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2024 IN REVIEW: The local news that shaped the last year in Barry County

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

A series of elections, an celestial phenomenon and a visit from the First Lady ... 2024 certainly came with its share of headlines.

As our team at The Hastings Banner, and our readers look ahead to the year in front of us, we wanted to look back at some of the most notable news that defined the prior year. The following is a rundown of some of the biggest headlines that shaped 2024.

Election officials scramble to comply with new laws

Administering elections was quite a bit more daunting for county, city, village and township officials this year. And, there were a lot of them to administer.

This year saw three different elections — the Michigan presidential primary on Feb. 27, the primary election on Aug. 6 and the state's general election on Nov. 5.

Because of the Voting Policies in Constitution Amendment, a proposal that was passed by voters in the 2022 election, election officials had a whole new set of laws to consider.

The biggest change was a mandatory, nine-day stretch of early voting that required more poll workers and additional equipment to execute.

These early-voting periods were barely utilized for the elections in February and August, but attracted a much higher volume of voters in the Nov. 5 general election, which featured the Presidential race between Kamala Harris and Donald Trump.

Local governments explore ways to regulate renewable energy projects

After the state government stripped local municipalities of some of their power to regulate large-scale renewable energy projects, officials in county government spent much of the year exploring avenues in which to reclaim it.

Barry County planners put together – and eventually passed – an ordinance in response to legislation passed in November of last year that allows utilities to bypass local government approval for clean energy projects and, instead, seek approval from the Michigan Public Service Commission for projects with a capacity of 50 megawatts or more. It also came as Consumers Energy was expected to present plans for a large-scale solar energy project in Assyria Township in southeast Barry County.

The state statute only regulates projects above 50 megawatts. Projects under 50 megawatts that are planned for areas falling under the county zoning rules will need to adhere to the ordinance.

In September, despite strong objections from local farmers and neighbors, Barry County planning commissioners approved plans by Consumers Energy to build a utility-scale solar energy project on close to 1,500 acres of farmland in Johnstown Township.

On a 6-1 vote, commissioners approved a preliminary site plan and special land use request for the state's largest energy provider to move ahead with the Spring Creek solar farm project.

Barry County hires new administrator; Brown retires

Barry County saw a changing of the guard in its front office as 30-year administrator Michael Brown bid farewell and entered retirement.



First Lady Dr. Jill Biden, with U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow in tow, walks through the facilities of YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin in Middleville on July 3. Biden visited the camp in Barry County to speak on food assistance programs. **File photo by Jayson Bussa**

In August, the county board held an emotional session where they honored Brown and his three decades of service to the community.

Leading up to that moment, the board spent the better part of the year embarking on a search for a new administrator, leaning on talent sourcing agency GovHR to do so.

After narrowing the field, the board conducted two rounds of interviews before deciding to extend an offer to Eric Zuzga, who was serving as the director of community services for the City of Marshall. Zuzga is also a resident of Barry County.

All candidates who were interviewed resided in West Michigan.

Zuzga brought administrative experience from a smaller level, having served as the city manager in Quincy prior to taking on his role at the larger city of Marshall.

Commissioners in general were impressed with his budgeting skills and economic development experience, stating they are confident he can take the step up to the administrator of an entire county.

Zuzga continues to settle into his role as the county heads into 2025.

County loses another titan of philanthropy

After losing Larry Baum in late 2023, 2024 brought with it the passing of another high-profile philanthropist in Barry County.

Richard "Dick" Groos, the grandson of legendary entrepreneur Emil Tyden and a businessman who pushed the family's enterprise legacy worldwide, died in March surrounded by family and under hospice care in Grand Rapids at the age of 94.

Groos graduated from Hastings High School in 1948 and continued his education at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. After a short military service

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Orangeville house fire leaves 17-year-old dead, others injured

Molly Macleod
Editor

The Barry County Sheriff's Office is investigating the cause of a house fire that left a 17-year-old girl dead and several others injured Monday morning.

Orangeville Fire Chief Matt Ribble told The Banner his crews first received the call for the house fire on the 8000 block of Marsh Road in Orangeville at 1:06 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 30.

Upon arrival at the scene, crews discovered the deceased 17-year-old female inside the house. Several other occupants were transported from the scene with non-life-threatening injuries.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation. Deputies A. Blundess, C. Hewitt, M. Noteboom and B. Romph of the Barry County Sheriff's Office are heading up the investigation.

Several agencies assisted the Orangeville Township Fire Department on Monday. These included the Michigan State Police, the Michigan State Police Fire Marshall, the Delton Fire Department, the Prairieville Fire Department, the Gun Plain Fire Department, the Martin Fire Department, the Hastings Fire Department, Wayland EMS and Barry County Central Dispatch.

Fire at Gun Lake Marina likely intentional

Molly Macleod
Editor

The Michigan State Police are investigating a fire that damaged three boats at the Gun Lake Marina on Thursday, Dec. 26. Investigators say the fire appeared to be intentionally set.

The MSP Wayland post responded to the scene on Patterson Road in Shelbyville last week. The fire broke out on the Allegan County side of the lake. The Wayland Fire Department responded to the fire, assisted by the Orangeville, Martin and Yankee Springs fire departments.

Thanks to a quick response from the area fire departments, last week's fire was contained to three boats. There were no injuries.

The MSP Wayland post is investigating the fire as a criminal incident. No arrests have yet been made.

Anyone with information on the marina fire is asked to contact the MSP Wayland Post at 269-792-2213.

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PAIR OF STATE MEDALISTS AMONG COUNTY'S BEST AT POOL
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THE HASTINGS BANNER



REVIEW

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hitch, Groos returned to Hastings, still filled with the business passion of his grandfather, who ushered Hastings into the developing Industrial Revolution of the late 1800s.

Groos took that drive to propel one of Tyden's inventions, the dry valve, ceiling-recessed fire prevention system, into the modern world as an internationally-sold product through the Viking Corp.

Groos never lost his love for and dedication to the home in which he was raised, continuing to live in Hastings where he raised a family of five children with his late wife, Ethel.

Groos's most evident and lasting contribution to the community may have been his work in founding what has become the Barry Community Foundation, which has built $57 million in assets.

Barry County directs its eyes for solar eclipse

The natural phenomenon of a solar eclipse happens once every one to three years. Even then, it can't always be seen from here in Barry County.

Observers this year, though, were treated to a show in the sky.

A solar eclipse is where the moon moves in the path of the sun, partially blocking it for a portion of the day. This year was special because, in some areas of the United States, observers could witness a total eclipse, where the moon completely blocks out the sun for a brief period of time, casting darkness. While that couldn't be observed in Barry County, onlookers could use special viewing glasses to watch the moon block out over 90 percent of the sun.

Community events were held throughout Barry County and viewing glasses went like hot cakes. Schools also used this as a fun learning experience for its students while some made the trip to areas like Ohio to witness the once-in-a-lifetime total eclipse.

First Lady makes local stop

The First Lady of the United States paid a visit to Barry County on July 3 when Dr. Jill Biden made an appearance at YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin in Middleville.

The purpose of Biden's visit to Middleville was two-fold — to tout summer food assistance programs enacted by the Biden Administration, while also visiting with kids who had a parent who was wounded, disabled or killed while serving in the military. Those kids were at Camp Manitou-Lin as part of the Camp Corral program, a nationwide effort to give a free camp experience to kids whose parents had made this sacrifice for their country.

Biden offered words on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's SUN Programs which was launched in late May and designed to provide sufficient food and nutrition for kids during the summer months when they don't have access to school breakfast or lunch.

Biden's visit came on the heels of President Joe Biden's lackluster debate performance against former President Donald Trump, which sparked concerns about whether he would be able to defeat Trump in the upcoming election or be fit to serve for another four years.

Biden eventually dropped out of the race and was replaced by Vice President Kamala Harris on the Democratic ticket.

All three county school districts welcome new superintendents

In 2024, school districts in Barry County saw a complete refresh in leadership — one of those transitions is still ongoing.

At Hastings Area School System, the change in leadership was born out of a tragic circumstance when Superintendent Matt Goebel announced that he would be stepping back from his position in April. Over a month later, Goebel passed away at the age of 48 after a battle with cancer.

The school board commenced a search for a new leader and, in May, landed on Dr. Nick Damico, who was serving as the interim superintendent at Delton Kellogg Schools at the time. Damico took the reins of the district where he currently leads.

In April, the Delton Kellogg Schools Board of Education announced that it had accepted the resignation of Superintendent Herman Lartigue Jr. before it named Damico the interim superintendent.

The ensuing search brought in four candidates for interviews and the board selected Jeremy Wright to take on the role. Wright was serving as the principal of Plainwell High School and had applied for the DK superintendent job in the past.

Finally, after serving for six years in administrative roles, Thornapple Kellogg Superintendent Craig McCarthy announced in November that he would exit his role at the end of the year. Retired TK Superintendent Tom Enslen took the position on an interim basis starting Jan. 1 while the school board conducts a search for a permanent replacement.



In April, residents in Barry County observed a solar eclipse that covered over 90 percent of the sun. Pictured, a group of onlookers gather at Putnam District Library in Nashville to take in the sight. **File photo by Jayson Bussa**



The past year was the final one for some veterans of county government, including Register of Deeds Barb Hurless and Treasurer Sue VandeCar. Another more-than-notable departure was from 30-year County Administrator Michael Brown, who receives a standing ovation from the county board and gallery in this photo. **File photo by Jayson Bussa**



Hastings Area Schools faced tragedy in 2024 when Superintendent Matt Goebel stepped away from his post and later passed away after a battle with cancer. The school district then conducted a search to find its current superintendent, Nick Damico (pictured). **File photo by Hunter McLaren**

In other 2024 headlines:

— The City of Hastings received a major facelift upon the conclusion of its streetscape project, which transformed the sidewalks along State Street through the downtown corridor. City officials debuted the finished product at this year's Summerfest and the city was construction-free throughout the fall.

