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Grosse Pointe News

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FEBRUARY 6, 2020
 GROSSE POINTE, MICHIGAN

Complete news coverage of all the Pointes

Major projects near end stages

By Eddie B. Allen Jr.
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE WOODS — Two ongoing construction efforts that have impacted residents are scheduled to conclude major phases this year.

The city hall renovation that began in January after a burst water pipe flooded the Mack Plaza property in 2019, damaging several departments' structure and furnishings, caused expenses exceeding \$1 million, City Administrator Bruce Smith said. Only the Department of Public Safety and community center were left without significant damage, causing a temporary relocation of staff from most of the campus into the community center. The result was an interruption of the center's rental for special events and discontinued programs for seniors and toddlers who used the facility.

Smith projects a return to normalcy by spring for residents who visit city hall and use its facilities.

"There were some delays because of the asbestos and the abatement involved," Smith said.

Originally, city officials had been optimistic about completing the renovations late last year, but damp drywall grew "a little moldy," Smith said, which

See PROJECTS, page 2A



PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

Exterior work is 100 percent complete and interior work is 75 percent complete on the former University Liggett Middle School building, which is being converted into 12 housing units.

Condos close to finished

By Eddie B. Allen Jr.
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE WOODS — A project designed to convert the former University Liggett Middle School into 12 housing units is significantly closer to completion since a contentious 2019 meeting.

City officials met with neighborhood residents Sept. 23 to hear complaints that the project, first approved in 2014, was disrupting the community and taking longer than anticipated.

See CONDOS, page 2A

Ethics committee has pre-formation meeting

By Laurel Kraus
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE SHORES — The Grosse Pointe Shores Ethics Committee gathered for a pre-formation meeting Wednesday, Jan. 29, to begin discussing the proposal and drafting of an ethics ordinance to govern elected and appointed officials and volunteer residents who are involved in city committees. The ordinance could potentially affect those employed by the city, as well.

Members can join the committee on a volunteer basis and

tentatively include Mayor Ted Kedzierski as the chairman, City Clerk Bruce Nichols, Councilman Matthew Seely and residents Brian Geraghty, Dr. Jan Pemberton and Rob Squiers.

"Having an ethics ordinance for the city that people can look at and people can have some certainty that certain items or conducts or activities are essentially regulated, maybe even prohibited, but certainly defined, is better than having no ordinance at all," Kedzierski said, regarding what the end goal should be.

The meeting was spent dis-

cussing the different areas of concern that could fall under the ethics ordinance, such as disclosing prior relationships with city contractors and accepting gifts.

"Years ago I received a basket of desserts, it looked like \$300 worth, and then a couple months later I got invited to the person who gave me that gift and that person was inquiring whether or not that person could serve as our judge," Kedzierski used as an example.

Questions brought forward at the meeting and not yet determined were whether city

employees should be subject to the ethics ordinance and whether elected officials should be allowed on the ethics committee since the ordinance is meant to regulate them.

"It was just meant as a pre-formation meeting and we'll have maybe a better idea of the committee and the structure in place for the next meeting," Kedzierski said. "The purpose is to do it right, not necessarily to do it fast, but get something in place that's right. Not just for our city, but for the entire community."

See ETHICS, page 2A

Shores officers sworn in, promoted

By Laurel Kraus
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE SHORES — Following the swearing in of Public Safety Officer Jeffrey Roybal at the Shores council meeting Tuesday, Jan. 21, officers Tony Spina and Douglas Fraser were promoted to sergeant and lieutenant, respectively.

"It's an incredible amount of work that goes into a promotion like that," Director of Public Safety John Schulte said, "months of studying and so I'm very proud of the new hire and I'm very proud of our command staff."

Retired Shores directors of public safety Stephen Poloni and Gary Mitchell, who hired and trained Spina, were in atten-

dance. "A great deal of his success has come from these two chiefs," Schulte said.

Spina graduated from the Macomb Police Academy in 2000 and has a master's degree in leadership and a bachelor's degree in public administration.

The 19-year veteran of Shores public safety also is a paramedic, assistant team leader of the Eastern Wayne County Special Response Team, a search and recovery diver with the St. Clair County Sheriff's Office Dive Team and an adjunct professor for several advanced police training courses at Macomb Community College.

"(I'm) just looking forward to advancing to the next portion of my career and trying to pass on

the training and tradition that I've received and help develop the newer officers coming up," he said.

Spina's wife, Shannon, began the process of pinning his shield, but asked his mother, Elaine, to finish in honor of his father, Don Wandzel, who retired from the Detroit Police Department after 32 years of service and passed away a few years ago.

His children, Alex and Justin, also were in attendance.

Fraser has been a sergeant since 2012. He graduated from the Oakland Police Academy in 1990 and has an associate's degree in criminal justice from St. Clair Community College.

"He's been an officer here

See OFFICERS, page 2A



PHOTO BY LAUREL KRAUS

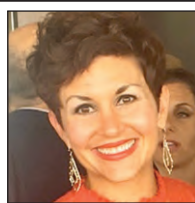
Sgt. Tony Spina and Lt. Douglas Fraser following their promotions Tuesday, Jan. 21, at city hall.

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Pointer of INTEREST

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Michelle Stackpoole

Home: Grosse Pointe Park
 Pierce drama teacher shares her family's adoption journey.



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PROJECTS:

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revealed more asbestos

than had been apparent, once the drywall was removed. "So that all took time," Smith added.

CONDOS:

Continued from page 1A

American Community Developers Project Manager John LaQuiere told city council Monday, Feb. 3, the exterior building work at Legacy Oaks Condominiums is finished and the interior is 75 percent complete.

"We have quite a bit of work inside," LaQuiere said.

Installing doors and windows at the 850 Briarcliff site are among remaining tasks, he said.

Building Administrator Gene Tutag affirmed the increased development at Legacy Oaks.

"I was at the site last week and it is correct that substantial progress has been made," Tutag told council.

Part of the challenge in

completing the project has been constructing it in a manner that meets the building's "custom nature," he added.

"It's going to be a beautiful development," Tutag said.

A "green screen" that serves as a visual barrier between the construction site and surrounding residents could be removed as early as the middle of the year, he added.

Councilman George McMullen Jr. raised a concern about LaQuiere's statement that exterior paving at the site will take place.

"When you start pouring cement, that's going to be big trucks and a lot of noise, I would imagine," McMullen said.

LaQuiere agreed, saying measures would be taken to minimize any disturbance to nearby residents.

Architectural redesign proposals and other stages of preparation that had to be approved by city council followed, along with an insurance settlement. Now the final stages of repair, including electrical, plumbing, painting and floor installation are underway and projected to meet contractors' 90-day estimate for completion, Smith said.

More complex, but still closer to completion, he said, is the \$34 million Milk River Drainage Improvement Project, an initiative to prevent sewage from flowing into Lake St. Clair, while also reducing basement flooding in homes nearby.

Milk River is a stream that runs between Wayne and Macomb counties into the lake. Some neighbors in the community along the river's basin, located in the Woods, have complained of issues ranging from damage to their property's foundation, caused by equipment work, to neighborhood eyesores related to the effort and

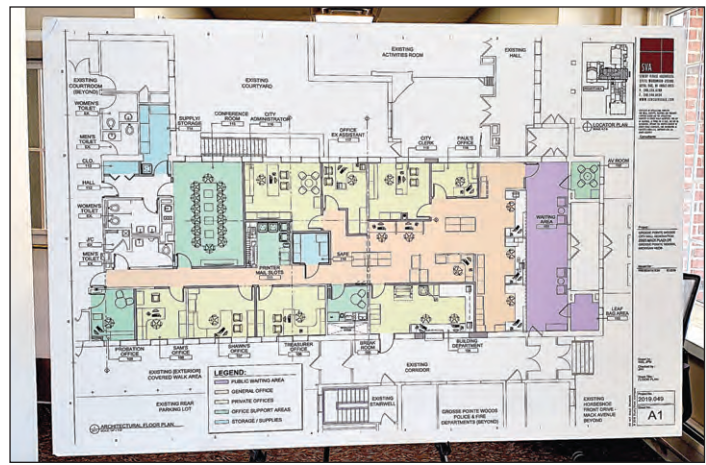


PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

A drawing of what the renovations entail is posted in the Woods' Community Center.

flooding around yards. Smith, who said he encourages calls to his office by residents who've been affected, also said he didn't know of significant property damage, but flooding is unrelated to the drainage improvement project.

"It's not caused by the work. It's caused by the water levels being higher," Smith said.

Heavy rain in recent months has added to concerns about water levels at

local marinas and elsewhere in metro Detroit, but Smith added that the drainage improvement project's undertaking involves updates to equipment, not actual water activity. Maintenance of a "pump house" connected to Milk River and refurbishing seven 70-foot storm pumps, costing \$500,000 per device, are central to the effort, he said. Project team members found hundreds of thousands of gallons of

sludge at the bottom of the basin.

The good news to residents is a "substantial completion date" for the overhaul is expected in late October, Smith said.

"That's with the exception of the remaining storm pumps," he added.

Extracting, disassembling and transporting the pumps has been a more involved process than officials estimated, but Smith said the overhaul is necessary because the original infrastructure was built decades ago. While the pump refurbishment will continue, one device at a time, for about two years, landscaping and grounds restoration in the community should begin in late summer or early fall.

"It's just been a massive undertaking, but guess what," Smith said. "If you don't do it, you wake up one day and things aren't working."

ETHICS:

Continued from page 1A

And I'd like something

that we'd be so proud of that if Grosse Pointe Farms or Grosse Pointe Woods or Grosse Pointe City wishes to use, that

they feel comfortable using our template as a model for their behavior, their activities."

Residents who were unable to attend the preformation meeting are still invited to join the ethics committee.

"We welcome their input," Kedzierski said

via email.

The next ethics committee meeting will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26, at Shores city hall, 795 Lakeshore.

"I'd like everyone coming to that meeting to bring five ideas, five activities or five items that our Grosse Pointe

Shores ethics ordinance should regulate," Kedzierski said.

He suggested reading model ethics ordinances from the Michigan Municipal League and attorney general as references.

"I do believe we're on the right path here,"

Kedzierski said. "It may not be an end-all. It may be something that periodically we need to amend ourselves, but I want to have something in place so that there's no guessing here, that there's no indecision here about whether or not something is OK or not OK."

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OFFICERS:

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since 1996," Schulte said. "He's a former SRT member. He spent six years on the special response team

and he has received the department life-saving award."

He also is certified as a lead paramedic and firefighter officer one and two.

"I'm looking forward to

my new position as a lieutenant," Fraser said. "I have a great bunch of officers that I'm working with and I'm just looking forward to stepping in and going from there."

Fraser's daughter, Stacy

Miller, a five-year St. Clair County Sheriff's officer, had the honor of pinning his shield.

Also in attendance to support him were his parents, wife, Vickie, and sister, Dana.

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North student shares perils of vaping at town hall

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

Daniel Ament's life as an active teenager who excelled in school and sports changed Sept. 5, 2019, when he became severely ill due to vaping. Ament spent 29 days on life support and, facing imminent death, received the first double lung transplant in the world related to a vaping-related injury Oct 15, 2019.

Once a competitive swimmer, sailor and runner, Ament weighed 99 pounds when he was released from the hospital. He had to relearn how to walk and talk, is on a regimen of 20 pills a day and faces a long recovery ahead. He also has had to give up a dream he held since he was 11 of attending the U.S. Naval Academy and pursuing a career in the military as a Navy Seal.

"Now my trajectory has completely changed in how I can live my life," Ament said at a vaping town hall at Grosse Pointe North High School Jan. 30, hosted by the Grosse Pointe Public School System, CARE of Southeastern Michigan, The Family Center of Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods and the Healthy Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods coalition.

That trajectory includes speaking openly about his ordeal and creating a website, Fight4Wellness.com, a nonprofit focused on health and wellness and informing youth about the dangers of substance abuse.

One reason Ament agreed to share his story at the town hall, attended by many North and Grosse Pointe South High School students, was to spread his message: If this could happen to him, it could happen to anyone.

"A lot of young people think they are immune," said Dr. Hassan W. Neme, the Henry Ford Hospital cardiothoracic surgeon who performed Ament's double lung transplant.

Another reason was to publicly thank the doctors who saved his life and the friends and family members who supported him throughout the ordeal.

Ament said he started vaping the summer of his sophomore year of high school. He was 16.

"It was around me a lot," he said. "I got into it because my friends were doing it. I kept doing it because I heard it was a healthy alternative to cigarettes and I didn't think anything bad would come of it."

Ament denied rumors he vaped from homemade cartridges or purchased black market products.

"I was vaping the same things that everybody else in the area has been vaping. The same distributors, the same stores," he said.

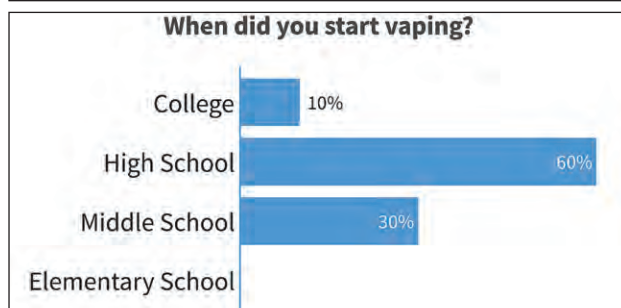
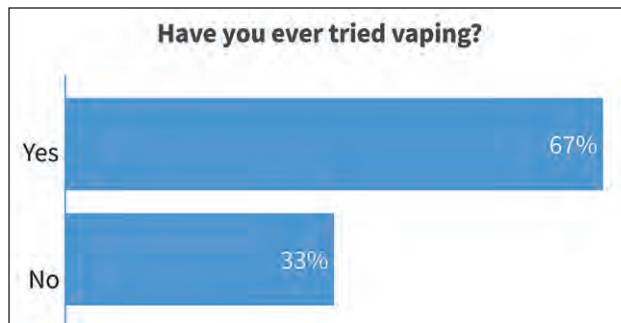
His first symptoms were fatigue, a severe headache and a high fever.

"I felt horrible. I had a fever of 104 and felt like I couldn't breathe," he said. "I went to the emergency room. That was my last memory until I woke up after surgery two months later."

On the panel with Ament and Neme were



Daniel Ament is pictured with Dr. Hassan W. Neme, the Henry Ford Hospital cardiothoracic surgeon who performed his double lung transplant.



COURTESY OF WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY, PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIOLOGY

Students in the audience participated in a live poll during the town hall.

