



SPORTS

Junior Uribe Beaumont rolls with the Darlings of Destruction roller derby team.

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GREEN AND GOLD DANCE

Tonight at 7 p.m.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Saturday, Feb. 2 vs. Regina, 4 p.m. at GPCR

BOYS BASKETBALL

Monday, Feb. 4 vs. Lincoln, 7 p.m. at home

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Thursday, Feb. 7 vs. Dakota, 7 p.m. at home

THIRD ANNUAL SPIRIT OF GIVING

Tuesday, Feb. 5, 6-8 p.m. Sign up to be a **student volunteer** and help different charitable organizations. Contact **Christine Cullen** for more information at christinecullen@comcast.net.

IDEAS

“WHO DOESN'T LOVE SEEING THEMSELVES WITH THEIR TICKLE-ME ELMO IN FOOTIE PAJAMAS NEXT TO MOM ON THAT OLD, LEATHER COUCH?”

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Making the car a NO PHONE zone

New law prevents not only texting at the wheel, but using any type of cellular device while driving. Texting law applies to all Michigan drivers, but this law only applies to teens with a Level 1 or 2 License.

By Lauren Semack
EDITOR

Editor's note: an anonymous student source was used.

After he got ahold of his license, it only took George a few months for him to get comfortable enough to pick up his iPhone. He didn't have an issue thumbing through messages, replying to them and making a call here and there. Now, it has been half a year, and this multitasking has become second nature to him. He says his parents yell at him to stop, but he hasn't. "I understand it's not a good idea, but I don't really think about the consequences when I'm doing it," George said. "If anything, it keeps me from speeding."

Soon, though, George's behavior will be illegal. Public Act 300 signed July 1, 2010 stated that all Michigan drivers cannot text and drive, but Public Act 592, signed by Governor Rick Snyder on Jan. 8, restricts drivers with a Level 1 or Level 2 License not only from texting, but also from picking up their cell phones at all while the car is in drive. The law will go into effect on March 20, but doesn't affect 17 year olds who have a graduated Level 3 License.

"I fully support it because new drivers need to focus on the road with their safety alone and the safety of others," District 1 State Representative Brian Banks said.

"Cell phones can be a distraction, and with new learners, their total attention needs to be diverted to the road, not texting or making a phone call – unless of course in the case of an emergency."

Current Michigan law requires "thumbs on the wheel, not on the phone," with the initiative against texting while driving enforced for all drivers, unlike the new law. Under Michigan's anti-texting law (sec. 257.602.b) a driver can't "read, manually type, or send a text message on a wireless two-way communication device that is located in the person's hand or in the person's lap ... while operating a motor vehicle that is

moving on a highway or street in this state."

The new law was proposed when a 17-year-old Sault Ste. Marie girl was killed in a car crash on Jan. 24, 2010 while talking on the phone behind the wheel.

This legislation is nothing new to the city of Troy though, which was the first city in Michigan to take the initiative on laws regarding distracted driving on July 29, 2010.

"It started three years ago. It's not necessarily a hands free; it's a distraction ordinance, and we implemented (it) in really regards to anything, including eating food, applying makeup, reading the paper, things like that," Troy Police Sergeant Andy Breidenich said.

Breidenich said that they passed the law because of all the reckless driving behavior caused by distracted driving.

"The issue really is, if you see erratic driving or driving swerving around, it used to be that they were drunk, but 50% of the time (now), they're distracted," Breidenich said. "Even calling affects reaction time, but texting (is more dangerous) because you take your actual eyes off the road."

Grosse Pointe Farms police officer Tom Shimko agrees that calling is much less distracting than texting, but still believes that the law should be in place for young drivers.

"Right now, I'm driving, and I'm on the phone, but I'm not texting; my eyes are on the road. Texting is a different story. It's a big thing. Right now, I have one hand off the wheel, but both eyes on the road," Shimko said.

He added that the law "saves lives. It can't go wrong. They're less experienced drivers, 16 and 17 year olds. That is the most common thing. They're not ready to try something like that yet."

George thinks the new law won't be strongly enforced, just as other teen driving restrictions, like having to stay off the road between 10 p.m. through 5 a.m. and having only one friend in the car at a time.

"I probably won't make any serious changes to what I already do because of the new law, just be more discreet," George said. "I think the texting-while-driving law was enough. At this point, they are over looking into it."

Shimko still thinks that teens who are resistant will come around and change their minds.

"It's like the seatbelt law. A lot of people were resistant at first, but they've seen a lot of deaths go down. Same thing here," Shimko said. "The distracted driver is probably the most dangerous driver on the road."

