



Rochester & Rochester Hills Gazette

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December 24, 2019

Vol. 4, No. 35

County Executive Coulter: Refugees strengthen Oakland

Oakland County welcomes refugees. That's the message in a letter County Executive David Coulter sent to Secretary of State Michael Pompeo in response to presidential Executive Order 13888 which asks local communities to identify their preference and ability to accept refugees to "support their successful integration into American society and the labor force."

"We are a nation of immigrants who often left behind economic, social or political hardships for a better life in America," Coulter said. "What better place is there for opportunity for all than Oakland County? That's why we responded in a positive way to the executive order."

In his letter to Pompeo, Coulter emphasized how refugees have contributed to growth in Oakland County, which accepted the highest percentage of refugees in Southeast Michigan from 2007-2016. The county executive wrote, "We recognize and appreciate the direct economic and social impact that refugees create in our community."

Coulter highlighted a program through Oakland County Michigan Works! which helps refugees acquire skills and training so they can enter the workforce.

A refugee is defined under the law as a person who has been forced to flee their home and is unable to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

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Police Patrol



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS from Rochester residents Ashley and Matt Elliott, cry baby Theo, and Santa. The Rochester Gazette wishes you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you for your continued support!

Rochester country club raises \$30,000 for charity

Great Oaks Country Club is a private member-owned country club located in the heart of downtown Rochester. In 2016, the Membership started their own "Great Oaks Gives" foundation to promote and deliver volunteer engagement and support of the Great Oaks Membership for the betterment of the communities in which they live. Each year they select a charity in the local area to

support through volunteering and fundraising.

For 2019, Great Oaks Gives selected the Rainbow Connection as their cause to support. The Rainbow Connection makes dreams come true for Michigan children with life threatening illnesses and provides support services to their families. The Rainbow Connection is also located in downtown Rochester

and they host their Annual Dobson Outing at Great Oaks every year. Their cause was important to the Great Oaks Membership and Great Oaks Gives wanted to make an impact on this foundation. Through fundraising events hosted at Great Oaks during 2019, the generous Membership of Great Oaks Country Club raised \$30,000 for

See GREAT OAKS, page 2

Oakland honors five Sigma Xi award-winning students

Oakland University students continued to demonstrate their research excellence at the 2019 Sigma Xi Annual Meeting and Student Research Conference, which took place in November in Madison, Wisconsin.

This year, five students received superior presentation awards in diverse disciplines including Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Cell Biology and Biochemistry, and Microbiology and Molecular Biology.

"This is a wonderful recognition of the hard work our students and their mentors perform every day to reach the highest levels in both research and scientific communication," said Fabia Battistuzzi, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and president of OU's Sigma Xi chapter.

Sigma Xi, the scientific research honor society, is the international honor society of scientists and engineers. It is one of the oldest and largest scientific organizations in the world, serving science and society for more than 125 years.

The theme for this year's conference was "Our Changing Global Environment: Scientists and Engineers Designing

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Great Oaks Country Club raises \$30,000 for Rainbow Connection



Pictured left to right: George Miller (Executive Director for the Rainbow Connection), Amber Beebe (Membership & Marketing Director for Great Oaks Country Club), Shawn Schroeder (General Manager of Great Oaks Country Club), and Rick Whitaker (2019 President of Great Oaks Country Club).

GREAT OAKS, From page 1
the Rainbow Connection! This was enough to grant wishes for 6 children with life threatening illnesses.

They are continuing their support in 2020 for the Rainbow Connection while also taking on a few more local charities: The Rochester Neighborhood House,

Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve and the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester.

Kid's Clean Water Calendar Contest winner announced

On Saturday, December 14, the 15th Annual Kids' Clean Water Calendar Contest Awards Ceremony honored the achievement of 12 contest winners and their families at the special recognition luncheon.

This year, Detroit Public Television/PBS's "Great Lakes Now" host Ward Detwiler joined

Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner Jim Nash to celebrate the contest's 15th anniversary milestone and winners.

Out of more than 700 art submissions by fourth and fifth grade students in Oakland County, 12 finalists were selected with grand prize winner Kaylynn

Sketch, a fourth grader from Troy's Barnard Elementary School, taking home the top prize for her "Keep it clean, We live in the stream" themed artwork which graces the cover of the 2020 Kids' Clean Water Calendar.

Calendars are available to order online at Oakgov.com/water/.

Battalion Chief Quaine retires after 47 years with fire department

Rochester Hills Firefighters are saying goodbye to a long-time firefighter. Battalion Chief Tim Quaine is retiring after more than 47 years with the fire department.