Ament's mother, Tammy Ament; Dr. Leslie H. Lundahl, clinical psychologist and faculty member in the substance abuse research division within the Department of Psychiatry and Neurosciences at Wayne State University School of Medicine; North Principal Kate Murray; South Principal Moussa Hamka; Detective Ryan Schroerlucke, Grosse Pointe Woods Department of Public Safety and president of the Grosse Pointe Fraternal Order of Police; North students Jakoby Bush and Grace Haynes; and South students Evelyn Kuhnlein, Keely Messacar and Alice Scott.

Serving as moderator was WDIV-TV news anchor Sandra Ali. Ali shared a sobering statistic with the audience: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of middle and high school students using e-cigarettes rose from 3.6 million in 2018 to 5.4 million in 2019 — an increase of about 1.8 million.

"The increase of youth vaping has been driven by a number of factors including advertising, the attraction of fruity flavors and the availability of easily concealed devices that deliver higher levels of nicotine," Ali said.

Ament revealed he first witnessed vaping when he was in seventh grade. Among participants in a live poll conducted during the town hall, 30 percent responded they started vaping in middle school, 60 percent said high school and 10 percent said college. Thirty-five percent said they felt pressured by friends to vape while 65 percent said they did not. Of those who currently vape, 21 percent responded they only vape nicotine and 21 percent said they vape both nico-

tine and THC.

A concerning message from the medical professionals on the panel was how little is known about the long-lasting impact of vaping or even what chemicals are causing the damage.

While not every person will experience health effects as dire as Ament, "no one is safe or immune from having this response," Neme said.

What is known is that water vapor provides an effective delivery system to the lungs of fine particles containing toxic chemicals such as nicotine, benzoic acid, glycerol, propylene glycol, natural oils, extracts and flavors.

In Ament's case, "the toxic substance, whatever that substance was, was delivered very effectively to the far end of the lung," Neme said.

Also known, according to Lundahl, is that nicotine is extremely addictive and alters brain chemistry, with a particular impact on the adolescent frontal lobe, affecting the development of brain circuits involved in attention and learning, with a greater risk of mood disorders and permanent problems with impulse control.

THC presents its own risks to the adolescent brain, she added, including affecting areas of the brain associated with memory, motor coordination, cognition and reward.

The device that "changed everything," Lundahl said, is the Juul, which came out in 2011. From 2011 to 2015, e-cigarette use by high school students grew 900 percent.

Signs for parents to look for include marked changes in behavior or mood, nose bleeds, increased drinking of water, inability to sleep and decreased appetite. Other clues are a fruity

smell and the presence of "pens or highlighters or chargers that are not really pens or highlighters or chargers," Lundahl said.

"If you suspect your kid is using, voice your suspicions openly," she advised. "You don't want to accuse or name or blame. Basically you're communicating this is dangerous. For me this is a safety issue. You always, always, always want a dialog with your kids. The last thing you want to do is shut it down."

Schools are doing whatever they can to both deter and stop the use of e-cigarettes, Hamka and Murray said, from talking about vaping at class meetings and health class and displaying posters with QR codes linking to cessation programs, to propping doors open to bathrooms and increasing the number of hall monitors.

Prevention and detection are difficult, however, when vaping is so pervasive, easy to conceal and highly addictive, Murray said.

Making it even easier to conceal are new products on the market, such as vaping watches and even a hoodie where the string is the delivery mechanism for the vape, Hamka said.

For students who are caught, a first offense results in a three-day separation from school. The second is five days and the third is up to a 10-day suspension. Police also are contacted.

From a legal standpoint, it's a civil infraction for the first and second offense, Schroerlucke said, but this isn't much of a deterrent.

"The problem with that is it's not going on your record. The state fine for that is \$50," he added.

Hamka said he has talked to many repeat offenders who tell him they want to stop, but can't.

"When you come to us and say, I'm struggling with addiction — alcohol, drugs, vaping — we view that as an intervention," Hamka said. "There are no consequences. There are no police involved. If we catch you, that's a different story."

"There have been some great moments when we have connected kids with cessation programs," Murray said. "We are very blessed to have great mental health professionals on staff and local resources."

Neme warned Ament's story was a living example of how e-cig-



Ament was a healthy 16-year-old with dreams of becoming a Navy Seal before he became ill from vaping.

rette use, marketed as a safe alternative to cigarettes, "is definitely not safe. We have a living example here. We have statistics about people who were injured. This is only the tip of the iceberg. ... It's something the public needs to be aware of and I admire Daniel's courage to come to the forefront and make his story known."

Tammy Ament said the hardest part of her son's ordeal was witnessing his rapid decline and feeling helpless. What got her through was her faith and a support system made up of friends and family.

"In the end, it's hard because so many kids are still vaping," she said. "It needs to be stopped."

Even if we help one person, hopefully, we can make an impact and help a lot of people."

Her message to Juul and other e-cigarette companies is, "I just hope they never have to go through what our family has had to go through. ... They're targeting our kids. They're wrecking lives."

In addition to the town hall, Daniel Ament has shared his story locally and nationwide, from WDIV-TV to "Good Morning America." Between appearances, the 17-year-old is keeping up with his schoolwork at home and hopes to stay on track to graduate with his class in spring of 2021. Future plans include studying business at a Michigan college and starting his own business.

Ament also hopes to continue to advocate for the cause and spread awareness overall through public service announcements, his website, Fight4Wellness.com, and traveling to schools to let young people know there are healthy alternatives to vaping for coping with stress.

"It's kind of nerve wracking, but I think I need to do it," he said. "I feel a responsibility to do it."

The Week Ahead

SATURDAY, FEB. 8

◆ Grosse Pointe Farms/Woods Mother Son Movie Day, 12:30 p.m. Pier Park, 350 Lakeshore.

MONDAY, FEB. 10

◆ City of Grosse Pointe City Council meeting, 7 p.m. at the Neighborhood Club, 17150 Waterloo.
◆ Grosse Pointe Park City Council meeting, 7 p.m. at city hall, 15115 E. Jefferson.
◆ Grosse Pointe Farms City Council meeting, 7 p.m. at city hall, 90 Kerby.

TUESDAY, FEB. 11

◆ Grosse Pointe Park Community Outreach session, 1 p.m. at the Tompkins Community Center, 14920 Windmill Pointe Dr.
◆ Grosse Pointe Woods Citizens' Recreation Commission meeting, 7 p.m. at city hall, 20025 Mack Plaza.
◆ Grosse Pointe Shores City Council special meeting, 7 p.m. at city hall, 795 Lakeshore.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12

◆ Grosse Pointe Woods Beautification Commission meeting, 7 p.m. at city hall, 20025 Mack Plaza.

THURSDAY, FEB. 13

◆ Grosse Pointe Woods Historical Commission meeting, 7:30 p.m. at city hall, 20225 Mack Plaza.

SATURDAY, FEB. 15

◆ Grosse Pointe Shores Town Hall meeting, 10 a.m. at city hall, 795 Lakeshore.



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Pierce teacher opens up about adoption

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

When Jack Stackpoole turns 5 on Feb. 13, his parents, Michelle and Brian Stackpoole, will throw him a birthday party. The family will celebrate a different milestone July 2 — what they call Jack's "gotcha" day. That was the day in 2015 they went to court and Jack's adoption became final.

Henry, the newest member of the Stackpoole family, born Sept. 17, will have a "gotcha" day too, although his court date, likely in February or March, hasn't been set yet.

Michelle Stackpoole, who grew up in Clio, met her husband while they both attended Central Michigan University. Brian Stackpoole, a broadcasting major, was two years ahead and landed a job in the fall of 1999 teaching broadcasting at Grosse Pointe North High School, where he remains today. Michelle Stackpoole, who studied dance and theater, joined him at North in 2001, teaching speech, acting, dance and English in addition to directing plays and musicals.

Following a two-year leave to pursue professional acting and voiceover work, Michelle Stackpoole returned to the district when there was an opening for a drama and broadcasting teacher at Pierce Middle School. She has taught at Pierce 11 years, adding computer graphics to her repertoire, including the innovation and design class piloted this year at



COURTESY PHOTO

Brian, Michelle and Jack Stackpoole welcomed Henry to the family Sept. 17, 2019.

all three middle schools. Stackpoole and vocal music teacher Heather Albrecht routinely team up to direct Pierce's plays and musicals.

The Stackpooles married in 2002. After about five years, they decided to start a family. Eight years of infertility treatments later, including eight rounds of in-vitro fertilization, visits with doctors in Detroit and trips to New York City to meet with a reproductive immunologist and to Colorado to consult with the "the guru of reproductive medicine," Dr. William Schoolcraft, Michelle Stackpoole said they decided it was just too difficult.

In the meantime, the couple had signed up with an adoption agency and put their profile on a Facebook page. When they returned home to

Grosse Pointe Park from Colorado, Stackpoole received an email from an expectant mother. She knew not to get her hopes up, as she had received scam emails in the past.

Within a week, the couple met with the 16-year-old and her 16-year-old boyfriend. The young parents selected the Stackpooles to adopt their child and they remained in contact, the birth mother sending periodic ultrasound images.

In January, shortly before the due date, the boyfriend called and said the adoption was off. He was keeping the baby, he said.

It was devastating news.

"I told Brian I was done," Stackpoole said. "I can't do this anymore."

As a last resort, she emailed the boy's mother.

"If this doesn't happen, I am never going to be a mom," she wrote.

While Stackpoole will never know what changed the boy's mind, she credits his mother. Late one night she received a text from him. The adoption was back on.

The emotional roller coaster didn't end there. Things were awkward at the hospital, Stackpoole said, in particular after Jack was born.

"They wanted to spend time with him and that turned into an hour and turned into two and turned into five. I was flipping out. We really didn't have many rights at that point if they wanted to change their minds," she said.

About a week after the couple brought Jack home, "both the birth mother and birth father started texting me: 'We made a mistake. We want him back,'" Stackpoole said. "I called the agency in tears. They were so good with advice. 'Let's give it 24 hours and see what happens,' (they said). 'People say things at the spur of the moment and they may change their minds.'"

She finally received a text from the birth father. "You may not hear from me again, but please take him to Disney World at some point," he wrote.

While that was the last contact she had with Jack's birth father, Stackpoole periodically sends updates and photos to his birth mother, who has gotten her life back on track, is enrolled in college and seems happy, she said.

When Jack was 2, the couple decided to put their names back on the list with the adoption agency. Again, they were open about the fact they were looking to adopt.

"I've talked with colleagues and friends who might be considering adoption and I say you can be as private as you want, but the more open you are, the more likely someone is going to have a connection and open up a possibility," Stackpoole said.

That openness paid off shortly before their paperwork was set to expire. After nearly three years of waiting, Stackpoole said she and Brian talked that summer about not renewing.

Then a friend called and asked if they were

still hoping to adopt a child. She had heard about a situation in Texas in which an adoption had fallen through. Stackpoole knew better than to get her hopes up, but when the woman called, she chatted with her briefly on the phone, advising her to contact the agency and check out their Facebook page.

The next thing she knew, "The adoption agency called and said, 'We just got a call from her and she has chosen you guys,'" Stackpoole said. "She is going to come to Michigan and stay with her mom here at the end of the month." I said, "What just happened?"

From that point on, the process went smoothly. With the birth mother living so close, Stackpoole was able to accompany her to most of her doctor's appointments. Also easing her anxiety this time around was knowing what to expect.

"It's not easy," she said. "The one thing they teach you about adoption is everyone involved is grieving. The people who can't have a biological child have grieved the loss of that. People that are placing a baby up for adoption are grieving. It's tough for everyone. It's very emotional."

On Sept. 17, when Henry was born, Stackpoole was in the delivery room.

"As someone who can't have children, being able to have that experience, I can't thank her enough for that. It was just incredible. I was there the moment he arrived," she

said. There were tears this time, "but more happy, emotional tears, not tears of worry and fear like the first time around. ... This was what she wanted. This was what she knew was the right thing to do."

Stackpoole continues to stay in touch with Henry's birth mother, describing their relationship as "this very sweet friendship." Henry, she added, "will always know her in some capacity. Just the other day, she sent me a text to say how relieved and grateful she is that he's happy and he's going to have such a wonderful life."

For Christmas, she sent a "beautiful gift," Stackpoole said. "She had a photo of the four of us made up into a puzzle because Jack is really into puzzles. She wrote us this really nice card talking about how there was just this one piece that was missing. I texted her to thank her and say she is the most selfless person I know."

With one in every 10 couples in the United States experiencing infertility, Stackpoole hopes talking about her story will inspire others.

"Some people who don't have a big mouth like me keep it quiet," she said. "But it's still something that makes people uncomfortable and they don't talk about it openly. It is a medical condition, but it's hard when it happens to you."

"Adoption is not how I thought we would build our family," she added, "but I can't imagine it any other way now."



Henry Stackpoole was a frequent visitor during rehearsals for Pierce's production of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," directed by Michelle Stackpoole.

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City of Grosse Pointe

Loud surprise

A section of an exhaust pipe was cut and removed from a vehicle belonging to a 28-year-old Grosse Pointe man while it was parked in the 17000 block of Mack Avenue between 12:30 and 2:15 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 2.

— *Laurel Kraus*
Report information about this and other crimes to the City of Grosse Pointe Public Safety, (313) 886-3200.

Grosse Pointe Farms
New year, new suspension

A 32-year-old Detroit man admitted to not having a valid license after being pulled over at Mack Avenue and Moross Road at 5:32 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29, due to a bent license plate and unreadable expiration tab.

A Secretary of State check showed the man had 52 current suspensions and five prior convictions for driving while license suspended. He was arrested.

Got the wrong ride

After a vehicle was pulled over at East Warren and Farmbrook Street at 3:45 p.m. Friday, Jan. 31, when a Secretary of State checked showed no record of the license plate, the 26-year-old Detroit driver was arrested for driving while license suspended and the 30-year-old Detroit passenger was arrested for a misdemeanor arrest

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

warrant out of Troy.

Crashing while intoxicated

A traffic accident in the area of Moross Road and Kercheval Avenue at 11:26 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1, led to the arrest of a 21-year-old Grosse Pointe woman, who admitted she was coming back from a bar where she had two drinks.

A preliminary breath test showed her blood alcohol content at .17 percent and she was arrested for operating with a blood alcohol content of .17 percent or more.

Swerving around the law

A vehicle was pulled over on Lakeshore Road at 1:42 a.m. Monday, Feb. 3, after an officer observed it not maintaining a straight path of travel within its lane.

The 62-year-old St. Clair Shores man's speech was slow and slurred and a preliminary breath test showed his blood alcohol content at .14 percent.

The man was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol.

Drunken driver

A 36-year-old Shelby Township man was arrested for operating under the influence after being pulled over at Moross Road and Mary Street at 12:06 a.m. Monday, Feb. 3, after

reports of a possible drunken driver.

— *Laurel Kraus*
Report information about these and other crimes to Grosse Pointe Farms Public Safety, (313) 885-2100.

