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2025

Grosse Pointe News

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# GPPSS pushing for more special education pay

By Ted O'Neil  
Associate Editor

**THE GROSSE POINTES** — The Grosse Pointe Public School System Board of Education passed a resolution last week directing administrators to bargain with the Grosse Pointe Education Association to pay special education teachers more money.

The resolution, passed at a special meeting Thursday, Dec. 26, pertains to a letter of agreement the district already provided to the teachers union.

If approved, teachers in autism spectrum disorder and moderately cognitively impaired classrooms would receive an additional \$10,000 for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

Board President Sean Cotton, owner of the Grosse Pointe News, said the money would come from Wayne RESA, the county's intermediate school district, via funds provided by Michigan Act 18. That act, approved in 1954, established special education programs statewide. Teachers in mildly cognitively impaired classrooms are not covered by Act 18.

"We've spent about two months negotiating with Wayne RESA to obtain the money," Cotton said. "But we have to have an agreement with the GPEA in order to pay the teachers."

The resolution was approved by Cotton.

See PAY, page 10A

## 2024 IN REVIEW

# Parks a focal point in the Woods

By Ted O'Neil  
Associate Editor

**GROSSE POINTE WOODS** — Two new parks, one for dogs and one for disc golf, along with improvements at Lake Front Park, expanded recreational offerings to residents. This is the year in review.

**January**

◆ Grosse Pointe Equestrian tears down its clubhouse, parts of which date back to the club's founding in 1911, to put more focus on horses and riders. "Less club, more community," the new owners said when they purchased the former Grosse Pointe Hunt

See WOODS, page 2A

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# FEMA approves phase one

By Laurel Kraus  
Staff Writer

**CITY OF GROSSE POINTE** — Voters' November decision to support a \$332 annual tax increase for the average taxpayer is paying off, as the city recently was notified the approval process for a \$21.6 million stormwater separation grant has been advanced to the next level.

The millage allows the city to fulfill a 26 percent match requirement for the grant, which comes

See FEMA, page 3A

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PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

Pictured from left are Garrett, Gemma, Jacqueline and Gwen Davis. The Davises moved to Grosse Pointe Farms in May 2024. The girls go to Kerby Elementary School and their parents are teachers. Garrett teaches chemistry and anatomy and Jacqueline teaches Spanish. Gemma plans to take skating lessons at Pier Park in January.

# Winter wonderland

On Christmas day, after the presents were opened and breakfast was eaten, families came down to the Pier Park skating rink in Grosse Pointe Farms to burn off some energy and get in a little family skating while the day wound down.

Right, Lily and Henry Poiffon pose with their parents, Emily and Dave, during a break from skating.

The Poiffons started their tradition of coming to Pier Park to skate on Christmas Day and New Year's Day during COVID because there was not much to do. They continued the tradition for Christmas 2024 by coming to the rink and introducing their youngest to skating and plan to keep the tradition going as long as they can.



## 2024 IN REVIEW

# Plenty of positives highlight 2024 for GPPSS

By Ted O'Neil  
Associate Editor

**THE GROSSE POINTES** — New leadership and long-sought budget stability were the hallmarks of the year for the Grosse Pointe Public School System.

This is the year in review.

**January**

◆ Richard Elementary School Principal John Kernan receives a grant from the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution to hold an assembly for Constitution Day. He received \$1,500 — one of only 20 nationally — to host Uncle Sam's Comedy Jam.

◆ Unlike three current nonprofit groups that raise money for the Grosse Pointe Public School System, a new

See SCHOOLS, page 9A

Pointer of INTEREST

**Bill Thompson**  
Home: Grosse Pointe Woods  
Long-time teacher, swim coach

See story, page 4A



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WOODS:

Continued from page 1A

Club in 2017.

◆ The city opens a 13,000-square-foot dog park next to city hall as an alternative for people living in the area who don't want to load their dog in their vehicle and drive to the dog park at Lake Front Park.

◆ A resident is sentenced to five to 15 years in prison after pleading no contest to a charge of operating a vehicle under the influence causing death. Brooke Lynn-Denise Charles was accused of striking Connor McMahon the evening of June 13, 2023, while he was changing a flat tire on his vehicle on eastbound I-94 near the Vernier exit.

◆ Council updates the city's sign ordinance, particularly in regard to political yard signs, in light of a 2015 decision by the Supreme Court of the United States that said municipalities cannot regulate signs based on content.

◆ The public safety department receives a new drug disposal kiosk, the first of its kind in the state, thanks to a grant from Rotary International. The state-of-the-art kiosk uses activated charcoal to neutralize pills or liquid dumped inside.

February

◆ Council approves spending \$350,000 to install a new liner in the pool at Lake Front Park and refurbish the two water slides there.

◆ Trinity Payne, then a second grader at Monteith Elementary School, meets and has her picture taken with President Joe Biden at They Say restaurant in Harper Woods, owned by her grandfather, Terry Payne Sr.

◆ The public safety department announces it will receive \$116,895 over 18 years as part of a nationwide, \$725 million settlement between states and opioid manufacturers. The city in 2020 and 2023 saw multiple overdoses in one night involving fatalities.



PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

**Above, rescue dog Milly and the Gee family — mom, Kara, and kids, Tessa and Colin — stand in front of their free dog treat library that offers toys and treats for dogs on walks.**

**Right, Lynn and Jerry Wiszowaty dance to the music of Sonic Freeway at Grosse Pointe Woods Music on the Lawn at city hall last June.**

March

◆ Public Safety Director John Kosanke says the city saw a 3 percent increase in crime in 2023 compared to the previous year. The increase included three fatal overdoses and a deadly shooting. Officers responded to 9,800 calls for service, an 18 percent increase over 2022.

◆ Council approves spending \$11,000 to buy a new hose and turnout gear dryer for the public safety department.

April

◆ Mary Sue Stonisch, D.D.S., retires after 37 years at Faircourt Dental on Mack, selling the practice to Sabrina Salim, D.D.S., after a three-year search.

◆ Ascension St. John emergency room personnel conduct a 24-hour strike after failing to reach a contract settlement with their third-party employer.



May

◆ Council forms a committee to begin planning how the city will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2025. Part of the festivities will include opening a time capsule buried in 2000, which marked the city's 50th anniversary.

◆ A dozen people are honored as the city's Community Tree Commission holds its 41st annual memorial tree dedication.

◆ Councilman Thomas Vaughn, 68, passes away after a year-long battle with pancreatic cancer. Vaughn was appointed to the council to fill a vacancy in 2021 and won a four-year term that year.

◆ Council approves two social districts on Mack that will operate 1 to 10 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays, May to October.

◆ Five public safety

officers are honored for their work in the line of duty. Sgt. Walter Galat and Officer Eugene Gunnery received life-saving awards, while Sgt. Joseph Provost, Detective Ryan Schroerlucke and Officer Dennis Walker receive department citations.

◆ Council approves the 2024-25 fiscal year budget that includes about \$1 million in deficit spending. It would finish the year with a balanced budget.

◆ Steven Schmidt is sworn in as the city's new treasurer after serving as deputy treasurer since 2021, replacing the retired Shawn Murphy.

◆ The city receives a Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day Foundation for a 46th consecutive year.

◆ Edmond Doheny is sentenced to two years in

prison for the shooting death of his brother on Brys Drive in October 2023. He also is sentenced to three years of probation for involuntary manslaughter. He pleaded no contest to both counts, but the two-year sentence of commission of a felony with a firearm carried a mandatory sentence.

July

◆ Owen Gafa, son of Councilman Kenn Gafa, is appointed parks and recreation director. The hiring does not constitute a conflict of interest, as City Administrator Frank Schulte hired Gafa, rather than a council vote.

◆ John Agnello, a rising sophomore at Grosse Pointe North High School at the time, along with an unidentified man, rescue a woman from a submerged vehicle that

drove into Lake St. Clair at Lake Front Park. Agnello was wearing a No. 14 Detroit Lions jersey of his favorite player, Amon-Ra St. Brown, who he would meet and receive a signed jersey and game tickets.

August

◆ Some 64 diseased crabapple trees are cut down at city hall. Of those, 62 had memorial plaques that will be relocated to other trees.

◆ Council begins accepting applications from residents to fill the seat left open by the death of Councilman Thomas Vaughn.

◆ A Yorkshire terrier is killed by a coyote on North Renaud.

◆ A new splash pad is dedicated at Lake Front Park.

September

◆ Lamia + Lamia Salon on Mack marks 50 years in business.

◆ Council begins the possible sale of vacant city property on Sunningdale Park and Bournmouth.

◆ An arrest is made in connection with the fatal overdoses of three people, including two sisters, in June 2023. A Harper Woods woman is charged with distribution of a controlled substance causing death.

October

◆ James Motschall is appointed by unanimous vote to a vacancy on council, to fill a term expiring November 2025. Motschall says he plans to run to keep the seat.

◆ Ishpinder Sahni is charged with nine felony counts, accused by Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel of embezzling more than \$350,000 from Woods Wholesale Wine.

◆ The Ahee Jewelers Disc Golf Course opens at Ghesquiere Park. Donors include edmund t. AHEE Jewelers, Rotary Club of Grosse Pointe, Saucy's Pizza and the Grosse Pointe Woods Foundation.

November

◆ A family of five is displaced from their home on Brys Drive after dryer lint caused a fire.

December

◆ Council considers \$178,000 of improvements to the baseball fields at Ghesquiere Park after the Grosse Pointe Woods-Shores Little League is awarded the state tournament, to be played in July 2025.

◆ Planning continues for celebrating the city's 75th anniversary, including picking a banner that will hang from light poles on Mack.

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Grosse Pointe Woods Beautification commission held their annual Flower Sale to raise money for Beautification commission projects.



# O’Hara honored with beautification proclamation

**GROSSE POINTE FARMS** — For her 16 years of service to the Grosse Pointe Farms Beautification Advisory Commission, longtime resident Sheila O’Hara was honored with a mayoral proclamation during a city council meeting Monday, Dec. 9.

The proclamation noted that between 2008 and 2024, she “tirelessly” initiated, promoted and coordinated beautification efforts in the Farms, advised city leaders on projects to enhance the ambience of the



Sheila O’Hara

community, installed spring plantings in the city’s public areas, consulted on environmentally smart planting methods and participated in the annual beautification awards program.

“Sheila is a visionary who masterfully blends tradition with modernity,” said Sierra Donaven, councilwoman and beautification commission chair, via email. “Her work with the Beautification Advisory Commission stands out for her deep knowledge of

plant materials, harmonious pairings and vibrant color combinations. Reflecting on her years of dedication to the commission and her extensive volunteer efforts, Sheila underscores the value of community engagement, encouraging others to ‘give back to your community by getting involved.’”

As the face behind the public art displays along Moross, O’Hara’s contributions to local beautification extend beyond her role with the Farms beautification commission, City

Manager Shane Reeside noted. “As the driving force and founding president of the Moross Greenway Project, Sheila transformed a barren strip of median islands between Mack Avenue and I-94 into an oasis of trees, shrubbery, perennials and art,” he said. “Her efforts have made a significant difference, benefiting the quality of life of thousands of motorists who traverse Moross Road daily.”

— Laurel Kraus



COURTESY PHOTO

## Sworn in

Seth Herbert was sworn in as the newest Grosse Pointe Park public safety officer on Monday, Dec. 16, after graduating from the Oakland Police Academy. He also is a graduate of the fire academy. Herbert, left, was sworn in by Grosse Pointe Park Director of Public Safety Jim Bostock.

## Woods planning events for its diamond jubilee

By Ted O’Neil  
Associate Editor

**GROSSE POINTE WOODS** — While some details remain under discussion, two events received the green light recently as the city continues planning how to celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2025.

The first will be held in conjunction with one of three Music on the Lawn gatherings, scheduled Friday, July 25. That will include a drone show, fireworks, cake and free food, in addition to entertainment.

“We’ll have a major ceremony, a big birthday party, on Dec. 11,” Mayor Art Bryant said, “since that’s the official date.”

That event also will include opening a time capsule sealed 25 years ago and creating a new one to be opened in 2050.

Council recently selected a design for banners that will hang from lightposts along Mack and be given to local businesses for cross-promotion. It also will be used on city letterhead and its website.

The public safety department plans to create a special badge for the year and a challenge coin. The coins are used as tokens and presented to officers within the department in recognition of achievements, exchanged among different law enforcement agencies as a sign of mutual respect or cooperation and given to civilians to show appreciation.

Other ideas under consideration are commemorative T-shirts that would be sold by the Grosse Pointe Woods Foundation, holding a photo contest for photos that capture the essence of the city and recognizing residents born Dec. 11, 1950.

Stretching back even farther, the Village of Lochmoor was incorporated Jan. 4, 1927, from the former Grosse Pointe Township. It became the Village of Grosse Pointe Woods in March 1939, and officially became the City of Grosse Pointe Woods 11 years later.

## City contracts GPAAS for stray services

By Laurel Kraus  
Staff Writer

**CITY OF GROSSE POINTE** — The city is on board with boarding its stray dogs at the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society’s newly established animal protection facility, with council approving the service agreement and associated costs as part of the consent agenda during its meeting Monday, Dec. 16.

The agreement includes a \$5,200 usage fee for 2025, based on a pro-rated portion of the facility’s operational costs, which in turn is based on prior use. The average number of animals sheltered the past five years on behalf of the city has been approximately 12 each year, not counting the animals officers were able to return home.

The city also will be charged a monthly invoice for services, including \$30 per day to board a dog for up to five days.

The number of stray dogs in the area has become a significant problem falling on the

backs of the Pointe public safety departments, City Manager Joe Valentine noted.

“So many people adopted dogs during COVID,” Public Safety Director John Alcorn said. “They were puppies and people were staying home. Coming out of COVID, a lot of people have dumped their dogs at pounds or released them. All shelters in metro Detroit are full and over capacity.”

For more than 40 years, Dr. Lawrence Herzog with the Grosse Pointe Animal Clinic handled stray dogs for the departments. When he retired from the commitment toward the end of 2023, the city struggled to find an alternative.

“We were left in a little bit of a bind, as our prior provider no longer provided those services,” Valentine said, “and the chief had really stepped up to find ways to accommodate those animals in the short term, but that was getting tough.”

“I think he was starting to take some of

them home, if I’m not mistaken.”

Though the city manager’s last remark was in jest, the department did recently house a dog at its station on Mack for five days.

“We’re not designed to hold animals,” Alcorn said. “We have officers that are taking the dogs out and walking them every few hours.”

GPAAS is happy to take over the responsibility by way of its Barbara N. Weiss Animal Protection Facility in Harper Woods, which celebrated its grand opening in November and is intended to support law enforcement agencies in the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods.

Lost, injured and stray animals will be sheltered and receive veterinary care until they are re-claimed or re-homed.

Foster homes and permanent placement for unclaimed pets will be sought through GPAAS’ adoption program, while animals that are critically injured, un-treatable or aggressive and there-

fore unadoptable will be humanely euthanized.

“To the credit of the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society, through a generous donation (it) was able to open a new shelter, providing services to all the Grosse Pointes, which really relieves that burden off of the departments trying to manage how those dogs are going to be handled when they’re retrieved,” Valentine said. “It really, I think, is a benefit to the communities that they serve, so I just wanted to acknowledge that as an added service to the communities.”

GPAAS must require an annual usage fee to sustain its services to the municipalities, Executive Director Corinne Martin wrote in a letter to council, because the facility’s projected overhead budget is \$130,000, not including food, supplies, veterinary care and medications.

The City won’t pay its usage fee for 2025 until July, when it can be worked into next fiscal year’s budget.

## The Week Ahead

- MONDAY, JAN. 6**
- ◆ Grosse Pointe Public School System Middle School Info Night, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
  - ◆ Grosse Pointe Woods City Council meeting, 7 p.m.
  - ◆ Grosse Pointe Shores Improvement Foundation meeting, 7 p.m.
- WEDNESDAY, JAN. 8**
- ◆ Grosse Pointe Public School System High School Info Night, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
- THURSDAY, JAN. 9**
- ◆ Grosse Pointe Public School System Kindergarten/Young Fives Info Night, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
  - ◆ Grosse Pointe Woods Beautification Advisory Commission meeting, 7 p.m.



## FEMA:

Continued from page 1A

by way of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“We have received approval, if you will, for the first phase, which they will be sending us an agreement on in the next several weeks,” City Manager Joe Valentine said in December. “We expect to have that early next year.”

“Phase one is the designing of the system,

so we’ll be wanting to move quickly on that.”

Engineering design work should take roughly seven or eight months to complete.

The project’s initial timeline showed preparation of plans and specifications complete by the end of 2024; however, Valentine said he soon will have a revised timeline.

Though the initial term of the grant is through January 2026, the city is eligible for two one-year extensions — “which we

will be using,” Valentine said — giving it until 2028 to spend the funding.

“We are up against a bit of a deadline with that project,” Valentine told council in December. “So we’ll want to move as quickly as we can. We have some ideas on how to expedite some of that timeline (which) we’ll be talking to you about in the future.”

The project aims to divert the majority of the remainder of the city’s combined stormwater to Lake St. Clair, rather than

its current path to the Neff Road Pump Station, where it risks overflow and basement backups.

“The step that we are at with FEMA is really encouraging, because what they did that led us to this next step was cost benefit analysis,” Mayor Shelia Tomkowiak said. “So our plan, as it is, was scrutinized and it passed, which is just amazingly good. If there was a flaw in our plan to mitigate flooding, they would not have gone through with the funding.”

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# Teacher, coach espouses life lessons through sports

By Ted O’Neil  
Associate Editor

If there are two con-  
stants running through  
Bill Thompson’s life,  
they are Grosse Pointe  
South High School and  
swimming.  
“My dad always used  
to say sports are great  
for teaching life lessons,”  
he said. “Things like  
commitment, teamwork  
and hard work. They’re a  
great metaphor for life.”  
The Grosse Pointe  
Park native grew up  
swimming for the  
Mutants and has been in  
and around the water  
ever since.  
“I took to it very young  
and really enjoyed it,” he  
said.  
Thompson attended  
Trombly Elementary  
School and Pierce  
Middle School before  
South. He’s been a sci-  
ence teacher at Pierce  
for 31 years.  
“I tell my students I’ve  
been in that building for  
more than half my life,”  
he laughed. “It’s my  
dream job. It took a  
while to get used to being  
a colleague with my for-  
mer teachers, but they

were all so helpful. I had  
some great mentors.”  
After a successful  
swimming career at  
South, he was recruited  
to swim for the University  
of Pennsylvania.  
“It’s a great school and  
I love swimming, so it  
was the perfect combina-  
tion,” he said.  
As a biology major,  
Thompson had plans of  
going to medical school.  
“I took a year off after  
graduation because I  
was so busy with swim-  
ming, I hadn’t had time  
to study for the MCAT  
(medical college admis-  
sion test),” he said. “I’d  
been coaching youth  
swimming during the  
summers and realized  
how much I enjoyed it,  
so I thought why not  
combine my love of sci-  
ence with my love of  
swimming.”  
He earned a master’s  
degree in education and  
his teaching certification  
at the University of  
Michigan before joining  
Pierce.  
“My dad (Bryan) was a  
big influence on my deci-  
sion,” Thompson said.  
“He was a professor at  
Wayne State and I

remember him sitting at  
the dining room table  
grading papers and talk-  
ing about his students.  
He’d even invite them  
over for dinner some-  
times, so I grew up  
watching him and how  
he made connections  
with his students.”  
Thompson became an  
assistant swim coach at  
South soon after joining  
the district under his for-  
mer coach, John  
Michalik, who he called  
“a legend.”  
He became head coach  
of both the boys and girls  
teams in the late 1990s,  
during which time cur-  
rent South coach John  
Fodell was on the team.  
Fodell went on to swim  
for Albion College,  
where he also played  
tennis, and was an NCAA  
DIII swimmer in 2006.  
Thompson has been  
Fodell’s assistant the  
past decade.  
“John was a great ath-  
lete and a hard worker,”  
he said. “We both owe a  
lot to South for our expe-  
rience and it’s awesome  
working with him side  
by side.”  
Thompson stepped  
down from coaching



COURTESY PHOTO

Bill Thompson, far right, with son, Luke, wife, Julie and daughter, Hayley.

after the birth of his chil-  
dren in the mid-2000s.  
Hayley is now at  
Michigan State  
University and Luke is a  
junior at South.  
“They swam a bit when  
they were younger, but it

didn’t really take with  
them and we didn’t force  
them to,” he said.  
“Hayley was more into  
dance and Luke is more  
into basketball and base-  
ball.”  
Thompson and his

wife, Julie, a teacher in  
L’Anse Creuse Public  
Schools, live in the  
Woods and have been  
married 21 years.  
“She went to North,  
but we’ve made peace,”  
he joked. “We actually  
met on a blind date.”  
Thompson attributes  
the success of the swim-  
ming and diving teams  
at both high schools to  
the fact each of the  
Pointes has a pool and a  
swim team.  
“We’re lucky because  
they’re exposed to it  
early and the parks do a  
good job of making it  
fun,” he said. “We’ve  
also got the Gators and  
Pointe Aquatics, so there  
are opportunities out-  
side of the high school  
season to train and com-  
pete.”  
Lochmoor Club, the  
Country Club of Detroit  
and Grosse Pointe Yacht  
Club, where Thompson  
coaches in the summer,  
also have teams.  
After three decades  
with the district,  
Thompson said he’s  
“thought” of retiring.  
“I love what I do, so  
for now I’m just taking it  
year by year,” he said.

# City adds to regional flood mitigation study

By Brad Lindberg  
Staff Writer

**GROSSE POINTE PARK**  
— A flood reduction plan  
for southeast Michigan  
will incorporate flow data  
from the city’s improved  
stormwater management  
system.  
An Army Corps of  
Engineers official  
requested the data upon  
learning from City  
Manager Nick Sizeland  
of the city’s multimillion  
dollar investment in  
sewer upgrades.  
Improvements in the  
city include a voter-sup-  
ported 10-year water-  
sewer millage and  
installation of a flood

relief valve paid partly by  
more than \$1 million in  
private donations.  
All of that and more are  
intended to guard against  
the type of storm-induced  
sewer backups that  
flooded thousands of  
basements during sum-  
mer 2021.  
Sizeland said the  
request for data came  
from Susan Rusinowski,  
principal planner and  
program manager for the  
U.S. Army Corps of  
Engineers in Detroit.  
Rusinowski heads the  
study, which is being  
done in principle partner-  
ship with the Great Lakes  
Water Authority and will  
last more than half a

decade.  
They met during a pub-  
lic workshop about  
regional flood mitigation  
Monday, Dec. 16, at The  
War Memorial.  
“I was talking with her  
about what we’ve done  
in the Park when it  
comes to the extreme  
emergency relief valve,  
inspecting sewers with  
television cameras,  
cleaning sewers and  
compiling data,”  
Sizeland said. “She was  
very interested and  
asked if we could pro-  
vide the Corps with data  
we’ve collected that  
could be used as part of  
their study. I said I’d be  
happy to provide data for

their efforts.”  
“Infrastructure in  
southeast Michigan is an  
issue that’s not unique to  
our city,” said Councilman  
Max Wiener, chairman of  
the infrastructure com-  
mittee. “Everybody has to  
deal with it. The problem  
is, it’s one of those things  
that everybody is aware  
of but nobody wants to be  
the first to put their neck  
out because you don’t  
know if it’s going to work.  
But, once we got that  
structure in place, when  
we passed that millage, it  
set a precedent.”  
Rusinowski character-  
ized The War Memorial  
event as an exchange of  
preliminary information.

“We’re here to intro-  
duce the process,” she  
said. “We are doing a  
study, but folks are ask-  
ing what’s the plan?”  
There is no plan yet,  
just a goal to reduce the  
risk of flooding.  
Risks come from storm-  
water sewer backups, as  
in the Pointes and other  
urban areas; or by lake  
and river flooding, which  
isn’t likely in the Pointes  
but happens in other  
areas of GLWA’s  
950-square-mile waste-  
water service area.  
The area ranges from  
Taylor in the south to,  
clockwise, Novi to north  
of Auburn Hills, east  
through Macomb County,  
down to the Pointes and  
almost everything in  
between.

Park also must handle  
flow passing through  
from upstream areas to a  
treatment facility in  
southwest Detroit. Some  
of those pass-throughs  
come from systems that  
haven’t been separated.  
“We are surrounded by  
combined sewers,”  
Wiener said. “(Flood mit-  
igation) needs to be  
regionally driven because  
the work we do will take  
pressure off all our neigh-  
bors.”  
“That’s one of my big-  
gest issues,” Sizeland  
said.  
Wiener cited as a posi-  
tive move the City of  
Grosse Pointe’s passage  
of a 21-year millage to  
fund sewer separation:  
“Separation in the City  
will take pressure off us  
as well.”

# Porch pirates run aground

**CITY OF GROSSE  
POINTE AND GROSSE  
POINTE WOODS** —  
“Tis the season for  
shopping and the bad  
guys are doing that,”  
City of Grosse Pointe  
Public Safety Director  
John Alcorn said.  
Ring doorbell footage

and good old-fashioned  
boots on the ground led  
officers Monday, Dec. 2,  
to the arrests of two  
alleged porch pirates  
accused of partnering to  
stakeout streets and  
snatch packages off  
front porches as the hol-  
iday shopping season  
commenced.  
Detectives say the two  
18-year-old men from  
Detroit stole a package  
containing an iPhone 16  
Max from the 500 block  
of Washington  
Wednesday, Nov. 20;  
two packages contain-  
ing an iPad and two  
dresses from the 800  
block of Loraine  
Thursday, Nov. 21; and  
a package containing a  
\$68 Kurt Geiger neck-  
lace from the 1000 block  
of Vernier Friday, Nov.

27.  
They also are sus-  
pected of being the cul-  
prits in a vehicle  
loitering on a Lakeshore  
driveway in the Shores  
at 10:30 a.m. Monday,  
Dec. 2.  
After the woman  
called police, a Shores  
officer spotted the vehi-  
cle suspected in the  
porch thefts — a  
Chevrolet Trailblazer  
SS — and the young  
men were arrested at a  
gas station at Vernier  
and Mack.  
One of the men was  
arrested wearing the  
same pants caught on  
footage in the Woods  
theft. The other is on a  
GPS tether from a con-  
cealed carry charge out  
of Warren, which  
showed him at both City

locations at the times of  
the thefts.  
The two were  
arraigned in Grosse  
Pointe Woods Court  
Tuesday, Dec. 3, each  
on one count of larceny  
less than \$200, which is  
a misdemeanor.  
Arraignment for the  
City of Grosse Pointe  
crimes took place  
Thursday, Dec. 5.  
Through the City’s  
court, they each face  
two felony charges of  
larceny \$1,000 or more  
and less than \$20,000,  
which carry a punish-  
ment of a 5-year incar-  
ceration and/or a fine of  
\$10,000 or three times  
the value of the prop-  
erty stolen, whichever is  
greater.

— Laurel Kraus

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Grosse Pointe Farms

Santa’s helper

An 82-year-old Farms woman became a victim of fraud and false pretenses Friday, Dec. 13, when around 3 p.m. a man was on her roof for about 20 minutes and then told her had used 85 gallons of an unknown material to repair the flashing and the cost was \$7,100.

The man refused to give his name or an invoice and ultimately left with a \$5,000 personal check. Officers found brown caulk on the flashing.

Larceny from auto

A work laptop, purse, wallet, cash and credit cards were stolen from a locked vehicle in the 400 block of Roland after its window was smashed overnight into Saturday, Dec. 21.

The same night, Ray-Ban sunglasses worth \$250 were stolen from an unlocked vehicle in the 400 block of Maison.

