

Grosse Pointe News

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JUNE 11, 2020
 GROSSE POINTE, MICHIGAN

Complete news coverage of all the Pointes



DRONE PHOTOS BY JACK RYAN/SKYVIEW AERIAL PRODUCTIONS

Seniors at Grosse Pointe North High School, left, and Grosse Pointe South High School participated in one-of-a-kind commencement ceremonies last week.

Class of 2020 graduates pandemic style

By Mary Anne Brush
 Staff Writer

THE GROSSE POINTES — A common thread was woven through Grosse Pointe North and Grosse Pointe South high schools' virtual commencement ceremonies — strength and resilience

in the face of loss. Speeches at both high schools reflected this theme. "While this isn't the senior year any of us had hoped for, our perseverance and adaptability during this difficult time represents strength and maturity far beyond our

years," North Senior Class President Emily Widgren said. "This ceremony is going to be the most historic one held at Grosse Pointe North so far." "This is not how it's supposed to be," said Andrew Fleming, South's commencement speaker.

"We are supposed to be here on the South front lawn in our caps and gowns reveling in the work — or lack thereof — that we had been doing the last couple of months. ... So what do we do and where do we go from here? ... How do we move on when high school has

never really ended?" The celebration began Wednesday, June 3, for North and Thursday, June 4, for South with an afternoon "honor drive." Graduates arrived in a parade of vehicles at each campus to pick up their diploma covers, pose for a photo and be

congratulated by members of the Grosse Pointe Public School System faculty, administration and Board of Education — all at a socially appropriate distance. It was the first time most seniors had seen

See 2020, page 8A

Farms develops plans to reopen public facilities

By Laurel Kraus
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE FARMS — Public facilities in Grosse Pointe Farms were closed March 12, even before the first executive stay-at-home order, but the city managed to continue providing essential services uninterrupted. With the stay-at-home order lifted June 1, the municipality has released an extensive guide on its plans to reopen.

"Fortunately, at this point we're seeing num-

bers of people who are infected have gone down," City Manager Shane Reeside said. "The social distancing and the stay-at-home order has had an impact, we believe. We are now beginning the process of reopening facilities in a thoughtful manner." The comprehensive plan, including a detailed overview of new health, safety and cleaning procedures, can be found linked to the homepage of the city's website.

See REOPEN, page 2A



DRONE PHOTO BY JACK RYAN/SKYVIEW AERIAL PRODUCTIONS

Black Lives Matter protesters marched up Kercheval in The Village Friday, June 5.

Pointes join outcry for police fairness

By Eddie B. Allen Jr.
 Staff Writer

THE GROSSE POINTES — It's the conversation Cynthia Douglas wants to have openly. A Grosse Pointe Woods

resident and president of the Grosse Pointes—Harper Woods NAACP branch, Douglas knew discussions about the policing of black residents were critical long before video of a dying

George Floyd went viral last month. The Minneapolis man's death at the hands of a uniformed policeman ignited international outrage, including demonstrations in Grosse Pointe

Woods, Grosse Pointe Park and the City of Grosse Pointe. Following a 200-vehicle caravan combining participants from the Pointes, Harper

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Former PTO treasurer arraigned on embezzlement charges

By Mary Anne Brush
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE WOODS — Quinn Smith, 43, was arraigned Wednesday, June 3, before Judge Theodore Metry in the Grosse Pointe Woods Municipal Court on embezzlement charges of nearly

\$100,000 related to the Monteith Elementary School's PTO and the Committee for the Renewal of the Grosse Pointe Public School System's Millage. Smith was the treasurer of the PTO between July 2017 and January 2020. An audit of the organization's finances

revealed the occurrence of unauthorized activity on the account. On Feb. 12, a report was filed with Grosse Pointe Woods police. It is alleged the defendant accessed the PTO account without authorization and embezzled more than \$91,000 in funds over two and a half

years. Smith also was the treasurer of the GPPSS millage committee between October 2019 and January 2020. An audit of the organization's finances revealed the occurrence of unauthorized activity on the



COURTESY PHOTO

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The Rev. Jeffery Baker
 Home: Grosse Pointe Park
 Pastor working to promote diversity in the community



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Chamber supports reopening businesses

By Laurel Kraus
Staff Writer

THE GROSSE POINTES — When the stay-at-home order was first issued, the Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce noticed businesses were coming up with unique, new ways of conducting operations, which led to a #GPSTRONG yard sign campaign in support.

The signs were available to residents and businesses at no charge, but with donations welcome, funds were raised toward another series of signage — examples include a “We are open” sign and another stating guidelines for the health and safety of customers — which are required of businesses to display as they reopen.

“The businesses were

going to have to have signage, so it was a way for us to offset a financial burden on businesses, so that we’re able to offer it free to all of them,” Chamber President Jenny Boettcher said.

Rather than only being offered to chamber members, the signage is available for all businesses in Grosse Pointe and comes with the offer to be delivered by chamber staff.

Business owners interested in taking advantage of these efforts can reach the chamber at (313) 881-4722 or info@grossepointechamber.com.

Additionally, the chamber is working with the cities to have consistent messaging and branding at Grosse Pointe businesses across the board, with the intention of build-



COURTESY PHOTO

Bruce Anderson of Moehring Woods with his #GPSTRONG sign.

ing the trust of customers and unifying the Grosse Pointe business community.

“We want our efforts to be effective within all the cities, so if we use all the same branding and sig-

nage, that will help and also send a stronger message to the folks both inside and outside our community,” Boettcher said.

The next steps in these efforts still are being discussed, but could include additional signage welcoming people to the district, indicating dedicated curbside pick-up areas and marking areas where businesses have expanded into public spaces.

Additional resources provided by the chamber include loan and grant information, COVID-19 updates and business resources such as professional webinars that teach business owners to promote and reinvent their business through online ordering, curbside pick-up and delivery during this

time.

“The chamber, like everybody else, has pivoted from being a community event planner, business and networking collaborator to the hub of information and resources guiding businesses through this crazy uncharted time,” Boettcher said.

As they already have begun working with a significant number of businesses on these efforts, Boettcher said the state of small businesses in the Pointes is looking positive.

“I would like to say over the past 10 weeks, the unity amongst the businesses owners, the community leaders and residents has carried all of us through these challenging times and their

love, support and generosity is what makes up our fabric of Grosse Pointe,” she said.

Boettcher suggested that even if community members are uncomfortable with going into stores, they can still help by purchasing gift cards and continuing to order through curbside delivery.

“Right now, more than ever before, it’s time that the residents need to support their local businesses and their efforts in buying locally will make all the difference in keeping our small businesses sustainable and strong,” she said. “We don’t know what the uncharted future will bring, but we do know that our businesses are strong and they will persevere, but we need to support them all.”

REOPEN:

Continued from page 1A

Through June 14, city hall will remain closed to the public as city staff return and prepare the facilities. Beginning Monday, June 15, the first-floor lobby area of city hall will open.

Employees will work onsite from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but at most, 50 percent of staff will be in the building at any given time and employees who are able will continue working from home for the time being.

“The interesting thing about this is it kind of created sort of a restart but on how we look at our

operations at city hall and we really have been working very aggressively to create a virtual city hall where we’re all interconnected remotely,” Reeside said. “We have added a lot of different software that is allowing us to do a lot of functions in a more efficient manner. ... Things can now be done completely virtually that couldn’t before and we think it’s going to add convenience in the future to residents.”

Residents and contractors are asked to make appointments with the departments before coming in.

Signs have been put up to remind visitors about social distancing and

anyone entering the building will be required to wear a mask.

“We appreciate the patience of our residents as we all go through this process together,” Reeside said.

The municipal court will continue holding the majority of proceedings virtually by video conference, but when necessary to happen in-person, additional safety measures will be put in place, including a health screening and a paging system to allow parties to wait in their vehicles.

No specific opening dates have been announced, but council could return to in-person meetings as early as July.

While the harbor was able to open May 1, as normal, a significant number of other Pier Park amenities, with

adjustments for social distancing, have now opened as well, including the playscape, tennis and pickleball courts, dog park and restrooms in the community building.

“A lot of the activities that we previously have had, we’ve resumed; however, we continue to encourage that people follow the executive order, that they maintain social distancing,” Reeside said.

Use of Kerby Field, subject to limits imposed by the governor’s executive order, by the Grosse Pointe Farms—City Little League is anticipated to begin June 15, while the splash pad and pool are scheduled to be opened July 1.

“Now that that was approved fairly recently, unfortunately it’s not flip a switch and open the

pool,” Reeside explained. “We still had some additional hiring to do for the lifeguards and we have to put all those employees through pretty extensive training as it pertains to COVID-19, but also they have to have all their recertification through American Red Cross.”

The pool will have to be kept at 50 percent capacity and activities that require closer contact such as swim lessons and swim teams will not be held this season to reduce density and increase the amount of open swim time. There also will be designated areas for lounging that are separated according to social distancing.

“We are in the process now of developing those policies, but it will be different,” Reeside said. “It will be somewhat of a dif-

ferent experience, but we think it will work and it will be a welcome amenity for our residents.”

July 10 will bring the next phase of opening facilities, such as the park pavilions, basketball and volleyball courts, warming building and limited programming in the community building.

Expanded programming is scheduled to begin at the community building Aug. 15, and all other programs will begin after Labor Day according to the current plan.

The city also is prepared in the event of the stay-at-home order being re-implemented if there is a spike in cases.

“Because of what we’ve gone through, I think we are actually more prepared now going forward in how to respond,” Reeside said.

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CHARGES:

Continued from page 1A

account. On Feb. 27, a report was filed with Grosse Pointe Woods police. It is alleged the defendant accessed the

Renew GPPSS account without authorization and embezzled more than \$1,700 in funds over three months.

Smith was charged with embezzlement of \$50,000 and less than \$100,000, a 15-year fel-

ony in relation to the Monteith PTO case. Smith also was charged with embezzlement of \$1,000 or more but less than \$20,000 from a non-profit or charitable organization, a 10-year felony, in relation to the GPPSS millage.

Smith’s attorney, David Draper, entered a not guilty plea on both cases on behalf of his client.

Also in attendance at the hearing was Woods Department of Public Safety Detective Ryan Schroerlucke.

Draper said Smith, a longtime Woods resident, had no criminal record, was employed

full time and was “completely cooperative,” adding he, as Smith’s attorney, and Schroerlucke had been working together to share documents.

“As the court may or not be aware, (Smith’s) wife is a teacher at Monteith. His children either attend or attended that school,” Draper said.

Draper assured Metry “my client is absolutely going to return to court and has many strong, strong ties to the community,” before the judge set bond at \$25,000 in the Monteith PTO case and \$5,000 in the millage renewal case, with Smith required to post 10 percent on each.

