

THE WAYNE Dispatch

MAY 2020



Special Delivery

Wayne Councilman Welcomes Son, First Baby Born in Newly Re-opened Hospital

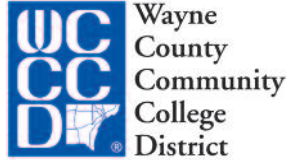


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First baby arrives at re-opened Beaumont Wayne

The Beaumont- Wayne Hospital reopened just in time for Wayne resident Amara Webster and her husband, City Councilman Jeremiah Webster, to celebrate the birth of their third child, Jameson Webster, at 4:22 a.m. on May 6. Jameson was the first baby born after the hospital reopened although Jeremiah said there was one other couple there who delivered their baby later in the afternoon.

Baby Jameson received a onesie decorated with moons and stars announcing him as a Beaumont Baby. The couple are ecstatic their baby is healthy and happy.

When the hospital went fully COVID-19 before closing last month, the Websters were told they would have to deliver their baby at Beaumont Dearborn. Jeremiah says he wasn't confident that Beaumont Wayne would reopen, but he was cautiously optimistic. He was pleasantly surprised when the Wayne campus opened as Jameson was ready to come into the world. "Everything aligned," smiled Jeremiah. Jameson joined a long line of Websters to be born in Wayne. Jeremiah, Jeremiah's mother and sister, and the Websters' two other children were all born at the hospital in Wayne.

"Everyone is so happy to be back," Jeremiah said. The doctors and nurses, he said, were all talking about how thrilled they were to be back. Amara's doctor told them he prefers to work out of Beaumont Wayne. The doctors who were doing their residencies at Beaumont Wayne were all thrilled to be back. They had



Beaumont Birthing Center staff happy to be back at work to serve the community.

worried that they might have to start over at a different hospital, if a different hospital would even accept them.

With the birth of their previous son, Nolan, Jeremiah said they were able to have so many family members come to the hospital to celebrate with them. This experience was so different. Once Jeremiah entered the hospital with Amara about to give birth, he was not allowed to leave. He said if he did leave, he would not have been able to come back in. No other family members are allowed in the hospital. They have had to video chat with their other two children to show off the new baby brother.

The doctors and nurses, he said, were all talking about how thrilled they were to be back. Amara's doctor told them he prefers to work out of Beaumont Wayne.



Jameson Webster, born at 4:22 a.m. on May 6.

Beaumont Wayne re-opens doors to community

Carolyn Marnon

Beaumont Wayne Hospital reopened Tuesday, May 5th, after a month-long controversy over the healthcare facility's sudden closure in the middle of a nationwide pandemic. The hospital is now serving both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients after receiving regulatory approvals. The hospital will be reopening in phases as additional staff is brought back to work.

When the pandemic was starting to hit the Detroit area, Beaumont Wayne was designated a reserve

COVID-19 hospital as the state's largest hospital system braced for a surge. The surge turned out to be more moderate, with state health officials crediting social distancing, the stay at home order and other factors for that progress. On March 26, Beaumont was caring for 650 confirmed COVID-19 patients and over 200 patients with tests pending.

Beaumont Wayne staff members and community members were all stunned when the hospital suddenly shut their doors and either reasigned staff to other Beaumont facil-

ities or laid-off employees in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic where health care workers are considered heroes. Wayne city officials received numerous calls from health-care workers who were confused about what was happening in their own place of employment. Beaumont Wayne has been prominent in the City of Wayne for years.

Mayor Rhaesa said the messages that Beaumont was releasing about the closure were contradictory to what seemed to be actually occurring. Beaumont officials said they

were trying to work with their employees, but employees indicated to the Mayor that they didn't know what was actually going on. "What was happening inside the hospital was not matching with what Beaumont officials were saying", said Mayor Rhaesa. "COVID-19 patients in critical condition were being moved to other hospitals even though Wayne was designated a COVID-19 only hospital", the Mayor added. Mayor Rhaesa went on to add that he felt

See **Hospital**, page 4



Helping hand

City of Wayne Mayor John Rhaesa, Councilwoman Kelly Skiff, City Manager Lisa Nocerini and her directors, Wayne Police Chief Ryan Strong and fellow officers take a moment for a photo after teaming up with the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries, Eternal Light Organization and Life for Relief and Development to deliver 142 boxes and 142 bags of food to seniors at the Wayne Tower.

