



## 'Finish strong' not just a cliché for Northville soccer

SPORTS, 1B

# NORTHVILLE RECORD

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2023 | HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Farmington Hills creates law limiting Airbnb, Vrbo rentals

Shelby Tankersley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

FARMINGTON HILLS — City officials have decided to crack down on short-term rentals like Vrbo and Airbnb.

City council members voted 4-1 Monday, Sept. 18, to ban short-term rentals in neighborhoods.

Councilwoman Mary Newlin cast the dissenting vote, and members Michael Bridges and Ken Massey were absent.

The law will not impact people who rent their home to a tenant for years or months.

Instead, the law targets people using rental website to lease their home for short time periods like a few days or a week.

"This doesn't do anything to people who rent out their homes for longer periods of time," Mayor Pro Tem Randy Bruce said. "This is really geared toward people who are using a home in a neighborhood as a business."

Council members lamented issues with noise and added traffic that short-term rentals can cause in neighborhoods.

Newlin, however, thought the decision went too far.

"I think it's a little short-sighted," she said. "Yes, there are problems out there. But, why penalize those who are using the short-term rental to be able to support their home?"

Nearby, cities like Livonia have also explored creating similar laws. Farmington Hills' new law amends the definition of "motel" to include short-term rental homes.

Motels in the city are only allowed in commercial zones.

"I like short-term rentals when I go on vacation," Councilwoman Jackie Boleware said. "However, our city is a commuter city."

"There are normally not people coming here to vacation."

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Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448.



Steve Felt, Linda Ross and Larry Ledbetter of the South Lyon Area Historical Society look over items found in a recently uncovered 50-year-old time capsule. COURTESY OF SUZANN MARTIN

## A 1973 time capsule uncovered in South Lyon provides lessons

Susan Bromley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

SOUTH LYON — In July 1973, the rock band Queen released its self-titled debut album, game show host Alex Trebek first appeared on American televisions, and U.S. President Richard Nixon was refusing to turn over presidential tape recordings in the Watergate scandal.

Meanwhile, in South Lyon, the

city's centennial committee buried a cement vault filled with artifacts to be unearthed on a day 50 years in the future. That day arrived earlier this month with a lot of suspense, excitement and consternation, too.

Larry Ledbetter and members of local Boy Scout Troop 228 worked with chisels and a sledgehammer to open the vault which was located using metal detectors near water holding tanks in McHattie Park.

As they finally cracked the time cap-

sule vault open, they, and about 75 intrigued onlookers in attendance, were greeted with two large, tan garbage bags from which wafted a horrifying stench.

Was it the sodden paper? The spilled wine? Or wait. Maybe it was...the cake?

"One of the ladies who witnessed me opening the package ... the lady said, 'That looks like a cake,'" Ledbetter recalled. "And it stunk. It was just degraded to a point of goo."

See TIME CAPSULE, Page 2A

## Former Courthouse Grille in Plymouth Twp. being razed

Laura Colvin

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

PLYMOUTH TWP. — Two buildings undergoing demolition in Plymouth Township will eventually lead to nearly 500 new apartment and townhouse units if current plans come to fruition.

At 41661 Plymouth Road, only a small section of the former Courthouse Grille restaurant remained standing this week as the pile of rubble grew around it.

The site is the future home of the proposed Hillside Overlook Apartments, presented to township planners as a modern four-story, 120-unit apartment building, potentially with a car wash, dog park and dog wash, as well as a stylish rooftop meeting area.

The project is under development by Kevin Kovachevich of District Capital Detroit, who declined to provide current specifics, citing possible changes to the proposal.

See RAZED, Page 2A



Crews were working Sept. 19, 2023 to demolish the Courthouse Grille at 41661 Plymouth Road in Plymouth Township. LAURA COLVIN

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Boy Scouts from South Lyon Troop 228 work to open a vault buried 50 years ago as a time capsule, when the city was celebrating its centennial.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF SUZANN MARTIN

## Time capsule

Continued from Page 1A

Surely no one could have expected the mystery concoction to be edible after half a century, but a few bottles of spirits certainly were intended for consumption this year at the celebration of South Lyon's sesquicentennial.

Among the identifiable items found in the vault were an intact bottle of Seagram's VO Canadian Whisky, as well as a bottle of wine that didn't fare as well. The wine cork had popped off, with mold and fungi growing from it, SLAHS Director Suzann Martin recalled.

The bottle of homemade grape wine was bequeathed by E. Everett Perkins, a South Lyon bank manager 50 years ago, to the person opening the capsule in the future.

The Boy Scouts urged Ledbetter to drink the wine. He declined, noting, "It would have killed me."

The whiskey he plans to give to Steve Showerman, who he said placed the bottle in the vault 50 years ago.

The Showerman family owned the grocery store in South Lyon, and one of the market's advertisement pages was one of the few legible pieces of paper found in the vault. The ad shows prices to envy, including 88 cents per pound for hamburger in 1973.

Among other paper items in the time capsule were a South Lyon Herald newspaper dated July 13, 1973, and an envelope presumed to contain a letter to Wendy, Sherry and Cindy Harder, from their parents, Clarence and Joann Harder, of Harvard Street.

Martin and Ledbetter hope to track down the family who no longer lives in the city.

Other items found in the vault included commemorative medallions; U.S. coins; a South Lyon Centennial coin dated 1873-1973, made of sterling silver; a porcelain centennial South Lyon decorated plate; a red, plastic fly swatter; and a City of South Lyon T-shirt. All of the items are currently on display at the South Lyon City Hall.

Martin, Ledbetter and other members of the South Lyon Area Historical Society are planning to bury a new time capsule, with some major differences to avoid mistakes of the past and disappointment in the future.

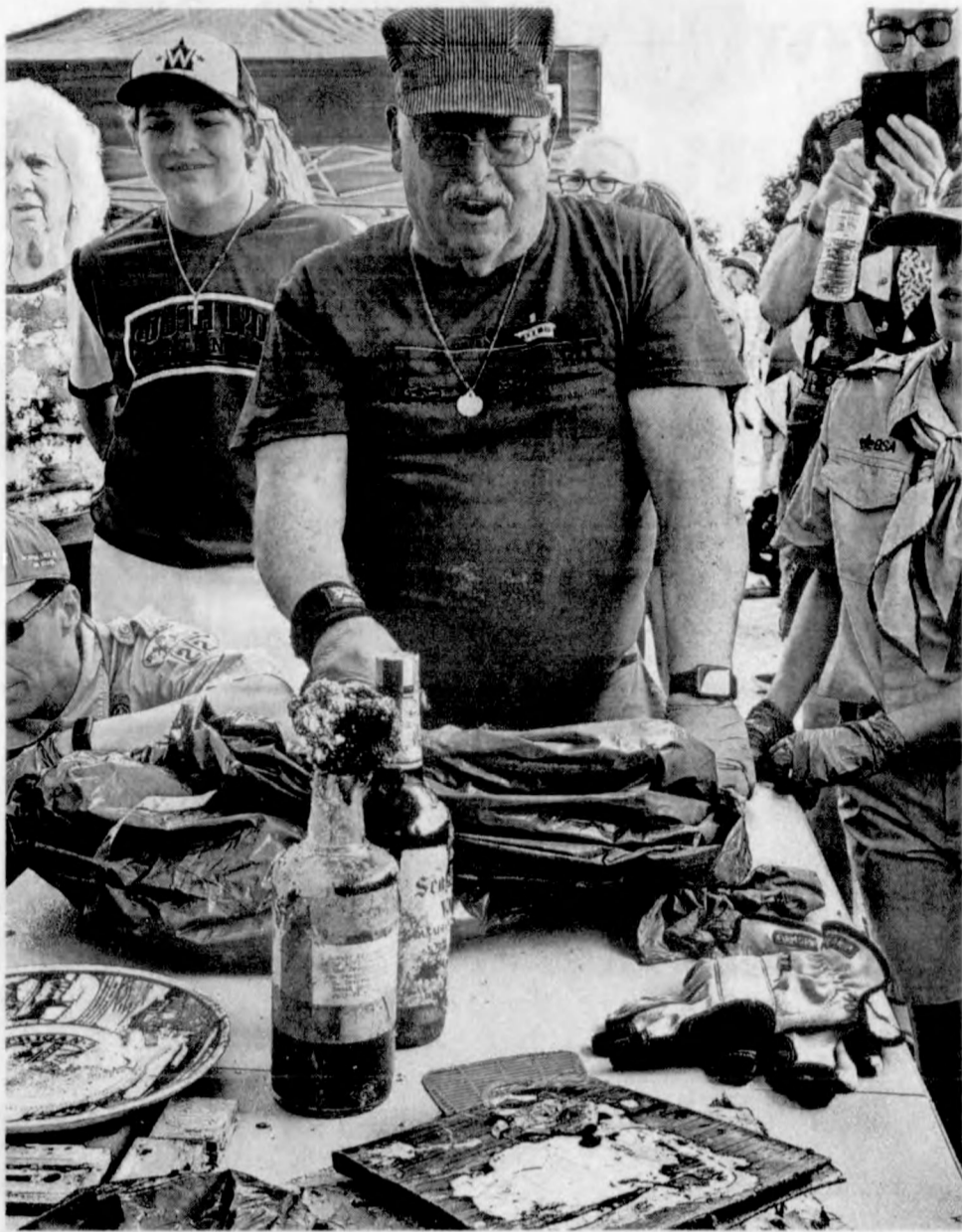
The vault will be buried under just 2 or 3 feet of soil, away from the creek. Exact coordinates for where to find it will be recorded. There will be no liquids or food items placed in the vault. Paper items placed in the vault will be laminated, vacuum-sealed, and put in PVC pipes with plastic caps.

Among the items already planned for the vault, Martin and Ledbetter said, are an iPhone and charger; menus from the South Lyon Hotel, Lake St. Tavern, Lucas Coney Island and the Lyon Grill; photos; a novel; a book about the City of South Lyon; and possibly the South Lyon Herald newspaper with this story.

Ledbetter and Martin are still looking for items to be submitted by the public before the new time capsule is buried around mid-October.

"What I am after, mostly, are letters of hope and encouragement for the future, maybe predictions," Ledbetter said. "We want to make sure the future has a good representation of the past so kids learn from it."

For more information, visit [slahs.net](http://slahs.net). Contact reporter Susan Bromley at [sbromley@hometownlife.com](mailto:sbromley@hometownlife.com) or 517-281-2412. Follow her on X @SusanBromley10.



Larry Ledbetter, commissioner of the South Lyon Area Historical Society, with items found in the time capsule from 1973.



A Showerman's grocery advertisement from July 1973.

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## Razed

Continued from Page 1A

"...We are in the process of finalizing our plans and submitting them to the township for next month's planning commission meeting," Kovachevich said in an email. "We will have a much better handle on timing and detailed plans after this late October meeting."

The Courthouse Grille – also known during its 80-plus year history as Ernesto's and the Hillside Inn – closed in 2018 after a long and storied history in the community. It sat vacant until last week, when demolition began.

Meanwhile, the former Elks Lodge at 41700 Ann Arbor Road, west of Haggerty Road, was demolished earlier this month. A pile of twisted metal and other rubble is all that remained visible on the site this week.

Plans call for a new 369-unit apartment and townhouse project developed by Pomeroy Living in conjunction with Toll Brothers on the site and 34 adjacent acres. Completion of the project is expected to take several years.



A rendering of the apartments that would be built on the Elks Lodge property.

COURTESY OF POMEROY LIVING

Nearby residents voiced ongoing concerns about increased traffic, loss of green space and other issues related to the development. The project was ultimately approved 4-2 by the Plymouth

Township Board of Trustees in May 2022.

Contact reporter Laura Colvin at [lcolvin@hometownlife.com](mailto:lcolvin@hometownlife.com) or 248-221-8143.

# Lyon Twp. portion of Grand River Avenue slated for construction work

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

**LYON TWP.** — Summer may be over, but prep work for next year's construction along Grand River Avenue is just beginning.

On Oct. 2, the Road Commission for Oakland County will start preparing to resurface and widen Grand River Avenue, from Napier Road to Wixom Road, along the border of the township and Wixom. The work is planned in partnership with both communities and will include drainage improvements, temporary

ary pavement construction and relocation of fire hydrants.

The bulk of the \$5.4 million project is slated to take place in spring 2024, with a start date to be announced next year. The project is expected to conclude in late August 2024. The majority of the resurfacing and widening project is paid for with federal funds and matching dollars through the Tri-Party program from RCOC, Wixom and Oakland County.