Chief Quaine began his career in the fire service in 1981 paid on-call firefighter, climbing the ladder to become Battalion Chief.

"Chief Quaine has been a dedicated and hardworking member for many years. He exemplifies honor, duty, and integrity. He always puts the residents and his personnel first

place," said Rochester Fire Chief Sean Canto. "His leadership in the firehouse will be sorely missed. We congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement."

As a result of Chief Quaine's retirement, Lt. Jason Murray was promoted to Battalion Chief and Firefighter Rich Welch was promoted Lieutenant.

A swearing-in ceremony took place this week at Rochester Hills City Hall for the promotions, with City Clerk Tina Barton officiating.



Newly promoted Lt. Welch and Battalion Chief Jason Murray, with retiring Battalion Chief Quaine in the middle.

Letter to the Editor

What a dispiriting article you published in the Gazette December 17th, 2019, "Christmas from a Muslim Perspective by Imam Shamshad Nasir."

Imam Nasir accuses Christians

of hypocrisy by not following the teaching of Jesus and implies that Christians are responsible for world conflict because, as the Imam quotes, Christians do not "turn the other cheek." Yet according to a report by the United Nations, 9 out of the top 10 countries in the world in 2018 with the highest war related deaths are Muslim; Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, DRC, and Mali. It seems that Muslims are not very good at "turning the other cheek" either.

Apparently, according to the Imam, Jesus was not born on December 25th. Something to do with when dates ripen? How disappointed my fellow church members will be when I pass on this information.

Finally, the Imam states that Christmas is just a "business and marketing venture" and that "Christmas these days is about getting... and that children expect adults to give them expensive gifts." What an uniformed and negative view. Christmas is a time to reflect on our Lord's message of peace and love and to recommit to live our lives accordingly and to help others as much as possible.

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Oakland University honors Sigma Xi award winners



SIGMA XI AWARD WINNERS with OU President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz. Pictured with President Pescovitz are (from left) Ann Fuelle, Walter Wolfsberger, Laurel Levin, Erving Laryea, and Naomi Haque. Photo courtesy of Oakland University.

OU, From page 1

Solutions for the Future.” A total of 16 OU undergraduate and graduate students presented their research at the event, which also included sessions and talks from renowned scientists, including Vint Cerf, vice president and chief Internet evangelist for Google. Approximately 140 students from various institutions presented at the conference.

“All of us at Sigma Xi are very proud of our students for bringing OU’s research into the spotlight at a national conference, especially with our five gold medal winners that have made our OU chapter number one in the nation for the most awards won from a single institution,” Battistuzzi said.

Sigma Xi members, who are elected to membership because of their research accomplishments, evaluated each student’s presentation. Students were judged based on their scientific thought, method, and communication skills.

In attendance with the students were Gerard Madlambayan, Ph.D. and Sarah Hosch, Ph.D., from Oakland University’s Department of Biological Sciences.

“Our students did an excellent job presenting their work to an enthusiastic national audience,” Madlambayan said.

“They were extremely well prepared, and their presentations were both engaging and insightful,” Hosch added.

Oakland University President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D., a

previous member of Sigma Xi, met with the award winners on Dec. 13 and praised their accomplishments.

“I’m so proud of these students who come from diverse backgrounds and all have a passionate drive to discover,” Pescovitz said. “These students represent the finest minds at OU, and I look forward to following their careers as they work to shape the next frontier of research.”

Walter Wolfsberger, a second-year Ph.D. student in biological sciences, earned a Graduate Division Award for Poster Presentations in the category of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology for his research on the genomics of Puerto Rican horses. His mentor is Taras Oleksyk.

“It’s a unique population with two breeds that were isolated geographically from the rest of the world and bred out of the horses brought to the island approximately 500 years ago,” Wolfsberger said. “While one of those breeds is a luxurious horse highly prized for its unique gait and smooth ride, the other is not considered such, often overlooked and is used for agriculture and tourism.”

Wolfsberger used genomic data to identify the relationship between the two breeds on the island, investigate their inbreeding and discover their origins.

“These results can be used to save the breed from extinction, and save their genetic variability, which we will focus on in the

future,” Wolfsberger said.

Wolfsberger was born in Svlayava in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine and completed his first Master of Science degree in computer science at Uzhhorod National University before moving to Puerto Rico, where he obtained a Master of Science degree in bioengineering for his work on a geo-spatial visualization system for genomic and metadata information.