Hospital, Continued from page 3

that it was wrong for the hospital to shut down during a global pandemic. He also raised concerns about the poor communication between the hospital, the Wayne community and the hospital employees.

"I want to thank everyone for their support and hard work over the past few weeks to reopen our community's hospital," Mayor Rhaesa said in a statement. "I want to thank Jordyn Sellek, the Executive Director of the Conference of Western Wayne, and the Mayors and Supervisors of the 18 Conference of Western Wayne Communities for coming together to support the resolution asking the hospital to reopen. I also want to thank the Wayne City Council for supporting a similar resolution at the Tuesday, April 21st, Wayne City Council Meeting.

"I also want to thank the members of Congress who stepped up to help, our State Representatives and Senators, our County Executive and Commissioners. Last, but not least,

let's not forget the hospital employees who were impacted but chose to stand up. They deserve our thanks and appreciation for their dedication."

Beaumont Wayne Dr. Muzammil Admed announced on his Facebook page "The whole team is glad to be back. In the ER, patients are starting to trickle in: an unfortunate lady with a hip fracture, another woman with congestive heart failure. Our environmental services team is keeping the hospital safe and clean. #Beaumontwayne has served this area for over 60 years, and we are so glad to have it start back up again. All hospitals have had a dramatic fall in volumes in the past month. But as the COVID threat decreases, people can start getting their health needs addressed that have been put on hold."

The message continues "We do still watch the COVID numbers, and metro-Detroit has been great with social distancing and flattening the curve. Unfortunately, the COVID numbers in western and northern Michigan are starting to rise. Don't

let down your guard: Until the testing shortage is resolved, we must wear masks, keep social distancing and work together to get through this!"

In another post, Dr. Ahmed wrote "#BeaumontWayne has undergone a thorough deep cleaning and patients can come here with the full assurance they can safely get their health care needs met. There is still much

uncertainty about the future. COVID19 is quite active, and the socio-economic repercussions are just starting to be felt. Adjustments will be required. We cannot assure stability or a return to the successes we have had in the past, but we can promise you that we will work together to make Beaumont Wayne and the community it serves healthy and strong."



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- Romans 12:12 -

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Transit still available for seniors/disabled

By Carolyn Marnon

Nankin Transit is still helping seniors and the disabled get where they need to go during the COVID-19 pandemic. Riders are required to wear a mask or face covering during a trip. For those riders who do not have a face covering, Nankin Transit has a limited supply that may be available.

Executive Director Jim Ridener says the pandemic has affected Nankin just like it has affected everything else. Whereas Nankin was doing 300 trips a day before the virus, they are now down to about 50 trips a day. They've lost about 80% of their ridership due to an abundance of caution since the senior population has been hardest hit by the virus

All drivers have masks and gloves according to Executive Director Ridener. The buses are wiped down every time someone gets on or off. A company disinfects the buses once a month, but the drivers clean them daily.

Drivers are given protection gear



Nankin Transit driver William Shaaf

and cleaning supplies. Nankin is able to stay on top of personal protection equipment despite the items being hard to find.

Operating hours have not changed. Drivers begin at 8:00 a.m. each day and are done driving by 5:30 p.m. "When you lose 80% of your ridership, that leaves us a lot of

capacity," said Executive Director Ridener. "We had to cut the drivers down to 6-hour days, but we are still covering the same amount of time."