Smith said he is employed at a logistics company, where he worked previously and returned in February after a period of self-employment.

“He actually has a long history with this company and a very good relationship,” Draper said. “They’re aware of the situation and he is still employed.”

Metry said Smith is to have no contact with any witnesses regarding the case or with anyone at Monteith other than his wife and children, nor is he to be entrusted with finances or funds for any person or organization.

Smith is due back in court at 10 a.m. Wednesday, June 24, for a probable cause conference. The exam in both matters has been set for 10 a.m. Wednesday, July 15, in the Grosse Pointe Woods Municipal Court.

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COURTESY PHOTOS

“Jeopardy!” Teacher Tournament champion Ben Henri with host Alex Trebek, runner-up Meggie Kwiat and third-place finisher Will Satterwhite.

North teacher named ‘Jeopardy!’ tournament champ

By Mary Anne Brush
Staff Writer

“This director of choral activities at Grosse Pointe North High School won the 2020 ‘Jeopardy!’ Teacher Tournament.”

“Who is Ben Henri?” is the correct answer.

Henri, who also directs a seventh- and eighth-grade boys choir at Parcels Middle School, captured the \$100,000 grand prize and a berth in the next edition of the Tournament of Champions.

Competing on “Jeopardy!” was a long-time goal of his, Henri said, but the experience eclipsed his expectations.

What he did not anticipate was how difficult it would be to keep a secret from the time the episodes were taped Feb. 24 and 25, to when the quarterfinals aired May 28, the semi-finals June 3, and the finals June 4 and 5.

“I told my wife,” he confessed. “I’m not going to keep that kind of secret from her for months.”

Henri said his students tried to trick the results out of him, but the sudden closure of schools due to COVID-19 made it easier to preserve the surprise.

“Obviously it’s exciting news and you want to share it with people,” he said. “It was also just as rewarding to be on a virtual Zoom call with people (when the show aired) and see their reactions.”

Participating on that call were North principal Kate Murray, Parcels Principal Dan Hartley and Parcels music colleague Leslie Saroli, among others, Henri said.

Under normal circumstances, Henri would have organized a viewing party for family, friends, the community and the choir program.

“The more people who can share in the moment, the more rewarding it is,” he said.

As it was, he said his phone and Facebook

page on Friday were flooded with calls and messages, with a second wave to follow from friends and family members on the West Coast.

Henri went into the final moments of the tournament with a slight lead over second-place finisher Meggie Kwiat, a fifth- and sixth-grade teacher from New York City, but felt confident about his chances of winning when he read the final “Jeopardy!” clue under the category of 18th-century novels: “The title character of this 1726 novel reaches four different lands as a result of a shipwreck, a storm at sea, pirates and mutiny.”

Henri said he read “Gulliver’s Travels” in high school and watched the Ted Danson series three or four times growing up. It’s also a topic he brought up with members of North’s quiz bowl team — which he coached all the way to nationals this year — because “it comes up regularly in competition,” he said.

Henri described his 14 fellow Teacher Tournament contestants as “wonderful people, hard-working teachers” and remains in touch with them through regular Zoom trivia calls.

“Obviously we all have teaching in common and then we have trivia in common,” he said. “It makes sense and this is an easy way for us to stay in touch.”

Henri added he was glad to have the opportunity to share his success with the community, in particular North. In fact, he showed his Norsemen spirit the first round of the competition — the only one he was guaranteed to appear in — by wearing green and gold and a North pin.

“I was nervous about representing our school and community and I’m just very humbled by the support from parents, from students and from my colleagues,” he said. “I’m just glad I was able to represent our community well.”



From left, North teacher Ben Henri, from St. Clair Shores, won \$100,000 in the Teacher Tournament of Champions, Meggie Kwiat, from New York City, finished second, claiming \$50,000 and Will Satterwhite, from Vinton, Va., finished third and went home with \$25,000.

Hospitals have silent reflection

By Laural Kraus
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE FARMS — Staff and physicians at Henry Ford Medical Center—Cottage and Pierson Clinic were among numerous hospitals across the country to gather at 1 p.m. Friday, June 5, for 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silent reflection.

“At Henry Ford, we will not stand for injustice or intolerance,” Director Marianne Langlois said. “We stand here today because we can and will do more. Join me for 8 minutes and 46 seconds — the time that a knee was held on George Floyd’s neck that eventually led to his death. Whether you stand, kneel or bow your head, use this time to reflect on the lives lost ... and reflect on the compassion and respect that we will continue to have for each other and for the patients we serve.”

While holding signs that read #whitecoatsforblacklives, dozens of Cottage and Pierson employees stood or knelt in front of Pierson Clinic on Kercheval, while vehicles honked in support as they passed by.

“I hope everybody was as uncomfortable as I was,” Langlois said when the silent reflection finished, “because times that by a million and that’s the injustice that our country has allowed and I hope today we remember our uncomfortableness and keep trying to make that injustice no longer.”

The nationwide reflection grew out of a social media movement called #whitecoatsforblacklives in which hospital workers post a photo of themselves with the hashtag to show support.



PHOTO BY JACK RYAN

Henry Ford Medical Center—Cottage staff hold signs for #whitecoatsforblacklives.



Staff at Henry Ford Medical Center—Cottage kneel during a moment of silent reflection in support of black colleagues, patients and community members.

PHOTO BY JACK RYAN

The main campus of Henry Ford Hospital also held the silent reflection, but Cottage and Pierson decided to participate as well in support of black colleagues, patients and community members and to honor the lives of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and others.

“Something that we have always (believed) at Cottage and Pierson here is that it’s important that everybody respect and trust each other and to me, this is respect,” Langlois said. “If you respect others, then that injustice would not occur.”

Administration made certain that any employees who wished to take part were able to have the time.

“We went around and talked to everybody to make sure whoever wanted to participate was able to,” Langlois said, “because it’s that important to all of us.”

As part of a Catholic health ministry system, Ascension St. John Hospital also was among area hospitals to participate.

“Ascension joins the Catholic Health Association of the United States in condemning racism and discrimination in all its forms,” Ascension CEO Joe Impicicche said in a public statement.

“We call for a renewed commitment to justice and peace based in respect and love. We ask all Americans to join in this effort and to pray for the healing presence of God to enter our hearts and minds as we deal with the issues that plague our nation.”

effort and to pray for the healing presence of God to enter our hearts and minds as we deal with the issues that plague our nation.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASCENSION

Care teams at Ascension St. John Hospital came together in solidarity to kneel for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in honor of George Floyd and in support of justice and peace.

The Week Ahead

MONDAY, JUNE 15

- ◆ Grosse Pointe Woods City Council meeting, 7 p.m. via Zoom.
- ◆ City of Grosse Pointe City Council meeting, 7 p.m. via Zoom.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16

- ◆ Grosse Pointe Shores City Council meeting, 7 p.m. via teleconference.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

- ◆ American Red Cross blood drive, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pointe Fitness, 19556 Harper, Harper Woods.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

- ◆ American Red Cross blood drive, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pointe Fitness, 19556 Harper, Harper Woods.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

- ◆ American Red Cross blood drive, 1 to 7 p.m. at St. Clare of Montefalco Catholic Church, 1401 Whittier, Grosse Pointe Park.
- ◆ American Red Cross blood drive, 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at Ascension St. John Hospital, 22101 Moross, Detroit.

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4A | POINTER OF INTEREST

Pastor's vision guides 101-year-old legacy

By Eddie B. Allen Jr.
Staff Writer

A stroll past 1385 Wayburn might draw a double take. Passersby familiar with St. Paul AME Church's acronym — abbreviated from African Methodist Episcopal — might wonder how a parish representing one of the oldest black religious denominations found a Grosse Pointe Park address.

The Rev. Jeffery Baker and St. Paul's 50-member congregation have been a long way from their original church home since relocating in 2017. But Baker, who has pastored the congregation 25 years, hopes not only to continue melding the church with other Park institutions, he plans to expand membership and promote diversity in the Pointes.

"We occasionally get some visitors, but they are sometimes misinformed that it's only a church for African Americans," Baker said, "and our mission is to be a church for humankind. We are there



The Rev. Jeffery Baker and his wife, Kimberly Denise Baker.

to minister and care for the community as a whole."

Indeed, the AME denomination was born of racial separation, but not by preference of its pioneering members. Following ongoing discrimination from whites toward black worshippers

in Philadelphia, Richard Allen, an ex-slave, launched a movement in 1816 that became a church of almost three million members today.

A segregated altar call was the proverbial last straw for Allen, who was later elected the AME bishop.

"That Sunday, Richard Allen said, 'Let us finish praying and we will trouble you no more,'" Baker said.

The history of Baker's parish before opening its doors in the Park is less dramatic, but similarly interesting. He served St. Paul in the Delray section of Southwest Detroit until the church, like many Delray residents, was displaced to allow construction of the Gordie Howe International Bridge to Canada. St. Paul was founded 101 years ago in the small community that was home to black, white, Mexican, Hungarian and a melting pot of other Detroiters. The church offered Delray's plant workers a place to worship within walking distance from home.

But even before the bridge construction was announced, Baker had been directed by his bishop to seek a new location for St. Paul. St. Paul had begun losing members, partly due to some of Michigan's worst air pollution from nearby facto-

ries and a refinery. "Many young couples and members did not want to bring their families into that environment," Baker said.

Hastened by the bridge's announcement, St. Paul leaders began searching.

"Originally, we were looking for a new edifice in the Oak Park and Southfield areas," the pastor recalled.

After exploring almost 100 potential sites, a church treasurer contacted Baker with a message about 1385 Wayburn: It was the one. Despite the relatively small number of black residents in the Pointes, the rarity of a predominantly black church's arrival in the community didn't concern Baker.

"I never really thought about that," he said. "Basically, I was looking for a place that was safe, clean and that could flourish."

Baker was welcomed by the Grosse Pointe Ministerial Association and St. Paul soon made its

presence felt in the neighborhood, distributing holiday baskets to Merit Academy students and their families.

"It was amazing, first of all, how many of them didn't know there was an African American church in Grosse Pointe Park, but many of them had never crossed Alter Road," Baker recalled.

Breaking down neighborhood and racial division is part of the pastor's goal for St. Paul. All visitors are welcome to attend weekly Sunday worship at 11 a.m., which follows 10 a.m. Sunday school. There also is a Wednesday Bible study.

A Highland Park native, Baker has been married 35 years to his high school sweetheart, Kimberly Denise Baker. His children include a daughter who pastors an Ecorse church.

His vision for the community is not just spiritual, but multicultural.

"I'm just excited to be part of the Grosse Pointe area and make it more diverse," Baker said.