Polar Express

After crashing into a tree on Lakeshore near Newberry at 5:55 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, a 48-year-old Utica man told officers he was driving when he came across some railroad tracks, was confused about which way the road went and shortly after crashed into a tree.

The man failed field

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS

sobriety tests, while suspected methamphetamines and fentanyl were found in the vehicle.

He was arrested for operating under the influence of drugs.

Free for all

A 34-year-old Farms woman left a storage bin full of items on her front porch, intending to sell just two appliances on Facebook Marketplace.

When the buyer showed up at 11:56 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 22, she took the whole bin and didn’t leave any money.

Illegal entry

A 28-year-old woman who said she had been in the country six months was arrested by U.S. Border Patrol for illegal entry at 12:35 p.m. Monday, Dec. 23, after a Farms officer pulled her over for speeding 40 mph at Moross and Williams.

Smashing spree

A string of vehicles — many on Ridgemont — were broken into overnight into Monday, Dec. 23. While some fit the usual M.O. of unlocked vehicles spurring crimes of opportunity, a handful of locked vehicles saw their windows smashed to gain entry.

◆ Nothing of significance was taken from an unlocked vehicle that was rummaged through in the 300 block of Kerby.

◆ Approximately \$25 worth of loose change

was all that was gained out of smashing a window and prying the door frame of a car in the 100 block of Ridgemont.

◆ Nothing of significance was taken from an unlocked vehicle rummaged through in the 100 block of Ridgemont.

◆ The key fob, also containing keys to the house, was stolen from a locked vehicle in the 300 block of Kerby.

◆ A purse containing IDs, a passport and a debit card was stolen from a vehicle after its window was smashed in the 400 block of Kerby.

◆ Gift cards totaling \$100 were stolen from a vehicle after its window was smashed in the 300 block of Ridgemont.

◆ No items of significance were taken from an unlocked vehicle that was rummaged through in the 300 block of Ridgemont.

◆ A purse containing credit cards and a driver’s license was stolen from an unlocked vehicle in the 200 block of Beaupre.

◆ Approximately \$5 in assorted coins was taken from a vehicle in the 300 block of Ridgemont.

◆ A black gym bag containing workout equipment was stolen from an unlocked vehicle in the 200 block of Ridgemont.

“Please continue to remove key fobs and valuables, lock doors and report anything appearing or sounding suspicious immediately,” Public Safety Director John Hutchins said. “Vigilance is key in pre-

venting these types of crimes and apprehending the offenders.”

Santa?

A homeowner in the 200 block of Ridgemont woke around 5 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 25, to the sound of footsteps running on his roof.

Two large branches were broken on a pine tree at the second-story level near the roof edge and a black dufflebag containing gym equipment was found in the backyard, which possibly was taken during a previous larceny from auto.

The homeowner does not believe anyone would have played a Christmas prank on his family, because they recently moved to the area.

Christmas surprise

A stack of Christmas cards left inside an unlocked vehicle were opened and left sitting on top of the front hood overnight into Christmas morning.

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

Grosse Pointe Woods

Stolen vehicles

Three vehicles were stolen in recent days, including two that were unlocked with the keys inside.

◆ The first occurred

around midnight Friday, Dec. 27, when a 2024 Ram pickup was taken from a driveway in the 2100 block of Lancaster.

◆ A 2024 Ford Expedition was taken overnight Saturday, Dec. 28, in the 1100 block of North Oxford. The owner told officers he usually leaves the key fob in the vehicle. It later was recovered in Detroit.

◆ A 2023 BMW was stolen from the parking lot of Lochmoor Club the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 29. A purse and key fob were in the vehicle.

— Ted O’Neil  
Report information about these and other crimes to Grosse Pointe Woods Public Safety, (313) 343-2400.

Grosse Pointe Park

Nothing to report per dispatch.

— Brad Lindberg  
Report information about crime to the Grosse Pointe Park Public Safety Department, (313) 822-7400.

Grosse Pointe Shores

Nothing to report per dispatch.

— Ted O’Neil  
Report information about crime to Grosse Pointe Shores Public Safety, (313) 881-5500.

City of Grosse Pointe

Baking thief

A package containing a \$30 sourdough mixing

bowl kit was stolen from a front porch in the 600 block of University at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18.

The suspect left the scene in a small, gray sedan.

Red-handed

After stealing miscellaneous items from a business in the 16000 block of Kercheval at 11:25 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 19, a 20-year-old Detroit man was arrested blocks away.

Drunken driving

After speeding 53 mph at Mack and Neff at 2:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 21, a 34-year-old Detroit man was pulled over and found to be intoxicated, for which he was arrested.

Vendetta

The driver’s side front and rear tires were slashed on a 2023 Jeep parked in the owner’s rear yard in the 800 block of St. Clair Monday, Dec. 23.

On air

A Direct TV account was fraudulently opened in a Grosse Pointer’s name and racked up \$550 in charges between July 2020, and November 2022.

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

Traffic islands go against the flow

By Brad Lindberg  
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE PARK — Out West they say heaven and earth meet on the prairie.

At least Willa Cather did, or planted that impression in “My Antonia,” about grassland almost being past the edge of the world.

Motorists next year on Jefferson Avenue near the border of Detroit may have a bite-sized chance to share Cather’s panoramic inspiration.

Formal landscaping that regularly outgrows itself on the traffic islands is likely to be swapped for native grasses and plants in naturalized settings requiring less tending.

“This ties in with the Jefferson (sewer) separation project,” said Nick Sizeland, city manager. “As part of that project, we have to bore some of the (new sewer) system through those islands.”

He figured construction provides an opportunity to do two things at once: Reduce stress on the stormwater removal system while simplifying the islands’ landscape schemes into something more sustainable. Simplification also has the economic advantages of less drain on the municipal pocketbook.

“We annually pay about \$25,000 to \$30,000 for maintenance of the traffic islands,” Sizeland said.

Payments come from

the relatively meager \$122,500 current budget of the Downtown Development Authority, part of which encompasses lower Jefferson.

Authority boundaries encompass commercial and public property on both sides of Jefferson from the Detroit border to Somerset. DDA funding comes from property taxes generated within the district that must be spent within the same area.

Sizeland has gripes with the landscaping.

“We’re paying landscapers to pull weeds,” he said. “Our public works is helping cut and trim. The plants are tall and may be a (visual) obstruction (to motorists). Several of the trees are dying and are beyond their useful life. Bushes collect trash from the wind. It (requires) intensive maintenance.”

“Savings is very important,” said Councilman Tom Caulfield, head of the finance committee. “We’re looking at, ques-

tioning and reviewing how everything has been done in the past and what we can do to improve and save.”

Sewer next year

Regardless of landscaping, sewer work is scheduled during summer or fall 2025 on a three-block section of Jefferson from the Detroit border to Lakepointe. The area of mainly commercial and civic property is one of the few in the Park where combined storm and sanitary sewers haven’t been separated.

“The city budgeted about \$400,000 for this project,” Sizeland said.

Work is affiliated with construction of the A. Paul and Carol C. Schaap Center for the Performing Arts and the Richard and Jane Manoogian Art Gallery, due for completion this year and in DDA territory.

“The Schaap Center is helping us with a dollar

See ISLANDS, page 8A

STUDY:

Continued from page 4A

of benefits from different solutions — environmental, social and economic benefits to get a more comprehensive look.”

Every variable in the model will impact everything else.

“As an example, if you have an increasing frequency of extreme precipitation,” said Kevin Jankowski, GLWA director of wastewater analytics planning and metering. “That could be coming down on aging infrastructure that has heavy infiltration. That results in a system bottleneck, which causes basement backups, which is a public health risk.

“The point is, as we put (variables) in the mathematical models, we want

to make sure what we see in the model represents reality and we come up with solutions that are cost-effective to minimize the impact to ratepayers.”

The study is cost-shared 50-50 by the Corps and in-kind work by GLWA.

“The process is led by the Corps,” Rusinowski said.

She guesstimated it would cost hundreds of millions to billions of dol-

lars to carry out the plan.

“We’re not at the stage where we’re recommending anything yet,” she said. “But, we’re taking a regional, large approach looking at existing infrastructure we have and the scale of the project. Ultimately, this study ends in a report that is delivered to Congress requesting additional authorization and funding for implementation.”



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POINTES OF VIEW

GROSSE POINTE WOODS / GROSSE POINTE SHORES / GROSSE POINTE PARK / GROSSE POINTE FARMS

Grosse Pointe News

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OUR VIEW

Happy New Year!

So, how is that New Year’s resolution coming along? Yes, we know it is only the second day of 2025, but it is probably a pretty good bet some of you already have abandoned your grandiose plans for self improvement. Maybe what sounded like a terrific idea after a few glasses of bubbly on New Year’s Eve has lost its luster now that the fog has cleared.

Or, if you are still on vacation this week, perhaps you are waiting for Monday to officially get started. Or, if our reader poll (right) is any indication, there is a pretty good chance you did not even bother to make a resolution.

Nearly half — 47 percent of you — answered “why bother?” to our question of how long people attempt to keep their New Year’s resolutions. Almost a quarter though, 22 percent, have enough dedication to keep it going all year long. Another 19 percent shoot for three months, while 12 percent aim for at least June.

An informal poll of our newsroom brought similar results and some interesting takes on the issue:

- ◆ “I made a resolution years ago not to make any more resolutions.”
- ◆ “Be kind.”
- ◆ “Eat healthier.”
- ◆ “Pray each day.”
- ◆ “Dry January.”
- ◆ “I’m a work in progress all year.”
- ◆ “I’m not good at giving things up, so I try to do better at things like not shouting at my kids as much.”
- ◆ “I don’t need to wait until the first of the year to make a change in my life.”

And therein lies the aura of making New Year’s resolutions. A new year, a new you, a blank slate.

The origin of making such resolutions might surprise you. The practice actually began with the ancient Babylonians more than 4,000 years ago. They celebrated their new year in mid-March, when they planted new crops. They celebrated with a 12-day festival, called Akitu, during which they would:

- ◆ make promises to their gods to repay debt and return borrowed items;
- ◆ pledge loyalty to their king;
- ◆ parade statues of their deities; and
- ◆ perform rites to symbolize victory over chaos.

They believed doing so would gain favor from their gods and ensure a successful harvest.

There also are some interesting practices around the world that accompany making said resolutions.

In Brazil, people go to the beach on New Year’s Eve to make their resolutions, entering the ocean at midnight as they jump seven waves and make seven wishes. In Italy, people eat fatty pork to fatten their wallets. Spaniards eat 12 grapes exactly at the stroke of midnight on New Year’s Eve. If you finish all 12 before the clock stops chiming — one every two seconds — you will have a prosperous year with 12 months of luck. If not? Tough luck.

In Ecuador, they burn effigies to represent getting rid of the year past. Colombians carry empty suitcases in hopes of a new year filled with travel and hold money to bring financial security.

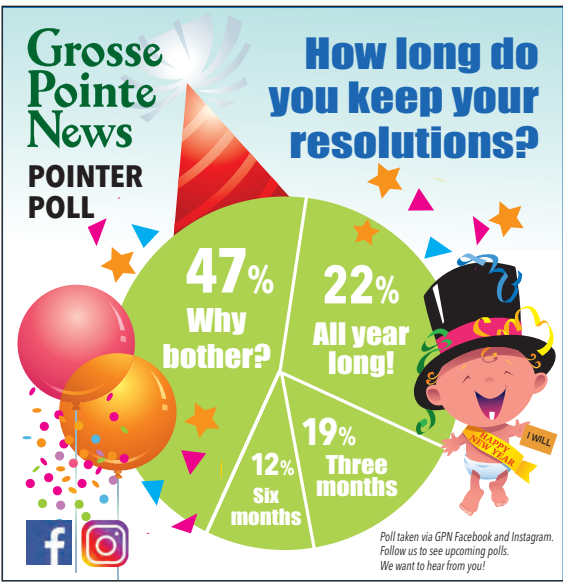
In the American south, traditional New Year’s Day menus include pork (because pigs root forward), collard greens (to represent cash), beans (to represent coins) and cornbread (to represent gold).

But enough about food; that’s making us hungry. What do the experts say about making and keeping your resolutions?

In the age of corporate speak, one suggestion is to set SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.



ILLUSTRATION BY KEN SCHOP



There also is a scientific angle involved. Setting a resolution and following through on it triggers your brain to release dopamine, which helps regulate the brain’s reward and pleasure centers and regulates emotional responses. The levels are high at first, but eventually drop off, meaning you need structure to keep you motivated.

Another path to success is to share your resolution with others. You can ask family and friends not only to hold you accountable, but also to cheer you on.

Tracking your progress can be a big help, whether that is through a journal or some type of app. Be sure to reward yourself. Celebrating small wins can help you stay positive and motivated.

If you slip up, try not to be too hard on yourself. You can, if you want, always start over.

If you do not keep your resolution, you are not alone. According to research by Ohio State University’s Fisher College of Business, 23 percent of people who make a resolution quit after the first week and 43 percent do so by the end of January.

This is where, as the saying goes, patience is a virtue. A 2009 study in the European Journal of Social Psychology, it takes a person on average 66 days to form a new habit.

Experts also suggest being picky about choosing a resolution by not setting too many all at once. You might have more success by trying something new. If you pick the same resolution every year and fail, you might be setting yourself up for the same pitfalls that stopped you before.

Another approach that can lead to success is called “situation change.” Rather than exposing yourself to temptation, avoid it altogether. Dieters, for example, can remove all sugary foods from the house. Spending too much time scrolling on your phone? Delete your social media apps.

Whatever your resolution, or lack there of, here is to a happy, healthy and prosperous 2025.

GUEST OPINION  
By Julie Moe

Provide better access to children with disabilities

Four months into the school year, my son, Max, still does not have a permanent teacher. Max has Down syndrome and is in a classroom for fifth to eighth graders with cognitive impairments at Parcels Middle School. He is on his third temporary teacher this year and will soon have a fourth.

This is fundamentally a civil rights issue — the right of children with disabilities to a free appropriate public education. While this right was passed into law in 1975, the reality is that implementation depends on the ability of a district to attract and retain special education teachers.

There is currently a nationwide shortage of special ed teachers, preventing many children from getting the education they are legally entitled to. Rather than using this as an excuse, it should be a call to action. In Grosse Pointe, our compensation structure undervalues special education compared to other districts, meaning the shortage has been exacerbated here. The vacancy rate for special ed teachers in GPPSS is roughly 40 to 50 times the rate for general education teachers.

In Detroit, the teachers union ratified a contract to provide \$15,000 annual bonuses for special ed teachers. In Dearborn, the teachers union ratified a contract providing up to \$10,000 annual bonuses for special ed teachers. In Rochester Community Schools, the teachers union ratified a contract providing annual stipends for special ed teachers.

The latest contract in GPPSS provided no such pay structure and also did not provide the district flexibility to hire critical positions at higher step levels (e.g. the ability to match a teacher’s current pay, which numerous other local districts have included in their contracts). As a result, multiple qualified teachers have interviewed for the open roles but declined due to compensation.

Fortunately, Wayne County RESA has realized this is a critical issue and agreed

See ACCESS, page 8A

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| January 2 – 8                                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |
| THU                                                                   | FRI                                     | SAT                                     | SUN                                     | MON                                     | TUE                                     | WED                                     |
|                                                                       |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |
| 30°<br>23°                                                            | 27°<br>19°                              | 26°<br>18°                              | 27°<br>12°                              | 26°<br>26°                              | 29°<br>11°                              | 19°<br>6°                               |
| Cloudy                                                                | Cloudy                                  | Cloudy                                  | Snow                                    | Cloudy                                  | Cloudy                                  | Mostly Cloudy                           |
| 50%                                                                   | 0%                                      | 0%                                      | 0%                                      | 10%                                     | 0%                                      | 10%                                     |
| SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:10 pm                               | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:11 pm | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:12 pm | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:13 pm | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:14 pm | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:15 pm | SUNRISE<br>8:01 am<br>SUNSET<br>5:16 pm |
| Weather data courtesy of Channel 4, WDIV Detroit • ClickOnDetroit.com |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |                                         |

LETTERS

The Grosse Pointe News welcomes letters to the editor. All letters should be typed and signed with the writer’s full name and local address, as well as a daytime telephone number for verification or questions. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length. All letters may be edited for content. We reserve the right to refuse any letter. The deadline for letters is 3 p.m. Monday. Letters may be submitted via email to editor@grossepointenews.com or by filling out the letters form on our website, grossepointenews.com.







YESTERDAY’S HEADLINES

**1950**  
*75 years ago this week*  
**I D E A      O F**

**CONVERTING TO CITY TO BE STUDIED BY WOODS:** At the Woods Council meeting Dec. 20, on motion of Commissioner Radcliff, a study group was pro-

vided for to examine into the proposal that the village should convert to a city.  
**COSTS THREATEN SCHOOL PROGRAM:** The meeting of the Board of Education, sitting as a committee of the whole, with the hope that the

school project in its entirety might be whipped into shape for formal approval by the board at its next scheduled meeting, failed to accomplish its purpose. Definite action upon almost every phase of the project was delayed

because it was impossible to obtain the architects’ and builders’ final estimates of the building costs.

**1975**  
*50 years ago this week*

**BIG SLUMP IN BUILDING HITS POINTE:** Residential building permits issued in southeast Michigan marked a significant reduction during the first six months of 1974 in comparison to 1973, according to a report prepared by SEMCOG. Six of the seven counties in southeast Michigan experienced building permit declines during the first half of 1974. Affected most by the decline were Wayne County (minus 47.4 percent), Oakland County (minus 43.1 percent) and St. Clair County (minus 43.8 percent).

**2000**  
*25 years ago this week*

**WOODS HONORS NORTH SWIM CHAMPS:** When you’re the best in the state, the awards keep coming. The Grosse Pointe Woods City Council has issued a proclamation honoring the North High School girls All-American swim team. Last month, the Norsemen won the girls state Class A swimming championship. The victory was the first title for girls swimming in the school’s history.

**Y2K STOP SIGNS BACK UP LIGHTS:** Most plans to thwart Y2K power problems have dealt with computer programmers hammering at keyboards to make sure software makes it through the new year. Of the few visible signs of millennium precautions, public safety departments in Grosse Pointe City, Park and Woods have placed temporary stop signs at major inter-sections throughout their communities. The signs have been staged at inter-sections governed normally by traffic lights The signs will remain covered by black plastic bags unless Mr. Computer Programmer messed up and the lights go out.

**2015**  
*10 years ago this week*

**A COMMUNITY MOURNS:** Paige Stalker was laid to rest Saturday, Dec. 27. And even as her family struggles to cope with their loss and make sense of the events surrounding her death, they take comfort knowing how many lives Stalker touched and how much the young woman they loved dearly was loved by so many in return. Stalker, 16, was killed the night of Monday, Dec. 22, while sitting in a car with four other teens in a desolate area of Detroit. A gunman opened fire on their car. Her family doesn’t know why she was there, as she had planned to watch a movie with her sister and brother.

PUBLISHER:

*Continued from page 7A*

badly needed lift.  
◆ Think things through. Forgive an injustice. Listen more. Be kind.  
◆ Apologize when you realize you are wrong. An apology never diminishes a person. It elevates him or her.  
◆ Don’t blow your own horn. If you’ve done something praiseworthy, someone will notice.  
◆ Try to understand a point of view that is different from your own. Few things are 100 percent one way or another.  
◆ Examine the demands you make on others.  
◆ Lighten up. When you feel like blowing your top, ask yourself, “Will it matter a week from today?”  
◆ Laugh the loudest when the joke is on you.  
◆ The sure way to have a friend is to be one. We are all connected by our humanity and we need each other.  
◆ Don’t discourage a beginner from trying something risky. Nothing ventured means nothing gained. A can-do spirit is the fuel that makes things

go.  
◆ Express your gratitude. Give credit when it’s due — and even when it isn’t. It will make you look good.  
◆ Read something uplifting. Deep-six the trash. You wouldn’t eat garbage, why put it in your head? Don’t abandon your old-fashioned principles. They never go out of style. When courage is needed, ask yourself, “If not me, who? If not now, when?”  
◆ Take better care of yourself. Remember, you’re all you’ve got. Pass up that second helping. You really don’t need it. Vow to eat more sensibly. You’ll feel better and look better, too.  
◆ Return those books you borrowed. Reschedule that missed dental appointment. Clean your closet. Take those photos out of the drawer and put them in an album.  
◆ Give yourself a reality check. Phoniness is transparent and it is tiresome.  
◆ Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of nature. A flower is God’s miracle.  
◆ Walk tall and smile more. You’ll look 10 years younger.  
◆ Don’t be afraid to say, “I love you.” Say it again. They are the sweetest words in the world. If you have love in your life, it can be the best year ever.

ACCESS:

*Continued from page 6A*

to provide \$10,000 annual bonuses for new and current ASD and MoCi classroom teachers in Grosse Pointe from Act 18 special education funds.  
Accepting these Act 18 special education funds to educate our most vulnerable students will have no negative impact on anyone in the district. It will not raise taxes. It will not come from current or future pay for general education teachers. It will not even come from the general fund for GPPSS. These are extra funds the district has secured which can legally only be used for these special education bonuses.  
Fifty years ago, the law was passed that allowed my son to have access to a public education, yet par-

ents of children with special needs still have to fight every day to make this right a reality, particularly in Grosse Pointe. Sometimes, that access requires accommodations which are different than for general education students. These funds to attract special ed teachers are the equivalent to installing an accessibility ramp into the school for my son.  
While the extra funds from Act 18 have been secured, the district cannot implement these bonuses unless the GPEA (teacher’s union) approves the proposed letter of agreement. I urge the teachers in the district to join their peers in Detroit, Dearborn and Rochester and “vote yes” to provide children with disabilities access to a public education. We can’t do this without you. We need this ramp.  
*Julie Moe is a resident of Grosse Pointe Woods and parent of a student with special needs.*

HACKS:

*Continued from page 7A*

OK, enough about salt. Do you get sinus pressure this time of year? Put an index finger on each side of your nose where the nose and face meet, relax your face and massage in a circle for about one minute. That is an acupressure point that tells the sinus to let go of trapped fluids. It can reduce your stuffiness almost 60 percent.  
Did you know you can brighten stainless steel with olive oil? After cleaning and drying the surface, add a few drops of extra virgin olive oil to a cloth or paper towel and rub it over your stainless steel surfaces in a circular motion. It’s a natural polish and can help reduce dust.  
Moving on to bubble wrap. Do you ever use bubble wrap for anything other than giving it to your kids to pop? While that is a fun way to relieve stress, the wrap also can be used for keeping your pet warm by wrapping some in a pillowcase and putting it under the dog or cat bed if it is on the floor, adding a layer between the floor and their bed to keep them warm when it is cold. And it adds a bit of extra cushioning, too.  
You can also put bubble wrap under your knees for extra cushioning if you are gardening or cleaning the floor or the bathtub. You can roll up bubble wrap and place it in front of your keyboard to give your wrists a rest. When you are traveling, you can tightly wrap jewelry separately in bubble wrap and tape it so the jewelry stays

untangled.  
Some more helpful hacks are to use ice cubes to water hanging plants so you don’t get drenched trying to water them, which can be tricky. The ice cubes slowly melt and drain off. If you are moving a couch or chair or table and it leaves a square indent in the carpet, place an ice cube in each one. As the ice is melting, you can fluff the carpet back into place. (I learned that one from my sister, who’s a furniture stager.)  
If you don’t want to run the air conditioner when it is hot, try placing a bowl of ice in front of a fan on low speed. It is said to make the air feel up to 10 degrees cooler.  
What about eggshells? Did you know you can scatter crushed eggshells on the leaves of any chewed plant and around

the garden’s perimeter because slugs and snails can’t cross the jagged edges and deer dislike the smell of eggs? If you have a pair of dull scissors, try cutting the eggshells because it is said the shells will sharpen the knife blade as it cuts.  
A way to nourish a plant is to spread crushed eggshells once a week into the soil of the plant and they will infuse calcium and potassium into the soil, encouraging the plant to grow.  
Honey is good for so many things. Other than its delicious food and helpful medicinal uses, like dabbing a bit of honey on a scrape or a wound to promote rapid healing, you also can use honey to tame a too-spicy salsa by adding a squeeze of lime and a spoonful of honey to counteract the spiciness.

Have a cough? Take a teaspoon of honey to calm it, because honey has antiviral and antibacterial properties to soothe your throat. And if you add a tablespoon of both vinegar and honey to cut flowers every time you change the water, it will keep the flowers longer because the acid in the vinegar kills bacteria and the honey is nourishing to the stems. Ever dipped your pizza crust in honey? There’s a pizza place in northern Colorado called BeauJo’s that has honey on every table for your dipping pleasure. Try it; it’s like dessert.  
Did you know about these life hacks?  
What about these? If you put a wooden spoon across the top of a boiling pot of water it won’t boil over the sides. What about putting a different color

nail polish on different keys to identify them? Did you know if you use a shallow frying pan to boil pasta, it cooks faster and uses less water? Or that using a dry rubber glove can get dog or cat hair off of furniture?  
I had no idea that crayons were flammable, but they will act like a candle. If you light the top of each crayon, it will provide around an hour of light.  
Apparently, if you use a wet knife to chop onions, it will reduce tears for eyes that can be sensitive when cutting an onion.  
I didn’t know about a lot of these but learned a few from other people, or by reading about them somewhere and doing a bit of research. Maybe you have learned something new here, too. If so, you’re welcome! Happy New Year.

ISLANDS:

*Continued from page 5A*

commitment,” Sizeland said. “They have to do this as part of (a legal) settlement (with Wayne County). I predict that within the next several months, I’ll be bringing to the city council an agreement between the city and Schaap Center regarding that separation project.”  
**Simplify**  
Sizeland also is DDA director. Around the time he plans to advise the council on sewer construction, he will meet with the DDA board about what to do with the traffic islands.  
“Do we want them to be low maintenance?” he asked during a meeting of the authority Tuesday, Dec. 10. “What beautifi-

cation efforts do we want? Flowers? We also want to consider running conduit through there for Wi-Fi. The council just approved license plate readers. I can see those in the future (located on the islands). A sprinkler system? It would be nice for this body to allocate more of its funds not for maintenance of those islands.”  
Guiliano Mancini, the newest member of the board, recommended a new design including bioswales and water retention areas.  
“(They) should reduce maintenance costs,” he said.  
“There might be grant funding for something like that,” said Mayor Michele Hodges, also on the DDA board.  
“I support bio-orientation and those options,” Sizeland said.

“More and more, people are catching onto this,” said Kelly Konieczki, the newest member of the city’s beautification commission. “It’s not only beneficial for wildlife, it’s saving money, it’s green infrastructure. It will save water costs and help our problems with flooding.”  
She said the most economical strategy is starting over from seed.  
“Buying large plants is not economically ideal,” Konieczki said.  
She said grass and prairie themes align with low maintenance.  
“I’m totally good with that,” Sizeland said. “Communities are looking at sustainability efforts, whether grasses or plants that are natural to the environment, suck up rainwater and don’t cost a lot for maintenance.”

Grosse Pointe News



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Grosse Pointe News



SCHOOLS:  
Continued from page 1A

group looks to raise the bar for the district. Pointers for Academic Excellence, which recently went live with its website, has as a mission statement: “To promote community engagement and maximize opportunities for the students and staff of the Grosse Pointe Public School System to reach their full potential for individual success and community contribution.” The group was founded by Board of Education President Sean Cotton, owner of the Grosse Pointe News, shortly after he was elected in late 2022.

