you're familiar with the program, you know exactly what that question is: What kind of offense will Bess, who has spent the past 12 years as an assistant/offense coordinator at Battle Creek Central, run? Smashmouth football is more than just a tradition at the Park.

"Canton has been two tight ends and a full-house T forever, and they've always had success with it," Bess told Hometown Life on Tuesday afternoon. "I'm a spread guy, myself, but I don't

See COACH, Page 3B



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## Davis beats teammate Hakim in wrestling district final

**Brandon Folsom**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Brother Rice wrestling team had six grapplers qualify for the finals of their respective weight classes during Saturday's Division 2 individual district tournament at Warren Fitzgerald.

And the Warriors were guaranteed to walk away with at least one champion.

No, none of their wrestlers won via void in the finals.

The guarantee came from teammates Richie Davis and Joe Hakim getting to face each other in the 106-pound championship match.

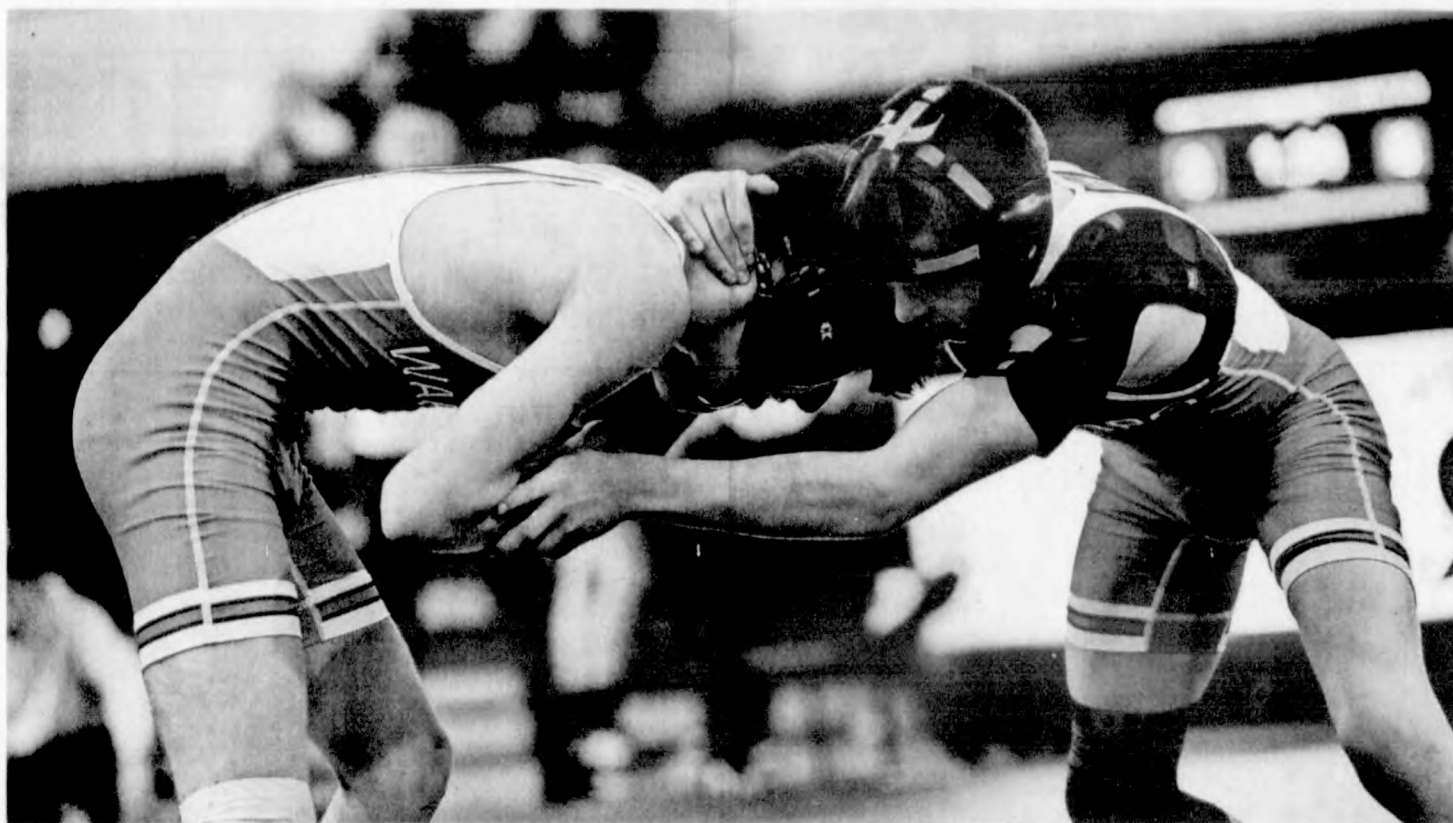
Thanks to a pair of takedowns and two near falls, Davis topped Hakim by major decision, 10-0, to take first place.

"It's like wrestling a brother," said Davis, a freshman. "We practice every day together. It just felt exciting that we were wrestling. We've been partners (in practice) all season."

Teammates wrestling each other in championship matches happen all the time (usually it happens a lot during random Saturday tournaments where teams can enter a handful of wrestlers into the same weight class). In fact, in the 138-pound third-place match, Brother Rice's Luke Nelson and Luke Elia went toe to toe.

But Davis and Hakim battling for a district title made it a special day for the Warriors.

When the tournament director lined up each wrestler for pre-match introductions, Davis whispered over to Hakim that when their names were announced they should both throw up their dukes at each other like they were



Brother Rice teammates Joe Hakim and Richie Davis compete in the 106-pound championship of the Division 2 individual wrestling district tournament Feb. 11 at Warren Fitzgerald. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

at a boxing press conference.

And so they did.