OUTCRY:

Continued from page 1A

Woods and Detroit May 30, Douglas and branch members plan to strategize solutions and prevent further tragedies like Floyd's death.

"It's been long overdue," Douglas said. "It didn't just start with George Floyd; it escalated with George Floyd."

Supporting a broader NAACP agenda and demand for federal legis-

lation, including a ban on the form of knee restraint used against Floyd, a chokehold ban and documentation of officer misconduct in public records, the local branch began community engagement. A virtual forum inviting city officials from the five Pointes and Harper Woods to discuss police policy was held June 3. Participants included City of Grosse Pointe and Grosse Pointe Park Public Safety Director Stephen Poloni, Grosse Pointe

Woods Public Safety Director John Kosanke, Grosse Pointe Farms Mayor Louis Theros, City of Grosse Pointe Mayor Sheila Tomkowiak, Harper Woods Mayor Ken Poynter and American Civil Liberties Union coordinator Rodd Monts.

The most recent high-profile complaints of police racism in the Pointes have not alleged brutality, but Grosse Pointe Park's involvement in a videotaped 2015 arrest, during which a suspect was punched, sparked protests and a lawsuit. Another Park officer was disciplined in 2013 for videotaping a black, mentally challenged man as the man sang and made animal noises.

"We've talked to some citizens about run-ins they've had with police," Douglas said, "not that the run-ins have been violent, but we've heard from people who've been followed driving through



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Charvé Kennedy, protest organizer and Grosse Pointe South graduate, left, kneels along with the crowd for 8 minutes and 46 seconds.

the area."

Part of the NAACP's goal is determining what local police "have in place to keep what happened in Minneapolis from happening here," Douglas added.

In Grosse Pointe Woods, Kosanke said he works to prevent race-involved incidents through careful hiring and regular, non-mandated cultural sensitivity training.

"I certainly understand why people are protesting," Kosanke said of Floyd's death. "There's 800,000 police officers across the United States and there is always that 1

percent getting into trouble or getting fired."

Aside from resume qualifications, various issues can affect Kosanke's hiring decisions, he said.

"You have to do this job for the right reasons. A lot of times we interview people and we don't like something they say or something in their background, because there has to be the right fit in the Grosse Pointe Woods community," he added.

While the fit includes officers with "the right temperament," Kosanke said cops on duty sometimes make bad decisions for reasons similar to citi-

zens they serve. "People don't call the police because they're having a good day," he said. "They call the police because they had a fight with their spouse, fight with their neighbor, dispute with a contractor. Officers have bad days, too."

Another issue exacerbating law enforcement in black communities is wrongdoing perceived by white citizens who've been increasingly criticized for calling cops without justification. The Grosse Pointes—Harper Woods chapter plans to launch a four-week series of "affinity groups" — separate Zoom meetings of white residents and residents of color who will explore ways they can avoid contributing to police incidents, then come together to exchange ideas. Local residents interested in participating should email gphw.naacp33aa@gmail.com and look for details at the Grosse Pointes-Harper Woods

See OUTCRY, page 5A

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Grosse Pointe Farms

Bike thief

While looking out an upstairs window of her home in the 400 block of Touraine Road at 5:40 p.m. Thursday, June 4, a Farms woman witnessed an unknown man exit her garage with her bicycle.

Officers pursued, but lost sight of him on Chalfonte Avenue.

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

Grosse Pointe Shores

Unemployment scam

After clicking on an email link Monday, June 1 — which appeared to be sent from the Michigan unemployment office and asked for her name and last four digits of her Social Security number — a 54-year-old Shores woman suspected it was a fraudulent email since she never filed a claim for unemployment.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

Destroyed flag

A male suspect on rollerblades was captured on video cutting up a Lakeshore Road resident's thin blue line flag, which is used to pay tribute to police officers, at 2:43 a.m. Tuesday, June 2.

Speeding with suspended license

After speeding more than 50 mph on Lakeshore Road at 5:57 p.m. Saturday, June 6, a 22-year-old Detroit woman was unable to provide her license, insurance or registration and was arrested for driving while license suspended and having valid warrants.

Speeding without insurance

A 29-year-old Detroit woman was arrested for driving while license sus-

pended and operating without insurance at 1:32 a.m. Sunday, June 7, after being pulled over at Lakeshore Lane and Lakeshore Road for speeding 52 mph.

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

City of Grosse Pointe

Phone bill fraud

Verizon notified a Lincoln Road resident that three lines had been opened in his name in March 2019, creating a balance of \$3,000.

Unemployment identity theft

Two Grosse Pointe residents were contacted by their employers regarding someone filing an unemployment claim in their names Monday, June 1, despite the fact

they were not on unemployment but were currently working.

A growing issue

A third Grosse Pointe resident received word from her employer that someone had filed an unemployment claim under her name Sunday, June 7.

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

Grosse Pointe Woods

Bike theft

A silver Gary Fisher bicycle was stolen from an unlocked garage in the 1700 block of Stanhope between 11:30 p.m. Friday, May 29, and 9:30 a.m. Saturday, May 30.

An unknown suspect entered through the garage's side door.

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

Grosse Pointe Park

Bicycle owners beware

Four separate bike thefts left riders without wheels in the span of a week: Between 8 p.m. Monday, June 1, and 6:20 a.m. Tuesday, June 2, a woman's \$200 silver Circle 9, seven-speed was stolen from an unlocked garage in the 1100 block of Devonshire; between 8 and 9 p.m. Tuesday, June 2, a black \$400 men's Fuji Barneby was stolen from an open garage in the 1300 block of Three Mile; between 4 p.m. Thursday, June 4, and 10 a.m. Saturday, June 6, a woman's yellow bike was stolen from an unlocked garage in the 1300 block of Beaconsfield; and between 6 p.m. Saturday, June 6, and 11:30 p.m. Sunday, June 7, a wom-

en's white \$150 Freestyle Beach Cruiser was stolen from an unlocked garage in the 1300 block of Somerset.

Caught after craving cold one

A 25-year-old Grosse Pointe Farms man faces a larceny charge after he was caught stealing a six-pack of beer from his place of employment in the 15000 block of Kercheval around 2:30 p.m. Thursday, June 4.

The employee also was fired.

Stolen moped

A 2018 Taizhou Wolf Islander moped was stolen from the 600 block of Westchester between 8 and 11 p.m. Monday, June 1.

The motor bike was locked in front of the address and the victim reportedly has both sets of keys.

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

OUTCRY:

Continued from page 4A

NAACP Facebook page this month, Douglas said.

We-GP President Shannon Byrne said We-GP, which participated in the caravan along with the Grosse Pointe Democratic Club and Little Pointers for Diversity, will keep following "the lead of the

NAACP in racial justice issues." Byrne also attended the June 3 virtual meeting with NAACP board members and city officials.

Douglas looks forward to locally addressing a festering national sore.

But she doesn't expect easy answers.

"It's going to take some time and a lot of tears and a lot of anger," she said, "and a lot a healing."



PHOTO BY JACK RYAN

Participants gathered in Grosse Pointe Woods.

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6A | OPINION

Grosse Pointe News

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OUR VIEW

Pointers moved to support BLM

Americans have been shocked by video of George Floyd's killing as a white cop held his knee on the black man's throat for nearly nine minutes — and hundreds of thousands of people, of all races, have taken to the streets in mostly peaceful protest.

That includes here in the Grosse Pointes, where marches have taken place over the past week in the Woods, City and Park. At hospitals such as Henry Ford Cottage and Ascension St. John, doctors, nurses and other staff have observed moments of silence.

The local events have been gratifyingly peaceful, as well. Police officers from the Pointes have taken a knee and, in some cases, led the start of the march. They have also signaled their interest in public safety by handing out masks to help protect people during the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to linger in metro Detroit.

It is 157 years since the Emancipation Proclamation, in the midst of the Civil War. It's 155 years since what's now celebrated as Juneteenth, on June 19, 1865; that's when slaves in Galveston, Texas, believed to be among the last to get the news, heard about their freedom. The 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution were passed from 1865-70. It took another century to bring many of their promises into law during the Civil Rights Era.

And now, what happened May 25 in Minneapolis has brought out Americans, including white people here and elsewhere who may have naively thought brutality against black citizens was mostly consigned to the past. It has galvanized the need to protest, especially after minority communities suffered disproportionately from the impact of COVID-19 and the ensuing economic shutdown.

Grosse Pointers have properly emerged to make it clear that they want justice and fair treatment in this multi-racial world. That includes an expectation that their public safety departments and schools, in particular, will continue to improve and grow into exemplars of equitable practices, civility and respect.

OUR VIEW

Stay safe

Admittedly, loosening state restraints in fighting the spread of COVID-19 has made it easy to throw caution to the wind. The signs are everywhere, even in the Pointes: fewer and fewer masks when people are out, less distancing as people encounter each other, a rapid increase in group sizes.

Meantime, as of this writing, the count of new disease cases and deaths continues to subside. At day's end Monday, according to Wayne County's dashboard, the Pointes had had just four new cases and one death in the previous week.

Michigan's pandemic experience took off in March, led by a rampage in metro Detroit. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer imposed strict stay-home rules and it was enough to allow hospitals, for the most part, to keep up with the surge.

But no one should expect the disease to disappear now. It may be reasonable just to hope that new cases will remain limited enough to trace contacts and isolate. Vulnerable people may have to resign themselves to limited interactions for a long time.

And the long stay-home period clearly came at a cost. Who'd have thought the biggest lesson for school kids would be how much they missed their teachers, classroom time and fellow students? Graduation parties, end-of-the-year get-togethers for eighth-graders and so on have a new exuberance.

It doesn't help that there are no good answers yet on whether outdoor crowds pose dangers of disease spread, among other uncertainties. Nonetheless, it would be great to see Grosse Pointe residents continue to set the standard of care — masks and six-foot distancing — for everyone in the community.



PHOTO BY JACK RYAN

Pure Grosse Pointe

Grosse Pointers turned out in droves last week to march in protest of racism and police killing of blacks exemplified by the recent death of George Floyd at the hands — or knees — of police in Minneapolis. The above protest on Friday began in the Kercheval business district in Grosse Pointe Park and proceeded up to The Village. It was one of three marches last week. The first was on Tuesday in front of Grosse Pointe Woods City Hall, and the second occurred Thursday when protesters marched down Cadieux from Mack to Maumee, ending up in front of the Unitarian Church on Maumee and across the street from the Grosse Pointe City Hall and Public Safety Department. All the protests were peaceful with no vandalism reported. Silent protests also were held by health care workers, nurses and physicians at the Henry Ford Medical Center—Cottage and Ascension St. John Hospital.

