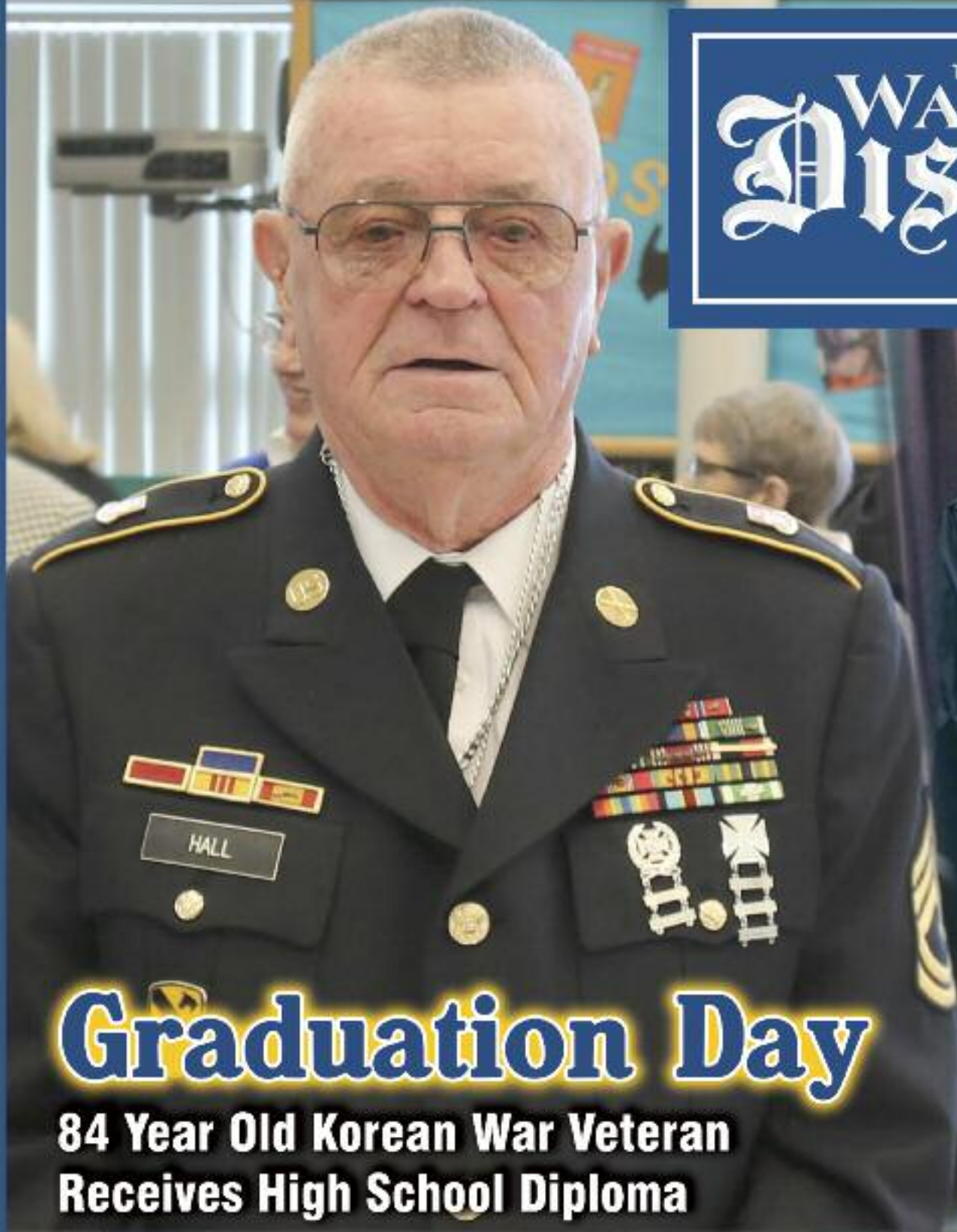


THE WAYNE Dispatch

MARCH 2020



Graduation Day

84 Year Old Korean War Veteran
Receives High School Diploma



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Veteran receives the first class of 2020 diploma

By Carolyn Marnon

Welcome to the Class of 2020 Avery Hall! A Korean War veteran, Avery left Wayne Memorial High School at the age of 17 to enlist in the Army. He had wanted to join the Army and go to Korea when he was just 16, but he says his folks wouldn't sign the papers. When he reached 17, he was off to serve his country in the armed forces.

On February 28, Avery Hall walked across the stage at Taft-Galloway Elementary School to loud applause, which included many of his nieces and nephews and friends, a small group of veterans, Taft students, the media, and other locals, to receive his long-awaited diploma. While seated on the stage listening to the accolades being rained down upon him, Avery would toss a thumbs up out to the audience which was tossed back to him by his nephew Mitchell Beardon.

The pomp and circumstance were all attended to on this special day. As Wayne Westland School Board members, the Interim Superintendent Jill Simmons, Taft Principal Brandon Cox, WMHS Principal James Anderson and Wayne Mayor John Rhaesa stood on stage, Avery Hall was assisted to the stage by his son, Wendell Hall, to "Pomp and Circumstance," the traditional graduation walking song. The Wayne Memorial High School JROTC Color Guard presented the National Colors.