When prep work begins in October, two-way traffic on Grand River will be maintained, but the speed limit will be reduced from 50 mph to 35 mph to increase safety for workers and motorists.

Prep work is expected to continue through mid-November, at which time speed limits will return to normal until spring, when motorists can look forward to:

- Pavement milling (grinding off old pavement) and resurfacing with asphalt.
- Construction of a continuous center left-turn lane between Napier Road and 12 Mile Road, and a mix of resurfacing and reconstruction of that section of Grand River Avenue.
- Improvements to drainage and installation of curbs and gutters.
- Paving of road shoulders where necessary.

necessary.

- Upgrading pedestrian crosswalks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- Modernization of the traffic signals at the Grand River/Napier and Grand River/12 Mile intersections.

For more information on the project, visit the Grand River Avenue, Napier to Wixom Road page in the "Road Projects" section of the RCOC website, [www.rcoc-web.org](http://www.rcoc-web.org).

Contact reporter Susan Bromley at [sbromley@hometownlife.com](mailto:sbromley@hometownlife.com) or 517-281-2412. Follow her on X @SusanBromley10.

## Livonia candidates to take part in Halloween forum

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

**LIVONIA** — Local candidates will come together in a Halloween-themed event to make election season a little more fun during the home stretch of this year's general election.

All candidates for mayor, city council, clerk and treasurer in Livonia are participating in the free 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 8, event at Mies Park, 32305 W. Chicago. People can bring their kids and pets to do some trick or treating and, if they

choose, speak with candidates.

"I don't think it's common for people to be able to meet all of the candidates in one place," said Carrie Budzinski, the city council candidate who organized the event. "It's not political. It's community. That's what this is all about. My hope in doing this is to be able to show that we can come together."

Candidates will line a short pathway at the park, passing out treats and answering questions. People will encounter candidates for clerk and treasurer first, followed by council candidates and then the mayoral hopefuls. Kids will

also get a chance to meet some of their favorite Disney princesses at the end of the path.

People can chat with candidates, read campaign literature or, if they wish, skip the campaigning and just do a little trick or treating. Budzinski said the event was organized with a focus on families, but people don't need to have a child to come.

"This is designed with families in mind," she said. "It's a Halloween event so parents don't have to find a sitter. As a millennial mom with two kids, I get that stress of being really busy. I hope this

breaks down those barriers."

Volunteers are hoping for 800 or more people to swing by and will have plenty of candy on hand. Budzinski noted that, though she's organizing the free event, it's not for her campaign and she will not function as host.

She hopes people can use the event to meet neighbors, learn more about local government and have a little fun.

"I think the priorities of moms and people with kids needs to be at that table," Budzinski said. "I want everyone to be able to feel like they're part of the process."

## Permanent blood donation center opens in Farmington Hills

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

**FARMINGTON HILLS** — Versiti has opened a permanent blood donation center people can visit year-round.

The Farmington Hills center, 29305 Orchard Lake Road, is the nonprofit's first permanent southeast Michigan blood donation facility. The nearest Michigan centers are in Kalamazoo and Saginaw.

Most donors at its mobile events in metro Detroit live in or around Farmington Hills, said a Versiti official who believes a year-round facility will have staying power.

"Before we selected Farmington Hills, we looked at where the majority of our donor base was donating," said Kellie Sopczynski, manager of donor services. "Farmington Hills fell right in the center of that donor base. So, this is as convenient as possible for our donors."

Versiti is a major blood supplier for 73 hospitals across Michigan. The nonprofit's Michigan centers generate 120,000 units of blood every year, according to its website. All donations made in Farmington Hills will go to Michigan hospitals. Nationwide, blood donations are declining.

People can donate blood, plasma or red blood cells in Farmington Hills. Donors can expect to stay for about an hour, which includes a health screening, donation and a snack.

The Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the center Tuesday, Sept. 19. Community leaders expressed excitement at having what they characterized as a good cause close to home.

"The values you have and the impact you'll add to our community are substantial," said Cristia Brockway, Farmington Hills' economic development director. "The easiest way to give back to



Farmington Hills community members celebrated a ribbon cutting at the Versiti Blood Donation Center this month.

PHOTOS BY SHELBY TANKERSLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

your community is to give blood. It's such an important thing and we all need it."

The center is open noon to 7 p.m. Tuesdays, 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesdays and 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays. Sopczynski said Versiti hopes to stay in the city for years to come.

"People need people," she said. "We need each other. Us Michiganders have to stick together. When you come in and donate, you could be saving a friend."

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



Versiti opened a permanent blood donation center in Farmington Hills, its first in southeast Michigan.

### Request for Proposal

The Northville Public Schools (also referred to as the District or NPS in these documents) will accept sealed bids for:

**Northville Public Schools Door Hardware and Window Film 2023**

Sealed bids are due no later than Oct 4, 2023@ 11:00 a.m.

A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting will be held at 15045 Fogg Street, Plymouth, Michigan 48170, on September 21, 2023 at 10:00 p.m. The plans, specifications, and bidding documents will be made available online at [www.michigan.gov/sigmavass](http://www.michigan.gov/sigmavass) or [www.northvilleschools.org](http://www.northvilleschools.org). Bid documents will be placed on Buildingconnected.com with the following link: <https://app.buildingconnected.com/public/5cc9d7f637c1a90018cb55dc>.

Proposals should be submitted through Buildingconnected.com with the following link: <https://app.buildingconnected.com/public/5cc9d7f637c1a90018cb55dc>. No physical bids will be accepted in person or via delivery service. Proposals must be submitted no later than 11:00 AM Local Time on October 4, 2023. The District will not consider or accept a bid received after the date and time specified for bid submission. Bids will be publicly opened immediately following the close of receiving bids with the following virtual meeting link: <https://northville.zoom.us/j/93495902923?pwd=Nm94NmZCU3RRdkk0eC93MlZMRTRC3dz09>

Meeting ID: 934 9590 2923

Passcode: 651784

Northville Public Schools' Board of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any and all Bids, either in whole or in part, to waive any informalities or irregularities therein, and to award the contract to other than the bidder(s) submitting the best financial Bid (low bidder), in its sole and absolute discretion.

The contents of RFP and Bidder's (also referred to as Contractor in these documents) Proposal will become contractual obligations if a contract ensues. Failure of the Bidder to accept these obligations will result in cancellation of the award.

Each bid must be accompanied by: 1) A 5% bid bond or certified check; If the bidder is providing a certified check as bid security, the certified check must be delivered to the Northville Public Schools Board of Education Offices located at 405 West Main Street, Northville, MI 48167 prior to the bid date and time 2) A sworn and notarized criminal background affidavit, 3) A sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship that exists between the owner or any employee of the bidder and any member of the BOE or the Superintendent of School District; and 4) A sworn and notarized Iran Disclosure Statement. The BOE will not accept a bid that does not include these sworn and notarized disclosure statements.

All proposals shall be firm for at least sixty (60) days from the date of opening of the proposal. All proposals submitted must meet or exceed all specifications herein

Successful Bidders whose Bids are \$50,000 or more will be required to furnish satisfactory Performance and Payments Bonds by a Treasury listed surety in the amount of 100% of their Bid. The cost of Bond(s) shall be included in each Bid

Bids are to be submitted on our Bid Proposal Form through Buildingconnected.com with the following link: <https://app.buildingconnected.com/public/5cc9d7f637c1a90018cb55dc>

All questions should be referred to Steve Ranchero at the e-mail address [bancherost@northvilleschools.org](mailto:bancherost@northvilleschools.org) or phone number 248-231-9879.

# Westland's mayor candidates talk local issues

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

**WESTLAND** — The race to be Westland's mayor is down to state Rep. Kevin Coleman, D-Westland, and interim Mayor Mike Londeau.

Voters will choose the city's first new mayor in nearly 20 years during the Nov. 7 election. Voters narrowed a six-person field to Coleman and Londeau during a primary in August.

Westland's mayor is a nonpartisan official who serves as the city's chief executive. The mayor serves a four-year term and makes \$121,574 annually.

Coleman, 40, is in his third term in the Michigan House of Representatives, where he chairs the housing committee. He's previously served on Westland's city council, veteran's association and festival committee. He's also earned a bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University.

If Coleman is elected mayor, voters in the 25th District, which includes most of Westland and part of Wayne, would vote in a special election to determine his replacement.

Londeau, 44, is a former city councilman who was appointed mayor in January. Prior to serving on council, Londeau chaired Westland's Downtown Development Authority and was a member of the city's master plan steering committee. He graduated from Wayne Memorial High School.

Hometown Life sent questionnaires to each candidate asking about their ideas and stances on local issues. Here's what they had to say:

## If elected, what will be your top three priorities as mayor?

**Coleman:** Providing top-notch public safety, which I've started on already by securing the largest-ever state investment to Westland of \$7 million to build new fire stations and purchase high-tech life-saving equipment. Attracting new business investment and re-develop the Westland Mall property. Keep Westland affordable by maintaining a balanced budget and stop future tax hikes.

**Londeau:** As your mayor, I will al-



**Westland 2023 mayor candidates Kevin Coleman, left, and Mike Londeau.**  
SHELBY TANKERSLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

ways place the safety of our residents above all other priorities. You have my unwavering commitment to work with both the police and fire departments to make sure they have all the tools needed to keep Westland safe, including adequate manpower and state of the art equipment. Taking a new approach to old problems, I have relentlessly targeted and worked to eradicate commercial blight in our neighborhoods and will continue to do so. Lastly, I will continue to enhance our senior services and recreational amenities to create a better quality of life for all.

## A thriving business community is important to any successful city. What will you do to promote new business in Westland?

**Londeau:** I've always believed that strong private investment follows smart public investment. By continuing to invest strategically in Westland's amenities and assets, while simultaneously encouraging private property owners to engage in the beautification of their properties, Westland becomes a more desirable place to locate a new business. Additionally we are currently in the process of rewriting and streamlining our zoning ordinance so that the city's regulations align with the type of new business development we all would like to see within the city and information is easy to access and understand for those looking to do business here.

**Coleman:** I've already had discussions with potential developers who are interested in Westland, particularly near our mall. I will ensure we have a streamlined, open-door policy for busi-

ness owners to set up shop here and let the world know we are open for business. Small businesses must be supported by increased community involvement and low taxes.

## Public Safety is one of the largest services a city offers. What will you do to improve public safety services for residents?

**Coleman:** Westland deserves the best of the best when it comes to fire and police. With a large senior population, EMS services are more critical than ever. I've brought the largest-ever funding allocations back to Westland for our first responders. I'm the only candidate with a plan who's already achieved real, transformative results for Westland on safety. It's easy to make promises during elections but actions speak louder than words.

**Londeau:** I have earned the trust and endorsement of all of Westland's police, fire, and public service unions in this campaign because they know I share their deep commitment to the residents and business owners in our city. I am fully committed to ensuring all of our departments are adequately manned to meet the needs of our community and will continue to invest in the latest equipment and technology to increase efficiency and improve response times. You also have my commitment that we will hire smart, talented, and respectful police officers and firefighters that are reflective of our community.

## Repeated power outages are an issue for many metro Detroit communities. What will you do to ensure better electricity services for Westland?

**Londeau:** As I knock on doors of Westland resident's homes, or have phone conversations, I continue to hear the frustration of homeowners across the city on the repeated power outages they continue to experience. I share their frustration and have elevated the administration's communication with DTE to my office. I will soon send every resident a survey to outline their personal experience and detail their losses and will pursue possible litigation to de-

mand real investment in the power grid that serves our community that goes beyond basic tree trimming and delivers fair compensation for resident's losses.

**Coleman:** The level of outages Westland experiences is absolutely unacceptable. I've pushed back on DTE's lack of investment in our grid as our representative in Lansing and was recently featured on Fox 2 calling on the state government to discuss alternatives to a one-sided energy monopoly in metro Detroit. The current system is failing us. As mayor, I will conduct a citywide canvass of neighborhoods to identify weak points and where the grid needs upgrades. Again, I'm the only candidate taking real action on this.

## Is there anything else you'd like to say to voters?

**Coleman:** Since I was first elected a decade ago, my goal has always been to lead with compassion, transparency and honesty. I've never been the choice of insiders at city hall, because I've always put people before politics. My opponent was appointed by insiders to do their bidding. Unfortunately he gave himself and other top-earners a massive raise before he accomplished anything in office and while we're facing tax hikes. I find this out of touch and know Westland deserves better. I'm looking forward to giving everyday residents a voice at city hall.