LETTERS

The Grosse Pointe News welcomes your letters to the editor. All letters should be typed, double-spaced and signed. Letters longer than 250 words may be edited for length. All letters may be edited for content. We reserve the right to refuse any letter. Include daytime phone number for verification or questions. The deadline for letters is 3 p.m. Monday. Letters to the editor may be emailed to editor@grossepointenews.com.

and always with a smile.

Thanks, Fairfax, for keeping our pantries stocked during this unprecedented time. You're the best!

CHRIS & JOHN MILLER
Grosse Pointe Park

Police chiefs must speak out

To the Editor:

My name is Charlotte Ruda, a resident of Grosse Pointe, and I am reaching out suggesting that the police chiefs of the Grosse Pointe communities publish an official statement in regards to the unrest seen across the country.

In the wake of George Floyd's death, we have witnessed numerous public demonstrations against injustice. No matter your racial or political identities, these events are impossible to ignore.

I have the utmost respect for law enforcement and living in a diverse area such as ours, I believe now is the time for the local police force to make a clear and concise statement denouncing police brutality and injustice.

The default response to a challenging and awkward discussion is often silence. However, silence on this topic is deafening.

Police chiefs across the county, notably in Flint, have taken this as an opportunity to openly share their feelings and stand alongside nonviolent protesters. Additionally, numerous companies have used their platform to release statements denouncing police brutality and calling for justice.

Police are looked to as leaders in the community and leaders at every level must use their power and platforms to counteract racism.

Now is the time to take meaningful action, acknowledge the disparities that exist across our community, do the research and use this as a moment to reflect and

acknowledge we all have work to do to create a more equal and just community.

We are a small community and it may seem that a small statement will not change the large systemic issues that we are facing; however, positive change, no matter how small, is still improvement.

CHARLOTTE RUDA
Grosse Pointe

Keep discussion going in Park

To the Editor:

Last week's (May 28) "The PARC Is Not the Park" letter highlights various issues with the proposed art center in Grosse Pointe Park.

Mr. Chouinard revealed several previous proposals for the site of the art center, news to me and many other residents, which had never been discussed in public.

He notes the generosity of GPP families, who made possible the residents-only Windmill Pointe theaters as well as the K-Line Trolley, before stating that "the delay could cause these generous donors to withdraw their support."

I share the concern about what might cause long-standing supporters of our community to walk away. Wouldn't they welcome conversation with other residents about what everyone would like to see before dropping out altogether?

... And what's wrong with open discussion about the costs taxpayers already pay for the theaters and trolley?

Mr. Chouinard ends by stating that "Park residents should not be deprived of this once-in-a-generation opportunity." I agree. GPP residents have an all too rare chance to have many voices heard, not just a few. Let's continue the discussion.

GRAIG DONNELLY
Grosse Pointe Park
Edited for length.

An outstanding commencement

To the Editor:

I want to publicly thank the Grosse Pointe North staff, particularly Principal Kate Murray and administrators Katy Vernier, Michelle Davis and Geoffrey Young, for the outstanding Senior Commencement they provided for the graduating Class of 2020.

I had the pleasure to be on the soccer field as the graduates received their diplomas. Prior to this, the graduates drove through Grosse Pointe Woods riding in a parade in their decorated cars with family, were greeted by teachers drumming and dancing and hooting and hollering in the school driveway, then drove around the North parking lot past several memorabilia like the Big Boy dressed up in cap and gown.

As the cars pulled up, they were escorted out of the car and warmly greeted by their principal, counselors and other administrators wearing Grosse Pointe North masks. From here they were given their diploma case and directed down a row of cheering, clapping, bell ringing, kazoo blowing teachers and school board members.

This is where I was able to witness my former Parcels students and cross-country runners walk their graduation walk. They all had smiles, some skipped, many waved at their teachers, several wept.

This was NOT a consolation prize graduation. This was a loving tribute to these great graduates. I go to the North commencement every year and have never enjoyed one more than this one. Each graduate was afforded more time, more attention, more love than any other commencement I have seen.

Yes, the traditional commencement would have been nice. But that was not possible and this alternative was very well planned, timed out perfectly and went off without a hitch. I know for a fact that this happened this way because the North staff cares more than most people realize. The time that went into making this happen was immense.

Congratulations, Class of 2020! It was a pleasure to see your smiles and excitement as you crossed North's field for that final time as a student. Your teachers and administrators love you, even the old ones from long ago.

SCOTT COOPER
Parcels Teacher
North Coach

Thanks, Fairfax Market

To the Editor:

Our south-of-Jefferson community is fortunate to have Fairfax Market.

Throughout the early days of the pandemic, the small market became a mainstay for many. Mike and his team delivered fresh produce, dairy products, meat and grocery staples efficiently

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I SAY By Jody McVeigh

Zooming in on a reconnection



I think I may have been born for quarantine. With this new way of life, I can sleep a little later AND exercise every morning—and still log in to work on time.

I can complete all of my work tasks from the comfort of my home, in the comfort of casual

clothing.

I can skip the commute, which has given me an extra hour and a half of “me time” each day.

On the flip side, I do miss human contact. Don't get me wrong. I love being alone, but I hate being lonely and as much as isolation was made for introverts like me, human connection is huge for my mental health.

That said, I have been making regular use of different apps to not only stay in touch with friends

and family, but to see them while doing so. Zoom, in particular, has been a favorite, although I think Google Hangouts is the only one my mom sort of, kind of understands.

A couple weeks ago, I had the first of what I hope will be regular Zoom meetings with my brothers. The younger one lives in Orlando; the older in Seattle. Both are great places to visit, but difficult for me to get to, even before there were travel restrictions.

I speak fairly regularly

on the phone with my younger brother. He's one of those people who can talk to anyone; it's easy to have a conversation with him.

My older brother, on the other hand, I believe is a lot like me. We want to connect, but aren't very good at getting the ball rolling. We're the quiet ones, the introverts.

Our first Zoom meeting lasted more than two hours. We settled on easy topics — movies, cooking, our jobs — and how we've been spending our

time in quarantine. Of course, we took a few playful jabs at each other — we are siblings after all — and talked about our mom (sorry, Mom; nothing bad, I promise). We talked a bit, too, about our dad, who we all miss.

It was nice to have had that initial conversation, especially to have broken the ice that had formed between my older brother and me.

I've looked up to him my whole life; he was my first playmate and schoolyard protector.

And even though we didn't always see eye to eye, especially in our teen years, I admire the man he's become, the family he's started and the fact this whole Zoom thing between siblings was his idea.

I wish we'd done this before quarantine made it the only way to connect, but I hope it continues long after we're allowed to resume life as we knew it. I wouldn't trade this renewed connection for anything — even for all the “perks” of working from home.

YESTERDAY'S HEADLINES

1945

75 years ago this week

MOVE TO ABANDON PARKING LOTS: The future of the municipal parking lot on Jefferson opposite the Park municipal building is coming to a showdown. At the Park council meeting Monday night, Commissioner Homer C. Fritsch, who is also police commissioner, was strongly moved to urge its immediate discontinuance. He said complaint was arising among nearby residents against the noise and dust coming from it at all hours of the day and night and the need for its maintenance seemed to have passed.

Obituaries: George Fink Jr.

1970

50 years ago this week

CONSTRUCTION GETS STARTED: One of Grosse Pointe City's automotive landmarks that dates back almost to the beginning of the motor industry — but which had become an eyesore in recent years — is giving way to a multi-million dollar luxury condominium on Jefferson Avenue between St. Clair and Neff. Construction crews have leveled what was formerly the O'Leary Cadillac dealer showroom and garage fronting on Jefferson, along with other structures that form part of the Pointes' turn-of-the-cen-

ture history.

Obituaries: Theodore G. Osius, George Brewster Loud Jr., Louis Calcaterra, Francis J. Duffy, Lois Neeme, Martha C. Hoeflein, Richard F. Woelfel, Lloyd L. Holtz

1995

25 years ago this week

RESTAURANT SOLD: Just days after One23 owner Vivian Day declared rumors of the sale of the restaurant to Detroit restaurateur Jimmy Schmidt were premature, the restaurant was sold. One23 will close its doors June 17, six years after its premier. Schmidt will take possession July 3.

Schmidt said the new restaurant will be called Antica Osteria del Chianti.

Obituaries: Thomas Litos, Helen C. Barum, Erika Mebus Maguire, Alice G. Fahrner, Shirley Marie Dasaro, Rosamond G. Wallace, Donald J. Ternes

2010

10 years ago this week

COPS RESPOND TO GUNPLAY: Two City of Grosse Pointe policemen came within trigger pulls of granting a suspected death wish in the latest response to gunplay on the Mack Avenue border with Detroit. When officers arrived at the scene in response to a report of shots fired, a male suspect reportedly turned toward them, went into a

shooting stance and pointed a dark object at them partially obscured by a bag of Cheetos. Officers drew their weapons. The man threw down the dark object, a beer bottle. He picked up a piece of broken glass and challenged officers again. The 26-year-old suspect from Detroit was

eventually turned over to Detroit police and taken to a hospital for psychological evaluation.

Obituaries: Albert Gustav Couvreur, Violet Daudlin, Thelma Rose Grandia, Lauren Clementine McDonald, Leona S. Spezia, Robert H. Tapert, Rosemary Adamo

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8A | SCHOOLS

2020:

Continued from page 1A

their teachers, outside of a computer screen, since schools closed due to COVID-19 March 16.

After the live, in-person event, families gathered in their homes for the 6:30 p.m. launching of a virtual commencement ceremony. Speeches and musical interludes were pre-recorded. Rather than a crowd of graduates and their families gathered in the soccer field at North or front lawn at South, speakers addressed the camera.

North Principal Kate Murray noted this difference in her address to graduates.

“You see, at this point, I would look out at the mass of green robes and see your excited faces. At that moment every year, I would also see your younger selves and all that you’ve accomplished for four years flashes before me. ... But this year is different.

This moment in time is drastically different and the picture is incomplete. You are missing.”

All hail to North

In his welcome, North Assistant Principal Geoffrey Young harkened back to a traditional ceremony when a speaker would set the tone by reminding guests of the dignity and solemnity of the occasion and seniors would be asked to “refrain from celebrating in ways that might overshadow other students.”

Young offered no such words to temper in-home celebrations.

“With full recognition of the various kinds of profound losses the Class of 2020 has faced, this ceremony aims to help the class find joy in graduation, hope in commencement and celebration in living,” he said. “So we hope none of you stays seated. Right now, in the middle of the ceremony when your name is read, at the end of the ceremony or basically any time you want,

we hope you get out your noisiest noisemakers. It’s time to hoot and holler. ... Let the neighborhood houses shake because it is time for everyone to know that you are the inevitably triumphant Class of 2020.”

