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Grosse Pointe News

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VOL. 86, NO. 52, 28 PAGES
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DECEMBER 25, 2025
 GROSSE POINTE, MICHIGAN

Complete news coverage of all the Pointes

For 2026: Infrastructure and finance

By Brad Lindberg
 Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE PARK — Ask Tom Jenny, head of public works, what's up for his department next year and he'll answer with a sentence that will stay relevant for years to come.

"We're looking forward to more new water main improvements, the sidewalk program moving forward, along with the general, everyday progress we're making with the infrastructure, sewer cleaning and televising, getting all our

infrastructure under control," Jenny said.

They're all ongoing projects.

Infrastructure is always on the minds of Park representatives. It dominated City Manager Nick Sizeland's list of goals for 2026.

"This city and our staff continue to bring their 'A' game to the community," Sizeland said. "We continue to strive for greatness."

His anticipated highlights for 2026 include:

- ◆ completion of the

See 2026, page 8A



The tales it could tell

PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

The portion of the 250-year-old white oak from 680 Washington permanently is on display at the entrance to city hall.

250-year-old 'tree cookie' dedicated

By Laurel Kraus
 Staff Writer

CITY OF GROSSE POINTE — "Society grows great when old men or women plant trees in whose shade they will never sit."

So goes an ancient Greek proverb as recited by Councilman Seth Krupp, M.D., before unveiling a historic "tree cookie" last Monday, in memory of City Forester

Brian Colter, who unexpectedly passed away early this year.

"I think about that (quote) in light of Brian and in light of all the people here who are doing things to make our community better that may not benefit them, but will benefit those around them or those in the future," said Krupp, who serves as council liaison to the City's Urban Forestry Commission. "I

think Brian's work really embodied that."

Colter served as the forester for the City, Farms and Park — first hired by the Park in June 1994. His efforts to preserve the tree canopy in the Grosse Pointes spanned many streets and many years.

"As you look around Grosse Pointe Park, Farms and City and see the trees we have in our community, you should

be reminded that those were due to the work of Brian and others that worked with him and came before him," Krupp said. "In particular, I'd remind everybody, as you drive down Jefferson and see the beautiful rows of sycamore trees on both sides of the street, those were due to Brian. He had a huge impact on this commu-

See COOKIE, page 3A

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2025 IN REVIEW

A year of new businesses, new ideas

By Laurel Kraus
 Staff Writer

CITY OF GROSSE POINTE — The Village welcomed new and expanded businesses galore in 2025, while saying goodbye to some local favorites like Ridgecrest and The Campus Shop.

Residents also enjoyed the first annual PorchFest, saw the appointment of their first junior mayor and gave The Neighborhood Club a try as the City's new polling location.

This is the year in review:

January

- ◆ The City enters into an agreement with the Grosse Pointe Public Safety Foundation, allowing it to accept the donation of five license plate readers to be placed at strategic intersections.
- ◆ Ridgecrest closes its

See CITY, page 2A

Something old, something new in the Woods

By Ted O'Neil
 Associate Editor

GROSSE POINTE WOODS — A 75th anniversary celebration, a new manager and a lower millage rate highlighted 2025.

This is the year in review:

January

- ◆ Winterfest at Ghesquiere Park is the

first event of a year-long celebration for the city's 75th anniversary. It includes demonstrations at the recently opened disc golf course, as well as pony rides, a petting zoo, food trucks and a dance party inside a heated tent.

◆ Two administrators at University Liggett School resign after being accused of impermissible personal use of the

school's social media sites.

◆ City council approves spending close to \$200,000 on field upgrades in anticipation of the Grosse Pointe Woods-Shores Little League hosting the state tournament.

February

- ◆ Volunteers on the city's various commissions are honored during

a reception at Lochmoor Club, including John Vitale (30 years on the planning commission), Laura Gaskin (10 years on the community tree commission), Rebecca Veitengruber (10 years on the historical commission) and Barbara Janutol (20 years on the citizens' recreation commission).

See WOODS, page 8A

POINTES OF VIEW

What's on every-one's mind in Grosse Pointe?

Get in on the conversation.

Section A

Public Safety 5A
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 Features 1B
 Obituaries 2B
 Sports 1D
 Classified ads 4D

2025 Pointers of INTEREST

The Grosse Pointe News congratulates our 2025 Pointers of Interest. Page 4A

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2A | NEWS

CITY:

Continued from page 1A

doors, ending a chapter owner Joe Binkowski started when he launched The Village business in July 2021.

◆ Longtime resident Betty Kackley celebrates her 100th birthday.

February

◆ The Pointes and Harper Woods hire Saranda Conn to serve as the cities' first co-responder clinician, working hand-in-hand with public safety.

◆ Councilwoman Maureen Juip will serve as the City's representative on the Active Adult Commission, which manages the senior millage tax funds, as the participating cities vote to execute an interlocal agreement for senior services.

◆ The city contracts with new cloud-based parks and recreation software, which offers personalized access to park accounts and the option for digital park passes.

March

◆ Tom Martindale becomes the public safety department's first captain in more than 60 years.

◆ Parks and Recreation Supervisor Rebecca Jensen leaves the position for a new opportunity as Clinton Township's senior center recreation coordinator. She's worked for the city



Grosse Pointe Farms Sgt. Thom Dionne hands Bear, the cat, to relieved homeowner Nina Wood while she listens to City of Grosse Pointe PSO Jarod Jones tell how the air tag was the key to helping Dionne locate Bear. Gia Wood, right, is happy to see her cat is safe.

25 years, since first being employed as a seasonal lifeguard in 1999.

◆ Officer Randy Perry is sworn into the public safety department after nine years with the Wayne County Airport Authority Police Department.

April

◆ The City's Urban Forestry Commission and members of the Maire Elementary School Green Team partner to plant a tulip tree at the corner of Notre Dame and Waterloo for Arbor Day.

◆ Rather than the prior plan to use the building for a counter-service restaurant, the old Chase Bank at Rivard and Jefferson is contracted for use as a personal office.

◆ After just five years

with the public safety department, Officer Jacob Gentile is named 2024 officer of the year.

May

◆ Construction is completed on the 1906 portion of the 389 St. Clair historic apartments.

◆ An Apple AirTag is used to track and rescue a family cat hiding in the basement laundry room during a house fire on Lincoln.

◆ The owners of Shift Kitchen & Cocktails in The Village take market feedback and shift to a sushi concept with Ryou Sushi.

◆ Defer Elementary School Girl Scouts paint fish on the City's first painted sidewalk crossing along Notre Dame.

◆ Farms resident Chad Murphy is hired as the new parks and recreation coordinator and Trent Hunter is hired for a new position as the parks maintenance technician.

◆ A kitten is rescued from a garbage bag in the Kroger women's bathroom and given a new home with Elise Ciaravino.

◆ City council authorizes the first issuance of bonds to cover design

engineering for its forthcoming sewer separation project.

◆ The old Ray Laethem building at Mack and Marseilles is torn down to make way for a Chick-fil-A location.

June

◆ Pointelle, a makeup and skincare shop, opens in The Village at 17125 Kercheval.

◆ Mayor Sheila Tomkowiak spends three weeks at Harvard University as part of the 2025 Taubman Fellowship for Executive Excellence, which is an intensive, prestigious program for senior executives in state and local government.

◆ Fourteen-year-old Preston Vanderpool presents a \$370 check to the city to go toward rebuilding and restocking the kayak dock at Neff Park. As a National Junior Honor Society fundraising project, Vanderpool collected returnable cans over several weeks to raise the funds.

◆ The Neighborhood Club is the city's new polling location, as Maire Elementary School no longer is an option due to

student safety and security concerns.

◆ The \$21.6 million FEMA grant toward sewer separation faces a setback as FEMA unfavorably to the city changes the criteria used to evaluate the benefit cost analysis which determines fundability.

◆ A donation from Councilman Dave Fries enables the return of little red wagons to Neff Park.

◆ John "Tripp" Studstill III, one month shy of his 12th birthday, is the City's first junior mayor.

July

◆ The Campus Shop closes after six years in The Village.

August

◆ Small Favors expands into The Campus Shop space, in turn expanding its kids' offerings.

◆ Chez LouLou Salon in The Village receives a \$22,600 state grant to support service expansion and new offerings.

September

◆ Hundreds of Pointers take to front yards during the first annual Grosse Pointe PorchFest.

◆ Decker Dermatology & Mohs Surgery opens in The Village.

◆ European Wax Center opens in The Village.

◆ SideStreet Diner celebrates 15 years in The Village, as a woman-owned independent diner.

◆ Bow Tie Orthodontics, owned by Grosse Pointe native Jay Williams, opens a Grosse Pointe location at 18136 Mack.

◆ Homes honored with a 2025 beautification award are 340 Lakeland, 794 Lorraine, 390 Rivard, 392 St. Clair, 548 St. Clair and 1 Woodland Place. Honored with an architectural award is 493

Lakeland.

◆ City officials order The Spice and Tea Exchange to remove a fall window painting in accordance with a city ordinance.

October

◆ The Spice and Tea Exchange appeals the city's direction to remove its fall window display.

◆ Just shy of a year since the Pointes — with the exception of the Shores — and Harper Woods passed the six-year, 0.35-mill senior services millage, an agreement with The Helm for essential senior services is ratified.

◆ The city is expected to receive an additional \$13,000 in emergency funding from the flooding and basement backups that occurred in June 2021.

November

◆ Neff Park, in collaboration with the Neighborhood Club, hosts the first all-Pointes Sporting Equipment Drive.

◆ The City rolls out free parking in The Village after 6 p.m. throughout November and December.

◆ Mayor Sheila Tomkowiak and council members Maureen Juip and Chris Walsh are re-elected to council. Newcomer David Calcaterra receives more votes than incumbent Dave Fries.

◆ The citation against the Spice and Tea Exchange is dismissed after the painting is removed from its window.

◆ Mayor Sheila Tomkowiak proposes off-leash hours for dog owners at Neff Park.

◆ The Village clock arch is adorned with a new set of warm white LED lights.

◆ Chick-fil-A opens on Mack across from the City.

December

◆ Updated plans for the city's stormwater separation project show the cost has skyrocketed to \$52.6 million, even with city engineers shrinking the scope.

◆ A section of a 250-year-old tree from Washington Road is adorned with a historic timeline and placed in city hall in memory of late City Forester Brian Colter.

◆ Public Works Director Pete Randazzo retires after 30 years in the department.



City Director of Public Safety John Alcorn stands next to Capt. Tom Martindale as Public Services Director Pete Randazzo pins on his new badge. Martindale is the first officer in the City to be named captain in more than 60 years.



PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

Owen Odean, Dean Andree, Luke Price, Nick Price, Mara Andree and Ben Price, all cousins, are pulled in a wagon train featuring the new red wagons, which were donated by Grosse Pointe City Councilman David Fries, right.

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PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID at Detroit, Michigan and additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$49.50 per year via mail in the Metro area, \$70 outside.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Grosse Pointe News, 16980 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe, MI 48230.

The deadline for news copy is 3 p.m. Monday.

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Land sale tabled

By Brad Lindberg
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE PARK — A nearly done deal came undone when TIFA board members suspected the sale of authority property was progressing below market value.

“We should get as much as we can for it,” board Vice Chair Christina Anton said during a Dec. 11 meeting of the Tax Increment Finance Authority.

“Why don’t we table this and bring it up at the next meeting?” said Nick Sizeland, TIFA director and city manager.

At stake is a lot which, if retained by TIFA, will cost more than \$250,000 to refurbish as a parking lot, according to Sizeland.

Or, if sold to a private holder, the property would regain taxable status and, for the first time in more than a decade, generate property tax revenue. A portion of that revenue would be sliced

off and given to TIFA for economic improvements to the district.

The land is at 1167 Maryland, just off Kercheval, next to Pointe Hardware Group.

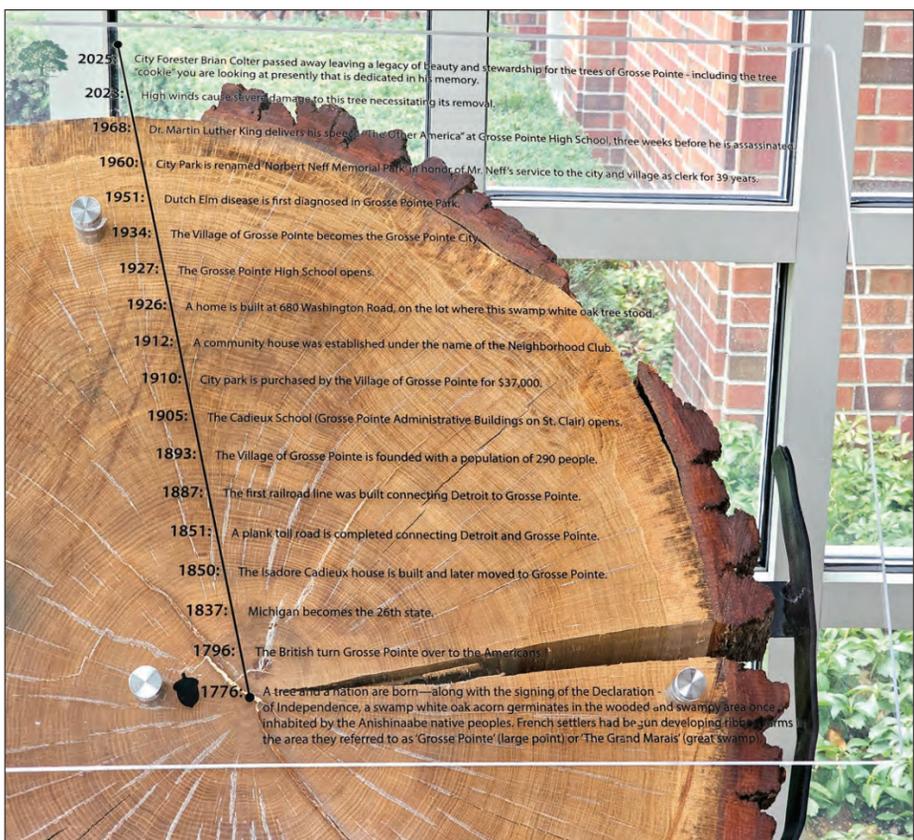
TIFA board members met this month to consider approving an option agreement giving the hardware store’s owner, Waref Hawasli, the exclusive right to buy the property for \$35,000 within one year.

“My understanding from talking to Mr. Hawasli is he’s looking to expand operations of Pointe Hardware and/or consider building a home or office space on that property,” Sizeland said.

“Do we consider this a reasonable price for a lot?” member Joe Tompkins asked.

“Yes,” Sizeland answered. “On Wayburn, the city just sold to Mr. Hawasli the parking lot behind Pointe Hardware

See SALE, page 5A



A closer look at the tree cookie.

PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

COOKIE:

Continued from page 1A

nity.”

Colter’s lasting impact extends to a passion project he was shepherding at the time of his passing: preservation of a 4-foot diameter slice of a 250-year-old tree he planned to have overlaid with museum glass noting historic dates in the community aligning with the tree’s rings.

The project came about when a 250-year-old white oak at 680 Washington had to be cut down as a result of a significant windstorm in 2023.

“Brian went over and got his gigantic chainsaw and cut what he taught me was called a cookie, which is a segment off of the tree, and preserved it,” Krupp said.

With the financial support of the City of Grosse Pointe Foundation, along with additional funds coming out of Colter’s and Krupp’s own pockets, the Urban Forestry Commission worked with the Grosse Pointe Historical Society to identify significant events marking the passage of time in the City

since the tree was born.

Colter recruited a friend who does floor refinishing to put a finish on the tree cookie and worked with an employee in the Park to construct the stand.

“Brian was very passionate about this,” Krupp said. “He was really excited. If you knew Brian, he had this thing he did when he got a little excited about something; he’d get like a twinkle in his eye or a little grin on his face.

“And Brian was so excited to think about how this tree was born the same year as our country and how cool it would be to do this project and unveil it in time for the Semiquincentennial, the 250th anniversary of our country.”

The tree cookie is now permanently displayed in the entrance to city hall, 17147 Maumee, in time for the country’s anniversary in 2026.

“I’ll close with Brian’s favorite quote,” Krupp said, after unveiling the tree cookie at the start of December’s council meeting. “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”

Tree cookie timeline

- 1776: A tree and a nation are born — along with the signing of the Declaration of Independence, a swamp white oak acorn germinates in the wooded and swampy area once inhabited by the Anishinaabe native peoples. French settlers had begun developing ribbon farms in the area they referred to as ‘Grosse Pointe’ (large point) or ‘The Grand Marais’ (great swamp).
- 1796: The British turn Grosse Pointe over to the Americans.
- 1837: Michigan becomes the 26th state.
- 1850: The Isadore Cadieux house is built and later moved to Grosse Pointe.
- 1851: A plank toll road is completed connecting Detroit to Grosse Pointe.
- 1887: The first railroad line is built connecting Detroit to Grosse Pointe.
- 1893: The Village of Grosse Pointe is founded with a population of 290 people.
- 1905: The Cadieux School (Grosse Pointe Administrative Buildings on St. Clair) opens.
- 1910: City park is purchased by The Village of Grosse Pointe for \$37,000.
- 1912: A community house is established under the name of The Neighborhood Club.
- 1926: A home is built at 680 Washington Road, on the lot where this swamp white oak tree stood.
- 1927: Grosse Pointe High School opens.
- 1934: The Village of Grosse Pointe becomes the Grosse Pointe City.
- 1951: Dutch Elm Disease is first diagnosed in Grosse Pointe Park.
- 1960: City park is renamed ‘Norbert Neff Memorial Park’ in honor of Mr. Neff’s service to the city and village as clerk for 39 years.
- 1968: Dr. Martin Luther King delivers his speech “The Other America” at Grosse Pointe High School, three weeks before he is assassinated.
- 2023: High winds cause severe damage to this tree necessitating its removal.
- 2025: City Forester Brian Colter passes away leaving a legacy of beauty and stewardship for the trees of Grosse Pointe, including the tree “cookie” you are looking at presently that is dedicated in his memory.