"It is a privilege and an honor to have Mr. Avery Hall and his family here today for this commencement ceremony," exclaimed Taft Principal Brandon Cox as he turned over the microphone to Wayne Mayor John Rhaesa.

"Our nation owes a great debt to its veterans whose service spans every decade and continues every day of our country's existence," Mayor Rhaesa began. "Through untold courage and sacrifice, America's veterans have secured the liberty which the founding fathers sought to establish here in the New World." He went on, "Let's not forget the sacrifices veterans like Mr. Hall made for all of us. They have ensured your right to travel freely all around this great country and around the world. Mr. Hall, I want to thank you on be-



Class of 2020 Graduate Mr. Avery Hall is an Army veteran who left Wayne Memorial High School when he was 17, before graduation, to serve in the Korean War and went on to serve in Vietnam, Germany, Alaska and Fort Sill. He is 84 years old and currently resides in a veteran's home in Oklahoma. He grew up in, then, Nankin Township and went to Cady Elementary School in Westland in the early 1940s. He was presented with his high school diploma during a graduation ceremony on February 28, 2020. Photo Wayne Westland Community Schools

half of the City of Wayne, your contributions making the United States of America the great country that it is today." He went on to say "I think we can all honor individuals like Mr. Hall through our deeds and not just our words. How do you do that? By living our lives and enjoying America's greatness. We can live our lives and be good Americans that all veterans can be proud to know that their sacrifices were not in vain. This is the thanks Americans can give, live your lives well as productive citizens should." Upon completion of Mayor Rhaesa's speech, Mr. Hall raised his arm and gave a thumbs up to the audience.

"This is symbolic," said WMHS Principal James Anderson. "This is the 100th year for Wayne Memorial, so you are the first graduate of the class of 2020" he said as he turned to Mr. Avery on stage. "It is our honor to reunite with a proud member of the Wayne Memorial community and finish the work that started so many years ago. However, the first thing we need to do is thank Mr. Hall for his dedication and service to our country. I am certain you made sacrifices leaving the comforts of Wayne Memorial as a young man and

throughout your military career," he said as he expressed gratitude for Mr. Hall's sacrifices.

"When I talk to students today about high school," continued Principal Anderson, "I talk about opportunity. It's my belief our goal as a high school is to prepare our students for the next opportunity in their lives, regardless if it is the military, college, a family business or going straight into the workforce. Opportunities are unique. Oftentimes, they only present themselves for a short time before they are missed. I cannot imagine how often you thought about the missed opportunity of earning your high school diploma. I, along with the Wayne Westland Community School District, are proud to be a part of helping you achieve a missed opportunity." After speaking about Mr. Hall's career since his separation from the service, Principal Anderson added "It may have taken some time and a lot of patience, but the diploma you receive today will belong to you. You earned it." He also mentioned the sacrifice Mr. Hall's parents made of not being able to watch their son cross the stage. When Principal Anderson spoke about Avery's wife of 60 years look-

ing down upon him on his special day, Avery could be seen kissing his wife's picture that appeared in the program booklet. Principal Anderson concluded with "You are the definition of Wayne Pride."

School Board President David Cox presented Mr. Hall with his diploma while stating that Avery was the first in his class of 2020. After being seated, Avery leaned over to Interim Superintendent Jill Simmons and asked "Am I supposed to turn my hat?" which received several chuckles from his family seated in the audience.

Mr. Hall came to the podium and spoke. He first addressed the children of Taft Elementary and expressed the importance of staying in school and getting an education. "Be on time for school, mind your classroom and school rules and," he chuckled, "eat well." He thanked everyone for being at the ceremony and gave a special shout-out to WWCS Administrative Executive Secretary Cheryl Watson for making the event possible.

As the ceremony concluded, Mr. Hall walked down the middle of the

NEWS BRIEFS

School district calendar change

Due to the 2020 Presidential Primary Election, there will be no school at Stottlemyer Early Childhood Center and for all K-6 grade students on Tuesday, March 10. Because many of Wayne-Westland schools serve as polling locations, having school in session on election day can be disruptive to the school environment and inhibits normal safety protocols. Middle schools and high schools will be in session and have a full day of instruction on March 10.

Girls wanted for fastpitch softball

The Wayne Baseball Association (WBA) is looking for girls born 2003-2013 for Fastpitch Softball. Registration will be held at the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd. on Thursdays, March 5 and 12, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and on Saturdays, March 14 and 28, from 12:30-2:30 p.m. There will also be a special registration on Thursday, March 19, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mark Chevrolet, 33200 Michigan Ave. Players from all cities are welcome.

Airport historian gives talk about female pilots

Detroit Metro Airport historian Daniel Mason will talk about the 107 female pilots who flew aircraft in and out of what is now Detroit Metro Airport during a presentation, The W.A.S.P. of Romulus Army Airfield, on Thursday, March 12, at 7:00 p.m. at the Wayne Public Library. The



Mayor John Rhaesa presents Class of 2020 Graduate Mr. Avery Hall a key to the city of Wayne. Hall is 84 years old and currently resides in a veteran's home in Oklahoma. Mayor Rhaesa thanked Mr. Hall for his service to our country and welcomed him back to his hometown. Photo Wayne Westland Community Schools

event is hosted by the Wayne Historical Society.