North Student Association President Clare Loch listed a few of the class’s accomplishments that year — the girls’ swim and dive team placing 20th at the state championship meet; the Black Student Alliance working with administrators to change the policy on head coverings and turbans being worn on school grounds, “leaving North a more inclusive environment”; the drama club filling the house with its “show-stopping production of ‘The Sound of Music’”; the quiz bowl team “(crushing) their competitions all the way to nationals”; and the Student Association winning the award of excellence and Star School Award and presenting its original ideas at the state conference in March.

“Perhaps the greatest legacy we will leave North with is our spirit, our kindness toward each other and our incredible strength,” Loch said. “... Through all the darkest moments, this class has proven time and again that selflessness and perseverance will get us through.”

Blue Devil spirit

“Welcome to the first — and hopefully last — virtual graduation ceremony for Grosse Pointe South,” South Senior Class President Imran Siddiqui said in his opening remarks. “... Our class faced its biggest obstacle earlier this year when our time at South was abruptly cut short. ... What initially seemed to be a long weekend turned into over 10 weeks of remote learning. The Class of 2020’s historic end will not be forgotten.”

“We are sorry for the milestones you have missed and at the same time grateful for the sacrifice of the greater cause of keeping our community

healthy,” Principal Moussa Hamka said. “Although your presence in our hallways ended abruptly and we are not celebrating you in a traditional manner, your accomplishments are not diminished.”

Fleming, too, apologized to his classmates for what they were denied before reflecting on “the great promise of a wide unknown,” the title of his speech.

“I’m sorry it had to be us,” he said. “I’m sorry it had to be the class that rebuilt South’s school spirit from the ground up. I’m sorry it had to be the class that has won best float since our sophomore year. I’m sorry it had to be the class that has held fundraisers any chance we had, that encouraged education about diversity, that maintained the excellence of the only weekly high school news publication in Michigan, the national award-winning choir, the undefeated, division-winning football team, the countless lead-

ers, the hard workers and the innovators. I’m sorry that this happened to a group of students with such potential and a group that had earned the recognition that we were promised.

“So where do we go from here?” he continued. “We go wherever life takes us, be it college, a gap year, work, travel. We go where we are supposed to. Because sometimes it isn’t about the hand that you were dealt, but it’s about how you choose to play that hand. We can let ourselves grieve and miss the best part of high school, or we can remember the countless memories we made and the countless memories we are yet to make.

“But until then, just remember that you did it. No pandemic or world crisis can take away the fact that we are on the path to wherever the world takes us,” Fleming concluded, adding, “The real question is not, where can we go from here? The real question is, where can’t we go?”

Noah Aubel waves to teachers as he walks during the graduation ceremony.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT



Nick Fannon walks through the first line of teachers who congratulate him.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

“This new context has taught us a great deal. One of its most important lessons is the power of community. Now is not the time for individual voices. Now is the time to build and strengthen our community. You understand this concept because you have lived it. You, more than any other graduating class, understand what it means to protect this house. In fact, you had to leave our house in order to protect it. Sacrifice is among the most selfless and most essential forms of protection. You have been the fiercest protectors of the North house.”

—Kate Murray, Grosse Pointe North principal



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Sofia Ketels waits for her cue to begin the graduation walk as her family watches from their car.

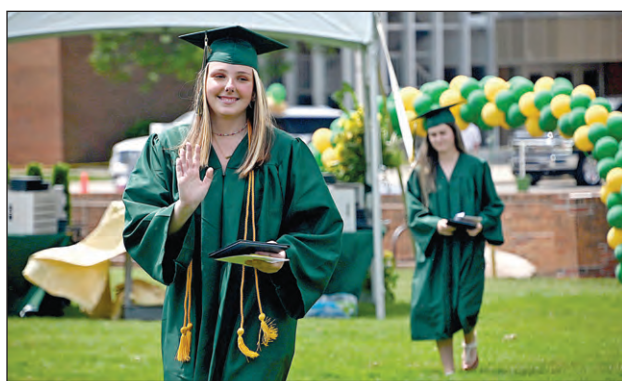


PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Ruth Fradeneck smiles and waves as she begins her graduation walk.



PHOTO BY JACK RYAN

South alumni, Kari and Ken Kraussmann, Class of 1988, with their son, Charlie, Class of 2020.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Calvin, Olivia and Mitchell Stricker pose near a photo of their kindergarten graduation.

“Lastly, be courageous. Watching our frontline healthcare workers battle the virus has been inspiring. As a nation, we have demonstrated that when we act boldly and with courage, we can tackle our most serious problems and be triumphant. From women’s suffrage, World War II, landing on the moon, the great recession and now COVID, the history of our country is rooted in overcoming adversity through courage.”

—Moussa Hamka, Grosse Pointe South principal

Find more graduation photos online at grossepointenews.com



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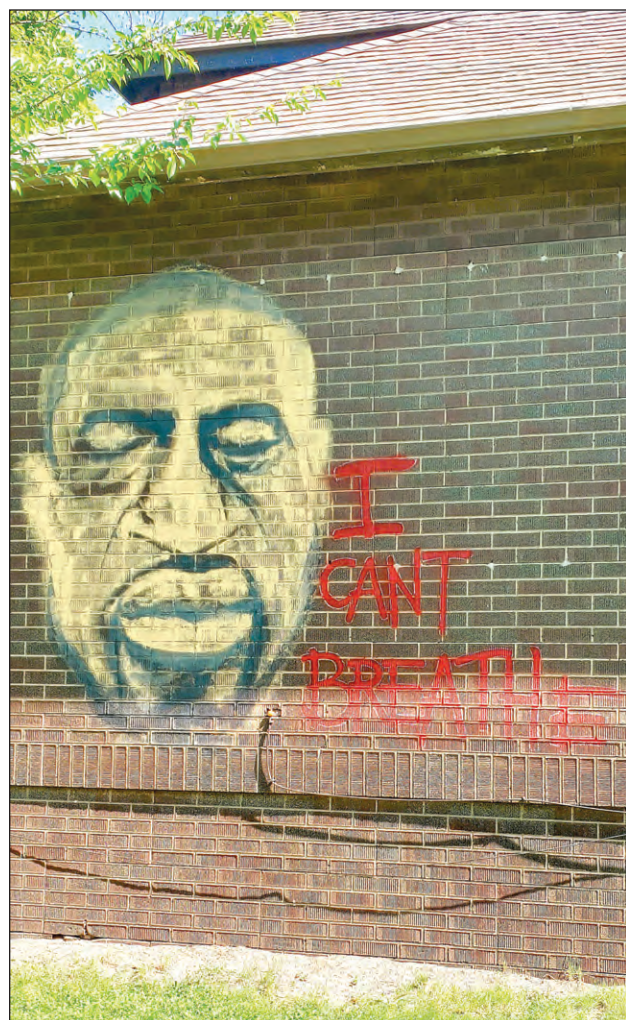


PHOTO COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Samantha Wittstock painted George Floyd's face on the side of her Grosse Pointe Park house in his honor.

Mural a tribute to human rights

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

Like many people, watching the televised riots in Minnesota following the May 25 death of George Floyd, who was killed by a uniformed police officer, was more than Samantha "Sammy Pants" Wittstock could stand.

In frustration, the Grosse Pointe Park resident grabbed her paints and brushes and went to work.

"My husband and I are both artists," she said. "Watching the riots ... was really alarming. I think it was a combination of everything going on right now in the world; there's a lot of emotion. When this kind of stuff goes on, I think, 'What can a 40-year-old mom in Grosse Pointe do?'"

What Wittstock did was channel her frustration and negative energy onto the side of her house. It was 1:30 a.m. when she asked her husband, Jeff, to give her a hand.

"I made him carry a ladder upstairs," she said. "He lugged out a light for me.

"I wasn't sure what I was going to paint," she continued. "I thought, maybe something for unity."

Floyd's headshot on Facebook

was the inspiration she was looking for. She also received encouragement from her brother, William Bond, who is black.

"I asked him how somebody like me could show they're not OK with this without seeming like an uppity white lady," she said. "It's a complicated situation. I don't want to be disingenuous. I want to be there for support."

It took Wittstock 45 minutes to paint the mural — Floyd's face next to the words "I can't breathe" — but the lasting effects of the project continue to spread.

Just as she was inspired by a photo on Facebook, Wittstock's project inspired others through the social media outlet. After Bond shared a photo on his Facebook page praising his sister's efforts, her Floyd mural was shared more than 2,100 times and she's received messages of support from strangers near and far.

"I get messages from people I don't know on Facebook, a lot of them saying thank you with a brown fist emoji or hearts," she said. "Or 'Thanks for standing with us.'"

One Detroit woman asked for her address so she and other Detroit moms could caravan their children past Wittstock's house.

The Wittstocks live in a bungalow on Maryland; they enjoy sitting on their porch and waving to passersby. There's been a noticeable uptick in visitors since she created the mural, Wittstock said.

"People are driving by my house all day, every day," she added. "They stop and get out of their cars and say hi. It's nice to see everybody come out."

Additionally, a Grosse Pointe mom messaged Wittstock to share that her daughter was given an assignment to write a poem inspired by art and what the artist may have been thinking while creating it; the teen selected Wittstock's painting.

"This 16-year-old girl wrote the most beautiful poem," Wittstock said.

While the Wittstocks often use humor in their art — Jeff Wittstock painted Gilda Radner on their front porch — this is her first "socially impactful" project.

"I'm not a super political person, but I find human rights to be very important," she said, noting her Floyd mural isn't about her or her art.

"It's about white people showing support to people of color and people of color knowing there are plenty of us standing with them."

Kindness Kits distributed to Full Circle participants

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

Sue Banner's retirement from Full Circle Foundation in no way put her on the sidelines with the organization.

Switching roles, from director of operations to a member of its board of directors, Banner currently is volunteering in the name of Full Circle by donating handmade masks and Kindness Kits throughout the community.

Her efforts began in March, when she started making masks for several nieces and nephews who work in the medical field, "to help them out when they could not get enough masks during the outbreak of the virus," Banner said. "My sister-in-law, who lives around the corner from me, wanted to pitch in and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TED COULILISH

Sue Banner works at her sewing machine.

help, so it became a team effort between us. She would cut fabric and I would sew.

"I wanted to help Full Circle be able to give back to the community because they have been so supportive of us. So, I set up shop in my basement and started sewing."

The pair eventually reached out on Full Circle's Facebook page to see who else in the Grosse Pointe community might need masks.

"One thing led to another and I began giving them to Full Circle families, organizations, volunteers, etc.," Banner said. "We have made over 500 masks and headbands to date — getting close to 600. We just cut another 75 (May 28). It takes about 10 minutes to make a mask."