— Hastings-based J-Ad Graphics Inc. announced in May that it sold its portfolio of community newspapers, which includes The Hastings Banner and Hastings Reminder, to Lapeer-based publisher View Newspaper Group.

— Areas of Barry County were ravaged by a pest known as Spongy Moth during the spring and summer. The damage to trees was severe, especially in southern Barry County, but it was too late in the season for municipalities to take action with measures like mass sprayings.

— Discussions reignited on the potential for bringing a Meijer grocery store to the Hastings area. Rutland Township officials entered into preliminary discussions on whether it is feasible to bring a store with a 20-acre footprint to a parcel of property at the intersection of M-43 and M-37. The

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NEWSPAPER DEADLINES

Advisor
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Reminder
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Sun & News
Wednesday at Noon

VIEW Newspaper Group

DID YOU SEE?



NATURE'S CUSTODIANS!

Barry County has a very healthy population of turkey vultures. These remarkable birds help keep our fields and forests clean. While turkey vultures do migrate, there are still a number hanging around the county well into December. They can often be seen perched on the Hastings water towers. **Photos by Del Bachert**

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REVIEW

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biggest hurdle so far is finding a way to extend water and sewer from the City of Hastings to the site, and who would fund it.

— A familiar face returned to the Barry County Sheriff's Office — this time as undersheriff. Following the termination of former Undersheriff Jason Sixberry, Sheriff Dar Leaf tapped department veteran Kevin Erb to take on the role. Erb, who was born and raised in Carlton Township, had spent 25 years with the department before retiring and joining the Lake Odessa Police Department. His tenure began on Oct. 1.

— After voters passed a $17 million bond proposal by Hastings Area School System in 2023, the district got to work on projects when school let out for the summer. The projects included new playground equipment at each elementary school and new LED signs at each building, among other efforts. Projects are expected to continue until the summer of 2026.

— More than 200 people gathered on the lawn of the Barry County Commission on Aging in August to celebrate the 50-year anniversary for the department, which provides a bevy of services for the county's growing aging population.

Nashville set to celebrate new housing at old school

The Village of Nashville is set to celebrate the culmination of turning a former school into new housing in early 2025.

Jennifer Heinzman, president and CEO for the Barry County Chamber and Economic Development Alliance, on Dec. 3 confirmed that potential residents were able to submit applications for the Village Flats Apartments, a 20-unit complex that was once the home of the W.K. Kellogg Rural Agricultural School.

According to Heinzman, new residents could start moving into the Village Flats as early as March 2025, once they've completed the application process and have been approved.

The conversion of the former school, built in the 1930s, is one of 12 housing projects across Michigan being funded through the Building Michigan Together Plan, with a combined total investment of $13 million.

The school had been mostly vacant, according to reports, since it was sold by Maple Valley Schools about seven years ago. Now, it will house 13 one–bedroom, five two-bedroom and two studio apartments.

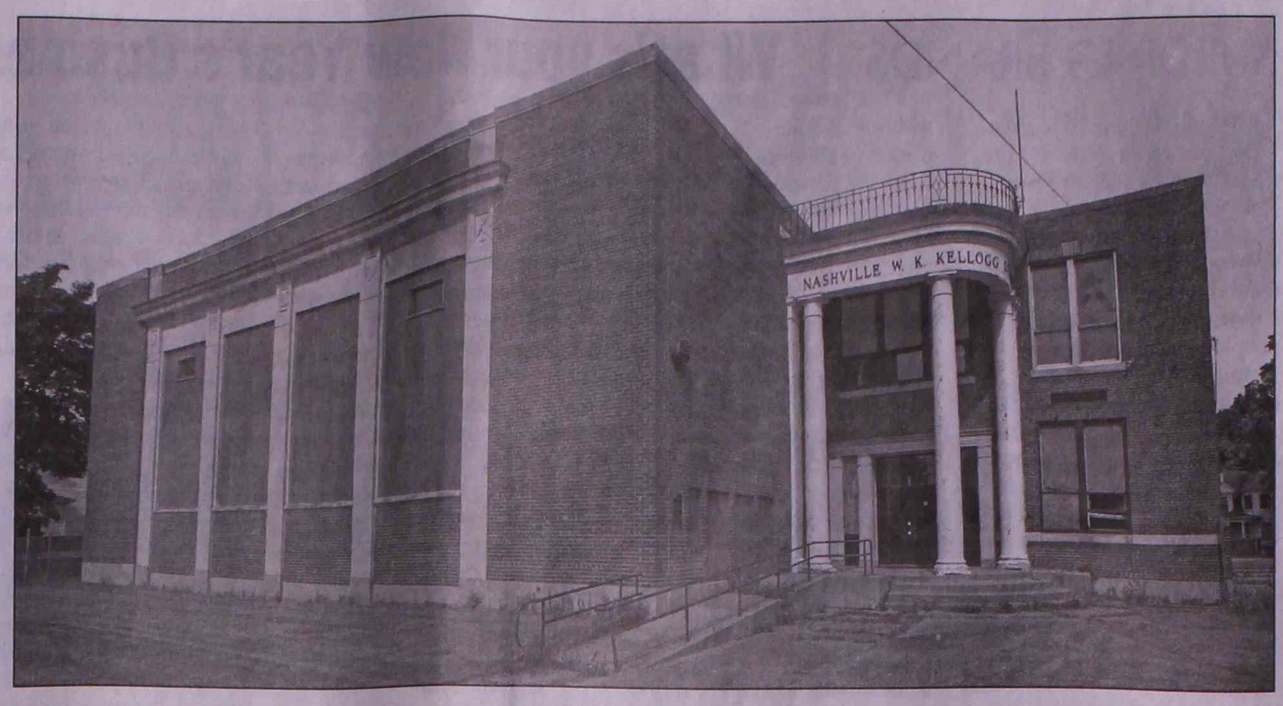
Both Nashville Village President Mike Keynon and Heinzman said the apartment complex seeks to address one of the most pressing needs in Nashville and the rest of Barry County – housing.

"That's our No. 1 priority," Heinzman said.

The chamber and other local organizations, such as the Barry County Brownfield Authority and Barry County Land Bank Authority, are currently working to add more than 900 housing units to help address housing needs countywide, Heinzman said. Though, that would still leave Barry County about 1,000 units short of projected needs, according to a study.

And the conversion of the former Kellogg School into apartments could be a preview of things to come within the county.

Heinzman said officials will be watching the outcome of a vote on a potential bond request that could be decided by Lakewood Public Schools voters in May.



Jennifer Heinzman, president and CEO for the Barry County Chamber and Economic Development Alliance, on Dec. 3 confirmed that potential residents were able to submit applications for the Village Flats Apartments, a 20-unit complex that was once the home of the W.K. Kellogg Rural Agricultural School. **File photo**

Citizen committee presents bond options to Lakewood school board

After going to the polls to vote in the nation's general election Nov. 5, voters in the Lakewood Public Schools district may find out if they'll be returning to the polls in spring 2025 to decide the fate of another bond proposal, one that would lead to the closing of the district's current early childhood center facility.

Members of the One Lakewood Committee, a citizen group which hosted a series of public forums in September and October, presented their recommendations to the LPS Board of Education at its regular meeting Monday, Oct. 28, at the Lakewood High School Media Center.

Committee member Edith Farrell said the district should consider moving forward with a bond proposal next spring, citing fiscal responsibility, declining enrollment, educational outcomes, safety and security, and decreasing utilization.

The committee recommendations included the school district streamlining its facilities by going from four to three educational buildings, closing the 100-year-old structure that now serves as the home of the Lakewood Early Childhood Center.

One Lakewood Committee members stated they also discussed the need for a new bus garage to better serve the district's transportation needs, as well as the creation of a "sinking fund" to help pay for ongoing maintenance and other projects. The cost of a new bus garage was projected at $6.7 million to more than $7 million.

During the forums, committee member Mike Haskin said those attending agreed there was a need for a new garage but not at that price.

Haskin added the board should seek a bond proposal of about $28 million that would fund improvements and upgrades at the elementary, middle and high schools, while placing the issue of a new bus garage and sinking fund on hold.

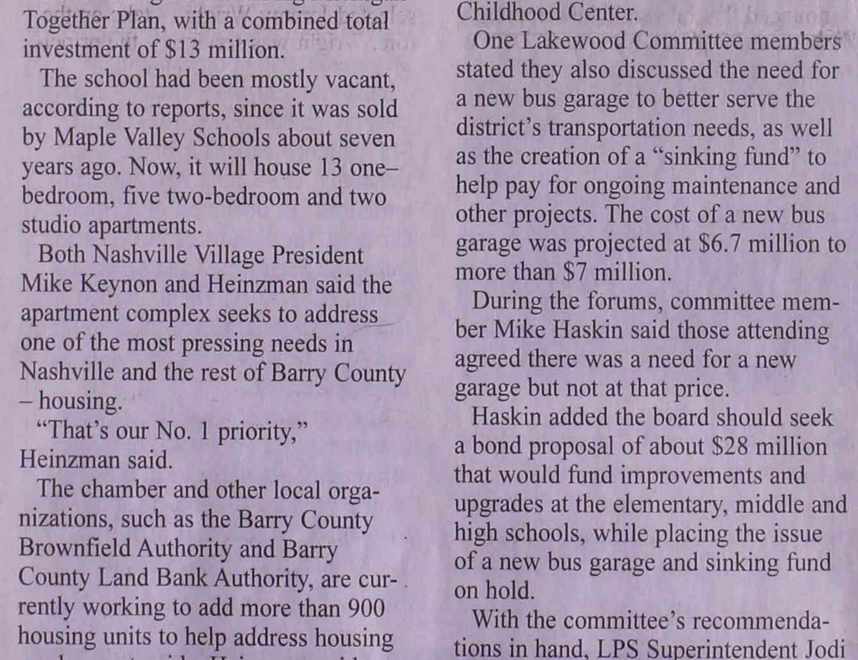
With the committee's recommendations in hand, LPS Superintendent Jodi Duits said the school board would discuss the possibility of a bond proposal at upcoming meetings on Nov. 11 and Nov. 25, and make a decision passing the needed ballot language for a May 2025 vote.