Ghost hunt

The Great Lakes Ghost Hunters invite you to join them for a ghost hunt in Wayne's 140 year old museum on Friday, March 13. Tickets are \$20 for a one-hour spot between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. Contact the Wayne Historical Museum for tickets.

Dueling piano party

Wayne Rotary Club presents their annual St. Paddy's Dueling Piano Party on Saturday, March 14, at 7:30 p.m. Held at HYPE Western Wayne Center, 4635 Howe, this evening of musical entertainment includes a

cash bar, food available for purchase, 50/50 raffles and fun. Tickets are \$20 each. Proceeds will benefit Wayne Memorial High School Rotary College Scholarships. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. with show starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at Henry's Service Center, Kurt's Cap and HYPE. For more information, contact Linda Gable at (734) 751-2302 or email linyet2b@yahoo.com

Baseball and softball registration

The Wayne Baseball Association (WBA) will be hosting registration for baseball and softball players for the 2020 season on Saturday, March 14 and March 28, from 12:30-2:30 p.m.

at the Wayne Public Library, 3737 S. Wayne Rd. The WBA believes team sports help youth gain confidence, learn responsibility and become leaders. Registration events will also be held on Thursdays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on March 5, March 12 and March 26.

Registrations taken after March 28, are by appointment only and are subject to a \$10 late fee. Players from all cities are welcome. You will need to provide a copy of your child's birth certificate. For more information, contact WBA at (734) 722-6400.

The parable project

St. Mary Catholic Church, 34530 W. Michigan Ave, would like to invite everyone to the event "The Parable Project: Take Two" from Magic Carpet Theatre. The show will be Monday, March 16, at 6:00 p.m. This engaging, lively, and interactive performance will inspire everyone to spread the Good News in their lives. There is no charge to attend, and no tickets are required.

The Parable Project: Take Two features humor, improvisation and audience participation that brings the Gospel message to life in a creative and fun way. This new show features nine parables that will help you experience the love of God. The audience helps to create the storm in "The Wise Builder," makes their best fish face in "The Net" and is delighted by song and pantomime in "The Lost Coin" and "The Merchant Searching."

See **Briefs**, page 12

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School Board President David Cox presents Avery Hall with his high school diploma at Taft Galloway Elementary School at the end of last month.

GRADUATE, Continued from page 3

audience to “On You Zebras,” the WMHS Fight Song. The audience stood and clapped while Mr. Hall waved and soaked up the admiration of the students as he left the gymnasium.

Avery was born at 335 S. Wayne Rd in what was then Nankin Township. The site was formerly the home of Kmart and now boasts UHaul rentals. His aunt and uncle also had a home on the property which, he said, was vast at the time. This was also a time when Wayne and Cherry Hill roads were both just gravel. Cady Elementary School, which he attended, stood kitty-corner to his home and is now where Bank of America stands. He also attended Wayne Junior High School.

Although he had wanted to go to Korea, by the time he had finished Advanced Artillery Training, the Korean War was winding down and he was sent to Germany for three years. He met a young German woman, Aloisia, while he was there. She became his wife; they were married a few months shy of 60 years. Before retiring as Sargeant First Class from the Army in 1973 at the age of 37, Avery had done four tours of duty in Germany and one in Anchorage, Alaska.

Avery worked another 24 years as a facility manager for Lawton Public Schools in Lawton, Oklahoma. Even though he now resides in a veteran’s retirement home in Lawton, he proudly proclaims that Wayne is his home. His son, Wendell, says that the planning of this graduation



Avery Hall with the love of his life, Aloisia.

ceremony has recharged his father. He then went on to say that back home in Oklahoma, Avery goes with friends to watch roller derby on Saturday nights.

Since he left Wayne at the tender age of 17, Avery has been back here in 2004 for the 50th reunion of the Class of 1954, the one which he would have graduated with had he not joined the Army, and for this ceremony. He is amazed at the paved roads and how large the Wayne and Westland are now.

Why was it so important to get his high school diploma? Avery says he got his GED in 1962 while he was serving in Germany. His son and daughter had diplomas, his siblings had diplomas and a grandson is getting a diploma in May. “I wanted to make my grandsons happy. I’ve been dreaming about it (getting his diploma) for years.”

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We are looking to raise \$30,000 over the next month. IF we hit our goal the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) will match that essentially DOUBLING YOUR DONATION!

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29th district court judge retires after 16 years

By Carolyn Marnon

After 15 years on the bench serving the people of Wayne, 29th District Court Judge Laura Mack has retired effective March 1.

Judge Mack was appointed to the bench by Governor Jennifer Granholm on January 12, 2004 to replace Judge Carolyn Archbold who retired at the end of 2003. In 2004, the voters affirmed Judge Mack at the polls to serve the remainder of Judge Archbold's term that ended in 2006. In 2006, Judge Mack was elected to a full six-year term followed by re-elections in 2012 and 2018.