The masks are being delivered or mailed to residents, as well as people in nursing and senior facilities throughout metro Detroit and organizations such as PACE.

"And we're getting ready to deliver 100 to The Helm," she added.

Additionally, Banner has assembled care packages, called Kindness Kits, which include thank-you projects for

young adults with special needs to complete. So far 100 Kindness Kits have been delivered and include the following projects:

- ♦ 200 face masks for seniors at The Helm;
- ♦ 50 garden flags with thank-you messages, which will hang in Full Circle's Learning Garden beds at the Riverview Rehabilitation facility;
- ♦ "Our Heroes" booklets, which will be given to first responders in the Grosse Pointes; and
- ♦ thank-you cards for essential workers such as mail carriers and grocery store clerks.

"The Kindness Kits evolved as a result of talking with our teachers and parents who said that since school has closed and our programs are on pause, we learned that many of our kids were getting bored at home with not enough to do," Banner explained. "Full Circle ran a Go Fund Me campaign to raise some money to purchase supplies to put together Kindness Kits, which included projects that the kids could do and would be focused on thanking our first responders, essential workers, etc."

The Go Fund Me campaign explained Full Circle's operations and their benefits to participants — including providing job skill training, daily structure and consistency, which have been a challenge since stay-at-home orders were issued and many parents



Full Circle participant Andrew Coutilish, 19, of Grosse Pointe Shores, stands with one of Banner's Kindness Kits.

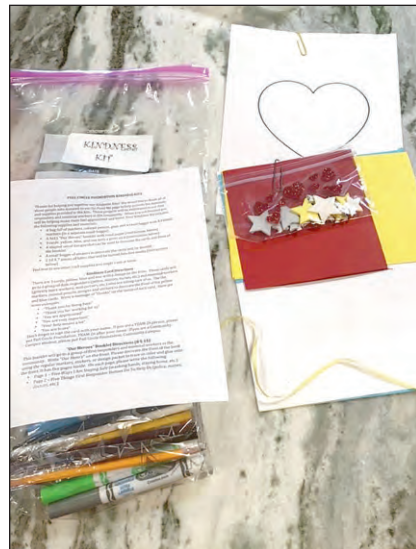
and caregivers are finding it difficult teaching young adults with special needs at home.

"Our young adults need our help and your help to stay engaged and active," the campaign literature reads, in part. "Your Go Fund Me donation will allow us to provide additional activities and other opportunities while they remain at home. You will be making sure important skills are not lost during this time."

The kits distributed to young adults with special needs include materials and supplies that allow

them to practice skill development while giving back to others. Donations are used to purchase materials for face masks, which will be designed by Full Circle participants, made by volunteers and distributed to The Helm and others; stationery and card stock for participants to write letters and cards thanking first responders, medical personnel and other essential workers; garden supplies, covering plants for Full Circle's Learning

See KITS, page 2B



A sample of the Kindness Kits being dropped off with Full Circle participants.

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2B | FEATURES

Cynthia and Edsel B. Ford II establish HFHS Nursing Emergency Needs Fund

Grosse Pointe Farms residents Cynthia and Edsel Ford II have made an initial gift to establish the Henry Ford Health System Nursing Emergency Needs Fund, which was created to provide support for nurses who may need financial assistance with expenses such as childcare, housing, transportation or groceries. The fund was launched in May to honor National Nurses Month.

“We think it’s important to offer compassion and gratitude any way we can,” Cynthia Ford said. “Healthcare workers, not only in our community, but across our country and around the world, have galvanized to help those in need. They have devoted their lives to their work and we as a community should be there to give them a helping hand when they need it as well.”

For the Fords, nursing has long been close to their hearts. In 1925, a 300-room nurses’ home named for Clara Ford, Edsel Ford II’s great-grandmother, was opened at Henry Ford



COURTESY PHOTO

Cynthia and Edsel B. Ford II

Hospital to house students of the Henry Ford Hospital School of Nursing. This diploma school offered training in basic sciences and nursing practice, graduating more than 5,000 students in the ensuing 71 years of its operation. The school was known for its high standards and excellence in education and practice, and “Ford grads” were easily recognized by their unique caps as well as their skillful care

of patients.

“Nurses have always shown such incredible devotion, not only during the COVID-19 crisis, but all the time,” Edsel Ford II said. “Our hope long-term is that others join us in helping to keep this fund going. It’s something I think my great-grandmother, Clara Ford, would have believed in. We want to honor her legacy and look out for the nurses of today, who care for our families,

friends, neighbors and communities, all while also caring for their own families.”

Since the fund was created, the Fords have served as its champions, raising awareness and encouraging others to contribute, which has resulted in more than \$400,000 donated by individuals, companies and foundations.

“We are so fortunate to be part of the amazing community that is Detroit, which is comprised of wonderfully compassionate individuals like Cynthia and Edsel Ford, who make up the beautiful fabric of our community,” said Mary Jane Vogt,

senior vice president and chief development officer, Henry Ford Health System. “The Nursing Emergency Needs Fund has already made a tremendous impact for our nurses and we hope it will continue to do so through the kind and thoughtful support of our donors.”

To learn more about the Nursing Emergency Needs Fund or to make a gift, visit henryford.com/support-nurses.



DRONE PHOTOS BY JACK RYAN/SKYVIEW AERIAL PRODUCTIONS



Making progress

New equipment has been installed at the Rotary Tot Lot in the City of Grosse Pointe. If all goes as scheduled, a safety surface, called poured-in-place, will be applied to the Tot Lot this week; next week, Allemon’s Landscape Center will perform landscaping and beautification.



KITS:

Continued from page 1B

Garden, which is operated by volunteers and will include vegetables that will be distributed for free to seniors at The

Helm, Riverview Rehabilitation North and other senior facilities and to families in need; and essential supplies and materials to help Full Circle programs reopen safely.

“Because we are in this

together, we can do this together,” the letter reads.

Banner’s efforts have gained attention from the community, as well as Full Circle administration.

“Sue Banner cares deeply about our community and young adults with special needs,” said Ted Coulish, executive director. “We are so proud of her and salute her heroic efforts to create two ways to help both during these challenging times. Sue is an amazing person and an outstanding member of the Full Circle Foundation Board of Directors.”

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06/11/20



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE FARMS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SUMMARY

Virtual Meeting	Monday, April 13, 2020	7:00 p.m.
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A regularly scheduled virtual meeting of the City Council for the City of Grosse Pointe Farms was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 13, 2020.

Present: Mayor Louis Theros, Mayor Pro Tem Joe Ricci, Councilmembers John J. Gillooly, James C. Farquhar, Beth Konrad-Wilberding, Neil Sroka and Lev Wood.

Absent: None.

Mayor Theros led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council approved the Minutes of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting and Closed Session held on March 9, 2020.

Council approved a request from Administration to authorize the purchase of a fire apparatus.

Council approved the following items on the Consent Agenda.

- Consideration of a request from Administration to approve an agreement with the Country Club of Detroit regarding the sale of water.
- Consideration of a request from the Finance Director to approve February 2020 invoices.
- Consideration of request to schedule a Public Hearing for proposed Fiscal Year Ending 2020 Budget for the May 11, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting.

Council received the April 2020 Public Safety Report.

Mayor Theros adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by **Derrick Kozicki, City Clerk.**

Published: Grosse Pointe News 06/11/2020



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE FARMS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SUMMARY

Virtual Meeting	Monday, May 11, 2020	7:00 p.m.
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Present: Mayor Louis Theros, Mayor Pro Tem Joe Ricci, Councilmembers John J. Gillooly, James C. Farquhar, Beth Konrad-Wilberding, Neil Sroka and Lev Wood.

Absent: None.

Mayor Theros led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council approved the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 13, 2020.

Council held a Public Hearing and approved the Proposed Tax Millage Rates and Budget for Fiscal Year Ending 2021.

Council approved a request to approve Water and Sewer Rates for Fiscal Year Ending 2021.

Council approved a request to approve a Recycling Contract Extension and Recycling Rates for Fiscal Year Ending 2021.

Council approved the following items on the Consent Agenda.

- Consideration of a Resolution approving the Plan Year 2020 CDBG Application.
- Consideration of an updated Title VI Plan for the City of Grosse Pointe Farms.
- Consideration of a request from the Grosse Pointe Rotary Sunrise Club to approve the “41st Grosse Pointe Run” on Saturday, September 19, 2020.
- Approval of payment for legal services.
- Consideration of a request from the Finance Director to approve April 2020 invoices.

Council received the City’s Quarterly Financial Report for the nine months ended March 31, 2020.

Council received the April 2020 Public Safety Report.

Mayor Theros adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by **Derrick Kozicki, City Clerk.**

Published: Grosse Pointe News 06/11/2020

Studio supports frontline workers with free yoga classes

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

Since mid-April, Full Lotus Yoga Studio in Grosse Pointe Woods has been offering free virtual yoga and meditation classes to support the community's healthcare heroes.

During May, Full Lotus students alone donated more than \$500 to fund classes for nearly 40 healthcare employees. With help from the community, more than \$1,000 has been donated to gift yoga classes to more than 100 frontline workers.

"Supporting each other through hardships has always been important to our studio community," said Liz DeFour, owner of Full Lotus. "We have

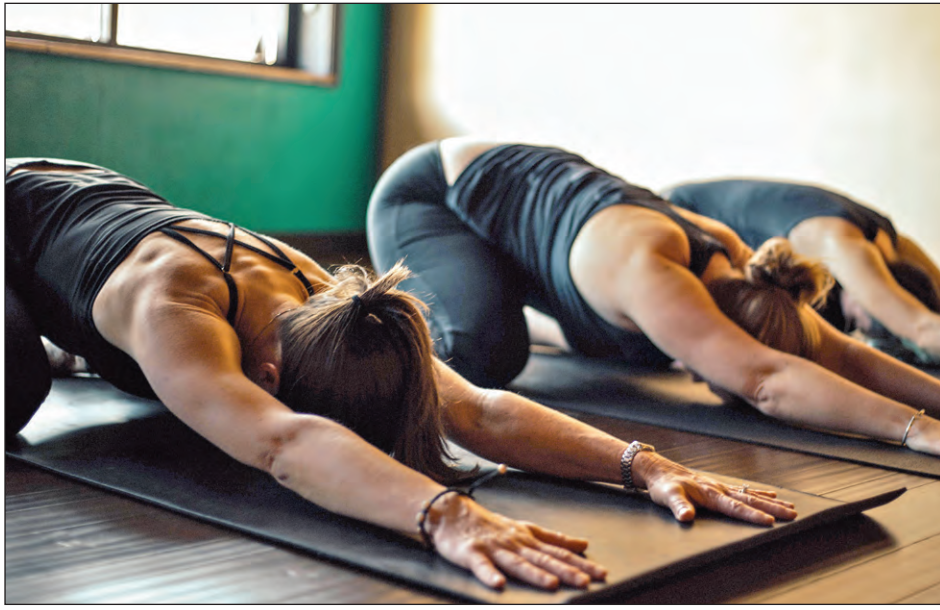


PHOTO COURTESY OF LIZ DEFLOUR

Full Lotus Yoga Studio in Grosse Pointe Woods is offering free virtual yoga and meditation classes to support the community's healthcare heroes.

many students who either work in the hospitals or have family members working in the hospitals. We wanted to provide a way to show that we care about them and their well-being. Providing online yoga

and meditation classes is the least we can do to thank them for their hard work keeping our community healthy over the past several months."