PHOTO BY LAUREL KRAUS

Lila Ostrowski’s badge is pinned by her stepfather, Ed Shrader, a former officer in the City of Grosse Pointe.

Newest officer hits the road

GROSSE POINTE FARMS — There’s no place like home for newly sworn-in public safety officer Lila Ostrowski.

“I grew up here,” said Ostrowski, who attended Richard Elementary and Pierce Middle schools. “So it was just kind of like sneaking back into my hometown.”

She graduated high school in May, then spent a couple months working in the corrections facility

at the Huron County Jail and as a volunteer firefighter for Harbor Beach, before finding her way to the Farms department.

“My stepdad (Ed Shrader) was a big inspiration for me,” Ostrowski said of the former City of Grosse Pointe officer who retired from Harper Woods. “He’s a veteran. He was a big part in helping me figure out what I

See OFFICER, page 5A

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January 9



Jana Kirlin Brownell
January 16



Tanner Belanger
January 23



Mike Kozak
January 30



Brad Gregory
February 6



Jon Wright
February 13



Darraugh Collins
February 20



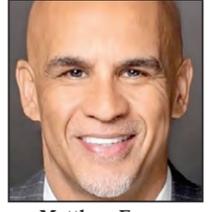
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March 6



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March 13



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March 20



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John Vitale
April 3



Sarah Holder
April 10



Kathy Gaughan
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Joe Ciaravino
April 24



Ted Coutilish
May 1



Bailey Linderman
May 8



Ellen Duff
May 15



Eric Reiter
May 22



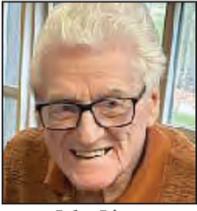
Jim Petersen
May 29



Gianin Carlino
June 5



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June 12



John Lizza
June 19



Heather Wiegand
June 26



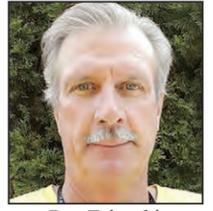
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July 3



Jake Spitz
July 10



Lauren Harrington
July 17



Ron Tyjenski
July 24



Hayden Barry
July 31



Caleb Licata
August 7



Paige Loperfido
August 14



Gabe Loper
August 21



Tim LaRiviere
August 28



Brent Ravello
September 4



Ashley Batt
September 11



Kevin Rasmussen
September 18



Curt Catalo
September 25



Ben Warda
October 2



Finn Wallace
October 9



Laura Meyer
October 16



Andrew Neer
October 23



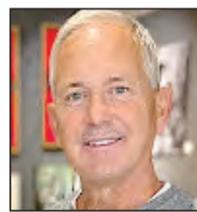
Paul Therriault
October 30



Fritz Damm
November 6



Don Sicko
November 13



Glen McCullough
November 20



Jaime Rae Turnbull
November 27



Erica Harrison
December 4



Rick McAtee
December 11



Louis Theros
December 18

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Farms gets A+ on audit

By Laurel Kraus
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE FARMS — It was no surprise to city officials the Farms earned an unmodified opinion for its fiscal year 2024-25 audit.

“I’ve been chairman (of the audit and budget committee) now for 12 of the 14 years that I’ve been up here,” Councilman Lev Wood said, “and every year it’s just about the same. Just very, very routine and then Plante Moran comes in and gives us an excellent report.”

Plante Moran, the city’s auditors, presented said report to city council in December.

“The city did receive an unmodified audit opinion again in the current year, which essentially means

that the financial statements are compliant with all the rules and regulations,” said Bill Brickey with Plante Moran. “We often refer to that as a clean audit report.”

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, the city’s general fund experienced \$20.1 million in revenue and \$19.8 million in expenditures. The change in fund balance was \$336,000, bringing the total fund balance to \$7.2 million.

Capital projects accounted for \$10 million of the city’s spending.

This included:

- ◆ \$324,000 for public safety vehicles and equipment;
- ◆ \$575,000 for public works vehicles and equipment, including a new Vactor truck;

- ◆ \$206,000 for Pier Park improvements, including the pergola at the pickleball courts;

- ◆ \$1.1 million in land purchases and improvements, including buying a Mack Avenue property and repaving the lots at the dog park and city hall;

- ◆ \$132,000 in city hall improvements, including a remodeled restroom;

- ◆ \$341,000 in sidewalk repairs;

- ◆ \$3 million toward the city’s road program;

- ◆ and \$4.6 million on water and sewer infrastructure, including water mains and the major sewer separation project.

Finance Director Tim Rowland reported the city’s pension and retiree healthcare liabilities

remain well funded: general pension at 96 percent; public safety pension at 112 percent; general retiree healthcare at 73 percent; and public safety retiree healthcare at 75 percent.

“All well above the state requirement of 60 percent for pension and 40 percent for retiree healthcare,” Rowland said. “They’re probably some of the better percentages you’ll see anywhere in the state of Michigan.”

Though not inherently part of the audit, the city also retains its AAA bond rating.

“What does all this

really mean to you?” said Wood, addressing residents. “Well, first it means we’re an extremely well-run city. We have a budget that we stick to extremely well. And given a number of different inputs, the end result is that we have a very, very good bond rating for our city.

“If we have to finance our sewer separation project, like we’re doing right now, or if we have a water main project or something substantial where we have to go out to the bond market, we get the very best interest rates we can because we have a AAA bond rating.”

SALE:

Continued from page 3A

for about \$40,000. When we were looking at the taxable value for the (lot on Maryland), we thought \$35,000 was a fair deal.”

Both lots are about the same size.

“Why would we not ask for \$40,000?” Anton asked. “Even if we’re not sure we’re going to get it, we try to give ourselves a little bargaining room.”

The prior TIFA director and former assistant city manager had the Maryland property appraised in 2022, Sizeland said.

Member Arthur Mullen suggested updating the appraisal.

“That way, we’re not guessing with public funds,” he said.

“I would assume things have gone up and up,” Anton said.

In 2012, TIFA board members approved purchasing the property, which hosted a two-family dwelling, for \$128,000. Still undeveloped and topped with gravel, it remains short of the goal of being turned into a sanctioned parking lot or anything else.

“It would cost us about \$265,000 for us to have a surface parking lot, which this board decided against doing,” Sizeland said.

Because the land is owned by TIFA, it has no taxable value.

“There’s a taxable value for a home in the TIFA district of \$28,000,” Sizeland said. “There’s quite a significant opportunity for TIFA to capture taxes that have not been captured since 2012, about 13 years.”

Help for the holidays

Grosse Pointe Sunrise Rotary President Mark Heppner, right, stands with Lt. Johnathon Harvy of the Salvation Army Conner Creek Corps Community Center, during the club’s Dec. 2 meeting at Ford House. Harvy talked about the opportunity to volunteer by assisting with holiday “bell ringing” collections in the Grosse Pointe area. These one- to two-hour opportunities, with Salvation Army staffers, spread holiday cheer in front of local grocery stores. Harvy encouraged residents to buddy up with a friend and visit registertoring.com to select a community and time slot to volunteer. Sunrise Rotary welcomes residents to its Tuesday morning breakfast presentations at Ford House. Email dennis.rotary1591@gmail.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB GRAMBO



PHOTO BY LAUREL KRAUS

PSO Lila Ostrowski and Public Safety Director John Hutchins.

OFFICER:

Continued from page 3A

wanted to do.”

Having already completed the fire and police academies, Ostrowski was sworn in Monday,

Dec. 15, with Shrader pinning her badge.

For her time with the department, she intends to, “get as much experience as I can, being the best version of myself.”

— Laurel Kraus

Grosse Pointe Farms

Heroic efforts

Officers thwarted an internet scam in progress against a 77-year-old Farms woman at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16.

The woman’s sister called police and told them she had left the home headed for a bank while on the phone with a scammer she believed to be from Apple. Officers used her vehicle’s OnStar to track her to a bank in Harper Woods, where they stopped her from withdrawing funds.

Though she already had deposited \$15,000 into a Bitcoin ATM at the request of the scammer, another officer at her home accessed her iPad and contacted the Bitcoin company to halt the transaction, which

was pending.

No U-turn

A 32-year-old Detroit woman was pulled over for making an illegal U-turn at the Mack and Kerby intersection, where a “No U-turn” sign is posted.

She was arrested at 1:11 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 17, for driving with a suspended license, since her record showed four priors.

Passenger problems

A 38-year-old Detroit woman was arrested on a Farms warrant for failure to comply with the

judgment of a civil infraction, after being the passenger in a vehicle pulled over at Mack and Moross for a non-functioning headlight at 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18.

— Laurel Kraus

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

Grosse Pointe Park

Package missing

At 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 19, a package containing \$150 worth of clothing was reportedly dropped off at the front door of a

residence in the 1000 block of Beaconsfield, but never received by the owner.

Car entered

Nothing was missing from a car that was broken into and searched between 7 and 8:15 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20, while parked in a lot on Mack Avenue between Nottingham and Somerset.

“(The) window was broken out,” police said. “(The) glove box was open (and) items moved

around inside the vehicle.”

— Brad Lindberg

Report information about these and other crimes to the Grosse Pointe Farms 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.

Grosse Pointe Woods

Nothing to report per dispatch.

— Ted O’Neil

Report information about crime to Grosse Pointe Woods Public Safety, (313) 343-2400.

City of Grosse Pointe

Nothing to report per the detective bureau.

— Laurel Kraus

Report information about crimes to the City of Grosse Pointe Public Safety, (313) 886-3200.

Whistle Stop hobby & Toy

Merry Christmas

From our family at Whistle Stop, we’re wishing you a Christmas filled with laughter, love, and joy! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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POINTES OF VIEW

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

Grosse Pointe News

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY WEEKLY BUGLE, LLC
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OUR VIEW

Merry Christmas

The famous line, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," is taken from an editorial that first appeared in the now-defunct newspaper The New York Sun titled "Is there a Santa Claus?" Oddly enough, however, the editorial did not run during the holiday season. It originally was published Sept. 21, 1897.

It was written in response to a letter from a girl named Virginia O'Hanlon, who was 8 years old at the time. According to historical accounts, O'Hanlon first posed the question to her father, but was unhappy with his answer and decided to write to the paper. Her letter states her father told her, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so."

The paper's response has been called "the most famous editorial in history," and has been translated into more than 20 languages and spurred at least two movies. O'Hanlon told interviewers later in life the moment had a positive impact on her future.

She went on to earn a bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate in education, teaching in New York City schools from 1912 until her retirement in 1959. She passed away in 1971 at age 81.

She was known to respond to any and all correspondence, always including a copy of the editorial in her reply. She also did plenty of interviews, although once remarked she was "anonymous" from January through November. The Sun also mailed out copies when requested, at one time sending 200,000 per year.

But what about the author of the editorial? It was written by lifelong reporter, editor and publisher Francis Pharcellus Church. As is the nature of editorials, like this weekly Our View, it was published uncredited, since editorials are the voice of the newspaper rather than the writer's personal opinion.

The Sun revealed Church as the author after his death in 1906, after which other New York papers began reprinting the piece during the holiday season. The Sun followed suit, reprinting it yearly from 1924 until it closed in 1950. It has become the most reprinted editorial in the English language and is widely reprinted by newspapers across the country during the holidays. For your enjoyment:

Is there a Santa Claus?

We take pleasure in answering at once and thus prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of The Sun.

"Dear Editor: I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say that there is no Santa Claus. Papa says 'If you see it in the Sun, it's so.' Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?"

Virginia O'Hanlon
115 West Ninety-fifth Street

Virginia, Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds.

All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as

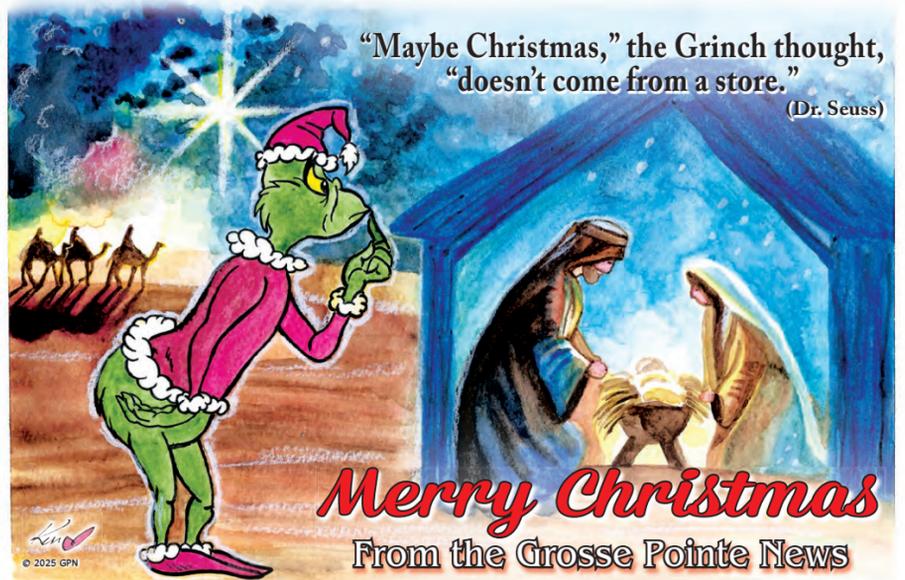


ILLUSTRATION BY KEN SCHOP

measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to our life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your Papa to hire men to watch all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove?

Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that nei-

ther children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there.

Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders that are unseen and unseeable in the world. You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, or even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart.

Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else as real and abiding.

No Santa Claus? Thank God he lives and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, maybe 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the hearts of children.

YESTERDAY'S HEADLINES

1950

75 years ago this week

YEAR OF PEACE PREDICTED BY POINTE'S OLDEST RESIDENT:

Grosse Pointe's oldest resident looks forward to the new year with a hope for peace on earth and goodwill to men. She is Mrs. Salome Chiera of Rivard Boulevard, who is 101 years old. Mrs. Chiera prays and believes that peace throughout the world will be restored.

NEW SALARIES ESTABLISHED BY TOWNSHIP:

Grosse Pointe Township's newest supervisor, Ernest Putnam, will be a "dollar-a-month" man, Arnold Damman, Township treasurer, told the News. Carl Schweikart, former supervisor who left office when Grosse Pointe Park and Grosse Pointe Woods adopted city charters, drew an annual salary of more than \$5,000.

D O D G E GRANDDAUGHTERS FETED AT TEA AND BALL:

Mrs. Horace Elgin Dodge introduced her granddaughters, Anna Ray Baker and Diane Dodge, to society Wednesday afternoon at a reception from 5 till 7 o'clock in her home on Lakeshore Drive. Mrs. Dodge's friends were invited to the reception and in the evening hours members of the debutante and young married sets danced in honor of the girls at a ball at the country club.

1975

50 years ago this week

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FOR ALL:

With the arrival of the holiday season, we at the News would like to send greetings and extend thanks to the many who have contributed so much throughout the year to making our business of serving The Pointe community a real pleasure. We are particularly grateful for the opportunities we have for personal contact with so many residents of this favored area. We appreciate

the chances we are given to be helpful to individuals, organizations, associations, institutions. We have always maintained that good deeds are the result of selfishness, for no one benefits more from a kind act than its perpetrator. We especially want to thank our news sources and advertisers for the terrific cooperation and support they have given us. Without their help our labors would be largely in vain. To the entire community, most of whose residents, we are happy to be able to report, are our readers, we wish an extraordinarily happy and meaningful Christmas season, and that the new year and many more to come will be filled with all things good and joyful.

CITY OKAYS SUBDIVISION:

The city council approved a four-parcel lot split of the Boyer estate at 17700 East Jefferson Avenue at their regular meeting. The land, being developed by Robert Curran and Richard Crawford, will contain three new buildable lots

See YESTERDAY, page 7A

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GROSSE POINTE 7-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

December 25 - 31



THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
42° 39°	47° 34°	44° 24°	35° 28°	43° 31°	47° 31°	41° 27°
Rain	Rain	Mostly Cloudy	Mixed Precip.	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Clear	Clear
20%	0%	10%	10%	20%	10%	20%
SUNRISE 7:59 am SUNSET 5:04 pm	SUNRISE 7:59 am SUNSET 5:05 pm	SUNRISE 8:00 am SUNSET 5:05 pm	SUNRISE 8:00 am SUNSET 5:06 pm	SUNRISE 8:00 am SUNSET 5:07 pm	SUNRISE 8:01 am SUNSET 5:08 pm	SUNRISE 8:01 am SUNSET 5:08 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.

I SAY By Ted O'Neil



Christmas past

One of my earliest memories of Christmas is from when I was in first or second grade.

I was a big fan of G.I. Joe and already had a few of the action figures, but that year I got a talking one. You pulled a

string attached to his dog tag and it played several different recordings. Things like "Hit the beach," "Take Hill 79" and "This is Charlie Company."

I don't recall if this occurred Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, but one of my aunts — feeling no pain after a few highballs — became enamored with it. She kept pulling the string over and over and, you guessed it, it broke.