Lakewood residents voted down a $64 million bond proposal in November 2022 and, by just a 337-vote margin, defeated a $39 million proposal in August 2023.

Staff writer Dennis Mansfield contributed to this report.



Barry County went to the polls in 2024 for presidential primary, primary and general elections that decided leadership for the county, state and nation. Local election officials had to adhere to a new set of rules in the process. **File photo by Brett Bremer**



After going to the polls to vote in the nation's general election Nov. 5, voters in the Lakewood Public Schools district may find out if they'll be returning to the polls in spring 2025 to decide the fate of another bond proposal, one that would lead to the closing of the district's current early childhood center facility. **File photo**



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Are your protection plans in place?

Have you ever thought about how much you have to protect? Between your family, your finances, your independence and your legacy, it can be quite a lot — and that's why it's important to have the right protection plan in place.

Let's look at these areas of need and some possible protection solutions:

• **Protecting your income** – An injury or severe illness could prevent you from working for some time. And if that happened, your family's finances could become strained. To help guard against this possibility, you may want to consider disability income insurance. Your employer may offer some type of coverage, but it's likely to be short term and may not be enough to help close the income gap you might face, so you may want to consider purchasing your own policy.

• **Protecting your family** – If you were no longer around, how would your family's lifestyle be affected? Could they stay in the same house? Could your children afford college or another type of post-secondary education? If you have adequate life insurance, the answer to these questions can be "yes." Again, you might get some coverage from your employer, but it may be insufficient, so you may want to explore additional protection through a personal policy. In determining how much coverage you'll need, you'll want to weigh several factors: size of mortgage and other debts, number of children, spouse's income and needs, and the legacy you'd like to leave.

• **Protecting your goals** – You may have some important financial goals, such as sending your children to college and achieving a comfortable retirement. To protect these goals, you'll need strategies to help prepare for them, which could include investing in an education savings plan and contributing regularly to your IRA and 401(k) or other retirement plans.

• **Protecting your financial independence** – Hopefully, you will be able to remain financially independent your entire life. But this independence could be threatened by the need for some type of long-term care. Consider this: A private room in a nursing home costs, on average, more than $116,000 a year, while the services of a home health aide are more than $75,000 a year, according to Genworth, an insurance company. Medicare generally does not cover these costs or types of needs and would typically only pay for a short period. You might be left with significant bills or creditors and possibly dependent on family or loved ones. To help protect yourself from these threats, you may want to consult with a financial professional, who can offer long-term care solutions.

• **Protecting your legacy** – When you work hard your whole life, you may want to leave something behind to your loved ones. A comprehensive estate plan can help ensure your family — and the charitable groups you support — will receive the resources you'd like them to have. An estate plan can be somewhat complex, involving various documents and arrangements, including a will, living trust and various powers of attorney, so you'll need to work with a qualified legal advisor, and possibly your financial professional.

As we've seen, "protection" can take many forms. So, try to follow all the protection strategies you need to enjoy the life you've envisioned for yourself and your family.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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BUILDING BRANDS | What's your New Year's Business Resolution?

Sunday, Jan. 19 is a date to keep in mind if you plan to make a New Year's Resolution this year. That's because research has shown that only 18 days after they've set their intention for a new year, the majority of people ditch their New Year's Resolution by Jan. 19. One fitness app has even named Jan. 19 "Quitter's Day" according an *inc.com* article on the topic.

That article also points out that of the 41% of Americans who make New Year's resolutions, only 9% are successful in keeping them.

I know, however, that most of the readers of this column make up the elite 9% who keep their New Year's Resolutions because they set specific goals and pursue them with relentless passion, expanding far beyond Jan. 19.

With this optimistic view in mind, each year I ask business professionals throughout the communities we cover to share their New Year's Business Resolution, knowing that it will inspire anyone who hasn't set their goal for the new year to do so. Here is what this year's group of inspiring contributors are vowing to do far beyond Jan. 19 in the new year:



EMILY CASWELL
ecaswell@mihomepaper.com

Tim Vargas, President & CEO McLaren Lapeer Region

Looking at 2025, our organization is determined to continue to be the provider of high-quality health care to the community, and, in doing so, a source of calm and compassion to the people of Lapeer. Throughout this past year, McLaren Lapeer Region undertook initiatives that increased our patients' and the greater community's access to care. This included hosting free health fairs and achieving re-verification as the county's only trauma center, though our goal now is to build on that. We aim to venture further into the community, help our providers make a connection with those they care for, and to ensure that patients who require care are able to receive it promptly and efficiently.

Bonnie Gettys, President/ CEO Barry Community Foundation

Our resolution here is the cherish the past, celebrate the present and strategize our future! With this being our 30th year in existence, we have much to be thankful for!

Theresa Doan, Director of Social Responsibility Genisys Credit Union

As the Social Responsibility Director of Genisys Credit Union, I resolve to continue our commitment to sustainable growth, community empowerment, and ethical practices that benefit our members, employees, and the communities we serve.

We will expand our financial literacy programs to reach more individuals in 2025, with a focus on underserved communities, youth, and seniors.

We will grow and collaborate with local organizations to ensure that our CSR initiatives address the unique challenges faced by all populations within our service areas.

By driving these initiatives forward, we will create meaningful change, align with our credit union's core values, and strengthen our position as a socially responsible leader in the financial services industry.

Leigh LaForest, Executive Director Grand Blanc Chamber of Commerce

I vow to be more present. Less tech, more in the moment. As for the Chamber, we are going to continue to work very hard to make sure that our members are feeling valued and supported.

Wes Smith, Publisher View Newspaper Group

Be a better listener: We all face the challenge of both listening to the person or group with whom we interact and delivering our own message, pitch or proposal. Stephen R. Covey teaches in his *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People:* "Seek first to understand and then to be understood." I know when I do this, better outcomes result.

Practice gratitude: The Mayo Clinic says, "Gratitude can decrease depression, anxiety, difficulties with chronic pain and risk of disease." Those are all good reasons to tell those with whom we work that we appreciate them. I also want my clients and colleagues to know their work has value and my relationships with them are important to me, both professionally and personally.

Pete Clinton, Advertising Director View Newspaper Group

My business resolution for 2025 is to stay ahead of everything. It is so easy in life and business to handle all the things we do on a daily basis to get by and forget about what it takes to keep everything out in front of you and not get stuck working from behind. To stay ahead, you need to take care of all the daily things that need to be addressed, but you also need to take the time to make all the extras to happen, which include planning, organization, research, thought, communication, brainstorming and developing more ideas. Focusing on this more will help our team and clients be better prepared to see success.

My New Year's Business Resolution is to be innovative. While there's always value in looking back at the way we did something in the past as to not "reinvent the wheel," in the year ahead I plan to challenge myself and our team to see if there is a better, faster, more efficient, easier or simply more fun way to do the task at hand.

I'd love to hear your New Year's Business Resolution. Email me at *ecaswell@mihomepaper.com.*

Emily Caswell is the brand manager for VIEW Group, the branding division of View Newspaper Group. She is a 2004 graduate of Michigan State University's journalism school. She first worked as an editorial intern for The (Lapeer) County Press in 2001 and 2002 and later as a reporter for Lapeer Area View and The County Press from 2008-09. Caswell was a staff reporter for The Lansing State Journal's NOISE publication and wrote a popular column for the daily newspaper. She later served as the publications director at a boutique brand and publishing agency in Lansing, before returning to View Newspaper Group in her current role in 2014.

Local group offers discussions on world affairs

Anyone looking for interesting reading and discussion is invited to join the Great Decisions world affairs discussion program.

Great Decisions is the nation's largest discussion program on world affairs. The grassroots face-to-face model adopted by Great Decisions more than 50 years ago continues today, with tens of thousands of participants taking part in discussions nationwide annually. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching the informative talks and meeting in a group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today. The local group is just one of multiple groups in Michigan with hundreds more throughout the United States.

This year, the Barry County group will meet on Tuesday afternoons beginning Jan. 21 in the Hastings Public Library's upstairs community room. The club will meet through March. The first two meetings on Jan. 21 and Jan. 28 will be from 1:45 to 3 p.m. All other meetings will be from 1 to 3 p.m.



Regular attendance is encouraged but not required. The group generally has between 15 and 20 participants. Consensus is not an aim of the program; rather, the class is designed to help individuals better understand complex issues.

A soft-cover book that provides background, relevant facts, present and future policy options and impartial analysis written by independent experts, is available for purchase. Attendees read the assigned article prior to each meeting to gain background information and prepare for discussion. Along with taking part in discussions, participants watch a video that provides more information on the week's topic. Attendees choose how much they want to participate in terms of preparation and in-class dialogue.

This year's topics include: American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads, U. S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy, U.S-China Relations, International Cooperation on Climate Change, The Future of NATO and European Security, AI and American National Security, India: Between China, the West, and the Global South and After Gaza: American Policy in the Middle East.