Those interested can donate \$20 to gift five online classes to a healthcare worker and, in return, receive a free class on their own account, DeFour said.

Donors need not be students to contribute.

"Any healthcare worker interested in receiving free classes can email the studio for instructions on how to redeem their classes," DeFour said. And for donors, "if there is a specific healthcare employee you would like to gift classes to, follow up with an email notification to the studio.

"The studio has matched every donation with an additional package gifted to a healthcare worker," she added. "It's really been a win for everyone."

Since 2013, Full Lotus has offered a variety of yoga, meditation and fitness classes to students of all ranges.

Its Health Care Heroes promotion will run "at least until the end of June," DeFour said.

A link to make a donation is available on the studio's website, fulllotusyoga.net.

"It's been an incredible success," DeFour said. "We still have new inquiries every day and are committed to gifting online classes to any healthcare worker who would like them."



PHOTOS BY JACK RYAN

Some of the classic cars included in the parade.

Classic cars cruise through Pointes

Stahl's Automotive Foundation hit the streets June 2, bringing joy to senior citizens in Grosse Pointe and areas of Macomb County.

Created to build

appreciation for history, the collection of cars rode in a caravan-style parade, visiting eight senior living centers and one hospital — starting from Stahl's Automotive

Collection in Chesterfield Township and moving past StoryPointe Chesterfield, Waltonwood—Lakeside and Shorehaven in Sterling

Heights, Henry Ford Macomb Hospital and Pine Ridge of Garfield in Clinton Township, Fraser Villa in Fraser, Lakeshore Senior Living in St. Clair Shores, then

wrapping up with visits to Sunrise on Vernier and Sunrise of Grosse Pointe in Grosse Pointe Woods.

The parade allowed residents who typically visit Stahl's museum to view the cars safely through the windows

inside the senior residences.

The parade included a 1966 Thunderbird, 1914 Model T, 1957 Pontiac Bonneville and cars from the Stahls' collection, among several others from volunteers joining the parade.

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The Dirty Dog reopened June 9th with lunch and dinner dining service. The dining room will be open Tuesday through Friday for lunch from the hours of 11:30 to 3 pm. Dinner service will be open at 5 pm until approximately 9 pm, Tuesday through Sat. The Dirty Dog will have projected video content of artists who have played at The Dirty Dog on a 100 inch screen with music overhead.

In our attempt to keep our customers safe by following the State's Covid guidelines, our capacity will be limited to 50%. We recommend that you call ahead so we can guarantee your reservation. For more information please visit our Facebook page.

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Served with lettuce, tomato, bacon, mayonnaise & fries
Grilled Cheese - \$9.50
Served on white toast served with a cup of tomato soup
Reuben Sandwich - \$12.00
Served on rye toast with Swiss Cheese, grandmas sauerkraut & fries

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4B | FEATURES

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.

Patrick T. Connolly

Patrick Thomas Connolly, 88, died Wednesday, June 3, 2020. He was born March 17, 1932.

Patrick was the beloved husband of Naomi Jane (nee Farley) Connolly; loving father of Martha Connolly-Ng (Michael), Kevin Connolly (Lisa), Kerry Connolly, Meegan Stroble (Ted) and the late Kathleen; and proud and cherished grandfather of Kieran, Michael Gannon, Elizabeth, Patrick, Avery and Maeve.

Patrick's family will receive friends at 11:30 a.m. Friday, June 26, until the funeral Mass at noon at St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church, 157 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms.

Share a memory with the family at Patrick's online guestbook at wujekcalcaterra.com.

Marlene Marie Stahl-Brophy

Marlene Marie Stahl-Brophy died Monday, May 18, 2020, in Detroit, with her children, George Charles, 21, and Jacqueline Marie, 19, at her side. Marlene was born June 20, 1963, in Detroit, to George Charles Stahl Sr. and Marjorie Mae Stahl (nee Szeszko).

A 1981 graduate of Grosse Pointe North High School, Marlene was valedictorian of her class. She earned a Bachelor of Business degree with high distinction from the University of Michigan in 1985, and graduated cum laude from the University of Michigan Law School in 1988, with a Juris Doctorate degree. Marlene also was a certified public accountant and licensed real estate agent. She dedicated her career to estate planning the past few years.

Marlene's greatest memories included fishing with family and friends in Marathon, Fla. She also enjoyed skiing, gardening, travel and exercise.

A member of VFW Bruce Post 1146, Marlene served on its ritual team to honor the deaths of U.S. military veterans. She also was involved in fundraising as a marathon runner for the American Lung Association after her father, George, died in 2004.

Marlene's true joy in life was time spent with her children. In their primary years, Marlene loved volunteering as a schoolroom parent and coaching their youth soccer teams. She never missed a swim competition, Jackie's piano recitals or gymnastic competitions and George's football games. She truly loved her children.

Marlene was predeceased by her father, George. She is survived by her children, George and Jacqueline Brophy; mother, Marjorie; siblings, Robert (Carole), Barbara, Philip (Valerie),

George, John and Marjorie Uysal (Serdar); and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the American Lung Association, lung.org.

Share a memory and view Marlene's tribute video at ahpeters.com.

Mimi Blackwell Rapetti Yost

Mimi Blackwell Rapetti Yost died Wednesday, June 3, 2020.

Born into a musical family in Vienna, Austria, Mimi had a passion for life. Her father was a member of the Vienna Boys Choir and later an attorney. Her grandfather was a composer and organist at St. Stephan Cathedral in Vienna. Mimi's brother, Rudolph Bibl, was director of the Vienna Volksopera and conductor of the Vienna State Opera.

Her family recalls Mimi herself was no ordinary woman. She earned a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Vienna and was fluent in seven languages at age 23. She traveled by ship to the U.S. in 1949 to marry one man, but met another man aboard ship, Harry Blackwell of Grosse Pointe, whom she married.

Mimi realized jobs available to women paid less than those available to men in 1972, so she decided on a commission-based equal career path and was one of the first women in Detroit to become a licensed stockbroker. A partner at Roney & Co., she retired in 1989.

Mimi served as president of the American Association of University Women, secretary of the Austrian Society for 25 years, board member of Mount Clemens community concerts many years and Torch Drive chairwoman.

Mimi enjoyed gardening; she had numerous fruit trees and canned her own fruits and vegetables. She also loved swimming, travel, playing bridge with friends, cooking, the Detroit Institute of Arts and her family.

Mimi's was not a wasted life. Growing up in Austria during World War II, she was a saver and recycler before it was fashionable and she didn't waste a minute of her life. Her family indicated one could compare Mimi's life to an opera, yet it actually was much more than that.

Mimi is survived by her loving husband, Dale Yost; daughter, Anne Ryan of Grosse Pointe; grandchildren, Melissa Ryan-Petz (Patrick) and Gregory Ryan (Hadley); and great-grandchildren, Lillian Petz, Elizabeth Petz, Quinn Ryan, Michael Ryan and Joe Ryan.

She was predeceased by her son, Mark

Blackwell, and husbands, Harry Blackwell and Mino Rapetti.

Arrangements were handled by A.H. Peters Funeral Home, Grosse Pointe Woods.

James D. VandeWyngearde Sr.

Former longtime Grosse Pointe resident James David VandeWyngearde Sr., of St. Clair Shores, passed away Saturday, May 30, 2020. He was 80.

Jim was the husband of his beloved wife, Janet, for 52 years; proud father of James Jr. (Leslie); and grandfather to his precious grandchildren, James III, Claire and Katie. He was predeceased by his brother, David, and parents, Fritz and Margaret.

Jim grew up on Detroit's east side and attended St. Ambrose High School in Grosse Pointe Park. He was proud of his Detroit roots and Belgian and Polish heritage. Jim continued his education to pursue what became a 50-year career as a radiological technician. He loved his work. Fiercely loyal, trustworthy and honest, Jim believed nothing replaced hard work, evidenced by the fact he never took a sick day in more than 20 years.

Jim met the love of his life, Janet, in 1963, at Bon Secours Hospital where they both worked. The couple married in 1967 and enjoyed more than a half century of wonderful years together. Janet meant everything to Jim.

In no particular order, the things Jim loved in life included Grosse Pointe houses — the older the better. He also loved reading and took pleasure walking Grosse Pointe's Central Library aisles in search of new books, though he often said he had already read them all. Inexplicably, he loved Russian history. Jim also loved Lake Michigan sunsets and Lake St. Clair sunrises. His favorite sunsets were those he watched with a glass of wine at the Jolli Lodge in Leland, a vacation destination the family returned to year after year, decade after decade. The Jolli Lodge likely was Jim's favorite place on earth. He loved charcoal barbecues, never gas, which were best had at Windmill Pointe Park. He loved watching the Detroit Tigers, but not nearly as much as his grandchildren's Grosse Pointe Park Little League baseball and softball games, which he never missed.

Jim's favorite restaurant was The Bluebird in Leland; his favorite car was his 1958 black Ford Thunderbird convertible; and his favorite dessert was pineapple upside-down cake. He loved walking together with Janet throughout Grosse Pointe.

Jim cherished two aspects of his life more than any of the above. First was his deep



Patrick T. Connolly



Marlene Stahl-Brophy



Mimi Yost



J. VandeWyngearde Sr.



John Fredericks Diebel



Robert H. Schappe

Christian faith, which was the centerpiece of who he was as a man. He demonstrated his faith by the way he lived his life and the countless hours he served God through church groups, boards and foundations such as the Munderloh Foundation. The other cherished treasure of Jim's life was his family. His wife, son, daughter-in-law and precious grandchildren meant more to him than the world. Jim's was a well-lived life. He will be missed by many.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Jim's memory may be made to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 22915 Greater Mack, St. Clair Shores, MI 48080.

John Fredericks Diebel

John Fredericks Diebel, 83, passed away peacefully Tuesday, May 12, 2020, at Lakeshore Senior Living in St. Clair Shores.

