



December 20, 2018

# Building Beat



## Meet Davison's very own **SUPERFAN**

It's a bird. It's a plane. No, it's ... Super Fan!

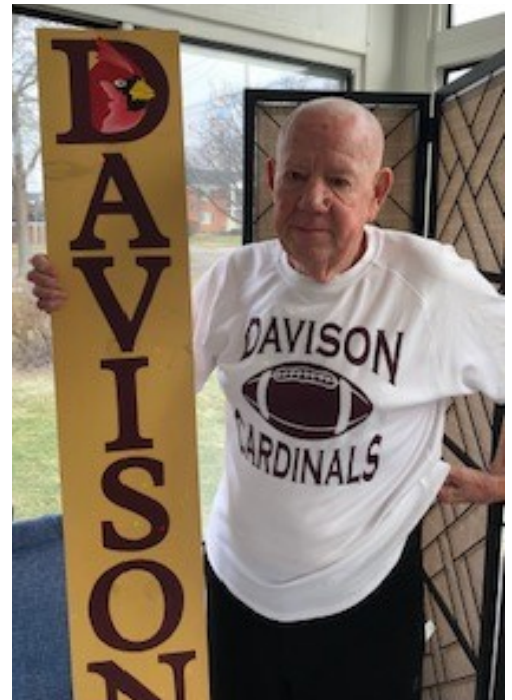
**Randy Braden** may not be able to leap bleachers in a single bound and a cane may replace the cape, but to many student athletes he is a true superhero. Since returning to Michigan in 2004, Braden has become a fixture at home sporting events in Davison, cheering on student athletes, encouraging coaches and developing friendships with players' parents.

"To have Super Fan at your games meant you always had someone cheering you on," said **Amber Rogers**, a Davison Middle School teacher and former coach. "No matter the score, no matter the weather, he was there."

Rogers coached both boys' and girls' soccer from 2007 to 2012.

"He was there at every home game and sometimes the away ones," she said.

Born one of eight children in Arkansas, Braden's family came to Flint when he was 12 so his dad could get a job in "the shop," i.e. Fisher Body. A whiz in math classes like trigonometry and calculus, Braden was invited to attend Flint Technical School, from where he graduated in 1957. His career in the airline industry kept him based in Miami Springs, Fla., but a later job setting up computer installations for banks helped him get back to the area from time to time. His sister, Alma Fitzgerald, had four children who graduated from Davison so when he was in town he always made sure to attend their sporting events as well as the occasional pool tournament at Madden's.



**Randy Braden is better known as "Super Fan" and is happy to be back cheering on his favorite student athletes after health issues sidelined him earlier this year.**

Back in Florida, Braden also had his own family. Daughter Brenda Lee Braden is the first born, followed by twins Debra Dawn and Michael "Speedo" Braden.

As the years went by, Braden's life experiences contributed to the person he has

### Upcoming ...

**Thursday, December 20:**  
DHS Winter Band Concert,  
6:30 p.m. Auditorium

**Friday, December 21:**  
School Spirit and Popcorn  
Day at Gates Elementary

Davison Alternative  
Education Family Holiday  
Dinner, 1:30 p.m.

**Enjoy your  
Holidays and  
Winter Break!  
School resumes  
Wednesday,  
January 2, 2019.**

become today. For instance, at one point in his life, Braden decided it was time for a breather so he lived in Mississippi for seven years “getting back to basics,” which meant living in an area with no electricity. He also spent some time living in Memphis, Tenn. to care for his dying brother.

When he returned to Michigan nearly 15 years ago, his sister and niece asked him if he wanted to go to a home football game at Collins Field. When he got to the ticket booth, he said the lady collecting admission fees asked him if he would be interested in having a senior pass.

“I just thought it was so neat that they let old people in for free to watch the games,” Braden said.

It was the beginning of what has blossomed into a longstanding love affair with the world of Cardinal athletics.

“It kind of started with the soccer teams,” Braden said. “I would be out and somebody would mention, ‘hey, you came to see my game.’ I began to get to know the kids and they asked if I wanted to start coming to practices, too.”

The relationships he has developed throughout the years with coaches and students have been nothing short of special. Braden dotes on the players, providing treats like candy on Halloween and chocolates on Valentine’s Day. His home is filled with letters, cards, pictures and mementos of his years as Super Fan. He has been invited to team banquets and graduation open houses and has reciprocated his love by showing his true colors, which, of course, are maroon and gold. He actually had maroon and gold accents painted on his home and a Davison logo proudly hangs on a shed in his backyard.

“I remember once, at an away game, we added him to the coaching staff because the opposing team was making a stink about him standing by our team,” Rogers recalled. “I also remember the year the soccer field got the lights. At the lighting ceremony, (Braden) was the one who flipped the switch – really, there was a huge switch he flipped in the middle of the field. It was very cool and he was the perfect person to do it.”



**Braden even shows his Cardinal spirit at home and recently had this Cardinal painted on his backyard shed by a local artist.**

When the softball team was awarded the district championship medal, Braden was invited out onto the field with the team to accept it.

While Braden admits that his most favorite sport to watch is basketball, he quickly adds that he is fond of all of the sports teams and the players.