The meetings are free; the only cost is for the soft-bound book. For further information about the local group or to order the book, contact Carole at 616-450-3164 or Marge at 269-352-3602 by Thursday, Jan. 9. — *MM*

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Community has a share in school district accomplishments

Dear Editor,

I'd like to comment on the recent article about me in the December 19, 2024, edition of the Hastings Banner.

The article noted the "farewell" given to me at the December school board meeting. I was honored with a vest noting my service years, an Appreciation Plaque, an award named after me for future band students, and an honorary chair at the PAC with my name on it. Numerous congratulations were left on the Facebook page.

Our Hastings community members need to have a share in these awards. I am only one of the many individuals who support our children in so many ways. Every person who attends a school or community event, attends a school board or any other board meeting is a contributor. I was voted in twice to represent your best interest, and I did my best to fulfill this job. I leave behind a talented group of young men and women who will carry on with the same intent. Believe it or not, we actually appreciate the people that attend our meetings and question our decisions… it helps us make better ones.

I ask that every citizen of Hastings continue to stand up, speak up and support your community. Without you, there would be no awards! Hats off to all of you!

Louis F. Wierenga Jr.
Hastings

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

View Newspaper Group publications accept letters to the editor. Letters should refer to an article that has appeared within this publication or ary sister View Newspaper Group publication in the last 14 days or refer to a local event that has taken place in the last 30 days.

All writers must provide their full name, home address and phone number. All letters must be original and are subject to editing for clarity and liability. Letters may not exceed 250 words and writers may not submit more than one letter per 30-day period. View Newspaper Group reserves the right to withhold publication of any letter.

Election-related letters are limited to 150 words and endorsements are limited to no more than three per candidate, per election cycle. View Newspaper Group will not publish letters from candidates for elective office or their campaigns, form letters or letters sent to other publications. Election-related letters will not be published in the final two weeks before Election Day.

PIERCE CEDAR CREEK INSTITUTE EVENTS

— JANUARY 3-9 —

Those interested can register for these events and find more information at cedarcreekinstitute.org/events/

Dec. 20-Jan. 5 — Winter break exploration kits. Pick up a free kit full of fun, hands-on activities to keep kids learning and exploring during school break. Kits will be available for several age groups including birth to 2 years old, preschool, early and upper elementary as well as teens. This year's kits are sponsored by the Friends of the Delton Library and Worgess.

Jan. 1-31 — Jan. Storybook Walk: "Bird Count" by Susan Edwards Richmond; illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman. Join a mother and daughter as they participate in the Christmas Bird Count. What kinds of birds will they find? After your storybook adventure, stop by the south side of the Visitor Center to pick up your own bird count activity. The Storybook Walk is free and self-guided on the Black Walnut Trail.

Jan. 1-31 — Backyard Bird Walk. What kinds of birds might live in your backyard? Follow the self-guided trail to find out. Afterward, visit the south side of the Visitor Center for a bird count activity and additional information on the Great Backyard Bird Count. This activity is free and self-guided on the Lupine Trail.

Thursday, Jan. 9 — Healthy Planet, Healthy People lecture series: Drinking Water and Forests with Dr. Emily Huff, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Forests are critical for increasing biodiversity, storing carbon and providing habitat for animals. Register for lunch by Jan. 2.

More information about these events can be found on the Institute's website at CedarCreekInstitute.org.

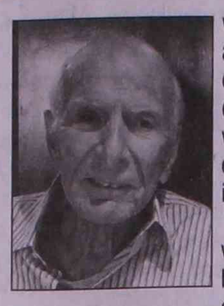
Correction:

In the Dec. 26, 2024 edition of The Banner, the article "Annual hike in Yankee Springs set for Jan. 1" incorrectly referred to Steve Merring as Steve Meering. We regret the error.

OBITUARIES

VIEW OBITUARIES ONLINE. HASTINGSBANNER.COM

Ado "AJ" Floreani



Ado "AJ" Floreani, a cherished husband, father, and friend, passed away peacefully on December 27, 2024, at the age of 87 in Grand Rapids, MI.

Born on May 7, 1937, in Chicago, IL, AJ's zest for life and infectious humor touched everyone he met. AJ dedicated over three decades to a successful career as an insurance salesman with AAA. In his retirement, he channeled his passion for craftsmanship into building homes.

His work ethic was matched only by his commitment to his family, and he will be lovingly remembered by his wife, Sandy (Veverica) Floreani; his children, Derek (Tron) Floreani, Julianna (Dwain) Johnson, Jay Scott Floreani; his four stepchildren, and the numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren who brought him immeasurable joy. An avid outdoorsman, AJ found solace and excitement in nature. Whether he was carving down a ski slope, gliding through water in his kayak, or enjoying a leisurely bicycle ride, he embraced every moment with enthusiasm. Traveling, golfing, woodworking, boating, and dancing were among his many interests.

AJ's good sense of humor was as steady as his faith, and he was a devoted attendee of the Gun Lake Community Church. AJ's legacy of love, laughter, and adventure will be forever cherished by those who were fortunate enough to know him.

AJ's memorial service will be conducted at 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 3, 2025 at Gun Lake Community Church, Pastor Dan Beyer, officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to St. Jude Children's Hospital will be appreciated.

Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or to leave a condolence message for AJ's family.

Carol Joan Ayers



Carol Joan Ayers passed away on December 26, 2024, in Grand Rapids, MI. She was born on December 9, 1948, in Hastings, MI, to Maynard B. and Ardyth V. (Kingsley) Park.

Carol graduated from Thornapple Kellogg High School. On May 6, 1971, she married Otis "Sam" Marshall Ayers, and they enjoyed over 50 years until his passing. She worked for over 20 years at Bradford White.

Carol's zest for life was shone through her love for sports, with countless golf and bowling trophies attesting to her talent and passion. Beyond sports, she cherished the simple joy of playing cards, creating laughter and lasting memories with friends and family at the table.

She was preceded in death by her beloved parents;, her husband, Otis "Sam" Ayers;, her sister, Pamela (Doug) Cook, and her son, Chris Ayers.

Carol is survived by her daughter, Amanda Ayers, and her adoring grandchildren, Emerson and Paisley Schmidt, who loved her "to the moon and back;" her sister, Judy (Jerry) Jackiewicz; her many nieces and nephews, and her special close friends, Melinda and Cheryl; who stood by her through thick and thin.

Carol's absence will be felt by many, including her classmates with whom she met for monthly lunches, the countless golfers from Yankee Springs Golf Course, and the girls with whom she shared countless card games.

A visitation will be held at Girrbach Funeral Home, 328 S Broadway; Hastings, MI on Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, from 6-8 p.m., with interment at Ft. Custard National Cemetery in Augusta, MI, when the weather is warmer. To leave an online condolence visit www.girrbachfuneralhome.net.

Shelly Ann Greenfield



It is with sadness we announce that Shelly Ann Greenfield, mother to Jerica Shakespeare and Merissa Greenfield, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2024, after a hard battle with cancer. Her final moments were spent peacefully in her nursing home in Hastings, surrounded by family and staff who loved her.

Known for her strong will and feisty mouth, Shelly will be dearly missed by all who knew her. Shelly's family asks that she be remembered for the joy she brought to others in life, not the sadness of her passing.

She is survived by her daughters; sister, Sharon; brothers, Chuck and Karl.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Brad; mother, Sally; father, Charles; brother, Joe, and sister, Sara.

Shelly was born and raised in San Bernardino, CA where she attended high school. At 18 she moved to Hastings with her family, and that's where she met Brad, and they were happily married for 38 years. Brad and Shelly started a family and bought a store. Everyone knew the boisterous red-headed woman who ran Cedar Creek Grocery and how generous she could be. The trick was to stay on her good side. Her free time was spent bowling, playing billiards, bird watching, sitting by a campfire, and crocheting.

Brad and Shelly spent their free time working on building their dream home together, but unfortunately, Shelly suffered a TBI in 2005. Brad took care of Shelly and honored her until he no longer could, and she was left to the peerless care of Thornapple Manor. At the Manor, Shelly was loved and well cared for. She spent her days playing cards, enjoying activities with staff, and watching classic movies.

A Celebration of Life gathering will be held at Girrbach Funeral Home, 328 S Broadway, Hastings, MI, 49058 on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2025, from 2 – 4 pm.

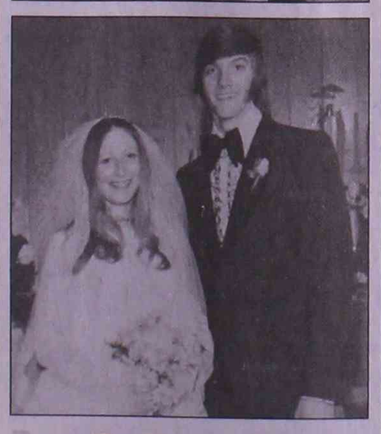
Flowers and memorial gifts are welcome but not necessary. Memorial contributions in memory of Brad and Shelly Greenfield can be made to Thornapple Manor, https://www.barrycf.org/funds/thornapple-manor/ or send a check made out to Barry Community Foundation, Thornapple Manor Fund, 231 S. Broadway St.; Hastings, MI 49058.

Arrangements by Girrbach Funeral Home, to leave an online condolence visit www.girrbachfuneralhome.net.

GO ONLINE TO HASTINGSBANNER.COM

ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT





Baileys to celebrate 50th wedding anniversary

James Lee Bailey and Debra Jo McClellen, met while attending high school in Kearney, NE, and were married in 1975. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on January 26, 2025.