"Our drivers are doing a great job during very difficult circumstances trying to keep them healthy and our customers healthy. I have to give kudos to the drivers that are out

there day in and day out. We are considered essential workers. I take my hat off to the drivers and our dispatchers that handle the phones. We haven't had to lay off anybody so that is a good thing. It's a difficult time for them because they have families too. We're trying to keep everyone safe and the system running."

William Shaaf, a Nankin Transit driver and a resident of Wayne, said "We went from no worries (before COVID-19) to constantly trying to make sure we are doing everything humanly possible to make our buses as clean as possible for the safety of our drivers and passengers." He added that the riders "are very cooperative, most of them board our buses already wearing their masks. I have given a mask to two passengers in the last week and a half, and they had no problem wearing them."

If a senior or disabled member of the community needs a ride to the grocery store, doctor, or other essential ride, call Nankin (734-729-2710) for help with transportation. Fares are \$3 one-way.

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Door decorations celebrate seniors

By Carolyn Marnon

The Class of 2020 in the Wayne Westland Community School District (WWCSD) has had to be creative about how to celebrate the end of their senior year. It is unknown whether these graduates will have the annual graduation ceremony like past graduates have had. There may not be a senior prom. Who knew that when 84-year old Korean War veteran Avery Hall received his Wayne-Westland high school diploma on February 28 as the first “graduate” of the Class of 2020, that he might be the only one to be presented with a diploma in front of an audience of board members and well-wishers?

Wayne-Westland families have been encouraged to decorate their front doors to honor their graduating seniors.

The front window at Wayne Memorial High School (WMHS) senior Tabitha Locklear’s home is covered in tassel garland and signs congratulating her. There are also congratulatory signs on the front lawn.

The front door at Tyler Xuereb’s (WMHS) house has a congratulatory sign along with a baseball hat and Zebra baseball t-shirt attached.

Kayla Lindsell’s door displays her WMHS choir t-shirt.

Mikayla Saylor’s door displays an honor roll sticker, an Eastern Michigan University sticker and a senior class t-shirt.

According to WWCSD Communications Director Jenny Johnson, the school district is distributing Class of 2020 lawn signs for seniors to put in their yards. Wayne Memorial High School is running Decision Day information on the school’s marquee with the names of senior and their plans for after graduation. You can follow along with updates on the Facebook pages of Wayne Westland Community Schools and Wayne Memorial High School.

Seniors who have already made decisions noted on the WMHS Facebook page include:

- Amber Henzel-Ford College
- Alivia Secord-Eastern Michigan University
- Abigail Gordon-Finlandia University
- Hazelle Williams-Ferris State University
- Deshawn Will-Michigan State University
- Delaney Green-Western Michigan University
- Andrea Santiago-Lagunas-Gannon University
- Riccardo Covin-Gillette Community College
- Sebastian Davis-MIAT College of Technology
- Savannah Gridley-Concordia University
- Kira Brinkmeier-College of the Atlantic



The Class of 2020 in the Wayne Westland Community School District (WWCSD) Honors our Seniors. Class of 2020: Savannah Gridley of Wayne Memorial High School.

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Visit wwfcu.org/relief to nominate someone in need today.



To help keep everyone safe, WWFCU's lobby is currently closed but our drive-thru is open **regular business hours**. Call (734) 721-5700 for more information.

Glimmers of hope among decimated fire department

By Carolyn Marnon

COVID-19 has had numerous effects on the Wayne Fire Department. The most notable effect is that 50% of the department's staff is out of commission due to the virus.



The remaining staff has been spending their days disinfecting areas throughout the station as well as the equipment, wearing masks 24 hours a day while at work and preparing for 911 calls that involve multiple layers of personal protection equipment.

Even though there are only seven active working firefighters, the department has not changed how the shifts are organized, but it has created the need for overtime to replace the missing numbers. The Wayne department is utilizing their mutual aid agreements with local communities, but they are not staffing the station with any outside fire fighters.