**Londeau:** I am humbled and honored to have received the highest number of votes in the primary election. The trust and support I have received from the citizens of Westland inspires me to work even harder to serve our community. Together, we've started a journey towards a brighter future for Westland. This achievement is a testament to our shared vision for progress. Let's continue to build momentum and create positive change. Thank you for believing in me - I'm excited for an opportunity to continue to lead the City of Westland into a new era of growth and prosperity.

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[stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com)

## McAlister's Deli asks for yearlong construction extension in Westland

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

**WESTLAND** — A much-anticipated McAlister's Deli is facing significant delays.

The coming Westland restaurant, first approved in September 2022, requested an additional year for construction. The restaurant was supposed to start construction in March. Westland City Council unanimously granted the extension request during a meeting Monday, Sept. 18.

"They've had some economic troubles in terms of borrowing and lining up contractors," Planning Director Mo Ayoub said. "But they're still pursuing the project here in Westland."

McAlister's Deli, a fast-casual sandwich shop, has locations nationwide, but the Westland restaurant will be the

first in metro Detroit. Other Michigan locations include those in Flint, Lansing and Sterling Heights.

The business is planned for a vacant site on the corner of Warren Road and Central City Parkway, directly across the street from Westland City Hall. The location is part of the city's shop and dine district and is expected to attract a large lunchtime crowd, especially since Panera Bread's only Westland location closed in 2020. The restaurant will include a dine-in seating area and a pickup window for on-line orders.

McAlister's Deli is known for its baked potatoes, sandwiches, salads and soups as well as its "famous" sweet iced tea. The chain founded in 1989 has over 500 restaurants in 29 states.

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

## Man who struck, shouted racial slurs at Livonia teen sentenced

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

**LIVONIA** — A man who assaulted and shouted racial slurs at a teen in the Kirksey Recreation Center earlier this year was sentenced to up to a decade in jail.

Moez Irfan, 29, was at the 15100 Hubbard St. community center in June when he bumped into a 13-year-old boy.

According to Livonia police, Irfan then struck the teen multiple times in the head and shouted racial slurs at him. Police said Irfan also resisted arrest when police arrived and needed to be subdued by multiple officers.

The incident hospitalized the teen Irfan attacked.

Judge Mariam Bazzi of the 3rd Circuit Court in Detroit sentenced Irfan to

between 18 months and 10 years in prison for one count of ethnic intimidation, which he pled guilty to, on Sept. 19. He has a time served credit of 96 days.

Irfan is also required to pay a \$1,898 fine and begin mental health treatment.

Prosecutors dismissed three other counts Irfan was facing regarding assault, assault with the intent to harm and assaulting a police officer.

"It was a tough case," said Andrew DiMaggio, Irfan's court-appointed attorney. "I hope the boy can recover quickly. It was very upsetting for the whole family. Mr. Irfan's family is totally supportive of him, but they want him to get help."

Jaron Russell Anderson, the prosecutor on the case, did not immediately return a request for comment.

Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448.



44th Annual

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# Three file for Farmington City Council race

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

FARMINGTON — Three candidates are running for three positions on Farmington City Council.

Councilwoman Johnna Balk, Mayor Pro Tem Joe LaRussa and newcomer Kevin Parkins are each seeking a four-year term. The two highest vote-earners will serve a four-year term, and the third-place finisher will serve for two years.

Council members, the mayor pro tem and the mayor in Farmington make \$3,000 annually. Once a new council is seated, council members will appoint a mayor and mayor pro tem from among themselves.

Balk, 55, is running for her second term on council. She works as a faculty librarian for the Oakland Community College campus in Auburn Hills.

LaRussa, 47, is running for a third term. He works as a plant manager for Advance Assembly, which is based in Warren.

Parkins, 34, is global program manager for UPS, or the United Parcel Service. He also volunteers with the city's historic commission and pathways committee.

Hometown Life sent each candidate a questionnaire asking about their ideas and stances on local issues. Here's what they had to say:

## Why are you running for city council?

**Balk:** Two years ago, the citizens gave me a chance by electing me. Trusting my 26 years living and raising our family here, being an active part of this community. I want to continue being a part of all the excitement we have helped to develop.

**LaRussa:** I'm running for office because my vision for Farmington is to live at the intersection of history and the future. I believe my experience, expertise, and proven leadership skills can continue to deliver results for Farmington and give our city the leadership it deserves. From transformational infrastructure projects to investment in our parks and neighborhoods, I've delivered results for residents and I'm looking for-



Farmington City Council candidates, from left, Johnna Balk, Joe LaRussa and Kevin Parkins.

SHELBY TANKERSLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

ward to doing even more to help our community.

**Parkins:** I currently serve on both the Historic Commission that works to preserve Farmington's historic character, and the Pathways Committee, which works to make Farmington and our businesses more accessible. I feel these committees reflect our city's progress perfectly — preserving our historic charm while continuing the growth and development to attract and maintain residents and businesses alike. The simple answer is I love this community and want to continue giving back to our city to make Farmington the best it can be for our residents.

## What do you see as the greatest issue facing Farmington and what will you do to fix it?

**LaRussa:** The most significant issue facing Farmington is our aging infrastructure. Roads, sidewalks, water, sewer, and our historic gems all require significant investment to bring them to current standards or replace them based on their age. I have a track record of prioritizing and investing responsibly to ensure our residents have safe streets and sidewalks, as well as replacing old water and sewer assets. I also helped lead the single biggest private infrastructure investment in both Farmington and Farmington Hills in the upcoming fiber-optic internet network, totaling \$150 million without a dime of taxpayer money being put toward it.

**Parkins:** I recognize one of our greatest challenges lies in attracting new businesses and people to the community. We have seen a lot of great development in recent years, thanks to our DDA and leadership, and now we need to also ensure we can draw the populations to

support them. I believe we can create an ecosystem of growth and prosperity for residents and businesses alike with leadership that has a clear vision for Farmington's future.

**Balk:** Aging infrastructure. We continue to utilize funds to upgrade roads, sidewalks and water/sewer, as well as Warner mansion.

## How will you be a representative for every Farmington resident?

**Parkins:** I pride myself in being active and present in our community, showing up to city functions, and volunteering whenever I can. In doing so, we have developed friendships with neighbors throughout Farmington and have gained a comprehensive understanding of many local issues. Professionally, I am a program manager for UPS, I spend my days finding unique solutions to problems and implementing complex projects on specific timelines. It is my hope that this translates well to a role in city council and will allow me to effectively advocate for the interests and needs of all in our community.

**Balk:** By being an active part of the community and being available. Talking and getting to know those I represent, and always being willing to listen and get answers to their questions.

**LaRussa:** I have been a representative for every Farmington resident since I was first elected. I've organized neighborhood improvement projects and led our city's efforts to get more attention and investment in our electric grid from DTE and its regulator, the Michigan Public Service Commission. My technical background and professional engineering expertise have been put to good use on behalf of all Farmington residents. I'm also proud of my support for our parks, which have seen improvements that bring quality of life increases for our residents and provide many options for recreation in the city.

## How will you play a role in creating a welcoming community for all regardless of age, race, religion or gender?

**Balk:** By continuing to make decisions that keep the best interests of all people who have chosen to live, work or

play in Farmington. Learning and growing in my knowledge of how to represent our diverse population.

**LaRussa:** I've supported many events in the city that encourage intercultural exchange and ensure our community is seen as welcoming by all residents and visitors. We've hosted multiple ethnic festivals, both as stand-alone events and as part of our award-winning Farmers Market. I'll continue to support these and other efforts to bring people from different cultures and walks of life together in Farmington.

**Parkins:** Unlike many members in our community, I did not grow up in Farmington, I was born and raised in Southwest Michigan. I have lived in several cities across Michigan and even abroad, allowing me to experience firsthand different cultures, demographics, and perspectives. As a visitor to Farmington, I understood why people live here. My wife and I chose to make Farmington our home in part due to the diversity, the open mindset, and the welcoming culture we experienced when coming here. It would be my goal to perpetuate this, encouraging and welcoming individuals of all backgrounds to Farmington, as Farmington welcomed us.

## Is there anything else you'd like to say to voters?

**LaRussa:** I'm excited and grateful to serve, and I will continue to use my skills and abilities to help lead Farmington into what I believe is a bright future for our community. I'm asking for your vote so I can continue to move Farmington forward.

**Parkins:** My wife Melissa and I have a vested interest in Farmington, we live in the Historic District and truly enjoy this community we are a part of and involved in. I believe in transparent and accessible communication, so please feel free to stop and say hi when you see us out walking our dogs, at local businesses, or at any of the community events. I look forward to continuing to serve our great community. Thank you for your consideration when voting.

**Balk:** Thank you for your past support and I promise to continue giving my absolute best to our amazing city. See you around town!



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

Axle	Dogs	Mack	Semi
B-double	Ford	Mood	Sleep
Bend	Fuel	Mt Isa	South
Bogie	Gears	Newell	Spare
Brash	Haul	Pies	Spoke
Bunk	Heat	Race	Stock
Cabin	Horses	Rate	Toll
Coal	Hubs	Rigs	Tyres
Cows	Idle	Rims	Western
Darwin	Lights	Roos	Star
Depot	Limited	Rope	Wheels
Dips	Loads	Rugged	
Dirty	Loner	Secured	

## TODAY'S ANSWER

Essential transportation

## Driving a big rig

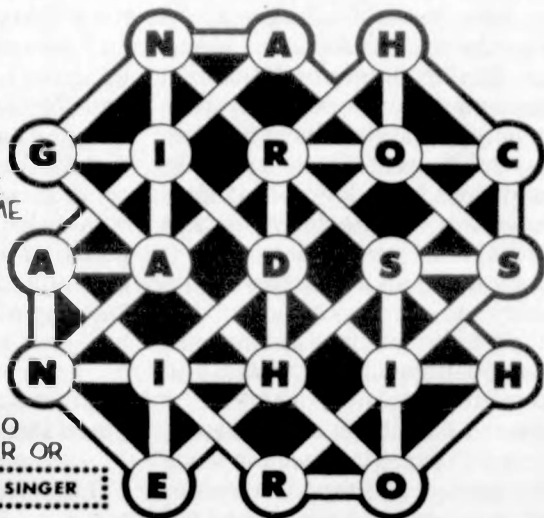
RUGGED EBD OUBLES  
 DDS LDERUCES PARE  
 WECMLOENRDDSBUH  
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 RTALTS AEWGOPARE  
 TSSDOOMRASOI IAU  
 DROFSKNUBTRONDF

## PUZZLES &amp; POSERS

## PEOPLE PUZZLE

HIDDEN IN THIS CRISS-CROSS NETWORK OF PASSAGEWAYS IS THE FIRST AND LAST NAME OF A WELL-KNOWN PERSON. A CLUE TO HIS OR HER IDENTITY IS GIVEN IN THE BOX BELOW. ~SELECT A STARTING LETTER AND TRACE THIS NAME WITH A CONTINUOUS LINE. AT NO TIME MAY ANY LETTER OR PASSAGE BE REUSED.

FEMALE SINGER



## 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

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

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

## NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- 1 Jets' address.  
 11 Funny business.  
 15 Sony cofounder and longtime head.  
 16 What *Southern Living* suggests for your succotash.  
 17 They don't mix very well.  
 18 Home of America's oldest tech university.  
 19 Centers of attraction.  
 20 Malcolm, Jr.'s nickname.  
 21 Carries away.  
 22 Kindly or candied.  
 24 Argentina's daily soccer newspaper.  
 25 It cut a key in half on QVC (2005).  
 26 *Moby-Dick* social call.  
 28 Cubed author's first name.  
 30 Personal.  
 31 Where a 1948 Declaration of Independence was proclaimed.  
 35 Work on the side.  
 36 Flashin' Fruit Punch brand.  
 37 Lime or lemon.  
 38 "Goodnight, Harvard" singer/taunter.  
 39 Go for a run.  
 40 Inauspicious.  
 41 Afghan onomatopoeia.  
 42 Cause to roar, perhaps.  
 43 Law enforcement lingo.  
 45 Hesitant stepper.  
 46 A way to vote no in New York.  
 48 Half a prominent name in modeling.  
 49 They assess scientific skills.  
 51 Cord component.