Q&A with Elite Driving School instructor Brian O'Neil

North Pointe: What are big problems with drivers and distractions?

Brian O'Neil: Everything. My joke to my Segment 2 class, especially the girls, is that I ask them, "What city doesn't allow any stupidity in the car, meaning no distraction by driving?" Troy. The reason is because of Somerset Mall. You can't do anything in Troy but drive a car, because Troy passed a law of no distractions.

I once had a Japanese student who wanted to make sure she understood some of the things she needed to do in order to pass her driver's test in America. We were waiting at a red light and a lady pulls up and she is talking on her cell phone. She turns to me and says that in Japan we're not allowed to talk on the cell phone when we drive. I replied and said that your country is more about the people, and my country is more about the money.

NP: What is the problem with teens driving with friends?

O'Neil: The most accident-causing thing for teenagers is driving to and from school because they put several kids in the car. What good is the law if we're not protecting our children?

NP: Why should teens be more concerned about texting while driving?

O'Neil: Because they're not paying attention while they're driving. A brand new law in Michigan just passed about two weeks ago. It is a new law about no cell phone while teenagers are driving. Why won't they do that for everybody? Because kids don't make money and they don't vote. Adults make money on the phone while driving (like closing a real estate deal), that is why the law is not enforced for adults. It's money and politics.

By Erin Armbruster

Assistant principal receives administrative award

By Maria Liddane & Haley Reid
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & INTERN

After 15 years of teaching English, it was only natural Assistant Principal Kate Murray would focus her efforts on reading and literacy. Murray was recognized by Michigan Reading Association for continuing her work for literary success as an administrator. This year, she was the only person to receive the association's Administrator Award.

"She's pioneered the Freshman Assist program – that's her baby. It's all about helping students to improve their reading, which will help all their classes," Matt Outlaw, Grosse Pointe South Principal and previous North Assistant Principal, said. "I've been her mentor for the last few years and encouraged her to become an administrator, so I obviously think very highly of her." "Then as assistant principal, she's continued to advocate for the importance of literacy and supported teachers, challenged her teachers, working with them to improve reading throughout the school."

Murray has taught a range of English classes, from Freshman Assist to Advanced Placement. "The significant gains she made with both groups really speak to her ability as a teacher of reading," English department chair Geoffrey Young said. "But then also, the award is about her continuance of the support of teachers now, as an administrator, that she continues to help to coach, to look for the kinds of resources that she can make available for teachers to continue that kind of work with our readers."

Murray said her commitment to literacy won't lose momentum with a change in position.

"I will always be committed to help all stu-



Assistant Principal Kate Murray will be awarded Michigan Reading Association's Administrative award at their annual Lighting the Way for Literacy conference March 9.

dents read proficiently and love to read. That's my 15 years of English background," Murray said. "From this position, I can now help all students and all teachers understand the benefits of supporting struggling learners and helping students read."

Nominations are submitted to the association by administrators and fellow staff members. Aaron Johnson, director of secondary education, was one person who wrote a letter of recommendation for Murray.

"She is willing to stand up for what she thinks is right," he said. "She advocates for what is best for students first – I think she's a champion for that."

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Security proposal brings opposition up in arms

By Sean O'Melia & Jeffery Valentic
STAFF REPORTER & INTERN

He wants our schools protected. Former School Board candidate and 2010 North alumnus Will Broman has proposed a plan he thinks will ensure student safety. Broman's proposal includes a policy for issuing armed security guards throughout Grosse Pointe Public Schools.

"It is time to wake up and put armed security personnel in our schools, all of our schools," Broman said. "This team of armed security personnel should be a team of off-duty or retired police officers and former members of the military who have the training, stress inoculation, and tactical awareness to safely protect our schools."

Broman also believes personnel should have experience in our city.

"... Security personnel should hail from the Pointes, or at least have spent time as a police officer with one of our public safety departments. This aspect of the plan is crucial to ensure the proper mindset and service-oriented interactions the security personnel will have with parents and students."

But with this plan comes a price. After a school year of work, one security officer could earn \$37,000. Adding that up for each security guard for each of the schools (one for each elementary school and two for each middle and high school), it would amount to \$750,000 a year. Factoring in his proposed Director of Security's salary, building upgrades, and training, Broman's proposal total is nearly \$900,000, though the price would vary with insurance liability.

The plan has elicited opposition. Christopher Profeta, 1999 North alumnus and current Macomb Community College teacher, is one opposer.

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