Grosse Pointe Shores

Driving while license suspended

A 37-year-old Detroit woman was pulled over on Lakeshore Road at 11:28 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27, and arrested for driving while license suspended, no insurance and a misdemeanor arrest warrant.

Third warrant's the charm

A 35-year-old Harper Woods woman with several suspensions and three active warrants out of Royal Oak was pulled over and arrested at 9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 31, at Hawthorne Road and Lakeshore Road, for driving while license suspended, no insurance and a misdemeanor arrest warrant.

In need of a map

A vehicle driving approximately 50 mph on Lakeshore was pulled over at 2:06 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 2. The 31-year-old Macomb man, who said he was just trying to get home and got lost, was agitated with watery,

bloodshot eyes.

He refused to take a preliminary breath test. He was arrested for operating under the influence and a misdemeanor arrest warrant and was cited for speeding, refusal of the preliminary breath test and the seat belt law.

— *Laurel Kraus*
Report information about these and other crimes to Grosse Pointe Shores Public Safety, (313) 881-5500.

Grosse Pointe Woods

Racist threats

Police are seeking a suspect in the intimidation of a 50-year-old man and his 27-year-old daughter after threatening notes were left on their vehicles in the 1900 block of Beaufait.

Beginning in late 2019, the victims discovered notes, including ethnic slurs, on their windshields while their vehicles were parked on the street, telling them they weren't wanted in the neighborhood, according to the Department of Public Safety.

On Wednesday, Jan. 29, the man drove to his church where a security employee later brought him a note that threatened his safety, which the victim said he believed was placed on the vehicle before he left home.

A neighbor with whom the victim has had conflict was suspected by the victim.

Equipment theft

Portable heaters, a chop saw and other items were reportedly stolen from an open construction site in the 1400 block of Lochmoor between Monday, Jan. 27, and Tuesday, Jan. 28.

A gutted home under construction enclosed by a fence is located at the site from which the tools were taken. A 41-year-old man and a 50-year-old man contracted to complete the work were named as the victims.

— *Eddie B. Allen Jr.*
Report information about these and other crimes to Grosse Pointe Woods Public Safety, (313) 343-2400.

Grosse Pointe Park

Larceny

A total of \$500 was stolen from the purse of a woman who accidentally left the handbag at a doctor's office in the 15000 block of Jefferson from Tuesday, Jan. 28, to Wednesday, Jan. 29. She returned to the

location after having been in the waiting room a day earlier and found the purse, but not the money.

Operating while intoxicated

A 51-year-old Harper Woods resident was arrested at Jefferson and Balfour after being involved in a single-car accident around 12:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 1. The driver was found to be intoxicated.

No namaste

A 69-year-old Park woman was charged with malicious destruction of property after scratching a neighbor's vehicle with her keys in the 1300 block of Somerset around 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1.

The suspect admitted keying the 2018 Ford Fusion in response to the victim's excess noise while the suspect practiced yoga.

— *Eddie B. Allen Jr.*
Report information about these and other crimes to Grosse Pointe Park Public Safety, (313) 822-7400.



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1879, H 27", W 22" EVENING MEAL



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1918, H 25.75", L 32", "RIVIERE DE NORMANDIE"



LOT 2013 EDWARD CURTIS OROSTONE
1906, H 14", L 11", "CANYON DEL MUERTO"



LOTS 2005 GIFFORD BEAL
OIL ON CANVAS BOARD
H 13.25", L 10", PARK FOUNTAIN



LOT 2053 EAMES, LOUNGE ARMCHAIR & OTTOMAN BY HERMAN MILLER, 2 PCS.



LOT 1004 HANDEL 6688 TABLE LAMP
WITH REVERSE PAINTED SHADE, H 24"



LOT 2008 ROBERT HOPKIN OIL ON CANVAS
H 12", W 14", SAILBOAT AT SEA



LOT 2019 ILIAS LLAOUNIS
18KT GOLD & ROCK CRYSTAL
THISTLE SCULPTURE, H 11"



LOT 9
A. VAN BUIJSEL EINDHOSEN
TALL OAK CASE CLOCK
18TH C, H 95"



LOT 2020 EDWARD FRANCIS MCCARTY
BRONZE CANDLESTICKS, H 16"



LOT 1253 CHINESE OPAL
GUAN YIN CARVING, H 9.5"



LOT 2018 PIERRE BITTAR OIL ON CANVAS
H 36", W 48", BAY VIEW, MI



LOT 1001 KPM BERLIN PAINTING
ON PORCELAIN PLAQUE, C. 1900
H 23", W 18" EXPULSION OF HAGAR



LOT 218 CIVIL WAR
FIELD OFFICER'S BOX & TIN TYPE



LOT 14 CHIPPENDALE STYLE MAHOGANY DINING SET, 9 PCS



LOT 1019 INDIA, 22KT GOLD BANGLE BRACELETS



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AND 14 KT WHITE GOLD RING

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OUR VIEW

Pluses, pitfalls pepper plans

The Grosse Pointe school reconfiguration plan still has a lot to prove to parents.

The uneasiness surfaced again at the Jan. 27 Board of Education meeting, when a group protested about moving fifth graders to middle school and spoke against the plan during the public comment session. More protests are planned for future board meetings.

Concerns about whether fifth graders are ready for middle school seem justified — not just from throwing them into a big school too quickly, but also by depriving them of leadership opportunities they had as the oldest students in an elementary school.

The plan to absorb fifth graders does have pluses, including expanded electives on a more sensible schedule than is possible in the elementary schools. Also planned: a new course, in rotation with other offerings, in innovation and design; it will nurture skills such as keyboarding and digital citizenship. Recess will continue to exist, as part of fifth graders' lunch break.

Interaction with older students also will be more limited than it is now. Each of the three middle schools in the Grosse Pointe Public School System will arrange separate entrances for fifth and sixth graders and those students will meet in mostly separate classroom clusters.

Because the new plan also modifies some of the routine for sixth graders, it alleviates some of the transition shock and confusion that affects them currently. Maureen Bur, director of secondary education, acknowledged that the current sixth-grade schedule had become the most confusing in the district.

Those changes are a plus and it's a shame it took reconfiguration for the district to deal more effectively with questions, which have been brewing for decades, about how best to ease elementary students into middle school.

There's also a case to be made that some of the pluses result from having more fifth and sixth graders together at each of the middle schools. Board members have been insistent that reconfiguration is not just about saving money, but also about creating bigger student groupings to avoid spreading traveling teachers and curriculum offerings too thin.

Yet many pitfalls remain as fourth and fifth graders move together to the middle schools next fall. Change of any kind is hard, but it will be harder with so many concerns from parents that this change is just not wise.

The change also will require a lot from teachers and principals. The district is blessed to have a wonderful cadre of them, but adjusting curriculums along with schedules is a massive undertaking even if the moves had unified support in the community.

During the comment period, one parent asked whether the change was cutting edge and world class. That highlights the speed at which the district has had to move since the board's reconfiguration decision last June, since it's still very hard to weigh what's better against what's different.

It also suggests the hunt for best practices for this age group may need to be ongoing. The board appears to be holding firm and talk last fall of a recall has not yielded concrete action.

For better or worse, that means parents and the community need to channel their dissent constructively. Gripes need to be accompanied by suggestions for other avenues, not just bemoaning the situation as it is.

Teachers and administrators need to be constantly ready for fine-tuning — and there probably will be a lot — as they deal with new problems and, in some cases, new buildings. Something as seemingly simple as setting up separate entrances for different grade levels may have unforeseen complications.

Over the course of many decades, school districts have changed: from K-8 and high school to the creation of seventh- to ninth-grade junior high schools, then to sixth- to eighth-grade middle schools. If there's a "better" or "best" model among them, it's not obvious — except to the extent that parents and teachers strive to make any model excellent for their children.



PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

One of the latest issues with the seawall was this sinkhole along Lakeshore, which occurred in December.

OUR VIEW

Seawall requires quick action

What to do with the deteriorating seawall along Lakeshore Road took a small but welcome step forward last month when Grosse Pointe Farms and Shores finally approved funding for an engineering study.

The study will cover the three-mile stretch between Warner Road and the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club.

The seawall was a Wayne County project when it built out the road decades ago, but at best the county will apparently pay for only half of the \$72,000 study. The Farms and Shores are splitting the remaining half.

Council members, especially in the Shores, have been perhaps justifiably leery of taking any responsibility for the seawall, even at this early stage. They cite 1929 documentation that states the county assumes full responsibility for upkeep.

But the hard facts are that problems continue to crop up along Lakeshore. Most visible is the yellow caution tape in the Shores, but occasional road clos-

ings also have occurred.

This era of high water in the entire Great Lakes basin has brought the threat to a new level. Lake St. Clair reached a new peak for January this year, two inches above its previous record in 1986 and well above its year-ago height. Precipitation continued to stay above normal throughout the region last month.

As the seawall damage becomes ever more obvious, the County Commission needs to act fast. Commissioner Tim Killeen, who represents the Pointes, believes approval of the county's share of the study can come within a month. After that, weather will determine how quickly the engineering firm can complete the study, which will include soil borings.

A new seawall has been estimated to cost \$3 million. That doesn't preclude an emergency, short-term fix — which is looking increasingly urgent.

Wayne County needs to step up and quickly. Although only two cities host the seawall, Lakeshore Road provides access — and pleasure — to drivers from all the Pointes and beyond. Continued neglect is not an option.

Delays a road to nightmarish conditions

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced a big bonding program to raise money for Michigan's roads last week, as she delivered her State of the State address. Her plan is far from perfect, but many drivers may have concluded, as she has, that another year of inaction isn't tolerable.

First of all, borrowing now only restricts the amount of money available for road work in future years — some of the money raised annually by fuel taxes and registration fees will have to go to bond repayments. (As apparently some still is from previous bonding.) It's basically a purchase on an installment plan and thank heavens interest rates are exceedingly low right now.

Second, the borrowed money won't follow the normal distribution of road money through the Michigan Transportation Fund; it appears the governor intends to use it all on state roads and major freeways. That leaves out any increase for counties, cities and townships.

While it makes sense to take care of the most heavily driven roads, local roads also are crumbling. That's pushed some of the Pointes and other Michigan cities to seek extra millages for road repair.

It's not a horrendous burden in some communities. But as the state continues to shortchange local governments and schools, it's not a good solution either. Many poorer communities can't handle the extra taxes at all; even in better-off places, no one wants to pay road millage except out of desperation.

The governor's new and accelerated projects for 2021 include rebuilding I-94 between Eight Mile and 12 Mile roads. Gratiot Avenue, a common bypass for the freeway, is to be rehabilitated between 14 Mile Road and Metro Parkway.

And that's yet another problem with postponing work on roads. Once there's finally more money for major projects, drivers can barely get from here to there. Every year of delay in proper, regular funding just adds to the eventual orange barrel nightmare.

YESTERDAY'S HEADLINES

1945

75 years ago this week

CLERKS NOW HANDLE FUEL PERMITS: The coal purchasing permit system which the Pointe area employed last winter has had to be revived again

with a vengeance. The domestic coal situation is more aggravated now than at any time last year. This is due doubtless to the average lower temperature that has prevailed this winter, further complicated with excessive snow.

OPPORTUNITY OFFERED GIRLS IN CIVIL AIR PATROL: A

great opportunity awaits girls from ages 15 to 18 who are interested in flying. Expert instruction in such courses as meteorology, navigation, aircraft identification, radio, aerial map reading and many more are offered at the weekly meetings of the Civil Air Patrol Cadets on Tuesday evenings at the Grosse Pointe High School.

26, this week reinforced his denial of taking bribes while a member of the Detroit Police Department. The 50-year-old Ellenburg has been accused by former underworld attorney Lawrence A. Burns of accepting bribes from Burns from 1959 to 1963 to protect a Detroit-based abortion center.

LAKERS WIN CAGE CROWN: The St. Paul Catholic High School Lakers find that it is tough to break old habits, but their basketball fans, one of the most loyal groups in the state, don't mind at all. The Laker cage teams have a habit of winning games and titles and that's exactly what they did Jan. 30, when they drubbed

1970

50 years ago this week

FORMER PARK POLICE HEAD REJECTS TEST: Cleveland Police Chief William P. Ellenburg, who abruptly resigned as park director of public safety on Sunday, Jan.

See YESTERDAY, page 7A

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The opinions expressed in letters and guest columns are not necessarily views shared by the Grosse Pointe News.

I SAY By John Minnis

Sending out an SOS for SoS



Benson won the SoS seat, ending a 10-year Republican succession and against our preferred candidate, Republican Mary Treder Lang of Grosse Pointe Shores.

Moscow bread lines. That's what I think about on my annual trips to the Secretary of State office. And, it appears, it doesn't matter who is the Secretary of State — Republican or Democrat — the lines and dysfunctional system continue.

Actually, there was improvement under Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land, who was elected in 2008, ending the 24-year Democratic reign of Richard Austin. Ms. Land is credited for streamlining the SoS, shortening lines at branches, introducing kiosks and online services and bringing the department into the 21st century. Term-limited, she was replaced by fellow Republican Ruth Johnson, who in turn was term-limited in 2018. Democrat Jocelyn

I would like to be able to report the improvements in service and efficiency begun under Republican Secretaries of State Ms. Land and Ms. Johnson continue under Democrat Ms. Benson's leadership, but two visits to the St. Clair Shores office within the past year indicate otherwise.

Before I get into my recent experiences, I'd like to say that we have been going to the SoS St. Clair Shores branch for more than four decades. The branch has moved around throughout the years. Currently it is in the shopping strip at Nine Mile and Kelly, Eastpointe. I got to recognize the workers over the years, watching them age and, eventually, retire at a relatively early age with a state pension. I often thought that would have been a smart way to go out of high school. But, I imagine, there is

nothing glamorous or exciting in working at the SoS. Same thing day in, day out. So I admire their dedication and don't begrudge them their retirements.

Waiting has always been the bane of going to the SoS; whether getting a driver's license or license plate or tab renewed, it didn't matter. There was always a wait anywhere from half an hour to two or three hours. SoS was not something you could do on your lunch hour.

Last April, I had to get my driver's license renewed. The renewal was tucked in with my license tab renewal, so I did not see it, which forced me to go to the SoS in person. My bad. I went online to make an appointment, but the soonest available was days away. So I went in.

There was a long line ending near the door, so I got in it. A private security guard was kind enough to point out that I needed to sign in at the two computer screens in the middle of the room. She escorted me up there and retrieved a ticket for

me similar to the ones you get at the meat market. I was instructed to get back into the "document review" line. Again, this from the private security guard, not any employee with the SoS.