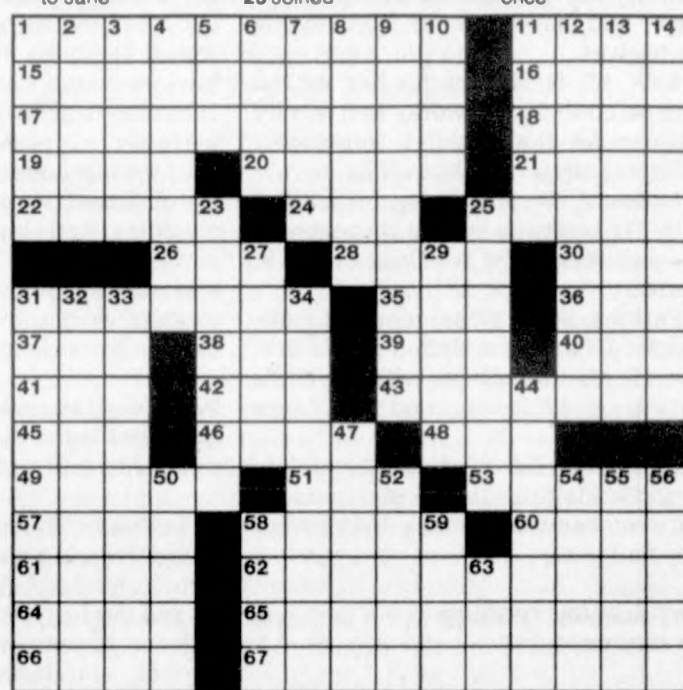
- 53 Marshall was its General Counsel for 23 years.  
 57 Composer educated at Eton.  
 58 Seis Felipe's.  
 60 Current coin with a crescent-star.  
 61 First Asian Best Actress Oscar winner.  
 62 Magnetite et al.  
 64 *à la* (French sheep).  
 65 Incorrect.  
 66 Sport using scoring circuits.  
 67 Hyundai Santa Fe's close kin.

- 4 Strongman who surrendered in 1990.  
 5 The Nuremberg trials, e.g.: Abbr.  
 6 '90s gameplay fad.  
 7 Inspirational half-sister of Helen.  
 8 Claudia called her "the only remaining supermodel".  
 9 Subject of the '53 memoir *High Adventure*.  
 10 Lowly.  
 11 "He showed the world who's boss," per a 2018 movie poster.  
 12 Home of the minor league RubberDucks.  
 13 Emulates elderberries.  
 14 Gives.  
 23 Choices for toasters.  
 25 Joined.

- 27 Goddaughter of Dolly.  
 29 Unvarnished.  
 31 Protest prelude.  
 32 Monetary term in the BBC's E-cyclopedia.  
 33 Owned up to hitting a parked car.  
 34 Puzzle app featuring Louis XVI.  
 44 Word from the Latin for "mug".  
 47 Subaru part-owner.  
 50 Much less than a roar.  
 52 Chaps.  
 54 Name related to Hayden.  
 55 Apogee.  
 56 Spanish stroll.  
 58 Icy expanse.  
 59 Neighborhood near Oxford Circus.  
 63 Collector of 6 Down, once.

## DOWN

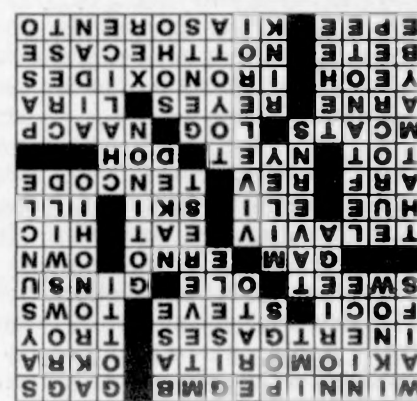
- 1 Bo-Peep's sheep, e.g.  
 2 "Tell me about it".  
 3 Mary Jane Austen, to Jane.



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9/23/23

## TODAY'S ANSWER



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LocaliQ



USA TODAY NETWORK

# Livonia deputy clerk, treasurer file to become next city clerk

Shelby Tankersley

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

LIVONIA — Voters will elect a new city clerk this fall.

Lori Miller, and city Treasurer Lynda Scheel are running for the position. The city's current clerk, Susan Nash, is term-limited and is running for treasurer. In Livonia, the clerk runs all elections, issues permits and licenses — including dog licenses — as well as death certificates.

The clerk is a nonpartisan official who serves a four-year term. The clerk's current salary is \$97,274.

Miller, 52, is Livonia's deputy clerk. She studied at Wayne State University and the Institute of Michigan Municipal Clerks. Outside of work, she volunteers with her homeowner's association and with the city's Community Emergency Response Team.

Scheel, 63, is ending a two-term stint as city treasurer. She studied at Livonia Stevenson High School and the Michigan Municipal Treasurer's Association. Scheel has held a variety of offices; she served on the Livonia City Council and the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education.

Hometown Life sent each candidate a questionnaire asking about how they'd serve as Livonia's chief election officer. Here's what they had to say:

## Why are you running for City Clerk?

**Miller:** I am a city employee in my 17th year, and 13 years in the clerk's office. I was appointed deputy clerk in January 2018. I am trained and accredited by the state of Michigan, the Bureau of Elections and have obtained the designation of Michigan Professional Municipal Clerk from the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks. My extensive knowledge, training and experience will serve Livonia well when newly



Livonia clerk candidates Lori Miller, left, and Lynda Scheel.

SHELBY TANKERSLEY/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

adopted election laws impact the election cycle for the presidential primary. The elected clerk must be experienced to administer an election on Jan. 1. I am the best qualified candidate to do so.

**Scheel:** For the last eight years I have had the honor to serve as your elected Livonia city treasurer. With term limits ending my service as treasurer, I am seeking the office of city clerk to continue my service to the citizens of Livonia. To help me prepare for this position, I completed the Clerk 101 Boot Camp through the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks in June 2023. Although I have experience with most of the topics discussed, this provided an opportunity to experience MAMC training, and how I will be able to continue to use my positive proven leadership experience.

## What will be your top three goals or initiatives as clerk?

**Scheel:** My top three goals as city clerk will be, A) To run an efficient and welcoming office where we will work as a team to serve all with the utmost professionalism. B) To run efficient elections with all staff and election workers trained and kept up to date on the election laws and processes; where public information and processes are easy to find and view, all is transparent, and we follow the law. C) To work with my team

in reviewing and implementing continuous improvements within the Clerk's Office that benefit our residents, businesses in Livonia, and our city employees.

**Miller:** Voter outreach, community education, and recruitment of election workers. Continuously engage with voters to keep them informed. I would visit all high schools, Schoolcraft and Madonna to register and educate students. Community education involves informing our residents of the importance of the clerk's office and being more visible and accessible. We must find creative ways to recruit, train and retain election workers. I have started discussions with our civil service department to develop ways to incentivize city employees to work election day. We should also partner with the chamber to get local businesses involved as well.

## How will you be a representative for every Livonia resident?

**Miller:** The clerk should be an apolitical leader and should advocate for voters' rights. It should not be a political role, but rather a public service role. There is a need to rebuild trust and relationships between voters and elected officials. I would invite small groups to visit and tour our election materials. Educate them on how things are done. Encourage them to participate by working a precinct, counting board or, next year, at our early voting site. I have seen our democracy in action and want all residents to know how important it is to trust and understand our system.

**Scheel:** My positive, proven, leadership experience, dedication, and attention to detail will serve all Livonia residents and businesses well, as it has in my current role as city treasurer. Working with residents and businesses during my time as treasurer, on the city council, the planning commission and the brownfield redevelopment authority gives me a unique understanding of

the needs of our city, its residents and its businesses. My past tenure on the Livonia public school board, my service on Livonia PTSA Council and the LPS Education Foundation Board has also given me insight into community and family needs, challenges and concerns.

## Is there anything else you'd like to say to voters?

**Scheel:** I have over 33 years of work experience in the mortgage banking industry and in public schools. I have 20 years of experience in Livonia government, including the planning commission, as vice president of the brownfield redevelopment authority, the Livonia school board, the Livonia City Council and as Livonia city treasurer. In my role as city treasurer, I also served as the Wayne County Treasurer's Association's president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. As a member of the city leadership team, I always represent the city with professionalism. My positive attitude is reflected in my interactions with the public and my team.

**Miller:** Our democracy and process work. I know it because I have seen it in action during the 11 local, state and federal elections I have administered in Livonia. I have volunteered at risk limiting audits, worked for other communities, and participated in several election recounts. The training, experience and skill set needed to be clerk cannot be learned in just a few years. Livonia deserves a qualified candidate that can provide stability, integrity and transparency and I will continue to do so in the manner that Livonia has come to expect. This is a critical role and requires an experienced candidate.

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Contact reporter Shelby Tankersley at [stankersle@hometownlife.com](mailto:stankersle@hometownlife.com) or 248-305-0448.

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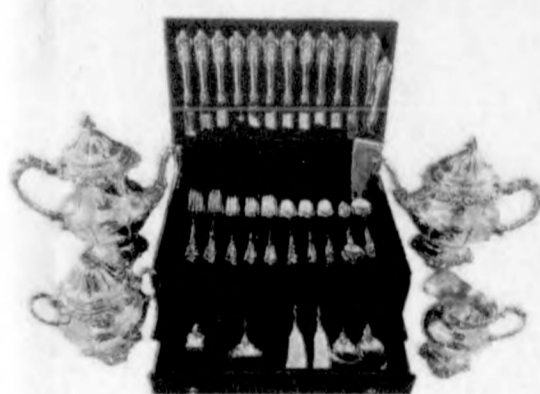
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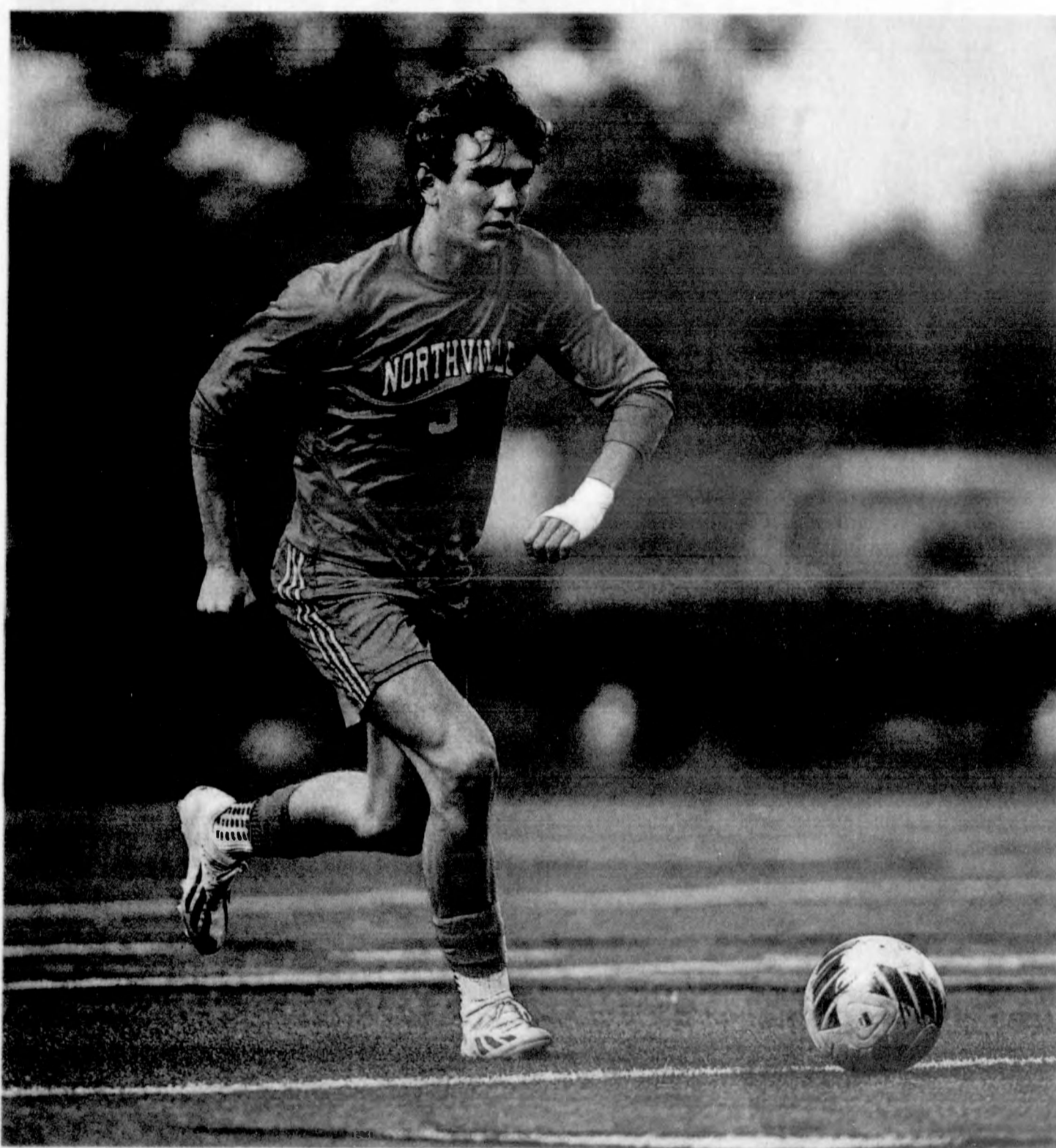


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## SPORTS



Northville's Collin Sargent pushes the ball ahead during a KLAA-East boys soccer match on Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023.  
PHOTOS BY BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

## 'Finish strong' not just a cliché for Northville soccer

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

As soon as the scoreboard of Tuesday's Kensington Lakes Activities Association-West boys soccer match showed there was just 1 minute left to play, Northville senior Marco Greenlaw hol-lered to his teammates to "finish strong."