The only downside? They competed in the quietest match of the day in Fitzgerald's gymnasium. Brother Rice's coaches stood by quietly and just let the match play out while most fans kept to themselves.

But were there any secrets between the two of them?

"Not really," said Hakim, a sopho-

more. "It was kind of just like another practice. Our coach just told us to compete hard and act like it's not even your teammate you're facing."

At the end of the day, Brother Rice finished with three individual championships. Davis beat Hakim, but senior Brennan Parent edged Warren Woods-Tower junior Vincent Provo by two points in the 157-pound championship while freshman Deacon MacNeill went to the

final whistle with Orchard Lake St. Mary's senior Luca Milani to take home the 132-pound title.

Others placing included Sebastian Abro (120 pounds) and Ricardo Saenz (126) taking second place, Caleb Steele (165) and Nelson (138) placing third and Elia (138) finishing fourth.

*Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Twitter: @folsombrandonj.*

## Westland John Glenn wrestling wins 8th straight district title

**Brandon Folsom**  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Following Wednesday's 55-19 victory over Livonia Franklin in the Division 1 team wrestling district final, Westland John Glenn coach Bill Polk accepted the championship trophy from Patriots athletic director Dusty Hall, quickly presented it to his grapplers and reaffirmed a message to them he's been saying all winter.

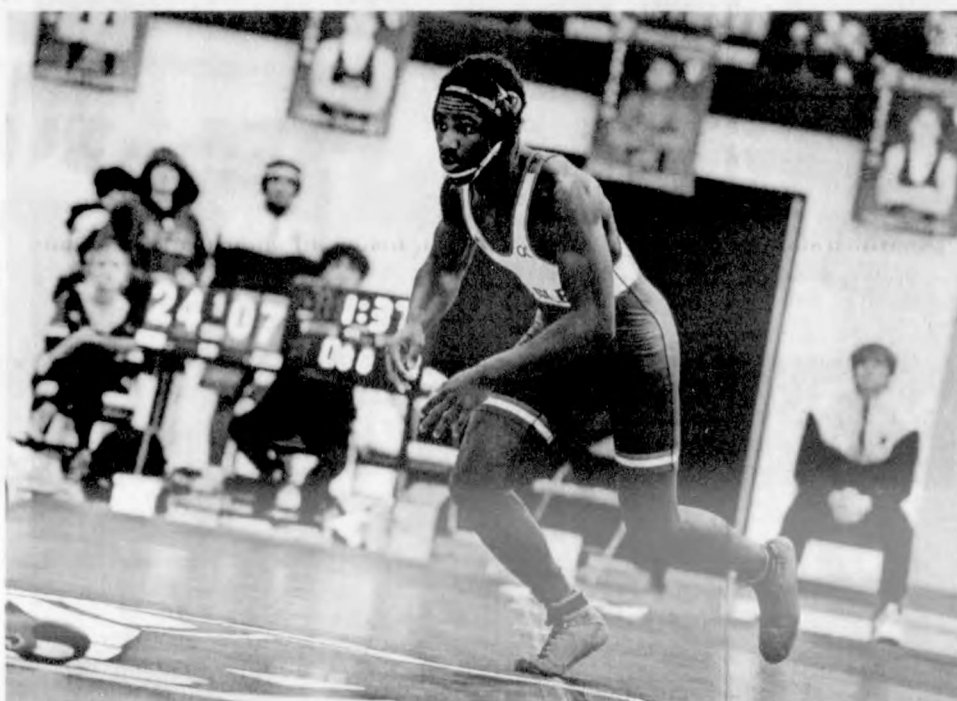
"We got the little one," said Polk, who recently celebrated his 500th career win as the Rockets' coach. "Now let's go and get the big one."

That bigger one would be the regional title.

A year ago, the Rockets narrowly lost to Temperance Bedford during the regional final. A point here and there, and it would've been John Glenn heading to Kalamazoo for the state championship. Instead, it was Bedford.

John Glenn and Bedford rematch in the regional opener next week. The winner faces either Belleville or Dearborn Fordson, two familiar Kensington Lakes Activities Association opponents, with a trip to Wings Event Center on the line.

"It's the next one we want," Polk added. "This (winning districts) was just in the way from us getting to that. That's what we've been talking about since last season ended. We lost a pretty close one against the team we're going to compete



Westland John Glenn's Ricky Smith grapples during the Division 1 wrestling district championship Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

against in the first round. The kids have been talking about it and training for it since we lost last year."

John Glenn, which beat school district rival Wayne Memorial, 76-6, in the district semifinal, wasn't guaranteed to advance to the regional round.

Several individual matches against Franklin lasted all six minutes with a

few others being decided by a small point margin. It took everything they had to win their eighth-straight district championship.

One of those matches was Ricky Smith's 6-1 win over Franklin's Domanic Lemon in the 190-pound weight class. In the final period, it was still tied 1-1 with 30 seconds remaining.

Smith received some inspiration from John Glenn's bench and reacted by slapping his hands on his thighs. With about 12 seconds left, Smith got Lemon onto the mat for the go-ahead points.

"I was just trying to stay in there for the team," the junior said. "I knew I had a big match. I was just trying to stay off my back, and I ended up getting a throw-in that I was hoping would get my team to the next level."

Polk said Smith's victory as well as the four other matches that were decided in the final minute (three of which were pins that came in the waning moments) was a tribute to John Glenn's challenging regular season schedule.

"This is what it's all about, getting to the postseason and performing when the chips are on the table and you need to win to advance," the 23rd-year coach said. "They did a nice job. We wrestle a pretty tough schedule all year for that, so I don't think my kids panic in close matches. We've been doing it all year long, winning and losing them. They can handle the pressure."

If the Rockets want to be one of the eight teams to advance to the state championship tournament, they must handle the pressure during next week's regional. And that starts with avenging last year's loss to Bedford.

*Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.*

## Wrestlers

Continued from Page 1B

### 190 pounds

**Ike Stuft, Milford:** The sophomore pinned Birmingham Seaholm's Luca DeSanto in 3:55.

**Benny Leece, South Lyon:** The senior pinned Livonia Stevenson's ArJon Thomas in 3:36.

### 215 pounds

**Conner Bercume, Detroit Catholic Central:** The sophomore pinned Novi's Vincent Nicolaou in 3:37.

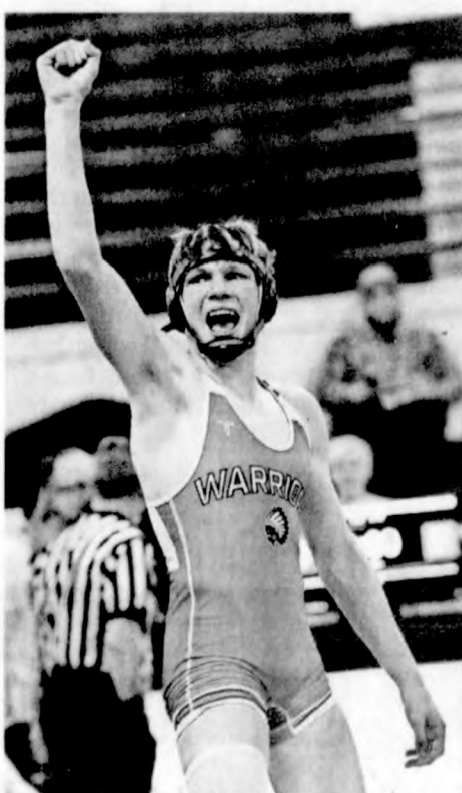
### 285 pounds

**Owen Hawley, Livonia Franklin:** The senior beat Monroe's Adrian Rincon by major decision, 9-1.

**Richardo Wourman, Livonia Stevenson:** The senior beat Ann Arbor Skyline's Jarel Reid by decision, 8-5.

### 106 pounds

**Wyatt Lees, Detroit Catholic Central:** The freshman beat Saline's Brice LaFleur by decision, 3-1.



Brother Rice's Deacon MacNeill celebrates winning the 132-pound championship of the Division 2 individual wrestling district tournament Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023, at Warren Fitzgerald. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

### 113 pounds

**Simon Dominguez, Detroit Catholic Central:** The junior beat Northville's Josh Drake via injury default.

**Tyler Lenhardt, Livonia Franklin:** The junior beat Westland John Glenn's Robert Dawson by decision, 8-6.

### 120 pounds

**Michael Cannon, Detroit Catholic Central:** The junior beat Livonia Stevenson's Sam Ward by decision, 5-2.

### 126 pounds

**Gino DiPonio, Livonia Franklin:** The junior beat Temperance Bedford's Nathan Gerber by major decision, 15-6.

**Gavin Holcombe, Salem:** The freshman beat Novi's Anthony Madafferi by decision, 1-0.

### 132 pounds

**Drew Heethuis, Detroit Catholic Central:** The senior beat Northville's Zephania Catalina by technical fall, 17-0.

### 138 pounds

**Mason Stewart, Detroit Catholic Central:** The junior beat South Lyon's

Danny Russel by decision, 8-2.

**Tyler Garrett, Livonia Franklin:** The junior beat Westland John Glenn's Matthew Irwin by sudden victory, 3-1.

### Division 2 157 pounds

**Brennan Parent, Brother Rice:** The senior beat Warren Woods-Tower's Vincent Provo by decision, 5-3.

### 106 pounds

**Richie Davis, Brother Rice:** The freshman beat teammate Joe Hakim by major decision, 10-0.

### 132 pounds

**Deacon MacNeill, Brother Rice:** The freshman beat Orchard Lake St. Mary's Luca Milani by decision, 11-7.

### Division 3 175 pounds

**Noah Etnyre, Lutheran Westland:** The senior pinned Pontiac Notre Dame Prep's Bradon Prater in 12 seconds.

*Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.*



## Coach

Continued from Page 1B

know what we're going to do. Once I hire my staff and we sit down and start talking about it and figuring out what we're going to do, then we'll know. There's a million ways to skin a cat, and there's not just one offense or defense. Once I get my staff hired, we'll figure it out."

When all that happens (figuring out an offense, hiring a staff) is up in the air.

Bess, 36, is still teaching at Battle Creek Public Schools. In fact, he was en route to Canton to meet his players, talk with assistant coaches and shake hands with parents while he answered questions for this story.

He doesn't have a home or teaching position in the area secured just yet. But that'll come with time. He wasn't promised a teaching position with Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, but openings happen after every school year. And if he can't land a gig at the Park, he said he has no problem teaching at a nearby school (which is something new Plymouth boys basketball coach Andrew Meeuwsen has been doing all winter).

He plans to make frequent drives over the next few weeks to Canton to begin putting his stamp on the program.

"We're going to figure it out," Bess added. "I'm on my way there now. It's about an hour and 20 minutes from here. An hour and 15 minutes if I drive fast, and it's not a bad drive. I-94 to M-14 is all highway. But that's the plan. I needed to get over there and start meeting with people and the kids. They've got a strength program already in place, so that's going on now, and there's some other things already in place that's helping me out."

Bess has actually never been a head football coach, but he does have six years of experience turning around Battle Creek Central's baseball program.

He took over a Bearcats team that hadn't won a game in 3 years and had just 28 players for both the JV and varsity. By the time he stepped down following the 2019 season, there were 50 players in the program and they had one season where they had won 12 league games in a Southwestern Michigan Athletic Conference that featured recent state champion teams in Portage North and Stevensville Lakeshore.