It was 3:17 p.m. My number was 74. Current number called: 57. Only 17 to go! Except, many people checked in with their cell phone numbers — no telling how many of those were in the queue. An hour and a half later, I am still in the "document review" line. It had barely budged. I swear a car dealer used the review line to process plates and titles. He was up there at window No. 1 forever.

The SoS office is getting ready to lock the doors. A young man announces there are more than 60 people in the queue but, obviously, fewer than that number of people waiting. Many must have given up and left. So he began calling numbers. I was the second or third called, so I proceeded to window No. 6 with unreviewed documents and all. The young man, with the loveliest

voice I had ever heard from a whiskered visage, completed my driver's license renewal, complete with the Department of Homeland Security enhancements. After two hours of standing in the "document review line," I can now go to Canada or board a plane. I considered myself lucky.

On Jan. 13, I took my mother-in-law to the SoS to get her handicapped rearview mirror hanger updated. Being a SoS veteran, I went to the two computer terminals without being told and logged in with my cell phone number and got a text message saying I had 67 people ahead of me. It was 10:01 a.m.

I got in the "document review" line for window No. 1. The private security guard was impressed. I explained how I had been through this before and how a security guard like her was kind enough to "show me the ropes" the last time I was here. Like her predecessor, she greeted newcomers at the door and instructed them on how to sign in and get into the "docu-

ment review" line. I got her name, Cynthia Sparks, with DJ Security Services.

I thanked her for helping people find their way when they come in, something an SoS employee should be doing. I told her the SoS should give her a bonus. She just smiled. I suspect helping out made the time go by, since she had to field complaints anyway.

This time I made it to the "document review" window No. 1. I showed her the handicapped renewal letter from the doctor. She asked if that was all the business we had with the Secretary of State today and I said yes. She completed the transaction in minutes.

As we were heading out — with 50 people still ahead of me in the queue — I thought I heard a SoS manager announce that only license plates and tabs were going to be processed for the remainder of the day. Anyone with other business would have to return another day.

Whew! Just made it under the wire.

YESTERDAY:

Continued from page 6A

Detroit St. Hedwig, 51-33, to claim their fifth Catholic League Second Division East championship in the last eight years.

Obituaries: Hugh J. Ferry, Jerry Fluary, Carrie E. Boyle, Marie L. Bisschop, Margaret Beysiegel, Theodore Villeneuve, Frances Laitner, Godfrey Schlafer, Donald R. Middleton, Muriel M. Sibbert, Marjorie T. Happer

1995

25 years ago this week

LIBRARIANS AWAIT BOARD PROPOSAL: The Grosse Pointe library board anticipated a challenging first year operating a newly independent entity, but didn't expect to be fighting a lawsuit. Since September, the library board and the unions representing library workers have been negotiating employment contracts. A lawsuit filed in late December contains two counts

against the public library, the library board, the Grosse Pointe Public School System, the school board and the city of Harper Woods.

PARK WINS 2ND ROUND IN LOT SPLIT LAWSUIT: Grosse Pointe Park city attorney Herold Deason was pleased to announce to the council that the state court of appeals reversed a circuit court ruling that would have forced the city to approve a lot split at 745 Whittier. Deason told the council that it was a victory for local municipalities and the council should be pleased with the result because it confirms the right to make decisions regarding local property questions.

Obituaries: Donna Ross Vollmer, Bernadene C. Barlow, Robert P. Ames, Helen Hickey Schoenherr Smith, Marie Schultz, Edwin C. Beaupre, William B. Williams

2010

10 years ago this week

CENSUS CRITICAL

TO MICHIGAN: The 2010 census is more than a head count. Compilation of the 10 answers on the survey, among other things, determines how federal money is allocated locally and the number of the state's congressional seats.

LAYOFFS LOOM IN SHORES: Grosse Pointe Shores might be slightly under water financially, but its mayor doesn't want budget-tighteners to go overboard and slash labor costs beyond what the market will bear. "After we do all these things, I hope we

have employees who want to work for us," said Mayor Dr. James Cooper, referring to anticipated labor concessions, including reduced fringe benefits for all employees.

Obituaries: Betty Evans Bradley, Mildred Viola Wishman, Charles

L. French, Susan D. Reames, Dorothy Ann Marcereau, Kathleen Mary Peabody, Thomas G. Sieber, Margaret Mary Meathe, Lucille Grace Causley, Marion Wilberding MacKenzie, Virginia Tompkins, Nancy Jo Norman, Gloria Atzel Crane

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South hosts wellness week

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

Maria Mitzel, activities coordinator for Grosse Pointe South High School, has a mantra she lives by.

“Do what’s best for kids and if you keep that in your focus, you can’t go wrong,” she said.

South’s second Wellness Week not only was student focused, it was student driven, Mitzel added. It was held Tuesday, Jan. 21, through Friday, Jan. 24, in the library/media center during lunch periods so students had the opportunity to learn coping strategies without losing instruction time.

Each day offered a twist. Tuesday, the Class of 2022 put a smile on students’ faces with smile messages on lockers. Destressers available in the library were plant and painting therapy, aromatherapy from CARE of Southeastern Michigan and therapy dogs from Ascension St. John Hospital.



PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

From left, Selga Jansons, Emily Colen and Emma Reich, who pause to pose for a selfie, have therapy horse Scotty eating out of their hands. The trick? Sugar cubes.

Wednesday, students created stress balls with balloons and sand. More therapy dogs were on hand along with yoga led by South yoga instructor Tammy Tocco.

New on Thursday — and a hit among students and teachers alike — was kinetic sand. The library

remained a stress-free zone with more aromatherapy, miniature therapy dog Luna and yoga.

Friday started off with a free pancake breakfast donated and cooked by the Breakfast Club and senior class under the supervision of commercial foods teacher Patti O’Hare.

Play-Doh and kinetic sand were the hands-on activity, with Ascension St. John therapy dog Zia making an arrival along with therapy horses Scotty and Bunny. Also new this year was karaoke, allowing students to free their inhibitions while working off some energy.

“My thing has always been: stay off the phones, communicate and giggle and look at each other,” South librarian Courtney Johnson said. “Go back to where things were simple and less stressful and it really is preschool

and kindergarten. That’s why the kids love planting the plants. That’s why they love painting the container after they’ve planted it ... It’s the simple times giggling with each other and establishing eye contact. It’s magical. It’s simple.”

As an additional draw, the senior class provided fruit and granola bars each day.

“Kids love to be fed,” Johnson said. “... They are hungry all the time.

They are teenagers and I think we forget. We need to nourish their souls.”

The brain child of senior class president Imran Siddiqui, the event gained momentum in its second year with additional attractions. Held last year in May before finals, students decided even with the loss of some outdoor activities, there were advantages to hosting it earlier, such as getting the second semester off to a good start and enjoying the benefits through the remainder of the year.

“We thought it would be a good start to the second semester right after exams, coming back to refresh,” Siddiqui said.

Siddiqui said he received a lot of positive feedback from the community and the students. While he would like to have seen more students participate, he and other members of student government did their best to get the word out on social media.

“It’s always cool to see what kids show up,” he said.

Yoga, for example, was surprisingly popular with girls and boys alike.

“I did yoga for the first time and I had a lot of fun,” Siddiqui said. “It was definitely something I wouldn’t say no to in the future.”

Also a hit were the ther-

apy horses, introduced by Lindsay Drouillard, a certified equine therapist with Therapy Ranch, which offers mental health intervention with horses.

“Horses are big. They are unpredictable and they respond to emotion and tell humans a story,” Drouillard said. “It takes the pressure off the human-to-human interaction and puts the focus on the horses.”

Following the event, students received a brief survey. The purpose of the survey was not only to elicit feedback for next year, but provide links to some of the resources available.

“Our whole goal is to provide (students) a chance to see what they can do when they’re feeling stress,” Mitzel said. “... These are strategies they can use. And that’s our whole point.”

The ultimate goal, Mitzel said, is to make it a weekly event with Wellness Wednesdays, enhancing those benefits teachers observed over just four days throughout the school year.

“We’ve heard back from some of our teachers that the kids are happier,” Mitzel said. “... That’s the whole goal of this. It’s about them.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF COURTNEY JOHNSON

Students and staff alike enjoyed the benefits of kinetic sand. Pictured in the foreground, clockwise from left, are Andrew Fleming, Michael Rennell, Steve Geresy, Kaitlin Edgerton and Maria Mitzel.

Teacher of THE WEEK

P.J. Palen

School: Grosse Pointe South High School
Years at South: 4 (previously taught 5 years at Pierce and Parcels middle schools)
Subject/Grade: Advanced Placement U.S. History and World History (grades 9-11)
Nominated by: Moussa Hamka, principal
Principal’s quote:

“P.J. is a passionate, personable and highly respected member of our social studies department. Mr. Palen has taught a myriad of courses including world history, honors world history, government, U.S. history and AP U.S. history. His ability to connect with students and generate excitement for the content area extends beyond the classroom as the mock trial and quiz bowl adviser. Additionally, he is the social studies department chairman and dedicates much time to reviewing and enhancing our curriculum.”

What motivated you to become a teacher?

I would have laughed at the thought of becoming a teacher when I was a young person, so it wasn’t a lifelong dream by any means. After college I began substitute teaching. I know it sounds corny, but teaching really made me feel alive. I pursued a teaching certificate. I want my passion for history and politics to rub off on my students.

Who are some of your inspirations?

My parents and grandparents. Many of my former teachers and Grosse Pointe community members. I was raised in Grosse Pointe. I am a big believer in the idea that it takes a village.

Historically speaking, I am a big fan of Martin Luther, John Adams, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Ulysses S. Grant, John Brown, Harry Truman, Empress Wu, and the list goes on.



COURTESY PHOTO

What advice would you give a new teacher?

Be comfortable with the uncomfortable.

The primary job of a teacher is to cultivate relationships with their students.

Know that you are going to make mistakes, say sorry and have a growth mindset.

Favorite book:

I’m a big reader. I like fiction. Some of my favorite authors include Jonathan Franzen, Herman Melville, Langston Hughes and Mark Twain.

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Brownell presents 'Tarzan'

Brownell Middle School presents Broadway's "Tarzan" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, and Friday, Feb. 7, in Brownell's multipurpose room, 260 Chalfonte, Grosse Pointe Farms.

Based on Disney's epic animated musical adventure and Edgar Rice



Burrough's "Tarzan of the Apes," "Tarzan" features music by Phil Collins and a book by Tony Award-

PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAH DUFFIELD

winning playwright, David Henry Hwang.

Tickets are \$10 and available at the door.

Pictured is the "Tarzan" cast, from left, Peter

Smith, Ashton Fell, Grace Euper, Lucy Gabel, Christian Yonkous, Vivian Rizer, Dylan DeMarco, Jaimison Diamond and William Murray.

Recommendations revisited

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

Members of the magnet advisory committee went back to the drawing board after presenting their initial recommendation to the Board of Education Nov. 25, 2019, which was met with concerns from parents and board members. The final recommendation was presented at the Jan. 27 meeting.

Earlier this school year, the committee, comprised of 14 teachers, 16 parents, three past magnet students, seven administrators and two board members, reviewed current practices, conducted research and surveyed current families of magnet-eligible students to come up with its recommendation to change the district's magnet program from its current grade 2/3 and 4/5 combination classrooms at Defer and Ferry elementary schools to a 3/4 combination at Defer, Ferry, Richard and Monteith elementary schools.

Fifth-grade magnet was eliminated in the new configuration because of the move to middle school beginning next year. For the 2020-21 school year only, magnet students will complete their magnet cycle at their home middle school with a certified teacher.

According to data the committee compiled, the current magnet program draws predominantly from home school families. Data also showed similar test results for magnet students and magnet-eligible students who declined to participate.

Another concern was whether testing first graders in January was too early to determine eligibility, shutting out students who might qualify for the magnet program given more time for growth.

According to Director of Pre-K and Elementary Instruction Keith Howell, the committee reconvened Dec. 16, 2019, to review 14 configurations and develop pros and cons for

each. The configurations were narrowed down to two options: the 3/4 combination at Defer, Ferry, Richard and Monteith elementary schools or three individual classrooms for grades 2, 3 and 4 at Ferry and Richard. The change from Defer to Richard was due to availability of classroom space.

Committee members and magnet-eligible families were surveyed on which delivery models they preferred. The survey, which closed Jan. 24, had an 89 percent response rate.

Overall results indicated a preference for a 3/4 combination magnet classroom at multiple locations across the district at 59 percent, with 41 percent preferring three individual magnet classrooms for grades 2, 3 and 4 in two locations.

Of families whose students qualified but are not attending magnet, 78 percent voted for this option, along with 82 percent of magnet committee members. Among parents, 68 percent of Defer parents and 31 percent of Ferry parents chose this option. Among teachers on the committee, 73 percent preferred this option. Broken up by grade level, 48 percent of second-grade parents chose this option compared to 61 percent of third-grade parents and 58 percent of fourth-grade parents.

Two options were provided on the survey for parents with students going into fifth grade next year: to complete the magnet curriculum cycle

with a certified teacher at the child's home middle school or in a fifth-grade magnet class at Brownell Middle School, selected due to its central location. Magnet programming would be for fifth grade only and students would have the option to remain at Brownell through middle school before returning to their home high school.

Only 12 respondents indicated interest in a fifth-grade option at Brownell, which wasn't enough to fill a class.

Ultimately, the biggest factor in the elementary school recommendation was the increase in geographic locations, Howell said, with more students having the opportunity to attend a magnet program at or close to their home school. Other benefits are the potential to eliminate the wait list and balance class sizes.

While 100 percent of administrators on the committee voted for the 3/4 combination in four locations, Howell admitted he was torn between the two plans, as he saw the benefit of a second-grade self-contained magnet classroom. Tipping the scales for him was his long-held belief first grade is too young to identify all magnet-eligible students, with first grade serving as the gatekeeper of magnet programming.

"Once they're in, you have the class set," Howell said. "If someone has the scores later, there isn't the space. Now we have more space and more opportunities for kids to access it."

Parents react to plan

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

Erin DiLodovico listened to the middle school plan presented by members of the Grosse Pointe Public School System administration to the Board of Education Jan. 27, and left the meeting feeling encouraged. The plan was a response to moving fifth grade from elementary to middle school as part of the reconfiguration for the 2020-21 school year.

"I think several of the items they are going to be able to offer to fifth and sixth grade are more than my seventh grader currently has," she said.

In addition to a seventh grader at Brownell Middle School, the Grosse Pointe Farms resident has a Young 5's student at Mason Elementary School whose home school next year will be Kerby Elementary School.

Unlike some residents who were upset they didn't have answers yet to their many questions, DiLodovico said she understood it would take time to figure it out.