◆ Cotton is elected president of the Grosse Pointe Public School System Board of Education. Ahmed Ismail, who served as president in 2023, is elected vice president, with Lisa Papas as secretary and Terry Collins as treasurer.

◆ The board sets budget parameters addressing issues such as enrollment, student and staff safety and health-care cost containment ahead of developing the 2024-25 fiscal year budget.

◆ The board approves a three-year contract, at \$310,000 annually, with new Superintendent Andrea Tuttle.

**February**  
◆ Projections from Plante Moran show GPPSS will lose 400 students over the next four years. Enrollment stands at 6,436, down 50 from the previous year but 90 more than anticipated.

◆ Second grade students at Maire Elementary School identify Grosse Pointe Woods resident Lionel Montagne, then 103 years old, as the pilot of a World War II plane called “The Old Gray Maire” depicted in a painting in the school office and get to meet him. The plane was so named because Maire students during the war sold stamps and bonds to sponsor it.

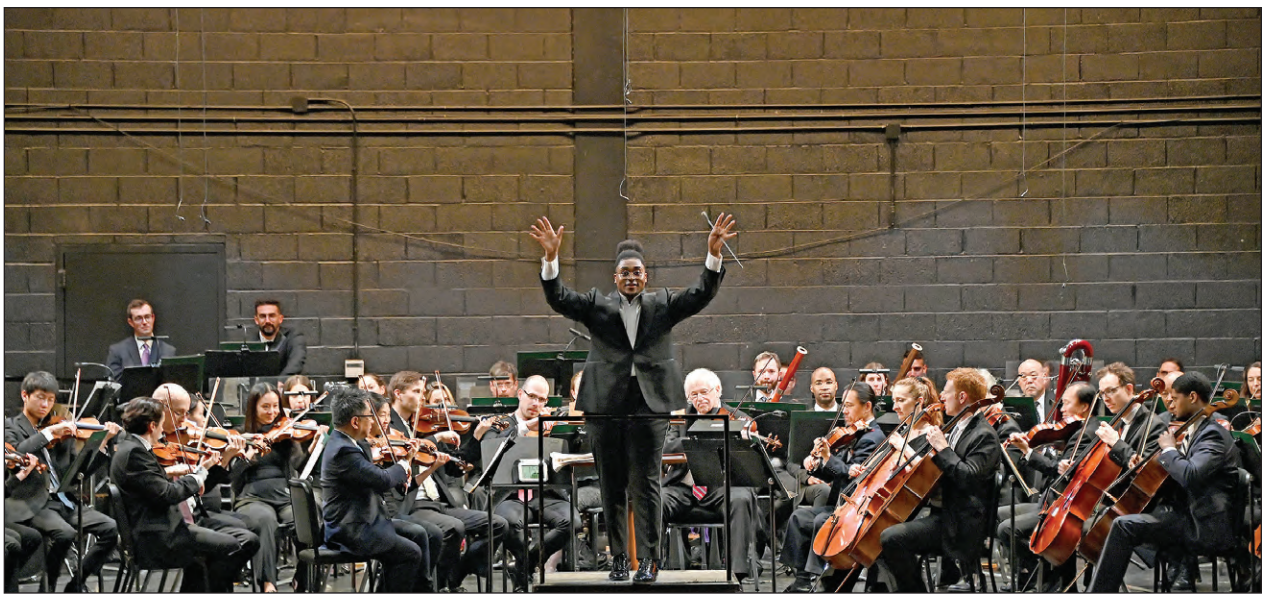
◆ Cotton lays out a timeline of human resources complaints filed against Ismail at the final meeting of the month. The complaints were filed against Ismail by Kate Murray and Michelle Davis, then principal and assistant principal, respectively, at Grosse Pointe North High School. The board votes to maintain attorney-client privilege for a 27-page report on the matter, but releases a three-page summary by Interim Superintendent Chris Fenton finding Ismail should not face punishment.

**March**  
◆ Brownell Middle School Assistant Principal Holli McNally and eighth grader Emmy Brown are named administrator of the year and student of the year, respectively, by the Michigan Association of Middle School Educators.

◆ Trustee Ginny Jeup, Cotton, Papas and Collins are targeted with suspicious envelopes.

◆ GPPSS turns down a Freedom of Information Act request by the Grosse Pointe News for the full 27-page report regarding human resource complaints filed against Ismail.

**April**  
◆ A Grosse Pointe News review of data from the Michigan Department



Above, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra performed at Parcels Middle School in May. This year Parcels was chosen to host one of the DSO’s two in-school concerts. Left, Defer Green Team students Levin Brass-Beers, Khaia Dupree, Kate Palmer, Maddie Byrn and Lewis Rorai watch as Lisa Kyle, chair of the Grosse Pointe Park Beautification Commission, fills the hole around a newly planted snow-drift crabapple tree. Holding the tree is Brian Colter, city forester for Grosse Pointe Park and City.

PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

of Education finds 283 students living within GPPSS boundaries attend public school outside the district.

◆ Brownell student Bella Maldonado is the national winner in the Daughters of the American Revolution essay contest for her essay about the NASA space shuttle program.

◆ The combined high school robotics team, Gearheads, is part of an alliance that finishes second out of 600 teams in the FIRST Robotics World Championships in Houston.

**May**  
◆ The board approves asking voters to approve two millages. A 20-mill operating millage for five years will be placed on the August ballot, with a 3-mill sinking fund millage for 10 years to appear on the November ballot.

◆ The library at North is named for former Superintendent Suzanne Klein.

◆ The band and orchestra room at North is named for longtime director Nate Judson.

**June**  
◆ Walt Fitzpatrick retires after three decades with the district, having served as principal at both Trombly and Kerby elementary schools. He later is named the first executive director of the GP Foundation for STEAM Support.

◆ Katy Vernier, longtime assistant principal at North, is named the new Kerby principal.

◆ Sara Delgado, principal at Parcels Middle School, is named the new North principal.

◆ Mary Anne Brush, a former member of the district’s communications team, sues for wrongful termination. Cotton says her position was cut as part of a larger action to balance the budget.

◆ Trombly, built in 1927, receives a state historical marker.

◆ The board approves the 2024-25 fiscal year budget at \$101.6 million.

**July**  
◆ Nine people file to run for four open seats on the board of education as Ismail and Papas choose not to run for reelection.

◆ The district finishes the 2023-24 fiscal year with a \$1 million surplus, leading to the first increase in the fund equity balance in three years.

◆ The board approves two-year contracts with four of its five bargaining

units that include 2 percent raises the first year and 1 percent raises the second year.

◆ Jason Wesley is named the new principal at Parcels.

**August**  
◆ The operating millage passes with 72 percent support.

◆ The Grosse Pointe Education Association approves a two-year contract. Some 70 percent of members voted, with 97 percent approval. It includes 2 percent raises each year and step increases, which are

equal to about a 4 percent pay boost.

◆ The board approves a \$125,000 donation from the Grosse Pointe Public Safety Foundation to install a repeater at North to strengthen police radio signals inside the building. Cotton is a member of the foundation.

◆ The board approves spending \$352,000 in sinking fund dollars to install new bleachers in the North gymnasium.

**September**  
◆ Brownell student Jane Hynous designs the most popular new “I Voted” sticker based on votes from the public in a contest sponsored by the Michigan Secretary of State.

◆ A new, accessible playground at Mason Elementary School is named after longtime Principal Bill Mestdagh.

**October**  
◆ Curriculum Director Keith Howell leaves the district after 17 years to become superintendent of L’Anse Creuse Public Schools.

◆ North announces SAT scores increased by 12 percent in math and 11 percent in English over the previous year.

**November**  
◆ The sinking fund millage passes with 66 percent support.

◆ Incumbent Trustee Colleen Worden and newcomers Clint Derringer, Laura Hull and Tim Klepp win the four vacant seats on the board of education.

◆ Longtime North teacher Susi Sipos is named World Language Teacher of the Year by the Michigan World Language Association.

◆ Richard Elementary School teacher Amy Wilson is named Autism Spectrum Disorder Teacher of the Year by the Fredi the Pizza Man Foundation.

◆ The cost to reopen Trombly is projected to be \$5.8 million.

◆ Tuttle receives the highest evaluation possible and a two-year contract extension.

**December**  
◆ The board approves an extension of the contract with Robertson Brothers to buy the former Poupard Elementary School, where the company plans to build 70 housing units.

◆ The board votes unanimously, at Ismail’s request, to allow all members to read the 27-page report detailing the human resources complaints filed against him.

◆ Grosse Pointe South High School Principal Moussa Hamka is named assistant superintendent of human resources.



From left, retired interim Superintendent Christian Fenton, retired Grosse Pointe School System Superintendent Suzanne Klein and retired Brownell Middle School Principal Mike Dib. Fenton and Dib wore purple jackets in honor of Klein, because purple is her favorite color, at the Community Luncheon that recognized her this year.



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# GPFPE announces fall grants

By Ted O’Neil  
*Associate Editor*

**THE GROSSE POINTES** — The Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education announced more than \$112,000 for its fall grant cycle at the Grosse Pointe Public School System Board of Education meeting Monday, Dec. 9.

“The Grosse Pointe Foundation for Public Education is built on the belief that strong schools bring out strong communities,” President Cynthia Sohn told the board. “Since 2006, we have awarded more than \$4.5

million to exceptional, innovative and supplemental opportunities for our students.”

The foundation awarded \$105,000 in grants during its spring cycle.

“GPPSS educators and staff never fail to inspire and excite us with their grant proposals for new and innovative ways to support and encourage their students,” said Kathy Fisk, co-chairwoman of the grants committee. “We are fortunate to have a donor community that believes in the power of public education and we are

grateful to those who have set up special funds, including the Lois J. Warden Fund for early and elementary learners and the newly established Doug Roby Angel Fund, supporting high schoolers in ways that would be near and dear to the late Doug Roby.”

The largest single grant was \$50,000 for an overhaul of the district’s website to make it more user-friendly. Other grants were:

- ◆ Books for Barnes Early Childhood Center, \$2,000
- ◆ Bringing Books to Life program, Barnes,

- \$2,000
- ◆ Destination Imagination, Kerby Elementary School, \$240
- ◆ Augmentative and alternative communication tools, Mason Elementary School, \$4,193
- ◆ Book vending machine, Mason, \$6,150
- ◆ Destination Imagination, Monteith and Mason elementary schools, \$240
- ◆ Sensory motor room, Mason and Monteith, \$3,500
- ◆ Modernizing middle school workshop, Parcels Middle School, \$7,800

- ◆ Headphones for ELA classrooms, Parcels, \$2,000
- ◆ Instrument refresh, Brownell Middle School, \$6,600
- ◆ Replacement stove and oven for special education classrooms, Parcels, \$750
- ◆ General assistance for the Gearheads, \$2,500
- ◆ The Shoe Project, Grosse Pointe North High School, \$2,000
- ◆ French language materials, North, \$535
- ◆ University tours for juniors and seniors, Grosse Pointe South High School, \$1,500

- ◆ Camera lenses, South, \$1,852
- ◆ Future City High School design project, South, \$375

The GPFPE’s SEED (Social, Emotional Encouragement and Development) grants fund programs that support mental and emotional wellness:

- ◆ Peer to Peer Program, North, \$2,500
- ◆ Fifth grade camp support, Parcels \$2,000
- ◆ Wellness Week, Kerby, \$500
- ◆ Sensory Corner, Barnes, \$1,000
- ◆ Adaptive swing set, Parcels, \$4,328
- ◆ Student Union, Parcels, \$7,500
- ◆ Support mannequin project for French students, North, \$300

## PAY:

*Continued from page 1A*

Vice President Ahmed Ismail, Secretary Lisa Papas, Treasurer Terry Collins and Trustee Ginny Jeup. Trustees Valarie St. John and Colleen Worden were absent.

Cotton added if the district gave the increase to special education teachers without the agreement, the union could force the district to give every teacher the same amount. That money would come from the general fund.

Cotton noted there are 30 teachers currently eligible for the pay raise, plus four vacancies the district is trying to fill. If more special education teachers are needed for the 2025-26 academic year, they also would receive the increase.

“There is currently a severe professional educator staffing shortage throughout our state and country. This shortage is most acute in the area of special education,” according to a previous statement from GPEA co-presidents Taryn Loughlin and Jackie Shelson. “As for GPPSS, the GPEA is deeply concerned about this crisis and the direct impact it has on our most vulnerable students and their families.”

“The best way to recruit and retain professional staff, including special education staff, is to provide competitive wages, benefits and good working conditions,” the GPEA continued. “The current GPPSS/GPEA contract is not competitive and, as a result, GPPSS is unable to recruit and retain professional staff.”

Superintendent Andrea Tuttle previously told the Grosse Pointe News that competitive wages and benefits are one manner in which the district works to recruit and retain staff members.

“To that end, the district agreed to a multi-year contract with the education association for the first time in several years,” she said. “The contract provides for step increases each year, in addition to a 2 percent raise in each of the two years of the agreement. The wages and benefits that are available for teachers in Grosse Pointe are competitive, and we no doubt believe the GPEA would not have agreed to such a two-year contract if it was not competitive.”

Step increases are equal to about a 4 per-

cent pay raise and the contract eliminated three teacher work days, equivalent to a 1.5 percent pay increase. It also added two paid time off days and increased paternity leave by five days.

The district added 27 new teachers for the 2024-25 academic year, only three of whom are in their first year teach-

ing.

The GPEA said it is “ready and willing” to improve pay scales for special education staff.

“The GPEA also stands ready and willing to improve the pay scales for all GPPSS professional staff,” Loughlin and Shelson added. “Any such hopeful change must be negotiated between GPPSS and

GPEA and then presented to the GPEA membership for approval. Let’s return GPPSS to a destination district by recruiting and retaining the best.”

Cotton said there are 956 students in the district receiving some type of special education services, or about 15 percent of the overall student population.

## GPPSS CTE hosting parents night out

**THE GROSSE POINTES** — The Grosse Pointe Public School System’s CTE (Career and Technical Education) program is hosting a parents night out 5 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 17, at Grosse Pointe North High School.

The event is for children ages 4 and up and will include snacks, games and a visit from a superhero.

Andrea Gruenwald, who coordinates the CTE program, said she planned the event in hopes of getting

more students to sign up for child care classes during the 2025-26 school year. Students spend part of each school day either at Barnes Early Childhood Center or an elementary school to gain experience. National Honor Society students can gain service hours by volunteering for the evening.

Gruenwald said there are limited spots left for attendees. See shorturl.at/KMCh to register.

## Mulling mayor’s term

By Brad Lindberg  
*Staff Writer*

**GROSSE POINTE PARK** — The ever-growing overlap between the time it takes to run for municipal office and the time required to get up to speed if elected has a first-term office-holder reasoning the city’s mayoral term should be doubled.

“I think we might want to consider changing the mayoral term to four years,” Councilman Max Wiener said. “It might be a good thing to discuss.”

“I agree with that 100 percent,” Councilman Marty McMillan said.

As members of the council, Wiener and McMillan serve four-year terms. Both are in their first terms.

“I used to agree with the principle of a two-year term,” Wiener said. “But, now that I’m serving, in practice I don’t believe it is efficient.”

The Park’s mayor serves only two years before facing the choice of running for reelection.

“I think two-year terms are a holdover from the days when (municipal) elections were uncontested,” Wiener said.

It used to be common in the Pointes for council turnover to be decided after elections, not by them. An incumbent would breeze through reelection, then announce retirement from office. Colleagues appointed a likeminded replacement. Hence the phrase, “I’ll serve, but I won’t run.”

“There’s more than six months running for office,” he said. “That means it takes one-quarter of a mayor’s term to run. It takes bandwidth away from administration.”

The barrier to entering the Park’s top elected office, represented by the cost and time of seeking the volunteer job, would be cut in half by doubling the term to four years. Doing so would make the office more attractive and obtainable, according to Wiener’s formula.

On the other hand, an office-holder serving four years would spend only the equivalent of one-eighth of a term glad-handing, speechifying and electioneering, assuming the same six-month campaign run.

Mayors serve two-year terms in the City, Farms and Harper Woods. Council members in all the sister suburbs plus trustees of the Grosse Pointe Public School System Board of Education serve four-year terms. Mayors serve four year-terms in the Shores and Grosse Pointe Woods.

Changes in the parameters of elected office require amending the city charter.

“That is a state-governed legislative process that requires resources, both monetary and staff,” Mayor Michele Hodges said.

Park voters must make the final decision, as they did Nov. 5, when changing the charter to

allow an extra month to draft a municipal budget.

Hodges instructed City Manager Nick Sizeland to research updating the charter in general.

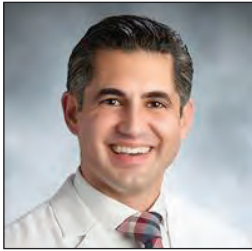
“I think it’s something to discuss,” Hodges said. “As discussed at the state of the city (address), it’s probably time to do a charter review.”

“We have old rules on the books that we have to update,” Wiener said.

Members of the current council, all of whom but Hodges are rookies — she’d been on council — spent more than a year reviewing and in many cases revising municipal ordinances, developing a five-year capital improvement plan, shepherding the planning commission (most of whose members no longer are in office) to finally finish updating the city’s master plan, evaluating and changing legal representation and auditors, facilitating the receipt of grants exceeding \$4 million, focusing on infrastructure improvements, the first water main replacement in years, installation of a flood-relief valve and returning the public safety department to full staff.

“It takes time to acclimate to office,” Wiener said. “I want efficiency and effectiveness in government. I think it (a four-year term for mayor) would lend itself to more efficient administration.”

## New Colon Cancer Screening Guidelines: Why Starting at age 45 Could Save Lives



By Christopher Hakim, M.D.

Recently, the American Cancer Society updated its guidelines for colon cancer screening, recommending that individuals at average risk begin screening at 45 instead of 50. Rising rates of colon cancer in younger adults have been a concern, with a steady increase in cases among those under 50 over the past few decades. The goal of screening early is simple: catch colon cancer sooner, when it’s easier to treat and chances of a cure are higher.

The new guidelines offer various screening options that provide more flexibility. Stool-based tests like fecal immunochemical tests (FIT) and stool DNA tests are among the choices. However, colonoscopy remains the gold standard, as it can detect and remove polyps in the same procedure. For example, stool tests are less invasive than a colonoscopy, but may miss some polyps or cancer. Ultimately, the choice depends on personal preferences, risk factors and access to healthcare.

The recommendations don’t just focus on starting earlier—they also extend screening later. The American Cancer Society now advises to continue screening until age 75, shifting from the previous cutoff of 65. This change reflects evidence that colon cancer risk remains significant in older adults and that screening can still help detect and prevent the disease.

Overall, these guidelines emphasize early detection and prevention, particularly in younger adults. By encouraging screening from 45 to 75, the aim is to reduce the impact of colon cancer and save lives. It’s a reminder to stay informed, consider your screening options and have a conversation with your health care provider about the best plan for you.

*Dr. Christopher Hakim specializes in Gastroenterology and practices at Corewell Health Beaumont Grosse Pointe Hospital, 468 Cadieux, Grosse Pointe. His outpatient clinic is at 25631 Little Mack Ave, St. Clair Shores, with his partners, Dr. Bradford Whitmer and Dr. Robbie Taha.*





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Grosse Pointe native presents what-if scenario in ‘Nixon King’

Production runs Jan. 10-25 at Planet Ant

By Jody McVeigh  
Editor

It’s 1960.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sits in a Georgia jail cell, arrested as part of a peaceful group attempting to integrate a department store dining room. The judge has it out for him; his allies fear he will be killed.

At the same time, Vice President Richard Nixon is facing off in a close presidential race with Sen. John F. Kennedy.

One event that might have thrown the election to Nixon was an act of courage he shirked — using his influence to help King escape his bonds.

But what if Nixon secretly tried to intervene?

That’s the story Grosse Pointe native Robert P. Young presents in “Nixon King,” a musical dramedy that takes the stage Jan. 10 to 25.

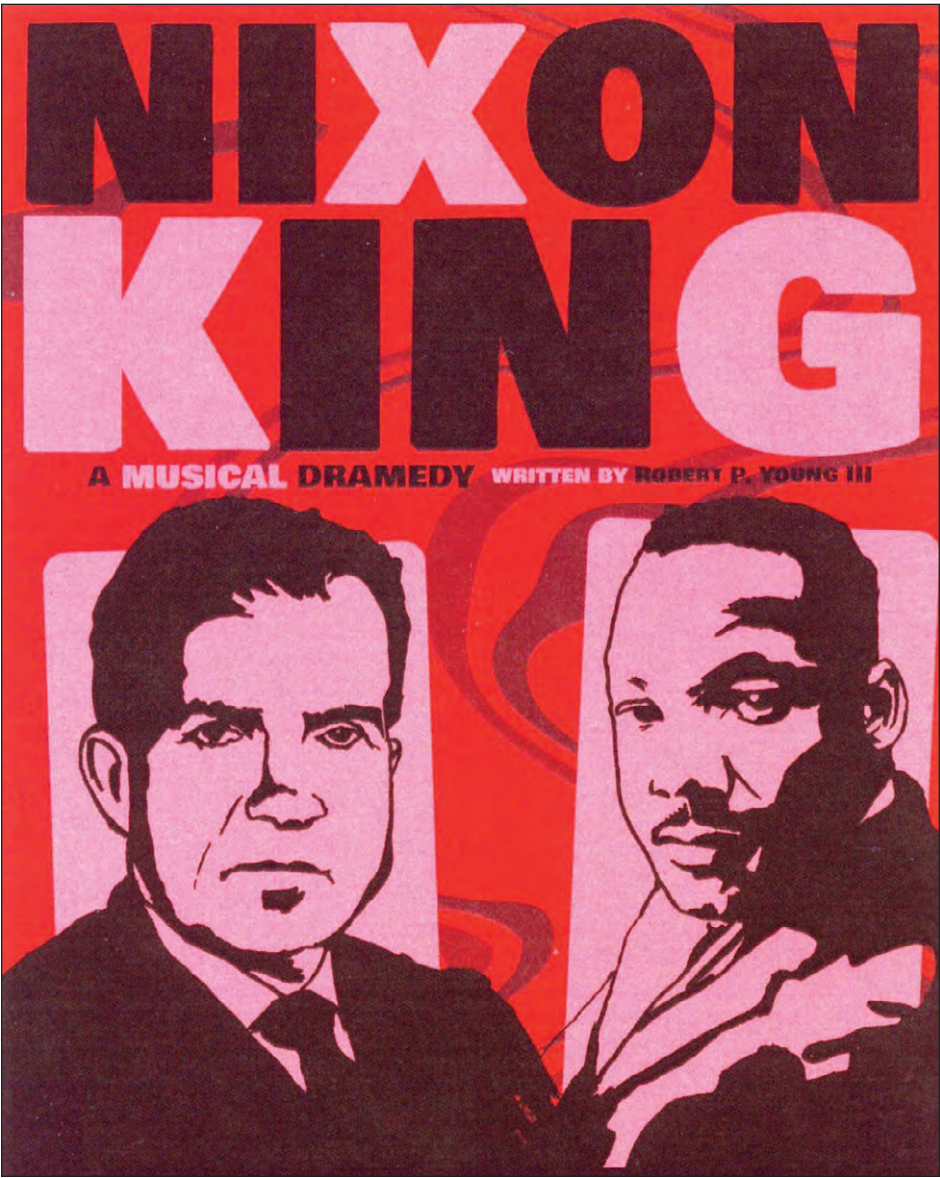
“King appealed to Nixon and Kennedy for help, but they both washed their hands of it,” Young said. “Nixon already had a relationship with King. He was a pro-civil rights senator and vice president.”

However, when Nixon refused to take action, “Kennedy’s people persuaded him to make inroads to get King released,” Young said.

Kennedy placed calls, King was released shortly after and Nixon saw “a groundbreaking loss of black votes,” Young added.

His play, he continued, imagines what would happen if Nixon, in disguise, personally visited King in jail. The pair debate politics and their personal lives, among other topics.

“They go at it,” Young



said. “They had a very contentious relationship because of the times and their inability to come to an agreement — what King should be doing as a civil rights leader and what Nixon should be doing as a presidential candidate.”

Billed as a “hilarious and poignant musical,” Young questions if history can truly be changed in one night or if things will play out as they originally did, regardless of Nixon’s efforts.

Young, a Grosse Pointe South High School graduate, studied film at Harvard University, with classmate Damien Chazelle, who directed “Whiplash” and “La La Land.” He bounced around Los Angeles for a while and worked on a few film projects before returning to Michigan.

“Nixon King,” he said, was 10 years in the making.

“I left film school in California and didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life,” he said. “My father suggested we collaborate on something together.”

Though his father didn’t work on “Nixon King,” Young poured his heart into the project.

“I was trying to think of a story that would make a big splash,” he

added. “He spoke at South shortly before he was assassinated. This might be something for families, something that teens would benefit from seeing.”

“And it’s a stellar cast. John Demerell plays Nixon. He’s a local award-winning Michigan actor. Kennedy is portrayed by Steve Pierce, a tenor of some local renown.”

Young himself takes the stage as King.

As for what he’d like audiences to take away from the show, “I hope they read more history, go out and support young artists who are trying to make a difference in the world,” he said. “I hope they come back and see the show multiple times. I hope they get a better sense of what’s going on in the country, in the past, and take direct action in terms of making a difference in politics.”

“... And I recommend reading ‘Nine Days’ by Paul and Stephen Kendrick. It takes place the same time and deals with the actual history, if people are interested in learning more.”

Young hopes to take “Nixon King” to the West Coast, as well as get funding to present a more “fully orchestrated, more operatic version” of the show in New York.

“Nixon King” is the second play he has written. “When We Get There,” also a civil rights play, had a run in Manhattan last year.

“Nixon King” will be performed Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, Jan. 10 to 25, at Planet Ant’s Ant Hall, 2320 Caniff, Hamtramck. Friday and Saturday shows are at 8 p.m. Sunday shows are at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$30 online, \$35 at the door. Visit [planetant.com/events](http://planetant.com/events) for tickets or information.



Robert P. Young wrote and stars in “Nixon King,” which takes the stage Jan. 10-25, at Planet Ant.

Flutie Foundation establishes Armani Williams Gives Back Grant

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation For Autism, a leading nonprofit in the autism community, recently partnered with Grosse Pointe native Armani Williams, the first openly autistic professional NASCAR driver, for the Armani Williams Gives Back Grant.

“The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism is proud to partner with Armani Williams to support autism-serving organizations that are expanding travel and transportation programs for the autism community,” said Flutie Foundation Executive Director Nick Savarese. “Through this partnership, we aim to provide vital funding to help people with autism access the training, education and resources they need to navigate transportation options and gain independence in their daily lives.”

The grant helps adults with autism gain essential access to driving training, support services and educational resources related to transportation. Funding will cover expenses such as instructor fees and scholarships, empowering those with autism to confidently navigate transportation options in their communities. Additionally, the training will equip parents of those with autism with valuable strategies to support their children’s transition to driving.

“Working with the Flutie Foundation to create more opportunities and access for the autistic community is so meaningful to me,” Williams said. “I am grateful that I have the ability to travel independently and I want that for everyone.”

To learn more about the Armani Williams Gives Back Grant, visit [tinyurl.com/2ne66ex6](http://tinyurl.com/2ne66ex6)

To learn more about Williams, visit [teamarmani.com](http://teamarmani.com).

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By Grosse Pointe News Staff

Turning the page to a begin a new year is also a great time to take stock of your future security. Assuring your retirement savings are in line with a projected cost of living and finally getting your estate paperwork in order will allow you to relax and enjoy the year ahead with peace of mind. For many, having less stress in life is a goal and resolution — and planning for an easier future is a great place to start. Here are some tips to help you get started.