Erving Laryea, a third-year Ph.D. student in biomedical sciences: health and environmental chemistry was awarded a Graduate Division Award for Poster Presentations in the category of Cell Biology and Biochemistry for his studies on Alzheimer’s disease, a neurological disorder and the most common cause of dementia in adults. His mentor is Colin Wu.

“To better understand Alzheimer’s disease and design effective therapy options, I study the phosphorylation patterns, aggregation properties and the morphological changes of TAU, one of the major proteins implicated in Alzheimer’s disease pathogenesis,” he said.

Laryea holds a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and a Master of Philosophy degree in chemical pathology from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and the University of Ghana, respectively.

“It was an honor to have had my abstract accepted and to present my research at the Sigma Xi conference,” he said. “I am very grateful to all who made this

possible.”

Naomi Haque, a second-year M.S. student in biology, has been working on understanding the effects of different isoforms of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) in human retinal endothelial cells. Her mentor is Ken Mitton.

“These cells make up the blood-retinal barrier,” Haque said. “An elevated concentration of VEGF is responsible for blood-retinal barrier disruption in diseases such as diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration, and retinopathy of prematurity.”

Her research earned her a Graduate Division Award for Poster Presentation in the category of Cell Biology and Biochemistry.

“My thesis project centers on plasmalemma vesicle-associated protein (PLVAP), which is positively regulated by VEGF,” she said. “We hypothesize that increased blood-retinal barrier permeability may be due to VEGF-mediated elevation of PLVAP.”

Laurel Levine is a senior biomedical sciences major who

plans to graduate in the spring of 2020. She received an Undergraduate Division Award for Poster Presentation in the category of Microbiology and Molecular Biology. Her project centered around a bioinformatics analysis of U12 introns in the version four B73 Maize genome. Levine is from Troy, Mich. and attended Athens High School. Her mentor is Shailesh Lal.

Ann Fuelle is a senior majoring in biomedical diagnostic and therapeutic sciences with a concentration in medical laboratory sciences. She has been working in the Department of Chemistry as an undergraduate researcher for the last three years. Her mentor is Colin Wu.

Fuelle received an award for an oral presentation. She presented her honors thesis project on the effects of microgravity and the accumulation of DNA damage in human cells.

To learn more, visit Oakland.edu/biology/sigmaxi/.

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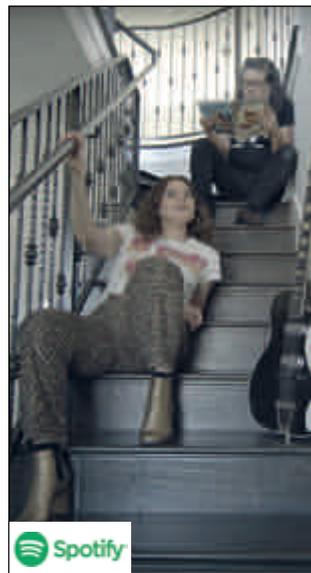
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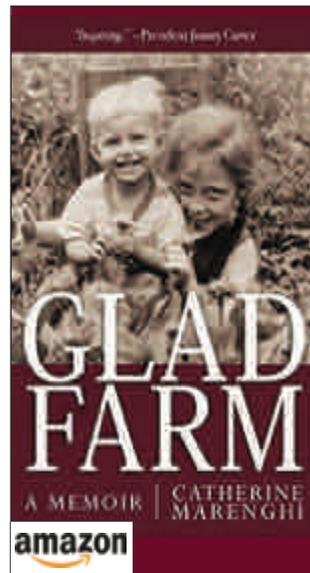
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Oakland presents *Dialogues of the Carmelites*

Oakland University's School of Music, Theatre and Dance will present the opera *Dialogues of the Carmelites* — Francis Poulenc's moving tale of the martyrdom of Carmelite nuns during the French Revolution — from January 16-19 in Varner Recital Hall.

"The story follows the arc of a fictionalized character, Blanche de la Force, though the other nuns portrayed in the play were real-life individuals," said Dr. Drake Dantzler, director and associate professor of music at OU.

"It is a mediation on faith, fear, death and redemption," Dantzler added. "Poulenc's music is beautiful, haunting and accessible despite its chromaticism, and, at times, terrifying. The final scene, in which the nuns are marched to the guillotine one by one while singing, is one of the most famous in opera."

The role of Blanche de la Force will alternate between OU seniors Caroline Roberts and Gillian Tackett.