"Did you expect an answer in a month? That plan would have been horrible," she said. "They took their time and they did it right."

Also reassuring to her was the enthusiasm of her child's principal, Rodger Hunwick, about fifth graders joining Brownell Middle School next year. She described him as "beyond excited."

Of the new plan, DiLodovico said she likes that Spanish will be offered in a full-year rotation rather than sporadically throughout the year and that instrumental and choir are offered in the classroom.

Her impression is many people agree it's progress, but want more.

"This was the first step. Now they're going to go back. The board has some questions and wants more feedback on some things. They have to do their research and due diligence and figure out some answers."

On the six-period day with an advisory, DiLodovico said she would like to know more. While her seventh grader "isn't in love with having an advisory," DiLodovico said currently it's only once a week and believes more consistency, a longer block of time and set curriculum will make it more meaningful.

DiLodovico also likes the concept of fifth grade serving as a transition year, with students having a full year to be guided by their teacher to discover the ins and outs of the building while learning what it's like to experience different teachers and learning styles.

While she felt the building maps showed the physical separations between the fifth and sixth graders and seventh and eighth graders, she said this wasn't a major concern for her. In fact, she quoted her own seventh-grade son, who said to her, "Mom, I'm really tired of people saying I'm going to be mean to fifth graders."

Grosse Pointe Park resident Lauren Nowicki isn't as sold on the plan to move fifth grade to middle school. She has a preschooler and children in first, third and fourth grade at Trombly Elementary School.

"Although the plan outlined at the BOE meeting

Monday is a start, there is just so much to be done," she said. "There is just no way that we can implement all of these changes and make them great.

There are so many layers of planning, we need to take some time to peel the onion back and come up with something that is innovative. I don't think that an advisory/home-room period is really 'expanded curriculum.' And the fact that (Trustee Christopher) Profeta was excited that we are back to the offerings he received in the '90s is absurd. How is this making us a competitive district?"

As a former middle school teacher, Nowicki believes a lot is being "pushed on teachers" and views the prospect of coming up with a curriculum for an entire year as daunting. Many teachers she has spoken with, she said, were not on board.

"Although I was happy to see the increased support staff, I don't feel like a few more counselors can offset the fact that my child will now be striving to fit in with these older kids when he should just be a kid himself, having a chance to be a leader of the elementary school and a role model with more responsibility," she said.

Nowicki's fourth-grade son, Ethan, had a few questions of his own for board members during public comments at the Jan. 27 meeting.

"First of all, I am not prepared for middle school," he said. "I don't think I fully know what I am getting into. Second of all, I'm not getting a chance to be a leader. Third of all, I should not be in a school with teenagers. Fourth of all, why?"

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Bridging gaps

Volunteers boost reading proficiency in Detroit second-graders

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

What started as simple dinner conversation among friends turned into a partnership that is changing the lives of students in Detroit.

The Rev. Drew Van Culin and a few of his parishioners from Christ Church Grosse Pointe, as well as parishioners from Hope Community Church met last summer for a meal, during which was sparked a conversation about Soar Detroit's efforts in Detroit Public Schools.

Soar Detroit provides literacy tutoring and other outreach to foster relationships and help students succeed. Van Culin, looking to expand his church's outreach efforts by forming new partnerships, said the program sounded like a perfect fit.

Plans quickly came together, leading to the formation of the Carstens Literacy Initiative — a joint effort of Soar Detroit, Christ Church, Hope Community Church, Hope House and Carstens Academy.

"Soar Detroit has for several years developed a program for mentored reading with students," Van Culin said. "Recently, the focus has been on second graders in Detroit. This year, they expanded from seven schools to 15 schools."

The partnership is three-fold, Van Culin added. The schools provide critical access to students and advocate for the program; Soar Detroit provides administration and oversight, as well as part-time staff to run the program; and the church provides volunteers to conduct the program.



PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

Pictured are Christ Church Grosse Pointe volunteers, front row, from left, Richard Gibson, Lisa Baruah, Emmajean Evans, Nancy Renick, Betsy Creedon and Nancy Osborn; and back row, from left, the Rev. Drew Van Culin, Karyn Weir, David Gaskin, Blair Osborn and Christine Miller.

There are 32 second-grade students at Carstens, each of whom receives two one-hour sessions of one-on-one reading mentoring each week, "in a structured, personalized, developmental program," Van Culin said. "I meet with two students who are at different levels of reading. (The lesson plans) are designed to meet them where they are and challenge them to help reach the next level."

Volunteers are given lesson plans and a folder for each child that charts their progress, what they've worked on and what still needs work. Van Culin said the program is run seamlessly.

"Churches are providing eager, committed, able volunteers," he said. There are 60 volun-

teers assigned to Carstens, 31 of them from Christ Church, including Nancy Renick, a City of Grosse Pointe resident. She said she jumped at the chance to participate.

"Father Drew got up one Sunday and said, 'This is what we need,'" Renick said. "We do a lot of outreach. Soar Detroit brings people together to equip children so they can thrive."

Volunteers, who receive background checks, are trained on how the program operates. A teaching background is appreciated, but not necessary.

Renick, whose own teaching career included stints at Clara B. Ford School in Dearborn and Barnes School in Grosse Pointe, initially worked

in the inner city to get her teaching certificate.

"Our goal is creating a safety net for struggling students," she said. "Soar can change the trajectory of students' lives. Even the best teachers can't address some needs that children bring to school. High stress from a fractured family situation or lack of focus because there isn't enough food at home creates big hurdles to learning. Down the line, those teaching middle and high school are understandably at a loss when it comes to students who can't read at an elementary level."

Though she's bonded with the students she tutors, Renick said, "We're not there to be their buddy. We're there to teach them and give them a sense of accom-

plishment, a sense of a better feeling about themselves. ... I enjoy it. There's a good response from the kids."

Van Culin, too, said he's seen positive reactions on both sides of the desk.

"It's been a clear gift to students and participants," he said. "The students are grateful, visibly joyful for the interaction and relationships that are building. ... And the volunteers, from day one, have said, 'This was all you had promised and more than I expected.' Clearly the volunteers are appreciating their time with their students."

Van Culin said he's watched ancillary effects of the program unfold as well. The partnership, for example, has broadened the appreciation for the

struggles Detroit school students are facing.

"We are asking, quietly still, fundamental questions about the system," he said. "Why do these struggles still exist? It's more than the child and more than the family. When 30 of 32 children in the school are not slightly behind, but significantly behind, that shines a light that these are more than just individual struggles or familial struggles."

"For the volunteers, it's breaking down historical anxiety about Detroit, particularly the Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood," he continued. "The purpose, why we're doing it, is our desire to make a difference in the world around us, our commitment to Detroit in general and particularly to the Jefferson-Chalmers community. We wanted to reach across that divide, step across that divide ourselves, to break down prejudices that we bring and be intentional about bridging the chasm that so easily exists at Alter Road."

The Carstens Literacy Initiative not only has received support from volunteer tutors, but from Christ Church as a whole. The church dedicated proceeds from its Gifts & Greens celebration in December to the initiative. Proceeds from the tree sale, bake sale, boutique and silent auction raised more than \$30,000. Several lead gifts from private donors and sponsorships also added to the total.

"I'm really grateful for the generosity of our community," Van Culin said. "We come together to do our part. ... But this

See GAPS, page 2B

Allez! Allez! Organizer hopes cabaret raises interest in French

Grosse Pointe Park resident Jenann Connolly is *passionné de Français*.

She wants to share that love in hopes of sparking interest among community members in the "language of love."

To do so, the former French and Spanish teacher has organized a French cabaret, "Chansons d'Amour," at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16, in the downstairs room at City Kitchen, 16844 Kercheval, City of Grosse Pointe.

"Claudia Hommel and a pianist, Steven, are going to put on a cabaret show," Connolly said. "A cabaret is the slinky

gown cut down the back, a great voice, great stage presence. And there will be some history of the area, too. ... It will be part musical, part educational, part history, part arts — all following the theme, 'French is Forever in the Pointes.'"

Connolly, a member of the Alliance Française de Grosse Pointe, said she hopes to draw anyone interested in the community to the event.

"This is not a fundraiser," she said. "I don't want funds raised. All I want is interest raised in how much more French we can teach to adults

in the area and to students in schools," although, she added, "You don't have to be in a classroom to learn French."

The cabaret includes the show, hors d'oeuvres and three 2-ounce glasses of wine, Connolly said.

"I'm going to keep it as simple as possible," she noted. "Intimate is what a cabaret is. This is a gentle beginning. ... I want French to be the star of the show."

Tickets are \$30 and available in advance only. Call Connolly at (313) 938-4093.

— Jody McVeigh

La chanteuse

Actor/singer Claudia Hommel was born in Paris and raised in Detroit. Her repertoire encompasses French chanson, American standards, 19th and 20th century art songs and theater music.

Hommel, who trained extensively in New York City, currently lives in Chicago and has an active career as a theatrical singer in clubs, recital halls, museums, libraries and theaters across the country.

In association with members of the American Association of Teachers of French, Hommel tours her Parisian cabaret programs as artist-in-residence to secondary schools and colleges across the continent. Her academic background in history and archives infuses her school residencies, workshops and master classes with revelations of social and cultural history and criticism.

She is a member of the Actors Equity Association, Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. She often shares the stage with other members of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals, which she co-founded in 1998. The Maison Clobert label features her recordings of Parisian cabaret concerts.

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2B | FEATURES

AREA ACTIVITIES

Questers

Questers Grosse Pointe Pettipointe Chapter No. 243 meets at 11 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, at Theresa Bertolini's home in St. Clair Shores. Wendy Jennings presents, "Myth, Magic and Mystery: A Hundred Years of American Children's Books." Questers is an international organization whose major objectives are to stimulate the appreciation and collecting of antiques and encourage the preservation of historical landmarks. For more information, email

Liberta Licata at pettipointequesters@gmail.com.

The Pear Tree Questers meets for lunch at 11:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7, at Mimi's Bistro, 15318 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park. There will be a short meeting and dues will be collected for the year. Afterward, the group will visit St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church for a historical tour by Mary Kay Ducharme. Trish Hensien chairs the event.

Ecumenical Breakfast

The Grosse Pointe

Men's Ecumenical Breakfast meets at 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7, at Grosse Pointe Memorial Church, 16 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms. The Rev. Mark E. Diehl, interim senior pastor and head of staff at Grosse Pointe Memorial Church, speaks. Cost for breakfast is \$7. Registration is not required and first-time guests eat free.

The Helm

The Helm at the Boll Life Center, 158 Ridge, Grosse Pointe Farms, offers the following programs:

◆ Tax Preparation, through Thursday, April 9. AARP Tax-Aide is the nation's largest service preparing taxes and answering tax-related

questions free of charge for taxpayers. Appointments are necessary.

◆ Grandparents and Grandkids Fun with Physics Workshop, 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 8, with facilitator Gary Abud Jr. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members.

◆ Neurobics for the Brain, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, with facilitator Kathy House.

Registration is required. Call (313) 882-9600.

Libraries

The Grosse Pointe Public Library hosts the following programs at its branches:

Central — 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms, (313) 343-2074

◆ Tween After Hours, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7.

◆ Makerfaire, 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8.

◆ Science Fiction Book Discussion Group, 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Ewald — 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park, (313) 821-8830

◆ Teen Poetry Slam, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10.

◆ Drop-in Story Time, 1 to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday,

Feb. 11.

◆ Hour of Code: Dance Party, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13.

◆ Ann Arbor Film Festival Tour, 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13.

◆ Reader Dog Drop-In, 2 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15.

Woods — 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods, (313) 343-2072

◆ Friends Book Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7.

◆ Friends Book Sale, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8.

◆ Reader Dog Drop-In, 1 to 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8.

◆ The Plush Doctor, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9.

◆ Awesome Afternoons, for ages 6 to 12, 4 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Blood drives

The American Red Cross hosts the following blood drives:

◆ 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, St. Lucy Catholic Church, 23401 Jefferson, St. Clair Shores.

◆ 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12, University Liggett School, 1045 Cook, Grosse Pointe Woods.

Register at [\[blood.org\]\(http://blood.org\).](http://redcross</p>
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Toastmasters

Northeastern Toastmasters meets at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 10, at the Mary Ellen Stempfle University Center, 19305 Vernier, Harper Woods. Call Wendy Bradley at (313) 884-1184 or Ron or Marcia Pikielek at (313) 884-4201.

Chamber

The Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce presents Business After Hours from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Wink Boutique, 377 Fisher, City of Grosse Pointe.

Men's Club

The Men's Club of Grosse Pointe meets at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms. Wayne State University President Roy Wilson speaks.

Jardinieres

La Societe des Jardinieres has its first meeting of the year at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, at the home of member Pat Hays. A valentine brunch will be served. After a brief meeting, the hostess will provide an overview of her trip to Greece.

GAPS:

Continued from page 1B

is a partnership, not simply a church solving problems."

Renick and the other volunteers from Christ Church have committed to the program for the entire school year. Van Culin said the program is exploring ways to expand to include third grade.

He also discussed expanding in other ways — by bringing in more churches and becoming the Detroit Literacy Initiative. He'd like to see more tutoring closer to home as well.

"There are students in Grosse Pointe who are

struggling with reading, but the levels of proficiency are higher so the need is lower compared with Detroit," he said. "I'd like to solve the problem a little differently. We're in the early stages of exploring a program here, an after-school program."

Van Culin said he's proud of the efforts that have been made, of the Grosse Pointe community sharing resources with its neighbors. Education, he said, is a natural commitment of Grosse Pointe and "we don't want to hoard that gift."

Reaching out, he added, is a directive from Christ.

"Christ said, just before he died, 'I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete,'" Van Culin said, referencing John 15:11. "Christ calls us into real relationship and service in the confidence that our lives would be enriched through our generosity and sacrifice. Our lives are enriched, not depleted. That certainly has been the case. Our vision of God is bigger and more beautiful today."

To volunteer, visit soar.detroit.com/mentor, email carstens@soar.detroit.com or call (313) 924-2001.

Tuesday Musicale hosts concert Feb. 11

Tuesday Musicale of Detroit invites the community to the concert, "Music for Keyboards and Strings," at 7:45 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, 19950 Mack.

The concert features 10-year-old pianist Bryna Sullivan, who has been winning local and national competitions since age 7. She will play Mozart's "Fantasia in D minor," Mendelssohn's "The Venetian Boat Song Op. 30, No. 6" and Chopin's

"Impromptu in A flat Major, Op. 29." Additionally, the concert includes Bacri's "Lyric Interlude Op. 110," performed by violinist Velda Kelly, violist Scott Stefanko and cellist Nadine Deleury.

Pianist Hiroko Ohtani rounds out the concert with two pieces by Francis Poulenc and three by Edvard Grieg.