"Because I am in the middle of my term," Judge Mack explained, "Governor Whitmer will appoint my replacement. Any replacement must be a lawyer in good standing who lives in Wayne and who has at least five years of experience as a lawyer. That person would then be required to be on the ballot in 2020 to be affirmed by the voters. If elected in November, my replacement would serve until the end of my current term, 2024."

Although she is retiring, Judge Mack does not plan to relax. She is a director of Families Against Narcotics NW Wayne Chapter, the Wayne 100 Club and the Michigan Association of Treatment Court Professionals. She plans to maintain her memberships in the State-sponsored Mental Health Court Advisory Committee, the Wayne County Jail Diversion project, the Michigan Diversion Council Incompetent to Stand Trial Workgroup, the Wayne County District Judges Association and the Michigan District Judges Association.



Judge Laura Mack

She will also be available to serve as a visiting judge for local courts. In July, she will take over as President of the Wayne Rotary Club.

"I am committed to ending stigma and helping people with substance use disorders and mental illnesses stay out of the criminal justice system by securing the treatment they need. My husband, Milt Mack, is also deeply committed to this ideal. Milt is on a task force with state court administrators, chief justices and community mental health professionals throughout the country to re-write civil commitment and forensic laws to more effectively and humanely deal with people suffering from mental illness in the court systems. As a district court judge with

16 years of experience, I have valuable insights into these problems, and I am looking forward to assisting and traveling with my husband."

"I also plan to volunteer my time to help mental health courts throughout the state," she says, "including the Western Wayne County Regional Behavioral Treatment Court that I started at the 29th District Court 6 years ago. It is very important to me that the treatment court continues. I would also help my successor continue the other programs I started, such as the Truancy Diversion Program, the Eviction Diversion Program, juvenile jurisdiction, the Teen Court program, Law Day and Constitution Day activities at local schools, and the informal internship program."

Until a replacement judge has been named by Governor Whitmer for the 29th District, the court is using visiting judges.

"It's been a pleasure serving the people of Wayne for over 16 years, says Judge Mack, "and I am looking forward to the next chapter."

And what will she do in her spare time? "I am also looking forward to exercising regularly and learning yoga!"



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Local government association elects 2020 leadership

The Conference of Western Wayne (CWW), an association of 18 chief elected local officials in Michigan's largest county, announced today that it has selected its new 2020 leadership team.

The CWW 2020 Executive Committee is comprised of Chairperson Mayor Kerreen Conley (Belleville), Vice-Chairman Supervisor Pat Williams (Canton Township), Treasurer Mayor John Rhaesa (Wayne), Secretary Supervisor David Glaab (Huron Township) and Chair Emeritus Supervisor Robert Nix II (Northville Township), who led the CWW the last year. The committee was sworn in by the Honorable Eric Sabree.

"I am truly grateful to serve the 18 communities in Western Wayne County that make up this organization," said newly elected CWW Chairperson Mayor Kerreen Conley (Belleville), "Our board has met monthly for well over four decades to not only share best practices between our local leaders, but to also take and advocate positions on state and federal legislation and county matters. Some of our primary focuses include: local government, public safety, substance use prevention, transportation and community and economic development. Our region is the most populated in the County and we pride ourselves on working together to promote Western Wayne."

The CWW is a bi-partisan group that works collectively to discuss mutual issues, share informa-



The CWW committee was sworn in by the Honorable Eric Sabree.

tion and generally improve the quality of life for the nearly 700,000 residents who live in the region. CWW also serves as the 911 Service District for Western Wayne County.

The CWW communities are the Cities of Belleville, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Garden City, Inkster, Livonia, Northville, Plymouth, Romulus, Wayne and Westland, and the Townships of Canton, Huron, Northville, Plymouth, Redford, Sumpter and Van Buren.

"The Conference of Western Wayne has worked with Wayne County on many state and local issues. The County and CWW work together to continue open lines of communication between our local leaders and Wayne County, and also to ensure that citizens' first line of government, local government, has not only a local voice, but representation at the state and federal levels as well. Organizations like CWW help create partnerships throughout Wayne County through collaboration and advocacy", said Wayne County Treasurer Eric Sabree.

The CWW area is 340 square miles, bordered by Washtenaw County to the west, Oakland County to the north, the City of Detroit to the east, and Monroe County to the south.

Despite the diversity of size, economic development and population density, these communities have been working together –regionally – to enhance this area of Wayne County for over 40 years.

"All of our 700,000 residents and 340 square miles are impacted by the decisions and laws that are made at the federal, state and county levels", said Mayor Conley. "It is vital that we continue to collaborate in order to create the best solutions possible to the challenges we face."

The 18 members of CWW selected the new leadership at its board meeting on February 14 in the City of Romulus.