I was devastated. I did get a new one, seeing as how my birthday is just a little over a month after Christmas, and I made sure to hide it whenever that aunt visited.

Getting older, and reflecting on it over the years, obviously Christmas isn't about the presents. It's first and foremost about the birth of Jesus ... and kindness. Salvation Army Red Kettles, Adopt-a-Family programs, etc.

Two acts of kindness stand out personally to me.

Growing up, my mom always hosted Christmas Eve and my brother and sister — who are quite a bit older than me — would go to their respective in-laws for Christmas Day.

My dad passed away on Dec. 22 when I was in seventh grade. The funeral was the morning of Christmas Eve. We had our family get-

together that evening and figured my mom and I would be on our own Christmas Day.

My brother's mother-in-law wouldn't hear of it. She insisted we come to their house Christmas Day and did so for several years.

The following year, sometime around Christmas, I decided to get a paper route to earn money to attend the 1981 Boy Scout National Jamboree. My uncle on my dad's side bought me what we commonly referred to as a "paper boy bike," the large, yellow Schwinn with tall

handlebars and large tires. Far better for getting around in the winter than a 10-speed with thin tires, especially on snowy weekend mornings.

I guess it was a present, in some way, but it was more an act of kindness, knowing my mom couldn't afford to buy one.

Those two instances always come back to me around this time of year as I reflect on how to be more kind.

Oh, and that G.I. Joe? They're selling online in the \$200 to \$400 range, depending on condition. Thanks a lot, Aunt Helen.

YESTERDAY:

Continued from page 6A

with the Boyer house occupying the fourth. The council also okayed the name "Island Lane" for the proposed private street serving the lots.

2000

25 years ago this week

CITY'S COUNCIL QUESTIONS N'HOOD CLUB PRESENTATION: Cynthia Melican, on behalf of the

Neighborhood Club, asked the council of the City of Grosse Pointe to appoint Mayor Susan Wheeler and City Manager Tom Kressbach to a special committee that will meet early next year to consider plans to coordinate and create new recreation opportunities for the Pointes and Harper Woods. The goal of the committee, said Melican, is threefold. First they would form an official organization with funding capabilities to help with recreation programs. Second, it would work with the school to gain

voter approval for capital gains projects for facilities. And finally, the committee would explore options to develop recreation space within the Pointes and Harper Woods.

PALMER HEENAN LEADS FIGHT AGAINST MACK AND MOROSS: Forget a shot across the bow. This battle opened with a full broadside. With the Grosse Pointe Park City Council signed on as a boarding party, Mayor Palmer Heenan has raised the Jolly Roger against notions of a community-funded rec-

reation facility at Mack and Moross. Heenan is the first Grosse Pointe elected official to take public action to shield his taxpayers from being shanghaied into helping fund a recreation center at Mack and Moross, long a fancy of officials in Grosse Pointe Farms.

2015

10 years ago this week

DEEPLANDS PRESERVE TALKS BEGIN: The words, "Deeplands Preserve,"

have conflicting meaning to people for or against transforming an unoccupied eight-acre estate into a 30-unit condominium complex in 18 buildings amid an existing neighborhood of single-family dwellings. To developers Bradley Foster, founder of Foster Financial in the City of Grosse Pointe and Michael Verruto of Eden Gate Equity, Philadelphia, "Deeplands Preserve" is the name of the proposed complex.

SCHOLARSHIP HONORS PAIGE STALKER: Paige Stalker

would have graduated from University Liggett School this May. Her fellow students from the class of 2016 voted to create the Paige Stalker Scholarship as their senior class gift. Each year, members of the senior class vote on a collective legacy gift to the school. This year they overwhelmingly decided to honor Stalker. The annual scholarship will support the education of students who, like Stalker, are bright and community-minded and who will have a positive impact on the school.

Bridge crew reflects wide appeal

By Brad Lindberg
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE PARK — There's a new twist to the oldest tale of its type on Lake St. Clair.

Women compose most of the coming year's bridge officers and directors of the Grosse Pointe Sail Club, organizers of the longest continuously running sailboat racing series on the lake.

"Having so many women in leadership compared to other clubs tells you that, if nothing else, we are open to bringing in people with different backgrounds and opinions, or opinions that might not be the archetype in a yacht or sailing club," said Ben Wixson, the club's new commodore. "It's more a statement of us trying to blaze trails by bringing in people with different ideas and backgrounds in areas where they may not have traditionally felt they could participate at that level."

There's nothing DEI — didn't earn it — or patronizing about Mary Beth O'Connell becoming vice commodore and Kim Miller the new rear commodore; plus adding Prudy Billiu and Kathryn Doherty to a crew of directors already consisting of Lindy Holloway and Paul Krynski.

"When you look at a sport like sailing, which has been predominantly male-focused for so long, the number of women skippers is increasing," Wixson said.

He also sees a correlation between the resurging popularity of the club's weekly sailing races off Windmill Pointe Park and the composition of members in leadership roles. Participation in races increased in recent years from around 40 boats per week to the current 60. The club's leadership reflects that growing appeal.

The club was founded in league with the Park in 1948, but now is independent.

"We feel like we're a community organization even though we're not directly affiliated with the city," Wixson said. "We try to do a lot of good for the city in terms of our annual pancake breakfast on Memorial Day. We also co-sponsor a blood drive at Windmill Pointe Park."

Members don't have to be sailors, boat owners or Park residents.

"It's Grosse Pointe Sail Club by name, but our membership includes peo-

ple from all over the country because of snowbirds, plus active participants from Macomb County and far-Western Wayne County from social and sailing aspects," Wixson said.

Races are most Tuesday nights, May through September. The start-finish line is within feet of the walkway atop the outer breakwall of Windmill Pointe marina. Courses also are within view.

"In the old days, a ton of people came down to watch the races," Wixson said. "My hope is that fire is ignited in people again, they come down and see this thing that continues over 70 years later and how fun it is. It's fun to watch, but it's fun to participate. Come May, come down to the Windmill Pointe Park, bring dinner and watch a race. Come on down and see what it's all about."

For more information, see the club's website, gpssc.org.

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8A | NEWS

2026:

Continued from page 1A

Charlevoix streetscape, starting the relining of four miles of sewers and replacing water meters throughout town, completing a five-year recreation plan outlook, continued growth in customer service and welcoming the opening of the Schaap Center for Performing Arts. The Schaap Center also is of interest to Ben Wixson, chairman of the Park Downtown

Development Authority. The authority district encompasses city hall and environs. "Since I've been on the DDA board, a big part of our conversations have been around the campus at city hall and, with that, an extension of the district as it's being established with the Schaap Center," Wixson said. "As that comes to completion, we're excited to see what that does for the neighborhood." The public safety department commissioned the first of two

traffic studies late this year to determine how thousands of Schaap Center patrons may impact the area. "The first round of the study is complete," Chief Jim Bostock said. "When the center is up and running, we'll do another study, compare results and see where we're at as far as traffic flow and congestion to see where and if we have to make improvements." "There are changes in the district along Jefferson — Full Circle and a Mexican restaurant moved into the

neighborhood — that are bringing people to the neighborhood," Wixson said. "I'm curious and excited to see how that changes in the coming years and seeing how that helps us navigate what's next for the district." "We're eagerly awaiting the opening of the Schaap Center," said Terry Brennan, building inspector. "Everyone's excited about that. I'm really looking forward to the Charlevoix streetscape project, a curbside downtown. That's going to be really

nice." Despite excellent audit results, there's work to do on the finance front. "Council wants to focus on pension and OPEB contributions in the next budget year," said Ethan Haan, finance director and treasurer. OPEB is an acronym for other post-employment benefits. Legacy costs go up every year. "It's about positioning the city for the best outcome," Haan said. "The state has been pushing communities to get more

funding for OPEB." "It is worth acknowledging how far we have come in a few short years," said Councilman Max Wiener in his December report of activities. "Four years ago saw us drawing down our fund balance and in weaker positions regarding our long-term liabilities. Grosse Pointe Park has assumed a proactive footing, similar to what we have done with our infrastructure planning. This posture will have compounding financial benefits to the city."

WOODS:

Continued from page 1A

Council reviews potential plans for the front lawn at city hall, where 64 diseased crabapple trees are removed. Plans could include an amphitheater and covered pavilion. Council recognizes three new Eagle Scouts from Troop 96, chartered through Grosse Pointe Memorial Church: Parker Josephs, Isaac Warner and Jonathan Lackner.

March

Resident Patti Kukula, executive director of the Detroit Public Safety Foundation, receives the Detroit Fire Department's 2025 Rev. McNeely Humanitarian Award.

April

Five deceased residents are honored at the city's 42nd annual memorial tree dedication. Council begins mulling a short-term rental policy. Council approves a new parking meter app for meters along Mack and in municipal lots. The annual Egg Stroll takes place at Lake Front Park. Public Safety Director John Kosanke reports crime increased 20 percent from 2023 to 2024, primarily due to a spike in stolen vehicles and reports of larceny from stolen vehicles.

May

Detective Miles Adams and Lt. Detective Bureau Commander Keith Waszak are honored as Officer of the Year and Supervisor of the Year, respectively, by the Grosse Pointe Woods Public Safety Department. Council considers increasing water and



PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

Above, Lynn and Jerry Wiszowaty dance at the 75th anniversary Music on the Lawn celebration in July. Left, Fallyn Jamieson poses with Mr. E. Bunny and couldn't resist making "bunny ears" behind his head. Below, PSO Duncan Gill, the new Woods K-9 handler, with his K-9 partner, Arcos.



sewer rates for the first time in eight years as the Great Lakes Water Authority and Southeast Macomb Sanitary District raise their rates. Reconstruction of

the Mack/Vernier intersection begins. Council approves a budget of \$18.1 million for fiscal year 2025-26 and lowers the millage rate from 17.04 to 15.51.

June

Council approves raising the spending threshold for the city administrator from \$10,000 to \$20,000 without need for council approval. Flo Kliber, a resident at Sunrise Senior Living, turns 103. The city is recognized with a Tree City USA designation by the Arbor Day Foundation for the 47th consecutive year. Council votes to combine six voting precincts into three. Ferlito's Restaurant closes after more than four decades in business.

Roy Bishop III, a student at Parcels Middle School, is named junior mayor.

August

Kosanke announces the public safety department will get a K-9 officer through an agreement with the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society. An Arthur Murray Dance Studio opens on Mack.

September

The defendant in a 2023 overdose case that saw three people — including two sisters — die after ingesting tainted cocaine reaches a plea deal with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit. Aerian Porter-Craig, arrested in 2024, pleads guilty in late August to two counts of distributing cocaine and fentanyl. In exchange, the office waives two counts of distributing cocaine and fentanyl causing death, which could have carried a life sentence. The Daily Jam, a

November

Mayor Art Bryant and Councilmembers Vicki Granger and Todd McConaghly are reelected. Councilman Jim Motschall, appointed to fill an unexpired term in 2024, wins a full term. Clerk Paul Antolin is recognized for his work keeping the city's voting rolls clean with a Sunlight Award from the Michigan Fair Election Institute.

edmund t. AHEE Jewelers announces the completion of its expansion with a showroom for Patek Philippe watches.

Arcos, the new K-9 officer, joins the public safety department. Some 13 homeowners, six businesses and four volunteer groups are recognized with beautification awards.

December

The city marks its 75th anniversary Thursday, Dec. 11, 75 years to the day after voters approved a new charter. The city receives a clean audit and a Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. It's the 52nd consecutive year the Woods has been recognized by the GFOA, the longest such streak in the organization's history. Como is sworn in as the new city manager.

FOR SALE	22429 LAKECREST ST CLAIR SHORES	SOLD	20618 SUNNYSIDE ST CLAIR SHORES	SOLD	20727 MARTER GROSSE POINTE WOODS
FOR SALE	1001 W. JEFFERSON DETROIT	SOLD	22516 BEACH ST CLAIR SHORES	SOLD	26285 JACKSON NEW BALTIMORE

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AND

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BoE gets update on strategic plan process

By Ted O'Neil
Associate Editor

THE GROSSE POINTES — Residents are invited to attend a listening session to give input as the Grosse Pointe Public School System maps out its new strategic plan.

It will be held 6 to 6:45 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6, in the Grosse Pointe North High School library with a representative from the Michigan Association of School Boards.

“It will focus on the same questions that

make up the online survey,” Superintendent Andrea Tuttle told the board at its meeting Monday, Dec. 8. “People who have already filled out the survey are certainly welcome to attend if they want to.”

The survey can be found at masb.jotform.com/team/ldess/grossepointesp26. It will be live until Tuesday, Jan. 6.

Questions include:

◆ What are the current strengths of the district?

◆ What are some areas

of improvement that should be considered by the district?

◆ What current barriers exist that would make it difficult for the district to implement new initiatives or make any significant changes?

◆ What is your vision for the district?

◆ What three words best describe the ideal district in three to five years?

◆ If you could do only one thing to improve the education of students in the district, what would

it be?

“Stakeholder feedback will be an important part of the planning process,” Tuttle said previously. “Community members, parents, students, teachers and all district staff members will have the opportunity to give input on the strengths of the district, opportunities for improvement, barriers for implementation and their vision for the district.”

Also on Jan. 13, MASB will have separate listening sessions for high

school students, administrators, elementary school teachers, secondary school teachers and the board.

Saturday, Feb. 7, there will be a retreat, also in the North library, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. to go over the survey results. Tuttle said that would include representatives from law enforcement, PTO groups, the Grosse Pointe Public Library, board members, teachers and administrators.

“MASB suggested we invite about 55 people

and they estimate around 30 will be able to attend,” she added.

The final plan is scheduled to be given a first reading at the board meeting Monday, April 13, with a final vote Monday, April 27.

The district’s strategic plan was last updated in 2021. The board voted unanimously at its first meeting in October to contract with the Michigan Association of School Boards to assist at a cost just shy of \$11,000.

Brownell student in trouble for improper AI use

GROSSE POINTE FARMS — A student at Brownell Middle School is facing consequences over the use of artificial intelligence.

In an email to school families Wednesday, Dec. 17, Principal Rodger Hunwick wrote: “Yesterday, at the conclusion of the school day, it came to our atten-

tion that a student may have used a non-GPPSS-approved AI-based online tool in a manner that violated our district’s code of conduct. Specifically, the tool was used to create inappropriate imagery of others.”

Rebecca Fannon, the district’s director of communications, said

she could not discuss what punishment that student might face, but said the matter is being handled according to the district’s student code of conduct.

Farms Public Safety Director John Hutchins said the matter remains under investigation and has been turned over to the juvenile division of

the Wayne County Circuit Court.

Hunwick’s email said an October all-school assembly featured a Farms public safety officer who discussed the possible dangers of the misuse of the internet, social media and AI tools.

“Our focus in sending this notice is to not only

make you aware of the situation, but also to request your assistance in helping us to educate adolescent learners on the power of technology, proper ways to utilize it, as well as the possible lifelong ramifications of its misuse,” he wrote. “We encourage parents and guardians to have conversations with their

child(ren) about digital citizenship and the appropriate use of technology, including AI tools. Brownell will continue to educate and reinforce these expectations through all-school assemblies, classroom instruction and ongoing discussions.”

—Ted O'Neil

Botmasterz team up with resident to build Little Free Pantry

By Ted O'Neil
Associate Editor

HARPER WOODS — As a robotics team, the Botmasterz are used to building things that move. After all, that’s the whole point of the many FIRST Robotics competitions they go to each year.

The most recent project by the all-girls team from Grosse Pointe South and Grosse Pointe North high schools, however, is quite stationary.

They teamed up with Mariel Krupansky of Harper Woods to build a Little Free Pantry.

“I saw on the Grosse Pointe Buy Nothing Facebook page that people were turning their Little Free Libraries into pantries,” Krupansky said. “This was right around the time of the government shutdown and food assistance programs were being suspended. It inspired me.”

Krupansky said she started with a plastic bin,

but wanted something larger and more permanent.

She decided to put out an RFP (request for proposals) on a Grosse Pointe Public School System community Facebook page looking for a student group to get involved.

“I wanted to make it more real world,” said Krupansky, who teaches technical communications for the University of Michigan College of Engineering. “I wanted

them to submit an RFP that covered things like engineering, budgeting, timeline, size.”

It was a perfect fit for the Botmasterz.

“It was a great experience,” said Sherry Betcher, the team’s coach. “We’ve got 16 girls on the team and they all played a part, from writing the RFP to planning to building.”

Betcher said the goal was to reuse as many items as possible rather than buying all new material.

“I found someone in the Park on Facebook who was having a new kitchen installed, so we were able to get one of the cabinets they were ripping out,” she said.

“We had to refurbish it and weatherproof it, but it worked really well.”

Allie Betcher, one of the senior leaders on the team, said she enjoyed the experience.

“It was interesting doing research about how other people built their pantries,” she said. “We learned a lot about things like construction and budgeting.”

Sherry Betcher said the team put around 40 hours total into the project. They had a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Krupansky’s house in mid-December that was attended by state Rep. Veronica Paiz, Harper Woods Mayor Valerie Kindle, Harper Woods Councilmembers Geri

LaPratt, Ivery Toussant Jr. and Regina Williams, as well as GPPSS Trustee Tim Klepp.

The pantry is 4 feet tall and 2 feet wide. Total cost ended up being \$56.90. It contains canned goods, dry goods and personal care items.

“I’ve got a neighbor who’s been adding some extra items to her shopping list each week,” Krupansky said. “This isn’t just about food insecurity; it’s a community resource. If someone needs a can of green beans and doesn’t feel like running to the store, they can grab one and just replace it later.”