"Yep, that's right, Marco," coach Henry Klimes yelled in response. "Let's finish strong, boys."

Honestly, that message was completely unnecessary.

The third-ranked Mustangs (9-1-1, 7-1-1) were carrying a 7-0 lead over rival Novi at that point, and they could've secured the victory via mercy rule about 15 minutes earlier had Klimes wanted it to happen.

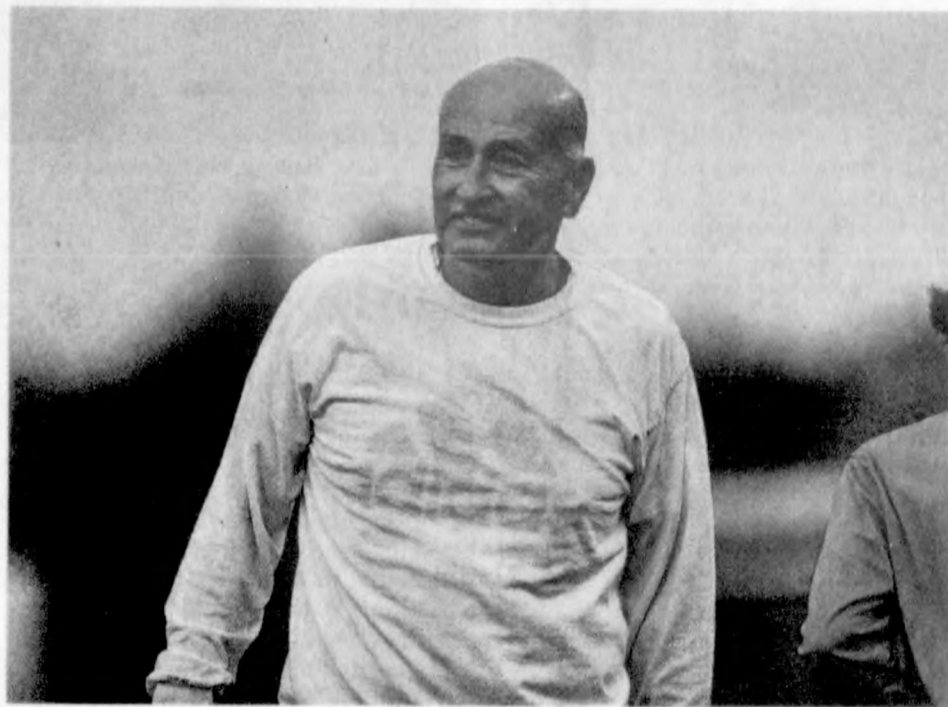
There was no need to "finish strong." There was absolutely no need to keep giving 100%.

They could've just booted the ball around to kill the remaining 60 seconds to easily get out of there with more points in the league standings.

Perhaps that's what the Northville of two weeks ago would've done.

Not anymore. Not after Brighton upset the Mustangs.

Northville entered that matchup as the No. 2-ranked team in Division 1, ac-



Northville coach Henry Klimes smiles before a KLAA-East boys soccer match on Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023.

cording to the Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association. It let in, essentially, an own-goal from the get-go, and wound up trailing the Bulldogs 2-1 entering halftime. All Brighton had to do was park the bus and focus on its de-

fense to steal the eventual one-goal win. The result? The MHSCA dropped the Mustangs all the way down to No. 13.

See NORTHVILLE, Page 2B

## Milford football snaps 14-year losing streak to South Lyon

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The expectations for the Milford football team couldn't have been any higher entering Week 4 because it was considered a favorite to beat South Lyon for likely the first time in a decade or more.

In fact, it's been since 2009 the last time the Mavericks have beaten the Lions. And that's saying something because the two have played each other as Lakes Valley Conference opponents every year since 2017, plus they faced each other in the 2020 playoffs. That's seven straight losses.

Finally, this was going to be the game that ended that 14-year losing streak.

The only problem?

Senior Ryan Allen was going to miss the game with an injury. And that's big news because outside of three-star Toledo commit Kalieb Osborne at Waterford Mott, Allen is probably the best dual-threat quarterback in the LVC.

What's more, his backup is an unproven sophomore.

Fortunately for the Mavericks, they have seven returning starters from last year's defense, which gave up the fewest points in the conference (177). To get past South Lyon, they were going to need a stellar effort from that unit.

And that's just what they got.

They forced three turnovers, halted the Lions' offense in scoring territory twice in the fourth quarter and gave rookie QB Caden "JT" Johnston-Thompson enough help to push Milford (3-1, 3-0) past South Lyon, 10-7.

See FOOTBALL, Page 2B

## Brighton hopes volleyball loss to Northville pays dividends in November

Bill Khan

Livingston Daily

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

BRIGHTON — It wasn't so much about winning Tuesday night's volleyball match, though that was certainly Brighton's goal.

The Bulldogs are mindful that, if everything goes according to plan, the match with Northville that really matters will be for a Division 1 regional championship Nov. 9 at Ypsilanti Lincoln.

With that in mind, progress was the key for fourth-ranked Brighton when it hosted top-ranked Northville Sept. 19 in a KLAA West match.

After a strong start, the Bulldogs lost to the Mustangs for the second time this season, 22-25, 25-16, 25-22, 25-19.

Northville has handed Brighton two of its three losses in a 23-3 season, the

See VOLLEYBALL, Page 2B



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## Northville

Continued from Page 1B

You can't just walk into Brighton and expect to win. The KLAA is too good of a league to assume any win is going to be a gimme at this point.

What Northville learned is that it's a lot harder to play catch-up when you're trailing vs. starting strong, maintaining that kind of pressure throughout the game and, ultimately, finishing strong.

"I thought we were more uncomposed at times because we were playing high-pressure to get (the equalizer at Brighton)," Klimes said. "We weren't being smart or composed with the ball to create that equalizer. Lesson learned, for sure. Good teams capitalize on mistakes, and Brighton capitalized on mistakes we gave them."

The Mustangs have vowed to not be in that situation again.

They've played all-out in each match since that loss, and they've been finishing strong. That's a 5-0 win over Hartland, a 5-2 win over Canton, a 6-3 victory at Livonia Stevenson and a 7-0 shutout over the rival Wildcats. These aren't bottom-feeding teams here. These are quality opponents. And now they're back up to No. 3 in the rankings.

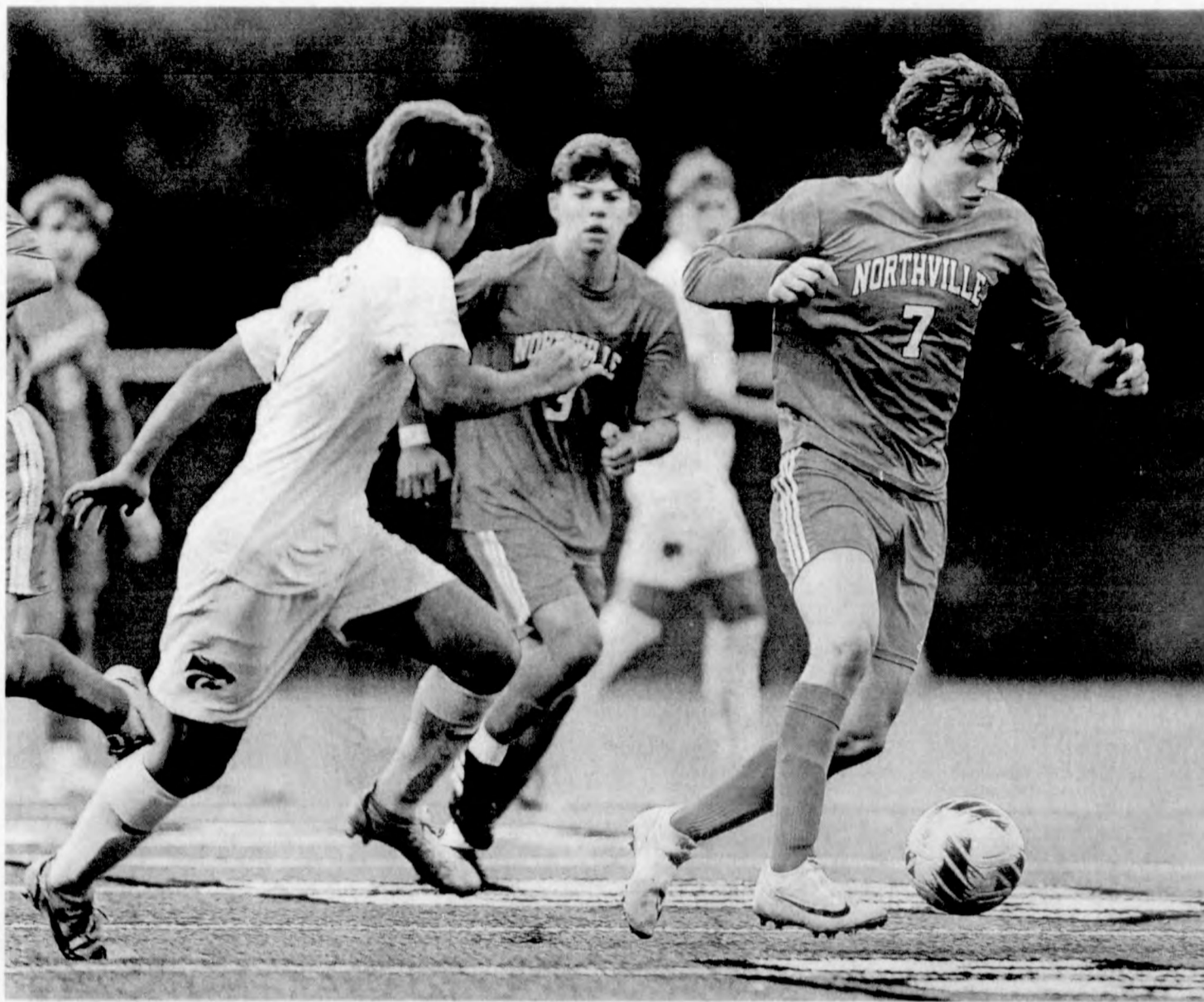
But they need to keep it going. There are still five division matches left, including a rematch with Brighton on Oct. 3.

"We can play only one game at a time," Klimes added. "We just want to get better each and every day to get ready for the state playoffs. If you keep playing well, good things happen, and I thought our ball movement today was pretty solid."

That was certainly true.

Alex McCallum led the team with one goal and four assists, giving him 10 goals so far this fall.

Haithem Al-Zoubi booted in two goals, while four other Mustangs notched goals.



Northville's Alex McCallum makes a move during a KLAA-East boys soccer match on Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

"Right now, we're starting to click a bit," Klimes said. "But it's getting hard as a coach because I can only put 10 guys out there, plus the goalie, but I've got a pretty strong bench so we're trying to rotate them in and give other guys some starts. So we've got a nice little squad

right now."

Northville should clinch the KLAA-West title in two weeks and will likely enter the postseason with just one loss on its record.

Expect the team to capture its first district and regional titles since 2021 if it

keeps finishing strong because that's been the key since losing to Brighton.

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

## Football

Continued from Page 1B

"We got put into a tough situation with our QB, Ryan Allen, getting hurt," defensive lineman Jon Motes said. "We had our sophomore, JT, in, and we wanted to lift him up. Our defense just needed to help him out a little bit and give him that energy so he could keep going."

Outside of giving up one big play, South Lyon's Skylar McGlinch tossed a 75-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Henderson, the Mavericks' defense did, indeed, give Johnston-Thompson that energy.

Milford's offense stalled three times in scoring territory during the first half. They settled for a 26-yard Mason Stislicki field goal in the opening quarter and turned over the ball at the 20-yard line in the next quarter.