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Local young woman is 7-time big ten champion

By Carolyn Marnon

Wayne Memorial High School graduate Anavia Battle has the fastest 200-meter dash time for 2020 out of all professional and collegiate athletes. Anavia registered a 22.66 which also became a facility record at a recent track and field event at Clemson University Indoor Complex. A college junior at Ohio State, Anavia is a seven-time Big Ten Champion and was 2018 Freshman of the Year.

The world record is 21.34 held by Florence Griffith-Joyner at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Anavia's was a Big Ten Champion her sophomore year at Ohio State when she won the indoor 200-meter, the outdoor 100-meter and 200-meter and the 4x100 relay. Her team won Big Ten Champions as a whole for both indoor and outdoor. Her junior year, she has won the 60-meter and 200-meter indoor and another team championship "making me a 7x Big Ten Champion," she says.

"To prepare for race day I make sure I eat and get rest and surround myself with good energy.

I don't really think when I run. I put my mind aside and get out there and run and have fun. My next goal to strive for in my career is to win NCAA and become a professional athlete."



Wayne Memorial High School graduate Anavia Battle has the fastest 200-meter dash time for 2020.

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The graphic features a cityscape background with a large yellow starburst containing the text "KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP!". Below this, there are five cartoon superhero characters: a boy in a green mask, a girl in a purple mask, a boy in a red and yellow suit in a wheelchair, a girl in a red dress, and a boy in a blue suit. Two speech bubbles provide event details and information for incoming kindergarteners. To the right, registration information and social media links for Wayne-Westland Community Schools are listed.

Plante Moran give update on city finances

Carolyn Marnon

Many associate the month of March with the color green. St. Patrick's Day boasts green beer and green leprechauns. The coming of spring heralds the renewal of trees and plants to lush greenery. One other item that is green is money. We're often told money doesn't grow on trees. If it did, I am sure we would all have been at Aldi's when they recently had Money Trees for sale. Alas, these plants would never sprout the dollar bills we would so love to have in our City.

Brian Camiller, a partner at Plante Moran, has been helping the City of Wayne restore financial stability during economically depressed times. Mr. Camiller recently addressed Wayne City Council to give an audit report and financial update on the City's finances through the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019.

The presentation of the City's finances received an "Unmodified Opinion." "This is like getting an 'A' on a report card," said Mr. Camiller.

If/when another recession arises, the city will face severe financial adversity with even fewer options to utilize over what has already been done. In summary, the City of Wayne needs a new, sustainable revenue source.

The auditor's report, done by Alan C. Young & Associates, does not address the financial well-being of the City, only that statements are materially correct and can be relied upon. "This is a very good report for the City."

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends the General Fund has a minimum of two months of expenditures in the fund balance or 16.67% of the years expenditures. As of June 30, 2019, Wayne had 14.7% in the General Fund. The City's amended FY 2020

budget includes an operating loss of \$1.5 million. As of June 30, 2020, Wayne's General Fund balance would be at 6.31%.

The City has made significant improvements since 2014. The budget process has been redesigned so that the City now knows what revenue is coming in and what expenditures are going out.

The Recreation Center was closed and then outsourced to HYPE Athletics. Changes have been made to healthcare, most notably the change to a retiree stipend. Capital

outlay has been delayed meaning the City is still using older equipment. SAFER and other grants are being utilized. Staffing vacancies are not being filled, and many other sacrifices are being made by City staff, retirees and citizens.

The Great Recession hit Wayne hard. From 2010-2019, the City has lost over \$60 million in tax revenue. Property taxes are the largest source of revenue in Wayne.

The City has been able to prevent State intervention while focusing financial efforts on cost containment. Mr. Camiller's power point presentation states "At this point, further containment or reduction may require reduction in service levels." The City still needs to address issues with capital outlay, facilities, compensation and technology. If/when another recession arises, the city will face severe financial adversity with even fewer options to utilize over what has already been done. In summary, the City of Wayne needs a new, sustainable revenue source.



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Distinguished Young Woman of Wayne-Westland to be named March 6 during local scholarship competition

The Distinguished Young Women of Wayne-Westland Scholarship Program will be holding the 53rd Annual Scholarship Program on Friday, March 6, at Wayne Memorial High School in Wayne at 6:30 p.m. Nine contestants from Wayne, Westland and Inkster will compete for thousands of dollars in college scholarships and the chance to represent our communities at local events and at the state finals in July 2020. This scholarship program is based on academic scholastics, leadership, physical fitness and talent.

At the local program on March 6, contestants will perform an opening number and compete in a performing arts talent routine, a physical fitness routine and self expression. Contestants are also evaluated based on academic scholastics and interview. "This is an amazing group of smart and talented young women and we are excited to have them showcase their talents at our 53rd



Front Row: Savannah Byers, Zuriel Phillips, Wendy Santiago-Rivera, Arleth Gonzalez and Isabella Riopelle. Back Row: Shannon Blevins, Emma Elinski, Morgan Butler and La'Tavia Ventress.

annual scholarship program.

We invite the public to come and support these accomplished young women" said Lauren Reed, Distinguished Young Women of Wayne-Westland Co-Director.

Competing this year from John

Glenn High School are Isabella Riopelle, Zuriel Phillips, Shannon Blevins, Emma Elinski, Savannah Byers, and Arleth Gonzalez.