What to know about estate planning

Managing and planning one's estate sounds like a task reserved for the über-rich. But that's a common, and potentially costly, misconception. Indeed, estate planning is a necessary component of long-term financial planning no matter the size of a person's investment portfolio.

Estate planning is an umbrella term that encompasses anything from asset allocation after death to end-of-life health care decisions to power of attorney should an individual become incapacitated. Key components of an estate plan typically include wills, trusts, power of attorney, and health care directives. According to a 2021 survey by Caring.com, only 33 percent of Americans have a will in place, and 60 percent of respondents in the same survey cited “not having enough assets” as reasons for not creating an estate plan.

The following are some basic steps anyone can take to establish an estate plan.

- Create a will. Although a will can be set up without an attorney, relying on an attorney to create or update a will can ensure that it is legally sound and reflects your intentions. In the will you can name an executor who will carry out your desired plans. Without a will, state laws will dictate the distribution of your assets.
- Establish trusts. Trusts protect assets, minimize estate taxes and provide for beneficiaries and can be revocable or irrevocable. They help avoid probate and reduce estate taxes. Special needs trusts can also be set up. The National Bureau of Economic Research indicates trusts can reduce estate taxes by up to 40 percent. Trusts also can shield some of your assets so they cannot be counted as part of your responsibility for paying for skilled nursing home admittance.
- Determine powers of attorney and health care proxies. If someone becomes incapacitated, that person will need responsible people who can act on their behalf. A financial or legal power of attorney can help with paying bills, accessing accounts and managing finances and other needs. A health care proxy can be listed on an advanced health care directive, known as a living will. The proxy will communicate your wishes indicated on the directive and see that your wishes are honored.

Knowing what's included in an estate plan can ensure that people make informed choices about their assets, beneficiaries and financial futures. It is always best to work with legal, medical and tax professionals when drawing up estate plans to avoid any issues that can arise when matters are not decided ahead of time. Getting your plan in place now provides the ultimate in peace of mind.



Catch up on retirement savings

With the surety of inflation over a lifetime, one need not look hard to understand the importance of saving for retirement. If you're reminded by loved ones or by ads touting retirement planning services, it's for good reason. Saving for retirement is among the most important steps you can take to ensure long-term financial security.

Despite the significance of retirement planning, studies indicate that many people are behind on saving and aware that they're behind. According to a recent survey from the online financial resource Bankrate, 55 percent of respondents indicated they are behind on their retirement saving. The good news for anyone who feels behind or concerned about their future financial wellness is that three strategies can help you save.

1. Take advantage of catch-up rules if you qualify. Laws governing retirement accounts in the United States allow individuals 50 and older to contribute more to their retirement accounts than they're eligible to contribute prior to turning 50. Bankrate notes that current laws allow individuals over 50 to contribute an extra \$1,000 per year to a traditional or Roth IRA and an extra \$7,500 annually to a 401(k), 403(b) or 457(b) account.
2. Itemize your tax deductions. The online financial resource Investopedia notes that taking the standard deduction is not for everyone. Individuals with significant amounts of mortgage interest, business-related expenses that are not reimbursed by an employer, and/or charitable donations may lower their tax obligation by itemizing their deductions. That reduction in tax obligation allows individuals to redirect those funds to their retirement accounts.
3. Cut back on discretionary spending. Perhaps the simplest, though not necessarily the easiest, way to catch up on retirement savings is to redirect funds typically spent on discretionary expenses like dining out or travel into retirement accounts. One way to feel better about this approach is to remind yourself that the less money spent on dining out and travel now means more money will be available to spend on such luxuries in retirement.

Contact a financial planner to walk you through steps you can take. Many of these services provide free consultations and can run a report to show you where you stand and where you need to be. With a few steps taken now, you can ensure your retirement future looks bright tomorrow.

Planning for long-term care

Long-term care is an important component of financial and personal wellness planning. Planning for long-term care can help aging individuals maintain their independence and quality of life into their golden years.

According to the National Institute on Aging, long-term care (LTC) involves a variety of services that accommodate a person's health or personal care needs when they can no longer perform everyday tasks on their own. LTC can help people with chronic illnesses, disabilities or other conditions. LTC can be expensive, but planning for such needs can help families avoid financial strain and stress, and also provide peace of mind.

Types of care

One of the initial steps when planning for LTC is to identify the available options. LTC is multi-faceted and can come in a variety of forms. LTC can involve in-home care, with a care provider coming into an individual's home to offer services like housekeeping and assistance with personal care. In addition, LTC can take place in nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Adult daycare facilities also may be considered part of LTC.

Payment options

It's important that families recognize that traditional health insurance does not cover the costs associated with LTC. In addition, Medicare cannot be used for LTC in most cases in the United States. It is essential to earmark funds or find alternatives to cover these costs.

According to Medicare.gov, some insurance companies will enable people to use life insurance policies to pay for LTC. Long-term care insurance also merits consideration. This insurance may cover LTC facilities or even home care and medical equipment. Families can explore all their options and find a policy that aligns with their needs and budgets.

Additional financial tools to consider are a Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), which allow for tax-advantaged savings specifically for health care expenses. Those with limited income can be eligible for Medicaid in the U.S., which can pay for nursing home care. However, it is important to research which homes accept Medicaid as a form of payment.

Financing your plan

People can work with licensed professionals to solidify long-term care and financial plans. An estate attorney can help create a durable power of attorney and a living will to ensure that health care and financial decisions are managed according to a person's wishes if he or she becomes unable to do so. An irrevocable trust also could be beneficial in managing assets and potentially shielding families from LTC costs.

Families should discuss health care wishes and other financial plans as they pertain to long-term care. Early planning can help families navigate caring for aging individuals.

From finances to health, it's important to be prepared to tackle whatever the future brings. While many put off such decisions out of discomfort or fear, the process doesn't have to be unpleasant. Facing the future with confidence is the best way to enjoy the chapter of life called retirement, and it's all within your reach when you take action.



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# Second Time Around

By Margie Reins Smith

## Goodbye 2024, hello 2025!

January is all about lists. We are bombarded daily with lists of 2024’s this and thats: The 10 best-selling books of 2024; the 10 sexiest men; the five worst weather disasters; the 20 most-used swear words; the top 10 questions Siri had to look up. I moved two years ago. I now live independently in a senior community comprised of about 600 people. The downside of moving at my age? I had to get rid of lots of “things.” I was flabbergasted by how much stuff I had accumulated during my life. Stuff I didn’t need any more. I sold my house. Sold my beloved piano. Gave away furniture (mostly to my children). Cleaned the garage, the basement, the spare room, my closet, the junk drawer(s). Then I paid somebody to move what was left. Decorated my new apartment exactly the way I wanted it. The upside of moving to a senior community? I’ll never have to cook again.

Here, for what it’s worth, are six new things I learned this year — my 84th.

1. That key fob gadget that unlocks my car has a battery inside it. I don’t know what supernatural force I thought was powering that handy little clicker. One day, mine quit. A friend pointed out — quite kindly — that key fobs are not magic wands. Key fobs need batteries to make them work and batteries have to be replaced or recharged now and then.

Duh.

2. Talking about politics is tricky. For the last few years I’ve had to be sure of my companions and all those within hearing distance if I wanted to express a political opinion or comment on a political event. Geeze. It wasn’t always like this. We used to argue back and forth and actually listen to each other and respect each other’s opinions.

3. Hearing aids are a Godsend. But they’re not perfect and those of us who have hearing aids often mis-hear words. One lovely

afternoon, a friend asked our dinner companions: “Was anybody cross-eyed today?” I had to stop and think about that for awhile. Surely she wasn’t inquiring about our eyesight.

What she really said was, “Did anybody go outside today?”

4. Surveys are time-wasters. I don’t do surveys anymore. Every store I patronize — online and in person — wants my feedback and after I buy something, it boomerangs back at me with a survey. This has gotten out of hand. Some surveys take 20 minutes to complete. Did someone greet me by name? Did I see all the choices? Did I find what I wanted? Did I read the return policy? Was the item delivered on time? Would I shop at this place again? Would I recommend this store? How much feedback can I give about a pair of socks? Nice color. They fit. Done.

5. Everything I own has an expiration date or a “use by” date. Food. Batteries. Medicines. Credit cards. Gift cards. Even my shampoo! That’s just wrong. Shampoo is soap. Soap doesn’t expire. People do, however. I have an expiration date. We all have expiration dates and it’s fortunate we don’t

know exactly what they are. I probably have a “best if used by date” too. But “good enough” is frequently good

enough. For soap, friends with drinks and “expired” is good enough.

6. We often say things like, “If I die.” “If I die, you can have my season tickets for U of M football.” “If I die, I want Barbour’s ‘Adagio for Strings’ played at my funeral.” “If I die, be sure I’m cremated immediately and there’s a big party afterward for all my

friends with drinks and laughter and off-color jokes.”

The phrase should be like, “When I die.” “If” implies choice. I’m absolutely sure we don’t have a choice.

Getting rid of possessions and simplifying my life was the right thing to do. I’m making new friends, participating in new activities and learning new skills.



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## A Winter’s Tale at Garden Grange:



A blanket of snow transformed Garden Grange, a charming 1920s home at 1015 Bishop Road, into a winter wonderland. This photograph, captured by Mercy J. Hayes and featured in her scrapbook, “Kodaking through Garden Grange, Exteriors, Interiors, Gardens, Friends 1926- 1929,” depicts the home after a significant snowfall - a remarkable 22-½ inches, according to Miss Hayes. The enchanting scene echoes the snowy illustration on her holiday card from 1925, showcasing the enduring allure of Garden Grange in winter.



Garden Grange, c. 1926 (Photo) and Mercy J. Hayes holiday card, 1925.



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# OBITUARIES

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

## Elizabeth “Bette” Pearl Prudden

Elizabeth “Bette” Pearl Prudden, 96, passed away Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024. She was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and loyal friend and leaves behind a legacy of love, art and inspiration.

Born in Kansas City, Mo., Bette grew up surrounded by the beauty of art and literature, sparking a passion that stayed with her throughout her life. She met the love of her life, Frederick Prudden, after World War II, and together they shared 63 incredible years of marriage filled with love, laughter and adventure, including dancing, boating and exploring the art and culture community. Frederick predeceased her in December 2011, but their love remained a guiding force in her life.

While raising their three children, Bette continued to nurture her love of art, honing her portrait skills and becoming a sought-after portrait artist. Her talent and dedication earned her a reputation as a master artist and she went on to teach countless students in her studio, inspiring a new generation of artists.

Bette’s family was her greatest joy. She was predeceased by her husband; son, Richard Prudden, and his wife, Robin Kolhorst Prudden; and grandson, Tim Prudden. She is survived by her daughters, Stephanie and Elizabeth Ann Prudden; son-in-law, William Voigt; and grandchildren, Nikki Arter, Douglas Voigt, Tom Prudden and Shannon Prudden. She also was blessed with five great-grandchildren, four great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews and friends who loved her dearly. Her loyal feline companion, Thomas, was by her side until the end.

A celebration of Bette’s life will be held at her beloved church home, Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, at a future date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the church’s community outreach program, ensuring that Bette’s love of art and culture continues to inspire future generations. Donations may be sent to Grosse Pointe

Woods Presbyterian Church, Re: Bette Prudden Memorial Fund, 19950 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236.

## Linda K. Stewart Rewalt

Linda K. Stewart Rewalt, 73, of Macomb Township and formerly of Grosse Pointe Woods, passed away Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024, after a short but fierce battle with pancreatic cancer.

Linda was born Feb. 12, 1951, in Detroit, to Dr. Maitland N. Stewart Jr., M.D., and June (nee Frank) Stewart, both now deceased. Linda graduated from Grosse Pointe High School in 1969, and graduated from secretarial school in addition to attending Macomb Community College. She married Thomas Rewalt on July 1, 1995, in St. Clair.

She began her career at Michigan Consolidated Gas Co., and continued to work in DTE’s natural gas businesses until she retired from DTE as an analyst after 46 years of service.

In addition to her family and friends, Linda loved babies and animals. She was proud of her participation in many of DTE’s volunteer programs, especially those that helped feed the hungry. She spent time visiting and shopping with her closest friends, following her classmates on Facebook and enjoying her relationship with all of her Richmond girlfriends.

She is survived by her husband of almost 30 years, Tom; her children; Erich Binder and Kay Binder; stepchildren, Patrick Larsen and Christopher Rewalt (Meghan McInnis); grandchildren, Tiana McClendon, Parker Larsen, Bella Larsen and Ruby McInnis; brother, Maitland Stewart (Mary Beth); niece, Jessica Stewart; nephew, Brian Stewart; and former husband, James Binder.

A celebration of life will take place in summer 2025. In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions to the Michigan Humane Society, [bit.ly/4ghyZ6j](https://bit.ly/4ghyZ6j), or the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, [bit.ly/4iL4APr](https://bit.ly/4iL4APr).

Jowett Funeral Home — Port Huron served the Rewalt family.

Share memories at [jowettfuneralhome.com](https://jowettfuneralhome.com).

## Jean Catherine Buhler

Jean Catherine Buhler, 92, passed away peacefully Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2024.

Jean was born April 14, 1932, to Scotsman James Stuart Swan and Janet Miller Sneddon, who emigrated to Grosse Pointe Park from Manchester, England, in the 1920s. Jean was the youngest of three children and was predeceased by her brothers, James Jr. and John Gordon. She is survived by her brother-in-law, Thomas “Tom” Buhler; two children, Laura and William; and her best friend and caregiver, Marney Ramsey.

Jean was an impeccable dresser with a flair for rakish hats, tasteful costume jewelry and perfectly composed makeup. She could easily have been a fashion model in her younger days. She spoke with a high and slightly imperative voice that always was welcoming and cordial. She was, in the words of many friends, a sweetheart.

Jean personified everything that is good and enduring about Grosse Pointe. She was born there, educated there, worshipped and worked there, married there and died there. Jean was a walking compendium of historical information about the area she knew and deeply loved. Her recall of events large and small took the form of charming letters to the Grosse Pointe News, in which she brought to life names, places and anecdotes that had been long forgotten by others.

In death, Jean joins her beloved husband and partner in life, William “Bill” Buhler, who passed away in 2009. As a couple, Jean and Bill were living proof that one plus one equals more than the sum of its parts. Together they boated the Great Lakes, took spirited drives in their MG and Porsche, traveled to Florida and the Caribbean, kept an impeccable home and garden and confronted the highs and lows of life as teammates. The walls of their home were covered with photos from their adventures.

Jean and Bill met at Grosse Pointe High School where she sang in the choir, worked on the school newspaper and performed as a majorette with the school’s marching band. The couple married at a candlelight service at Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church in 1956. Their bond lasted 54 years.

Upon graduation from high school, Jean planned to attend college in Massachusetts and study interior or fashion design. Unfortunately, her father suffered a severe heart attack and Jean elected to remain home to help with his recovery. She found employment at Jacobson’s, also known as “Jake’s,” in The Village, where she worked for 14 years in the cosmetics department. She loved every minute of it.

Jean and Bill never had



Elizabeth Pearl Prudden

children; instead, they devoted their energies to family and friends, an impeccable home and, most notably, the water. As captain and first mate, they maintained spotlessly clean sailboats for 25 years and powerboats for 25 more. Jean and Bill were longtime members of the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club, Grosse Pointe Farms Boat Club and Detroit Yacht Club. Jean was a past president of the Grosse Pointe Women’s Club and an active member of the United Methodist Women, Grosse Pointe Historical Society, Grosse Pointe Garden Club and a gustatorial group known as the Happy Cookers.

A service celebrating Jean’s long and excellent life will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, at Grosse Pointe United Methodist Church, 211 Moross, Grosse Pointe Farms. Memorial donations may be made to the church choir, 211 Moross, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236, or a charity of the giver’s choice.

Jean’s remains will join Bill’s at a future date in a resting place on the church grounds. She will be remembered by those who knew her whenever the bells of the beloved church ring out toward the lake on Sunday mornings.

## Carmen Rosa “Rosita” Perez Borja

Carmen Rosa “Rosita” Perez Borja, 94, passed away Monday, Nov. 25, 2024, surrounded by the love of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Rosita was small in stature but a giant in giving to others. She led an exceptionally well-lived life, exemplary of courage, devotion and commitment to God, marriage and family.

Rosita served as a lovely and compassionate nurse and married Dr. Carlos Perez-Borja in 1955. She honored her commitment to him for more than 65 years until he passed in 2021. Her unwavering dedication to support Carlos through his career, travels and tribulations of life proved her to be an extraordinary wife, mother and example to her children.

Together they found the courage to leave all they knew and loved in Quito, Ecuador, to bring four baby daughters to the U.S. for the promise of greater opportunity. Rosita served as a nurse for a short time in the U.S., but soon gave up a career she loved to devote her time to mothering and acclimating her daughters, Carmen, Patricia, Maria and Helena, to a new country and life. Carlos and Rosita soon added a son, Carlos, to their brood and his birth added the first of many “gringos” to the family, as later, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were born



Linda K. Stewart Rewalt



Carmen R. Perez Borja

in the U.S.

Rosita kept herself busy cooking amazing Ecuadorian meals and caring for the needs of all. She had a keen sense of humor and loved to discover new adventures to enrich the lives of her children in her new country. Visits to parks, museums and weekly trips to the library and church acted to fill the gap of missing extended family, such a realization that only hit her children later as they added great friends and their own children to realize what they had been missing.

Rosita loved to travel and accompanied her husband on many trips throughout the years. As her children grew, these trips included an extended stay in Paris, where Carlos took university courses while Rosita thoroughly enjoyed exploration on her own, sharing sights, tastes and new friends with him after class.

As grandchildren came, Rosita was all in. She loved the babies and was a joy to learn from as she swaddled, coddled and calmly demonstrated a firm but loving hand. Rosita advised her children to welcome their own children, sharing Donn’s favorite of her sayings: “Each baby arrives with a loaf of bread under their arm.”

Rosita claimed to learn to read English from baby grandson, Donny, as they played card-matching games and laughed joyously at each other’s efforts. She enjoyed and nurtured her grandchildren, who have wonderful memories of her sweet embrace. Great-grandchildren also brought a beautiful smile of amazement to her face, as she always cherished the babies.

Her life was not without adversity, but she demonstrated courage and faith in how she dealt with breast cancer as a young mother; the loss of dear daughter, Carmen; and later, her beloved husband, Carlos; as well as chronic pain in later years. Those who suffered their own losses were supported with love and tender guidance.

Extended family dinners, omitted in arriving to the U.S., were delighted in by Rosita as matriarch. She hosted grandchildren, dear friends and great-grandchildren every Sunday. She lived for these dinners, reveling in the company of loved ones and exclaiming over the food, sweets and her special decaf coffee. Rosita attended Sunday family dinners until the end.



Jean Catherine Buhler



Barbara Masouras

In her last years, Rosita basked in the attention of dear friends. She loved to knit scarves, sweaters and hats for babies, friends, family and even the family puppy. She enjoyed reading, gardening and advising others on the special care in gardening that caused all plants to thrive in her presence. She loved Spanish lessons and songs with her special friend, Mary, who brought her mountains of puzzles to share with all who wished to participate.

Rosita, a blessing to all who knew her, now rests in the arms of the Lord.

## Barbara Masouras

Barbara Masouras, 77, passed away peacefully Monday, Dec. 23, 2024. She was a lifetime resident of Grosse Pointe.

Barbara was born Sept. 12, 1947, in Gladwin, to Betsey and Richard Prokus, both now deceased. She graduated from Grosse Pointe High School in 1965, and then from Ferris State University. She worked as a teacher’s assistant at Assumption Nursery School in St. Clair Shores.

Barbara was very artistic. She enjoyed cooking, painting, sewing, fashion, interior design, boating, long walks, music, golfing and all things nature, including the sun and visiting the beach. She had a love for people, adored children and loved to dress up and have a good party. She was a great hostess.

She was the beloved wife of James “Jim”; loving mother of Jamie and Melissa Schervish (Charles); dearest “Yia Yia” of C.J., Ella and Allie; and dear sister-in-law of John (Joann). She also is survived by her many loving nieces, nephews and remaining family and friends. She was predeceased by her sister, Sherry Van Daele (Ron); sister-in-law, Angeline Roustemis (the late Michael); and brother-in-law, Perry Masouras.

Services were held at Chas. Verheyden Inc., in Grosse Pointe Park, and a funeral Mass took place at Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in St. Clair Shores. She is entombed at Cadillac Memorial Gardens.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, [go.assumption.org](https://go.assumption.org).

Share a memory at [verheyden.org](https://verheyden.org).

## Detroit Goodfellows share holiday spirit with Optimist Club

Members of the Detroit Goodfellows team, including Executive Director Jordan Mulka, warehouse manager Emmett Yglesias and Conrad Koski, a volunteer who oversees purchasing, visited the Lakeshore Optimist Club for its Dec. 11 meeting.

They provided an overview of Detroit Goodfellows programming. The organization’s oldest program is the Old Newsboys Goodfellow Fund, which has provided Christmas gifts for children ages 4 to 13 since 1914. Each year packages for children are distributed through police departments and organizations to families in Detroit, Highland Park, Redford, River Rouge, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Ecorse.

See OPTIMIST, page 5B





PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLIAM G. POLUM

# Holiday concert success

Sunday, Dec. 8, the Grosse Pointe Community Chorus hosted a successful holiday concert at St. Clair of Montefalco Catholic Church, attended by a full house. A variety of 14 holiday arrangements were sung by 81 chorus members, conducted by musical director Kayvon Kashani-Gharavi and accompanied by pianist Ron Pietratoni.

The Grosse Pointe Community Chorus started in 1953 and is still

going strong 71 years later.

The chorus rehearses Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9 p.m. in the choir room at Grosse Pointe North High School. Spring rehearsals start Tuesday, Jan. 7, and the spring concert is scheduled Sunday, May 4.

For more information or to register to join the chorus for the spring session, scan the QR code or visit [grossepointecommunitychorus.org](http://grossepointecommunitychorus.org).



COURTESY PHOTO

## James Vaughen in concert

Grosse Pointe Memorial Church, 16 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms, welcomes James Vaughen, assistant principal trumpet from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, for a concert at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 10. His program will highlight the historical timeline of the instrument's evolution, from the 14th century to the works of today.

## AREA ACTIVITIES

### Book sale

Shaw's Books, 14932 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Park, hosts its 15th annual Holiday Book Sale 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, through Jan. 5. All books, ephemera, prints, maps, posters and other paper collectibles — more than 25,000 items — are 20 percent off. For more information, call (313) 824-4932.

### Library

The Grosse Pointe Public Library hosts a variety of programs. To register for the following, visit [grossepointelibrary.org](http://grossepointelibrary.org).

◆ Silent Book Club, 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 2, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ Reader Dog, 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 4, at Woods, 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

◆ Saturday Drop-In Storytime, 10:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 4, at Central, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms.

◆ First Tuesday Book Discussion, 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 7, at Central, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms.

◆ Teen Leadership Council, 6 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8, at Woods, 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

◆ Make Comics Club, 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8, at Central, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms.

◆ Capturing Photography with Monica Morgan, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 9, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ PBS Kids Party, 4 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 9, at Woods, 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

◆ Sensory Storytime, 10 to 11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 10, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ Readers' Choice Book Discussion Group, noon to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ Hustle for Health Dance Class, noon to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.

### GPPSS

The Grosse Pointe Public School System offers a series of informational nights for various grade levels. The schedule is:

◆ Rising Fifth Grade Info Night, all GPPSS middle schools — 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 6.

◆ Rising Freshman Info Night, Grosse Pointe

North and Grosse Pointe South — 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8.

◆ Kindergarten & Young Fives Info Night, all GPPSS elementary schools — 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 9.

### The Helm

The Helm at the Boll Life Center, 158 Ridge, Grosse Pointe Farms, offers a variety of classes and programs. Registration is required at (313) 882-9600 for the following:

◆ Indoor Walking Club, 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning Jan. 7.

◆ Watercolor Painting, 10 to 11 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 8, with instructor Linda Boyle. Cost is \$25 for members, \$35 for guests.

◆ Restorative Evening Yoga, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. the first and third Thursdays, Jan. 9 to March 20, with instructor Allie Short. Cost is \$7 for members, \$10 for guests.

◆ The movie "Jane Austen's Persuasion" is shown at noon Friday, Jan. 10. Cost is \$3 for members, \$5 for guests.

◆ Spanish for Beginners, 10 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 15 to Feb. 19, with instructor Randi Lou Franklin, J.D. Cost is \$35 for members, \$40 for guests.

◆ Field Trip & Lunch, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15. The group will tour Sweetest

Heart of Mary Catholic Church and dine at Supino Pizzeria. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for guests.

◆ Taking the Mystery out of Balance and Posture, 1:30 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15, with instructor Paul Clark. The program takes place at the Harper Woods Public Library and is free to members, \$5 for guests.

### Blood drives

The American Red Cross hosts the following blood drives:

◆ 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 7, Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, 19950 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 10, St. Clare of Montefalco Catholic Church, 1401 Whittier, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13, Bethel Baptist Church, 24600 Little Mack, St. Clair Shores.

◆ 1 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15, Jefferson Masonic Lodge No. 553, 22000 E. 11 Mile, St. Clair Shores.

◆ 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 16, Henry Ford St. John Hospital, 22101 Moross, Detroit.

Register at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

### Family Center

The Family Center of

See **EVENTS**, page 6B



COURTESY PHOTO

From left, Optimist Club member John Koski, Optimist Club President Steve Licari, Goodfellows board member Emmet Yglesias and Goodfellows Executive Director Jordan Mulka.

## OPTIMIST:

Continued from page 4B

Each package includes a variety of age-appropriate items, including clothing, toys, books, dental kits and candy. Goodfellows also helps children throughout the year with "camperships," scholarships, dental programs and a shoe program.

The Lakeshore Optimist Club presented the Goodfellows with a monetary donation to help the charity continue its mission. For more information, visit [detroitgoodfellows.org/](http://detroitgoodfellows.org/).

The Lakeshore Optimist Club meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend, listen to interesting speakers and see what the club is about. Visit [gpoptimists.com](http://gpoptimists.com) for locations, dates and times each month.

# Worship Service



**St. Michael's Episcopal Church**  
*sharing the Light of Christ*

**January 5 ~ The Epiphany**

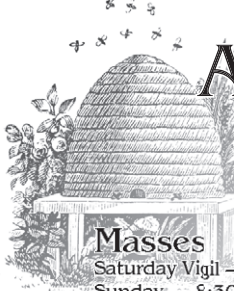
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*The story of Christmas retold in Scripture and Song*

*A warm welcome & hot coffee follows in the parish hall.*

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313.884.4820  
[stmichaelsgpw.org](http://stmichaelsgpw.org)



**Saint Ambrose Catholic Church**

15020 Hampton  
Grosse Pointe Park,  
Michigan 48230

### Masses

Saturday Vigil — 4:00 p.m. ☎

Sunday — 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

Tuesday — 8:30 a.m. — Morning Mass

Thursday — 7:00 p.m.