Has the community done anything special for the fire department? There's been "a tremendous amount of donations which has been wonderful," said Deputy Chief Jeremie Schneider. "The support has been great from the community and really from all of southeast Michigan. Different organizations put together by citizens that don't reside in Wayne." Deputy Chief Schneider also mentioned Little Caesars Pizza's corporate office reached out to the department, as well as Livonia, Canton and some downriver restaurants.

The department appreciates all

the meals that have been provided to them. If you would like to donate to the fire department, Deputy Chief Schneider emphasizes that they can only accept store-bought or restaurant-bought food. Homemade food items cannot be accepted. The department will gratefully accept gift cards to grocery stores. Please call the station at 734-722-1111 to make arrangements for a good day to organize a meal donation.

The pandemic is "is putting quite a strain on the City of Wayne fire department," explained Deputy Chief Schneider. "Our call volumes have increased. That adds to fatigue, stress and more hours each individual fire fighter is required to work due to the shortage of fire fighters that are being quarantined."

Run times in answering a 911 call are affected greatly due to transportation times to hospitals outside of Wayne and the decontamination process that follows each call. Rescue workers will begin decontaminating with a rapid cleaning of the passenger compartment while they are still at the hospital. As soon as they return to the station, they deep clean the passenger compartment along with themselves. It can take anywhere from 1 1/2 -2 hours to transport someone and put the rescue vehicle back into service. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the department was able to put a 2nd vehicle into service but now due to half the staff in quarantine, the department has been unable to staff the 2nd vehicle and is currently running one rescue and one fire engine.

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Zooming to a new school district superintendent

By Carolyn Marnon

Like everything else that has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Education's search for a new Wayne Westland Community School District Superintendent took a new approach.

Board of Education members were going to interview the two remaining finalist candidates at the Board of Education offices in mid-March. The candidates had to wait until April 21 to be interviewed; the interview took place over the Zoom conference platform online that many are becoming familiar with during this pandemic. The two candidates were John Dignan, Ed.S., Director of Post-Secondary Options and Community Partnerships for the Southfield Public Schools in Southfield, MI and Keith McDonald, Ed.S., Director of Human Resources for Livonia Public Schools in Livonia.

The Board of Education voted on May 4 unanimously 7-0 to offer John Dignan the position of new Superintendent of Wayne-Westland schools. The Board called John to inform him of their offer which he graciously accepted.

"That is awesome! I'm so ecstatic, eager and excited to get started," John said. "I'll be honest, I feel my heart fell in my shoe a little bit," he chuckled.

Board President David Cox told John "Your energy is a great fit for us. We're completely supportive of you."

"I'm so appreciative of being se-

lected," John replied. "I can't wait to get started!"

John Dignan is a resident of Shelby Township. He has been the Director of Post-Secondary Options/Community Partnerships for Southfield Public Schools since 2018. Past positions include Warren Consolidated Schools Principal, and Lincoln Consolidated Schools Principal, Assistant Principal and Teacher/Coach.

Mr. Dignan has Bachelors of Arts in the College of Social Science and the College of Communications from Michigan State University, Bachelor of Arts College of Education/Teacher Certificate from Wayne State University, Master Degree from the College of History at Eastern Michigan University, Master Degree in Educational Leadership from Madonna University, Education Specialist/Educational Leadership from Oakland University and is currently in progress to earn an Ed.D. in Leadership and Innovation at Madonna University.

John told the Board during his interview that he has a favorable impression of the district. He praised the people and the pride they have towards the district.

He has observed that Wayne Westland is surrounded by industry and higher-learning institutions. He feels it's important to build strong relationships with businesses and the community. One of his ideas is partnering with Wayne State University's STEM-enrichment program that involves cybersecurity, drones and 32 other learning channels. He wants to leverage relationships he already has and in his interview, mentioned Pro: Up, a program in Detroit that

matches high school students to educational and career development experiences like classes, summer programs, internships and jobs.