The concert is free of charge. For more information, visit tuesdaymusicaleofdetroit.org.

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Patty McCracken instructs bridge players, from left, Walter L. Dissett, Dee Steiman and Adel Dissett.

PHOTO BY MONICA SABELLA

The Encore Years: Patty McCracken

By Monica Sabella
Special Writer

To some, retirement is a chance to rest, but to former therapist Patty McCracken, 78, retirement is an opportunity to be more active and supportive in the community.

"I'm a true believer in giving back," she said.

Her generous and energetic spirit inspired a 53-year-long career as a therapist and motivated her to get involved in volunteering around the Grosse Pointes.

"From the time I was very, very young, I knew I wanted to be in a helping profession and ... I'm still in a helping role," said the mother of six.

From Grosse Pointe Memorial Church to The Helm to Honduras, McCracken has been there, helping build homes, guide youths, care for parish members and teach beginner's bridge.

At Memorial Church,

she worked as a Stephen minister, an elder, a two-time deacon and a Sunday school teacher. She was one of the first women to sit on the 2020 planning committee and even inspired her husband, Jack, to become an usher and Stephen minister at the church.

At her home, McCracken still offers therapy to a few select patients — her private psychiatric practice closed two years ago — and in the past she offered pro bono consultations to those in need suffering

from depression or anxiety.

When her husband needed daily medical transportation after a hip replacement, she stumbled upon a new organization to serve, The Helm.

"I believe you give back and so that's when I contacted The Helm. ... This is a wonderful, unbelievable group of people here, the people who are running the Helm. They just do a beautiful job of making people feel comfortable, welcome and at home.

See ENCORE, page 4B

Nationally noted Parkinson's patient advocate to speak Feb. 13

Nationally noted Parkinson's disease patient advocate Gil Thelen speaks from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Parkinson's Action Group meeting at Christ Church Grosse Pointe, 61 Grosse Pointe Blvd., Grosse Pointe Farms. All are welcome.

The retired president and publisher of The Tampa Tribune — named to the Florida Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2016 for his news innovations — will talk about his book, "Counterpunch: Duking It Out With Parkinson's."

The book chronicles his journey of discovery about how to live well with Parkinson's. His wife and fellow journalist, Struby Thelen, is co-author, describing the challenges of being a care partner for a Parkinson's patient. Their "Lessons Learned" and practical advice



See SPEAK, page 4B Gil Thelen

Second Friday event at Wilson Center

The next Second Friday Senior Friends event takes place 10 to 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14, at The Wilson Center: Senior Resources for Independent Living, 648 St. Clair, City of Grosse Pointe.

The event is designed to educate the community about services and care available, as well as connect people with those resources.

Representatives from home care, elder law, advanced care planning, senior cen-

ters and other senior-related agencies will be on hand. Guests also may take tours of The Wilson Center and learn about its offerings, including a demonstration of its car-driving simulator.

Second Friday Senior Friends is presented by Right at Home Grosse Pointe, in partnership with Ascension Health and the Healthy Grosse Pointe & Harper Woods coalition. For more information, call (248) 914-9778 or email belinda@rahcare.com.

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OBITUARIES

Obituary notices are purchased and often prewritten by family or friends. While we try to run obituaries as submitted, we nevertheless reserve the right to edit for accuracy, style and length.

Star Gilezan

Former Grosse Pointe Woods resident Star Gilezan, 88, passed away peacefully Monday, Jan. 27, 2020 at Beaumont Hospital, Grosse Pointe. She was born Sept. 11, 1931, in Cairo, Egypt, to Ardeshes and Aramanush (nee Baliozian) Azablar.

Star was the beloved wife of the late Peter Gilezan, her husband of 67 years, who predeceased her in 2018; dearest mother of Gay Tosch (Paul) and Grant Gilezan (Krisztina); and proud grandmother of Charlotte Tosch and Holly and Lauren Gilezan. She also is survived by her treasured cousin, Lillian Kachadourian (Dan); niece, Gail Howe (Wes); grandnephews, Jack and Paul Howe and many loving family members and friends.

The daughter of survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide, Star came to Detroit in 1941 and was very proud of her Armenian heritage. She became an accomplished pianist while at Southeastern High School, composing classical pieces and playing on Detroit radio. During her adult years, she developed talents for sculpting, gardening and preparing Armenian and French cuisine. She enjoyed sports, especially following professional tennis. She also enjoyed reading, travel and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Her greatest passions were her children and grandchildren and sharing conversation, music and laughter with family and friends.

Star worked for Chrysler Corp. and National Bank of Detroit. As a longtime member of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, she served on its guild and volunteered in its thrift shop. She was a member of the League of

Women Voters of Grosse Pointe and a volunteer at Ascension St. John Hospital.

Star and Peter were members of Grosse Pointe Yacht Club. During their marriage, they also lived in San Diego, Holland and Switzerland.

The family is grateful to the staff of Hospice of Michigan and Beaumont Hospital, Grosse Pointe for their compassionate care and support.

The family will hold a private memorial service.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Star's memory to St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 20475 Sunningdale Park, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236.

Sally J. Wagner

Former Grosse Pointe Farms resident Sally Jean Wagner, 93, passed away Monday, Dec. 23, 2019, at her home in Williamsburg, Va.

Sally was born March 22, 1926, in Cleveland, to William and Elsa Bassichis. She graduated from Hathaway Brown School in Cleveland and, at age 48, began her college education at College of William & Mary. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in art history at age 51.

Sally also earned her real estate license, was vice president and program chairwoman for the American Association of University Women, and was heavily involved in her book club and Bible study. She also enjoyed history, politics, travel, reading and putting together challenging jigsaw puzzles.

Sally is survived by her son, William Henry Wagner (Kathy); daughter-in-law, Barbara Wagner; grandsons, John Prescott "JP" Wagner, Griffin Stewart Wagner

and Robert "Trip" Neal Wagner; and great-grandson, Griffin Jr. She was predeceased by her son, Robert Neal Wagner; and her sister, Betty.

A memorial service was held Dec. 30, at A.J. Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors in Troy. She was interred at White Chapel Memorial Cemetery in Troy.

Constance E. Gildner

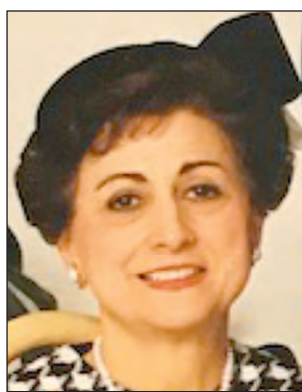
Constance Eve Gildner, 89, passed away Thursday, Jan. 2, 2020, at ShorePointe Nursing Home, under the loving hospice care of Andrea, Ann, Kelly and Trina.

Born Dec. 27, 1930, in Detroit, to Henry G. and Helen (nee Svensgaard) Gildner, Constance graduated from Academy of the Sacred Heart in 1949, then attended Michigan State University. She worked for Capitol Airlines as a senior flight attendant from the 1950s to the 1970s, and shared many hilarious stories with family and friends about famous and infamous passengers, including J. Fred Muggs. She often said it was the best job she ever had.

Constance also was a rabid crossword puzzler, especially enjoying The New York Times puzzles, which she was proud to complete.

She is survived by her sister, Gretchen Brian (Darrell) of Belvedere, Calif.; special friends, Christina Olofsson and Marvinn Wille; niece, Jennifer Brian; and nephews, Derek Brian, Rusty Gildner, Gregory Gildner, Gordon Gildner and Geoff Gildner. She was predeceased by her parents and brother, Henry "Perk" Gildner.

Arrangements were made with Verheyden Inc., and a private inurnment will take place at St. Paul on the Lake Catholic



Star Gilezan



Sally J. Wagner



Constance E. Gildner

Church.

Memorial contributions in Constance's honor may be made to the Alzheimer's Association at alz.org or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals at aspca.org.

Alvin Choma

Detroit resident Alvin "Al" Choma, aka "Emil," passed away peacefully Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020. He was 81. He was born April 15, 1938, in Weirton, W.V., to Alexander and Stella Choma.

Al was the beloved husband of Denise; dear father of Joe (Elissa), Christa, Allie, Deborah Nowicki, Lisa Seyfried and Paula Choma Higgs; and loving Grandpa to Ozzie, Charlie and Brooks. He also is survived by his brother, Bernard Choma and sister, Denise Paisley. He was predeceased by his beloved baby, Michael.

Al was a dedicated and proud professional mechanical engineer, spending his career working in different parts of the Detroit automotive industry. He graduated from the Detroit Institute of Technology and was an avid sports enthusiast, loving all of his Detroit sports teams, as well as the Notre Dame Fighting Irish, Indiana Hoosiers and St. Louis Cardinals. He had a love for attending his son's and daughter's sports events; he made sure to never miss a game and was frequently found cheering along the sidelines at their practices.

Al had a love for music and enjoyed attending concerts with his family. He was a leader and coach to his family and



Alvin Choma

close friends his entire life and instilled his hard work ethic with his always-hustling attitude.

A funeral Mass took place Tuesday, Feb. 4, at Our Lady Queen of Apostles in Hamtramck. He was interred at Resurrection Cemetery in Clinton Township.

Memorials in Al's honor to the Michigan Humane Society at michiganhumane.org are appreciated.

Florence C. Oster

Florence Caroline Oster, 92, a former resident of Grosse Pointe Woods, passed away Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020, in Las Vegas, where she had resided since 2017. Florence was born March 11, 1927, in Pontiac, to Frank and Susanna Nicholls. She married John F. Oster at St. John Evangelical Church in Detroit on Oct. 15, 1949.

Florence earned an associate's degree as a registered nurse and went on to work as a labor and delivery nurse and in OB-GYN practice at St. John Hospital. Florence enjoyed reading, working puzzles, singing in the church choir and Bible study. Her family describes her as patient and kind, humble and a wonderful



Florence C. Oster

nurse and caretaker.

Florence was the beloved wife of the late John F. Oster; loving mother of the late John F. Oster Jr., Peggy Oster, Susan Maurer (the late Richard) and Margaret Oster; proud grandmother of Amy Maurer Roumanos (Robert), Jeffrey Maurer, Kathryn Maurer Miner II (Recil), Jessica Oster Williams (Jeff), Theresa Oster and John J. Oster (Diedre); and cherished great-grandmother of Robert Roumanos, Adam Roumanos, Recil Miner III, Jacob Miner, Braeden Miner, Hailey Maurer and Alison Mae Maurer.

Services take place Saturday, Feb. 8, with visitation from 9 a.m. until the service at 11 a.m. at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 20338 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods, with the Rev. Randy Boelter officiating.

Family internment will be at Cadillac Memorial Gardens East in Clinton Township. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Faith Community Lutheran Church, Las Vegas and Christ the King Lutheran Church, Grosse Pointe Woods. Arrangements were made by Kraft-Sussman Funeral Home, Las Vegas and A.H. Peters Funeral Home, Grosse Pointe Woods.

ENCORE:

Continued from page 3B

And I just am so glad I found it."

She began by helping with the Helm's Meals on Wheels program, but lately she teaches beginner's bridge. It was one of three program suggestions she made, the others being a grief support group and a collaborative cookbook.

The Helm hung its hat on beginner's bridge, McCracken said, and, despite her reservations about teaching, she gave it her best.

After just one season, the program already is a huge success and likely to return this spring.

"I can't tell you how much time I put into it — way over-prepared," McCracken said. "I wanted to give them so much more. They just wanted to play cards. They were just hanging out."

Still, it's the best way to meet new people, have fun and keep connections alive, McCracken said, adding that staying "connected with family, community, old friends," staying healthy and active



PHOTOS BY MONICA SABELLA

McCracken makes a suggestion to Dee Steiman.

are some of the most rewarding things.

"I can't say that enough ... physically, emotionally, mentally. ... (Of) course that's who I've always been in my life," said

McCracken, who exercises three times a week and hiked through the Adirondack Mountains last summer.

Throughout the years, McCracken's passion for



Bob Steiman holds up his hand.

life encouraged her to overcome difficulties to achieve her goals and realize her dreams. When her family's financial limitations stood in the way of studying, she got a job, a scholarship and later a grant to become a therapist.

Her love of tennis took her on a 26-year cross-country adventure with a team of young women in the U.S. Tennis Association. Her love of the outdoors inspired a trip with the American College Abroad, to more than 11 countries, before she returned home to get married and start her family, which includes her children, Bradly, 52; Brett, 51; Mike, 49; Alissa, 47; Kevin, 47; and Heather, 45.

When glaucoma and macular degeneration set

in, she switched from competitive tennis to playing padel, pickleball, platform tennis, golf and bridge. Now she teaches.

"I will always be active as long as my body will allow me to," she said.

The secret to happiness, she added, is to "be positive, be focused on what you have, not what you don't have. It's just so important in all stages of life."

Do you know someone who is breaking the stereotypes of aging? We are looking for individuals who are doing any number of things that previously were not associated with people 60 or older. Have a suggestion? Call or email Jody McVeigh at (313) 343-5590 or jmcveigh@grossepointe news.com.

SPEAK:

Continued from page 3B

benefit patients and their families who wish to live well with their condition.

Thelan and his wife have pioneered ground-level, study/action educational groups for newly diagnosed Parkinson's sufferers in Florida and Georgia. Using their model, Deb Champion started the local Parkinson's Action Group.

Parkinson's incidence is projected to double in the next 20 years, creating what experts call a "pandemic" and "perfect storm" of new cases. To make things worse, there currently are fewer than 50 neurologists across the country in training to become movement disorder specialists. This shortage will only worsen as the population ages, as aging is a risk for Parkinson's and other movement disorders.

To educate doctors and help newly diagnosed patients, the dean of the Mercer University Medical School distributed 2,000 copies of "Counterpunch" to 373 frontline medical offices in Georgia for use by Parkinson's patients.

PASTOR'S CORNER

By the Rev. Jim Rizer

Ways to miss

It is possible to respond in radically different ways and have the same outcome. This truth is revealed in the parable commonly referred to as the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). The story begins, "There was a man who had two sons." The account first focuses on the younger son who in his brashness asks for his inheritance while Dad is still alive. After this "I like the cash better than you" moment with his father, he goes off and squanders what once looked like a fortune. After carving his own path dead ends in unfulfillment, he "comes to his senses" and decides to return home in hopes of being able to work as a servant.

Next, we turn our gaze on the father, who sees his son while he was still far off and begins to prepare a party. To our surprise he grabs the robe and ring and runs up the road to greet his son who returns in shame. As the son begins to apologize, the father rejoices and welcomes the lost son home. No lecture, no conditions.