The pantry is located at 20601 Beaufait, just west of I-94.



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of the Botmasterz stand by the Little Free Pantry they built.

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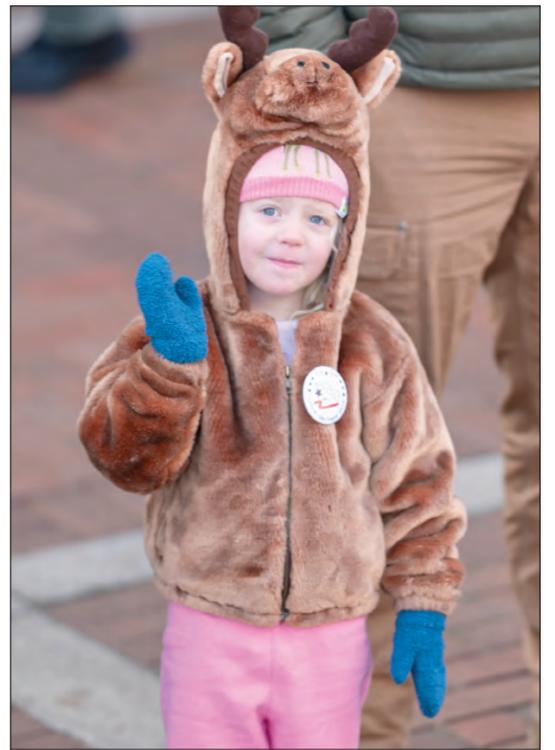
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10A | NEWS



Clockwise from top left, Detroit Mounted Police; a parade-goer is bundled up for the show; Detroit Ghostbusters; and Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce President Jenny Boettcher waves from the Motown Hitsville USA float.

Grosse Pointe on parade

The Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce has organized the Santa Claus Parade since 2012, carrying forward a beloved community tradition that first began in 1975, and now celebrates its 50th year. Over the decades, the parade has evolved from a small, local procession into a vibrant celebration featuring expanded floats, school marching bands, community groups and festive entertainment that draws thousands of spectators each year.

“The Grosse Pointe Chamber of Commerce’s 50th annual Santa Claus Parade is more than a tradition,” Chamber President Jenny Boettcher said. “It’s a joyful celebration of community, togetherness and holiday spirit that has united generations in the Pointes.”

PHOTOS BY ROD ARROYO/PORTRAITS BY ROD



Jolly Old St. Nick greets parade-goers.



The Motown Museum float.



Girl Scout Troop 77262.



The Golden Retriever Rescue of Michigan.



The Redford Township Unicycle Club.



The Part of Your World Princess Company float.

**CITY OF HARPER WOODS
WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN
SYNOPSIS: REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 15, 2025**

The regular City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Valerie Kindle at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: All Councilpersons were present

MOTIONS PASSED

- 1) To receive, approve and file the minutes of the regular City Council meeting held December 1, 2025 and furthermore receive and file the minutes of the Library Board meetings held on May 15, 2025, May 19, 2025, June 18, 2025, August 21, 2025, September 18, 2025 and October 16, 2025 and the Board of Review meeting held on December 10, 2025.
- 2) That the agenda of the regular City Council meeting having been acted upon and with no further business, the meeting is hereby adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED

- 1) (1) approve the Accounts Payable/Payroll Vendor listing for Check Numbers 133945 through 134082 in the amount of \$1,376,002.38 as submitted by the City Manager and Finance Director, and further, authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the listing. (2) approve payment to Anderson, Eckstein & Westrick, Inc. in the amount of \$37,806.51 for professional services during the month of December 2025 for the following projects: Harper/Van Antwerp Redev, #180-313; City Hall Generator #180-291; 2025 Sidewalk Replacement #180-313; 2024 Joint Crack/Seal #180-341; Tap Sidewalk Program #180-349; Roscommon Pocket Park #180-329; HWHS Football Field Clubhouse #180-327; DWRF Lead Water Service Replacement #180-331; Temp Water Operator #180-303; DWSD Sewage Discharge #180-347; 2025 San. Sewer FCIPP #180-364; 2025 Storm Sewer Replacement #180-362 and the 2025 Sanitary Sewer Lining #180-379. (3) approve payment to Doxim, Inc. in the amount of \$5,181.37 for the processing and mailing of the November Water Bills and envelope supplies. (4) approve payment to SAFEbuilt, LLC in the amount of \$57,945.76 for the contractual building department services performed during the month of November 2025. (5) approve payment to Nu Appearance Maintenance, Inc. in the amount of \$8,608.50 for contractual lawn cutting and leaf pick-up, in various areas of the City, including City Hall, the annexes, Library and the Parks. (6) approve payment to Uni Dig in the amount of \$16,920.00 for leaf disposal in conjunction with the curbside leaf pick up program. (7) approve payment in the amount of \$8,800.00 to Guardian Sewers for their assistance with a water main break, installation of two new risers, valve repairs and installation of new stop boxes. (8) approve the reappointments to the various boards and commissions as listed on the attached memorandum from the City Clerk.
- 2) To approve payment to Insituform Technologies USA in the amount of \$18,543.87 for Progress Payment No.1 on the 2025 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation by Full Length CIPP Lining, #180-379.
- 3) To renew the City’s participation in the Michigan Municipal League’s Liability and Property Pool for 2026 in the amount of \$286,302.00 for coverage as stated in their renewal proposal and, further that competitive bidding be waived in accordance with City policy.
- 4) To accept the proposal submitted by Yeo & Yeo CPA’s and Advisors for the City’s annual financial auditing services in the amount of \$55,125.00.
- 5) To accept the proposal from Right Size Facility in the amount of \$59,682.16 and to add 15% contingency of the total cost for the complete renovations of several areas of City Hall.

Valerie Kindle, Mayor

Leslie M. Frank, City Clerk

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Pageant princess Shores baby to represent hometown at nationals

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

Halina Andrzejewski isn't yet able to walk, but she's following in her mother's footsteps on the pageant circuit.

The 4-month-old daughter of Greg and Britt Andrzejewski of Grosse Pointe Shores recently was crowned

"Ultimate Grand Supreme" at the America's Best Pageant. The title earns her a spot in the America's Best National Pageant, which takes place this fall in Nashville.

"I did pageants growing up and I really enjoyed them," Britt Andrzejewski said. "And I grew up watching

'Toddlers & Tiaras.' I thought if I was ever lucky enough to have a little girl, I'd do that with her."

The sash Halina will wear at the national competition, Sept. 11 to 13, reads "Baby Miss Grosse Pointe Shores."

"The America's Best Pageant promotes community involvement and good citizenship," Andrzejewski said. "Halina's goal is to bring home a title for her community and most importantly have fun."

The America's Best Pageant, which followed a "Wicked" theme, was just the beginning for Halina, who earlier this month participated in the Sunburst Beauty Pageant, where she won several titles and qualified for the state pageant in May, in Ann Arbor.

In addition to a collection of crowns, a panel of judges presented Halina medals for Most Photogenic, Best Smile, Best Personality, Best Attire, Prettiest Eyes and Prettiest Hair — all in the "under 1" age group.

Next up, Halina will compete in Portage,



Halina Andrzejewski is a natural in front of the camera.

another Sunburst pageant, which follows a "Pink Christmas" theme.

"It's something we're feeling out," Andrzejewski said, "seeing what we like, what she likes. We'll be doing them as long as she likes them and tolerates them. ... If it gets to a point where it's not her thing, that's fine too."

"... Right now it's for the experience," she added. "For me, it taught me good sportsmanship — you're always clapping for other people — and learning how to lose. It taught me about having confidence while being in front of a group of people. It taught me things you take with you throughout your life. I'd love for her to have that as well."

"And who doesn't like a sparkly dress?"



COURTESY PHOTOS



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2B | OBITUARIES

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.

Dr. Jacques Beaudoin

Dr. Jacques Beaudoin, 93, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family Monday, Dec. 8, 2025, at Henry Ford St. John Hospital, the hospital he helped grow into a major medical center.

Jacques was born under modest circumstances May 28, 1932, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He was the youngest of 10 siblings and began living on his own at age 15, when he rented a room for \$5 per week. To earn his breakfast, he read scripture in Latin to the priests who ran his school during their morning meal. Then he washed dishes to earn lunch and dinner.

At age 16, he was introduced to a beautiful young woman named Monique Allard, who he began dating. She eventually became his wife of almost 67 years. His prowess in the classroom allowed him to skip two years of school. He was a superb athlete throughout high school and college, captaining his hockey team to the intercollegiate championship in Montreal.

After graduating from college, not having the

financial wherewithal to attend medical school, he worked any job he could find, including working at a sawmill, an aluminum can factory and selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door. After saving enough to afford his first year of medical school, he attended the English-speaking University of Ottawa Medical School even though he did not speak much English. Undaunted, he quickly became the president of his medical school class.

During this time, Jacques and Monique were married and had two children. To make ends meet and support his family, on weekends Jacques took the train from Ottawa to Montreal so he could work as a singing waiter at one of Montreal's finest restaurants.

Upon graduating from medical school, Jacques and Monique moved to the Detroit area so Jacques could complete his residencies in medicine, surgery and thoracic surgery at Harper Hospital and Grace Hospital (now part of Detroit Medical Center), Henry Ford St. John Hospital and Bon Secours Hospital (now Corewell Health

Beaumont Grosse Pointe Hospital). They moved to Grosse Pointe in 1960, as Jacques ultimately became a valuable member of the medical staff and highly respected thoracic surgeon at both St. John and Bon Secours. He served as chief of surgery at both hospitals and chief of staff at St. John.

In addition to his dedication and skill as a surgeon, Jacques loved music. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of the Big Band era and could (and would) sing along with any song. The voice that allowed him to work his way through medical school as a singing waiter also could be heard at many St. John and Bon Secours dinner dances, when he would be beckoned to the stage to perform a song or two. Jacques and Monique also loved to travel and traversed the globe over many years.

Jacques was a highly respected man of humility who will be greatly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

Jacques was predeceased by his wife of 66 years, Monique Beaudoin. He is survived by his daughter, Louise Juntunen; sons, Jacques Beaudoin (Pam) and



Dr. Jacques Beaudoin



Floramae H. Kliber

Jean Beaudoin (Ann); grandchildren, Steven Maisel (Sara), Laura Maisel, Elise Beaudoin-Johnson (Travis), William Beaudoin (Athena), Patrick Beaudoin (Liza) and Henri Beaudoin (Michelle); and four great-grandchildren.

A memorial luncheon will be held from noon to 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8, at The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms.

Floramae H. Kliber

Floramae H. (nee Fisher) Kliber, 103, passed away peacefully Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025, at Sunrise of Grosse Pointe Woods.

Floramae was born May 1, 1922, in Detroit, to Coyle and Helen Fisher. She was predeceased by her husband of more than 60 years, Edward F. Kliber Jr., who passed away in 2010 at age 88. She also survived the death of her eldest son, Robert "Bob" in 2016, and her youngest daughter, Lynn

McDonald, in 2021. Floramae is survived by her son, David (Mandy) of Wisconsin; and daughter, Nancy Ruppert (the late Larry), of Lake Orion. Floramae and her family lived on Audubon in Grosse Pointe Park for more than 60 years.

Flo grew up on Detroit's east side and had three siblings, Bob, Virginia (Depuydt) and Larry, and survived them all. She attended Michigan State University and Nazareth College in Kalamazoo, where she studied journalism. Flo wrote articles for the Grosse Pointe News and other publications. She also volunteered for the Northeast Guidance Center and the gift shop at Corewell Health Beaumont Grosse Pointe Hospital. She and her sister also sang on the radio in the 1940s.

Flo joined the Navy WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) toward the end of World War II, but was not activated. Before she had a family, Flo worked for

AT&T as an executive secretary and was proficient on a manual typewriter, typing an amazing 120 words per minute. Later, she typed tax returns for her husband, Ed, who was a CPA with his own practice near Grosse Pointe. Mostly, she was a homemaker and a gourmet cook.

Flo was a devoted wife, grandmother of seven, great-grandmother of 10 and an aunt of more than a dozen nephews and nieces. She loved being with family. She had a passion for travel in the U.S. and abroad. She and her husband belonged to the Nomads, a travel club with its own airplane that flew out of Detroit Metro Airport to many places in the world.

Floramae's family was musical and she loved to sing, especially old songs, and often sang around the house and played the organ. She sang many times at Sunrise of Grosse Pointe Woods in her late years. A devoted Catholic, she also sang at church.

A funeral Mass will be held in spring 2026 (her favorite season) at St. Paul on the Lake Catholic Church. Visitation will be held at Verheyden Funeral Home in Grosse Pointe Park. Flo will be buried at Great Lakes National Cemetery next to her husband, Ed, who served in the U.S. Navy. Funeral time and dates will be announced in the spring.

Arrangements entrusted to Chas. Verheyden Inc.



AREA ACTIVITIES

Shaw's Books

Shaw's Books, 14932 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Park, hosts its 16th annual Holiday Book Sale 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays through Sundays, through Dec. 28. All books, ephemera, prints, maps, posters and other paper collectibles — more than 25,000 unique items — are 20 percent off during the sale. Call (313) 824-4932.

Blood drives

The American Red Cross hosts the following blood drives:

◆ 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 26, St. Clair Shores Senior Center, 20100 Stephens, St. Clair Shores.

◆ 7:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 30, Henry Ford St. John Hospital, 22101 Moross, Detroit.

◆ 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6, Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, 19950 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9, St. Clare of Montefalco Catholic

Church, 1401 Whittier, Grosse Pointe Park.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12, Bethel Baptist Church, 24600 Little Mack, St. Clair Shores.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, Holy Innocents-St. Barnabas Parish, 26100 Ridgmont, Roseville.

◆ Noon to 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, Cornerstone Baptist Church, 17017 12 Mile, Roseville.

Register at redcross blood.org.

POST Detroit

POST Detroit, 14500 Kercheval, Detroit, hosts several workshops during December. To sign up for the following, visit mutualadoration.com:

◆ Sewing Machine Essentials Workshop: Scrunchies, 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 27. Cost is \$75.

◆ Sewing Workshop: Crossbody Bags, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 28. Cost is \$120.

See EVENTS, page 6B

Racing For Kids makes special visit to Henry Ford St. John Children's Hospital

Racing For Kids kicked off the holiday season with a special visit Friday, Dec. 12, to hospitalized children at Henry Ford St. John Children's Hospital. The visit was a Christmas gift "drop off" to help brighten hospital stays for many metro Detroit children.

Being in the hospital during the holidays can be especially hard for children, so Racing For Kids wanted to make those stays a bit more exciting with a special Christmas gift.

Each child received a Galaxy Light planetarium projector night light to magically transform their hospital room ceilings into multi-star constellations. Each unit contains 13 interchangeable galaxies.

In addition to the children's gifts, Racing For Kids CEO J. Patrick Wright also presented hospital officials with a \$15,000 check to support phase two in the development of pediatric examining rooms in the hospital's pediatric emergency room.

"Racing For Kids has had a longstanding relationship with both Henry Ford Health System and St. John Children's Hospital," Wright said. "Now that these two great institutions have joined together, we are delighted to help support their pediatric health initiatives, which align perfectly with our mission to help sick kids get better faster."

"Our grant will help with current construction as well as ongoing pediatric care," he added.



PHOTO BY RENEE LANDUYT

Racing for Kids CEO Patrick Wright, second from left, presents a \$15,000 check to Henry Ford St. John Children's Hospital members, from left, Roseanne Mark, manager of clinical nursing and clinical manager of pediatrics/PICU/PASU; Lisa Pinkowski, senior development officer of the St. John Foundation; and Heath Roberts, senior vice president, pediatric service line.

"We are truly grateful to Racing for Kids for this generous gift," said Heath Roberts, senior vice president of Henry Ford Health Pediatrics. "Their support helps us enhance care and comfort while improving the lives of children and families we serve at St. John Children's Hospital."

Since 1989, Racing For Kids has used the popularity of motorsports to raise funding and awareness of children's health-care needs.

At the heart of the mission are driver visits to hospitalized children, bringing the excitement of the auto racing world, as well as hats and toys, to their bedsides. Since its inception, Racing For Kids has visited more than 45,000 children in more than 750 children's hospital visits in the United States, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Japan and Australia. It has raised more than \$8 million for the hospitals visited and other children's

health institutions.

Racing For Kids also makes donations to the hospitals they visit, with the funds earmarked for special therapies or for playroom development.

Major sponsors of Racing For Kids include Bridgestone Firestone Trust Fund, Douglas E. Fregin, the Cotton Family, and Benson Ford Jr. Racing For Kids is a charity partner of the IndyCar Series. For more information, visit racingforkids.org.

10th annual Suicide Prevention Education Summit is Jan. 22-23

Early-bird registration ends Dec. 31

By Jody McVeigh
Editor

The 10th annual Suicide Prevention Education Summit, presented by Kevin's Song, returns to Saint John's Resort in Plymouth Thursday and Friday, Jan. 22 and 23.

"It's amazing that when John and Gail (Urso) came up with this idea, they were surrounded by people who said, 'Yes, we need to do this,'" said Kevin's Song Executive Director Jennifer Fair Margraf, regarding the nonprofit's founders. "Gail is an eternal optimist and wasn't going to let it fail."

Celebrating a decade of collaboration, education and progress in suicide prevention, this year's summit theme is "The Power of 10: A Legacy of Hope, A Future of Possibility." It will



focus on practical, evidence-based approaches to suicide prevention, as well as tools and treatments for assisting at-risk individuals and communities.