Over the years, they've been blessed with 12 children (Julie, JeNae, Jim Jr, Jason, JoAnn, Josh, Jordan, JenaLeigh, Jacob, Jillian, Jared and Jenelle), 24 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

To honor this milestone, their children are hosting an open house at The Jefferson (103 W State St., Hastings, MI) on Saturday, Jan. 11, 2025 from 6:30-9 pm. Friends and loved ones are invited to join the celebration.

HASTINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY SCHEDULE

Thursday, Jan. 2 – Movie Memories and Milestones watches a 1943 film starring Virginia Weidler, Edward Arnold and John Caroll, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 4 – Beginning Beekeeping family event, 1 p.m. Join library staff for a family-friendly introduction to beekeeping.

Monday, Jan. 6 – Crafting Passions, 10 a.m.; library board meeting, 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 7 – Baby Cafe, 10 a.m.; mahjong, 2 p.m.; chess, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 8 – Itsy Bitsy Book Club, 10:30 a.m.

More information about these and other events is available by calling the library, 269-945-4263.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Freyja Morena Despotovic, born at Corewell Health Pennock on November 25, 2024 to Mikayla P. Graham and Andrew T. Despotovic of Lansing.

*****

Emersyn Carroll, born at Corewell Health Pennock on November 27, 2024 to Karley Carroll and Jerimiah Carroll of Nashville.

*****

Azora Beden, born at Corewell Health Pennock on December 4, 2024 to BreezAnn Adams and Keegan Beden of Barry (Nashville).

*****

Malia Jo Kemp, born at Corewell Health Pennock on December 4, 2024 to Shelby Salamone and Hunter Kemp of Hastings.

Worship Together



...at the church of your choice ~ Weekly schedules of Hastings area churches available for your convenience...

HASTINGS FREE METHODIST CHURCH
"We Exist To Be An Expression Of Who Jesus Is To The World Around Us". 2635 N. M-43 Hwy., P.O. Box 8, Hastings. Telephone 269-945-9121. Email hastfmc@gmail.com. Website: www.hastingsfreemethodist.com. Pastor Brian Teed, Assistant Pastor Emma Miller, Worship Director, Martha Stoetzel. **Sunday Morning Worship:** 9:45 a.m. with Kids Church and Nursery. Aftermath Student Ministries: Sundays 6 p.m.

SOLID ROCK BIBLE CHURCH OF DELTON
7025 Milo Rd., P.O. Box 765, (corner of Milo Rd. & S. M-43), Delton, MI 49046. Pastor Roger Claypool, (517) 204-9390. Sunday Worship Service 10:30 to 11:30am, Nursery and Children's Ministry. Wednesday night Bible study and prayer time 6:30 to 7:30 pm.

COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH
502 E. Grand St., Hastings. Pastor Tod Shook Wednesdays - Bible Study - 6 to 7 p.m.; Sunday School - 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.; Sunday Service - 11 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. www.cbchastings.org.

WOODLAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
203 N. Main. Pastor: Kathy Smith. Sunday School 9:15 a.m.; Worship 10:15 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (PCA)
328 N. Jefferson Street. Worship 10 a.m. Nursery provided. Pastor Peter Adams, contact 616-690-8609.

ST. ROSE OF LIMA CATHOLIC CHURCH
805 S. Jefferson. 269-945-4246 Pastor Father Jeff Hanley. Mass 4:30 p.m. Saturday. Mass 8 and 11 a.m. Sunday.

LIFEGATE COMMUNITY CHURCH
301 E. State Rd., P.O. Box 273, Hastings, MI 49058. Pastor Scott Price. Phone: 269-948-0900. Website: www.lifegatecc.com. Sunday Worship 10 a.m. Wednesday Life Group 6:30 p.m.

HASTINGS BAPTIST CHURCH
309 E. Woodlawn, Hastings. Matt Moser, Lead Pastor. Sunday Services: 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages; 10:30 a.m. Worship Service; Senior High Youth Group 6-8 p.m.; Young Adults 6-9 p.m. Wednesday, Family Night 6:30-8 p.m., Kids 4 Truth (Children Kindergarten-5th Grade), 6:30-8 p.m. Middle School Youth Group; 6:30 p.m. Bible Study and Prayer. Call Church Office 948-8004 for information.

PLEASANTVIEW FAMILY CHURCH
2601 Lacey Road, Dowling, MI 49050. Pastor, Steve Olmstead. (269) 758-3021 church phone. Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

This information on worship services is provided by The Hastings Banner, the churchesand these local businesses:

Flexfab®
1699 W. M43 Highway,
Hastings, MI 49058.
945-4700

HASTINGS
Fiberglass Products
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1301 W. Green St.
Hastings, MI 49058
945-9541

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

A look at pioneer life in Michigan and the founding of Yankee Springs

BANNER JUNE 22, 1995

JOYCE F. WEINBRECHT

Mary M. Lewis Hoyt, the second daughter of William Lewis and Mary Goodwin Lewis, was born in Weathersfield, Wyoming County, N.Y., on Oct. 1, 1832. The family moved to Michigan Aug. 28, 1836, while it was still a territory, and settled at Yankee Springs, Barry County, where her father was the first hotel keeper in the new county between Kalamazoo, Battle Creek and Grand Rapids.

Mary M. Lewis married Henry Hoyt of Kalamazoo on Jan. 21, 1851. The following article appeared in Volume XXX of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society in 1906. The Hastings Banner supplied the photographs for the article.

Mary Lewis Hoyt wrote as follows:

"On the afternoon of a summer's day, Aug. 26, 1836, nearly 68 years ago, there might have been a covered wagon containing a stalwart man of 35 years and five children, between the ages of 11 and 2 years, driving through the unbroken wilderness of Barry County in the Territory of Michigan.

"Accompanying this wagon was a woman on horseback, carefully guiding her gray saddle horse over the rough roads of the new country. She had in this way performed nearly the whole of the journey, having started from Weathersfield, Wyoming County, New York, three weeks before, taking in Canada on our route and expecting to settle in South Bend, Indiana, where my father had bought a tract of land of 160 acres.

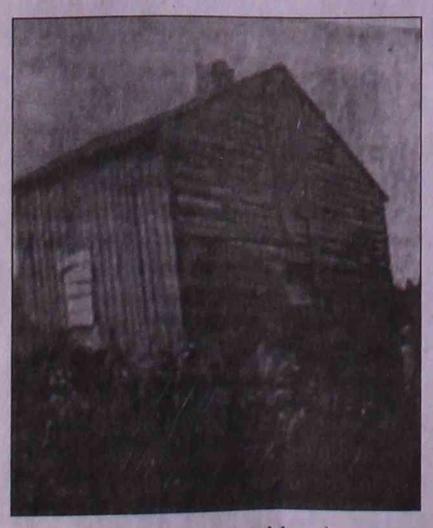
"The party consisted of my father, William Lewis, and Mary Goodwin Lewis, his wife, three daughters and a son, also an adopted daughter, Flavia Stone. We were at this time about to spend the night with an older brother, Calvin Lewis, who came to Michigan a few weeks in advance of us and settled in Yankee Springs, but the result was that we settled there also.

"I was a child of 4 years at the time, so the words of my mother will best describe our coming into Michigan:"

"After leaving Detroit, the road was mostly through dense woods, Marshall, Battle Creek and Kalamazoo being marked by little clusters, through Gull Prairie, now Richland, and there met Leonard Slater, located on the Indian reservation as a missionary to the Potawatomi tribe of Indians. Leaving this place, we plunged into the wilderness and the road having despaired, we followed an Indian trail marked by blazed trees and journeyed 18 miles farther through the woods without seeing a single habitation. Tired and travel-worn, wearing and hungry we halted at nightfall in a lovely valley in the wilderness, where a log house was in process of erection. Living springs of clear cold water were gushing from a bank and on a nearby poplar tree someone had fastened a shingled marked 'Yankee Springs.'

"In 1835, a young man by the name of Charles Paul, in company with the family of Henry Leonard, were eating their luncheon under the trees beside one of the springs. A stranger joined them and it came out in conversation that they were all from New England states, and one of the party said, 'We are all Yankees.' At this suggestion, Charles Paul hewed the bark off the side of an oak tree and cut the words 'Yankee Springs' on it. The name clung to the place and was finally adopted by the township."

Mary Hoyt continued.



All that remained of the Mansion House in Yankee Springs in 1906.



The burial markers of William "Yankee Bill" Lewis and his wife Mary Goodwin Lewis Mills in the cemetery in Alaska, Michigan.

"A welcome was given to us by our relatives and the log cabin of two rooms was shared together. A quilt was hung over the door space and the windows were boarded. A supper was served and we settled down for the night. Dismal tales have come to me of those first nights in the forest; that the barking of the wolves broke the stillness of the hours and that the glittering eyeballs of the panther looked down upon us with no friendly gaze.

"My father located 1,000 acres of land there and it soon grew to be an attractive place. We endured in common with all the earlier settlers the trials and privations of pioneer and frontier life and lived to see the wilderness subdued and surrounded by all that pertains to a later civilization. Here in this thick forest, the land entirely unclaimed, we settled.

"The woods were filled with Indians and our nearest white neighbor, Calvin G. Hill, was eight miles distant from us. From Middleville to Ada, the direct route to Grand Rapids was a dense forest, an unbroken wilderness without an inhabitant.

"We were on the direct line of the great Indian Trail running from Detroit to Grand Rapids which passed directly through Barry County.

"But we were not long alone. The fur trader and the speculator were abroad in the land, and to fill the increasing demands of the weary traveler, our little cottage of two rooms was extended, building after building, until we occupied 'nine stories on the ground,' seven distinct building in a row in the front and two additional in the back. They presented neither an imposing nor a graceful appearance, but were the hurried creation of backwoods life, where there was no time to waste on architecture, symmetry or beauty.