As the party develops, the spotlight turns to the elder son who is not at all happy. He not only sees this as undeserved extravagance, but as a

squandering of the remaining assets that were to be his someday. So caught up in working for his share, he finds no joy in the return of his brother and cannot share in the father's elation.

One son kept the rules religiously, one broke them all, but both missed the love and relationship with the father. One chose a path of legalism hoping to self-justify, the other opted for liberating self-determinism, but both miss the father's heart.

Yet this parable is not just their story, but our story as well. At times we are like the younger son, wanting to break away and blaze our own trail to fulfillment. At times we are like the elder son, manipulating the system, seeking to stay in the good graces enough to get what we want. Like the parable, either way we risk missing the love of the father.

The parable is intentionally unfinished as we wonder what the elder son's next step will be. Will he continue to miss the father's love? What about us? Will we miss the heart of the heavenly father?

Jim Rizer is the pastor of Living Hope Evangelical Church, Grosse Pointe Farms.

Farms resident ordained to Lutheran Church

The Rev. Dr. Ken A. Grant was ordained Saturday, Jan. 25, at a celebratory worship service at St. James Lutheran Church, Grosse Pointe Farms. Bishop Don Kriess of the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Church in America presided over the ordination, which was attended by clergy from across southeast Michigan, family and

friends.

The service included music by the choirs of both St. James and Genesis Lutheran Church in Detroit, as well as hymns and songs led by Kurt Heyer of St. James and David Billy of Genesis.

Grant, who lives in Grosse Pointe Farms, serves at Genesis. His wife, the Rev. Denise M. Grant, serves as pastor of St. James.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DENISE GRANT

The Rev. Dr. Ken Grant was ordained to the Lutheran Church on Jan. 25.

Tasty Treats is Feb. 16

Grosse Pointe Memorial Church's staff singers offer an afternoon of treats — for the ears and taste buds — at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16. This year's program is presented in the church's newly refurbished Fellowship Hall and features the Liebeslieder Polkas by P.D.Q. Bach. Also planned is a variety of songs from musical theater, opera and more, complemented by an array of treats to eat.

Vocal artists are sopranos Sheena Law-Killinger and Carol Ambrogio Wood, mezzo-sopranos Diane Schoff and Kayla Williams, tenors Michael Fowler and John O'Brien and baritones Dan Aggas and Ken Shepherd. Marilyn and James Biery, and special guest John



Lovegren, accompany on piano.

General admission tickets are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. Seating is limited; the church suggests tickets be purchased advance. Tickets are available at the church, 16 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms, and online at eventgroove.com.

GPPL no longer charging overdue fines

The Grosse Pointe Library Board of Trustees unanimously voted at its Jan. 23 meeting to eliminate overdue fines on most materials. The board also approved forgiving past overdue fines. These changes were effective Feb. 1.

"Our mission is to expand learning, inspire creativity and connect our community," said Jessica Keyser, library director. "Fines are a barrier to service. Limiting barriers to knowledge is more important than ever."

The American Library Association passed a resolution last year encouraging libraries to eliminate the imposition of overdue fines.

Research has shown that overdue fines are not effective in encouraging the return of library materials. Instead, they can quickly become a barrier to using the library altogether. Fines make up less than .5 percent of the GPPL's total revenue.

Any patrons with past-due items are encouraged to bring them back to the library — no questions asked and no fines. All patrons with past-due fines will be waived. Patrons just need to stop in the branch to update their records.

More than 200 libraries across the country are fine free.

Symphony's winter concert is Feb. 9

The Grosse Pointe Symphony presents its winter concert at 7 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms. The concert includes guest conductor Alexander Mishnaevski, former principal viola for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

The concert also features the winner and runner-up of the Nester Scholarship competition. Grosse Pointe South High School senior Ian Plansker placed first in the competition and will play his own composition, "Rondo for Flute and Orchestra." Alfonzo Keller-Caselles, runner-up, will play the second movement of the

Tchaikovsky violin concerto.

Plansker is a flautist, harpsichordist and composer of historically idiomatic music. He currently is auditioning for a historical flute and harpsichord double major at several colleges and conservatories.

Plansker has won numerous awards for flute performance, including two consecutive first place finishes in Tuesday Musicales's Student League Competition and first place in the SEMFA Rachel Stornant Competition. He has been playing flute five years and harpsichord three years and has been composing five years. He has

had several of his compositions performed by numerous orchestras and choirs in North America.

In the pursuit of his passion for baroque music, Plansker recently attended Oberlin Conservatory's Baroque Performance Institute on a scholarship for baroque flute and harpsichord. Last December, his setting of "Ave Regina" was performed by the Toronto Chamber Choir and last June, his opera, "The Spectres," was performed at Oberlin Conservatory's Baroque Performance Institute.

Keller-Caselles is a violinist and conductor who began studying violin and piano at age 4 and con-

ducting at age 12.

As a violinist, Keller-Caselles has played in several top youth orchestras in Michigan, including the Detroit Symphony Youth Orchestra, Michigan All-State Orchestra, Youth Arts Project String Chamber Orchestra, Detroit Metropolitan Concert Orchestra and Detroit Civic Concert Orchestra. He has played professionally with the Bellini Opera Theatre Orchestra and serves as concertmaster for the Oakland University Honors Orchestra and Berkley High School Symphony Orchestra.

Keller-Caselles also is an avid chamber musician. He has led performances of Alexander Borodin's String Quintet in New York City while

studying at the New York University Summer Strings Intensive and has led the Berkley High School resident string quartet through first division ratings in district and state solo and ensemble festivals. He is the founder and president of the Berkley High School Chamber Music Society.

As a conductor, Keller-Caselles has directed several ensembles locally and abroad. He was selected as the full orchestra conductor for the Modern Music Masters National Honor Society induction performance for the Berkley chapter, appeared as guest conductor for the Berkley High School Symphony Orchestra and served as assistant conductor for the Salas Polyphonic

Choir in Spain.

A special feature of this program is the performance of Gounod's "Petite Symphonie for Winds." The full orchestra will play Bach's "Orchestra Suite no. 2" and Richard Rodgers' "Victory at Sea."

The Grosse Pointe Symphony Orchestra may be followed on Facebook.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and free for K-12 students. Tickets are available online at gpsymphony.org or at the door.

The Grosse Pointe Symphony Orchestra is supported in part by grants from Ascension Health, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and National Endowment for the Arts.

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Basketball

UNIVERSITY LIGGETT SCHOOL

Knights cruise to two more wins



PHOTO BY RENATO JAMETT

University Liggett School's Delaney Garvey, shown at a previous game, is leading the team in scoring this season.

By Micah White
Special Writer

The University Liggett School girls basketball team continues to build its streak of a successful record with dominating wins over Detroit Cristo Rey, 54-21, and Frankel Jewish Academy, 49-6.

When speaking with head coach Craig White about the success, he said, "Now that we are in the second half of the season, it's time to really show what we really have."

During this time in conference play, each team has faced each other at least once, so every team is in round two.

With these second-round games for the

Knights, Delaney Garvey led the way with 18 points. Both Samantha Krasnicki and Margaret Dunn added nine points, and Grace Rahaim pitched in eight points against Detroit Cristo Rey.

When the Knights faced Frankel Jewish Academy, both Rahaim and Krasnicki led the team with 16 points each. Kaitlyn Gray added five points and Alexis Gormley, Aidan McFarlane and Dunn finished with four points.

"It's time to turn it up," White said. "Since the start of the season we harped on defense and we are still perfecting it every single day; we are still executing those fundamentals."

Between both games, the Knights kept each team below seven points in every quarter. However, with hawking defense, it still managed to excel on the offensive end of the game to finish with landslide wins.

The Knights are 10-2 and 7-0 in the Catholic League Interseasonal II Division.

Boys results

The ULS boys team lost 61-48 to visiting Clarkston Everest Collegiate last weekend, dropping to 4-2 in the Catholic League Interseasonal II Division.

Cameron Strong and Alex George led the Knights with 11 points apiece, while Mike Clark had nine points.

North, South split on hardcourt

Blue Devils wear down Norsemen

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

An amped up crowd was on hand to watch another installment of the Grosse Pointe North/Grosse Pointe South boys basketball game.

South hosted the second regular season meeting, and through it all the Blue Devils beat the Norsemen 76-48. However, the game was played closer than the final score indicated.

"We didn't play our best, and I think with all of the distractions concerning this game, I'm not surprised," South head coach Steve Benard said. "It's a fun game for the fans, but tough to prepare for. The players are anxious and sometimes their emotions get the best of them. We won and stayed unbeaten in our division."

"We have to start hitting the open shots," North head coach Andy Ayrault said. "We played better against South this time around and had chances to make it close, but we have to make shots."

It was a close first quarter with the Blue Devils ahead 15-7, but the home team used a 22-8 second quarter to build a 37-15 halftime advantage.

The Blue Devils built the lead with their top



PHOTO BY PAUL KANIA

South's Will Johnson dunks two of his 18 points in the Blue Devils' win over Grosse Pointe North.

two scorers, sophomore Will Johnson and freshman Anthony Benard, scoring a combined seven points.

Ayrault got his Norsemen refocused and they turned the 22-point deficit to single digits as they played tight defense and became more aggressive on the offensive end of the court.

The top offensive contributions came from senior Cameron Perrino and junior Jordan Shepherd. In the post, it was senior George Graham and junior Alexander Benner doing the heavy lifting.

The Blue Devils used a quick seven-point scor-

ing burst to regain momentum and head into the fourth quarter with a 54-38 lead.

Benard's squad tightened the screws on the Norsemen in the fourth quarter, forcing turnovers and missed shots to build the lead back to 20-plus points.

The Norsemen finished with 16 turnovers to eight for the Blue Devils.

Senior Nick Fannon had a double-double to lead the Blue Devils, finishing with 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Johnson finished with 18 points, followed by junior Matthew Edwards

See SOUTH, page 2C

Braker dominates

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

When the chips were down, senior Christina Braker put her Supergirl cape on and played the heroine last week as she led the host Grosse Pointe North girls basketball team to a dominating 56-44 win over rival Grosse Pointe South.

"When we were down after the first quarter, Christina put the team on her shoulders and really played well," North head coach Gary Bennett said. "She gave the rest of the girls confidence. It really was an amazing performance."

It was all Blue Devils early. They forced some early turnovers and hit four open three-point shots to open a 19-6 lead. It could have been more if they hit several layups or converted the turnovers into baskets.

Missing the layups and turning the ball over themselves kept it a 13-point difference when the first-quarter horn sounded. At the time, Braker did not score a point.

Then the Norsemen turned the switch and Braker began to dominate. She scored 11 second-quarter points to help the home team outscore the Blue Devils 18-1 in the stanza to take a 24-20



PHOTO BY RENATO JAMETT

Grosse Pointe North senior Christina Braker, left, dominated the game at both ends of the court against Grosse Pointe South.

halftime advantage.

She scored in the paint on five straight possessions as the Blue Devils' lead steadily shrunk. Besides scoring, Braker was rebounding and defending the Blue Devils' leading scorer, junior Alexa Downey, and holding her in check.

"We had our chances in the first quarter to really blow it open, but missing the layups and not converting the turnovers into points kept them in the game," South head coach Kevin Richards said. "Braker dominated the game. I give Gary credit. His team played well tonight, and we did not."

In the second half, the

rest of the Norsemen jumped into the mix. Senior Hannah Davis; juniors Maddie Kohler, Meadow Venet and Jordan Solomon; sophomore Isabella Stephanoff; and freshmen Annabel Ayrault and Sophia Borowski each elevated their game.

The Blue Devils, a master this season at creating turnovers, fell victim to the turnover bug. They just couldn't make a dent in the deficit, which grew to double digits late in the third quarter.

It was 37-29 after the third quarter. The Norsemen had turned a

See NORTH, page 3C

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2C | SPORTS

SOUTH:

Continued from page 1C

with 10 and Fannon with 10. Benard had nine points, while seniors Alex Shaheen and Miles Jamieson had eight points apiece.

“Our scoring has been pretty spread out the last couple of games,” Benard said. “That is what we need to make us a more well-rounded team.”

Helping Fannon on the boards were Jamieson and junior Thomas Hessburg, who both had five.

For the Norsemen, Perrino had 12 points, followed by Shepherd with 10 and freshman Adam Ayrault with seven. Graham and Benner chipped in with six points apiece.

On the boards, Shepherd and Ayrault



PHOTOS BY PAUL KANIA

Two of the lowpost standouts in the game were Grosse Pointe North's Alexander Benner, right, and Grosse Pointe South's Nick Fannon, left.

had five apiece, followed by Graham, Perrino and

Benner with four apiece.

Earlier in the week, North lost 67-43 to host Romeo to fall to 2-5 in the Macomb Area Conference White Division and 2-11 overall, while South crushed visiting Utica Ford 82-30 to improve to 7-0 in the White Division and 11-2 overall.

“We had five players in double figures against Ford, and another few with eight points,” Benard said. “It’s great to see the guys share the ball and not worry about who is scoring the points.”

South is the highest scoring team in the MAC, averaging 75.5 points per game, and second is Macomb Dakota at 68.9.

Grosse Pointe South hosts New Haven at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6.

Grosse Pointe North hosts Utica Ford at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6.



Grosse Pointe North's Jordan Shepherd, No. 4, forces Grosse Pointe South's Alex Shaheen to take an off-balance shot.



South's Jacob Harris drives to the basket with North's Ethan Pinkney defending.

GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ADVERTISEMENT

The Board of Education of the Grosse Pointe Public School System (“Owner” or “School District”) will receive sealed Bid Proposals for:

PROJECT – Public Address & Clock System

Bid Proposals will be received by Chris Stanley of the Grosse Pointe Public School System, at 389 St. Clair Avenue, Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48230, on or before **12:00 p.m.** (local time) on **February 25th, 2020** (“Due Date”). The Board of Education will not consider or accept a Bid Proposal received after the Due Date, the date and time specified for Bid Proposal submission. Bid Proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud immediately following the Due Date at the same location.

A pre-Bid Proposal meeting will be held on February 10th, 2020:

- a. 9:00 a.m. at 389 St. Clair, Grosse Pointe, MI 48230. All persons attending the Pre-Bid will be required to enter through the front office.

Each Bid Proposal must be accompanied by 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 Board of Education or the Superintendent of the Grosse Pointe Public School System. The Board of Education will not accept a Bid Proposal that does not include this sworn and notarized disclosure statement.

Each Bid Proposal must also be accompanied by a sworn and notarized statement certifying that the Contractor is not an Iran Linked Business. The Board of Education will not accept a Bid Proposal that does not include this sworn and notarized statement.

Each Bid Proposal must also be accompanied by a bid bond in the amount no less than five percent (5%) of the total bid amount(s).