"We need to continue to talk about it and break down the stigma surrounding suicide," Margraf said. "We need to normalize talking about suicide to make it no different than talking about cancer."

For the first time, Kevin's Song has partnered with the Community Mental

Health Association of Michigan.

"Michigan has 83 counties and they have 43 offices throughout the state with services that are available to all Michiganders," Margraf said.

The mobilization of its extensive statewide network will help the summit reach a broader audience of clinicians, educators, advocates and mental health professionals.

"Ten years ago, Kevin's Song set out to create a space where learning,

lived experience and compassion could come together," Margraf noted. "Through our partnership with the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan, we're expanding that vision to reach even more professionals and communities. As Michigan continues to advance through laws, education and crisis response, this summit remains a place to turn knowledge into lifesaving action."

"We can reach more people than we've reached in the past about our conference," she added. "This is a huge change. They've been wonderful to work with and insightful and wonderful with suggestions and assistance."

"Community partners like Kevin's Song are essential in the collective mission to save lives," said Robert Sheehan, chief executive officer of the CMHAM. "Our association is honored to join

this milestone 10th annual summit to help bring evidence-based suicide prevention tools directly to those working on the front lines. Together, we can ensure that the lessons learned at this conference become lifesaving actions in every Michigan community."

The two-day summit opens Thursday with a focus on youth, ranging from students in kindergarten through early college years.

Keynote speakers include:

◆ Cheryl King, Ph.D. — Preventing Youth Suicide and Building Supportive Adult Networks for Young People at Risk

◆ Roddia Hill, Psy.D. — Strengthening Protective Environments: Culturally Responsive Approaches to Suicide Prevention

◆ Jaime Taylor, D.O., M.S., FAAFP — Wired to Feel: Understanding Adolescent Brain Development and

Suicidal Risk
◆ Larry Berkowitz, Ed.D. — Best Practices for Suicide Postvention in Schools: Managing Dilemmas and Changing the Narrative

Breakout sessions will explore social media addiction, supporting families through adolescent suicide, adolescent drug use, bridging the gap between psychiatry and schools, sexual orientation and gender challenges, nutrition and mental health, among other topics.

Thursday evening, Thomas Joiner, Ph.D., will be honored during a dinner, which also features a performance by the University of Michigan Musical Theater Department.

"Dr. Joiner has been with us every single conference," Margraf said. "He'll receive an award that likely will become an annual award."

See SUMMIT, page 6B



Volunteers and staff gather after a marathon session of wrapping, sorting and packaging gifts to homebound seniors.

The giving season

For about 15 years, The Helm has collected items for homebound seniors in the Grosse Pointes and Harper Woods at the holidays. On Dec. 11, volunteers and staff gathered to wrap, package and distribute gifts to 109 residents.

"The seniors are truly grateful for the gifts and

we are so thankful to those who donate gifts and time to support this project," said Heidi Uhlig-Johnstone, director of volunteer services at The Helm. "The total cost of donations is a little more than \$5,000. We are fortunate to be in a community that understands, appreciates and supports older adults."



Volunteer Shelley Eells loads gift bags into her car for delivery to homebound seniors.

Volunteers and staff wrap gifts for delivery to homebound seniors.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HELM



Just some of the gift bags waiting to be picked up and delivered to 109 homebound seniors.

ENGAGEMENT



Matt R. Wheatley and Carina A. Bertakis

Bertakis — Wheatley

Rosanne and John Bertakis of Grosse Pointe Shores announce the engagement of their daughter, Carina Anne Bertakis, to Matt Ross Wheatley, the son of Carol and Brett Wheatley of Bonita Springs, Fla. Miss Bertakis is a graduate of Grosse Pointe South High School. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising management from Michigan State University and works for Vivreau Filtration. Mr. Wheatley graduated from Miami University in Ohio with a degree in marketing. He works in the marketing department with Ford Racing. An October 2026 wedding is planned.

Village Grille *Grosse Pointe's Friendliest Family Restaurant!*

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Our Private Banquet Room is the perfect place to host your event!

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One beautiful year

SEPTEMBER

Highlights from our past year of Beautiful Beginnings

By Grosse Pointe News Staff

A longstanding favorite section of the Grosse Pointe News is Beautiful Beginnings. This popular part of the newspaper focuses on local milestones and celebrations within the community. It covers resident weddings, bridal and baby showers and announcements, graduations — and all the other amazing moments that propel us into a brand new happy chapter of life. As we wrap up 2025, we revisit a few portions of these sections that published in the past year — with a bridal theme — to once again enjoy sharing the excitement of new beginnings in the Pointes.



COURTESY PHOTO

NOVEMBER



Salud!

Mark the occasion with Perrier-Jouet Blason Rosé, left. It's a delicious and festive choice from Woods Wholesale Wine in Grosse Pointe Woods. Visit the shop at 20787 Mack Ave.

woodswholesalewine.com

Tree of "we"

Commemorate your first Christmas as newlyweds with a meaningful ornament. A gold "Mr. & Mrs." bulb, above, is a keepsake you'll cherish for years. Thoughtful touches symbolize your shared journey and grow more special with time. Find it at Small Favors.



MAY



Classic jewelry for the bride and groom

AHEE is how Grosse Pointe celebrates! A beautiful heartfelt keepsake piece from edmund t. AHEE Jewelers makes the day more meaningful. Find exquisite diamonds, pearls, gold, silver, Shinola watches and more at 20139 Mack Ave. in Grosse Pointe Woods. Call (313) 886-4600 or visit ahee.com for more information and store hours.



ahee.com

Round brilliant cut quad diamond earrings in 18k white gold, right, accent every bridal gown



Honor the occasion with a Shinola Monster automatic 43mm stainless steel bracelet watch, above, he'll treasure.

A drink to us

Not that you don't mind sharing everything – but it's kind of nice to have a glass of your own! This cute set by Mud Pie makes sure both of you are covered. When you are busy with the hosting duties, you'll never lose your drink. Find the set at Small Favors. Visit shopsmallfavors.com or stop in when you're in The Village at 17112 Kercheval Ave.



shopsmallfavors.com



Mikimoto Akoya pearl and round brilliant cut diamond earrings in 18k white gold, above, are the "something new" every bride wants, from AHEE Jewelers.

FEBRUARY



COURTESY PHOTO

Your special moment in style

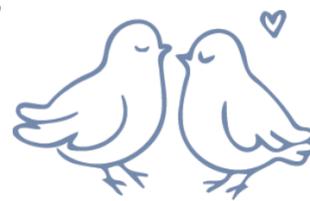
Once Again Bridal Shop provides a variety of new and used bridal attire for all the women in your wedding party, from the bride to her bridesmaids, to mother of the bride or groom or for great formal looks for special guests.

Shop the new location at 35737 Harper Ave. in Clinton Township. Call (586) 792-1736 or visit online at onceagainbridal.com.

MARCH



COURTESY PHOTO



Celebrate "yes" or "I do"

By Olivia Monette
Special Writer

Spring is a season packed with celebrations, and if you're looking to throw the perfect party, Party Adventure has you covered — literally. From Easter brunches and Mother's Day gatherings to graduations and the Kentucky Derby, this go-to party supply store has an incredible selection of decorations, especially when it comes to balloons. Whether you're planning an elegant soirée or a fun backyard bash, Party Adventure has everything you need to bring your vision to life.

From colorful decor to festive tableware,

Party Adventure will ensure your gathering is a success. Their helpful staff is on hand to advise you on the latest ideas and products. With years of experience assisting the local community on celebrations of its most important milestones — they're happy to share some of the best ideas with you. We've showcased a few concepts on these pages about how you can celebrate your upcoming events in style.

Stop in at 234000 Greater Mack Ave. in St. Clair Shores to see their aisles and aisles of options for every type of party theme — or visit them online at partyadventureusa.com. Phone at (586) 776-9750 for more information.

Spring blossoms with all things nuptial. Balloon displays, such as the one at left, have become centerpieces of décor for engagement parties, wedding showers, bachelorette parties, wedding celebrations and more. They are showstoppers and easily capture the themes and colors important to the look of the party. A Party Adventure consultant can work with you to create a masterpiece for your special day.

JUNE



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VIVIANO'S FLOWER SHOP

Unique florals set the tone



By Donna Zetterlund
Special Writer

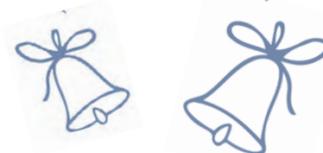
There are few days more important than a wedding, bridal or baby shower, milestones that become lasting memories captured in photos and in hearts. And there are few names more synonymous with milestone celebrations than Viviano. With 88 years of experience, Viviano Flower Shop has created unique floral designs that make every type of event personal and special. From centerpieces and candles to linens, charger plates and room decor such as items for place card tables, gift tables, dessert displays, fresh cake flowers and so much more — Viviano Flower Shop can be trusted to make sure every special occasion is the epitome of quality and style.

Working closely with each customer, the consultants at Viviano Flower Shop aim to bring dreams to life through carefully crafted and artistically designed florals. Their knowledgeable team of experienced designers and artisans is dedicated to the intricate details—that make the magic.

While weddings are usually planned around a color scheme or style — showers are often focused around a theme. This is where the consultants and designers at Viviano Flower Shop really shine! They offer creative guidance in selecting the flowers, vases and decorative accents that bring a creative vision to reality. Designing unique arrangements for one-of-a-kind showers gives them a chance to make a truly personalized celebration for you.



"A New Chapter Awaits" was the idea behind this book-themed bridal shower. Special touches include stacked book floral centerpieces, upper left, a fresh flower cake, far left, and a garden in an adorable ceramic book container, left.



6B | CHURCHES



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT MUSIAL

The Grinch that stole Christmas ... lights

Grosse Pointe Woods resident Robert Musial happened to see this imaginative Christmas display during his drive home last week. At this house on Sunningdale in the Woods, the Green Meanie pulls a string of holiday lights from the eaves in true Grinch fashion.

SUMMIT:

Continued from page 3B

The second day of the summit will highlight evidence-based treatments, research innovations and practical tools for clinicians and community advocates.

Friday's keynote speakers include:

- ◆ April Zeoli, Ph.D., MPH — Overview of Extreme Risk Protection Orders in Michigan and the Relevant Research
- ◆ Craig Bryan, Psy.D., ABPP — New Generation Treatments to Prevent Suicide
- ◆ DeQuincey Lezine, Ph.D. — The Path Beyond the Crisis: Finding Possibilities for Growth
- ◆ Thomas Joiner, Ph.D. — Discussion of the Progress in Suicide Research and Prevention: What's on the Horizon?

Breakout sessions address suicide preven-

tion among seniors, grief and postvention strategies, rural community outreach, ethical use of artificial intelligence tools and implementation of the Zero Suicide framework.

"I grew up in southwest Michigan," Margraf said. "Now, living in metro Detroit, I realize a large percentage of Michigan is rural. How do we culturally tailor approaches to suicide prevention for rural Michigan?"

Joiner's talk, she noted, will close out the conference.

"He'll talk about where we were 10 years ago as far as working in this area and where we're going," she said. "He'll close out the entire conference with a focus on hope and healing and clinical steps and how far we've come and what the future possibly could be."

Broadly stated, the conference is for,

Margraf said, "anyone who is dealing with human beings."

Social workers, counselors, policy makers, suicide loss survivors, as well as parents, first responders, educators, human resources representatives, veterans and anyone who works with youth are welcome.

"And students," Margraf said. "Last year we had a large group of students from one of our school districts come. This year, additional districts are reaching out. We offer student rates and encourage them to come.

"This generation is so focused on mental health and prevention and wanting to talk about it," she added. "And I'm not talking about people getting their master's or doctorates. This is appropriate for high school students as well."

Early-bird rates are

available through Wednesday, Dec. 31. A two-day pass is \$375 per person. Single-day registration is \$225 for Thursday and \$200 for Friday.

After Jan. 1, the two-day rate is \$500 per person, while the Thursday rate is \$275 and the Friday rate is \$250.

Student rates are \$140 for two days, \$75 for Thursday and \$70 for Friday.

The dinner honoring Joiner, which takes place 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, is \$40.

Visit kevinssong.org for more information or to register.

"This is going to be a very empowering event with actionable items," Margraf said. "You will learn things you can take back and immediately put to use. This is not just data; it's tools and techniques. Learn on Thursday, use on Friday."

EVENTS:

Continued from page 2B

Library

The Grosse Pointe Public Library hosts a variety of programs. To register for the following, visit grossepointelibrary.org.

- ◆ Drop-in Movie: "Olaf's Frozen Adventure," 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 27, at Central, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms.
- ◆ Drop-In Afternoon Kids' Craft, 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 29, at Central, 10 Kercheval, Grosse Pointe Farms.
- ◆ Christmas Crafting, 4 to 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 29, at Ewald, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.
- ◆ Paging Through the Past: A Historical Fiction Book Club, 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 3, at Woods, 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.
- ◆ Reader Dog, 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 3, at Woods, 20680 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods.

- ◆ War Memorial History Tour, 10 to 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 8.
- ◆ Second Saturdays at TWML Space Explorers Blast Off, 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 10. Cost is \$10.
- ◆ Silent Book Club, 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13.
- ◆ Puzzle Palooza, 6 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15. Costs vary.
- ◆ Traveling Acupuncturist Pop-Up, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15.
- ◆ VetConnect Seminar Series: Support for Those Who Served, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22.

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The Family Center

The Family Center of 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.

- ◆ Grief Support Group, noon to 1 p.m. Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 10 and April 14, at the Harper Woods Library, 19601 Harper; and Jan. 27, Feb. 24, March 31 and April 28, at the Ewald Library, 15175 E. Jefferson, Grosse Pointe Park.
- ◆ Health for Her: The Pelvic Floor, 6 to 7:15 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, at The Helm, 158 Ridge, Grosse Pointe Farms. Register at helmlife.org.
- ◆ Women's Retreat: Beyond Resolutions: Cultivating Real Change, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. Space is limited.
- ◆ Tightwads and Spendthrifts: Navigating the Money Minefield in Real Relationships, 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28.
- ◆ Aging with Insight: Finding Local Housing Options for Seniors, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 29, at The Helm, 158 Ridge, Grosse Pointe Farms. Register at helmlife.org.

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Sunrise on Vernier

Sunrise on Vernier, 1850 Vernier, Grosse Pointe Woods, hosts a support group at 4 p.m. the second Wednesday of each month. For more information, call (313) 642-2000.

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.

Concert

Planet D Nonet takes the stage for its 18th annual holiday show at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 28, at Cadieux Cafe, 4300 Cadieux, Detroit. Book a seat at tinyurl.com/2sw96jnp.

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 grossepointeartcenter.org.

- ◆ Portraits with Liz Frankland, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 6 to 27.
- ◆ Workshop about Donald Cronkhite's "Willow Tree," 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 8, 15 and 22.
- ◆ Color Theory with Saveria Giovinazzo, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fridays, Jan. 9 to 30.
- ◆ White Line Block Printing with Nobuko Yamasaki, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7. Material fee is \$20. Deadline to register is Wednesday, Jan. 28.
- ◆ Introduction to Black and White Scratchboard Art with Mary Taitt, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesdays, Feb. 11, 18 and 25.

Ford House

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

- ◆ Storytime: "Life on Mars," 10:30 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6.
- ◆ Family Workshop: Paper Marbling, 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Jan. 17. Costs vary.
- ◆ Trivia Night, 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22. Admission is \$10 for Friends, \$12 for the public.
- ◆ Lecture: Creating a U.S. Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 29. Cost is \$12 for Friends, \$15 for the public.

War Memorial

The War Memorial, 32 Lakeshore, Grosse Pointe Farms, offers programs and activities for the community. For information on the following, visit war-memorial.org.

Worship Service

Christ the King Lutheran Church and Preschool
Mack at Lochmoor • 884-5090
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

240 Chalfonte G.P. Farms
313-884-3075 • www.gpcong.org
WE HAVE AN ARTS MINISTRY

St. Matthew Catholic Church
Harper at 6021 Whittier
Detroit, MI 48224
313-884-4470

Holiday Mass Schedule
Wednesday, December 24, 2025
Christmas Eve Mass ~ 10:00 pm

Thursday, December 25, 2025
Christmas Day Mass ~ 10:00 am

Thursday, January 1, 2026
New Years' Day
Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God ~ 10:00 am Mass

Saturday, January 3, 2026: Vigil Mass
Feast of the Epiphany ~ 4:30 pm

Sunday, January 4, 2026
Feast of the Epiphany ~ 10:00 am Mass
Vespers Service ~ 4:00 pm

St. Michael's EPISCOPAL CHURCH
313.884.4820
stmichaelsgpw.org

December 24, Christmas Eve
Music for instruments and voices begins at 3.45
Celtic Christmas Service at 4.00

December 25, Christmas Day at 10.00 am
Holy Communion and Carols

December 28 ~ The First Sunday after Christmas Day
10.00 am - Holy Communion with Carols

20475 Sunningdale Park - Grosse Pointe Woods

LIFE & LEISURE *Merry Christmas*

2C GP GABBY | 2C MOVIE JUNKIE MARK | 3C MOMBEAU'S TABLE | 6C - 8C COMICS



"Good tidings we bring to you and your kin."

Photo story by Renee Landuyt

A little bear delivers a gift for Santa at his workshop, an elf juggles presents and Santa's bag is filled with gifts he is ready to deliver.