Friday — St. Francis Day —

Blessing of Pets — Noon Mass

(313) 822-2814 • [stambrosechurch.net](http://stambrosechurch.net) • [facebook.com/stambroseparish](https://facebook.com/stambroseparish)

☎ Saturday Vigil is streamed online at 8:00 a.m. Sunday on our facebook page

**Christ the King Lutheran Church and Preschool**

Mack at Lochmoor • 884-5090

[www.christthekinggp.org](http://www.christthekinggp.org)

**SUNDAY**

8:30 a.m. - Bible Study

9:30 a.m. - Worship Service

Sunday School - During Service

**WEDNESDAY**

10 a.m. - Bible Study

6:30 p.m. - Worship Service

**Solomon Spangler, Pastor**

**Making New Disciples - Building Stronger Ones**

**Grosse Pointe Congregational Church**  
(United Church of Christ)

**Worship Sunday at 10:00 am**

**Rev. Richard Yeager-Stiver**

**An Open & Affirming Church**

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**WE HAVE AN ARTS MINISTRY**



# xMonthly launches Jan. 6

By Jody McVeigh  
Editor

Grosse Pointe Farms resident Jeffrey DeMaria is preparing for the Jan. 6 hard launch of xMonthly, his software subscription service management company, which “helps realize the value of building subscription-based partner organizations and providing end-client opportunities to leverage Microsoft AI Cloud Powered Solutions.”

With 15 years of experience, DeMaria is committed to connecting with the humans at the forefront of artificial intelligence, or AI, innovation in pursuit of delivering value to his clients.

“We want to help Microsoft resellers and their clients achieve their business goals by defining actionable tactics,” he said.

xMonthly is not DeMaria’s first entrepreneurial achievement. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree from Indiana University in 2004, he first founded a custom apparel company aimed at college and fraternal organizations.

“I took my business and entrepreneurship minors and started a company solving problems,” he said. “The problems were organizations needing to get something

done quickly, so I created a T-shirt company.”

Next, he earned an MBA in finance, marketing and international business from Michigan State University’s Eli Broad College of Business in 2009. He since has held positions at Enliven Software, ServiceNow, RoseASP and Velosio.

As director of partner enablement with Velosio, DeMaria was a founding member of the Stratos Cloud Alliance, a leading Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider, or CSP, which was named Microsoft Indirect Provider of the Year.

Through his endeavors, he’s won several marketing awards and his positions helped him gain connections with Microsoft executives.

His knowledge and strategic insights enable xMonthly to lead the way with cutting-edge software technologies like Copilot, Copilot Studio, Microsoft 365, Dynamics 365 and others.

“We’re going through a pivotal shift (in tech),” DeMaria said. “There’s a lot of change happening, so we’re working with people to understand that availability. We’re big on the human element with these things.”

With help from Ryan Caine of Grosse Pointe Farms, DeMaria is add-

ing that human element to xMonthly.

“I hired Ryan to make me sound like a human,” DeMaria said. “That’s one tool I can’t replicate. He has the attention and focus required to make sure the message is clear. ... Copilot is a great writer, but it sounds like a robot. Ryan is a University of Michigan graduate who is going to help me bring some of that human element to it. I’m blessed he’s willing to work with me as I’m developing this. He’s my human sounding board.”

Caine, the xMonthly startup administrator and marketing manager, said he’s had fun learning to understand the space.

“I was a junior at the University of Michigan when ChatGPT was released,” he said, adding that he and his friends first used it for fun, making up poems about each other — until the question was raised how ChatGPT could help with assignments. “I’ve always loved writing, but my roommates were more into math and pre-med. Writing is required at U-M, so to have (ChatGPT) help with essays is a useful tool.

“... Now I can’t imagine how it’s changed the middle school, high school or even the college experience,” he

added. “The emphasis is on humans. It’s more important that we need to connect with them.”

xMonthly offers guidance in driving technology adoption and maximizing the benefits of Microsoft solutions. It also is committed to helping businesses achieve their goals through partnerships and innovative solutions.

“I want to let the community know that I’m open to chat on how to help them take advantage of these tools,” DeMaria said. “... Anyone who uses Microsoft can benefit from a conversation. We work with clients to make the end product better.”

While the launch goes live Jan. 6, the xMonthly website currently is accessible to learn and sign up for more.

Starting Jan. 15, xMonthly will host a CSP briefing session the third Wednesday of each month. Additionally, partners may schedule a briefing hosted by xMonthly at their convenience.

“It’s an opportunity for clients to learn from a Microsoft partner the benefits of Microsoft 365 and Copilot,” DeMaria said. “Users of that technology can learn about the additional benefits of using that technology. A solution architect will



present on behalf of xMonthly.”

In every briefing, xMonthly will emphasize the transformative nature and opportunity of Copilot, Microsoft’s AI software.

DeMaria, who bought the xMonthly domain more than 10 years ago, said he believes now is the perfect time to launch xMonthly.

“With all these ideas and now with all these tools, I feel that enough people want to come on board. Right now is the time,” he said. “... This is an amazing opportunity to be a Microsoft partner. I want to help other businesses be partners. I know how to find the money for Microsoft investments to help grow partner businesses.”

The Jan. 6 nationwide launch begins at noon and includes a free xMonthly contributor profile for all live attendees.

“You have to learn about this stuff,” DeMaria said, noting the ever-evolving nature of technology. “Anyone using Microsoft software, give us a call. We’ll show you how. ... They need to know what they don’t know. This is a crash course on the risks and the benefits associated with it. Forty-eight percent of Microsoft renewals take place between June and March. This is an opportune time. We can help optimize licensing costs, help better manage costs, lock down the environment and provide better support.”

“This is an opportunity with AI,” Caine added. “There’s a lot of interest in it. Learn to use it and integrate it with your business. On Jan. 6, join the call to learn more about what we’re doing.”

Registration for the Jan. 6 event is open online at xmonthly.com.

## Welcome new businesses



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE GPCC

Friendship Factory recently opened its newest location at 20100 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods. Erin Danforth is the proud owner of this Friendship Factory franchise, a party venue that offers more than a dozen party packages for all ages. To celebrate the grand opening, the Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting event. Danforth shares the scissors with Grosse Pointe Woods Mayor Art Bryant, while surrounded by friends and family, as well as Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce President Jenny Boettcher, next to Bryant, and Membership and Events Coordinator Abigail Turnbull, left.



Bowline Financial, 20916 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods, is owned by Matthew Sumnicht and John Herbert. The firm offers financial planning and investment management for households and businesses. Learn more at bowlinefinancial.com or by calling (248) 327-6390. Pictured during a recent Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting event are, from left, Chamber President Jennifer Boettcher, Sumnicht, Grosse Pointe Woods Mayor Arthur Bryant, Herbert, Bowline Client Care Associate Brittany Woody and Chamber Membership Director Abigail Turnbull.



Waref and Danielle Hawasli celebrated the grand opening of FESTOOL, the first standalone boutique of its kind in the country, Saturday, Nov. 30, with their three children, FESTOOL staff, Grosse Pointe Park Mayor Michele Hodges, Grosse Pointe Chamber President Jenny Boettcher and Membership and Events Coordinator Abigail Turnbull. FESTOOL is located in the same block as Hawasli’s Pointe Hardware & Lumber and offers upscale tools and building equipment. The store, located at 15004 Kercheval in Grosse Pointe Park, is open Monday through Friday and by appointment on weekends.

## EVENTS:

Continued from page 5B

Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods offers free programs and resources that help build happier, healthier families. The following programs take place at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms, unless otherwise noted. Learn more at familycenterhelps.org or RSVP to maryjo@familycenterhelps.org.

◆ Picky Eaters, 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 14. This hands-on interactive workshop, for children 5 to 6 years old and one parent/caregiver, includes a demonstration and instruction on creating a healthy snack board. Attendees will create their own snack board to take home; all materials are provided. This program is designed for people with no allergies or dietary restrictions.

◆ Healthy Grosse Pointe and Harper Woods Coalition meet-

ing, 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15. Anna Flores, doctor of clinical nutrition at Authenticity Recovery, will define disordered eating, share who is at risk and the warning signs, as well as discuss prevention and treatment.

◆ Community Book Discussion, 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at Central Library, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms. The group will discuss “The Body Keeps the Score” by Bessel van Der Kolk. A panel of experts will discuss how traumatic experiences can affect a person’s mind and body, rearranging the brain’s wiring and leading to symptoms like anxiety, hypervigilance and difficulty forming relationships, as well as how to undo the effects of trauma.

### Ford House

The Edsel & Eleanor Ford House, 1100 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Shores, offers the following programs:

◆ All About Eleanor Guided Tour, 1 p.m. Tuesdays through

Sundays in January. Admission costs vary.

◆ Storytime: “The Snow Thief,” 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays in January.

◆ Trivia Night, 6 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 16, Feb. 20 and March 13.

◆ Lecture: Rhythms of Resilience and Change with Rod Arroyo, 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 23. Tickets are \$10 for members, \$12 for nonmembers.

For tickets and information, visit fordhouse.org.

### GPAA

The Grosse Pointe Artists Association offers a variety of classes at its studio, located at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms. To register for the following, visit grossepointeartistscenter.org.

◆ Venturing into Abstract and Nonrepresentational Art with Marcia Hales, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 9.

◆ Portraits in the Style of Berthe Morisot, with Donald

Cronkhite, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 16, 23 and 30.

◆ The Art and Science of Color: Understanding and Applying Color Interaction with Mihir Sharma, 6 to 8 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 16, 23 and 30.

◆ Landscapes in the Style of Pierre-Auguste Renoir, with Donald Cronkhite, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays, Feb. 20 and 27, and March 6.

### Chamber

The Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce hosts After Hours Networking, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22, at Closet Connections, 20427 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

### Heroes’ Movement

The inaugural Heroes’ Movement gala takes place 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms. The event includes appetizers, an open bar, a live auction, live music and a keynote speaker. Cocktail attire is recommended. Tickets and

sponsorship opportunities are available online at heroes-movementusa.org

### Adaptive yoga

Yoga Moves Any Body, in partnership with the Kirk Gibson Foundation, hosts Adaptive Chair Yoga classes at 11:30 a.m. Mondays at Full Lotus Yoga, 20365 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods. Adaptive yoga benefits those with multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, stroke and other neuromuscular conditions. Cost is \$12 per drop-in class or five classes for \$50 in advance. Visit fulllotusyoga.net.

### Toastmasters

Northeastern Toastmasters meets in person at Wayne County Community College District’s Mary Ellen Stempfle University Center, 19305 Vernier, Harper Woods, as well as on Zoom, at 7 p.m. the second and fourth Monday of each month. Call (313) 720-8444 for the link and password.



# LIFE & LEISURE



2C GP GABBY | 3C MOMBEAU’S TABLE | 4C MOVIE JUNKIE MARK | 6C - 7C COMICS

## Avoid chimney fires

By Brad Lindberg  
Staff Writer

Firefighters are the most welcome among uninvited guests during the holidays.

“We respond to a fair amount of (chimney fires) during the holiday season,” said fire inspector Sgt. Tom Card of the Grosse Pointe Park public safety department.

In the hierarchy of things that can go wrong, a chimney is a relatively safe place to have a house fire. Flames generally go up and out the top.

“Most people say it sounds like a jet engine going off in their fireplace,” said Tom Maynard, owner of Coachlight Chimney Safety Co., in the City of Grosse Pointe.

Noise is nothing compared with what can happen.

“When you go outside and look up, you’ll see fire and embers spewing out the top of the chimney,” Maynard said. “They can land on the roof and start it on fire.”

Both Card and Maynard said chimney maintenance is key to preventing fires.

“Clean the chimney before having everybody over ... and piling on logs,” Card said.

“Christmas is the time when you run into most chimney fires,” Maynard said. “The reason is people burn wrapping paper, wreaths and parts of Christmas trees in the fireplace. When they have a chimney that’s not been maintained — they’ve burned and burned but never swept it — you get creosote in there.”

Creosote is a flammable byproduct of wood fires that sticks to the

insides of chimneys.

“When you put those types of accelerants in the fireplace, it raises the fire really high and intense,” Maynard said. “A lot of times that’s how chimney fires start.”

“The problem is that the chimney can only withstand so much heat and when creosote reaches its combustion point, the heat inside the chimney will exceed what it was built to take,” according to a posting at chimney101.com. “This can cause material near the chimney to ignite, shoot sparks onto your roof and weaken your chimney to the point of total failure.”

Chimney fires can leach into walls. Some after-incident fire reports in the Pointes revealed flames from burning chimneys spread through cracked or poorly built masonry to char wood



STOCK PHOTO

Chimney maintenance is key to preventing fires.

framing.

Maynard said his company sweeps about 1,500 chimneys annually.

“More than anything else, a chimney fire is from lack of maintenance,” he said. “Basically, I tell people to sweep the chimney after burning every two cords of wood.”

A one-cord stack of firewood measures roughly 4-by-8 feet.

He also advised burning hardwood in a fireplace. Softwood can promote more creosote buildup.

“Make sure whatever you’re burning it’s seasoned; good and dry,”

Maynard said.

Gas fireplaces also need tending.

“They have soot as opposed to creosote,” Maynard said. “It’s not dangerous, where you’re going to have a chimney fire. It’s just messy.”

Some fire reports are false alarms caused by people starting a fire in the fireplace without opening the chimney damper, a hand-operated hatch that opens and closes to regulate the flow of exhaust gases up and out the flue.

The obvious sign of a closed damper is smoke billowing from the fireplace into the house.

“It could smoke your house out,” Maynard said. “It’s important that everyone who is going to put their hands on a fireplace knows how the damper opens and closes, what to do and how to do it in an emergency.”

“You can look up the chimney with a flashlight to see if it’s open or closed,” Card said. “And see how dirty it is.”

He also advised people to outfit their property with smoke detectors.

“The Park, City and Farms have programs where you call us and we’ll come and give you a smoke detector if you need it,” Card said.



STOCK PHOTO

Cleaning the lint trap regularly can prevent dryer fires.

## Snuff out stove fires, prevent dryer fires

By Brad Lindberg  
Staff Writer

Holidays are a recipe for kitchen fires.

“A lot are cooking related,” said Sgt. Tom Card, a fire inspector with the Grosse Pointe Park public safety department. “People are either getting dinner ready while kids are running around in a crazy house or they’ve had a few beverages, start dinner, but fall asleep on the couch.”

There are two common ways to attack a stovetop fire, in addition to calling 911.

One is spraying flames with a fire extinguisher formulated to battle burning oils, fats and grease.

Paul Roybal, manager of Pointe Hardware on Kercheval in the Park, stocks kitchen extinguishers as regular inventory.

“They start at \$20 and go up depending on size,” he said.

Many operate at the touch of a finger.

“Some are as simple as that,” Roybal said. “Take the lid off and press a

button.”

“Fire extinguishers put fires out, but they also make a huge mess,” Card said. “When you blow off one in your kitchen, you’re going to be cleaning up all of that sodium bicarbonate and other stuff in those extinguishers.”

Which leads to option two, a fire blanket. Many are made of woven glass fiber.

“Hang it next to the stove,” Card said. “If something happens, throw the blanket on top and the fire goes out immediately. You can at least smother it while we respond.”

Jennifer Carlo, manager of Gilbert’s Pro Hardware on Harper in St. Clair Shores, recently ordered another delivery of fire blankets.

“People ask for them,” Carlo said. “We have two sizes. One is 40-by-40 inches. The other is about 50-by-70 inches. They usually cost about \$29 and \$49 for the larger one.”

Card said another good spot to stage an extinguisher or fire blanket is

near a clothes dryer.

Pointe public safety officers routinely respond to reports of dryer fires. A common cause is ignition of built-up lint in the vent system.

“Clean the lint trap on a dryer,” Card said.

“Periodically check while the dryer is operating to make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the outdoor vent flap will open,” according to “Home fires involving clothes dryers and washing machines,” on the National Fire Prevention Association website, [nfpa.org/education-and-research](http://nfpa.org/education-and-research).

“Clean lint out of the vent pipe once a year. There are long, thin brushes one can buy to make it easier to reach and remove lint in the vent pipe.”

“Having smoke detectors goes without saying,” Card said. “But, sometimes we have to remind people to change batteries in them. Inspect your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. If they’re not working, we’ll give you new ones at no cost.”

### GROSSE POINTE ANIMAL ADOPTION SOCIETY

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Keeping New Years resolutions in 2025

**Dear Gabby:** I vow to keep my resolutions every year and every year I break them before February. What is wrong with me? It is also embarrassing when people ask me how I’m doing. — No Will Power in the City

**Dear No Will Power,**

You aren’t trying hard enough. Either that or you have set yourself up for failure by setting unrealistic goals. This year, set small and achievable goals, tackle them one at a time and build upon your success little by little. Write them down in a journal or notebook and tell nobody. This is about you, not others. You can do this! This is your year to thrive, not just survive.

— Gabby

*We love problem-solving and giving advice! Please send us your questions & problems to [advice@grossepointenews.com](mailto:advice@grossepointenews.com).*





Progress over perfection  
in the new year



Dear Annie

by Annie Lane

**DEAR READERS:** As we step into the new year, pause to honor the journey traveled and embrace the endless possibilities ahead. Each January brings a quiet promise — an invitation to start fresh, to grow and to live more fully. Approach that promise with open hearts and gentle determination.

The new year often tempts us to aim for perfection — to craft long lists of resolutions and demand drastic change overnight. But life isn’t about perfection. It’s about progress. It’s about showing up every day, no matter how imperfectly, and doing the best with what is available. This year, focus on the idea that small, steady steps forward are just as powerful as giant leaps.

Think about where you are right now. Challenges once thought impossible have already been overcome. Those triumphs, both big and small, are the foundation for the year ahead, proof that anything can be tackled. It’s a cinch by the inch and a trial by the mile.

When setting goals this year, start by asking yourself what makes you smile. What brings you joy and purpose? Instead of striving for external markers of

success, consider deeper goals that align with your values. Perhaps it’s cultivating more meaningful relationships, prioritizing self-care or finding moments of gratitude in each day. Success isn’t about doing more; it’s about living more fully.

Give yourself permission to rest. The world often glorifies busyness, but rest is essential. It’s in those quiet moments of reflection and renewal that clarity and strength are found. Allow yourself the grace to recharge. Rest isn’t a sign of weakness; it’s an act of self-compassion.

Redefine how setbacks are viewed. They aren’t failures but opportunities to learn and grow. Every stumble is a step closer to understanding, every detour a chance to discover new paths. Be patient with yourself. Growth takes time, and every effort counts. Celebrate progress, no matter how small, and trust that movement is happening in the right direction.

Remember the power of connection. Life isn’t meant to be navigated alone. Reach out to loved ones, nurture relationships and lean on your support system when needed. Just as importantly, extend kindness to those around you. A simple act of compassion can ripple outward in ways unimaginable, making the world a brighter place for everyone.

Standing on the threshold of this new beginning, choose hope over fear, resilience over doubt, and grace over judgment. Commit to living with intention, savoring the present and embracing the messy, beautiful journey of growth. The new year isn’t about transforming overnight; it’s about taking one step at a time, with courage and an open heart. Happy New Year! Wishing you all wonderful experiences for 2025.

Here’s to a year of small victories, quiet joys and unwavering hope. Here’s to a year where strength is found in struggles, meaning in moments and peace in progress. Make this new year a time of taking care of yourself through little victories each day.

**DEAR ANNIE:** Three months ago, I came home from lunch and my wife had packed up her closet and said: “I’m sorry, but I’m no longer in love with you. I’m bored and lonely, and I’m moving out.” We have been together

33 years and married 32 years. It was devastating to say the least. Since then, we have spent some time together going to the gym and getting dinner. So she moved back in last week.

Then, after one day, I could tell she was uneasy. She stated she felt it was still too early to live with me again and that she was still not in love with me and still not sure if she wants to be married anymore.

We have never fought or argued about anything our entire marriage. She said not one word to me about this decision at the time. She will not go to see a counselor with me at this point. She states that she is the one who changed and that I’m a wonderful man and a great husband, father and provider. What must I do to regain her love for me? I miss her terribly! — Emotionally Devastated and Depressed.

**DEAR DEVESTATED AND DEPRESSED:** I am so sorry that your wife gave up on your marriage without so much as an explanation. That must be incredibly confusing and difficult to accept.

Unfortunately, things won’t get better unless both of you are committed to fixing your marriage. If she’s not, then you’re better off moving on — easier said than done, but time heals all wounds.

**DEAR ANNIE:** My husband is in prison. I don’t want to get into the details about why he is there. It’s mostly for context.

My mother-in-law has told me that him being gone has affected her more than it has me because she’s his mother and nothing will change that. I can throw him away as my husband, but she can’t throw him away as her son. But I’m navigating life without him, and it’s hard. I was pregnant with our second child when he was arrested. Our older child was 6 years old. We still speak, and we are not divorced.

How do I deal with what my mother-in-law says when she screams at me that this whole situation is worse for her?

I didn’t know we were competing, and quite frankly, we are both losing, so I don’t know what she wants me to do. She insists I always say it’s worse for me but never gives me a “For instance” because I’ve never done that. That just tells me she doesn’t think I have any right to be affected by this.

My husband’s sister has also been getting on my nerves. She’s gone on medication for anxiety and depression since my husband went to prison but won’t go to a therapist, and it shows. Nobody thinks she should have to because she has a master’s degree in psychology. She’s not a psychologist or anything. She has degrees but won’t use them. Should I just cut off contact with them? — Family Drama

**DEAR FAMILY DRAMA:** I You’re absolutely right. It’s not a competition between you and your mother-in-law — or anyone else in your family, for that matter — over who is in the most pain. The next time your MIL goes down this road, acknowledge her feelings but don’t feel like you have to diminish your own. If this continues, take whatever distance you need to protect your peace of mind and your children’s.

The same goes for your sister-in-law. You can’t control how she decides to cope with this situation either, but you can put boundaries in place so that it doesn’t negatively impact you or your kids.

*Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).*

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# We Tried It!

by Anna Lizer



I recently started following an eye doctor on TikTok who mentioned that the best way to care for your eyes is to use a warm compress for 10 to 15 minutes daily. As someone who wears contacts and glasses and often wakes up with tired eyes, I thought this could be worth a try.

The eye doctor recommended the Cornea Care self-heating eye masks, so I ordered a pack of 30 individual masks from Amazon for \$31.50.

These masks are pretty

cool. Once you unwrap the package, they start warming up right away, with no extra steps required. They even have little hooks that go around your ears, keeping them comfortably in place, which makes it easy to lie back and relax.

My routine has become waking up, grabbing one of these masks and enjoying an extra 10 minutes of snoozing with warmth over my eyes. It's incredibly soothing and, as a small daily ritual, feels like an inexpensive form



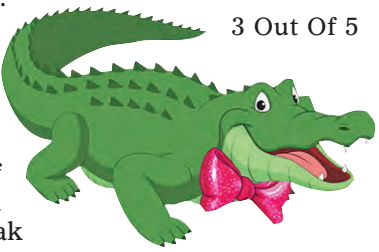
of meditation.

In terms of benefits, I haven't noticed any significant change in my

eyes. The masks feel nice, add some moisture and provide a good excuse for a 10- to 15-minute break.

for your eyes, these could be a good choice.

*We LOVE testing out new things! Tell us about your favorite item or something you want us to try for you! Drop us a line at media@grossepointenews.com.*



3 Out Of 5

# Thai Congee with pork (Jok Moo)

## Courtesy of Mombeau's Table

Happy New Year everyone! As I sit here and write this, I'm thinking about all the healthy meals that I've made throughout this past year; which ones were well received and which ones got a thumbs down.

After my eating escapades over the holidays, I need a healthy shift and I need to get back into routine. Meals that are healthy and already prepared in the fridge work best for me.

Though leftovers are a tricky thing to sell in my house, including myself, soup is always easy. Soup is best leftover, easy to quickly heat up and overall just good for you. So, I decided to share this Thai rice soup that has been a hit at Mombeau's house.

Jok Moo is a pork and rice porridge that is thick, filling, simple and so delicious. Typically eaten for breakfast, this dish is filled with pork meatballs, ginger and garlic. And best of all, it's low in fat to comply with my January healthy eating reset.

The soup simmers for a while so the starches in the rice begin to break down and make the soup

almost creamy without the dairy.

I first saw this recipe in Chrissy Teigen's cookbook, "Cravings," and decided to give it a try because it looked so easy to make.

Everyone was sick in the house and we needed a magical elixir. There is lots of ginger and garlic involved and I added turmeric for an extra immune boost. This would be a great use for bone broth, if you have it. If not, just use chicken broth or substitute water.

A couple cubes of bouillon added lots of extra flavor that the kids loved. I'm not sure if this truly was the magical elixir we needed but I do know they asked to bring it to school for lunch. That alone is a mom win for sure.

Cheers, Mombeau.

**Jok Moo**

**Pork Meatballs**

1 lb ground pork

2 cloves minced garlic

1 tbsp soy sauce

**Jok**

1 tbsp coconut oil

1 chopped onion

¾ cups jasmine rice

6-8 cups chicken broth

2 bouillon cubes

4 minced garlic cloves

2 tsp turmeric

3 inch piece of ginger, thinly julienned

3 tbsp soy sauce

Sliced scallions for garnish

Start by making the meatballs. Combine the pork, garlic and soy sauce in a mixing bowl and set aside.

Next, wash the rice. Use a fine mesh strainer and move the rice around with your fingers until the water runs clear. Set aside.

In a large soup pot over medium heat, add the oil and onion. Sauté until the onion becomes translucent and slightly browned, about five minutes. Add in the ginger,



PHOTO BY KAREN FERGUSON

minced garlic and turmeric. Keep stirring until you smell the ginger and garlic. Add in the broth. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer.

Pour in the rice, six cups of broth and bouillon cubes, stirring a few times so the rice doesn't stick to the bottom and the bouillon breaks apart.

Bring back to a simmer for 20 minutes. At this point you can drop in the meatballs. Use a spoon to drop in walnut size amounts of the pork mixture. They do not have to be perfect. Add in the soy sauce, stir and cover. Simmer for another 20 to 30 minutes. You know the soup is done when

the rice has broken down and the soup is nice and thick. If it is too thick at any point, add the remaining two cups of broth. Taste the soup and adjust for seasoning with salt and pepper.

Serve piping hot with freshly sliced scallions. Any leftovers freeze beautifully.

# Wine and health

"Wine has been with us since the beginning of civilization. It is the temperate, civilized, sacred, romantic mealtime beverage recommended in the Bible. Wine has been praised for centuries by statesmen, philosophers, poets, and scholars. Wine in moderation is an integral part of our culture, heritage, and gracious way of life."

The above statement appeared on some wine bottles in 1989 and 1990. The late Robert Mondavi created the declaration as part of his "mission statement," and it was the heart of his attempt to validate table wine as a moderate beverage that benefited people when consumed moderately.

The federal government initially approved the statement for use on wine bottles in 1988. Mondavi used the line until 1990, when the Department of the Treasury division that oversaw alcoholic beverages said it would no longer allow the statement to be used.

At the time, a neo-prohibitionist movement was spawned by several anti-alcohol groups, some of

which claimed that any alcoholic consumption was harmful. Reporting in The Los Angeles Times then, I quoted several reputable physicians that wine in moderation was beneficial to health.

In the intervening 35 years, several other anti-alcohol movements sprang up. Most were short-lived. Today, however, a new prohibition movement has arisen and seems to have more virulence than any since the early 1990s.

Perhaps as a response to that, the Sonoma County Vintners Association has announced that it has launched a "Wine Is Us" campaign that it says is "designed to increase awareness of the many comprehensive benefits of moderate wine consumption, as reported in reputable medical studies."

Although wineries are prohibited from making any health claims, it is unclear whether marketing agencies such as the Sonoma County Vintners, which is not under the purview of the federal government, will be permitted to

make such claims.

The studies the vintners and others usually address is wine's effect on heart disease — the No. 1 killer of Americans. This also was a key element in the famous 1991 report by CBS' "60 Minutes" in its episode entitled "The French Paradox." That report said the French have a lower rate of heart disease than do Americans even though the French smoke more and have a diet that's higher in fat.