Competing from Wayne Memorial High School are La'Tavia Ventress, Morgan Butler, and Wendy Santiago-

Rivera.

Tickets to the event can be purchased from any participant or on the night of the show for \$10.00. All proceeds go toward scholarship awards. Come out to cheer on the contestants.

The Wayne-Westland Local Program is part of the Distinguished Young Women of America, which has impacted the lives of more than 765,000 young women since it first began in 1958. The mission is to empower high school young women by providing scholarship opportunities, developing self-confidence and teaching crucial life skills needed for success in college and beyond. National sponsors include Mobile County, City of Mobile, Alabama Power Foundation, Encore Rehabilitation, Wintzell's Oyster House, Master Boat Builders, Barbara Barrington Jones Family Foundation, Evonik, Regions Financial Corporation, Jostens and Alabama Media Group.

OBITUARIES

JANET ELLEN HELPPIE

(November 9, 1927 – February 8, 2020)

Janet Ellen (Colburn) Helppie passed away quietly on February 8, 2020. She was a resident of Wayne, Michigan from 1953 until 1988, and prior to that lived in Norwayne for several years.

She was born in Orange, Texas, on November 9, 1927, to Norman and Alma (Ruble) Colburn. Her parents already had three children more than a decade older, and Janet's birth was followed 19 months later by her sister and best friend, Joan.

Janet and Joan grew up in Gary, Indiana and Detroit, Michigan, doted on by their parents, two older brothers (Norman Jr. and John) and older sister (Mary). Janet graduated from Cooley High School in Detroit, where she met the love of her life, Richard Dean ("Dick") Helppie. Dick worked for Wayne Community Schools as an attendance officer, teacher (Roosevelt Elementary), and swim coach at Wayne Memorial High School.

Despite Dick's first (of many) proposals to Janet at age 17, she chose instead to attend Olivet College, where she studied modern dance. But their love was strong and, at age 20, she dropped out of college to marry Dick at the Mayflower Congregational Church in Detroit on September 11, 1948. Still, Janet promised her father that she would finish her degree; and so, at the age of 42 and just a semester before her oldest daughter graduated from college, Janet was proud to keep her promise during her father's lifetime, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies from Eastern Michigan University.

Dick and Janet's love story produced 7 children, 30 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren (with 3 more on the way). All 7 children graduated from Wayne Memorial. After more than 68 happy years of marriage, Dick preceded Janet in death on March 8, 2017.

Dick and Janet raised their family in Wayne, where they were active in the community, including the First Congregational Church, Scouts, dance lessons, the PTA, and various sports teams. They moved to the Dallas area in 1988 and traveled extensively around the United States for many years. They joined the



Carrollton Senior Center, took up bridge, and played Scrabble daily.

Janet continued to pursue her love of dancing by taking tap and clogging lessons, and performing around North Texas for many years with the Skyliners Tap Troupe. Dick served as her cheerful driver and enthusiastic fan, his dance skills never coming close to Janet's -- despite a few attempts at learning.

Throughout her life, Janet loved attending live theater and dance performances of every kind--including on Broadway, at regional and community theaters, and even at the local schools (whether or not she knew any students in the shows!). She passed on her dancing genes to her children (who all have a wonderful sense of rhythm) and grandchildren (her youngest, Marin Rose, continues to thank her "Dancing Grandma" in all of her professional dancing bios).

In addition to her husband, Janet was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers, her sister Mary, and her daughters Jane (Richard Enos) and Martha (Mark Mason). She is survived by her children, Joanne, Susan (Gary Shackelford), Richard Jr. (Leslie), Sally (Michael Stokes) and Mary (Tom Horstman), along with her sister Joan, 30 grandchildren, 31 great-grandchildren, and a large extended family and numerous friends.

The family is certain that, during their three years apart, Dick has been working on his dance skills, and that he and Janet are now happily dancing together.

BRIEFS, Continued from page 4

Free ice cream cone day

Dairy Queen's annual free cone day will take place Thursday, March 19, from 1:00-9:00 p.m. at the Wayne Dairy Queen. Come get your free small vanilla soft-serve cone. The event is held in partnership with the Children's Miracle Network.

Make a fairy garden

The Wayne Historical Society will be hosting a Fairy Garden Workshop on Saturday, April 4, at 1:00 p.m. All supplies will be provided for this make-and-take fairy garden. Reserve your spot today for \$20.

U of M library presentation

Guest speaker Michelle McClellan, from the Bentley Historical Library on the University of Michigan Ann Arbor campus, will give a presentation on the historic library and its unique collections and will show anything they might have about Wayne. The event is hosted by the Wayne Historical Society and will be at the Wayne Historical Museum on Wednesday, April 8, at 7:00 p.m.

Chum's Donuts to close

Chum's owner Larry "Chum" Stockwell died recently. His wife reports that she will be closing the long-time icon of the community across from Wayne Memorial High School at the end of March.

Wayne Percussion has success at competition

Wayne Memorial Percussion (WMP) began its 2020 competition season at Troy Athens High School on February 8.