"Blanche is born into a rich family, and seemingly has everything she might need at her fingertips," Tackett said. "Yet, she is plagued with an inner fear of the world around her, and is the definition of a superstitious person, who could be described as having a poor constitution. Blanche tried to solve her problem by leaving the world as she knows it and turning to her one refuge — God. She becomes a nun. However, what Blanche thought would be a refuge is just

about everything but that."

For Roberts, playing the role of Blanche has been an enjoyable challenge.

"I've never felt more like a character I'm playing than the moment when I put Blanche's habit costume on," she said. "It's been a challenge to play her because she is different from myself in so many ways. She is overcome with fear in everything she encounters, and there are even moments when I feel my body experiencing a physiological fear response."

Nick Nastally, who will alternate the role of Le Chevalier de la Force — the brother of Blanche — with Mario Melone,

said the production tells "a wonderful story."

"One of my goals in life is to be able to take people away from their reality and enjoy music," he said. "I want to be able to let people feel what they are meant to feel: emotions, whether happy, sad, angry, longing, etc. I am able to do this through opera and especially through this production."

Tickets for *Dialogues of the Carmelites* are \$12 for students and \$22 for the general public.

To purchase tickets, visit Etix.com/.

GAZETTE RECOMMENDS...

DEON COLE: COLE HEARTED – NETFLIX



Chicago's own Deon Cole is relentlessly hilarious in his first hour-long Netflix original comedy special. Doubling down on his unrestrained and engaging set from the Netflix stand-up comedy series, *The Standups*, Cole beta tests bottomless jokes about offering mints to strangers, dining while Black, and the preservation of comedy as the last raw form of expression.

- Mark Nicholson, Publisher

The age of the artificial Christmas tree

by PHILIP TRAVERS

Troy Historic Village, The 365 Project

The Christmas Tree is one of the prominent symbols throughout history that marks the time that Christmas season has arrived. Families for centuries have wandered out into the woods in the dead cold of winter to find that perfect Fir or Spruce to brighten up their living room for the holiday season. In modern times Christmas Tree lots pop up in cities and towns across America and Europe signaling the start of the season. Families have also adopted buying Artificial Christmas Trees that can last them years and years instead of cutting down a live tree.

For most countries, December 25th, Christmas Day marks the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Celebrating Christmas came into prominence slowly after Charlemagne was crowned king on Christmas Day in 800 A.D. Christmas in the middle ages saw the birth of the 12 days of Christmas and the origin of public festivals where people incorporated ivy, holly, and gift giving as part of the rituals of Christmas.

While we can date the celebration of Christmas as early as 800 A.D. the prominence of the Christmas tree being used as a

symbol of the holiday isn't found until the 12th century when people in Europe hung Fir Trees upside down marking the holiday season. In the early 16th century Martin Luther is credited with decorating the first Christmas tree with candles. It is said he did this to show his children how stars twinkled through the dark night. In the 16th Century Germany was the first country to open Christmas markets where gifts, wreaths, trees and food were sold to the masses.

America dates the arrival of the Christmas Tree to German settlements in the late 1700's and early 1800's. In America settlers used Douglas Firs and Virginia Pines to decorate their living rooms. In 1847 August Imgard in Wooster Ohio decorated a blue spruce with candy canes and every year a tree is erected above his grave honoring his vision for using candy canes as tree decorations.

By the 1800's Germany's trees began to suffer as the mass destruction of Christmas trees was well on its way. It was fashionable to cut off the top of a large Fir tree and leave the remainder of the tree to die. It was because of this mass destruction that the introduction of the first goose feather artificial tree was

introduced in Germany in the 1880's. By the early 1900's the Addis Brush Company in America realized that there must be a better way to build an Artificial Christmas Tree. Addis was known for making one of the first toilet bowl brushes. They used the same methods for constructing an artificial Christmas tree, which had huge advantages over the goose feather trees and they could hold more weight and subsequently more ornaments.

In the 1960's silver aluminum pine trees were vogue and brought the Artificial Christmas tree into prominence in America. The manufactures installed a revolving light under the tree that was able to change colors and create different reflections off of the tree. These trees led to the mass production of all types of artificial pine and spruce trees in the late 1900's and 2000's.

Today families enjoy the choice of buying Artificial Christmas Trees in all shapes, colors and sizes. You can buy white, pink, green, flocked or iced Christmas trees ranging in size from 12 inches up to 40 feet. and they come pre-wired with an assortment of different types of lights to brighten your holidays.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!



Final days of the Holiday Walk

The final weekend of Holiday Walk at Meadow Brook Hall will be especially jolly when Santa arrives with two of his reindeer. Share your holiday wishes with Santa in his workshop from noon to 8 p.m. and experience the wonder of Meadow Brook at the holidays.