Battle Creek Central coach Casey Bess works with players in 2022. Bess has been named Canton's new football coach.  
BECCA MAHON/BATTLE CREEK ENQUIRER

But how he turned around the baseball program is the important thing here because that's what he plans on doing as Canton's football coach.

"I truly believe high school athletics is all about the kids and creating an experience for the kids," Bess said. "That's what I do best, is making relationships, pouring myself into the kids and putting out quality young people into our community. The wins and losses will take care of themselves. I'm a firm believer in that, especially at the high school level. I just pour into the kids and help mold quality young people. The football games will take care of themselves."

Saying that is one thing. But Bess has actually impacted athletes around Battle Creek.

Through his nonprofit organization, MODO, which stands for "Motivate Others Despite Obstacles," Bess and his fel-

low assistants at Battle Creek Central have given players an opportunity to enjoy larger-than-life experiences.

It started with taking players to a fancy restaurant in Battle Creek. The only caveat? Each player had to learn how to tie a tie and wear it during each Tuesday night dinner.

Then it turned into taking athletes on spring break trips to visit different colleges.

Eventually, Bess' organization raised enough money to take athletes to the play, "Hamilton."

"It's about giving experiences to kids who normally wouldn't get it," Bess said.

Fortunately for Bess, the Chiefs' don't open the season against Temperance Bedford until Aug. 25.

He has plenty of time to put together a staff, install an offense and begin investing in his players.

It's tough transitioning from a school such as Battle Creek Central, where Bess was the star quarterback before graduating in 2004, because it's so far from metro Detroit.

But he's thankful to finally get an opportunity to lead his own program.

"It's a great, historical and very successful program," he said. "To me, it's the best job that was open in the state of Michigan. I just said, 'What the heck? Let's see what happens.' It's an excellent school district, Plymouth-Canton, and that's just as intriguing as the football tradition here. Obviously, last year, it was a down year, going 3-6, but if I'm not mistaken it had been since 2007 the last time they hadn't been in the playoffs. It's just a great, rich program full of tradition. What else can you ask for?"

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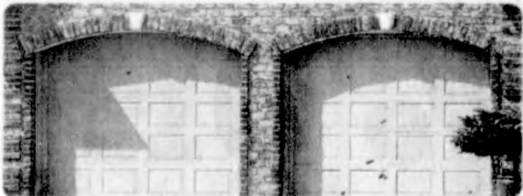
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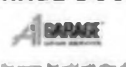




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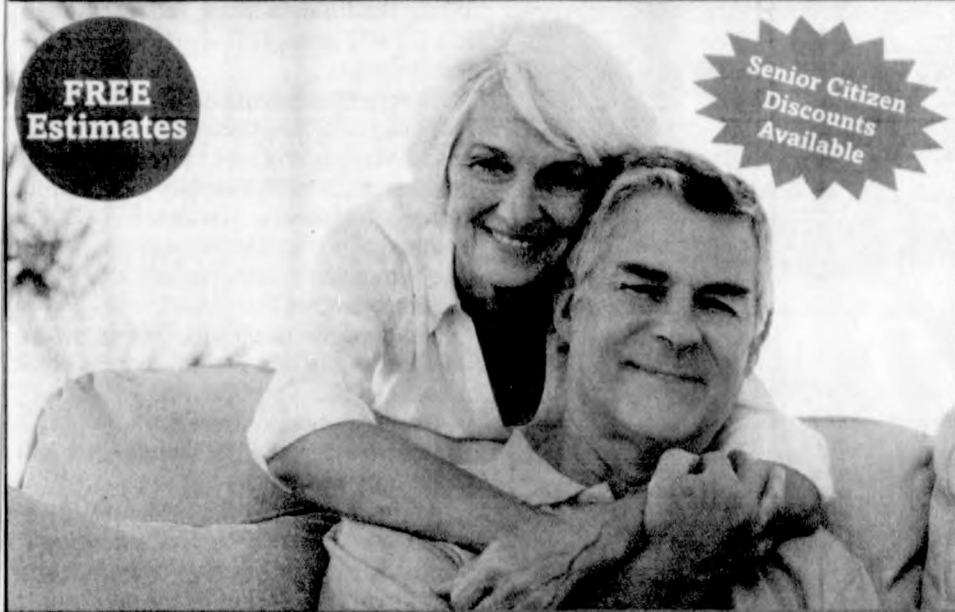
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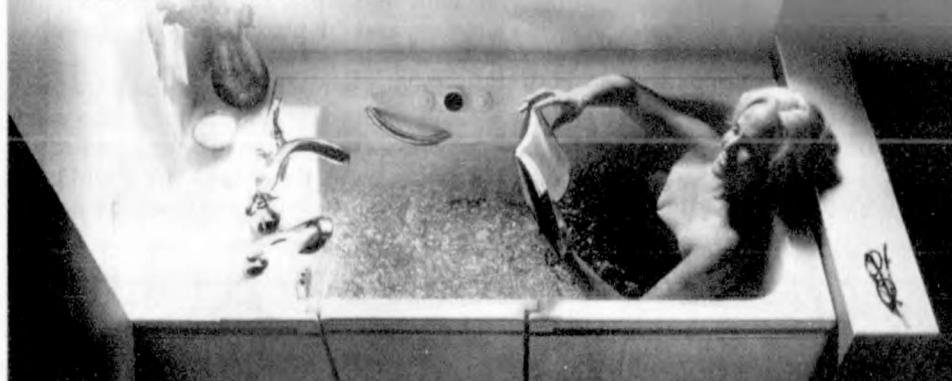
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# Undefeated North Farmington 3 wins from perfect 22-0 season

**Brandon Folsom**  
HometownLife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The North Farmington girls basketball team is enduring a two-game lull. If you can even call it that.