The late Dr. Paul Scholten, director of women's services at San Francisco State University, published a pamphlet in 1997 for the International Wine and Food Society in which he stated the case for moderate consumption.

"Studies at Harvard University have shown that moderate drinkers reduce their risk of coronary heart disease by 20 percent to 40 percent as well as that of angina pectoris and stroke," Scholten wrote.

"Dr. Curtis Ellison (professor of medicine and epidemiology at Boston University school of Medicine) has estimated that for those who have heart disease, moderate drinking provides more health benefits than

any other normal measure such as diet or exercise — except giving up smoking."

Scholten also listed several other health benefits in his pamphlet.

Michael Haney, executive director of the Sonoma County Vintners, said his group's "Wine Is Us" campaign will "provide a positive and informed narrative" about "the cultural, social, and well-being impacts of wine."

The agency's responsible approach reminds me of how Mondavi framed his mission statement more than 35 years ago.

**Wine of the Week:** 2022 Santa Cristina Cabernet Sauvignon, Toscana (\$13) — The excellent house of Antinori in Italy's Tuscany once made this wine exclusively out of sangiovese. This cabernet is delightful because it has fascinating aromas of violets, cherries and a trace of tree-ripened olives, and the balance is perfect with only 13.5 percent alcohol.

Dan Berger lives in Sonoma County, California, where he publishes "Vintage Experiences," a weekly wine



newsletter. Write to him at winenut@gmail.com. COPYRIGHT 2024 CREATORS.COM

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHICAGO MEDIA ANGELS AND ERSATZ FILM

Left, Grant Rosenmeyer as Ben Grady getting instructions from Paul Raci as Mealworm in the 2023 movie “The Secret Art of Human Flight,” written by Jesse Orenshein and directed by H.P. Mendoza.

MOVIE REVIEW  
“The Secret Art of Human Flight”  
2023 - Not Rated  
1 hr 47 min  
★★★★☆

When it comes to watching a new movie, my general rule is to give it 20 minutes, and if it isn’t great, I move on. Like my motto says, “Life is too short to watch mediocre movies.” So when I saw the unusual title “The Secret Art of Human Flight,” I immediately put it in my queue. I must say, this little film took me by surprise. It hooked me from the first minute or two and never let go.

The film is one of those quirky, offbeat gems that reminded me of something Wes Anderson would make. It deals with the death of a loved one and how one recovers from it. It’s from director H.P. Mendoza and after watching it, I think I need to look into his other work. Jesse Orenshein did a masterful job with the sensitive and at times playful screenplay and Markus Mentzer deftly handled the cinematography.

We encounter the protagonist Ben (Grant Rosenmeyer) in the early stages of grief. His wife

Sarah (Reina Hardesty) has just suddenly died and he’s in a state of shock. Not only were they life partners, but they were the creative team behind a successful series of children’s books. He was the writer and Sarah was the illustrator. Needless to say, they spent a good portion of every day in each other’s company. So his loss was especially hard.

When Ben goes into a virtual hibernation, his sister Gloria (Lucy DeVito) and her husband Tom (Nican Robinson) become concerned. They force him to get outside and have him soak up the fresh air and sunshine in his front yard before they take a short vacation.

When they return a couple days later, they discover he hasn’t moved the entire time. What’s more, a detective, played by Rosa Arredondo, begins snooping around. Apparently, the couple had a substantial life insurance policy, and she’s suspicious that there may be some foul play involved.

Ben is totally consumed by his loss. We can feel his pain through his lifeless facial expressions and his catatonic state. Realizing he has to

do something, anything to change things up, he’s drawn to a YouTube video he’s discovered. It’s of a man standing on a precipice. When he jumps off, instead of dropping to his death, he actually flies up and soars into the sky. After doing some research on the dark web, he finds out who the man is and contacts him.

He calls himself



# Movie Junkie Mark

by Mark Domin

“Life is too short to watch mediocre movies”





Ben at the precepice.

Mealworm (Paul Raci), and he supposedly has a program where he can teach people to fly. Ben is so intrigued, he sends him an alarmingly large sum of money. In return, he receives an instruction manual, outlining the steps one needs to take to fly. Naturally, it’s all quite shady. However, a couple days later, guess who shows up at Ben’s

door? You guessed it; it’s none other than Mealworm himself.

Talk about an intriguing character. He’s a longhaired old hippie who has a colorful past. But he’s in earnest regarding his personal flight program. And just when you think he’s taking Ben for a ride, he hands him a wad of cash — the money Ben sent him, minus some travel expenses.

A good portion of the movie involves the offbeat and very entertaining steps Mealworm guides Ben through. It adds a bit of much needed wackiness, which offsets the stages of depression Ben is experiencing. He’s also helped along by his encounters with a concerned friend Wendy (Maggie Grace) who’s lost her spouse. She encourages him to find something to do, no matter how absurd or impossible it is and just go for it. If he completes it, it will be a huge step toward moving on. And that’s exactly what Ben needs to do.

“The Secret Art of Human Flight” is a wonderful, uplifting tale that is entertaining from beginning to end. It’s a fresh take on a difficult

subject and I’m surprised this fantastic film isn’t better known. But at least now you know about it! And if you enjoy it as much as I did, spread the word!

Currently streaming for free on Hoopla (with your library card) and Prime Video. Also available to rent on Apple TV and other services.

Note to parents: The film is not rated but I’d give it a PG-13.

My rating system:

★ A real stinker. A movie that is so bad, you’re embarrassed to admit you’ve seen it, but you have to rate it nonetheless.

★★ So-so. Not a total waste of time, but you would have been better off reading a good book.

★★★ Pretty good. In

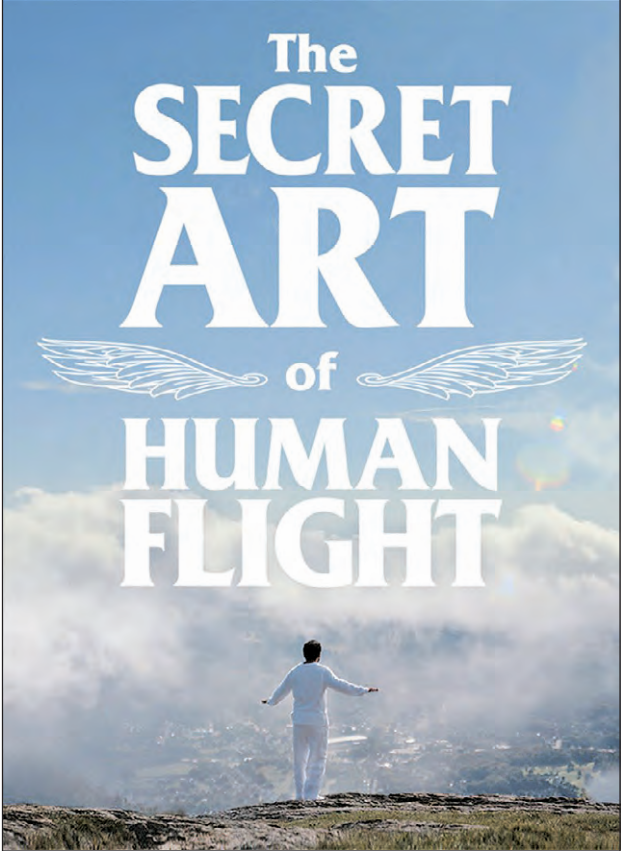
fact, if there weren’t any other movies in your queue, you might watch it again.

★★★★ One you’d recommend to friends.

★★★★★ So good you’d actually go out and buy it!

If you have any suggestions, feel free to email me at: dominmark@yahoo.com.

Also, if you’re looking for more recommendations, be sure to check out my blog: moviejunkiemark.blogspot.com.



Movie Poster.



A video of Sarah (Reina Hardesty).



Ben’s sister Gloria (Lucy DeVito).



Mealworm (Raci) & Ben (Rosenmeyer) in the Sky room.



Wendy (Maggie Grace).



# Royal Stars

Weekly Horoscopes

**Moon Alert:** Avoid important decisions or shopping after 11 p.m. EST today (8 p.m. PST). The Moon is in Aquarius..

Happy Birthday for Thursday, January 2, 2025: You are strong, reassuring and hard-working. You are organized, insightful, sensitive and compassionate. You're quick to get to the heart of a problem. This has been a fun-loving year for you! Let your guard down and loosen up a bit. Have fun, but don't lose sight of your goals. Old friends might reappear.

**ARIES**  
(March 21-April 19)  
You're high-viz today, and you're also popular! Enjoy talking to younger people; it might be uplifting. You might explore travel options or something to do with publishing, higher education, medicine or the law. Meanwhile, a secret love affair is exciting for some. H m m m . Tonight: Patience.

**TAURUS**  
(April 20-May 20)  
People will listen to you today because you have something to say. In part, this is why relations with friends, as well as groups and organizations, are excellent. Nevertheless, someone in a position of authority might catch you off guard. Be ready for this, especially late in the day. Tonight: Listen.

**GEMINI**  
(May 21-June 20)  
Explore new ideas with partners, spouses and friends today. They might be worthwhile. Meanwhile, travel plans might suddenly change, especially later in the day. Likewise, double-check details about publishing, higher education, medicine and the law. Don't be caught off guard. Tonight: Be careful.

**CANCER**  
(June 21-July 22)  
Travel for pleasure appeals to you now and in the next few weeks. Do try to get away somewhere, because this will please you. Discussions about shared property, taxes, debt and loans will go well today, especially if they are work-related. A friend might surprise you today. Tonight: Be observant.

**LEO**  
(July 23-Aug. 22)  
You're working hard now; nevertheless, today is a good day to discuss a future vacation with someone or plans for a social diversion, perhaps dinner, lunch, a movie, sports events or playful times with kids. Later in the day, a parent or boss might do something unexpected. Tonight: Slow down.

**VIRGO**  
(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)  
Home repairs might be on your agenda today. Family discussions will go well, especially discussions about fun activities, vacations or the arts. Nevertheless, something unexpected might affect your job, your health or a pet. Keep your eyes open and be aware. Assume nothing. Tonight: Pay attention.

**LIBRA**  
(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)  
Parents should be extra vigilant today, because this is a mildly accident-prone day for your kids. Meanwhile, social plans might change or be rescheduled. This is a busy day with short trips and discussions with siblings, relatives and neighbors. Focus on home and family. Tonight: Cooperate.

**SCORPIO**  
(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)  
You have a fast-paced schedule, and you're busy and curious. Not only are you working, you also want to play! However, something to do with home and family might surprise you

later today. Stock the fridge. Tonight: Avoid conflict..

**SAGITTARIUS**  
(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)  
You're full of ideas today and keen to exchange what you think with others. Nevertheless, be aware this is a mildly accident-prone day for you, so pay attention to everything you say and do. Keep your eyes open. You'll enjoy entertaining at home or making your home more attractive. Tonight: Avoid controversy.

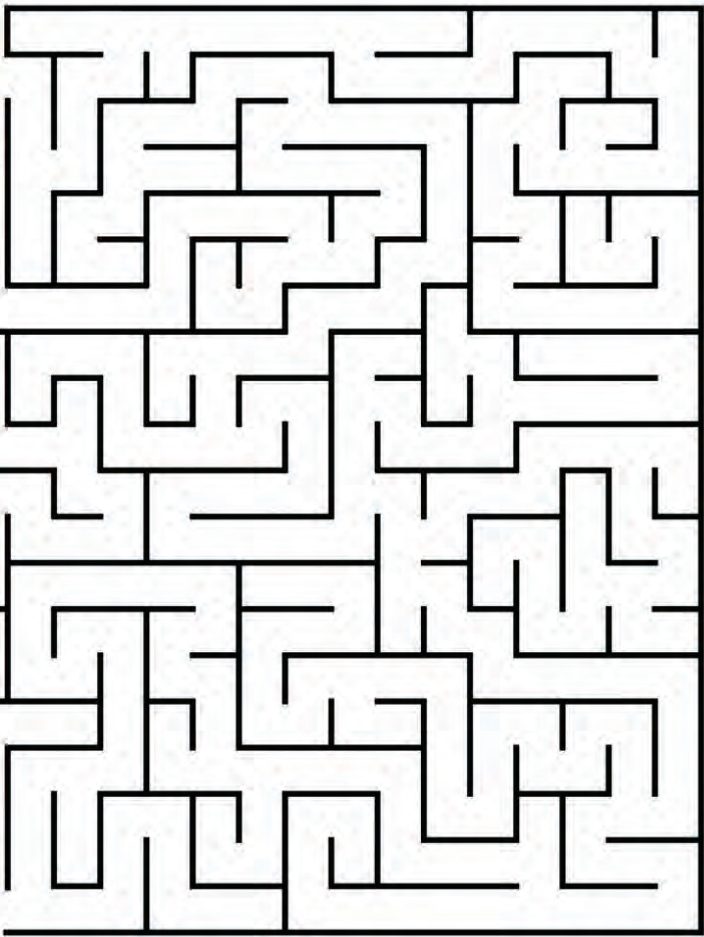
**CAPRICORN**  
(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  
Today you're focused on ideas about earning money as well as spending it. Research might reveal new information. However, keep an eye on your money and your possessions, because something unexpected could impact them. Protect what you own against loss, theft or damage. Tonight: Check your finances.

**AQUARIUS**  
(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  
Discussions with friends, especially younger people, will be lively today. You also might be involved with a group or a team. You might impulsively do something at the last moment and change direction about something. Something unexpected at home might trigger this. Tonight: Listen to others.

**PISCES**  
(Feb. 19-March 20)  
You are charming because fair Venus in your sign. In fact, the next few weeks are an excellent time for you to buy wardrobe treasures. Discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs will go well today. You will be articulate and full of original ideas. Nevertheless, you feel restless for some reason. Tonight: Stay focused.

**BORN TODAY**  
Ben Hardy (1991), actor  
Dax Shepard (1975), actor  
Taye Diggs (1971).

## Help The Puppy Find His Bone



## Winter Word Search

V S N O W F L A K E X O A W  
D N S O C K S X S I P M E T  
E O G H Z O E A L Q R M S W  
C T K O N P M A E N I N N D  
E E C O F T B L K T S Y O T  
M B U D S I C L R Q B N W B  
B G L I L I R E A U R X M M  
E R R E C Y T E T N G L A I  
R H G I P N Q U P L K W N T  
C O L D I U J Q X L O E L T  
I M F W B A F L X N A X T E  
C A J R D R K U S V L C Z N  
E N I C E S K A T E S C E S  
X H O T C O C O A P B B T Y



- |            |            |           |           |
|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| WINTERTIME | HOODIE     | ICICLE    | SOCKS     |
| COLD       | BLANKET    | SNOWMAN   | MITTENS   |
| SNOW       | CHRISTMAS  | ICE       | DECEMBER  |
| FIREPLACE  | ICE SKATES | HOT COCOA | SNOWFLAKE |

## Contract Bridge

### THE RABBIT-IN-THE-HAT TRICK

South dealer.  
Both sides vulnerable.

#### NORTH

♠ Q 8 3  
♥ Q 6  
♦ Q J 10 9  
♣ A K 8 5

#### WEST

♠ 4  
♥ J 9 5 2  
♦ K 7 4 2  
♣ J 10 9 2

#### EAST

♠ 10 7 6  
♥ K 7  
♦ 8 6 5 3  
♣ Q 7 6 4

#### SOUTH

♠ A K J 9 5 2  
♥ A 10 8 4 3  
♦ A  
♣ 3

The bidding:

|       |      |       |      |
|-------|------|-------|------|
| South | West | North | East |
| 1 ♠   | Pass | 2 ♣   | Pass |
| 2 ♥   | Pass | 3 ♠   | Pass |
| 6 ♠   |      |       |      |

Opening lead — jack of clubs.

A declarer can't pull a rabbit out of a hat if there isn't one in there, but sometimes the rabbit is there and declarer doesn't know it. As a case in point, consider this deal where South is in six spades and West leads a club.

Declarer wins with dummy's king and leads a diamond to the ace, followed by a low heart to dummy's queen. East wins with the king and returns a diamond, and South must

fail whatever he does next. He cannot successfully trump two hearts in dummy and eventually goes down one.

Oddly enough, after winning the opening club lead with the king, the play that offers the best chance to make the slam is to cash the ace of clubs at trick two and discard the ace of diamonds on it!

For practical purposes, this play assures the slam. It allows declarer to utilize dummy's Q-J-10-9 of diamonds and score three diamond tricks regardless of which defender has the king of the suit.

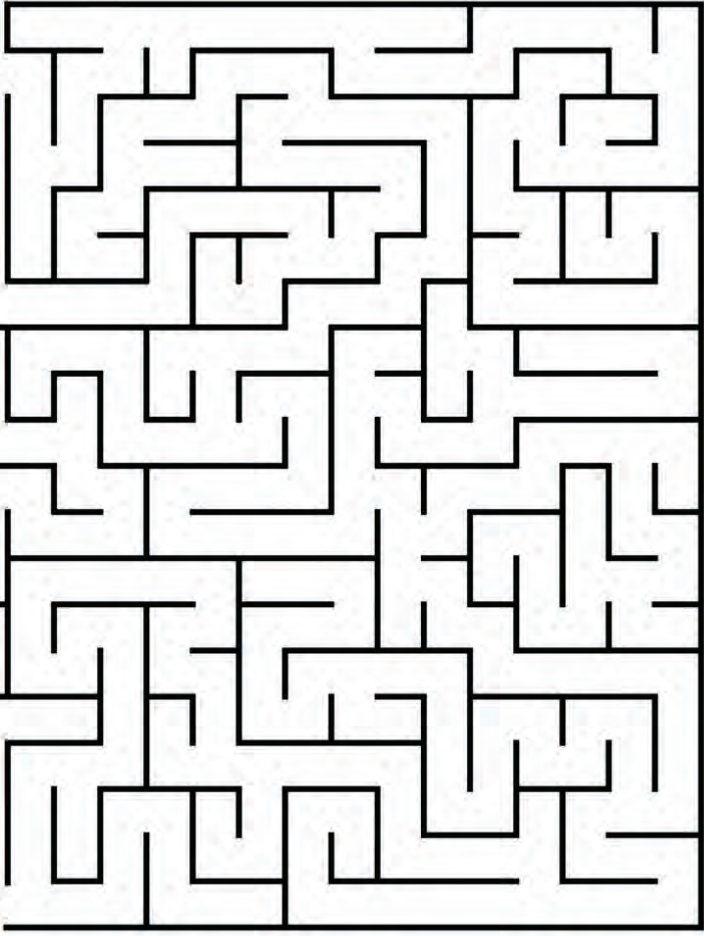
In the actual case, South leads dummy's queen of diamonds at trick three and discards a heart after East follows low. West takes the queen with the king but cannot stop South from scoring 12 tricks consisting of six spades, one heart, three diamonds and two clubs.

The outcome is the same if East has the king of diamonds. In that event, his king is trapped as the diamonds are led from dummy regardless of when he elects to play it, and declarer again scores three diamond tricks. Of course, when South sooner or later draws trump, he cashes the A-K before leading a third round to the queen to collect whatever diamonds remain in dummy.

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by Steve Becker

## Help The Kitten Find Her Yarn

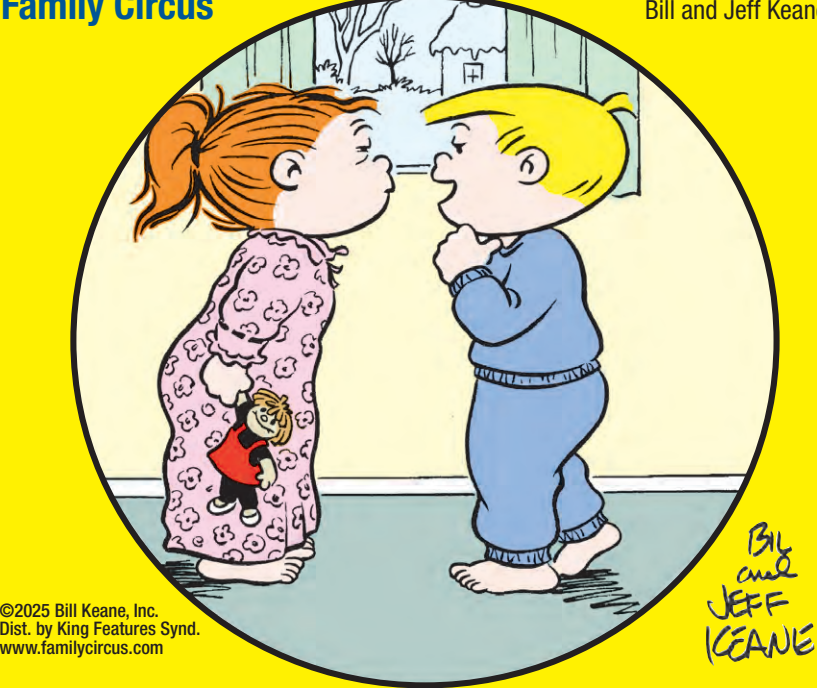




# Puzzles and

## Family Circus

Bill and Jeff Keane



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www.familycircus.com

Bill and Jeff Keane

"I didn't see the new year come in, but I got up early and saw Mommy and Daddy come in."

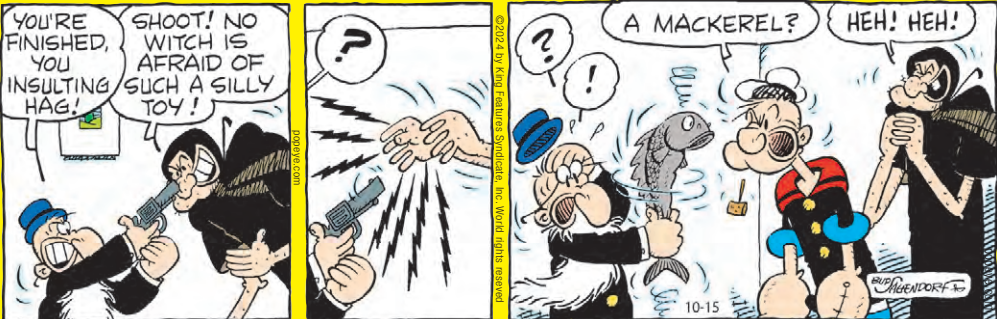
## Garfield

Jim Davis



## Popeye

Bud Sagendorf



## Beetle Bailey

Greg, Brian, Neal and Mort Walker



## Blondie

Chris and Dean Young



## Over The Hedge

Michael Fry and T. Lewis



## Andy Capp

Reg Smythe



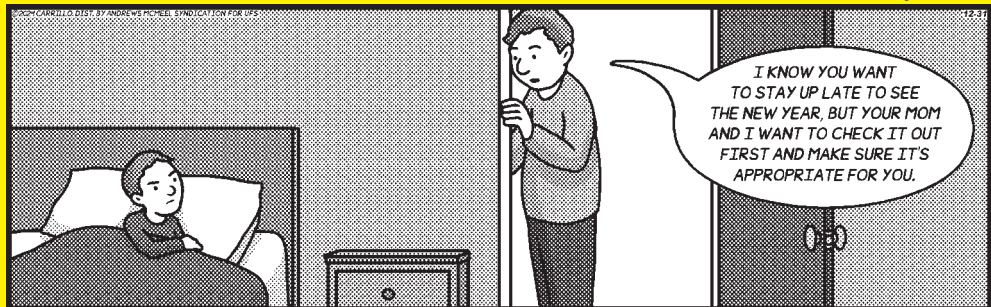
## Wizard of Id

Created by Brant Parker and Johnny Hart. Currently by Mason Mastroianni



## F Minus

Tony Carrilo

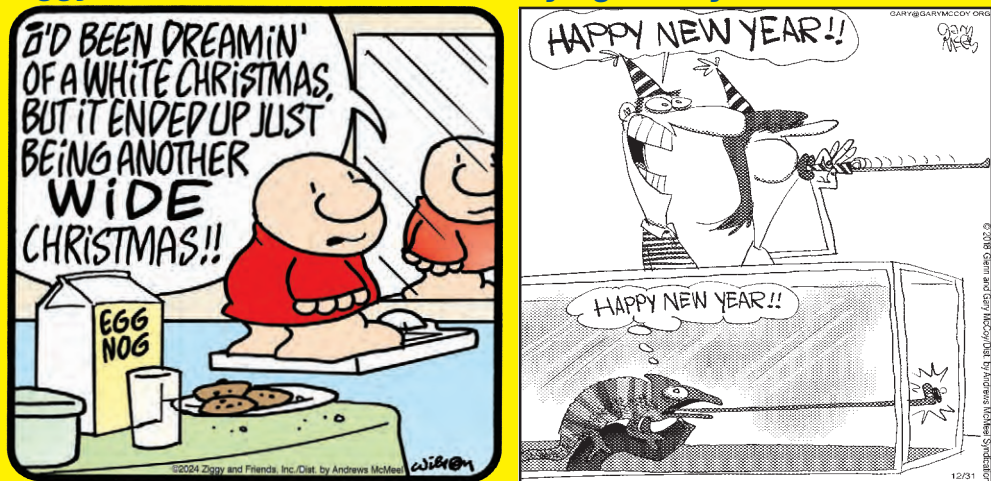


## Ziggy

Tom Wilson

## Flying McCoys

Glenn McCoy



## UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

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

1/2 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Complete the grid so every row, column and 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

### Previous puzzle solution

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

12/26 Solution

## Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg January 2, 2025

### ACROSS

- 1 Puts in stitches
- 5 Tiny amount
- 9 Saved
- 13 Lolani Palace's island
- 14 Declare
- 15 Misrepresent
- 16 Good thing to check before pouring milk into your coffee
- 18 App with many filters, informally
- 19 1965 Alabama march site (In this clue's answer, note letters 4-5 + ...)
- 20 Sedan, e.g. (... 1-3 + ...)
- 21 NBA legend Shaquille (... 1-2)
- 22 Participate in a bee
- 24 Grammy winner — Aguilar
- 26 Requirements
- 29 Small
- 33 Drive— (3-4 + ...)
- 36 Styling product (... 1-3 + ...)
- 37 More sore (... 1-3)
- 38 Water, in Paris
- 39 Leaves out
- 41 By way of
- 42 Cover stories? (4-6 + ...)