They scored 67.3 in the finals of the Scholastic Concert A competition and fourth-highest finals score in all Class A divisions. WMP went on to win their second Scholastic Concert A-Class competition of the season with their show "Legacies in Stone" on February 23 at the MCGC (Michigan Color Guard Circuit) Competition held at Troy Athens High School.

The WMP is 4-time defending State Champions and have 2 consecutive top-ten finishes at WGI (Winter Guard International) World Competition. The only home performance and the only free performance of Wayne Memorial Percussion will be March 28.



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Sensory equipment helps Taft-Galloway students

By Carolyn Marnon

What do pizza and Taft-Galloway Elementary School in Wayne have in common? They both have the attention of Fredi the Pizzaman, a Melvindale businessman whose “Fredi the Pizzaman Foundation” recently funded some special classroom equipment.

Taft-Galloway Elementary School was assigned two classrooms this year for children in the Wayne Westland School District who are autistic. There is a Kindergarten to 2nd grade classroom and a 3rd-5th grade classroom. Nancy Kelly has been an Occupational Therapist with the school district for 22 years. She thought there needed to be more support for these children, but she was told the district did not have any funds for that support. Nancy got on the computer and made a request on Donors Choose, a website that helps teachers receive items for classroom projects from generous donors throughout the country.

Last November, Nancy requested help with a sensory room to give students the opportunity to have sensory experiences. She wrote, “The mission at our elementary school is to create an engaging and safe school that inspires growth and learning for all. The 2019-20 school year included the addition of two new classrooms for students with autism at our school.”

“The students have brought a new dimension of challenge and joy to our school. Students with autism typically have a unique learning style with their sensory motor needs, processing and communication difficulties. This group has been met by the school community with open arms. Our students with autism have their own special classrooms as a home base. They are also mainstreamed as often as possible into the general education classrooms where teachers and students alike welcome them into the classroom family.”

She went on to write, “A sensory room will be a great calming and exploratory area for our elementary students. Our new students with autism require extra sensory activity during the day to develop their ability to process the many sensory stimuli they experience on a daily basis. These include tactile (touch of differ-



“Fredi the Pizzaman Foundation” recently funded some special classroom equipment for Taft-Galloway Elementary School.

“The students have brought a new dimension of challenge and joy to our school.

Students with autism typically have a unique learning style with their sensory motor needs, processing and communication difficulties.”

ent textures), visual (calming lighting and patterns), auditory (relaxing sounds), vestibular (gentle movement), and proprioceptive input (use of big muscles with resistance). Research in the area of autism and other sensory processing disorders has shown by providing the extra sensory inputs, students can organize and regulate their sensory systems, helping them to feel safer and less anxious.”

Taft’s Parent Coordinator Sarah Lewis had heard of Fredi’s foundation through social media. She contacted Fredi to see if his foundation would be able to help equip a former storage space at the school. “I’ll come out tomorrow,” he is quoted as saying. By December, the equipment was being ordered thanks to the generosity of several Donors Choose donors and \$1149.17 from Fredi the Pizzaman Foundation.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on January 23 outside the new ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)

classroom at the end of a long hallway at the elementary school. Leading up to the door was a multi-color liquid encased floor playmat. The colored liquid danced across the tile as attendees walked down it into the classroom where student Daniel enthusiastically ran from item to item to show how each worked. The classroom included a swing with a large round seat that resembled a papasan chair, a bean bag chair, a hip-pity-hop ball to jump with, a large exercise ball, a mini trampoline, a small rocking chair, and a “crash pad” (a 5-ft square blue velour landing pad filled with foam blocks.)

Fredi Bello was presented with a folder that included photos of children using the new sensory equipment and thank you cards written by each of the students. He also received a Certificate of Appreciation from Taft Principal Brandon Cox.

ASD Teacher Amy Kinnelly, who has been with the district for 11 years, said the swing and the crash

pad have been the favorites since the special classroom opened last month. In the past, autistic students who needed a “break” from the school day would put on a weighted backpack or exercise in the hallway. Now they have a specialized space to take that break to help them prepare to re-enter the classroom.

Amy and Nancy say Fredi has “been a very nice man in the community because he supports the public schools.”

Fredi Bello works 70 hours per week making his own pizza at his small 4-table pizzeria in Melvindale (about a 25-minute drive from Wayne). When he’s not working at his restaurant, he’s working on his foundation, spreading the word about autism awareness.

Fredi and his wife have 3 children-ages 9, 7 and 6. His middle child, Antonio, was diagnosed with autism. The Fredi the Pizzaman Foundation was established to help spread autism awareness and raise money to equip Michigan classrooms with sensory equipment that aids in calming children with autism. His foundation has already donated funds and sensory equipment to 15 schools in Michigan, most of those in Metro Detroit.

Fredi’s foundation recently received a \$10,000 donation from the DTE Foundation. Fredi also holds fundraisers. He will be holding his 5th Annual Golf Outing on August 1, 2020. He will be holding a Walk and Bowling for Autism event on April 26.