"The fame of the place spread throughout the country, and so brisk was business at the old 'Mansion House,' as it was called, that it was no uncommon thing for 100 people to tarry there for a night, while 60 teams were often stabled there between sunset and sunrise.

"The extreme ends of the old house were named. The one farthest north was 'Grand Rapids' and the extreme south was 'Kalamazoo.' The Kalamazoo was considered the best room and was furnished better than the others and the better class of people occupied generally bridal parties, etc. All the other buildings have tumbled to ruin. This building alone (1906) stands out all by itself. It is close to the road, down in the hollow, seemingly proud of the fact that it has survived all of the changes of the last century and inviting admiration and respect because of it. If the old building could speak, what stories it could tell, what historical information it could impart that would be of interest and benefit to future generations.

"Together, this husband and wife labored and toiled, their chief desire seeming to be to give happiness to those about them. With a hospitality that was proverbial and a generosity that cannot be measured by ordinary methods, they greeted all who came, the man without money was treated as well as the man whose pocket bulged with the currency of the day.

"Ministers of all denominations, irrespective of creed, were entertained free of charge, but were expected to hold an evening service in our large dining room, and men were sent out to notify the neighbors to that effect.

"The first Episcopal service I ever heard was rendered there by Dr. Francis Cuming, who was journeying to Grand Rapids to settle over St. Mark's Church in that city.

"We were in very close touch with the people at Grand Rapids in the early days and visited often in their families. Much of our trading was done there and, though they were 38 miles distant from us, we made frequent journeys there.

"I remember seeing Louis Campau and Rix Robinson, those grand pioneers, the earliest. Their names should never be forgotten by us. They were here in the early 1820s and none who came after exceeded them in powers of endurance, or the cheerfulness with which they bore the hardships and toil of that period.

"The name of Louis Campau is reverenced by older Grand Rapids people, for he came there first. He once owned the whole village of Grand Rapids. In the old days, all knew of his tender heart. All who met him received some kindness at his hand. We used to hear how, when his bank failed, he brought home armfuls of wildcat money and papered his cupola with it, saying, 'If you won't circulate, you shall stay still.'

"I recall the Whitney family; the Moreaus; the Godfreys; Morrisons; Richmonds; Whites; Henry R. Williams; the Almys; P.R.L. Pierce; Canton Smith, an early hotel keeper of that city and the Rathbones, early settlers who built a large hotel and opened it with a big dance. I was there and danced all night. Mrs. T.B. Church, that noble pioneer woman who played the organ of St. Mark's Church for 50 years and is still living (1906) in that city; her gifted son, Fredrick Church, then a babe whom I often carried in my arms, now celebrated worldwide as an artist. All these and many more were household names with us and went to make up a part of our family life in a time when there were few social barriers and man felt and needed the sympathy and encouragement of his brother man.

"Lewis Cass was twice our guest, ex-Governor Felch, ex-Governor Ransom, U.S. Senator Zach Chandler, Senator Charles E. Stuart, Judge Pratt and indeed, all men of note who traveled in those days were at some time or another entertained there in the primitive style of the day.

"Royalty was once entertained at the Mansion House, and this occasion was memorable as being the first time that the table was set with napkins for each guest, word having been sent in advance of his coming. Almost the first guest I can remember was Douglas Houghton, then a young man. He was first appointed State Surveyor and later, as we all know, filled the office of State Geologist for many years.

"Theft and robberies were unknown, although large quantities of money were carried by travelers and it would have been an easy matter for it to change hands had there been the desire for it by designing persons.

"For example, every year, large quantities of money were carried through from Detroit to Grand Rapids to pay the Indians at their annual payments. This money, $15,000, was conveyed through an extra stage by a man named Lee, accompanied by an Indian interpreter named Provonsol. The money was all in specie and was carried in boxes about a foot square, very heavy as I remember hearing. These boxes were all set in the room at the south end of the old house. There was an outside door with an old lock and key to it. Two old guns they had were set up in one corner of the room and those men probably slept without a care of thought of being robbed and sent safely through from Detroit to Grand Rapids in this simple and easy way.

"My father was a man of indomitable courage and perseverance, never discouraged, always happy and with a fund of humor, wit and storytelling rarely exceeded. He was just the one to lead in settling and establishing a new country. He planned largely and liberally and was able with perseverance and strong health to carry out his plans and by his personal magnetism encouraged others to work and persevere also.

"He was the first to contract for carrying the United States mail through that portion of the country. In the first contract, he was assisted by General Withey, of Grand Rapids. This route was from Battle Creek to Grand Rapids. Later, a contract was taken to carry the mail from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. Lines of stages were put on and several coaches a day were started from these points, all meeting at Yankee Springs, the halfway house for refreshments of passengers and change of horses.

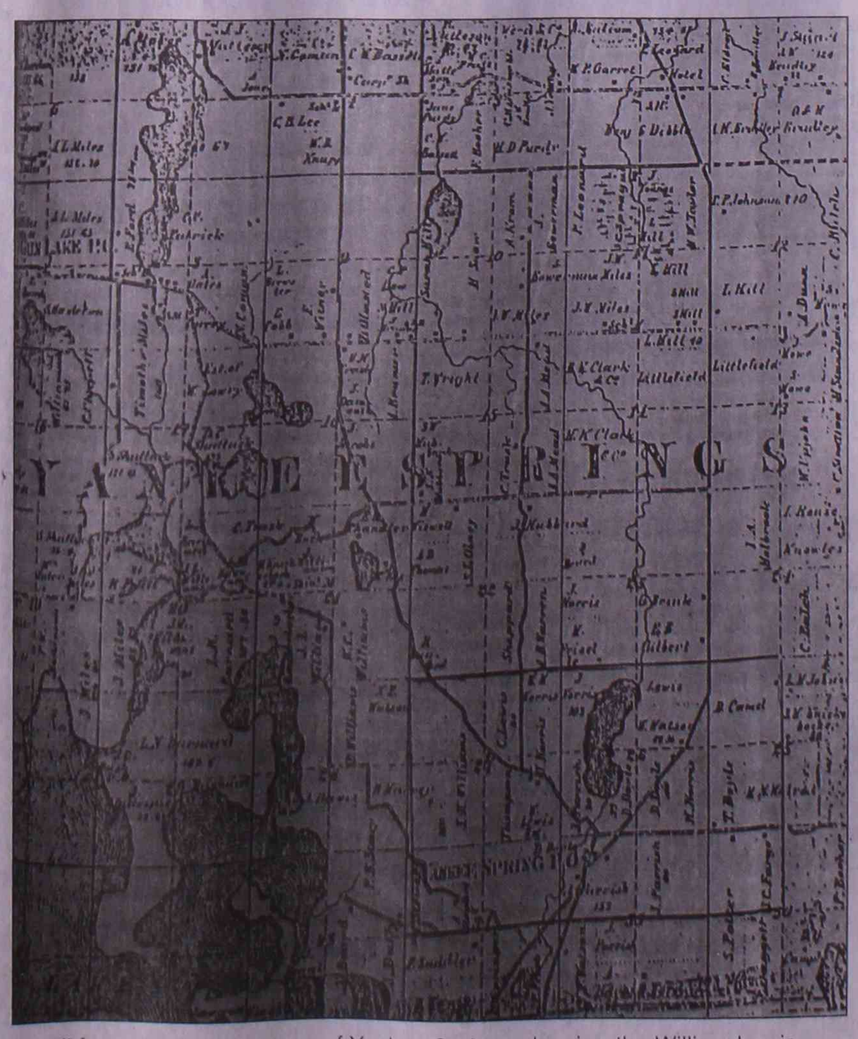
"For many years, this was the only route through the woods from Battle Creek and Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids and until other roads were opened up, it made very lively times at the old house.

"The Yankee Springs post office for a long time supplied the adjacent country. Letters were luxuries in those days, rare and costly. Envelopes and postage stamps were unknown. We wrote on three pages of the paper, folding it so the name could be written in the middle of the fourth and sealing with a wafer (wax), directed it and then paid our 25 cents postage on it or left it to be collected by the person to whom it was addressed, just as we chose. Sometimes, it was difficult for the older settler to produce the 25 cents to pay postage and he had to earn it before he could claim his letter.

"My father and Rix Robinson built the first bridge across the Thornapple River in 1838. The road then ran on the old Indian trail across the Coldwater Stream on Section 35, in Caledonia. Split logs were used for flooring, pinned down by wooden pins.

"He, in company with some others, started in 1849 to build a plank road that was to turn from Galesburg to Grand Rapids. A good deal of time, energy and capital was expanded on this scheme, but it was finally abandoned."

To be continued...



Detail from an 1860 plat map of Yankee Springs showing the William Lewis Estate.

CLASSIFIEDS

TO PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD, CALL 269-945-9554

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STATE OF MICHIGAN
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF BARRY
FILE NO: 24-791-CH
ORDER TO ANSWER
HON. VICKY L. ALSPAUGH

HEATHER RITCHIE,
Plaintiff,
vs.
ESTATE OF SADIE L. PIKE, and the Unknown Heirs of Sadie L. Pike, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.3 and ARMINA PIKE
Defendants.