- 45 Camp bed (... 1-3 + ...)
- 46 Throw (... 1-2)
- 47 Give a new title to
- 48 "Fear of Flying" author Jong
- 50 "Darn!"
- 52 Conspiratorial group
- 55 Getting older (2-5 + ...)
- 58 Hosp. areas (... 1-3 + ...)
- 61 Backs of necks (... 1-3)
- 63 Black tea type
- 64 Expensive NBA game seating area
- 66 Makes, as tea
- 67 Lose steam
- 68 Hamster's home
- 69 Close tightly
- 70 Snow day toy
- 71 Singles

- ### DOWN
- 1 Word before "chef" or "vide"
  - 2 Makes simpler
  - 3 Puppy
  - 4 Secondary list on a computer
  - 5 Clump of gum
  - 6 Temperature control syst.
  - 7 Tiny amount

- 8 Pip-squeak
- 9 Actor/director Branagh
- 10 "What \_\_\_ is new?"
- 11 Pocket bread
- 12 Blue-green hue
- 15 "Frida" or "Erin Brockovich"
- 17 Connecticut Ivy
- 23 Kit with toy bricks
- 25 Stretchy
- 27 Harris' party, for short
- 28 Cake serving
- 30 DVR pioneer
- 31 Luau wreaths
- 32 Historic periods
- 33 What one might shed
- 34 Robust
- 35 Destroy
- 40 Blue Jays' city: Abbr.
- 43 Nocturnal bird on a farm
- 44 Pictures brand
- 46 Hot sauce brand
- 49 "You \_\_\_ be serious!"
- 51 Factions
- 53 Beelike
- 54 Overhang
- 55 P.D. alerts
- 56 "Pretty Woman" actor Richard
- 57 Swedish furniture giant
- 59 Chum
- 60 "Are you \_\_\_?"
- 62 Gets
- 65 Common bell pepper color

### PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G | O | W | N | R | A | G | E | H | I | T | M | E |
| A | C | A | I | A | W | O | L | A | D | H | O | C |
| S | T | Y | X | W | A | V | E | T | E | A | M | O |
| M | A | S | O | N | R | Y | C | H | E | A | T |   |
| A | G | I | N | G | T | I | T | O | S | U | E |   |
| S | O | D | O | P | E | N | S | E | A | S | O | N |
| K | N | E | E | R | A | T | D | N | A | K | I | T |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| A | K | I | T | A | S | N | O | W | E | A | C | H |
| L | I | F | E | L | E | S | S | O | N | S | L | O |
| E | M | O | N | Y | E | T | I | C | A | L | L |   |
| R | E | N | T | S | I | T | S | A | B | O | Y |   |
| A | B | O | V | E | T | R | E | E | B | A | R | S |
| C | O | N | E | S | E | A | S | E | A | M | I | E |
| E | X | E | R | T | M | E | T | S | L | A | N | E |

12/26 Solution

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## Cookie Cutter by Ricky Siros

|    |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |
|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 |   |   |   | 14 |   |   |   | 15 |    |    |    |
| 16 |   |   |   | 17 |   |   |   | 18 |    |    |    |
| 19 |   |   |   | 20 |   |   |   | 21 |    |    |    |
| 22 |   |   |   | 23 |   |   |   | 24 |    |    |    |
| 25 |   |   |   | 26 |   |   |   | 27 |    |    |    |
| 28 |   |   |   | 29 |   |   |   | 30 |    |    |    |
| 31 |   |   |   | 32 |   |   |   | 33 |    |    |    |
| 34 |   |   |   | 35 |   |   |   | 36 |    |    |    |
| 37 |   |   |   | 38 |   |   |   | 39 |    |    |    |
| 40 |   |   |   | 41 |   |   |   | 42 |    |    |    |
| 43 |   |   |   | 44 |   |   |   | 45 |    |    |    |
| 46 |   |   |   | 47 |   |   |   | 48 |    |    |    |
| 49 |   |   |   | 50 |   |   |   | 51 |    |    |    |
| 52 |   |   |   | 53 |   |   |   | 54 |    |    |    |
| 55 |   |   |   | 56 |   |   |   | 57 |    |    |    |
| 58 |   |   |   | 59 |   |   |   | 60 |    |    |    |
| 61 |   |   |   | 62 |   |   |   | 63 |    |    |    |
| 64 |   |   |   | 65 |   |   |   | 66 |    |    |    |
| 67 |   |   |   | 68 |   |   |   | 69 |    |    |    |
| 70 |   |   |   | 71 |   |   |   | 72 |    |    |    |



# Comics

## Peanuts

Charles M. Schulz



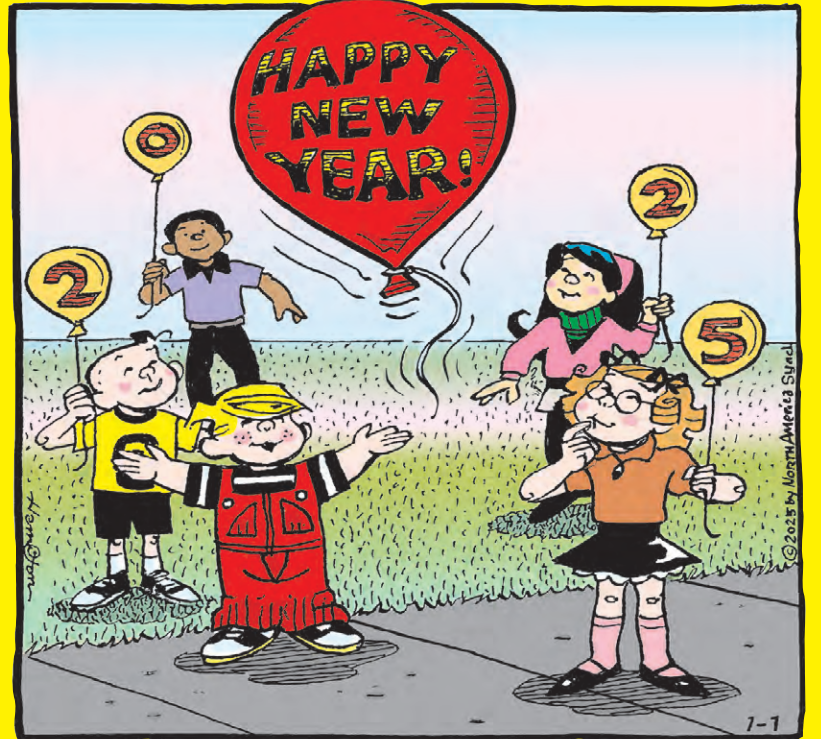
## Hagar The Horrible

Dik Browne and Chris Browne



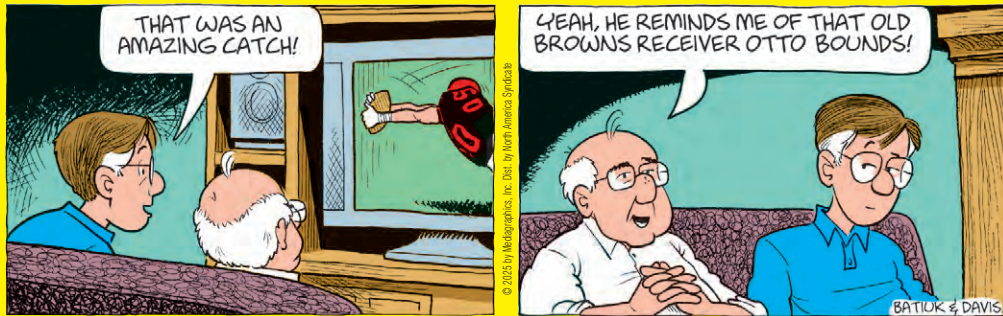
## Dennis the Menace

Hank Ketchum, Scott Ketchum, Ron Ferdinand and Marcus Hamilton



## Crankshaft

Tom Batiuk and Dan Davis



## Crock

Created by Bill Rechin and Brant Parker



## Mother Goose and Grim

Mike Peters



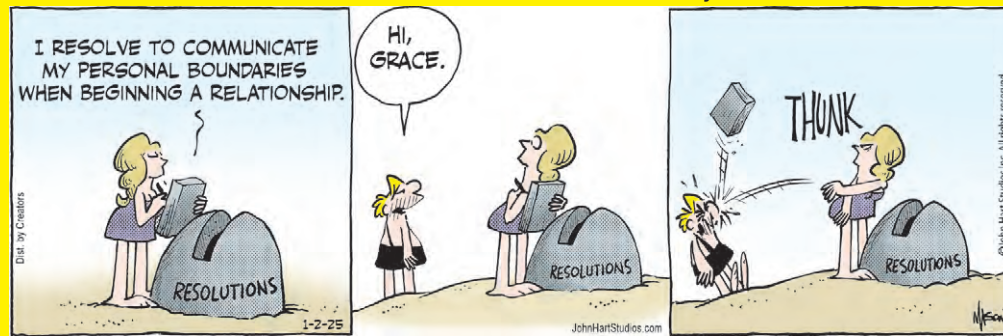
## Carpe Diem

Niklas Eriksson



## B.C.

Johnny Hart and Mason Mastroianni



## Wumo

Mikael Wulff and Anders Morgenthaler



## Reality Check

Dave Whamond



## Bizarro

Dan Piraro and Wayno



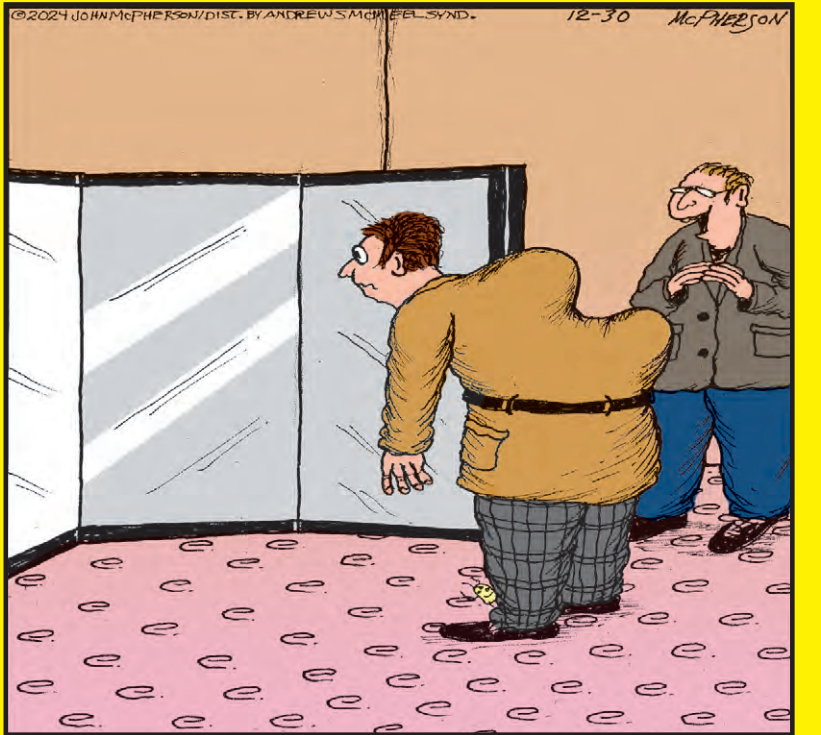
## The Lockhorns

Bill Hoest, Bunny Hoest and John Reiner



## Close To Home

John McPherson



## Marmaduke

Paul & Brad Anderson







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**Kid Scoop Together**

## Funny Fill-In

Ask a family member for each kind of word below. Then fill in the blanks to create a very silly story to read aloud!

# HAPPY SILLY NEW YEAR!



Start 2025 with smiles and laughs with these silly games! Being silly can bring smiles and laughs to your friends and family, too!

## New Year Guessing Game

Each player chooses something related to New Year celebrations, like balloons or confetti. The other players ask **YES** or **NO** questions to try and guess what it is, asking no more than 20 questions. Each time someone asks a question with a **NO** answer, they have to dance and cluck like a chicken!



Hey, kid! That is **NOT** how I dance! What the heck?

## Double Dancer

Look closely! Only two of these dancers are exactly the same. Can you find them? Have a friend try, too!



How many socks do you see here?

## New Year Bingo

- Cut out these bingo cards and give one to each player.
- Once the game starts, everyone looks or listens for the words on their card.
- When you see or hear one of these words related to New Year's celebrations, cross it out.
- After one hour, time's up! The player who crossed out the most words wins!

**Standards Link:** Language Arts: Follow simple written directions.

RESOLUTIONPARTYTIMES SQUARE  
CELEBRATEMIDNIGHTBALLOONS  
CALENDARCLOCK2025

TIMERESOLUTIONCONFETTI  
2025FUTUREHOUR  
PARADEDAYEXCITED

MUSICHOLIDAYBALL  
PEOPLEHAPPYRESOLUTION  
LAUGHTER2025GOODBYE

## Stinky Sock Game

Seat everyone in a circle. Quickly pass a pair of rolled-up socks around as music plays. When the music stops, the person holding the socks leaves the game. The last person left is the Toe-tally Tops!

**Standards Link:** Language Arts: Follow simple written directions.



### Extra! Extra! Silly Headlines

Clip newspaper headlines and paste them together to create silly news items. For example:

**Spaghetti** rocket travels to **MOON** hotel

**Standards Link:** Language Arts: Follow simple written directions.

## Our Annual Silly New Year Party

My parents like to host a New Year's Eve party every year. And these \_\_\_\_\_ parties are hilarious!

Dad likes to wear a party hat made from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Mom wears a \_\_\_\_\_ gown covered with sparkly \_\_\_\_\_.

They greet each of their guests by shouting "\_\_\_\_\_!"

\_\_\_\_\_ music plays as everyone begins to dance and \_\_\_\_\_. Uncle Ambrose has a \_\_\_\_\_ voice and likes to \_\_\_\_\_ loudly.

People bring lots of \_\_\_\_\_ appetizers and \_\_\_\_\_ snacks, such as cheesy \_\_\_\_\_, sweet \_\_\_\_\_ and spicy \_\_\_\_\_ on toothpicks. Aunt Clara always fills the punch bowl with \_\_\_\_\_ which the guests look forward to each year.

As the clock strikes midnight, everyone shouts "\_\_\_\_\_!" and many \_\_\_\_\_ are dropped from upstairs onto the surprised and delighted party guests. It's sure a \_\_\_\_\_ way to start the New Year!

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## Kid Scoop Puzzler

### Toilet Paper Tower Toss

Make a tall tower of toilet paper rolls. Take turns trying to knock over as many rolls as you can by tossing a rolled up sock at the tower three times.

Which player knocked over the most rolls? Add up how many rolls they knocked over with each turn to see who won.



|        |   |   |   |
|--------|---|---|---|
| Aziz   | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Carlos | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| Kendra | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Anna   | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Mia    | 5 | 2 | 3 |

**Standards Link:** Math: Calculate sums and differences.

## Double Double Word Search

Find the words by looking up, down, backwards, forwards, sideways and diagonally.

ASK  
BALL  
CLOCK  
DANCE  
GAME  
HOUR  
MIDNIGHT  
MOON  
MUSIC  
PARADE  
PARTY  
SOCK  
TOSS  
TOWER  
YEAR

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | M | D | A | N | C | E | N | E | A |
| M | O | L | L | A | B | L | O | C | D |
| I | F | W | A | G | Y | H | O | U | R |
| D | H | L | E | K | A | E | M | C | Y |
| N | P | Y | S | R | D | M | S | I | K |
| I | Z | A | S | A | E | S | E | S | C |
| G | L | V | R | E | O | C | J | U | O |
| H | Q | A | R | T | B | G | W | M | S |
| T | P | V | J | W | Y | E | A | R | J |

**Standards Link:** Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE **Kid Scoop** LESSON LIBRARY

## What's New?

Look through the newspaper for three things that didn't exist when your parents were born. Ask them which of these things made the biggest difference in their lives.

**Standards Link:** Follow simple written instructions.



## What do frogs shout on the first day of January?

ANSWER: "HOPEY NEW YEAR!"

## Write On!

### Let's Get Silly!

How would you like to get silly in the New Year? What silly things would you do? Write about them.

## Your Neighborhood

It's what's most important to you, to your kids, to your family. It's easy to stay on top of what is happening around you with the

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# 2024 Sports Year in Review

Dear Readers,

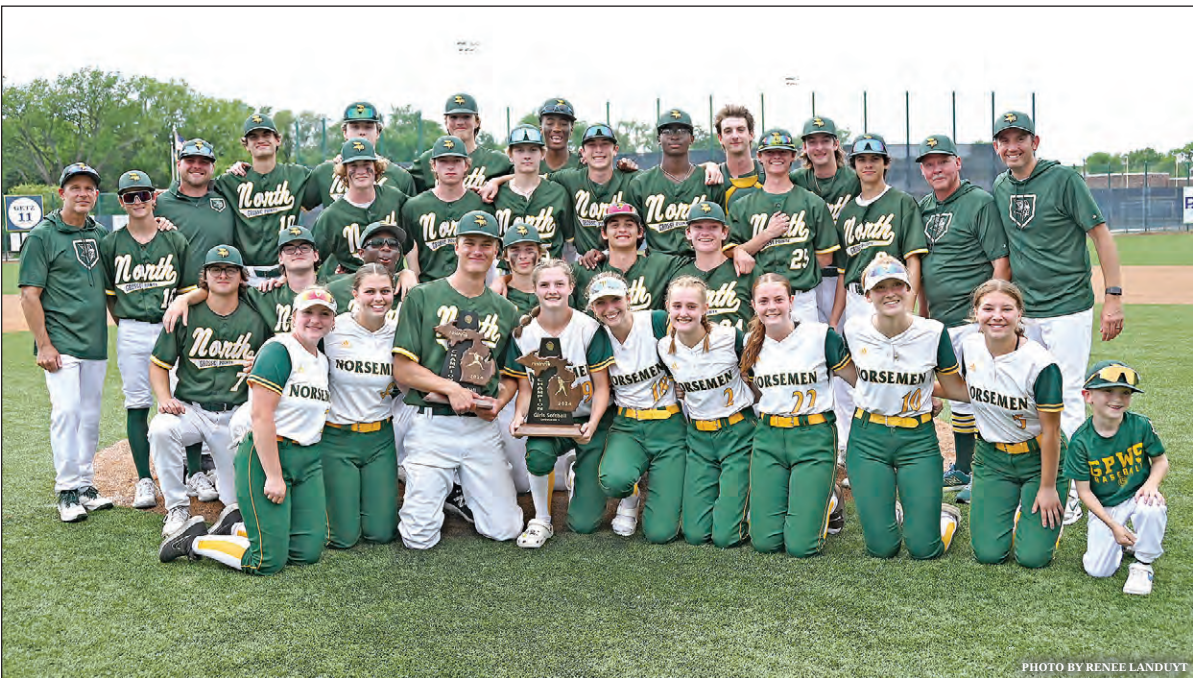
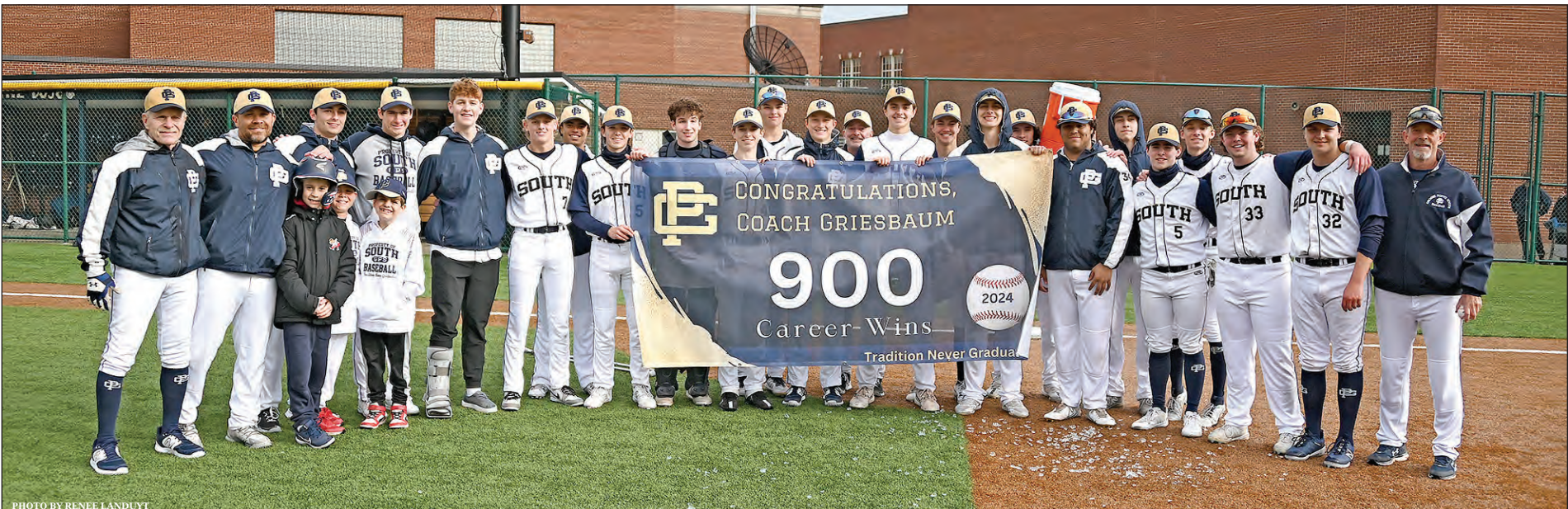
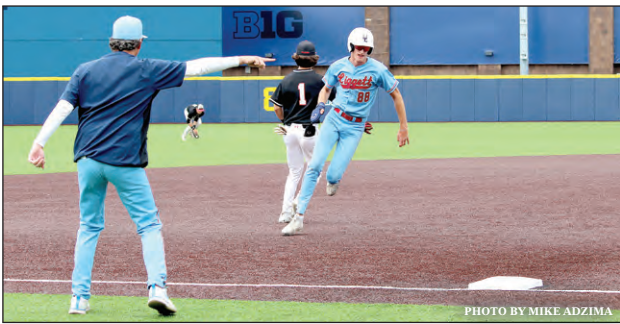
In our first sports section of 2025, we would like to take the opportunity to look back at the year that was 2024. It was another incredible year for Grosse Pointe’s high school sports teams, all of which gave the community countless memorable moments.

This is a chance to look back at the championship trophies raised, the heartbreaking losses endured and the record-breaking performances achieved by the incredibly talented teams and athletes that represent the Pointes with pride.

These are the moments that shaped 2024 into another unforgettable year in sports and we are excited to continue telling the stories of these great athletes and programs in 2025.

Cheers to a very happy, prosperous and victorious new year!

*Mike Adzim*  
Sports Reporter



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# Winter 2024

## Girls varsity ice hockey

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2023-24 season saw the Grosse Pointe South girls hockey team return to state champion status. The Blue Devils went 23-3-2 during the season and won the Michigan Girls High School Hockey League (MGHSHL) Division 1 state championship for the first time since 2018.

South defeated crosstown rival University Liggett School in the state championship game with a narrow 1-0 victory. Maeve Hix scored the game-winning goal in the first period, with the Blue Devils’ defense and an outstanding performance by goalie Rosie Smith helping the team hold on to win the title.

Senior captain Anne Wayman led the team in points with 40 while junior Abby Evans scored 22 goals to lead the team in that category. Head coach Lexi Bohlinger was named the league’s Coach of the Year.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights’ quest for a four-peat of state championships was dashed in the 2023-24 season, losing to Grosse Pointe South in the state final, but it still was another strong winter for Liggett girls hockey. The team went undefeated in the regular season and had a final record of 22-1-2 while also seeing one of its seniors receive the state’s highest honor.

Sofie Ancona was named 2023-24 Miss Hockey by the MGHSHL. Ancona was the state’s leading scorer, finishing with 73 points, including 48 goals and 25 assists in just 25 games. She is now playing NCAA Division III hockey for the Hood College Blazers in Maryland, where she currently leads the team in points for the 2024-25 season as a freshman.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North’s girls hockey team made the move up to Division 1 in the MGHSHL for the 2023-24 season and saw highs and lows throughout the winter. North battled through the regular season to finish with a record of 11-10 for the year and was eliminated in the opening round of the playoffs with a loss to Orchard Lake St. Mary’s.

Josie Cueter led the team in points and was among the top scorers in the state. The junior finished the year with 52 points, scoring 30 goals while adding 22 assists.

## Girls varsity basketball

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen had an exceptional season in 2023-24, led by a strong group of seniors who spent years leading the program. While the team did not quite match the exciting playoff run it had the season before, there still was plenty of excitement on the hardwood.

North finished the season with a record of 19-6, taking second place in the MAC Red Division. They earned a spot in the league tournament, making it to the championship game. Eva Borowski was the hero in the MAC Red/White Tournament final, hitting a buzzer-beater shot to win the trophy 46-44 over Anchor Bay.

Senior Natalie Babcock, who now plays NCAA Division I softball for University of Detroit Mercy, eclipsed 1,000 points in her basketball career during the season and was named All-State in Division 1 by the BCAM. North brought home the district championship for the third season in a row, defeating Roseville in the final. The season ended in the regional semifinal round of the playoffs with a loss to Royal Oak.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils had a relatively young team in the 2023-24 season and experienced some success, earning a berth in the district final round of the playoffs. Finishing 12-12 overall, South was fourth in the MAC Red Division.

Junior Maddy Benard had a strong season that ended with her earning Division 1 All-State honors from the BCAM. South got a playoff victory in the district semifinals, routing Detroit Martin Luther King Jr. 56-10, before falling to Cass Tech in a close district final game.

**University Liggett**  
Despite a losing regular season in 2023-24, the postseason was where the Liggett girls basketball team really shined during the winter. The Knights continued their dominance in the Division 3 district tournament, defeating Detroit Leadership Academy and Mount Clemens in the district tournament to win the title for a third consecutive year.

Liggett earned another playoff win over Detroit Communication Media Arts in the regional semifinal, but fell to Lutheran Northwest in the regional final game to end the season with a record of 9-14.

## Boys varsity basketball

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils had a strong run through the 2023-24 season that ended with an unfortunate early loss in the playoffs. Led by senior Karter Richards, who was named Division 1 All-State by the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan (BCAM) and made the organization’s “Best of the Best” list, the Blue Devils finished the season with an 18-5 record.

South went undefeated in league play to win the MAC Red Division for a second consecutive season. The team also won the MAC Red/White Tournament with a thrilling 59-56 win over Warren Lincoln. In the playoffs, South was eliminated in the opening round of district play with a loss to Detroit Martin Luther King Jr.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
In the second season under head coach Rob Johnson in 2023-24, the Norsemen experienced ups and downs throughout the winter. North got out to a somewhat shaky start to the season, undergoing losing streaks in December and January, but bounced back toward the end of the regular season with four straight wins in February.

The Norsemen finished with a final record of 9-13, finishing sixth in the MAC White Division. North was eliminated in the opening round of the district playoffs with a loss to Detroit Cass Tech.

**University Liggett**  
The 2023-24 season ushered in a new era of University Liggett boys basketball with the arrival of new head coach James Scott. The Knights were a young team that experienced growing pains throughout the winter, going on a six-game losing streak to start the season.

Things picked up for Liggett when the calendar flipped to January. One of the biggest highlights of the year came Jan. 24, when the Knights earned a thrilling 51-48 win over Lake Shore on the Detroit Pistons’ court at Little Caesars Arena.

Liggett won its first game of the playoffs, opening the district round with a victory over Madison Heights Madison. The team then was eliminated in the district semifinals with a loss to Center Line Prep Academy.

## Boys varsity ice hockey

**Grosse Pointe South**  
South’s 2023-24 season was the first under new head coach Alan Korolewicz. There were ups and downs throughout the winter, including a long losing streak in December and January, as the Blue Devils finished 8-16-1 for the year.

In the playoffs, South won its first-round game of the Division 2 regional tournament against Port Huron 10-1. The team was then eliminated in the regional semifinals with a close 5-4 loss to De La Salle Collegiate.

Drew Brady led the Blue Devils with 25 points for the season, including 11 goals and 14 assists. Evan Bernard was the team’s leader in goals with 12.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen struggled through much of the 2023-24 season on the ice, winning just a single game in the regular season. That one win was a 5-4 overtime victory over Woodhaven in December. The playoffs were not much kinder to North, with the team losing in the opening round of the Division 3 regional tournament against Bishop Foley.

Leading the team in points was senior Matthew Lorelli, who had 18 goals — also the most on the team — and six assists.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights had a strong season on the ice in 2023-24 and came close to finally capturing a regional championship in the playoffs, which has eluded them in recent years. The team finished the regular season with a record of 15-7-1 and enjoyed four-game winning streaks in both January and February.

Gary Stacy had 30 points, 12 goals and 18 assists to lead the Knights. Kevin Vreeken led the team in finding the back of the net with 13 goals.