The Raiders, who are somehow unranked, are 19-0, two wins from winning the Oakland Activities Association-White outright and three wins from completing a perfect regular season.

But their last two wins have had coach Jeff Simpson on edge.

On Feb. 7, it took two overtimes to get past Royal Oak, 42-39, which is saying something because North Farmington downed the Ravens by 24 in early January.

And then, on Friday, it took everything the Raiders had to sneak past 5-12 Birmingham Seaholm, 32-17.

And don't let that 15-point victory fool you. They needed a timeout with 5:56 left and a stern talking to from Simpson to finally run away from the Maples.

An undefeated season is in progress. A likely division title is on deck. And one of the most anticipated playoff matchups between North Farmington and fifth-ranked Farmington Hills Mercy is a few weeks away.

But are you having fun, Jeff?

"Yeah, it's a little stressful when we don't shoot the ball well," Simpson said. "We're in a little bit of a slump right now, but I guess better now than at the end. We've just got to shoot our way out of it, I think."

"We're in a little lull. It's a long season. It's a grind. ... I think they're feeling it a little. I'm trying to keep them staying loose, but I think they're feeling a little bit of pressure (about going undefeated). I really think that they are. But I'm trying to keep them loose and keep them playing the game they love. You've just got to keep fighting through it."

The reality is no one expected the Raiders to be in this position.

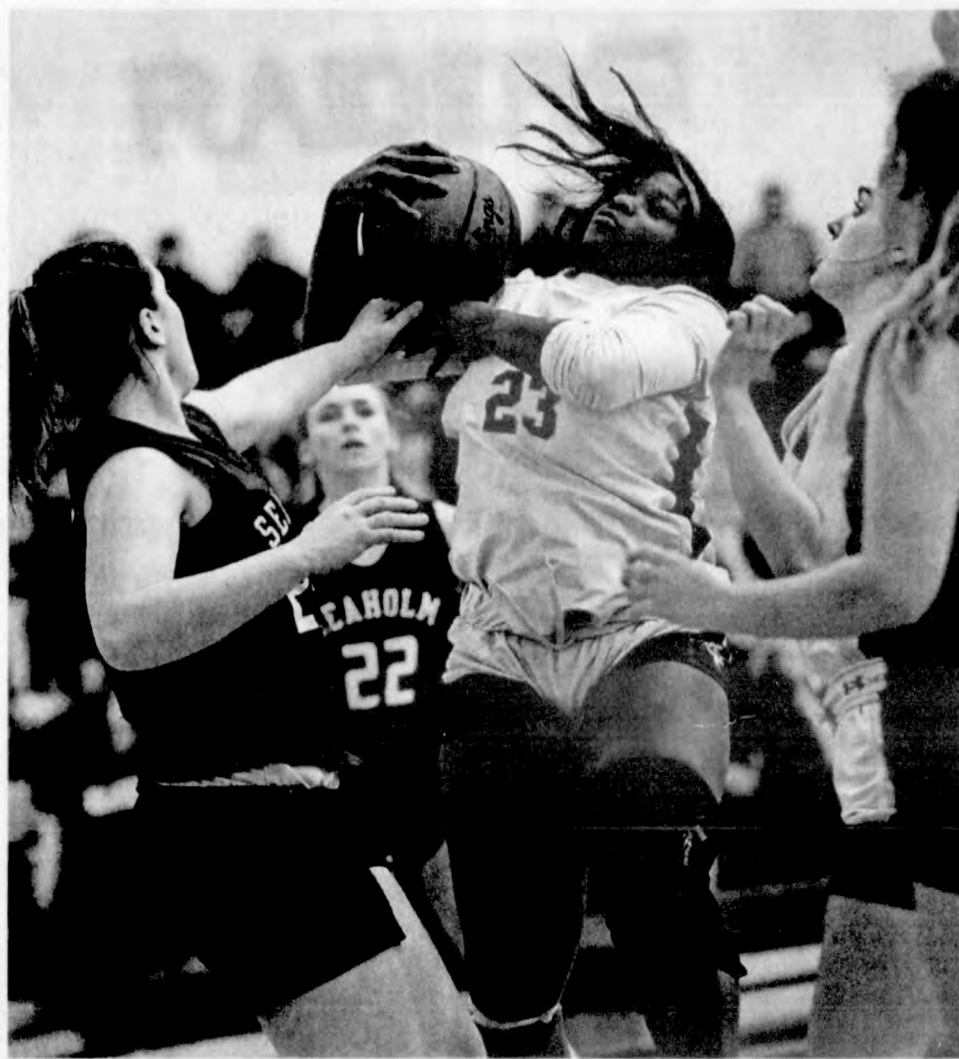
Sure, they were expected to have a great season, especially with how deep their roster was going to be. They brought back one of the best backcourts in the OAA in seniors Sela Lefler and Penelope Creary. Plus they surrounded those two with juniors Hannah Hart, Asiyah Jihad and Anaya Billups and seniors Sydney Williams, Eliza Muller and Kelly Simpson.

But they went 12-9 a year ago and, clearly, they were missing something.

As it turns out, that something was almost 6-foot center Halle Rogers.

She tore her left ACL during the OAA-White opener against Rochester on Dec. 21 last winter.

Now that she's back battling in the paint, opponents don't have an answer



North Farmington's Halle Rogers pulls down a rebound during an Oakland Activities Association-White girls basketball game Friday, Feb. 10, 2023. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

for her. And, no, not just from an offensive standpoint. Rogers is a better defender and rebounder than anything else.

She's incredibly slow on defense. And not in a bad way. She has a knack for baiting opponents to make foolish passes into the post because of how "slow" she is to react to a post move. But once that ball goes up in the air, Rogers swiftly nabs it and away the Raiders' transition offense goes.

Name one center in Michigan who could probably lead her team in steals. Because if it wasn't for Lefler and Creary right now, Rogers would be No. 1 in that statistic.