The gingerbread family and snowman are excited the elves are working hard in Santa's workshop.



There's "no place like gnome" for the holidays.



Sven the reindeer and Olaf the snowman from "Frozen" park the sleigh and have some fun.



A house dressed up in lights for Christmas.

**BE THE MIRACLE
THEY'VE BEEN
WAITING FOR**

hope

2025 ANNUAL APPEAL
 DONATIONS TO: GPAAS, 296 CHALFONTE, GROSSE POINTE FARMS, MI 48236
 ONLINE DONATIONS AT GPAAS.ORG/DONATE

*Happy New Year
and the best to you and
yours in 2026*

from
Village Locksmith

**VILLAGE LOCK
& HOME REPAIR**

18554 Mack Avenue
Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48236
villagelockgp@gmail.com • 313-881-8603

GROSSE POINTE *Gabby*

POINTING YOU IN
THE RIGHT
DIRECTION WITH
REAL-LIFE ADVICE!

Combatting clutter and creating victory zones

Dear Gabby: Between holiday chaos, wet boots, sports gear, school papers and general “winter sloth,” my house looks like someone shook it like a snow globe and walked away.

I want to start fresh for the new year, but every time I try to tidy one area, I uncover another disaster. Help me get my motivation back or at least find my dining room table under the piles. — Buried in the Farms

Dear Buried: The more people insist on “embracing cozy season,” the more my eye twitches because cozy is lovely,

but clutter is not. You are not alone.

Winter turns every house into a dumping ground of mittens, half-finished school projects and mystery crumbs.

Here is the trick: Do not clean the whole house. Clean one space; one small, visible win. Whether it's a bathroom, the front closet or a single kitchen counter, make it a victory zone. The feeling of accomplishment will carry you into the next 5 percent of progress.

Set a timer for 15 minutes a day. That is it. Anyone can do 15 minutes, even in full seasonal despair. When the timer

goes off, you are done. You will be shocked at how fast things change.

Also, recruit your kids. If they are old enough to make a mess, they are old enough to undo one. In this house, we clean as a team.

Winter will end. In the meantime, attain inner peace through trash bags and timers.

You've got this!!

— Gabby

We love problem-solving and giving advice! Please send us your questions & problems to advice@grossepointe-news.com.



Merry Christmas, no matter how you celebrate

DEAR READERS: I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Christmas is a very busy time of year filled with strong emotions both happy and sad. The joy and the arguments can each feel louder.

Some of you woke up to wrapping paper everywhere, excited kids, pets eating the bows and a sink full of sticky mugs. You're happy but exhausted and maybe a little overstimulated. If that's you, I hope you give yourself five quiet minutes. Sit with your coffee, step outside for a breath of cold air or just

stare at the wall if you need to. The mess means life is happening, not that you're failing.

Some of you are facing your first Christmas after a loss. Their chair is empty. Their ornament is still in the box. The traditions you used to love now feel like they belong to someone else's life. If that's where you are, I'm so sorry. Grief is loud on days like this. There's no “right” way to do the holiday. If you put up a tree, that's OK. If you couldn't bear to, that's OK, too. Tears at the table will not ruin Christmas; they're proof that love was real.

Some of you are doing the complicated family dance with the relative who drinks too much, the one who makes comments about your life choices, the siblings who still know exactly how to push your buttons. If you set boundaries this year -- arrived late to dinner, left early or decided not to go at all -- please don't second-guess yourself just because it's Dec. 25. Protecting your peace isn't “un-Christmaslike.” It's self-respect.

Others are alone today, not by choice. Maybe the kids are with their other parent. Maybe you're newly divorced, newly

single or just far from home. Maybe your plans fell through. If your day is quiet, please don't confuse that with failure. A “small” Christmas can still be a meaningful one. Light a candle. Cook something simple that you love. Watch a movie you don't have to negotiate with anyone about. You're allowed to build a holiday that fits the life you actually have.

And to everyone working today — nurses, doctors, first responders, caregivers, hospitality workers, delivery drivers and so many others — thank you. While some people are arguing over

who's carving the turkey, you're keeping people safe, cared for and connected. What you do matters more than most of us ever see.

Christmas, at its heart, is a story about light showing up in a very ordinary, imperfect place. Not a perfect house, not a perfect family, not perfect people. Just people — which means you don't have to have a magical movie moment for today to count.

If you're joyful, share it. If you're hurting, be gentle with yourself. If someone crosses your mind, send the text.

People don't need perfect words. They just need to know they weren't forgotten.

From my heart to yours, thank you for letting me into your living rooms, your group chats, your kitchen tables and your hard days this year. It's an honor.

Wishing you one real moment of peace, one genuine laugh and one reminder that you matter more than you know.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

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Dear Annie

by Annie Lane



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BLACK BEAR AND KAMALA FILMS.

A passionate interlude with Felicity Jones as Gladys Grainier and Joel Edgerton as Robert Grainier in the 2025 movie “Train Dreams,” directed by Clint Bentley.

MOVIE REVIEW
“Train Dreams”
2025 - Rated PG-13
1 hr 42 min
★★★★★

When I read the description of this film, I figured it would be a mildly entertaining hour and a half of movie viewing. Just how engaging could a movie be about a logger out in the Pacific Northwest in the early part of the 20th Century? The title “Train Dreams” seemed pretty vague as well. Was I ever in for pleasant surprise. This one hooked me within the first 10 minutes and mesmerized me the entire time. When friends asked me what was it was about,

I simply responded, “Just watch it!”

The movie is the sophomore outing for the dynamic duo that brought you 2023's “Sing Sing.” Here Director Clint Bentley and writer Greg Kwedar have delivered another masterpiece. “Train Dreams” is based on the best-selling novella by Denis Johnson. While “Sing Sing” was set in the somewhat claustrophobic confines of a prison, the action in this movie takes place largely against the backdrop of the great outdoors — mainly in Idaho and western Washington state. The picture cinematographer Adolpho

Veloso paints of the area is one for the books. Every scene makes you feel you're taking in the crisp mountain air, out communing

Movie Junkie Mark

by Mark Domin

“Life is too short to watch mediocre movies”

with Mother Nature.

Adding to the epic feel of the movie is the narration. While this can often feel awkward and unnecessary, it fits in perfectly here. The gentle voice of William Patton has a folksy charm to it, as he makes observations about the scenes and reveals the inner thoughts of the protagonist. Apparently Mr. Patton narrated the audiobook version of the novella as well. I don't think the movie would have nearly the same impact without his

insightful monologue.

“Train Dreams” is about Robert Grainier, played by Joel Edgerton. He's starred in a wide range of movies including “The Great Gatsby,” “Boy Erased,” “The Boys in the Boat,” and “Master Gardener.” Here he gives a subtle yet powerful performance. He's an orphan who as a young boy was sent to Idaho to work on a farm. Then he spent his adult life as a logger, felling trees to be used on railroad tracks. He was content with living the life of a drifter,



moving from one project to the next, wherever he was needed. And his efforts helped open up a large swath of territory of the growing nation.

While he's out in the woods, we meet the rag-tag bunch of guys he works with. And there are some real characters here including Arn (William H. Macy). He's doesn't do a lot of work although he is the company's demolition expert. He's mainly known as a wise old sage who loves to share the wisdom he's gained around the campfire. A significant event takes place that will have a huge impact on Robert when he witnesses the killing of a Chinese laborer who's tossed off a bridge. He sees the horrendous act and the fact that he doesn't do anything to stop it will



Gladys Grainier (Felicity Jones) and Robert Grainier (Joel Edgerton).

See TRAIN, page 4C

We Tried It!

by Anna Lizer



A few weeks back I was intrigued by some ads I was seeing for an under eye brightener that not only was a “game-changer,” but also cost just \$11.99. Containing caffeine, peptides, vitamin E and boasting clean ingredients — and with more than 3,800 great reviews — I thought this would be a sure thing. If you are into makeup or skincare at all, you know this is a low price to pay for any sort of miracle product.

I purchased the Palladio under eye brightener in light pink, as that was the



shade shown in multiple videos. Of course in the advertisements it worked flawlessly and the models looked radiant.

Cut to me. I received

the package very quickly via Amazon and wanted to try it ASAP. After unboxing and checking it out, the product seemed

simple and maybe slightly cheap — but maybe I’m jaded. The color of the brightener

sort of reminded me of stage makeup or like my grandma’s foundation I remember playing with when I was little.

I dabbed a bit under my

eyes, with just eye cream on my face otherwise. It really is bright. It’s so bright, it’s both an invitation to view and a spotlight on every under eye flaw I’ve ever had — and some I didn’t even know I had, until now. It most certainly wasn’t hiding my dark circles or puffiness — or that newly discovered blue vein under my left eye.

This couldn’t be right. I started over and this time used way less of it. It’s a lightweight and sheer product, so it’s easy to use too much (as I learned the hard way). This time I

would say it was a slight improvement, but still not anywhere near the results I was hoping for. After more trial and error, I actually tried dabbing the slightest bit over my usual concealer and that was a bit better, but nothing great. Who has time to try to force a product to work?

Overall, this is not a great product for me. I’m giving it one alligator. It seems totally unnecessary and unflattering. Have you tried it? Please let us know if you have a different experience — or a prod-

uct you like. Been wanting to try something but are afraid to pull the trigger? Email us at media@grossepointe-news.com and we will take the risk for you!

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@grossepointe-news.com.



Last minute treats Courtesy of Mombeau’s Table

Tis the season for doing everything at the eleventh hour. Or maybe it’s just our family. But somehow, we get it all done. It may not be a pretty process to get there but we get there just the same. A couple nights ago my daughter asked me if I could run to the store to get chocolate chips for a cookie exchange that she signed up for at school. Normally this wouldn’t be an issue but in this case the cookie exchange was the next morning. Luckily we didn’t panic for too long because we decided to make the easiest, most delicious treat ever.

This is the Christmas Crack cookie. It’s essentially the same recipe for Christmas Crack that I’ve shared before but this time, instead of bark, we made individual treats. These cookies have only four ingredients and are remarkably

easy to whip up with little room for error.

Buttery Ritz crackers are placed in the bottom of muffin cups. Then a simple toffee of butter and brown sugar is poured over the top. They’re then baked for a quick eight minutes. We finished them off by adding chocolate chips over the top. The heat from the toffee melts the chips so they can be smoothed over with the back of a spoon. We added some festive sprinkles over the top for decoration.

If you’re looking for a last minute, homemade treat idea, these are perfect. They’re chewy, buttery and salty sweet. You could easily sit back with a glass of milk and polish a plate of these off no problem. Or you could lay them out by the tree for a late night pick me up for Old Saint Nick!

Cheers and Merry Christmas, Mombeau

Christmas Crack Cookies

- 2 sticks butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 24 Ritz crackers
- 6 oz semi sweet chocolate chips (½ bag)
- Muffin cups

Festive sprinkles (optional)

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Add the butter and brown sugar to a saucepan over medium heat. Melt the butter and sugar together, whisking to combine. Bring it to a boil and turn the heat to low. Continue to whisk for a few minutes until it develops a consistent sheen. Turn the heat off.

Line two muffin tins with muffin cups and spray with cooking



PHOTO BY KAREN FERGUSON

spray. Place a Ritz cracker in each one. Spoon about one tablespoon of the caramel mixture over the top of the crackers. Place the tins in the oven and bake

for eight minutes. Once you take them out of the oven, top each “cookie” with about a tablespoon of chocolate chips. Then use the back of a spoon to smooth out the choco-

late evenly over the top. Finish with sprinkles. Place in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Serve the cookies inside the muffin cup or peel away. Enjoy!

Wine at year-end parties

Wine industry veterans say that more wine is sold in two seven-week blocks than at any other time of the year, which makes perfect sense when you think about it.

In the last weeks of May and through the end of June, people tend to celebrate weddings and graduations, often with special parties calling for things like Champagne. And then, of course, there are holiday festivities surrounding Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Eve, all of which generate celebrations.

In this country, Champagne and domestic sparkling wines are most heavily purchased during both periods. And though I don’t know what the numbers might be, I suspect that pain-killing medications like aspirin and acetaminophen also

show increased sales.

Teetotalers might not relate, but anyone who has nursed a hangover certainly knows that the impact can last a lot longer than the theoretical enjoyment that caused it.

Instead of chasing the ghost of a hangover cure, the best strategy is to take preventative measures to eliminate the morning-after problem, or at least to avoid its worst impact.

My first rule of thumb when heading for a year-end party at which alcoholic beverages flow like Niagara Falls in the spring is to start the evening with an eight-ounce glass of water and something with carbohydrates.

A friend once told me to eat a small potato (raw if necessary) before going to an alcohol fest and chase it with eight ounces of water. Water

helps dilute some of the alcohol and the potato will absorb some of it.

Another friend, who is a physician, said carbohydrates might have some effect, but he recommended that for every eight ounces of alcohol consumed, you also consume eight ounces of water. It may mean visiting the water closet frequently, but it’s a lot better than nursing a fierce headache.

Wine lovers may not appreciate adding water to fine wines, but I have been at functions where a wine or two is served that has 16 percent alcohol. In such cases, I always add at least an ounce of water to my glass because it actually makes the wine taste better. Most high-alcohol wines do not benefit from excessive alcohol.

Even better than that,

however, is a ritual I have followed for decades and one that I always look forward to. When I am headed for an event at which wine is a focal point, I speak to the host and suggest that I bring a few bottles of wine. Almost no one refuses.

And the ones that I almost always bring are low-alcohol German rieslings. These are not aberrations. Germany specializes in great riesling and several of their finest are intentionally produced with roughly 7 percent to 10 percent alcohol.

Flavors of these wines are usually exotic and so fascinating that they match nicely with all kinds of diverse foods that are frequently found at such parties. The typical aromatics of these lighter styled rieslings are floral — tropical



fruits, lychees, notes of honey, blossoms and berries.

Also, wines like this are usually slightly sweet, but typically are balanced by good acidity. They’re frequently served cold, allowing them to work nicely with all kinds of foods.

Adding a glass of water to the routine in the middle of the evening and focusing on German Rieslings usually helps to avoid any morning-after pain and suffering.

Wine of the Week:

2023 Villa Wolf Dry Riesling, Pfalz (\$15) – This is one of the most widely available and attractive German Rieslings available today.

And although the label says that it is dry, the wine has just enough sweetness to make certain that the acid is not too tart. The flavors are of peach, apricot and pear and although the wine is listed at 12 percent alcohol, I have tasted it several times and suspect that it is closer to 11 percent. Gorgeous flavors and excellent balance and frequently discounted. (The 2024 vintage may already be in some areas of the county.).

To find out more about Sonoma County resident Dan Berger, visit the Creators Syndicate webpage at www.creators.com.



ANSWER FOR ALBUM COVER PUZZLE ON PAGE 4



12/23 Solution

ANSWER FOR OH, JOY! PUZZLE ON PAGE 4



12/24 Solution

4C | LIFE & LEISURE

TRAIN

Continued from page 2C

plague him until his dying day.

Then one day, he meets a young woman, Gladys, (Felicity Jones) at church and the two fall in love. They make a perfect couple and you can sense they were made for each other. They both share their dreams and buy a plot of land on a gorgeous stretch of river. They build a cozy log

cabin and once they're comfortably settled they have a daughter, Kate. Life simply couldn't be better. The only drawback is that Robert is gone for long stretches of time on his various work assignments.

Robert's idyllic life is shattered one fateful day when a horrendous forest fire rages through the area. He struggles to return home, and when he discovers his cabin has been destroyed, he searches in vain for his

wife and daughter. Sadly, there is no trace of them, and it's this devastating loss that haunts him for the rest of his life.

As the movie rolls on into the middle of the century, Robert seems to be stuck in the past. The country moves forward at a tremendous pace, while he remains a simple laborer. The following quote from the narrator not only perfectly sums up Robert's life, but will give you a feeling for the tone of the entire film. (It's a little bit of a spoiler, so skip it if you'd rather not see how the movie ends).

Narrator: "When Robert Grainier died in his sleep sometime in November of 1968, his life ended as quietly as it had begun. He'd never purchased a firearm or spoken into a telephone. He had no idea who his parents might have been, and he left no heirs behind him. But that spring day, as he misplaced all sense of up and down, he felt, at last, connected to it all."

This is one of those rare movies that made me want to rewatch it as soon as the end credits were rolling. It's simply that good.

Currently streaming on Netflix.

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 buy it!

If you have any movie 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: moviejunkie-mark.blogspot.com.



Robert with Kate.



Arn played by William H. Macy.



Movie poster.



The happy family.

EXTRA CROSSWORD PUZZLES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Answers on Page 3

Universal Crossword

Edited by Taylor Johnson December 23, 2025

ACROSS

- 1 Clearasil target
- 5 Car make named after a big cat, for short
- 8 Not odd
- 12 Speak highly of
- 13 Employs
- 15 Earned
- 16 CNN host and "60 Minutes" correspondent (In this clue's answer, note the last 4 letters and the first 1)
- 19 Single-celled organism
- 20 ___ Museum (Vegas attraction full of electric signs)
- 21 Finish
- 22 Wooden piece in some DIY Christmas ornaments (... the last letter and the first 3)
- 25 "Gangnam Style" singer
- 26 Outdoor gear retailer
- 27 Pinch pennies
- 30 Some Guinness entries
- 33 Words on a Wonderland cake
- 34 Sitar melody
- 37 Like old jokes
- 39 HS junior's exam
- 40 Audibly

- 42 Merit badge earners
- 44 Some runway sights
- 46 CT scan alternative
- 47 Tabby, for one
- 50 Speak convincingly (... the last 2 letters and the first 3)
- 54 Pick up the tab
- 56 ___! Cherry-O (board game)
- 57 City on the Illinois River
- 58 Certain annual music-listening recap, and a hint to this puzzle's theme
- 61 Genesis maker
- 62 Ward (off)
- 63 Mine finds
- 64 Old Russian ruler
- 65 Govt. ID issuer
- 66 "___ worry about it!"