Tanner Petru broke off a 78-yard run that set up the Mavericks with first and goal from the 1 just before halftime. But that drive ended with Johnston-Thompson getting gang-tackled in the backfield on fourth down by South Lyon's Ryan Jedrusik, Brody Weaver and Henderson.

Finally, the offense put together a scoring drive in the third quarter. Johnston-Thompson relied on his feet to move the chains and get the Mavericks back inside the red zone. Only this time it was running back Peyton Chamberlain punching in the go-ahead TD from 1-yard out to make it a 10-7 score.

Both the defense and the special teams did the rest of the heavy lifting as South Lyon attempted the comeback.

To open the fourth quarter, Josh Parker and a herd of Mavericks stopped South Lyon's Brady Shields on fourth and 4. Almost six minutes later, it was the other Kaden Johnston bringing down Shields on a QB draw play on fourth down at the 24. And then middle linebacker Wyatt Lesnew intercepted McGlinch's prayer on third and 23 with 1:36 left in the game.

"I just dropped back into coverage and was looking at the No. 2 receiver, and our D-line had good pressure, he (McGlinch) just threw it up and it was just 'see ball, get ball,' honestly," said Lesnew, a senior. "It felt fantastic. I've got to give kudos to our secondary and D-line. They were working hard all night. Without them, we would've never gotten it done."

Milford's offense went three-and-out on the ensuing series and was forced to punt it back to the Lions, but Stislicki's kick pinned South Lyon's offense at its own 1-yard line. Moments later, Brady Collison pulled down an interception to end the game and secure the victory.

"Our defense and our special teams



Milford's Caden Johnston-Thompson rushes during a Lakes Valley Conference football game on Friday, Sept. 15, 2023. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

played tremendous," Milford coach Andrew Micovich said. "Flipping field position with our punts, the defense getting big stops, it meant a lot. Yeah, we did give up one big play, which is uncharacteristic of us, but, I mean, really, hats off to them. They played hard."

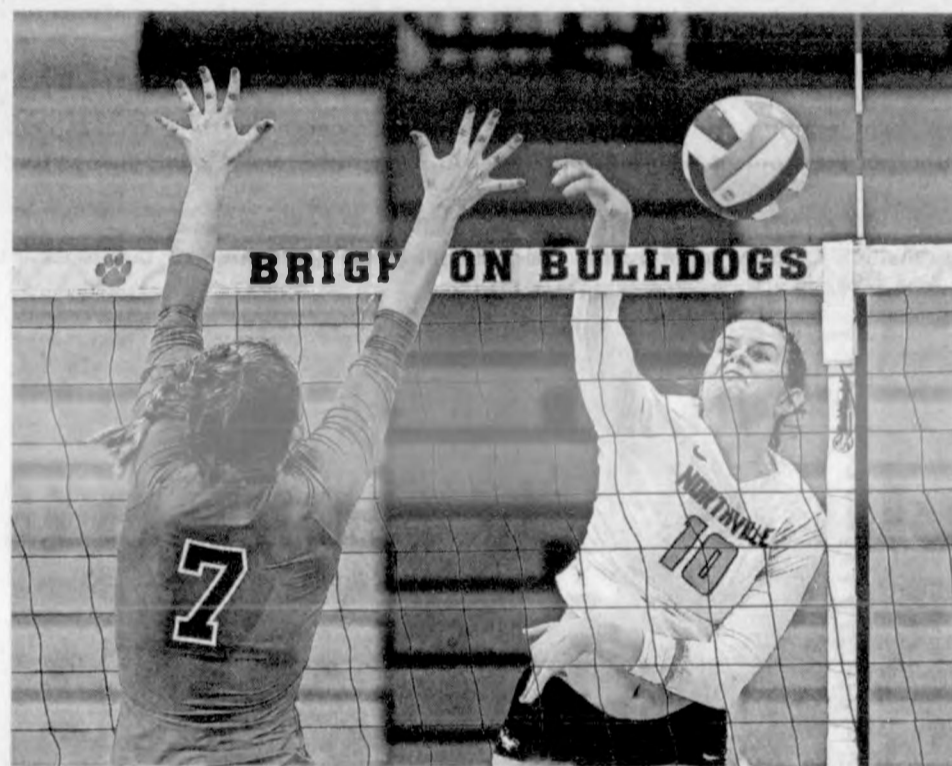
Micovich said he was unsure when Allen would be healthy enough to return to the Mavericks, but that's OK. The second-year coach was pretty happy with his backup, JT, who helped Milford account for 225 yards of total offense against a stout defense.

It's clear the future is bright for the underclassman.

"Caden is a hell of a player, and he's really explosive," Micovich said. "He's been practicing with us since June. He was never necessarily a JV quarterback. I always talk to him and tell him, 'Listen, you're a varsity player that just happens to play JV.' So it was great that he's been getting the repetitions in practice, practicing against the best defense in the LVC. I'm really proud of him tonight. That's a good South Lyon defense over there, and he made some plays when we really needed it."

Whether JT gets one more start or winds up finishing the season under center, his defense will have his back. They proved that in their milestone win over South Lyon.

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



Northville's Mallory Reck drives the ball past Brighton's Alyssa Swanson during a 3-1 victory Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023. TIMOTHY ARRICK/FOR THE LIVINGSTON DAILY

## Volleyball

Continued from Page 1B

other being 2-0 in a quad Aug. 24 at Saline.

"We made a lot of progression from the last time we saw them until the second time," Brighton coach Cori Crocker said. "Now the next time we see them is in regional finals. We're looking to continue to make another progression into that next match."

The Bulldogs don't shy away from having a state championship as their stated mission, but know they will likely have to get through Northville to accomplish that goal.

That won't be easy, as Brighton knows full well.

Northville was the state runner-up last season and has won 20 straight matches since losing its opener to No. 2 Hudsonville.

"I love the timing of this match, because it just reminds us of the level we have to work for and how hard we have to be going in practice," Crocker said. "It's very hard when you're going and beating a lot of teams up to remind them how serious practice should be taken and how hard we should be working."

"A match like this is just reinvigorating us coming into the practices for the next few weeks. I'm excited to see what I get out of them for the next couple weeks to come."

Brighton has lost 12 straight matches to Northville since winning 3-0 on Oct. 1, 2019. The Bulldogs' four fourth-

year varsity players are 0-10 against the Mustangs, getting swept in all but three matches.

"It will help us a lot, because it will prepare us for when it's really important, like regionals," Brighton senior setter Lea Gage said. "Us getting out there, win or loss, it was experience and it helped us grow as a team. Since I've been here as a freshman, that was probably the best fight I've had against Northville."

Despite the lopsided nature of the rivalry, the Bulldogs have the Mustangs' respect.

"They're a very scrappy and aggressive team," Northville junior outside hitter Molly Reck said. "They frustrate teams really easily, because they dig the crap out of the ball. It was a really good win for us, a really gritty win."

Brighton fought back from a 12-7 deficit to win the first game and jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the second game. Northville altered the momentum of the match by responding with seven straight points to begin an 18-4 run.

The third game was tied 21-21 before the Mustangs made the plays necessary to win.

Brighton never led in the fourth game, as Northville clinched the match on an ace by Ashlee Gnau.

"They're a very well-coached team," Northville coach Sarah Lindstrom said of the Bulldogs. "I know Cori Crocker very well. She does a great job getting her players to step up in moments like that. ... We knew they were going to bring it defensively."

Northville improved to 4-0 in the KLAA West, while Brighton fell to 3-1.

# Why Detroit Country Day boys soccer deserves its No. 2 ranking

Brandon Folsom

Hometownlife.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Most coaches will tell you they don't pay attention to the rankings.

But not Steven Bossert.

No, the Detroit Country Day soccer coach is actually the president of the Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association. One of his duties is ensuring the rankings are put together and shipped out to the public each week. So he's well aware of who is ranked where and what it means for a team to be atop the polls.

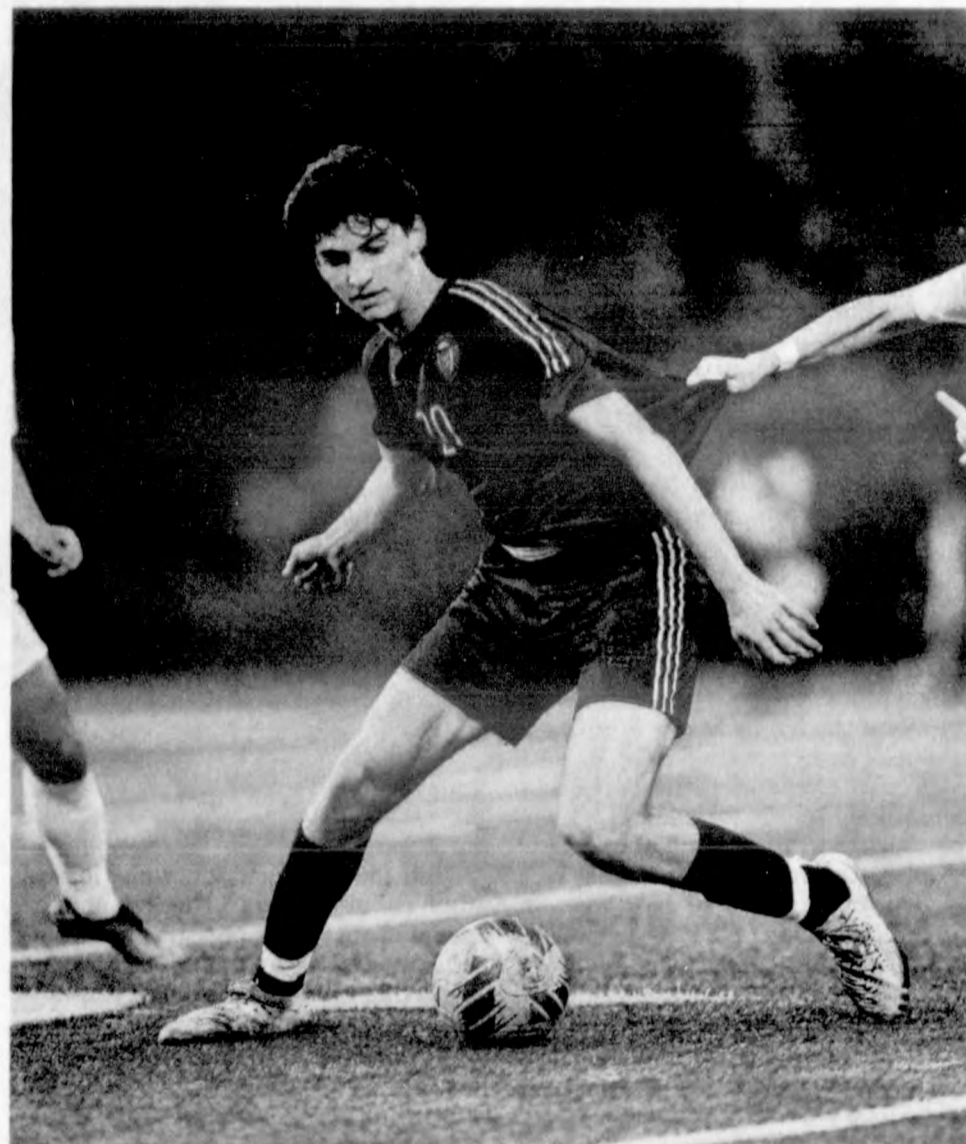
And following their Sept. 20 match against fifth-ranked Pontiac Notre Dame Prep, you could say the Yellowjackets (8-2-2) are definitely worthy of the No. 2 ranking they have in Division 3.

Despite a recent spat of injuries, they jumped out to a convincing 2-0 lead before halftime, battled through an onslaught of cramping in the second half and held on for the two-goal victory over the Fighting Irish.

That win concludes a three-game series that Country Day uses to see where it's at as a program as it prepares for the postseason. Because it doesn't compete in a conference, it judges how well it's playing based on its results against Brother Rice, its D-2 neighbor up Lahser Road, rival Cranbrook and, of course, Notre Dame Prep.

The Yellowjackets played the Warriors to a 1-1 tie in late August, recently edged the Cranes, last year's D-2 state runners-up, 3-2, and had no trouble out-possessing NDP to create a pair of goals.

"We thought it'd be an entertaining game, and it certainly was. It was a tough battle," Bossert said of the top-five matchup. "They're (NDP) a good team. We know they're really well coached, and they have several dangerous players. We had to play well to beat them. I think we did, especially in the first half. In the second half, we had a bunch of cramps and had to play a bunch of guys out of position. But we



Detroit Country Day's Zach Rodger looks to make a play during a boys soccer match against Pontiac Notre Dame Prep on Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023.