The Grosse Pointe Public School System’s Board of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any and all Bid Proposals, either in whole or in part, to waive any informalities or irregularities therein, or to award the contract to other than the contractor(s) submitting the best financial Bid Proposal (low bidder), in its sole and absolute discretion.

Bid documents, including Bidders Information Manual, scopes of work, Drawing and Specifications will be made available Wednesday, February 5th, 2020, at the following website:

<https://mi01000971.schoolwires.net/Page/10754>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jacinto Cordero at jacinto.cordero@plantemoran.com or 248.223.3538.

Published: GPN, February 6, 2020

Gymnastics

GROSSE POINTE UNITED

Gymnasts excel

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

The Grosse Pointe United gymnastics team finished sixth with 138.300 points in the recent Canton Invitational.

The meet featured 18 teams from around the state, including eight out of last year’s top 10 from the state finals. The invite is known through the state as the “Pre-State Meet” and is highly competitive.

Farmington won the meet with 143.675 points, while Rockford placed second with 142.550.

Leading the way for the team was Cate Gagnier, who was runner-up in the all-around scoring in Division 1. She placed third on vault, uneven parallel bars and floor exercise, plus fourth on balance beam.

Other girls who com-

peted were Amanda Nguyen, Kate Ennis, Maeve Jamieson, Sammy Lucido, Maddie LoPorto, Ava Rogowski and Emma Burney. They competed in one, two or three of the four events.

In other action, they beat Port Huron 140-111.4. The 140 points was a season high.

Lucido scored the 8.8 on the balance beam, 8.625 on floor exercise, 7.975 on uneven parallel bars and 8.4 on vault.

All seven of the gymnasts scored above an 8.0 on vault, including Gagnier, who had 9.65. Rogowski, Emma Burney, Jamieson, Ennis and Nguyen also competed.

On bars, Gagnier, Nguyen and Jamieson scored above 8.0 with Lucido just below, and on the beam Rogowski, Nguyen and Gagnier joined Lucido with a

score above 8.0.

The girls excelled on the floor exercise with Gagnier scoring 9.775, followed by Nguyen at 9.15, Lucido at 8.625, Jamieson at 8.575, Burney at 8.5, Ennis at 8.4 and Rogowski at 8.075.

The team, 6-2 overall, also placed second with 132.325 points in a tri-meet. Bloomfield Hills won with 134.75 points. Birmingham and West Bloomfield competed.

Scoring for the team on vault were LoPorto, Lucido, Ennis and Lexi Poulos, while the four top girls on bars were Madi Lucido, Rogowski, LoPorto and Nguyen.

On beam, Madi Lucido, Burney, LoPorto and Rogowski led the way, and it was Ennis, Poulos, Rogowski and Burney placing in the top four for Hamidi’s team on the floor.

Ice hockey

NORTH, SOUTH & LIGGETT

Thumbs up, as well as thumbs down

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

A quick start is just what the doctor ordered last week when the Grosse Pointe South boys hockey team traveled to Orchard Lake St. Mary’s to battle the Eaglets.

Playing on the road against any Michigan Interscholastic Hockey League team is a task, but the Blue Devils played well and won 3-1.

They jumped out to a 2-0 first-period lead as sophomore Aaron Vyletel scored just 48 seconds into the opening frame, and sophomore River Kraus tallied at the 8:51 mark to get the advantage.

Vyletel scored unassisted, and Kraus’s goal was assisted by junior David Rivard and senior Brian McKenna.

Neither team scored in the second period, and early in the third period the Eaglets scored to tighten things up.

Kraus scored an unassisted goal at the 14:34 mark of the third period to give the Blue Devils some breathing room.

It was a well-played game as there were only three penalties called, and senior goalie William Strickler earned the win, stopping 21 of 22 shots. The Blue Devils finished with 34 shots on net.

Head coach and his Blue Devils improved to 7-1-0-1 in the MIHL and 15-1-0-1 overall.

South girls

The Grosse Pointe South girls hockey team took advantage of an opportunity and turned it in to an easy 8-0 win over visiting Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook Kingswood last week.

The Cranes, playing without their All-State goalie who missed the game with an injury, had a newcomer in the net.

The Blue Devils’ sophomore Molly Ryszewski was back on the ice and made a difference, scoring a natural hat trick in the first period. She scored at the 4:51, 2:54 and 1:16 mark of the opening period as they built a 3-0 lead.

Senior goalie Emily Desnoyer made sure the Cranes would not get on

the board, making some key saves to help her team maintain all of the momentum.

Senior Lauren Benoit and sophomore Olivia Livingstone scored goals at the 11:35 and 8:37 mark of the second period to stretch the lead to five goals.

Benoit went on to also record a natural hat trick by scoring the next three goals in a 21-second span. Once the period ended, the game was called due to the mercy rule.

For head coach Hailee Craig and her Blue Devils, the win improved their record to 4-8 overall.

ULS girls

The University Liggett School girls hockey team lost 4-2 to Brighton Unified last week. Brighton is now 13-0-1 on the season.

Sophomores Allyson Doppke and Natalia Dragovic scored third-period goals for the Knights.

The Knights rebounded last weekend, beating visiting Wixom St. Catherine 7-0 to improve to 14-4 overall.

North girls

The Grosse Pointe North girls hockey team suffered an offensive outage last week in its two games against Warren Regina and Plymouth-Canton-Salem.

The Norsemen lost 2-0 and 5-0, respectively, but had the shots on net to compete with both squads.

The Norsemen dropped to 3-14 overall.

Next are games against rivals University Liggett School, Thursday, Feb. 6, at McCann Ice Arena, and Wednesday, Feb. 12, against Grosse Pointe South at Eastside Hockey Arena.

City of Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Grosse Pointe Woods Planning Commission, under the provisions of Public Act 110 of 2006, MCL 125.3101 as amended, and Grosse Pointe Woods City Code of 2017 Section 50-339(2), will hold a Public Hearing on February 25, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council/Court Room of the Municipal Building, 20025 Mack Plaza Drive, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236 regarding an Application for Site Plan Review and Special Land Use from Cross Pointe Christian Church, 21336 Mack Avenue, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI. The application involves construction of an addition of approximately 1,900 sq. ft. for an elevator, elevator equipment room, and office. This proposal requires Special Land Use approval pursuant to Secs. 50-32 and Site Plan Review requirements in accordance with Sections 50-34 through 50-42 of the Grosse Pointe Woods Code. The Planning Commission’s recommendation is subject to City Council approval to be scheduled at a later date. Agenda documents are available for inspection at the City Clerk’s Office, 20025 Mack Plaza, between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. All interested persons are invited to attend and will be given opportunity for public comment. The public may appear in person or be represented by counsel. Written comments will be received in the City Clerk’s office, up to the close of business preceding the hearing. A group spokesperson is encouraged on agenda items concerning organized groups. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services at the meeting should contact the Grosse Pointe Woods Clerk’s Office at 313 343-2440 seven days prior to the meeting.

Lisa Kay Hathaway
City Clerk

G.P.N.: 2/6/2020

Swimming

GROSSE POINTE NORTH

Norsemen win

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

The Grosse Pointe North boys swimming and diving team earned its first league win of the season last week, beating Utica Eisenhower 109-75.

Head coach Nick Valice watched his Norsemen dominate the meet. It was close until the diving competition, where the Norsemen swept it to earn 13 points to the Eagles' two.

Trever Mulkey won with 211.80 points, followed by Andrew Peabody with 191.21 points and Evan Mocan with 159.61 points.

The Norsemen opened the meet by winning the 200-yard medley relay with Alex Agius, Owen Schaaf, Jonathan White

and Kyle MacGillis posting a time of 1:55.58.

Jack Gehlert won the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 1:56.76, and in the 200-yard individual medley it was Gianni Carlino winning at 2:05.41 and White taking third at 2:39.13.

Schaaf won the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 23.62, but the Eagles captured second through fifth to keep it close.

After the diving, the Norsemen cruised with Carlino, Peabody and White placing first, third and fourth in the 100-yard butterfly with times of 56.11, 1:08.85 and 1:12.45, and the trio of Ian Donahue, Agius and Loudon Fuchs took first, second and fourth in the 100-yard freestyle with times of 50.84, 58.40 and 1:03.36.

The Norsemen didn't place well in the 500-yard freestyle, but came back with a vengeance to win the 200-yard freestyle relay with Schaaf, Gehlert, Carlino and Donahue posting a time of 1:38.64.

Schaaf was first in the 100-yard backstroke, cruising to an eight-second win with his time of 1:01.70.

The Norsemen took first, second and fourth in the 100-yard breaststroke as Donahue, Gehlert and MacGillis had times of 1:08.07, 1:12.24 and 1:20.15.

In the 400-yard freestyle relay, Peabody, Carlino, Gehlert and Donahue won with a time of 3:38.52 to help the Norsemen improve to 1-2 in the Macomb Area Conference Red Division.

NORTH:

Continued from page 1C

13-point deficit into an eight-point lead, thanks to a 31-10 advantage in the second and third quarters.

Richards tried to regroup, but the turnovers and missed shots continued to plague them.

Braker continued her dominance at both ends of the floor, and with Borowski and Kohler chipping in by making their free throws the Norsemen's lead reached double digits midway through the fourth quarter.

Downey scored seven of her team-leading 11 points in the fourth quarter, and junior Cameron Lundh was tough on the boards as they kept the Blue Devils within striking distance.

The Norsemen hit several straight free throws in the final few minutes to preserve the win and send the Blue Devils to their first division loss of the season.

The Norsemen had only nine turnovers to 23 for the Blue Devils, plus they made 16 free throws. The Blue Devils, masters of making three-point baskets, hit four in the first quarter and only two in the remaining three quarters.

Sophomore Kamryn Richards had eight points, while Lundh finished with seven points and eight rebounds. Senior Sophie Iafate added six points.

For the Norsemen, Braker finished with 22 points and eight rebounds, while Kohler had 16 points. Borowski



PHOTOS BY RENATO JAMETT

Grosse Pointe North's Jordan Solomon chipped in with a couple of points.

finished with six points and six rebounds.

Ayrault also had six points, followed by Davis with five.

Later in the week, North traveled to Port Huron Northern and was pushed to the limit, but

prevailed 53-50 in overtime.

Grosse Pointe North improved to 5-3 in the MAC Red Division and 9-4 overall; Grosse Pointe South is 6-1 in the division and 10-3 overall.



Grosse Pointe North senior Hannah Davis, left, defends South sophomore Kamryn Richards.

GROSSE POINTE SOUTH

Blue Devils earn sweet victory

By Bob St. John
Sports Editor

The Grosse Pointe South boys swimming and diving team cleared a big hurdle in its bid to win another Macomb Area Conference Red Division regular season title last week, beating Macomb Dakota 100-86.

The Blue Devils won five of the 12 events, but the team's depth was able to nab crucial second- and third-place finishes that pushed them over the top.

The 200-yard medley relay team of John Gelle, Jackson Jogan, Keiran Rahman and Tucker Briggs won with a time of 1:44.64. Dakota won the final two relays to keep it close.

In the 200-yard freestyle, Ryan English, Gelle and Briggs finished second, fourth and fifth with times of 1:53.83,

1:57.81 and 1:59.85, and it was Thad Mackrell and Adam Johnson taking second and third in the 200-yard individual medley with times of 2:10.81 and 2:15.54.

Michael Currier, Raef Akkary and P.K. Nugent placed second, fourth and fifth in the 50-yard freestyle with times of 23.83, 24.09 and 24.38.

The Blue Devils also earned the win in diving as Logan Hepner cruised by earning 266.25 points.

Rahmaan, Drew Vandeputte and Ethan Kinkade swept the 100-yard butterfly, turning in times of 55.42, 56.80 and 58.29, plus English and Currier took second and third in the 100-yard freestyle with times of 51.86 and 51.92.

Gelle and Joshua Dixon finished third and fourth in the 500-yard freestyle, posting times of 5:15.89 and 5:22.34,

and the foursome of Briggs, Currier, English and Akkary took second in the 200-yard freestyle relay with a time of 1:33.09.

Heading down the stretch of the meet, Rahman, Mackrell and Briggs swept the 100-yard backstroke with times of 57.27, 58.48 and 59.34, and Vandeputte, Peter Costello, Jogan and Johnson finished first, third, fourth and fifth in the 100-yard breaststroke with times of 1:02.42, 1:06.18, 1:06.38 and 1:07.54.

The Blue Devils clinched the victory by taking second in the 400-yard freestyle relay as Rahman, English, Gelle and Vandeputte had a time of 3:26.10.

Grosse Pointe South is 3-0 in the MAC Red Division.

They need one win to clinch a share of the title.

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION FOR THE ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2020

GROSSE POINTE PARK, GROSSE POINTE CITY, GROSSE POINTE FARMS, GROSSE POINTE WOODS, VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY AND HARPER WOODS, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF GROSSE POINTE PARK, GROSSE POINTE CITY, GROSSE POINTE FARMS, GROSSE POINTE WOODS, VILLAGE OF GROSSE POINTE SHORES, A MICHIGAN CITY AND HARPER WOODS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE. That any qualified elector who is not already registered, may register to vote at the office of their City Clerk; the office of the County Clerk; a Secretary of State branch office, or other designated agency. Registration forms can be obtained at mi.gov/vote and mailed to the City Clerk. Voters who are already registered may update their registration at www.expressSOS.com.

The last day to register in any manner other than in-person with the local clerk is Monday, February 24, 2020.

After this date, anyone who qualifies as an elector may register to vote in person with proof of residency (MCL 168.492) at their local clerk's office (see locations below) at the following times: Regular business hours: Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm; Saturday, March 7th from 8:00am to 4:00pm; and Election Day, Tuesday, March 10th from 7:00am to 8:00pm.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that registered voters will be voting on the following as presented and listed below:

PARTISAN SECTION (DEMOCRATIC PARTY BALLOT) Presidential: Democratic Presidential Primary for President of the United States.

PARTISAN SECTION (REPUBLICAN PARTY BALLOT) Presidential: Republican Presidential Primary for President of the United States.

PROPOSAL SECTION Authority: Renewal of Wayne County Art Institute Authority Millage - A proposal to levy 0.2 mill on all taxable property located within the County for a period of 10 years from 2022 through 2031.

Full text of the ballot, including the proposals, may be obtained at www.mi.gov/vote.

Persons with special needs as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact their local City Clerk's Office.

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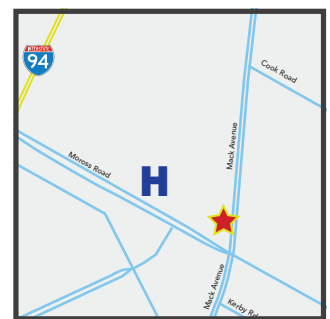
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