DOWN

- 1 Los ____, N.M.
- 2 Rainforest layer
- 3 Minimalist paintings?
- 4 "The Bear" actress Ayo
- 5 Roast beef au ___
- 6 In unison
- 7 Heredity units
- 8 American Football genre
- 9 Smoke shop purchases
- 10 Genesis garden

- 11 Many a character on "The Big Bang Theory"
- 14 Many kilt wearers
- 17 Go-kart competitors
- 18 Like beer in a cooler
- 19 iPhone download
- 23 What kids mail to Santa
- 24 Dice game with an easy six bet
- 28 UFC fighting style
- 29 Fur baby
- 30 Flora's counterpart
- 31 Tic ___ (small mint)
- 32 Instant replay speed
- 34 Genre for "Holiday" by Lil Nas X
- 35 The whole shebang

- 36 Fitness class with kids?
- 38 Moon of Jupiter
- 41 Indian megacity
- 43 Certain laundry detergent capsule
- 45 Flat-bottomed boat
- 47 Lurch
- 48 Surrounded by
- 49 Gossip, slangily
- 51 "Now I remember"
- 52 Gala garments
- 53 Camera that may be attached to a ski helmet
- 54 "Hey, over here!"
- 55 Orangutans, e.g.
- 59 Road goo
- 60 Nutritional stat



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Universal Crossword

Edited by Taylor Johnson December 24, 2025

ACROSS

- 1 Cookie ___ (holiday exchange)
- 5 Sewn edges
- 9 Alternative to .docx
- 12 "Yikes!"
- 13 What's drawn for some labs
- 15 Best-of-the-best acronym
- 17 "Water park toy"
- 19 Opera opener
- 20 Japanese electronics giant
- 21 Ultimate
- 23 "Popular search engine's altered logo"
- 26 Station with shells
- 29 Like lemons
- 30 "Angels & Demons" actor
- 31 Bowlers and fedoras
- 34 Velveeta company
- 37 Ford or Lincoln, e.g.
- 38 Certain child care workers ... and a phonetic hint to the starred clues' answers
- 40 (I'm a cow!)
- 41 Many-headed monster of myth

- 43 Sharpen
- 44 Zesty flavor
- 45 ___ immunity
- 47 Capital of Maine
- 49 *Chinese-American stir-fry dish
- 53 Meant playfully
- 54 Indian yogurt drink
- 58 Designer Gucci
- 59 *Toucan Sam's colorful cereal
- 62 Demeanor
- 63 More certain
- 64 "American ___" (TV singing contest)
- 65 Hosp. areas
- 66 South Asian garment
- 67 Fashionably

DOWN

- 1 Soaks (up)
- 2 "Hold on just a second!"
- 3 Auth. unknown
- 4 Triangle or square, e.g.
- 5 "A Christmas Mystery" network
- 6 "Do Ya" grp.
- 7 Catwalk walker
- 8 Finish, as a crossword puzzle
- 9 FedEx Cup organizer
- 10 Films that are based on true events

- 11 Deadly
- 14 Homeowners' documents
- 16 Rummikub piece
- 18 Rookie gamer
- 22 Cozy corners
- 24 Island home to "Jurassic Valley"
- 25 Scatter plot or bar chart
- 26 STEM part, casually
- 27 Not at home
- 28 Person with a lot of credit, maybe
- 32 Confucian philosophy
- 33 Egyptian peninsula
- 35 Futura, for one
- 36 Roman garment
- 38 NFL quarterback

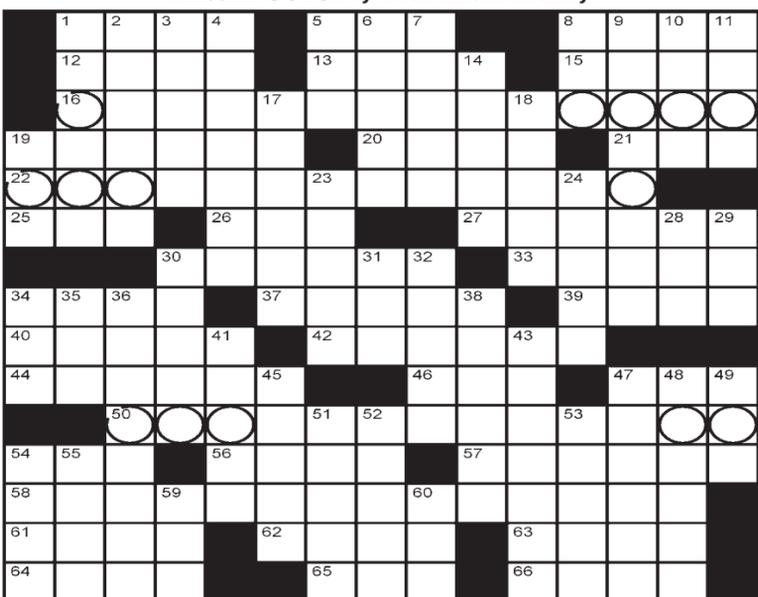
- 39 Sign on again
- 42 Areas
- 44 Liquid source of essential fatty acids
- 46 Removes, as a hat
- 48 Nerve
- 49 Palindromic address
- 50 Skateboard trick
- 51 Spiritual teachers
- 52 2024
- 53 dramedy starring Mikey Madison
- 55 Fizzy drink
- 56 Leopard feature
- 57 ___ of Man
- 60 Not 'neath
- 61 Three-stage race, briefly



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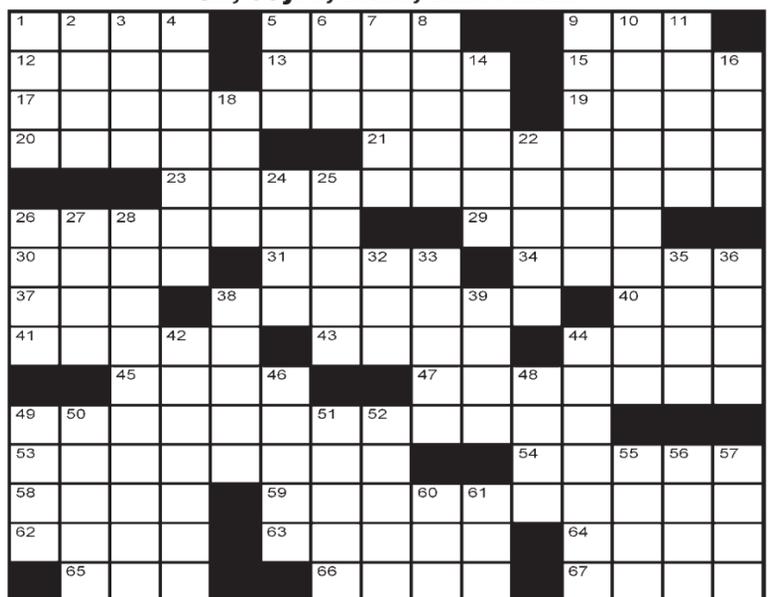
12/23

Album Cover by Tarun Krishnamurthy



12/24

Oh, Joy! by Zachary Edward-Brown



Weekly Challenge

UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle

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

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

Previous puzzle solution

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

12/25 DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

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12/18 Solution

Contract Bridge

THE PERCENTAGE PLAY

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ Q J 9 2
♥ A 5
♦ J 8 4 3
♣ A 10 5

WEST

♠ 5 3
♥ Q 10 7 6 4
♦ K 6 2
♣ Q 8 3

EAST

♠ A 8 7 4
♥ J 8 2
♦ Q 7
♣ J 7 6 2

SOUTH

♠ K 10 6
♥ K 9 3
♦ A 10 9 5
♣ K 9 4

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	3NT	

Opening lead — six of hearts.

Deciding which suit to attack first is often the key to success or failure of a contract.

Take this case where West leads a heart against three notrump. South is immediately faced with the question of whether to win the opening lead, and, if so, in which hand.

Let's say he follows the best course of allowing East to win the opening

heart lead with the jack, and that East returns a heart to dummy's ace.

Declarer must now decide whether to lead a spade to force out the ace, or whether to lead a diamond from dummy in order to take the first of two diamond finesses.

In the actual case, this is a critical decision, since if South attacks spades at trick three, he goes down, while if he attacks diamonds first, he makes the contract. Once West's king of diamonds is dislodged, his hearts are no longer a factor, and South finishes with 10 tricks.

It is easy to prove that playing a diamond at trick three is much better than playing a spade. The only time the spade play wins is when West has the ace of spades and neither diamond honor. As opposed to that, attacking diamonds first wins whenever West's only entry is a diamond honor — and there are two ways he can hold a diamond honor as opposed to only one way he can hold a spade honor. The odds are thus 2-to-1 in favor of attacking diamonds initially rather than spades.

Of course, if West started with the ace of spades and one of the diamond honors, as well as five hearts, no line of play will succeed.

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by Steve Becker

Royal Stars Weekly Horoscopes

Moon Alert: There are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions today. The Moon is in PISCES. It's a lovely day!

Happy Birthday for Thursday, December 25, 2025:

You are a resourceful, pragmatic idealist. You have a sense of destiny that you are meant to do something. This year's about new beginnings and major changes. Be ready to take action. Define your goals. What you do now will bring great benefit in the future. Prepare for leadership.

ARIES
(March 21-April 19)

This is a pleasant day, and you make an excellent impression on everyone because the Sun, Venus and your ruler Mars are sitting at the top of your chart. You look confident, attractive and charming! Take this advantage and share your good vibes with others. Tonight: Enjoy privacy.

TAURUS
(April 20-May 20)

Your ability to meet interesting people and possibly travel or be exposed to unusual cultures and different events might be one reason you feel stimulated today. You'll enjoy interacting with friends and groups. You might hear from people from afar. It's a good day! Tonight: Warm friendships.

GEMINI
(May 21-June 20)

You're high-viz, which means everyone notices you today! This is good, because you make an excellent impression on others. Issues related to shared property, debt, assets or inheritances might be positive discussions. Romance will also be exciting. Discussions about making money are likely. Tonight: You're strong.

CANCER
(June 21-July 22)

This day will be stimulating for you. You're interested in doing something different. Relations with partners, spouses and close friends are positive and mutually supportive. You will entertain others with new ideas and stories. Tonight: Seek stimulation.

LEO
(July 23-Aug. 22)

You will be organized today, but you will also be charming and diplomatic with everyone. Financial or practical support from someone else will please you. Use your mind for amusing past times like reading, writing and playing games. Tonight: Check your assets.

VIRGO
(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Today the Moon is opposite your sign, which happens for two and a half days every month. When this occurs, it means you have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Socializing with young people and children will be a joy. Tonight: Genuinely listen.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Home and family are your primary focus today. You might entertain. You will be wrapped up in details to make your home attractive. Nevertheless, you're busting your buns to be as efficient as possible because you're a people-pleaser. Tonight: Cooperate with others.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Today is fast-paced, and many of you might travel or take a short trip. Conversations with siblings, relatives and neighbors will be lively. Romance will also be exciting. Discussions about making money are likely. Tonight: Enjoy good times.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Today you are chatty and enthusiastic, wanting to share your ideas with everyone. Home and family are a strong focus. In fact, some of you might want to relax at home in a gentle, special, quiet way. Others will be spending money and being generous! Tonight: Relax.

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

This is a positive day for you! The Sun, fiery Mars and fair Venus are all in your sign. In addition to which, the Moon is dancing beautifully with both Mars and the Sun. This is emotionally supportive to you. You're happy, energetic and strong. Huzzah! Tonight: Talk and learn.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Holidays are often stressful; however, the gods are with us today, making this day quite pleasant. However, for your sign, you might choose to be low-key and enjoy a quiet time. Nevertheless, discussions with younger friends and people in clubs and organizations will please you. Tonight: Maintain your possessions.

PISCES
(Feb. 19-March 20)

Today the Moon is in your sign, which might make you a bit more emotional than usual. However, it also means that things will tend to go your way. Enjoy schmoozing with friends, relatives, groups, clubs and organizations. A platonic relationship might turn romantic. Discussions with parents and bosses will be dynamic. Tonight: It's all about you.

BORN TODAY
Actor Humphrey Bogart (1899), singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffett (1946), actress Sissy Spacek (1949).

Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg December 25, 2025

ACROSS

- 1 Something awesome
- 8 What "you" used to be
- 12 Cause to break
- 13 "Chocolate" dogs, for short
- 14 Singer known for country, despite his surname (In this answer, unscramble letters 4-7 and think "Babe")
- 16 Tech site
- 17 Dried poblano
- 18 Double click target
- 20 Crime scene evidence
- 21 GPS path
- 22 F-35, e.g. (Letters 6-10, "Derek")
- 25 Tropical storm
- 28 Grab
- 29 Freeway entries
- 33 St. crosses
- 34 Ritz-Carlton VIP (Letters 3-8, "Mickey")
- 36 Frog's kin
- 38 With 7-Down, coastal city in Orange County
- 39 Subcompact '80s Dodge
- 41 High-calorie seasonal drinks
- 45 Apt spots to order sidecars? (Letters 4-8, "Yogi")
- 49 Cyber address
- 50 "du lieber!"
- 51 Not that great
- 52 "Same here"
- 54 Baby's bed
- 56 Christmas party game ... and a theme hint
- 59 Mixer found at a mixer
- 60 What to do with a letter to Santa?
- 61 "You Live Twice" (Bond flick)
- 62 Like tied shoelaces

DOWN

- 1 Arm muscle, informally
- 2 Verb before "no fury"
- 3 It can bounce off the wall
- 4 Heat meas.
- 5 Your and my
- 6 Carrie's "Sex and the City" love interest
- 7 See 38-Across
- 8 "1000-lb Sisters" network
- 9 '50s dance named for a body part
- 10 Mr. Scrooge
- 11 Expansive properties
- 12 Beauty by Rihanna

14

- "Mario 64"
- "Just kidding!"
- Console under Christmas trees in Dec. 1986
- "Golf ball incoming!"
- As a whole
- President in 1986
- Sweatshirt with a top
- Province beside Manitoba: Abbr.
- UFC combat style
- "War and Peace" has hundreds of them
- as a bug in a rug
- Dale Gribble's neighbor in the fictional Arlen, Texas

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

C	L	A	M	E	L	M	E	R	C	M	O	N
H	I	K	E	D	O	I	L	Y	H	A	N	G
I	S	I	T	J	U	S	T	M	E	E	S	T
A	P	N	E	A	A	T	S	P	E	S	O	S
				O	M	E	N	S	T	A	T	A
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12/18 Solution

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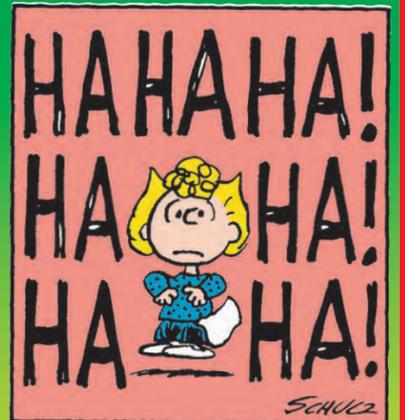
Switch-Hitters by Daniel Hrynick

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Peanuts

Charles M. Schulz



Bizarro Dan Piraro and Wayno

Andy Capp

Reg Smythe



Flying McCoys Glenn McCoy

B.C.