There are two strategies Mr. Dignan would like to pursue to attract more students to the district. Branding would be one. The other is creating unique opportunities. He would like to find out why families are leaving the district, so the district can make changes. He would also like to highlight the points of pride of each school in the district and cultivate relationships with realtors so that they can share that pride information with potential home buyers. Other opportunities could include a K-12 virtual school with Section 23 funding and perhaps instituting a Microsoft TEALS (Technology Education and Literacy in Schools) at the soon-to-be-shuttered Marshall Middle School.

"Any great relationship starts with trust," says Mr. Dignan. He believes teachers are a million-dollar investment and that when it comes to collective bargaining, "You have to bargain in good faith."

When asked how he would attract skilled and trained employees to the district beyond compensation, Mr. Dignan stated that teachers make the magic happen. He wants to build relationships with Eastern Michigan, Oakland and Wayne State so the district can have building substitute teachers. He also feels that home-grown talent is important and there could be a program with dual enrollment in teaching.

"Everything is rooted in communications," said Mr. Dignan. He says mistakes are an opportunity to mentor people because mistakes will

happen. Each school has its own problems, and it's important to know what those problems are.

Cradle 2 Career is an experience Mr. Dignan feels is needed beyond the basics for students to succeed. This program highlights career exploration for middle school students and career preparation for high school students. He also supports field trips to college campuses as part of a grade level system with a field trip to a particular local college targeted at each grade level.

The first step Mr. Dignan would like to take as the new superintendent as part of a comprehensive five-year strategic plan for the district would start with his 90 Day Plan which incorporates a listening tour as he goes around and listens to various stakeholders in the district-the Board of Education, the surrounding communities and their leadership, central office, union leadership and the various school buildings. He wants to talk to all these stakeholders to design a framework for the future. Especially since COVID-19 has closed school buildings, he'd like to ramp up online learning and discover what that would actually look like for the district. Until he talks to everyone, he feels it's premature for him to say the plan should be X, Y and Z.

Mr. Dignan plans to be visible in the community. That means attending sporting events, band concerts, city council meetings, visiting churches and industry partners. He said you can't be an invisible man and then ask for help. He told the Board he is very much a people person. "A building does not make a school community. People make it."



John Dignan

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Verizon Brings COVID-19 Small Business Support Up to \$7.5M with New Grant to LISC

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Thanks to a \$7.5 million investment from Verizon, we are offering grants to help small businesses fill urgent financial gaps until they can resume normal operations or until other more permanent financing becomes available.

GRANT APPLICATION Applications for round 2 are now closed. The next round will open on May 14th. Please register to receive email updates on the program. Having trouble? Email enews@lisc.org to sign up.

REGISTER NOW Who is eligible? LISC will use the Verizon funding to provide grants of up to \$10,000 to businesses facing immediate financial pressure because of Covid-19—especially entrepreneurs of color, women-owned businesses and other enterprises in historically underserved communities who don't have access to flexible, affordable capital.



U.S. Small Business Administration

Our nation's small businesses are facing an unprecedented economic disruption due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. On Friday, March 27, 2020, the President signed into law the CARES Act, which contains \$376 billion in relief for American workers and small businesses.

Funding Options In addition to traditional SBA funding programs, the CARES Act established several new temporary programs to address the COVID-19 outbreak.

Paycheck Protection Program This loan program provides loan forgiveness for retaining employees by temporarily expanding the traditional SBA 7(a) loan program.

EIDL Loan Advance This loan advance will provide up to \$10,000 of economic relief to businesses that are currently experiencing temporary difficulties.

SBA Express Bridge Loans Enables small businesses who currently have a business relationship with an SBA Express Lender to access up to \$25,000 quickly.

SBA Debt Relief The SBA is providing a financial reprieve to small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options

New Director for Wayne Main Street hired for district

By Carolyn Marnon

Lori Morrow, a 10-year resident of Wayne with a background in business became the 3rd Executive Director of Wayne Main Street last February after Maxwell Cameron resigned to take a position elsewhere. Lori has been a WMS volunteer for four years, helping with Downtown Days and as a committee member of TOAST Wayne. As an active member of the community, Lori is looking forward to working with volunteers to help grow the Wayne community and businesses.