"It feels amazing to be back," the senior said. "It was definitely emotional last year watching the games and not playing. I feel like I'm a great addition to the team. We work together well on the court, and I'm glad to be back, definitely."

Rogers sat out 8-9 months while rehabilitating her knee injury. She said physical therapy wasn't fun. And after coming back, she admits she might be a step slower because she fears reinjuring

herself.

But even being a step slower than last year has made the Raiders unbeatable. Quite literally.

Her knack for grabbing rebounds and getting fouled on put-back attempts has been invaluable to Simpson.

"She's playing much better down low," he said. "She's getting tougher, stronger. Coach (Trent) Kelly has been working with her down low on finishing. She's still struggling at times to finish, but free throws are much better now. She's working on things, and she's getting much better. Defensively tonight, she was phenomenal. That's what I told her. Don't worry about the offense, you've just got to keep playing defense. She gets a little scared sometimes. She kind of banged her other knee against Royal Oak. She got a little scared right away. But she's slowly getting past that, but I think it's just a natural human reaction."

Rogers' effort is what kept North Farmington alive against Seaholm.

She totaled four of her team's 11 points in the third, and then she drew another trip to the foul line in the fourth.

While the Raiders struggled on offense, Rogers was keeping them in it on the defensive end.

"It's so nice having her," said Lefler, a team captain. "Last year, it was definitely sad playing without her. She sets the best screen. She has a really high IQ. She gets a lot of steals. She gets a lot of rebounds. She plays super aggressively. I love when she's in the game, and I love playing with her."

That's easy to say for Lefler, who's enjoying a dream senior season right now.

Her team is undefeated.

She just signed with Division III Kean University in New Jersey.

And she reached the 1,000-point career mark for her career while scoring 17 points during that double overtime win over Royal Oak earlier in the week.

"It's been really amazing," Lefler added. "It's been an amazing season. It couldn't have gone any better, honestly. It is crazy. It's really nice. I knew we were going to have a good senior year, but I didn't know we were going to go undefeated. Honestly, it's been really nice, and I'm hoping to go 22-0. It's been really, really amazing."

Lefler said Kean recruited her because the team needs a point guard who can be gritty as well as a leader.

She's definitely been that for Simpson, who has been coaching Lefler and the rest of the seniors since they were in the seventh grade.

"She's always been a basketball junkie," Simpson said. "She loves the game. She's probably too hard on herself. She's her own worst enemy as far as being too hard on herself. So she wants to play in college, and she has that opportunity. She's found a place that really likes her and wants her out at Kean University in New Jersey. She's going to go there with a big freshmen class, and she's going to go there and looks forward to that."

Lefler gets a chance to add to her legacy as the regular season winds down.

If the Raiders beat Rochester Adams in their next game, all they have to do is get past Oxford on senior night to win the outright division championship. They're just one game ahead of the Wildcats in the league standings.

Should they lose to Oxford, however, they can still clinch a share of the title with a win at Harper Woods to end the regular season.

Considering North Farmington beat Adams by 26 points, Oxford by 19 and Harper Woods by 31 earlier this winter, it's safe to say it should be favored to finish the year 22-0 overall. And, at the very least, that should finally put a smile on Simpson's face.

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Twitter: @folsombrandonj.

## Obituaries

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### Gloria Reynolds

Gloria Reynolds, a teacher, explorer, artist, and believer in doing good for others in the world, died on January 8 in Howell, Michigan. She was 82.

Gloria Jean Crawford was born the first day of fall, September 21, 1940 in Webberville, Michigan. She was the daughter of the late Leona Crawford Niblock and Spencer Crawford, and the eldest of three children.

After graduating from Eastern Michigan University, she began her career as a teacher for the Novi, Michigan school district. She loved being with and teaching children. Her special gift was creating opportunities, experiences and possibilities for children in her classrooms and for her family. For years, she treated her nieces and nephews to outings to the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Music Hall, and Fisher Theater. She led annual trips for those aged 5-12 years old to trail "Aunt Gloria's" footsteps through Chicago, Toronto, Niagara Falls, Orlando, Washington D.C., and even New River, West Virginia for a whitewater rafting trip. Every moment with her was a teaching opportunity, from learning how to board a plane, train, subway, or raft to understanding what to do if you became lost. She opened up the world and instilled an appreciation for culture and a love of travel.

Gloria was a lifelong learner and felt the world was meant to be explored and life was a gift to be appreciated. Explore she did, from the Moai of Easter Island, to the gorillas in Africa, to the sunny beaches of Spain. She loved a great adventure. She climbed Machu Picchu and Mount Kilimanjaro. She bungee jumped into a gorge in New Zealand, visited penguins in Antarctica and went skydiving for her 70th birthday. Having visited all seven continents, Gloria often said it was the local people she met that had the greatest impact on her.

Gloria married Paul Reynolds, a manager for Detroit Edison, in 1984. They



enjoyed biking together, criss-crossing the states of Michigan and Iowa on multi-day rides for charitable organizations. He shared her love of travel, accompanying her on many of her quests, including to Cuba, Scotland and Panama in later years.

Gloria and Paul enjoyed a long retirement together in St. George, Utah along with Gloria's beloved cat, Pretty Kitty. Gloria continued working with children by leading the mentoring program for a nearby Shiwits Native American community. She joined Zia pottery studio in Kayenta and further developed her skills as an artist. She competed for many years as a racewalker in the Senior Olympics, organized and delivered meals at the community soup kitchen, and volunteered for many programs through her church. She was a long-time member of Habitat for Humanity, helping to build many homes. In 1999, she traveled to the Philippines to participate in President Jimmy Carter's Work Project, a mass build of 250 homes for low income Filipinos.