Johnny Hart and Mason Mastroianni



Reality Check Dave Whamond

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Greg, Brian, Neal and Mort Walker



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Mike Peters



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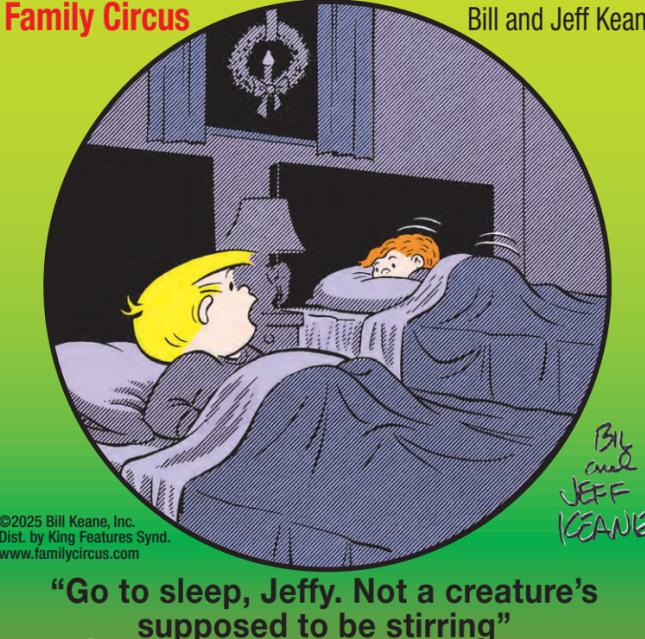
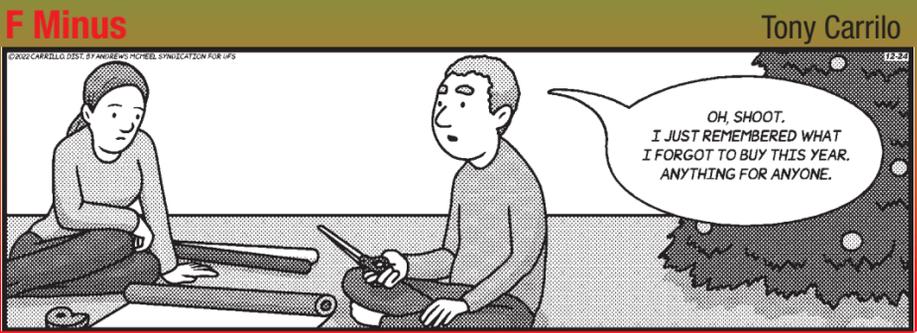
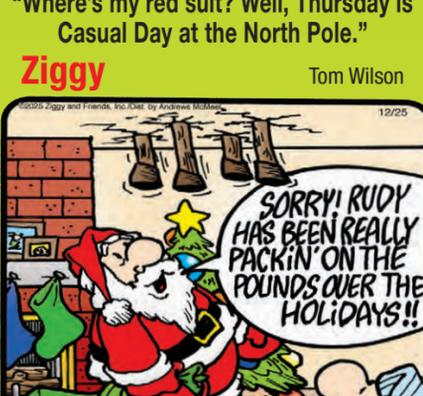
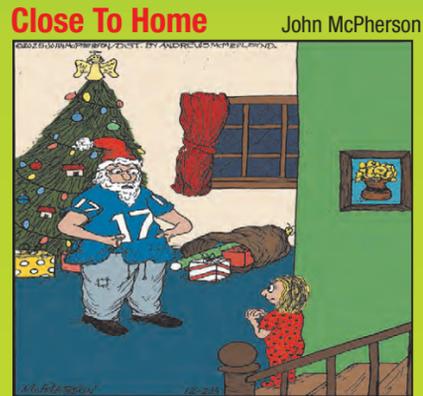


Wumo

Mikael Wulff and Anders Morgenthaler

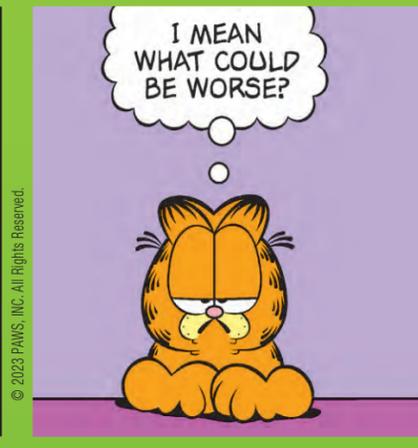


Grosse Pointe News THURSDAY COMICS

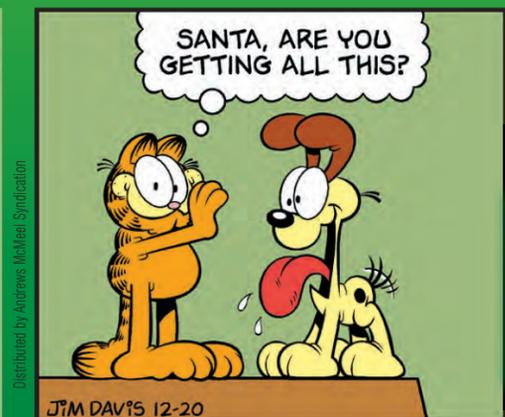


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North girls hoops rolls to early wins

By Mike Adzima
 Sports Reporter

When it comes to ways to start a new season, the Grosse Pointe North varsity girls basketball team could not have asked for much better. Led by senior Eva Borowski, the Norsemen earned their third victory in as many games this season Wednesday,

Dec. 17, fending off a late comeback attempt by Chippewa Valley for a 39-33 win.

“We played hard and that’s always our biggest priority,” North girls basketball coach Gary Bennett said. “... Today, I’m happy with the effort and the defensive adjustments we made. We got a good effort from everybody.

It’s a good win, because that’s a team that could beat us.”

The Norsemen held a lead for a majority of the night, but Bennett was right to think it was anyone’s game. Last Wednesday’s game started evenly with the teams trading some shots and Chippewa Valley ended up in front 11-8 at the end of the opening quarter.

North began to turn the momentum in its favor with a strong second quarter. Borowski continued to light up the scoreboard on her way to 26 points — a third consecutive game of scoring 20 or more — and helped the Norsemen move ahead 21-16 going into half-time.

The defense stepped up for North coming out of the break. The Norsemen were able to find their way into passing lanes and force Chippewa Valley into mistakes. Ultimately, North held the Big Reds to just three points in the quarter while extending the lead to 15 heading into the final frame.

Chippewa Valley was not going down quietly, however. The Norsemen



Senior Eva Borowski led the Norsemen with 26 points a victory over Chippewa Valley Wednesday, Dec. 17. It was Borowski’s third consecutive game of 20 or more points.



PHOTOS BY MIKE ADZIMA

North’s Juliette Laurenceau looks to make a pass around a Chippewa Valley defender.

had to fight off a comeback attempt by the Big Reds, who outscored them 14-5 in the fourth quarter. North’s defense held up enough to still secure the win by six, showing signs of a steadily improving young team.

In the eyes of their coach, being able to close out a victory like that began with the

effort the team showed in the days leading up to the game.

“Our last three practices were our best practices of the year,” Bennett said. “I saw that we were starting to do things better, with a little bit more intensity and focus. That’s what it’s going to take for us to keep improving.”

Sophomore Emma

Barr added eight points alongside Borowski’s 26 in the win. North played its final game before a break for the holidays Friday, Dec. 19, improving its record to 4-0 with a 48-35 win over L’Anse Creuse North. The Norsemen return to action Wednesday, Jan. 7, hosting Madison Heights Bishop Foley at 7 p.m.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Richards writes new chapter in family’s South basketball legacy

By Mike Adzima
 Sports Reporter

Anyone who knows anything about basketball in the Pointes likely is familiar with the Richards family. They probably have seen Kevin Richards on the sidelines as the long-time head coach of the Grosse Pointe South varsity girls basketball team, or watched players like Kamryn and Karter Richards become stars on the court for the Blue Devils.

The Richards’ basketball legacy at South is having another name carved into it, with Kooper Richards emerging as a game-changer for South varsity boys basketball this winter. The junior point guard has helped carry the Blue Devils to five wins in their first seven games and is doing so with skills that seem to come naturally from developing a love for the game early on.

Grosse Pointe News

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Kooper Richards

School: Grosse Pointe South
 Sport: Basketball

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to recognize stuff from the game and started to want to be a coach with my dad, so I’d sit on the bench with him. Watching my older sister and brother was a great influence on me as well.”

Like his older siblings, Richards is a natural scorer. In fact, he is scoring at a pace now that could see him join his brother in South’s 1,000-point club by the end of his career, as he is averaging

around 16 points per game this season for the Blue Devils.

As the starting point guard, Richards is the one the Blue Devils trust with the ball at all times. He can facilitate and create plays for his teammates or take the big shot on his own when he needs to, like in his game-winning basket in South’s 55-54 win over Rochester Adams Wednesday, Dec. 17.

Richards knows more than anyone that being a point guard is about a lot more than scoring. He has to know where his teammates are going to be on the court at all times to create plays, which requires great team chemistry, something he and his fellow Blue Devils have been building beyond just this season.

“We have a lot of the same guys back and last year didn’t go as we wanted it to,” Richards said. “When we played



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA

Kooper Richards handles the ball on offense for South in a game against Notre Dame Prep Dec. 5.

King Kooper

- Scored 14 or more points in 6 games so far this season
- Made game-winning shot in South’s 55-54 win over Rochester Adams Dec. 17
- Member of South varsity boys basketball and football teams

together over the summer, we set the tone that it wasn’t going to happen again and we were going to be a lot better this year. That chemis-

try started to build then and it just continues to build every day in practice and games as we

See *ATHLETE*, page 2D

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2D | SPORTS

Liggett stays hot as boys hockey teams head into holiday break

By Mike Adzima
Sports Reporter

As the teams take a couple of weeks off for the holidays, it marks somewhat of a halfway point in the boys varsity hockey season. For some teams, like University Liggett School, there are hopes that the momentum of a long winning streak carries over as the calendar flips to 2026, while the squads from Grosse Pointe North and Grosse Pointe South look for a new year to bring new opportunities for wins.

University Liggett

Having not lost since late November, the Knights are one of the hottest hockey teams in the state right now. That hot streak continued last week with a pair of wins, including one over a perennial powerhouse.

The week started for Liggett with a matchup at home against Jackson Lumen Christi Tuesday, Dec. 16. Four goals in the first period helped the Knights capture the momentum right away and keep it, riding their way to a 6-2 victory over the Titans.

Two of those four first-period goals were scored by Luke Slanec. Landen Maltby and Griffin Marchal also contributed to Liggett's early lead. Marchal scored again



PHOTO BY MADELINE HEXTER

Liggett's Luke Slanec scored in the Knights' victory over defending Division 2 state champion Flint Powers Catholic Thursday, Dec. 18.

later in the night, with Nick Gould finding the back of the net as well to help the Knights ice the win.

Liggett then hosted defending Division 2 state champion Flint Powers Catholic Thursday, Dec. 18. In a highly anticipated matchup against the No. 4-ranked team in the state, the Knights held their own and rallied from a two-goal deficit to earn a 5-3 win.

The Knights found themselves down 3-1

after two periods, with the team's lone goal to that point coming from Slanec. Liggett did not back down from an uphill battle against the defending state champs.

Goalie Lucien Valiot and the Knights' defense shut out Flint Powers in the third period. A pair of goals by Gould and others by Maltby and Cam Stapleton helped the Knights storm back, from being down by two goals to winning by two goals.

"It's fun to see where this team is at right now

because I don't think we've even hit our ceiling, or come close to it," Liggett boys hockey coach Colin Smith said after the win. "I knew we could compete with Flint Powers, but I have a new outlook on where we really are. ... We have to stay the course. We didn't win anything yet. We just beat a team in a hockey game, but it is a huge boost for morale knowing that they can do that."

Liggett remained hot in its next game Friday,

Dec. 19, against Romeo. The Knights rolled to a 7-3 win led by a Gould hat-trick. Slanec scored twice against Romeo with other goals for the Knights coming from Johnny Secco and Marchal.

The Knights return from the holidays for their first game of the new year Tuesday, Jan. 6. They host Detroit Country Day at 5:30 p.m.

Grosse Pointe North

The Norsemen played their final game before

the holidays Thursday, Dec. 18, traveling to Ann Arbor to play at a historic venue. North took on Ann Arbor Father Gabriel Richard at the University of Michigan's Yost Ice Arena, where the two teams fought to a 3-3 tie.

Brandon Shock, Airdan Burney and Andrew Phillips scored the Norsemen's three goals, which helped the team take an early lead. However, Gabriel Richard was able to tie the game and send it to overtime, where it eventually ended in a tie.

North plays its first game of 2026 Tuesday, Jan. 6, hosting Port Huron Unified at 6:30 p.m. at Big Boy Arena.

Grosse Pointe South

The first portion of the season has not been kind to the Blue Devils, who find themselves entering the holiday break on a 10-game losing streak. Another tally was added to the loss column Thursday, Dec. 18, as South fell at home 9-1 against Orchard Lake St. Mary's. Liam O'Donoghue scored the lone goal for the Blue Devils with assists from Will Gryzenia and Charlie Thomas.

South will look to turn things around in January, starting with a game on the road at Allen Park Tuesday, Jan. 6.

ATHLETE:

Continued from page 1D

move on."

Richards put in plenty of work with his teammates to build that chemistry and make sure they were prepared to bring South more wins this winter than it did last season. He also put in plenty of work on his own in the weight room to build strength for both basketball and football, where he had over 500 receiving yards on the gridiron for South in the fall.

It was all in an effort to keep getting bigger and better. Richards is far from the tallest player on the team at South, but point guard is a position based more around skill than size. Either way, he knew he had to build up muscle anywhere he could to avoid the issue of other teams getting a size advantage.

"After last season, I sat down and said I need

to get stronger," Richards said. "... Older guys and other teams would sort of pick on me and put their biggest guy on me and try to wear me down. This year, I got a lot stronger in my legs and my upper body. A lot of that came from football and I'm just not going to be picked on anymore by other teams."

As he tries to gain an advantage in size, perhaps the biggest advantage Richards has is his high basketball IQ. It would be hard for him not to have a vast knowledge of the game simply from the world in which he has grown up, with a highly respected head coach in Steve Benard teaching him in practice and games, and another legendary coach in his dad waiting at home.

"I tell (Coach Benard) what I see out there on the floor and he tells me what he sees from off the floor and we work together on what we should do," Richards

said. "When I go home, I get another perspective of it from my dad and he tells me what he sees from the stands. ... It's good having a coach both on the court and at home."

Richards has everything it takes to be successful with the coaching and talent of the teammates around him at South this season. It is known he can be a great playmaker and score seemingly at will, but it is never fully on him to take over the game on a nightly basis.

He knows any one of his teammates is equally capable of putting on a big performance in any game, just as he is. Richards sees his role as being whatever his teammates need him to be in a given scenario — a skilled and cerebral player capable of filling the stat sheet, but willing to sacrifice his own numbers for the most important thing: another number in the win column for the Blue Devils.

"I really want a district championship this year," Richards said. "King has knocked us out the last two years

and I just can't let that happen again. ... I want to do whatever the team needs me to. I'm not looking to always be the

leading scorer or do anything stats-wise. Whatever they need me to be on any night, I can step up and just be that."



PHOTO BY MIKE ADZIMA

Richards has been among South's leading scorers in every game so far this season, scoring 14 points or more six times already.

City of **Grosse Pointe Park**, Michigan

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION FOR A SHORT-TERM RENTAL AT 1379 MARYLAND

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE The Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Grosse Pointe Park will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall, Fourth Floor, 15115 E. Jefferson Avenue, Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230 on the following matter:

An application to the Grosse Pointe Park Zoning Board of Appeals requesting an appeal to an administrative decision, which was based on the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.13 Short-Term Rentals. The application is from the owners of real property located at 1379 Maryland, Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230 and they are requesting relief from the administration decision to not allow a Short-Term Rental at this location.

Information concerning this request may be obtained from the Public Service Department during regular business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by calling (313)-822-4365. Written comments concerning this request will be received by the Public Service Department prior to the public hearing or by the Zoning Board of Appeals at the public hearing. Comments can be submitted via email at clerk@grossepointepark.org.

Bridgette Bowdler,
City Clerk

HITS & HIGHLIGHTS



BULLDOGS HOCKEY

The 2013 Detroit Bulldogs hockey team was victorious in the Regional Silver Sticks tournament and punched its ticket to the International Silver Sticks finals in January. Grayson Winkler was named the tournament MVP, and Blake Steiner scored the game-winning goal in the championship.

COURTESY PHOTO

GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL

Grosse Pointe South girls basketball earned a win over Roseville last Thursday, Dec. 18, 56-34. The win helped the Blue Devils improve to 3-2 early this season, with Evie Baer and Morgan Duff both leading the scoring with 15 points each. South visited Detroit Edison after press time Tuesday, Dec. 13. The Blue Devils return to action Saturday, Dec. 27, taking on Detroit Renaissance in the PSL Holiday Classic hosted by Renaissance.



GIRLS VARSITY HOCKEY

Grosse Pointe South girls hockey earned two wins last week, starting with a dominant 8-0 win over Livonia United Friday, Dec. 19. Sydney Eickhorst lit up the stat sheet with four goals, and Sophia Husek also recorded a hat trick for the Blue Devils.

South then had a rematch of last year's Division 1 state championship game against Mid-Michigan Alliance. In a close matchup, the Blue Devils managed to come away with a 2-1 victory, with Eickhorst and Charlie Harr scoring. South returns from the holidays Thursday, Jan. 8, for a game against University Liggett.

Grosse Pointe North's girls hockey team earned a big victory before the holiday break, beating Plymouth-Canton 8-0 last Wednesday, Dec. 17. Paige Martin found the back of the net four times for the Norsemen, with Mia Wilhelm, Twila Shappy-Behn, Leah Burney and Ava Villani all scoring as well. North is back in action Saturday, Jan. 4, playing on the road against St. Clair Shores.



SOUTH BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

Grosse Pointe South baseball will host its 3rd Annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony Friday, Jan. 23, at the Assumption Cultural Center in St. Clair Shores. The 2026 honorees include Ed Wernet, Tom Temrowski and the entire 2001 Division 1 state championship team in honor of its 25th anniversary.

The evening will be hosted by Fox 2's Ryan Ermanni. Tickets are \$85 and include dinner and an open bar. For more information, contact Southdugoutclubpresident@gmail.com.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTION 2026

Hall Of Fame Induction Honoring:

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*posthumous induction

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City of **Grosse Pointe Park**, Michigan

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON VARIANCE REQUEST FOR A FRONT FACING GARAGE AT 824 THREE MILE RD.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE The Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Grosse Pointe Park will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall, Fourth Floor, 15115 E. Jefferson Avenue, Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230 on the following matter:

An application requesting a variance to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.05: Residential Building Form and Design Standards, subsection E: Design Standards: - Garage by the owners to permit a:

Front Facing Garage in the ER, Estate Residential District.

Information concerning this request may be obtained from the Public Service Department during regular business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by calling (313)-822-4365. Written comments concerning this request will be received by the Public Service Department prior to the public hearing or by the Zoning Board of Appeals at the public hearing. Comments can be submitted via email at clerk@grossepointepark.org.

Bridgette Bowdler,
City Clerk

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