Guests can also warm up during the cold evenings with bonfires and winter bars that offer

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December 24, 2019



Rochester & Rochester Hills Gazette

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Not only do their efforts benefit those in need in the community who need it most, they also help reduce food waste in the area by collecting large quantities of food from restaurants, wholesalers, and caterers.

Forgotten Harvest is always in need of monetary donations and volunteers. Visit ForgottenHarvest.org for more information on how to donate your time, energy, and efforts to this worthy cause.

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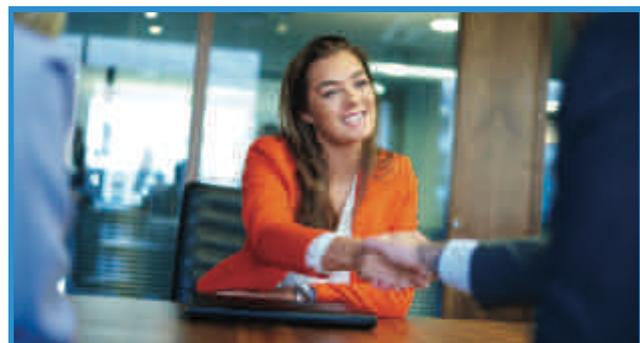


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4				8		6	3	
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Officer runs records check, discovers several outstanding warrants

POLICE PATROL



DEATH INVESTIGATION IN ROCHESTER HILLS

Deputies

responded to the 26000 block of S. Adams Rd to conduct a welfare check on a subject, a 65-year-old man, who had not reported to work. The caller, who is the owner of the street sweeping company who employs the subject, advised that he had not checked in for his work assignment and that his truck is missing. Deputies were later advised that his employer had located the vehicle which was found to be parked behind the T-Mobile building. Deputies located the vehicle. The vehicle's engine had been left idling and the doors were locked. Deputies observed the employee slumped over the steering wheel, obviously deceased. Paramedics from the Rochester Hills Fire Department arrived on the scene. Paramedics provided telemetry to Ascension-Providence Hospital Rochester where a physician provided the time of death. Deputies learned from the employer that the deceased lived alone and did not have an emergency contact. A Detective and an Investigator from the Oakland County Medical Examiner's Office responded to the scene to begin their investigations. The Medical Examiner's Office assumed custody of the deceased. An autopsy has been scheduled. Detectives are continuing with the investigation.

RECORDS CHECK REVEALS WARRANTS – Just before midnight, a Rochester officer was in the area of 2nd and Main and performed a routine records check of the vehicle in front of him. The records check showed the registered owner of the vehicle's license was currently suspended and expired. The registered owner also had several warrants for his arrest. A traffic stop was conducted, and the officer made contact with the driver, a 22-year-old Centerline man. The officer confirmed the driver was the registered owner. The driver was transported to the Rochester police department and later released with a pending court date for driving while license suspended. The other jurisdictions said to advise and release on their warrants.

DRUNK AND DISORDERLY – A Rochester officer was dispatched to the area of 4th and University for a report of an unruly subject who was being questioned by staff from a local restaurant about a disturbance he had caused at the restaurant. The officer arrived and made contact with the subject, a 37-year-old Rochester man, who smelled of intoxicants and was having difficulty standing. The man would later agree to take a PBT which showed him to have a BAC of .20%. The officer spoke with the restaurant employees who stated the man had kicked open the bathroom door, urinated on the floor, and was screaming at people inside the restroom. Employees said the man was escorted off the property and told not to come back in, but approximately 15 minutes later the man returned and started ripping Christmas decorations off the exterior of the restaurant, opened a bag of salt and threw it, and threw several planters on the ground. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the Rochester police department where he was held until sober. He was later released with a pending court date for public intoxication/disorderly conduct.

ROLLING STOP – It was just before 1 a.m. when a Rochester officer was in the area of Walnut and 2nd and observed a vehicle roll through the stop sign. The officer also observed the vehicle failed to signal while turning. A traffic stop was conducted, and the officer made contact with the driver, a 26-year-old Lake Orion man. The officer observed signs the driver had been drinking and he was placed through field sobriety testing. The driver failed all offered tests and was transported to the Rochester police department where he agreed to an offered breath test resulting in a .16% BAC. The male was held until sober and released with a pending court date for operating while intoxicated 2nd offense.

Note: To contact the Rochester Police Department call 248-651-9621 or the OCSO Rochester Hills Substation at 248-537-3530.



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