Gloria always challenged herself to do more. She served as an inspiration to others, always ready to lend a helping hand and never failing to see the beauty in the world. She led by example, and her kindness and encouragement will be dearly missed.

Gloria was preceded in death by her husband, Paul Reynolds; her step-daughter, Val Reynolds; and her brothers, Tom Crawford and Spencer "Bud" Crawford. Survivors include her brother, Ken (Becky) Niblock, and stepsister, Sandy (John Hess) Rogers. She is also survived by her nieces Lisa (Jason) Ferguson, Krista (Paul) Schulte, and Jessica (Mike) Hughes, her nephews Scott (Chris) Niblock and Spencer (Lauren) Crawford, and her great nieces and nephews Maddy, Zack, Bella, Abby, Ari, Alison, Carson and Connor.

A memorial service for Gloria will be held at her church, the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church in St. George, Utah, at a date to be determined. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made by reaching out and performing an act of kindness in her name or by donating to Habitat for Humanity.



# This Student-Athlete Award recipient just won a \$2,000 scholarship

Brandon Folsom  
Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Paying for college expenses just got a little easier for Noah Etnyre.

On Tuesday, the Michigan High School Athletic Association named the Plymouth Christian Academy senior one of its Student-Athlete Award recipients for the 2022-23 school year.

What's the Student-Athlete Award?

Each year, for the past 34 years, the MHSAA, the governing body of high school sports in Michigan, has held an essay-writing contest. A panel reviews each essay and then picks 32 winners. Each winner receives a \$2,000 scholarship.

Etnyre was one of just six athletes who participate in Class C sports to earn the honor.

His high school experience gave him plenty to write about in his essay.

He's a three-sport athlete, but he plays only baseball at PCA. The school has a co-op agreement with nearby Lutheran Westland for a handful of sports. Etnyre takes advantage of that arrangement by playing football and wrestling for the Warriors.

He was the football team's starting quarterback, which included him leading the Warriors to their first-ever conference championship in 2021. And he was an individual state runner-up as a wrestler last winter.

Etnyre, who will play both baseball and football at Calvin College next school year, used his essay as an opportunity to talk about his experience representing both PCA and Lutheran Westland.

(My Lutheran Westland teammate)

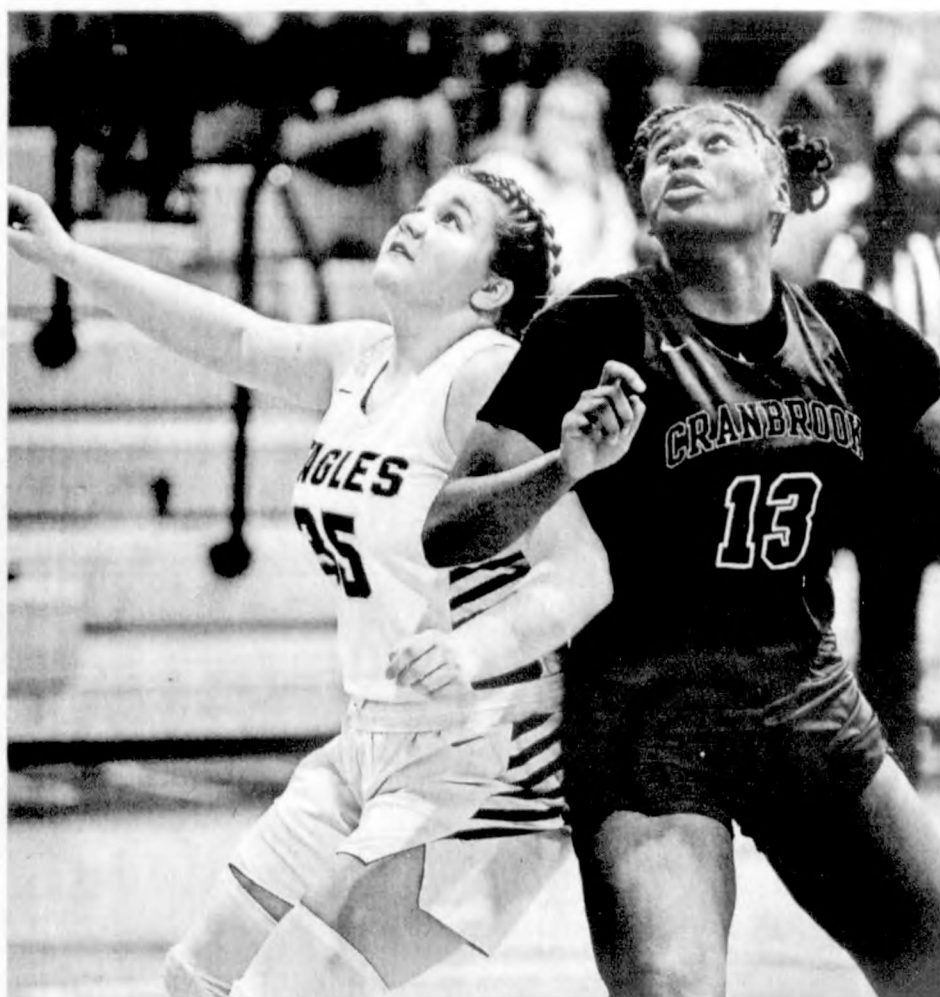
Jack and I share an intense affinity for competition and success, and this common desire presented itself in a garage gym, a local football field, and the 2021-22 athletic season," a snippet of Etnyre's essay to the MHSAA said. "However, unlike most high school teammates, we never attended class in the same school building. ... The importance of sportsmanship is understanding that a sport is so much more than a game. The game is simply there to bring people who need to be together, together."

Etnyre also believes his faith was an important part of his growth as a high school athlete.