Nathan E. Tagg (P68994)
Tripp, Tagg & Storrs, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, Michigan 49058
(269) 948-2900
Attorney for Plaintiff

TO: ESTATE OF SADIE L. PIKE, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.3 and ARMINA PIKE,
Based on the pleadings filed in the above-entitled case, it is ordered that Defendants, ESTATE OF SADIE L. PIKE, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.3 and ARMINA PIKE,
Shall file a Notice of Interest in the real property located in the Township of Orangeville, County of Barry, State of Michigan, described as follows:

LAND SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF ORANGEVILLE, COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN: COMMENCING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 22 IN THE VILLAGE OF ORANGEVILLE, ACCORDING TO PLAT ON FILE IN THE REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE FOR COUNTY OF BARRY, AND RUNNING THENCE SOUTH PAST THE WESTERN BOUNDARIES OF LOT 22 AND 21 TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 18, THENCE WEST PAST THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF LOTS 18, 17, 16, 15, TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 14, THENCE NORTH TO A LINE DUE WEST TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF LOT 14, THENCE NORTH TO ALINE DUE WEST OF THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF LOT 22, THENCE EAST TO PLACE OF BEGINNING.

PARCEL 08-11-017-247-00
at least 3 days prior to the hearing date noted below to assert any interest in the above-described property. If the Defendants, ESTATE OF SADIE L. PIKE, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.3 and ARMINA PIKE,
fail to do so that shall constitute a default in the above-entitled matter, and on the 5th day of February, 2024 at 11 :30 A.M., this Court shall take proofs and shall terminate whatever interest ESTATE OF SADIE L. PIKE, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.3 and ARMIN A PIKE,
may have in and to the above-described property unless a Notice of Interest in the Real Property is filed or unless Defendants or their representatives appear on that date and time.
Hon. Vicky L. Alspaugh P42572
Date: Dec. 16, 2024
Drafted by:
Nathan E. Tagg (P68994)
Tripp, Tagg & Storrs, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, MI 49058
(269) 948-2900
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STATE OF MICHIGAN
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF BARRY
FILE NO: 24-06-CH
ORDER TO ANSWER
HON. VICKY L. ALSPAUGH

JODI VAN GUILDER
Plaintiff,
vs.
JOHN A. LEE, JR., HON. VICKY L. ALSPAUGH MARIAN LEE, EL VIN LEROY LUCAS, DEBORAH MONTEITH JOYCE STILES, THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SYDNEY LEE ROOTS, THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBIN WAREY, THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD DONALD MOORE, THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RONALD EUGENE MOORE, GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
Or THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
Defendants.

David H. Tripp (P29290)
Tripp, Tagg & Storrs, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, Michigan 49058
(269) 948-2900
Attorney for Plaintiff

TO: EL VIN LEROY LUCAS,
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SYDNEY LEE ROOTS
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBIN WAREY
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD DONALD MOORE
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RONALD EUGENE MOORE
GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
Based on the pleadings filed in the above entitled case, it is ordered that Defendants,
EL VIN LEROY LUCAS,
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SYDNEY LEE ROOTS
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBIN WAREY
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD DONALD MOORE
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RONALD EUGENE MOORE
GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
Shall file a Notice of Interest in the real property located in the Township of Hope, County of Barry, State of Michigan, described as follows:

A parcel of land in the Northeast one-quarter of Section 24, Town 1 North, Range 9 West, described as commencing at the Southwest comer of the West one-half of said Northeast one-quarter; thence North 54 rods for place of beginning; thence North 10 rods; thence East 16 rods; thence South 10 rods; thence West 16 rods to the place of beginning; subject to easements of record.

at least 3 days prior to the hearing date noted below to assert any interest in the above described property. If the Defendants,
EL VIN LEROY LUCAS,
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SYDNEY LEE ROOTS
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBIN JUAREY
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD DONALD MOORE
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RONALD EUGENE MOORE
GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
fail to do so that shall constitute a default in the above entitled matter, and on the 19th day of February 2025 at 8:30 o'clock in the forenoon, this Court shall take proofs and shall termrnate w atever mterest
EL VIN LEROY LUCAS,
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF SYDNEY LEE ROOTS
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF ROBIN JUAREY
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RICHARD DONALD MOORE
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF RONALD EUGENE MOORE
GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III
THE UNKNOWN HEIRS OF GERALD JOSEPH MONTEITH III,
may have in and to the above described property unless a Notice of Interest in the Real Property is filed or unless Defendants or their representatives appear on that date and time.

Hon. Vicky L. Alspaugh P42572
DRAFTED BY:
DAVID H. TRIPP (P29290)
Tripp, Tagg & Storrs, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, Michigan 49058
269/945-9585
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SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - BARRY COUNTY

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 16, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Joseph Boss Groenewoud Jr. and Samantha Elert-Fabing, both unmarried Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: May 15, 2023 Recorded on May 17, 2023, in Document No. 2023-003951, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Union Home Mortgage Corp. Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Thirty-Four Thousand Five Hundred Eighty and 98/100 Dollars ($234,580.98) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Barry County, and described as: A parcel of land in Section 31, Town 1 North, Range 10 West, being more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 31, Town 1 North, Range 10 West; thence South 89 degrees 56 minutes East 876.64 feet along the East and West 1/4 line of said Section; thence South 0 degrees 33 minutes East 1109.94 feet parallel with the North and South 1/4 line of said Section to the place of beginning; thence South 89 degrees 56 minutes East 226.00 feet; thence South 0 degrees 33 minutes East 298.74 feet to the Northerly line of Highway M-89; thence Northwesterly along said Northerly line 266.12 feet on the arc of a curve to the left having a radius of 1969.86 feet and a chord bearing North 58 degrees 44 minutes 30 seconds West 265.93 feet to a point which is 915.00 feet Easterly of said North and South 1/4 line as measured along said Northerly line of Highway M-89, thence North 0 degrees 33 minutes West 161.00 feet to the place of beginning. Commonly known as 12320 M 89, Plainwell, MI 49080 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foraeclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Union Home Mortgage Corp. Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1548405 (12-19)(01-09)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 23, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:

Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Thomas A Wagner and Bonny J Wagner, husband and wife

Original Mortgagee: Ameriquest Mortgage Company

Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee to Ameriquest Mortgage Securities Inc. Asset Backed Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2004-R11 Under the Pooling and Servicing Agreement Dated as of December 1,2004, Without Recourse.

Date of Mortgage: September 4, 2004

Date of Mortgage Recording: September 23, 2004

Amount claimed due on date of notice: $97,088.67

Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Assyria, Barry County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the Northwest corner, thence East 530 feet along the North line of said property; thence South 240 feet on a line with the West line of said property; thence West 530 feet on a line parallel with the North line of said property; thence North 240 feet on the West line of said property to the point of beginning of the following property:

Commencing at the Southwest corner of the Northeast 1/4 (recorded as Southeast 1/4) of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 36, Town 1 North, Range 7 West, running thence East 16 and 2/100 chains, thence North 24 and 92/100 chains; thence West 16 and 2/100 chains; thence South 24 and 92/100 chains to the place of beginning.

Common street address (if any): 10304 Huff Rd, Bellevue, MI 49021-9602

The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).

If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.

This notice is from a debt collector.

Date of notice: December 19, 2024
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1547903 (12-19)(01-09)

NOTICE

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.

Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 30, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.

Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Matthew Rocco and Johanna Rocco, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Van Dyk Mortgage Corporation, Mortgagee, dated April 14, 2017 and recorded April 18, 2017 in Instrument Number 2017-004196 Barry County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Freedom Mortgage Corporation, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Two Hundred Twenty-Six Thousand Two Hundred Forty-Three and 99/100 Dollars ($226,243.99).

Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Barry County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 30, 2025.

Said premises are located in the Township of Yankee Springs, Barry County Michigan, and are described as:

Lot 7, of Glass Creek Estates, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Liber 6 of Plats, page 57, Barry County Records.

1163 Crystal Way Court, Middleville, Michigan 49333

The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.

If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: January 2, 2025

File No. 24-005572Firm Name: Orlans PC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(01-02)(01-23)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 30, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:

Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Carmen Pirok and Jason Pirok, husband and wife

Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns

Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Freedom Mortgage Corporation

Date of Mortgage: April 14, 2021

Date of Mortgage Recording: April 23, 2021

Amount claimed due on date of notice: $221,951.70

Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Charter Township of Rutland, Barry County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 111 in Pine Haven Estates No. 4, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Liber 6 of Plats, Page 55, Barry County Records.

Common street address (if any): 1879 Pine Blf, Hastings, MI 49058-8128

The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).

If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.

This notice is from a debt collector.

Date of notice: January 2, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515

1549128
(01-02)(01-23)

SPORTS

TK renames duals in honor of coach Lehman

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The annual December TK duals are now the Tom Lehman Memorial Invitational.

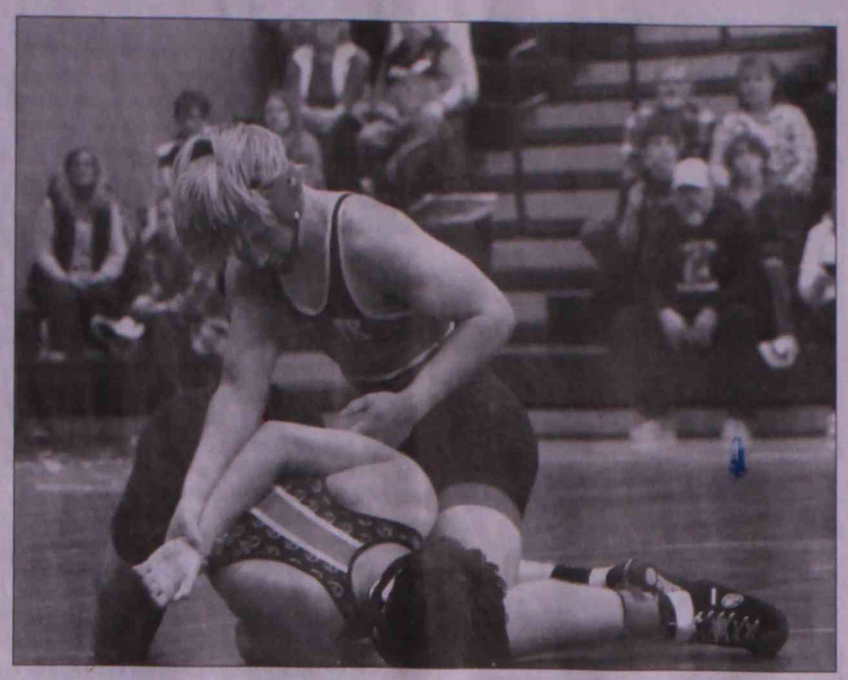
Lehman, who led the TK wrestling program from 1972 to 2009 and is 12th on the MHSAA all-time list of coaching dual meet wins with an overall record of 710-234-7, passed away in September.