BRANDON FOLSOM

battled and held on, and it kind of felt like a playoff game, right?"

Ammar Siddiqui created the first goal off a breakaway down the near sideline in the 24th minute. His shot got deflected, but Elija Khaldun was there to bang in the rebound.

Zach Roger scored the insurance goal off, essentially, a set piece just before

halftime. The senior had so much time to secure his footing off of Andrew Brentano's throw-in that his shot from 30 yards out looked like an uncontested free kick.

The game was never in doubt, but Bossert was right: It did, indeed, look like a playoff game out there. And it usually is. Last year the two played to a 0-0

tie. The year before that? They played to a 1-1 tie in the regular season, and then the Fighting Irish edged Country Day 2-1 in overtime during the district tournament.

"It's always pretty close, whether it's here or their place," he added.

"I know that we always kind of benchmark our season on this game, the Cranbrook game and, usually, Brother Rice, to see how our season is and what kind of team we got."

So what makes Country Day so strong this season?

It returns four of its seven all-stars from 2022 in Rodger, a surefooted forward, junior goalkeeper Finn Hounsell, senior twin brothers Stephen and Andrew Brentano in the midfield and junior defender Alex Eby.

What's more, they play a more traditional, well-skilled version of the game. They're a possession team that plays to feet more than you'd typically see at the high school level. There's not much boot-ball going on.

It's rare to see Country Day not pass the ball around several times before getting off its scoring attempts.

The Yellowjackets have proved that in their wins over bigger schools such as Detroit Cass Tech (twice), Macomb Lutheran North, Holland Christian, Parma Western and Detroit U-D Jesuit, among other impressive victories for a D-3 school playing a tough schedule.

Country Day has definitely earned that No. 2 ranking.

"I'm the president of the coaches association so I'm definitely aware of the rankings in all four divisions," Bossert added. "I do know (what it takes to be highly ranked). We are (highly ranked) because we play a tough schedule. We're 8-2-2 now, and we've got a great record. We play a lot of Division 1 schools, and we've been able to play a good style of soccer."

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

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# Longtime Salem tennis coach dies at 78

Brandon Folsom

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Canton coach Tom Kimball hopes the school district one day renames the tennis facility at Plymouth-Canton Education Park after longtime Salem coach Bill Nelson, who died unexpectedly on Sept. 8.

That's the type of impact Nelson had during his four decades of coaching the sport in the area.

Nelson, who taught at West Middle School in Plymouth for 38 years, coached at the junior high level until he got his start with the Rocks in 1990. He spent 28 years as their head coach before making the unselfish decision to become the team's assistant in 2018 so that the program could promote long-time assistant Rob McLaren to head coach.

"I started coaching with Bill as his assistant coach about 10 years ago," said McLaren, who teaches at Discovery Middle School. "I had been coaching at Plymouth as the girls coach, but I had always wanted to be the coach of a boys team. I had a chance to take a head coaching position somewhere else and in true Bill Nelson form, he said, 'No, no, no. You're not leaving Salem. You're staying here. You become the head coach, and I'll become the assistant,' and it has worked out great for us over the past few years."

In turn, McLaren invited Bill to also become an assistant at Plymouth during the girls seasons.

"Only here can you do something like that," McLaren added. "Since we were both middle school teachers, no one gave us too much trouble about that because we had kids come through our schools that we eventually coached on both of our teams. So he had been wearing the Salem blue during the boys season and the black and silver for the girls season ever since."

McLaren, as well as the local tennis community, celebrated Nelson's life and his commitment to the sport during a memorial service this past Saturday at Salem. They even planted a tree at the P-CEP courts in his honor.

Dozens of former coaches, players and colleagues attended the service to



Longtime Salem tennis coach Bill Nelson poses for a selfie with Hartland coach Terry Mears in 2022.

TERRY MEARS/COURTESY PHOTO

show their support of Nelson, who was at a Salem practice as recently as Sept. 5.

"Tennis was a real passion of his," McLaren said. "It's one of the things that kept him spirited, just coming out to the tennis courts every spring and every fall for the tennis teams. His loss is absolutely heartbreaking."

"He was a legend at the Park. He's been around tennis for about 40 years when you add up the all the middle school and high school teams he's coached. It's going to be hard to even think about replacing him because he's meant so much. He's been at those courts for 40 years. All those Saturday tournaments. All those matches. He's outlasted so many legends in our district. He's been coaching here forever, and he'll be missed."

## What they're saying about Bill Nelson's legacy at Salem

Canton tennis coach Tom Kimball: "For nearly 40 years, Bill showed up. Always on time, always with a smile, always upbeat, ready to share his knowledge of tennis with his players. I coached for many years with Bill and against Bill and could not have asked for a better mentor to guide me in my own position as a P-CEP tennis coach. We made tennis practice challenging yet fun for the players. This has resulted in



Salem tennis coach Rob McLaren speaks during a memorial service for longtime coach Bill Nelson on Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, at the high school.

TOM BEAUDOIN/SPECIAL TO HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

teams that have regularly exceeded 50 players and have made many trips to the state finals.

"Bill did not focus on wins, losses, trophies or medals. The lessons he taught us included sportsmanship, perseverance and camaraderie. These are ideals that transcend the sport of tennis and impact our lives in more ways than we realize."

"Through countless hours on the court and unwavering passion for the game, Bill motivated his players not only to be better athletes but also better human beings, to always do the right thing. He knew that his teams could compete at the highest level in the MHSAA and he encouraged them to embrace new challenges with courage, determination and with unwavering sportsmanship."

Salem athletic director Tim Baechler: "Bill is one of the most positive people and coaches I have ever met. I never heard him complain about his health or speak negatively about another coach, kid or team here at Salem."

When I broke the news about Bill to my wife, Julie said, 'Noooooo, I had him as a teacher at West Middle School. He was one of my all-time favorites!' Bill made a big difference in our community for many years. He left his legacy, and that is what we all should be aspiring to do."

Canton tennis coach and P-CEP counselor Barb Lehmann: "The best match was always Canton vs. Salem! The players knew each other on the other side of the net and we as coaches were friends. It was easy to be friends with Bill even when he stood at 6 feet or more and I at 5 feet. He always was positive with his kids and was a good sport. While each of us wanted to win, beating a team where you respected their coach was just that much sweeter. Bill was funny, entertaining and kind. The number of players from Salem and Canton, and eventually Plymouth, were lucky to know Coach Nelson! I know I was!"

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

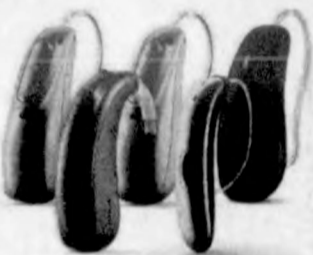
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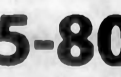
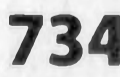
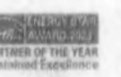
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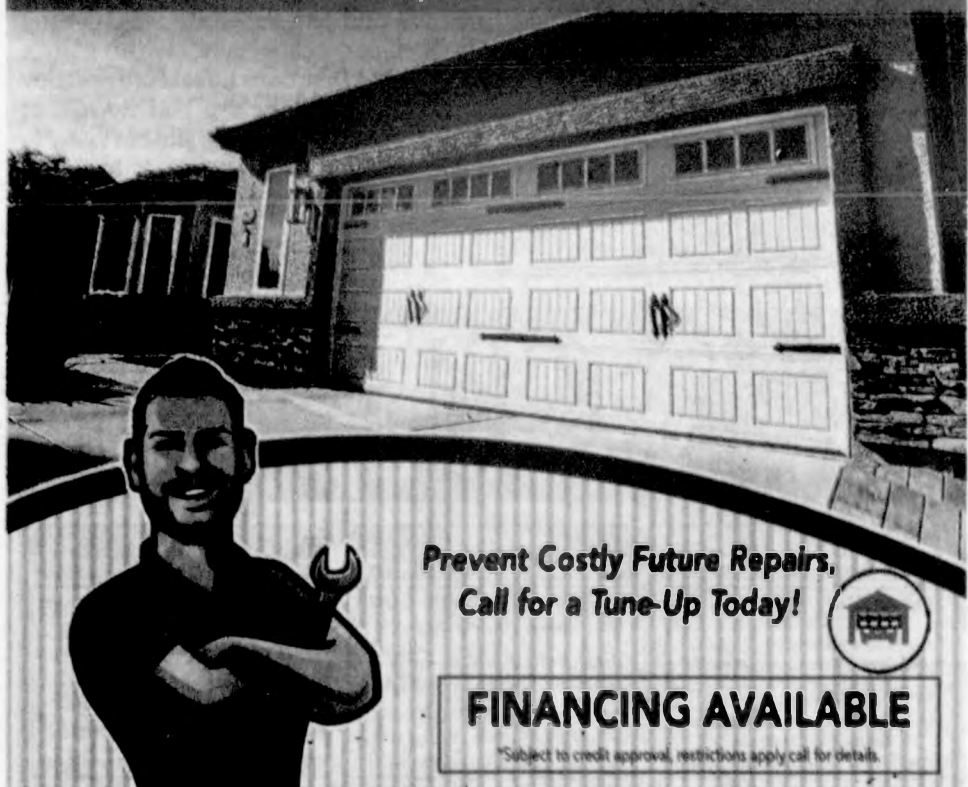
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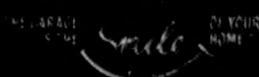
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# ‘Family first’ mentality helping Clarenceville bring along youngsters

Brandon Folsom  
Hometownlife.com  
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

The Livonia Clarenceville football team looks a little different this fall.

You can start with the makeup of its roster. The Trojans (2-2) rely on 11 underclassmen and have just three juniors and five seniors in starting roles. They’ve had as many as seven underclassmen on the field at the same time.

And then there’s the coaching staff. One of the biggest surprises of the off-season was seeing coach Bob Meyer leave Clarenceville to take over Auburn Hills Avondale.

During his four seasons with the Trojans, they never had worse than a .556 winning percentage, and they qualified for the postseason in each of the past three years. And perhaps no moment of his was bigger than when he helped Clarenceville upset undefeated Redford Union in the D-4 playoff opener a year ago.

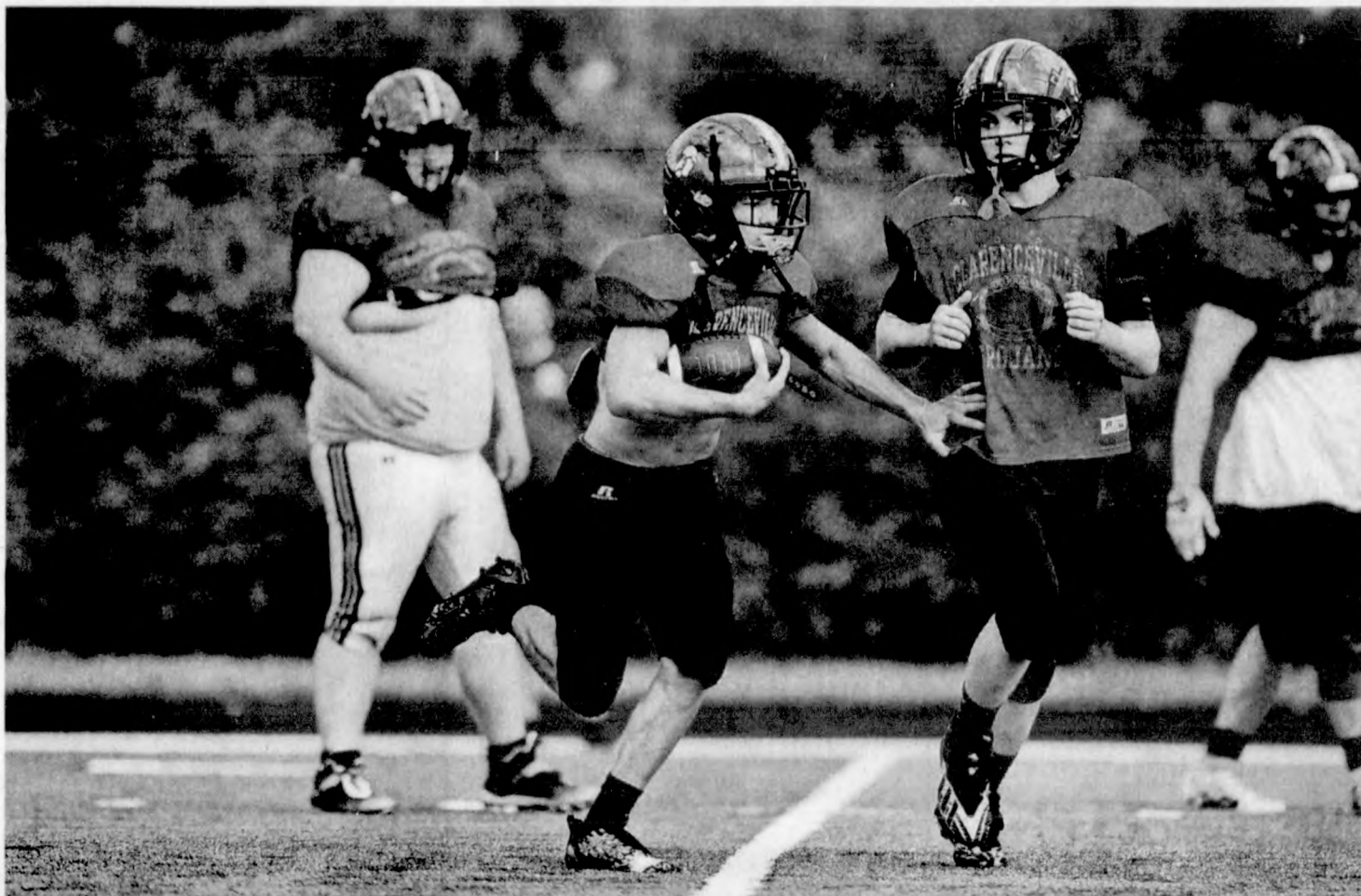
Coincidentally, Meyer won his 100th career game a week ago, as the Yellow Jackets downed Ferndale 37-12 to move to 4-0 overall and 2-0 in the Oakland Activities Association-Gold.