In the playoffs, Liggett dominated in the regional semifinals with an 8-0 win over Bishop Foley. The regional final saw the Knights lose a close 4-3 game to eventual Division 3 state champion Cranbrook-Kingswood.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GROSSE POINTE NORTH ATHLETICS

PHOTOS BY MIKE ADZIMA



# Winter 2024

## Boys varsity swim and dive

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2023-24 winter swim and dive season was another banner year for Grosse Pointe South's varsity boys team. The Blue Devils won the MAC Red league championship for an unprecedented 26th consecutive season, winning nine events at the league championship meet.  
At the Division 2 state finals meet, South finished in sixth place overall as a team.  
Senior Troy Liu made big waves at the Division 2 state finals in March, becoming the state champion in the 50 freestyle and taking second place in the 100 freestyle. He also was a part of the fourth-place 200 freestyle relay team along with teammates Ben Bryan, Vince Massefoli and Joey Drawbaugh. Liu, Bryan, C.J. Schindlbeck and Paul Kaminski also finished in sixth place in the 200 medley relay.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen had strong performances in the water for the 2023-24 swim and dive season. North finished third at the MAC Red league championship meet and saw some swimmers go on to the Division 2 state finals and break some records in the process.  
North finished 16th at the state finals as a team, but earned top-10 finishes in a few events. Tommy Moreland finished sixth in the 100 butterfly at states and set a new school record. Also setting a new school record was teammate James Gusmano, who took eighth in the 50 freestyle. Moreland, Gusmano, Connor McMahon and Keegan Wettstein teamed up to set a new school record while taking seventh place at states in the 200 freestyle relay.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights had just one swimmer representing the school in the 2023-24 season. Brendan Beeland swam for Liggett throughout the season and earned his spot in the Division 3 state finals, where he finished 13th in the 500 free-style.



PHOTO BY PETER GUSMANO



PHOTO BY DAILEY JOGAN



COURTESY PHOTO

## Varsity wrestling

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2023-24 season was a historic one for the Grosse Pointe South wrestling program. The Blue Devils saw their first-ever wrestler capture a state championship and had another wrestler who broke some barriers for the team in the sport.  
Junior Wyatt Hepner had an incredible run through the season that ended at Ford Field in the Division 1 state finals. Hepner battled his way to the championship match at 138 pounds, winning South its first state championship by defeating Eisenhower's Sam Angello with a 1-0 decision in the finals.  
Senior Milania Rodriguez also had a monumental season for South, becoming the first female wrestler from the school to qualify for the girls state finals at Ford Field.  
Fellow senior Paul Wilson advanced to the state semifinals in the 175-pound weight class, eventually earning All-State honors with a fourth-place finish. Josh Lemanski also was All-State at 165 pounds, finishing eighth in the state in his weight class.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North wrestling was represented at Ford Field once again to close the 2023-24 season. With three wrestlers — Preston Auld, Andrew Persyn and Derand Sacko — qualifying for regionals, Auld was the only one to earn a spot in the state finals.  
Auld made the trip to Ford Field for the second season in a row, losing both his matches in the Division 2 state finals.



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA

## Varsity gymnastics

**Grosse Pointe United Gymnastics**  
The Grosse Pointe United Gymnastics team had some impressive highlights in the 2024 season. The squad finished first in its league in February and just missed out on qualifying as a team for state finals.  
However, there were five gymnasts who qualified individually to represent the team at states. Lucy Tull would go on to earn All-State status in Division 2 by finishing seventh in the balance beam.

Have a safe & happy holiday season!

This, and every year- My family and I are extremely grateful & humbled, by the amazing clients I am fortunate enough to have.

"I can't say enough good things about Tom. He helped us find a house and then sell it several years later. When we were looking for our home, he spent countless hours showing us around and his knowledge and insights helped us fall in love with the area. When we finally found our home, Tom did an expert job in conducting what proved to be a difficult negotiation. When it was time to sell, there was no doubt that Tom was our guy. Once again, he came through and far exceeded our expectations. It was a particularly complicated sale because we were overseas at the time. Tom wasn't phased. He handled things in our absence with aplomb (which included many tasks that he would not have to do in a normal sale), happily accommodated a 12-hour time difference, and delivered a final result that was well above what we expected going in. Most importantly, Tom is just a solid human being all around. Again, I cannot recommend him enough"

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Spring 2024



# Boys varsity baseball

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The 2024 baseball season was another memorable year for the Norsemen, ultimately leading to the team’s second trip to the Division 1 baseball final four in the past three years. The team’s incredible post-season run was awe-inspiring considering North endured what largely would be considered an underwhelming regular season.

Led by a strong group of seniors — including ace pitcher Brennan Hill, pitcher and outfielder Rocco Cardinale, first baseman Brady Beers and more — the Norsemen finished the 2024 regular season with a losing record. They were fourth in the MAC White Division. However, when it came time for the postseason, North took things into another gear.

The run began with the Norsemen making it to the district championship game, where they defeated rival Grosse Pointe South 7-4 to win the title. North’s postseason magic continued into the regional round, with wins over De La Salle Collegiate and Macomb Dakota, to become regional champions.

North cruised to a 9-1 victory over Flushing in the state quarterfinals to officially punch its ticket

to East Lansing and the Division 1 state semifinals. However, that was where the run finished, as the Norsemen fell short of a state championship with a 5-2 loss to Brother Rice in the semifinals.

**University Liggett**  
The University Liggett baseball team saw the beginning of a new era in 2024, with its first season under new head coach Jay Ricci. While the team battled through a challenging schedule in the regular season, the Knights continued the program’s run of post-season success by winning district and regional championships and nearly making it to the Division 2 final four.

Liggett endured one of the toughest schedules in the state by competing in the Catholic League throughout the season, experiencing several highs and lows. That tough regular-season schedule made the Knights well-prepared for the postseason, during which they were able to add some more hardware to the program’s trophy case.

The Knights dominated the Division 2 district tournament, winning over South Lake, Chandler Park Academy and Harper Woods to win the trophy.

Liggett advanced to the regional round and ultimately the regional championship game, where the team won an extra-innings thriller 2-1 over Divine Child. The Knights’ season came to an end in the next game with a heartbreaking 4-3 loss to Trenton in the state quarterfinals.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2024 baseball season started with a milestone win for the South baseball program and its longtime head coach. In his 41st season at the helm of the program, Dan Griesbaum Sr. earned his 900th win as a head coach with the Blue Devils in April, as the team was beginning the spring campaign.

The milestone at the beginning of the season was one of the highs of a rollercoaster season. The Blue Devils played in the always-challenging MAC Red Division with mixed results, ultimately finishing fifth in the division at the end of the regular season.

When it came time for the postseason, South advanced to the district final round after a win over Roseville in the semifinals. However, the team’s season ended with a loss to Grosse Pointe North in the district championship game.

# Girls varsity softball

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The 2024 season was one in which the Norsemen tried to build off of one of the program’s most successful campaigns ever in 2023. While they were not quite able to replicate that success, it still was another strong year for North softball when it came to postseason accolades.

North had its struggles during the regular season and ultimately finished seventh in the MAC Red Division. Things picked up for the Norsemen in the postseason, however, with the team defeating Detroit Cass Tech and Lakeview to win the district championship for the third time in as many seasons. North

was eliminated in the regional round with a loss to Woodhaven.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
Grosse Pointe South softball racked up tallies in the win column for much of the 2024 season. Led by All-State honorable mention Addie Waller, among others, the Blue Devils finished the season with a record of 27-10, including getting a rivalry win over Grosse Pointe North in May.

South ended the regular season third in the MAC Blue Division and looked to carry its strong play into the playoffs. Those hopes were cut short, however, with a loss to Lakeview in the district semifinals to end the

season.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights experienced a successful spring on the softball diamond once again in 2024. Liggett collected wins throughout the season while battling through the Catholic League and hoped for postseason success as well.

The Knights got that, as they once again were crowned district champions in Division 3, winning the title with a dominant 13-2 victory over Clawson. Liggett picked up another playoff win after that to advance to the regional championship game, where a loss to Algonac ultimately ended the team’s run.



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA

# Girls varsity soccer

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2024 season was one of the strongest the South girls soccer program experienced in recent years. The team had plenty of success in the regular season and the postseason, including a playoff run all the way to the regional finals.

South finished the season with a record of 11-5-5, finishing second in the MAC White Division and just two points out of first place. In the playoffs, the Blue Devils took home the Division 1 district championship with wins over Wyandotte Roosevelt and Dearborn Fordson. They then defeated Dearborn in the regional semifinal round to make it to the regional finals among the final eight teams left in the state. A 3-0 loss to Salem in the regional final brought

South’s playoff run to an end.

The team had six players receive postseason All-State recognition for their efforts, including Savannah Spangler, Lilia Moussiaux, Morgan Lainey, Lilia Brundage, Brooke Hepner and Ava Pappas.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
Coming off a miraculous run to the 2023 Division 2 state championship, the 2024 North girls soccer team had big shoes to fill. With new head coach Thalu Masindi, the Norsemen were unable to repeat the magic of the prior season.

Led by first team All-State senior Amelia Streberger, North finished the spring with a record of 6-14-1, coming in sixth in the MAC Red Division. The team picked up a couple wins

in the playoffs, advancing to the district championship game before being eliminated by St. Clair.

**University Liggett**  
The University Liggett girls soccer team always enters the spring season with high hopes. Those high expectations saw mixed results in 2024, with the Knights finishing with an 8-8 record.

When it came time for the postseason, Liggett picked up a couple wins over Bishop Foley and Bloomfield Hills Roper to make it to the district championship game in Division 4. However, a loss to Shrine Catholic in the district final brought an end to the year’s campaign for the Knights. Senior Sofie Ancona and junior Kerih Short both received All-State recognition at the end of the year.



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA

# Boys varsity lacrosse

**University Liggett**  
Liggett’s boys lacrosse program began the spring 2024 season with a hot start. The Knights won their first five games in a row to start the year and were victorious in eight of their first nine contests.

Liggett ultimately finished the season with an 11-4 record and fell short of one of its biggest goals: winning a Catholic League championship. The Knights went on to be eliminated by U of D Jesuit in the first round of the regional playoffs.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
Things started slow for the Grosse Pointe South boys lacrosse team in 2024, but picked up as the season progressed. The Blue Devils lost their first four games and finished the season with a record of 6-11.

After winning the MAC Tournament championship the year before, South advanced to the final yet again this spring but lost to Port Huron. South earned a playoff win over De La Salle Collegiate in the regional tournament before being eliminated by Cranbrook-Kingswood in the regional semifinal.

Lucas Valice, Jackson Rybicki, Jack Smith and Ryan Peabody earned All-State recognition.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North’s boys lacrosse team struggled through much of the 2024 season. Wins were hard to come by for the Norsemen, who finished sixth in the MAC Red Division with a record of 3-15. In the playoffs, the team was eliminated by Cranbrook-Kingswood in the opening round of the regional tournament.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GROSSE POINTE SOUTH ATHLETICS





# Spring 2024

## Girls varsity lacrosse

**University Liggett**  
A seven-game winning streak to start the season helped the Knights' girls lacrosse team kick off the 2024 season strong. Liggett finished the season with a 10-3 record and came up just short of winning the Catholic League championship. Olivia Marcero ended up being named All-State honorable mention for Division 2 at the end of the season, which for the Knights ended with a loss to Cranbrook-Kingswood in the regional tournament.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
South's girls lacrosse team saw highs and lows throughout the spring season, finishing second in the MAC Red Division with a 9-10 record. The team defeated crosstown rival Grosse Pointe North with a dominant victory in the first round of the regional playoffs, but was eliminated by Troy in the regional quarterfinals.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North's girls lacrosse team was unable to celebrate many wins during the 2024 season. The Norsemen went 5-13 while finishing fourth in the MAC Red Division. When it came time for playoffs, they were eliminated in the opening round of the regional tournament by Grosse Pointe South.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY LIGGETT ATHLETICS

## Boys varsity golf

**Grosse Pointe South**  
South's boys golf team had its share of success on the links during the spring. One of the biggest highlights came in early May when the Blue Devils took first place in the Charger Invitational at the Flint Golf Club. Brennan Sullivan played a major part in the win by shooting 67, going five under par. The team also finished third at the MAC Red championships in May.

**University Liggett**  
The Liggett boys golf season in 2024 was highlighted by the performance of Steve McMahon. The junior was an individual qualifier for the Division 3 boys state championship and finished tied for 42nd in the field. He also was an All-State honorable mention.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen went through the 2024 season finishing tied for fourth at the MAC Red championships. North was 12th in the region at the end of the year and did not have any golfers qualify for the state finals.

## Girls varsity tennis

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils had another strong spring on the tennis courts in 2024. One of the highlights of the season came when South dominated the Division 2 regional competition, winning seven of the eight flights to win the regional title. That earned the Blue Devils a spot in the Division 2 state finals, where they finished in seventh place, with Maddy Youngblood making it to the state semifinals in No. 4 singles.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen punctuated the 2024 season with a trip to the Division 2 girls state finals. North finished second in the region behind Grosse Pointe South and had an individual regional champion, with Laila Aslam winning the bracket in No. 1 singles. She went on to be named All-State as North finished 17th at the state finals.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights were led by strong performances in 2024, but did not experience much success in the postseason. While players like Audrey Didio, Claudia Haouillou and others had success in many of their matches throughout the season, Liggett finished fourth in the regional tournament and was unable to secure a spot in the state finals.



PHOTO BY ELIZA HIX



PHOTO BY GRACE GERSEY

## Girls varsity track & field

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils had another strong year on the track led by longtime head coach Steve Zaranek. South took second place in the regional competition and had athletes qualify for states in five different events.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North's girls track and field team finished fourth in the region and had two athletes representing the Norsemen at the Division 1 state finals. The highest finisher was Bailey Hopko, who took 14th place in the 4x800 relay. Morgan Duff, Adelina Parikh, Molly Reynolds and Evelyn Wodzisz also made it to states in the 4x400 relay. Duff also finished 23rd in the long jump. Olivia Barba finished 13th in the state in the discus.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights took third place in the Division 3 regional finals for girls track and field and had some athletes who represented the team at the state finals. Olivia Jacque, Mychala Penn, Aisha Manneh and Collette Peabody qualified for states in the 4x100 relay. Kelsey Beckett also made it to states for discus, where she finished 25th overall.

## Boys varsity track & field

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North's boys track and field team had a memorable 2024 season and had a state champion among them. Senior Clinton Allen's throw of 177 feet, 3 inches at the Division 1 track and field state finals in June made him the state champion in discus. His teammate Marcus Robinson finished 20th in the same event.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The boys track and field team from South was unable to capture a MAC Red Division championship in 2024, but had success at regionals and sent three athletes to the state finals. South finished third as a team at regionals, with Jack Martin winning the regional championship in the 1600 and Jet Miller winning a regional title in the 3200.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights had a strong season on the track in 2024, with athletes doing big things at both regionals and the state finals. Liggett's boys track and field team finished second in the Division 3 regional competition.

**University Liggett**  
Santino Cicarella finished first in the region in the 100- and 200-meter races. Jake Juip once again qualified for and won the state championship in the 200-meter adaptive race. Cicarella went on to finish second in the 200 and fourth in the 100 at states. He also was part of the 4x100 relay team for Liggett, along with Marvin Hartfield Jr., Jermaine Calloway Jr. and James McCullough, who qualified for states and finished 21st. Michael Darlington was 20th at states in the 1600 meter, while Jordan Stefanides finished 24th in the shot put after winning the regional competition.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE MONTGOMERY





PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

# Boys varsity football

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The 2024 season was a monumental one for Grosse Pointe South’s football team. The Blue Devils made history as the first team in the program’s history ever to reach ten wins in a season and delivered several thrilling moments on the gridiron along the way. South went a perfect 9-0 throughout the regular season, including a 5-0 record in MAC White Division play, which gave the team its third straight division title. The Blue Devils also closed the regular season with a seventh straight win over rival Grosse Pointe North, tied for the longest winning streak in the rivalry’s history. When it came time for the playoffs, South earned its historic tenth win of the season dramatically. The Blue Devils defeated MAC White Division foe Roseville 27-26 in the first round of the Division 2 playoffs, with South’s defense making a key fourth-down stop late in the game to secure the win. The magical season came to an end the next week with a 35-21 loss in the district final round of the playoffs to De La

Salle Collegiate. Two Blue Devils received honors from the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association (MHSFCA) after the season ended. Senior quarterback Jack Lupo and senior linebacker Lex Willson were both named first team All-State in Division 2.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
2024 was almost like a tale of two different seasons for the Grosse Pointe North football team. The Norsemen started the year by losing their first three games but then followed that with a four-game winning streak in the middle of the season to get back on track and finished the season at 5-6. North’s record of 4-1 in the MAC Gold Division put them in a three-way tie for first place and earned the team at least a share of the division championship for a third consecutive season. Despite a loss to rival Grosse Pointe South to end the season, the Norsemen bounced back in the playoffs with a thrilling 30-27 win over Port Huron on a game-winning field goal in the opening round of the

Division 3 postseason. North then saw its season end in the district final round with a loss to Detroit Martin Luther King Jr. To end the year, senior receiver Leo Perettie and senior linebacker Daylon Doe received first team All-State honors in Division 3 from the MHSFCA.

# Boys varsity soccer

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The South boys soccer program bounced back in 2024 with a strong year that brought success back into the program. It took the team a bit of time to find its footing in the first weeks of the season, but when the Blue Devils hit their stride few could stop them. Things really began clicking for South in September when the team began a 12-game unbeaten streak that extended into the postseason. The Blue Devils had an overall record of 15-4-3 and went 9-0-1 in MAC White Division play to bring home the league title. The team beat Roseville and Fraser in the first two rounds of the district playoffs to move on to the district championship game, where a loss to Lakeview brought the season to an end. Senior Onction Zape received third team All-State honors in Division 1 from the Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association (MIHSSCA) at the end of the season and broke his own school record for most goals in a season with 28.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The 2024 season had its ups and downs for the Norsemen’s boys soccer team. Finishing with a record of 9-10-2, North ended up fourth in the MAC Blue Division. In the postseason, the team defeated Lamphere in the district semifinal round to advance to the district championship game in Division 2, where its season came to an end with a loss to De La Salle Collegiate. Two Norsemen were recognized by the MIHSSCA at the end of the year for their achievements. Senior Matthew Robert was named second team All-State for Division 2 and sophomore Vincenzo Bonasso received an All-State honorable mention.

**University Liggett**  
The University Liggett boys soccer team had another strong run throughout the fall. The Knights finished the season with a 12-4-1 record and had a five-game winning streak in September that helped propel the team onto the right path. In the playoffs, the team won its first game of the Division 4 district tournament over Allen Park Inter-City Baptist before losing to Detroit Cristo Rey in the district championship game. Senior captain Bobby Harthorn received third team All-State honors in Division 4 from the MIHSSCA at the end of the fall.



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA



COURTESY PHOTO

# Girls varsity field hockey

**University Liggett**  
The University Liggett field hockey team may not have achieved state-championship status this season, but it did achieve one of its major goals this fall. In late September, the Knights defeated Marian 4-3 in a shootout to win a dramatic Catholic League championship. Liggett finished the regular season with a record of 10-3 and had to face a crosstown rival in the first round of the Division 2 playoffs. The Knights defeated Grosse Pointe North 4-1 to advance to the state quarterfinals, where they lost to eventual Division 2 state champion Chelsea. Olivia Marcero was named

Division 2 first team All-State and Ally Orlick received second team All-State honors from the Michigan High School Field Hockey Coaches Association (MHSFHCA).

**Grosse Pointe South**  
It was another strong season for Grosse Pointe South field hockey that met an unfortunate early end in the postseason. South’s record through the regular season was 10-4-3 and the team had to compete in the play-in round of the Division 2 state playoff tournament. The Blue Devils defeated Regina 8-0 to open the postseason. However, South would lose 2-0 to eventual state

champion Chelsea in the next game of the playoffs ending the season. Scout Webber received first team All-State honors in Division 2 from the MHSFHCA and goalkeeper Harriet Kowalski was named second team All-State.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen entered the field hockey season with a mix of skill and experience that ultimately led to a season of mixed results on the field. North had a record of 8-7-1 to end the regular season and had to face crosstown rival University Liggett in the first round of the Division 2 playoffs, with a 4-1 loss ending the team’s season.

# Girls varsity volleyball

**Grosse Pointe South**  
It was a successful season of volleyball all around the Pointes, and it was no exception for the Blue Devils. For South, it was another year and another district title as the team once again emerged as district champions in Division 1, defeating Cass Tech in the finals. The Blue Devils finished with a record of 19-14-1 and took third place in the MAC Red Division. After winning the district championship, South was eliminated from the playoffs in the regional round by Livonia Stevenson. Junior outside hitter

Gabby DiVita was named first team All-State in Division 1 by the Michigan Interscholastic Volleyball Coaches Association for her performance throughout the season. The Norsemen also got to spend this fall adding some volleyball hardware to the school’s trophy case. North captured a Division 1 district championship with a win over Lakeview in November. Overall, the team ended the season with a 15-13 record and finished fourth in the MAC White Division.

Following its district title win, the Norsemen were eliminated in the regional round of the playoffs after losing to Eisenhower. University Liggett 2024 brought a three-peat of district championships for the Knights’ volleyball team. Liggett made it three straight Division 3 district titles by defeating Mount Clemens in the championship game in November. Liggett finished the season with an overall record of 13-7 and was eliminated from the playoffs after losing to Cass City in the regional round.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY LIGGETT ATHLETICS



# Fall 2024

## Girls varsity swim & dive

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The South girls swim and dive team continued its string of success in the 2024 season. Among the team's many achievements this fall was yet another finish atop the MAC Red Division and a top-two finish in the state.

In November, the Blue Devils swam their way to an unprecedented 24th consecutive MAC Red Division championship, with swimmers winning league titles in eight different events. South then went on to finish in second place at the Division 2 girls swim and dive state finals and had a few individual state champions bring home hardware.

Junior Whitney Handwork won the state championship in the 50 freestyle. She also achieved second place in the state with teammates Hannah DiDio, Quinn Ryan and Heidi Bryan in the 200 freestyle relay.

Caroline Bryan won the state championship in the 100 butterfly and was a champion in the 200 medley relay along with Ryan, Mischa Eng and Nicole McEnroe. In total, South had swimmers achieve All-State status in nine events.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen had strong performances in some of the biggest meets of the fall that ultimately helped lead the team to a top-ten finish in the state. North finished second in the MAC Red Division championships behind Grosse Pointe South.

**University Liggett**  
Liggett had two swimmers who ended up representing the Knights at the Division 3 state finals to end the season. Paige Moutard and Liliana Haladjian qualified for the finals in the 200 freestyle, 500 freestyle and 100 butterfly.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS TREPANOWSKI



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSICA BRYAN

## Boys varsity cross country

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The success of the boys cross country team at South in 2024 largely mirrored that of the girls varsity team. South's boys team also was a perfect 14-0 in MAC White Jamboree races and were crowned league champions.

The Blue Devils finished fifth at the regional meet and had Tethyan McKenzie go on to represent them at the Division 1 state finals.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The Norsemen finished the 2024 season seventh in the MAC Red Division. The team took eighth place at regionals, with three runners finishing within the top 50 at the regional meet. However, none of the Norsemen qualified for this year's state finals.

**University Liggett**  
Liggett's boys cross country team finished sixth at the CHSL Cardinal Division Championship meet this fall. Clayton Gady and Michael Darlington both made the top 20 at the league championship meet. Gady also had a top-30 finish at the Division 3 regional meet, where the Knights placed 11th as a team.

## Boys varsity tennis

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North's boys tennis team made some program history this fall by winning the team's first outright MAC Red Division championship in three decades. The Norsemen finished second in the Division 2 regional tournament and earned a qualifying spot in the state finals as a steam, with the No. 1 doubles pair of Louis Macres and Gruhith Yerramali winning a regional championship.

North would end up finishing 17th at the state finals, with Macres and Yerramali earning Division 2 All-State honors from the Michigan High School Tennis Coaches Association (MHSTeCA) to end the season.

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils had another strong campaign on the tennis court this fall. While they failed to capture a share of the MAC Red Division title, the team still qualified for states with a third-place finish at regionals.

South would go on to finish 14th overall at the Division 2 state finals, with Matthew Holowski receiving an All-State honorable mention from the MHSTeCA.

**University Liggett**  
The Knights shined on the court during the fall season, especially in the regional competition. Liggett became Division 4 regional champions this season and had athletes win individual regional titles in seven of the eight brackets at the tournament.

Liggett ended up with a top-three finish in the state, taking third place in the Division 4 boys tennis state finals in October. The team had five players earn All-State recognition. Tise Courtright made the list for singles while the doubles teams of Griffin Marchal and Niko Cooksey and Landen Maltby and Luca Marciano also received All-State honors.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE ZARANER

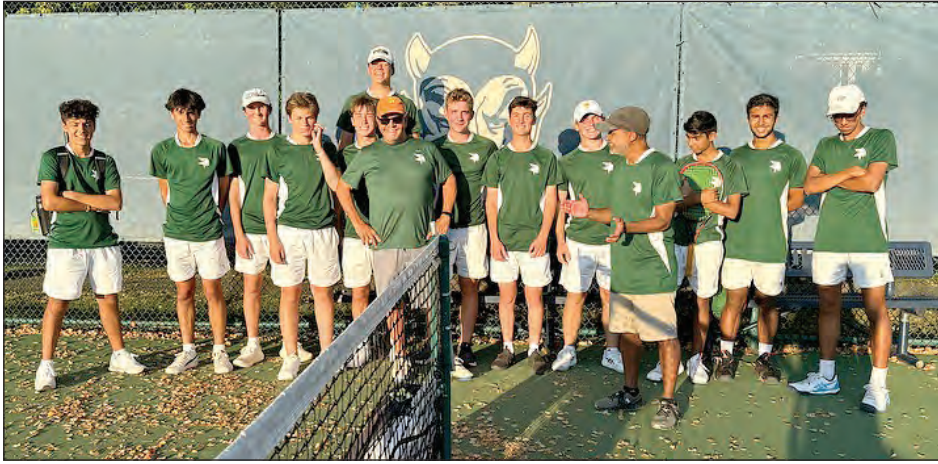
## Girls varsity cross country

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils' varsity girls cross country team was the MAC White Division champion in 2024. South finished in first place at the MAC White/Blue Division Meet in October and took first place with seven varsity runners achieving All-League status. The team also scored a perfect 14-0 across the MAC White Jamborees.

The team did not finish high enough at regionals to earn a team spot in the Division 1 state finals. However, Sarah Koval qualified for states as an individual and would go on to finish among the top 150 runners in the state at the final meet.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
The 2024 season for North girls cross country saw one of its best highlights happen at the Wayne County Championships in early October. The Norsemen ended to a tenth-place finish at the meet. In league competition, the Norsemen ended up finishing seventh in the MAC Red Division and did not have any runners who qualified for the state finals.

**University Liggett**  
This fall, Eleanor Szafarczyk finished 18th while representing Liggett at the CHSL Cardinal Division Championship meet in October. The Knights did not finish high enough in the Division 3 regional competition to qualify for the state finals, with Phoebe Rinaldi having the highest finish for Liggett at regionals in 69th place.



COURTESY PHOTO

## Girls varsity golf

**Grosse Pointe South**  
The Blue Devils were just two strokes away from being MAC Red Division champions in 2024. South finished second to Dakota at the MAC Red Tournament, with Lyla Hampton also finishing second as an individual. Hampton also finished second at the regional tournament which earned her a spot at the Division 2 state finals, where she went on to finish 17th.

**Grosse Pointe North**  
North finished in sixth at this fall's MAC Red Division Tournament, with Catie Kaslatas and Katie Schorer both earning top-30 finishes in the league. The Norsemen finished in ninth place at regionals, with Kaslatas once again leading the way and finishing in the top 40 of the field.



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