When he started the foundation, Fredi said he had no plan. “My biggest fear is running out of money.” He went on to say “These rooms mean everything to me. It’s not about my boy. I understand what the parents are going through. I just try to share my story.”

The next item on Nancy Kelly’s wish list for the sensory room is a steam roller, a piece of equipment with rollers that provide deep pressure while the student crawls through it. Southpaw, a company that makes sensory integration products, is currently selling the Steam Roller Deluxe for \$550. With additional replacement bands, Nancy says they will need \$600 before it can be purchased.

Wayne graduates making sport headlines

By Ryan Wright

Wayne Memorial has been silently producing Division 1 (D1) talent over the past couple of years. Not only is WMHS producing student athletes, but the athletes are actually making waves across the nation.



Seven-time Big Ten Champion Anvia Battle when she ran for Wayne Memorial.

Photo by Ryan Wright

In February 2017, graduate Anvia Battle became first in the nation in the 200-meter dash with a time of 22.86. She was first in the nation last year as well with a similar time and career best 22.80. She cur-



Wayne Memorial graduate Jeanae Terry played in front of her hometown when Illinois played at Michigan on February 19. Photo by Ryan Wright

rently holds the 2020 record at 22.66.

The girls basketball program has also been producing high-level basketball talent for five years now. Since Jarvis Mitchell became coach in 2014, Wayne Memorial has five girls playing D1 basketball. With 3 KLAA (Kensington Lakes Activities Association) Conference Championships and two state final-four appearances in his tenure as Zebra head coach, Coach Jarvis has done nothing but elevate his girls at the highest level. Currently attending Division 1 schools are former WMHS students Mya Garret (Tennessee State), Amara Chikwe (Youngstown State), Camree Clegg (St. Johns), Jayah Hicks (South Carolina State), and Jeanae Terry (Illinois). Wayne Memorial has another D1 talent in-the-making with Junior Alanna (Rose) Micheaux, who currently has 41 Division 1 college offers.

Recently Jeanae Terry was able to play in front of her hometown when

See **Graduates**, page 15

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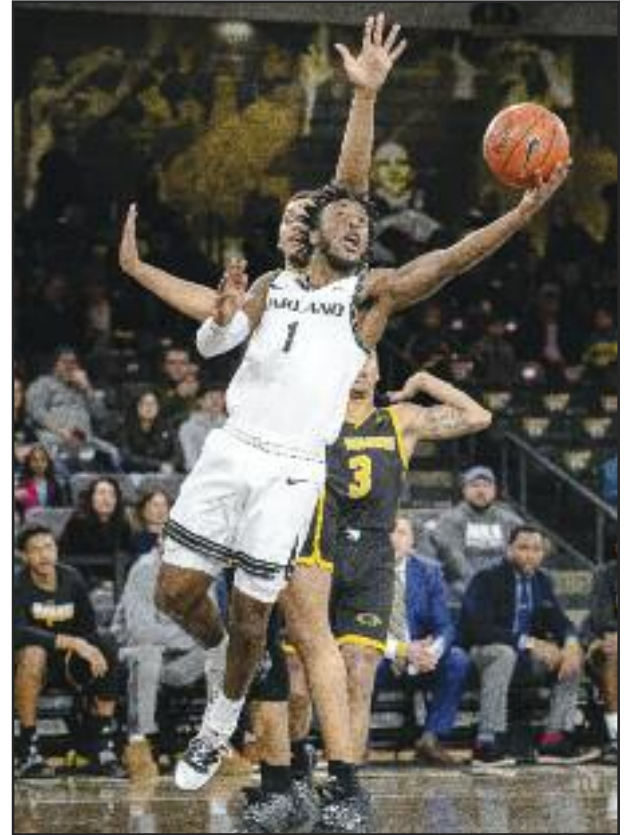
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GRADUATES, Continued from page 14

Illinois played at Michigan on February 19. Jeanae put up 8 points, 2 assists, and 1 rebound for her team, but they fell short, losing 80-59.

The boys basketball program has been no slouch either. There are currently two boys playing D1 basketball: Rashad Williams (Oakland University) and Isiah Lewis (Chicago State). Rashad and Isiah led the WMHS Zebras to their first KLAA Conference title in school history in 2017 and won the Division title in 2018, marking the first time the Zebras won a division title in 21 years. Rashad Williams wasn't cleared to play this season until January 16, 2020 due to his transfer from Cleveland State. In his 13 games so far, Rashad is averaging 20.2 points, 2.6 rebounds, and 1.9 assists per game. He won't play enough games this season to be eligible to be on any stat leaderboard, but his 20.2 points a game would put him in top 25 in the country in scoring. On February 13, Williams was featured on ESPN's Top 10 plays of the day, reaching #2 with a cross-over of a Cleveland State player and hitting a wide open three pointer. That play also got him on multiple ESPN shows and local news channels. He also put up a career high 37 points against University of Detroit Mercy on January 31 earning him Horizon League player of the week.



Oakland University Rashad Williams, in his 13 games so far, is averaging 20.2 points, 2.6 rebounds, and 1.9 assists per game. Photo by Ryan Wright

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