Who has stepped up to fill such a void on Clarenceville’s sidelines? That would be Marty Castellon, who was promoted to head coach after spending the past three seasons as the Trojans’ defensive coordinator.

He has 25 years of experience working under some of the greatest coaches to do it in Michigan. From former Walled Lake Western coach Mike Zdebski to Zeeland East’s Joe Woodruff and Meyer, among many others.

His coaching staff, which includes assistants Joel and John Popa, Alex Snow and Andrew Rose, combined with the handful of veteran leaders the team has brought back, such as workhorse senior running back Elijah Craig, junior linebacker Jaylan Johnson and junior Michael Oliver, have kept the Trojans competitive during this transition.

“The philosophy here is to be a family first, and that’s what I’ve been stressing since Day 1,” Castellon said during a practice on Sept. 12. “That’s why we’ve had more kids who have wanted to come out. We stress academics, and the



Livonia Clarenceville's Eli Craig rushes during a practice on Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2023. BRANDON FOLSOM/HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

teachers are 100% backing me on that. It’s been both fun and a little bit of a struggle. We’re just trying to stay on track, have the kids trust the process of what we’re doing here and focus on academics.”

Winning at Clarenceville has been challenging since the Trojans left the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference and went independent ahead of the 2021 season. Playing a grabbag schedule filled with unfamiliar opponents (with many games against teams from outside of metro Detroit) has made preparing for games tough.

They opened the season with wins over Cranbrook and former MIAC foe Whitmore Lake before losing their past two games against Southgate Anderson and Macomb Lutheran North. Through four games, they’ve played teams from four different counties (Oakland, Liv-

ingston, Wayne and Macomb).

Before the regular season is over, they’ll head to Kalamazoo to face Loy Norrix and go downriver to take on Flat Rock. But the team doesn’t look at that as a bad thing. Lining up against teams from all over has been great for team bonding.

“It’s been pretty challenging, but it’s good for our team,” said Craig, who has rushed 84 times for 894 yards through the first four weeks, which includes a six-touchdown effort against Whitmore Lake. “We can see different teams play and see how other teams work and see how we work against them.”

Clarenceville had a bye in Week 5, but that’s just more time for the team to grow as a unit.

And creating chemistry is something the Trojans have taken quite seriously.

Every day after school, they meet in the gym, weight room or a classroom. They lift together, eat meals together, study film together and just hang out as much as they can before the actual practices begin.

“In order to understand your teammates, you have to build a bond,” said Johnson, who was voted a team captain despite being only a junior. “We try to meet every day as a team, come together, have fun and then come out here to play ball. We spend time with each other, talk about the team, talk about we can do to provide for each other and do our best to improve. It took a little time for me to get used to (being a captain), but I feel like once we got everyone to come together as a group, we’ve been getting better and better as time has gone by.”

Yeah, the Trojans have a host of younger players they’re relying on at key positions. But that’s kind of always been the thing at Clarenceville.

Johnson said he wouldn’t have become a leader had he not learned under former veterans. And Craig agreed with that sentiment, too. The Trojans have had no shortage of leaders since Meyer took over in 2018. From former running backs Sean-Brian Craig, Elijah’s older brother, and Jordan Williams to Miles Ealy and Dontez Robinson, among many, many more, who have taught their current leaders how to do it on Friday nights.

Now they’re hoping this year’s team lays the foundation for the program’s future leaders.

“They nominated JJ (Johnson) to be a captain as a junior because he leads off the field and on the field,” Castellon said. “He has good academics. He’s a kid who motivates everyone to get going. That’s just his natural ability, to be a captain. And he’s not the only one. We have good kids here, good athletes and a good administration. We have the numbers when they show up. We have a good group of coaches. When the kids buy in, it’s always family first, then education and then football.”

For Clarenceville to make the postseason, it’ll have to win four or five games, and the schedule isn’t getting any easier, especially with games against D-1 Dearborn Edsel Ford and Loy Norrix and well as 4-0 Flat Rock. But beating bigger schools is the best way to collect playoff points. And what better way to grow as a team than by winning games?

## Obituaries

### Jeffrey R. Barnes

**NORTHVILLE** - Jeffrey R. Barnes (68), son of Martha Barnes of Northville and the late Orville “Barney” Barnes, passed away Sept. 15, 2023. Jeff lived in Northville & Livonia as a boy. He graduated from Lowell Sr High School in 1973 and Michigan State University in 1977. After college, Jeff worked as a grain accountant for Michigan Elevator Exchange, a division of Michigan Farm Bureau, and Continental Grain Co in Des Moines, IA. He also worked in Des Moines for Sears & Wells Fargo. He is survived by his mother and 3 brothers, Tom Barnes of Oregon, Richard Barnes of NY and CA, and Greg Barnes of NC. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Sept. 23, at 11:30 a.m., preceded by a memorial visitation from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., at L.J. Griffin Funeral Home, 19091 Northville Rd, in Northville.



### Margaret Anna Schlack

**NEW HUDSON** - Margaret Anna Schlack passed away peacefully at home after a brief bout with cancer, surrounded by her loved ones on September 13, 2023 at the age of 91.

Margaret was born December 31, 1931 in Redford, Michigan to the late Lillian and Willard Crook, Sr.

Mom was widowed at a young age with 9 children. She was our mentor, never afraid to voice her opinion nor mince words while using her quick wit and sense of humor. Her strength and courage will be forever remembered!

She was an avid reader and also enjoyed writing and receiving letters from her family and friends. She was artistic, creative, musically talented and loved to dance. She had the ability to do anything she set her mind to.

Margaret is preceded in death by her husband Max, son Tom and grandson Josh St.Clair, brother Robert Crook Sr., brother-in-law James Lynch Sr. and sister-in-law Josephine Crook.

She is survived by siblings Nancy Lynch, James (Diane) Crook, Willard (Sandra) Crook Jr., and many nieces and nephews.

Her beautiful life will be forever cherished in the lives of her children: Carol (Howard) Redman, Kathy (Mark) Stoll, Joyce (Bill) Teeple, Karen (Roger) Biddinger, Kim (John) Fleming, Kris (Joe) Bovitz, Kelly (Mike) Coon and Paul (Margaret) Schlack. She has 24 grandchildren, 25 great grandchildren and 4 great, great grandchildren. A Celebration of Life will be held 1-4 pm, Saturday October 21 at the VFW Post 1224 125 East McHattie St. South Lyon

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Guide Dogs for the Blind or St. Jude. A special thanks to the Hospice team who were exceptional.



## Community Worship

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<b>HOLY SPIRIT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH &amp; SCHOOL</b> <a href="http://www.hpscc.net">www.hpscc.net</a> at the corner of Wiggins Lake & Musch Rd. 810-231-9199 Fr. John Rocas, Pastor Weekend Liturgies: Saturday 4:00 p.m. Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. <small>Please visit our Shrine of Turin Display and Book &amp; Gift Shop!</small>	<b>Church of the Holy Spirit</b> 3700 Harvey Lake Rd., Highland Saturday Mass 5PM, Sunday Mass 9 & 11AM 248-887-5364   <a href="mailto:HolySpiritHighland.com">HolySpiritHighland.com</a> The Holy Spirit is Here - Come Home <b>All are Welcome!</b>	<b>Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church</b> 41415 W Nine Mile Rd • Novi, MI 48375 248-349-0565 Divine Service on Sundays at 10am Sunday School & Adult Bible Class 8:45am Rev. Thomas Schroeder <a href="mailto:wsstanovi@aol.com">wsstanovi@aol.com</a> Come and worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!
NORTHVILLE	SOUTH LYON	WHITMORE LAKE
<b>First United Methodist Church</b> (248) 349-1144 777 West 8 Mile Road (8 Mile and Telford) Northville, Michigan Worship Times: September - May 9:15 & 11:00 a.m. Memorial Day - Labor Day 10:00 a.m. Rev. Marsha M. Woodley, Lead Pastor <a href="http://www.firstunitednorthville.org">www.firstunitednorthville.org</a>	<b>RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!</b>	<b>FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 10774 Nine Mile Road Rev. M. Lee Taylor • 449-2582 Sunday School, 9:45 a.m. Worship, 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Evening, 7:00 p.m.
<b>OUR LADY OF VICTORY CATHOLIC CHURCH</b> 133 Orchard Dr., Northville WEEKEND LITURGIES: Saturday 5:00 p.m. Sunday: 7:30, 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. Church: 348-2621, School 348-3610 Religious Education 348-2568 Rev. Dennis Theroux, Pastor	<b>RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!</b>	<b>RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!</b>

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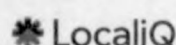
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# How to improve customer retention

### Metro Creative

One of the principles of good business is to remember that it is less expensive to have customers become repeat shoppers than to try to entice new customers to come in and try products or services. Harvard Business Review says onboarding a new customer can be as much as 25 times more expensive than retaining an existing customer. However, profits can grow even when businesses retain a small number of customers.

Consumers can be fickle, and there is always some shiny new "something" that may draw their attention away. That fickle nature is on display whenever a new product hits the market. An existing phone may still function at or near peak capacity, but the newer one boasting different bells and whistles captures the attention of a buyer who doesn't want to feel like he or she is missing out on the latest and the greatest.

Small business owners have to do their part to ensure their customer base is not drawn away by something shiny and new - par-



ticularly if that something is a big box retailer who has moved into the neighborhood. These strategies can improve customer retention and benefit small businesses.

• **Prioritize strong first impressions.** Customers will judge a business by its cover. How they were treated, how smoothly a process ran and how quickly action was taken when an issue arose will affect how likely a

customer is to stick around. Businesses who perfect their first impressions, particularly by putting their key employees in position to initiate contact, may find they are more successful at customer retention.

• **Customize the customer experience.** Businesses can use omnichannel support to gather information about clients as they attempt to curate highly personalized experiences. Omnichannel

support provides customer service across various channels and touchpoints, says Zendesk. This includes cohesive usage of live agents, chatbots, emails, and more. Omnichannel support streamlines customer service conversation history from channel to channel, ultimately making things easier on the customer.

• **Offer loyalty incentives.** Businesses can foster goodwill and customer retention

by rewarding customers who stick around. Rewards can include VIP events, early access deals, special offers, discount codes, and other loyalty programs. These programs help collect data to improve the customer experience and indicate to customers that they're valued.

• **Keep customers in the know.** Businesses should routinely update existing customers on what is being done to keep products and services fresh so evolving customer needs are met. With so much competition out there, businesses need to keep their names at the top of the minds of consumers.

• **Make every customer feel like a VIP.** Go above and beyond with every customer, treating each and every one as if he or she is the most important person in the room. VIP services can include seamless online services as well as prompt and fast point of sales in person.

These strategies can be employed by small businesses to improve customer retention rates.

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