"First, I'm extremely grateful for the nomination," Etnyre wrote in a statement to Hometown Life. "Obviously, none of it was possible without PCA, Lutheran High and everything my coaches and the staff/faculty have done for me. God has blessed me with the opportunity to represent a Christian school as well as Christian athletes. It means a lot to me to be able to represent something more than just my role as a student or an athlete. I can represent Christ first and let the other aspects of my life take care of themselves. It's important to me to put my identity in my faith and who I am as a Christian first, and then build my life on that foundation."

"I'm looking forward to continuing my Christian education and aligning that with my studies in college. I am also looking forward to continuing my athletic career and just playing ball and having fun."

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Twitter: @folsombrandonj.



Plymouth Christian Academy's Hailey Maulbestch battles Cranbrook's Yasmyn Palmer for a rebound during a girls basketball game Tuesday, Feb. 7, 2023.

TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Question

Continued from Page 1B

The question throughout summer league was simply: How will Houk do filling in Fernandez's shoes?

Considering the meme of Kevin from "The Office" spilling that giant bucket of chili on the floor wasn't used to kick off this story, it's safe to say Houk is doing well after having just one summer to prepare for the position switch.

"She's doing a great job at point," longtime coach Rod Windle said following Tuesday's 54-45 win over Cranbrook. "She's directing traffic and figuring out driving lanes for herself. I believe she leads the team in assists and points, so she's a player who's making our offensive click a little bit."

That quote could've easily been said about Fernandez, Hometown Life's 2021-22 Player of the Year, a year ago.

But, no, that quote was about Houk, who has steadily found her groove in the backcourt.

There are so many things Houk and Fernandez do similarly. Whether it's scoring in transition, strongarming rebounds and steals and taking them the distance, driving to the hoop or knocking down quick catch-and-shoot 3-pointers.

And much like Fernandez, Houk's surrounded by so many talented players that it makes it easier to create scoring opportunities for the Eagles. There's Hailey Maulbestch, who also reached the 1,000-point scoring mark this winter, Madison Yeager and rookie Clara Goen. But there are also a few more up-and-comers such as Sophia Arlen-Olsen and Chloe Martin who are finding their rhythm in Houk's offense.

"It's been a lot of fun," Houk said of sliding into Fernandez's old role. "Everybody has really bought into what we're trying to do, and we're working our butts off in practice and in games. I'm pretty confident in it (my new role). My teammates are coming around and making sure they're getting open to help me out and make my job easier, too."

"I'm just being patient with the ball, knowing when I need to slow down the game a bit and not speed it up."

A year ago, Houk totaled 375 points, 171 rebounds, 127 assists and 84 steals all while shooting 51% from the floor and 27% from downtown. That was good enough for second-team honors on Hometown Life's All-Area team, which included a who's who of future college players such as Wayne Memorial's Mayla Ham (Georgetown signee), Davai Matthews (Long Beach State) and Paris Bass (North Dakota), South Lyon East's Taylor Anderson (Central Michigan University) and Farmington Hills Mercy's Sarah Cunningham (Grand Valley State) and Maya White (GVSU).

With the Eagles jumping up to D-3, it'll be tough for Houk to replicate those numbers because they're not promised a deep playoff run like last season. They'll likely face Ypsilanti Arbor Prep, last year's state champions, in the district final. PCA (12-6) lost to the top-ranked Gators 67-32 on Jan. 31. But still, the Eagles are talented enough to make a potential playoff game close.

And, sure, Dwight from "The Office" might have once said that "identity theft is not a joke," but Houk has certainly been doing a great impression of Fernandez this winter. The only question now is: Who will replace Houk when she graduates following this season?

Brandon Folsom covers high school sports in metro Detroit for Hometown Life. Follow him on Twitter @folsombrandonj.



North Farmington's Ryan Hurst dribbles past Detroit Catholic Central's DJ Lee during a non-conference boys basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022.

TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## Hometown Life's 2021-22 basketball Player of the Year commits to UDM

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As one incredible legacy at Detroit Mercy comes to a close, the Titans men's basketball program hopes another one is about to begin.

North Farmington boys basketball senior Ryan Hurst announced his verbal commitment to the Titans with a post from his Twitter account Tuesday.

"I chose U of D because it felt like home," Hurst told Hometown Life via text message shortly after his commitment. "I got a chance to build a great relationship with Coach (Mike) Davis and Coach (Donnie) Marsh and they made me feel very welcome. I hope to accomplish (creating) a winning environment at U of D and make the (NCAA) tournament."

The 6-foot-3 combo guard was named Hometown Life's Player of the Year following the 2021-22 season. The West Bloomfield transfer averaged 23 points per game in just his first season with the Raiders, who are currently putting together quite the state championship campaign with a talented supporting cast surrounding their second-year starter.

Right now, the third-ranked Raiders are 12-1 overall. Their lone loss was by one point to Warren Lincoln, one of the best teams from the Macomb Area Con-

ference. North Farmington is undefeated in the Oakland Activities Association-Red and just three wins from securing at least a share of the division title.

While Hurst continues to lead his high school team to great heights, which should include a district championship at the very least, Antoine Davis is currently doing the same at UDM.

Davis, the son of Titans coach Mike Davis, recently became the second all-time leading scorer in NCAA history after surpassing former Portland State player Freeman Williams during a win over IUPUI two weeks ago. He is currently fewer than 300 points from breaking Pete Maravich's NCAA record of 3,667 career points.

He was recently named one of 10 finalists for the Bob Cousy Award, which is awarded to the best point guard in college basketball each year.

What's more, the university will be retiring Davis' jersey during his final home game on Feb. 25 against Wright State.

While saying farewell to Davis will be hard for Titans fans, they should find solace in welcoming in Hurst, who should be a finalist for the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan's Mr. Basketball Award when it's announced later this season.

Twitter: @folsombrandonj.

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