“They are actually what really keeps me going,” he said. “It pumps me up, knowing that wow, I did make a difference. It’s the same feeling that teachers get when they get to know their kids.”

Health reasons forced Braden to take a little break from attending games but he is so happy to be back on the sidelines once again. He has been seen at basketball games since the season started a couple weeks ago.

“It always makes me smile to see him standing with his walking stick and cheering the team on,” Rogers said. “Over the years we have kept in touch through cards and letters as well.”

Whenever I see him out and about I always have to stop and say, 'Hi.' My girls even know him as Super Fan.”

“He is known by everybody – players, coaches and the other fans,” said Athletic Director Dave Beamer.

Beamer said last year when Braden did not show up when the girls’ soccer team started practicing, players became very worried. They asked Beamer to call Super Fan to make sure he was OK.

“He is definitely special,” Beamer said. “He is definitely loved by everyone and completely appreciated for all that he does.”

## Middle School Robotics teams finish successful seasons

Davison Middle School’s two robotic teams recently finished their seasons and one of them became the first ever DMS team to compete in the semi finals at the state level.

Techna Cards is the 7th grade team, consisting of members **Morgan Bellant, Charlie Beson, Zane Coole, Ruth Davis, Clay Ex, Rose Johnson and Zach Saylor.**

These students spent the last three months helping to build and program a robot to compete in First in Michigan competitions. They went to their first competition at Kearsley Middle School on November 10 and finished 23rd out of 24 teams. They fared much better at the next competition, held in the Upper Peninsula at Iron Mountain. Due to the distance, only a few families were able to attend and Morgan Bellant and Zane Coole represented the team. They did an outstanding job and ended up in 10th place out of 32 teams. Unfortunately, they were not chosen to compete in the finals and the team’s season ended.



**Techna Cards is the seventh grade robotics team.**

The eighth grade team, The Wild Cards, consisted of **Shlama Boudagh, Paige Craft, Grant Davis, Jacob Fogelberg, Jaiden Hoberg, Andrew Racine, Peyton Spodney, Caden Tucker, Kamden Walworth and Tred Wittke** as well as honorary member **Lucas Fabian** who was unable to join the team this year.

This team also spent three months building and programming a robot to compete in the First in Michigan competitions. At their first competition at Kearsley Middle School, the team went on to finish the qualifying matches in 8th place. They were picked to join an alliance and advanced to the final round. Unfortunately, the robot lost power but the team ended up taking home a second place trophy.

The Wild Cards then went on to compete in the UP at Iron Mountain. Again, due to the distance, only a few families were able to travel that far leaving Shlama Boudagh, Caden Tucker and Paige Craft to represent the team.

Team drivers Shlama and Caden went on to place 7th. The team was then chosen by the 2nd place team to join their alliance and together went on to win first place. The win earned The Wild Cards an invitation to go to the State Championship Dec. 13 and 14.

There were 96 total teams competing in two divisions. The Wild Cards competed in the Edison Division and were up against 42 teams. After six qualifying matches, the Wild Cards were in 20th place. The team was then picked by the 7th seed team to join their alliance in the semi-final qualifying rounds. Unfortunately, the teams lost their rounds and did not advance to the finals.

This is the first time a Davison Middle School Robotics team has ever played a match in the semi-final rounds at State level.

Thanks goes out to the coaches and mentors who spent countless hours helping the teams not only build a robot but learn new skills and function as a team. Special thanks goes to the coaches **Dave Racine, Louis Renner, Jason Rodgers, Pete Schneider** and **Tim Wandry** and Davison High School mentors **Malachi Bergman, Peyton Craft, Sydney Hardesty, Michael Osterholzer** and **Sydney Schneider**.



**The eighth grade team, The Wild Cards, was the first DMS team to ever play a match in the semi final rounds at State.**



## Go Gold campaign nets nearly \$2,000 for Mission of Love

A donation of \$1,907 was sent to A Mission of Love, a Warren-based charity that assists families of children battling cancer, following the district's Go Gold campaign held in September. The organization was suggested as a benefactor by the family of **Abigail Sieb**, one of our students who has benefitted from A Mission of Love. In addition to the Go Gold T-shirt fundraiser, the staff at Davison Community Schools participated in a District Jean Day, raising money for the charity by paying \$5 to wear jeans to work on a Friday in September.

## Pink Out campaign raises more than \$7,000 for American Cancer Society

The District's annual Pink Out campaign netted \$7,516.55 for the Genesee County chapter of the American Cancer Society. The money was raised through a variety of fundraisers, including the sale of Pink Out T-shirts and donations taken at a designated Pink Out football game held in October, and a District Staff Denim Day, in which employees could wear jeans to work for a \$5 or more donation. This year's Pink Out efforts were coordinated by Mrs. Darcey Kondel, teacher at Davison High School.



## Cardinal's Nest students learn about **FIRE SAFETY**

Firefighters with the Davison Richfield Fire Department recently stopped by the Cardinal's Nest to talk with preschoolers about fire safety and, of course, show off the department's shiny, red fire truck and all its equipment!