At the time of her hire, WMS Board President Juan Bradford said, "Wayne Main Street is looking forward to the fresh perspective and energetic approach that Lori brings with her."

Juan also notes that "It took us about three months to find a candidate we were happy with and who met the qualifications. We did numerous postings and searches and conducted multiple interviews. As it turned out, the ideal candidate was right here in Wayne."



Lori Morrow

What qualities made Lori a good choice for this position? "The first time you meet Lori," Juan says, "you instantly realize that she is a people

person. Friendly and easy to talk to. The more you get to know her you realize her honest desire to do good things for this community. Wayne Main Street is lucky to have her as our new Executive Director.

Lori has been involved with customer service and has been a business professional for over 30 years. She spent 10 years in the insurance industry.

Since taking over as Executive Director, Lori's biggest challenge has been understanding the computer system that WMS uses.

"We are a volunteer-based program of which works to enhance the community and its businesses. We assist in the community needs as far as facade grant programs, downtown benches and planters, community partner roundtables, scarecrow contest, small business Saturday and holiday window contests. We work to be a positive force in the community working with business and property owners to preserve, enhance and promote historic downtown Wayne as a vibrant destination for

residents and visitors who gather to shop, work and enjoy what the city has to offer," comments Lori when asked about WMS.

Before the pandemic, WMS had planned a spring clean-up day and a Decadent Dessert Walk. Both events have been cancelled or postponed.

"We're always looking for energetic and enthusiastic volunteers. Visit our website and fill out an application and let us know how your talent and skills can help us. www.downtownwayne.org." Share your interest in helping and when it is safe to do so, WMS will contact you. WMS is also looking for individuals who would be interested in filling open seats on the Board of Directors. Terms are 3 years.

During her free-time, Lori likes to snowmobile and garden. Family comes first in her life, she lives for pizza, she's an early-riser in the morning who likes to watch the sun rise, she's excited to start a new chapter of her life with Wayne Main Street and, she finds that "life is a blast!"

Emergency food distribution in our area

There are several different organizations that are helping community members with emergency food distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are aged 60 or older, reside in The Senior Alliance's downriver and western Wayne County municipalities service area, are the spouse of an adult aged 60 or older, are an adult with a disability who lives with an individual age 60 or older, or are currently enrolled in the MI Choice

Medicaid Waiver Program, you may be eligible for Emergency Food Distribution for Seniors through The Senior Alliance.

Upcoming distribution is May 21, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at 5454 Venoy Rd in Wayne.

Food boxes are limited and will be on a first come, first served basis. Do not arrive before 9:30 a.m. You will need to enter the parking lot via Venoy Rd and follow the signs to enter the line. You must remain in

your vehicle and follow the guidance of staff and volunteers as they direct you. After pulling into the distribution area, put your vehicle in park and unlock your trunk for the food to be loaded. Stay in your vehicle. You can call 734-727-2011 or email sradocaj@the-senior-alliance.org for more information on qualifying.

Wayne-Westland Community School District continues its weekly food distribution for WWCS students. The distribution of five break-

fasts and five lunches per child, along with a gallon of milk for each family, occurs Monday, May 11 and May 18, from 10:00 a.m. until Noon.

Burning Bush International, 30355 Annapolis Ave in Westland has several food distribution dates set.

May 11: 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 May 27: 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
 June 8: 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 June 22: 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

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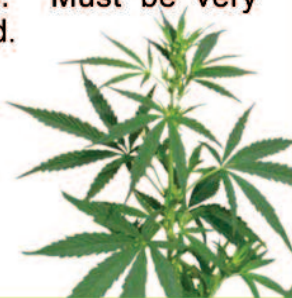
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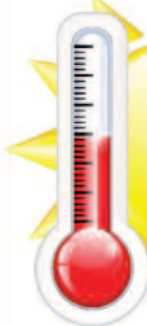
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