Born March 18, 1937, in Detroit, to Madeleine and Dr. Nelson W. Diebel, John attended St. Paul on the Lake Catholic School and University of Detroit Mercy High School. He earned an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Notre Dame and a master's degree in creative writing from the University of Michigan. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army as a lieutenant.

John married Ann Howard Young in 1966; they remained married until Ann's death in 2004.

John had a long career as a journalist and writer for The Detroit News, Detroit Free Press and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and as personal speech writer to A. Alfred Taubman.

An accomplished actor, director, playwright and songwriter, John was a longtime member of Grosse Pointe Theatre, Fine Arts Society of Detroit and Theatre Arts Club of Detroit. He wrote several musicals that were presented in workshops and sung through performances.

John also was an avid runner, bowler and tennis enthusiast. He was a longtime member of Country Club of Detroit and Indian Village Tennis Club. He and his wife, Ann, were well known for their elaborate parties and gatherings held over many years. John will be

remembered for his incredible generosity, talent and joie de vivre.

John was predeceased by his parents; brother, Nelson; and beloved wife, Ann. He is survived by his brother, Dr. Donald Diebel (Cindy); several nieces and nephews; and many loving friends.

A memorial gathering will be held at a later date. Interment will take place at Mt. Elliot Cemetery, Detroit.

Memorial contributions may be made to Grosse Pointe Theatre, gpt.org; or Fine Arts Society of Detroit, fineartsdetroit.org.

Arrangements were handled by Chas. Verheyden Inc.

Robert H. Schappe

Grosse Pointe Park resident Robert H. Schappe, 81, died suddenly and unexpectedly Thursday, June 4, 2020, at home. He was the beloved husband of Glory Swoboda Schappe for 58 years.

Born in 1938, on the family farm in Clifton, Wis., Bob graduated from Tomah High School in 1956.

Bob began his studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and joined Phi Kappa Theta fraternity. A student and U.S. Army National Guard member, Bob was called to active duty in 1961. He served with the 32nd Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, where he played in the division band. Bob was honorably discharged in 1962; he returned to Madison and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology in 1963. Bob also earned a Master of Science degree in social psychology at Ohio University in 1965, and a Ph.D. in behavioral cybernetics at the University of Wisconsin in 1971.

He worked 23 years as an organizational psychologist with General Motors Co., and 15 years as a professor in the School of Management at the University of Michigan—Dearborn.

Bob had many and varied hobbies including Civil War history, birding, linguistics and family history research. He and Glory were members of St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church. Bob loved spending time with his sons and grandsons.

Bob's passion in life was sailing. A member of Grosse Pointe Sail Club and Bayview Yacht Club,

he raced the yacht "Spectre" on Lake St. Clair many years. Bob sailed 34 Port Huron-to-Mackinac races, thus earning him membership in Bayview Yacht Club's Old Goat Society. He was commodore of Grosse Pointe Sail Club, Detroit Regional Yacht Racing Association and The Commodores Club.

Bob is survived by his wife, Glory; sons, Robert Scott (Tracy McCabe) and Stephen Patrick (Julie Frear); four grandsons, Michael, Ian, David and John; and sister, Rosemary (Patrick Croft). He was predeceased by his brothers, Bruce and Jim, and sister, Bernita.

A celebration of Bob's life will be held at noon Friday, June 12, at St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church, Grosse Pointe Farms. Glory and Bob's family will greet guests outdoors in the grotto at 11:30 a.m. and again for 30 minutes after the Mass. Masks are required in the church and social distancing protocols will be followed.

Condolences may be made online at ahpeters.com.

Susan S. Trumppore

Former Grosse Pointe resident Susan Scott Trumppore, of Vernon, Conn., passed away Friday, June 5, 2020. She was 81. Susan was born Sept. 4, 1938, in Plainfield, N.J., to James and Frances (nee Gonod) Scott.

Susan was a graduate of Grosse Pointe High School and St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Ind. She had a long career in social work with the state of Connecticut.

Susan had a lifelong interest in theater and gardening. She loved tennis and sports and was an avid fan of the University of Connecticut women's basketball team.

She is survived by her brother, James Scott, of Fairport, N.Y.; niece, Stephanie Robinson (Brent), of Pittsford, N.Y.; nephew, Michael Scott (Jacqueline) of St. Petersburg, Fla.; great-niece, Madison Scott; and many cousins.

Private funeral services will be held at the family's convenience.

Donations in Susan's memory may be made to a charity of the donor's choice. Online condolences may be offered at pietrasfuneralhome.com.

Church offers virtual community programs for all

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

The community is invited to participate in programming offered virtually by the Rev. Alexander Riegel of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. Anyone can participate; no commitment is necessary.

The programs are another way of keeping people connected during the days of COVID-19 distancing.

"Almost every church is offering a virtual Sunday morning," Riegel said, "but I don't feel

that's enough to keep the community engaged with church.

"As a minister, it's awkward to do ministry two-dimensionally," he added. "Sunday alone two-dimensionally is nice and it's wonderful that we have the technology, but it's not the kind of deep connection people are used to. You can't feign connection in a two-dimensional world. At the very least, I want to offer content they're used to getting."

To facilitate that deeper dive, not only with church members,

but any interested community member, Riegel hosts virtual programs throughout the week. Monday evenings, he discusses the previous day's sermon. Tuesday nights, he hosts a poetry circle.

"I pick two poems that I ask people to read ahead of time, so they can think about them," he said. "They take two or three minutes to talk about what they saw in the poems and then I facilitate a group discussion."

This week's poems were "As I Grew Older"

by Langston Hughes and "The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams.

Friday nights are for movie discussion. Friday, June 12, the group will discuss "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." The Friday, June 19 movie is "Waking Life."

Every other week, Riegel teaches a Sanskrit mantra. The next session is Thursday, June 18, during which Riegel will teach the proper articulation, intonation and meter of the Pavaana Mantra.

All programs take place 7:30 to 9 p.m. via Zoom. Registration is required; program sizes are limited.

Poems and movies are provided in advance, so participants can have time to study or watch the material to be discussed. The afternoon of each program, Riegel sends registered participants a link to the appropriate Zoom meeting.

"Anybody can come," he said. "It's an opportunity to stay connected."

Riegel said he's open to suggestions for other programming. Whatever

the community would like to see, he'd like to facilitate.

"This is just a way of saying we've got a lot of time on our hands," he said. "People are missing those connections. It's a deeper dive with each other."

Those interested in participating may register online at gpuc.org/virtual-programs.html, which also includes more detailed program information and dates, "as sometimes the days of the week on which I run programs changes," Riegel said.

ASK JEFF AND DEBRA

Why a spiritual program of recovery?

Q: If addiction is a medical issue, why do professionals recommend a spiritual program of recovery — the Twelve Steps? I understand it's a disease and that good professional treatment is necessary, but why the Higher Power?

A: Addiction has been called a disease of the will. So, if our free will is compromised, we need help beyond our own minds: a power greater than ourselves.

To regain control of our lives, we have to admit we're out of control. Most people suffering from substance use disorders have a hard time admitting that. They struggle to accept the facts and hope to regain the ability to drink or use other substances like normal people. They cling to this belief despite all evidence to the contrary.

In the disease of addiction, our will is impaired. We have lost the ability to guarantee our behavior. Our normally reliable mind is actually working against us, so we keep trying the same thing, hoping for different results.

Success begins when we accept — however tentatively — there may be a better solution. We need to accept help from outside ourselves: a Higher Power.

Alcoholics already have a higher power called alcohol. People who are addicted have unwittingly surrendered part of their will to their drug of choice.

Some people in early recovery are allergic to any notion of a Higher Power or God. But hasn't alcohol or another substance been their Higher Power? Haven't they followed its dictates, even when it resulted in repeated negative consequences? Didn't they believe things would always be better if they only had access to their drug of choice?

People struggling with addiction

already have a strong faith, but it's a faith in a substance, a disordered faith, a belief that this power, this drug, will always make things better. The beginning of hope comes when the addicted person can accept help from outside themselves.

Going to detox, entering a rehabilitation program, working with the treatment team are all examples of accepting help from others. These actions, as opposed to mere thoughts, are the first steps in developing a spiritual program of recovery.

Many people mistakenly believe the term "spiritual" must automatically mean religious, but this is not the case. Most people struggling with addiction have trouble accepting the most rudimentary help, much less psychological or spiritual help. The first steps on the journey may be simply accepting medical help. But for an addicted person, accepting help of any kind is a significant shift.

The spiritual journey of recovery begins with a willingness to find a new Higher Power. Call it purpose, Good Orderly Direction (G-O-D), religious faith or just a flicker of hope; perhaps there is some greater force that can help me get better.

It is this venture of faith which takes us outside ourselves and yet helps us find control within ourselves. The best plan is to quit debating and start investigating. Not on the internet, but in person. What has been helpful for other people? What was their experience? What worked and what didn't?

Twelve Step groups offer the perfect place to find these answers. The meetings are confidential and welcoming, free of charge and free of judgment. Here we will find people who will share their experience

and walk with us on our journey. Their stories of success will give us the strength we don't yet possess. Their years of sobriety will give us hope.

The old maxim says, "God works through people," and this is never more true than in Twelve Step groups. A new member may have any kind of faith or none at all. The only suggestion is to keep an open mind and keep coming back. Over time, a new confidence and a new power will invisibly flow from the seasoned members to the newcomer. Resentment, fear and anxiety will diminish. It is a program of action: going to meetings, getting a sponsor, working the steps. These actions grow into a faith that works.

Some people mistakenly think a spiritual program of recovery means one must join a church or profess some religion, but this is not the case. It's fine if a person wants to return to their faith, of course. Recovery literature echoes many of the truths found in the great religions. But for the newly recovering person the challenge is to develop their own notion of a Higher Power.

Perhaps this Higher Power is nothing more than our home group, at first. We can have faith in the people who sobered up before us and are willing to help us today. This fledgling faith is more than enough to begin the journey of recovery. As time goes on, most of us come to realize there has been something greater that delivered us from our private hell. Coincidence and serendipity are God's way of remaining anonymous.

Jeff and Debra Jay have been helping families overcome addiction more than 30 years. Their best-selling book, "Love First," is a standard in the recovery field. The Jays live in Grosse Pointe Farms and their website is lovefirst.net.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RENEE LANDUYT

Preparations

Friday, May 8, workers placed sandbags along Edsel & Eleanor Ford House property across the street from the main entrance all the way to the Milk River at the border of Grosse Pointe Shores and St. Clair Shores.



Ford House property, with the Milk River on the right, is lined with sandbags as kayakers take to the high water.



Sandbags line the Ford House property, looking toward the Milk River.

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King Crossword Solution for last week's puzzle 6/4/20. Includes crossword grid and solutions for across and down words.