"Coach had a way of treating everyone with respect and dignity," TK announcer Craig Stolsonburg said in a statement following the day's first round of duals. "We know that if coach was here he would he would be sitting in that chair or in the first row of the bleachers catching up with former wrestlers and students. Coach Lehman's kindness, caring nature and ability to love everyone made him a true once-in-a-lifetime icon of the TK community. We are honored to name this invitational after coach Tom Lehman."

Lehman's teams won 19 conference titles, 13 district titles, nine regional championships and the 1996 MHSAA Division 3 State Championship, and he was honored with many coach of the year and hall of fame accolades over the years while also earning the chance to coach national and international squads.

The Trojans displayed a "Home of Tom Lehman" sign for the wrestling room and competed throughout the day of duals. It was a tough day of dual.

The TK team was downed in its first three duals of the day 56-18 by Grand Ledge, 52-28 against Rockford and Greenville took a 55-21 win over the Trojans. TK closed out its tournament with duals against Springport and Grant.

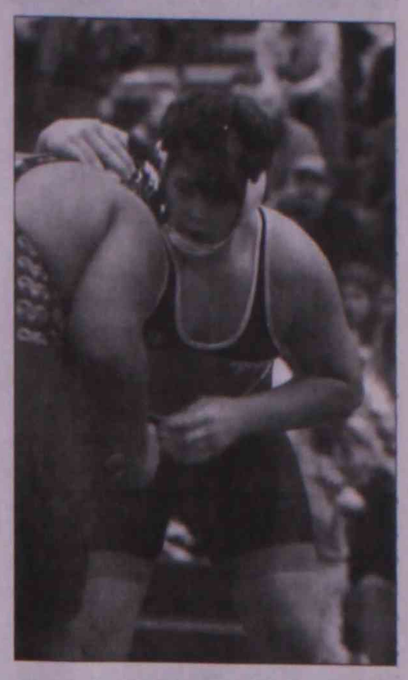


Thornapple Kellogg's Aiden Foy works to turn Rockford's Brody Willner during their 138-pound bout at TK's Tom Lehman Memorial Invitational Saturday.
Photo by Brett Bremer

Rockford's program is ranked seventh in the state in Division 1 and Greenville entered the holiday break ranked sixth in the state in Division 2.

In that dual with the Greenville Yellow Jackets, the Trojan team got pins from Christien Miller at 113 pounds, Blake Bossenberger at 165 and Jayce Curtis at 190 pounds. Jackson Smith added a 9-8 win against Greenville's Jaxson Croy in the 175-pound bout.

A pin by Smith was the lone win for TK in the dual with Grand Ledge to start the day other than forfeit wins by Tanner Buxton and Miller.



Thornapple Kellogg heavyweight Abram Dutcher looks for an opening in his dual with Rockford's Alex Stewart Saturday at the Tom Lehman Memorial Invitational in Middleville.
Photo by Brett Bremer

Aiden Foy got TK off to a solid start in the dual with Rockford scoring a 15-0 technical fall in his 138-pound bout. Griffin Grummet added a 16-0 technical fall in his 150-pound match. Bossenberger had a quick pin in the dual with the Rams. Miller at 113 pounds and Diego Rodas at 126 had first period pins too.

DK team in top half of Ionia tournament standings

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

All 11 Delton Kellogg wrestlers finished among the top six at their weight class, and five finished in the top four, as the varsity team was fourth Friday Dec. 27, at Ionia's Mike Adamson Invitational

Mendan Phillips and Gauge Stampfler both scored runner-up finishes for the Panthers.

Stampfler took a technical fall and two pins in his first three matches to earn a spot in the first-place match against East Lansing's Kingston Laurain. Laurain took a 5-4 win in a sudden victory overtime period to push his record to 21-1 on the season. Stampfler is now 6-1 on the season.

Phillips ran his record to 16-2 while finishing second in the 157-pound weight class. He scored three quick pins and a seven-point decision in his four matches to open the day before facing Zeeland East's Caden Arendsen in the flight championship. Arendsen pinned Phillips to close out the day. Phillips is now 16-2 overall this season.

"He is only a sophomore wrestling 157," coach Phillips said. "157 is is a really tough weight class. Those middle weight classes there are usually some of the toughest ones in the state. He put a lot of extra work in this summer in the weight room and just practicing. He had a pretty good football season and he's following it up with a good sophomore season wrestling."

Delton Kellogg had Mason Ferris third at 190 pounds and Joseph McCoy third at 138 pounds. Alec Sinkler earned a fourth-place finish competing in the 138-pound weight class along with his teammate Stampfler.

The DK team also had wins on the day from Evan Stampfler, TJ Wright, Lane Steele, Austyn Lipscomb and Isaac Ferris. Coach Phillips said Ayden Jones wrestled well too.

"The competition was a step up from what we're used to seeing recently," coach Phillips said. "We had some very good performances against very high quality kids."

Portland won the day's team championship with 302.5 points ahead of Zeeland East 288, St. Johns 230, Delton Kellogg 146, East Lansing 98.5, Ionia 91, Lansing Eastern 68.5, Ovid-Elsie 58 and Owosso 44.

Portland had five individual champions on the day in Isaac Kramer at 138 pounds, Landon Guilford at 165, Brad Meyers at 175, Gunnar Williams at 190 and Barrett Spitzley at 215 pounds. Portland got runner-up finishes from Griffin Opperman at 150 pounds, Grady Lanz at 106, Branlun Simon at 113 and Landon Lanz at 120.

Coach Phillips thought his young guys really benefited from the competition. Everyone wrestled five matches at the tournament and he said everyone battled all day. Evan Stampfler, Jones, Steele, McCoy, and Mason Ferris are all freshmen and Sinkler is a sophomore in his first high school wrestling season.

"The quality competition made us better as as team and helped some of those freshmen to step right up and realize they can do this too. A lot of times they are kind of like not sure if I can do this, it they're good enough or tough enough. They proved they're right there," coach Phillips said.

The Panthers head to Homer for a tournament Jan. 4 and then will get back into the Southwestern Athletic Conference action at Lawton Jan. 8.

Saxon ladies on top at end of Mat Cat Invitational

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Hastings varsity girls' wrestling team took the championship Friday at Montague's annual Lady Mat Cat Invitational.

Hastings junior Dezarae Mathis ran her record to 10-1 with a runner-up finish in the 120-pound weight class. She was one of eight Hastings girls to place in the top six in their weight class Friday.

Mathis pinned Hart's Calyn Eisenlohr and East Kentwood's Anari Roberts before scoring an 11-1 major decision over Pine River's Krystin Nelson in the semifinals. Her first loss of the season came in the championship match against Grand Haven's Gracey Barry who pinned her late in the first period. Barry was the state runner-up at 115-pounds a year ago.

The Saxons outscored the second-place Grand Haven team 159.5 to 126.5 at the top of the standings. Whittemore-Prescott was third with 119 points ahead of Pine River 103, Standish-Sterling 89.5, West Ottawa 89, Romeo 87.5, Plainwell 82, Thornapple Kellogg 78 and Olivet 69. There were wrestlers from 58 different schools competing at the meet.

Jordan Milanowski placed fourth-place finish for Hastings in the 140-pound weight class and teammate Sydney Patterson was sixth at 145 pounds.

Hastings had Morgan Casselman and Autumn Miller place second and third respectively in the 110/115 B weight class and Chloe Aicken was the runner-up in the 170-pound B class. Petra Foster was fourth in the 140/145 B weight class and Liliana Fox was fifth in the 120/125 B division.

Aicken pinned her first two opponents before falling to West Ottawa's Braelyn Sharda in her championship match in the 170 B division. Casselman had three quick pins before falling to Fruitport's Bailey Garner in their 110/115 B final.

Raini Braska had the top finish for the Thornapple Kellogg team placing third in the 115-pound weight class. She took a pair of pins before being bested by Whitehall's Kassie Sapp in the semifinals. Braska bounced back for a 4-1 win over Whittemore-Prescott's Gracie Murphy in a sudden victory period in the match for third.

The Trojan team had Emma Gibson fourth at 135 pounds, Rylee Alberts fourth at 145 pounds, Peyton Wilkerson sixth at 100 pounds, and Addisyn Barringer sixth in the 130/135 B division.

The Saxon girls are scheduled to return to action Jan. 10 at the Fowlerville Galdiatrix.

Some top teams take wins over Lakewood wrestlers

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Lakewood varsity wrestling team battled to a 1-3 day at Grandville's Marge and Tate Invitational.

The three losses were to the D1 hosts, a Whitehall team ranked second in the state in Division 3 and a Cedar Springs team ranked ninth in the state in Division 2.

Lakewood fell 40-29 to Grandville, bested Tri County 57-21, fell 36-33 to Cedar Springs and fell 46-24 to Whitehall.

The dual with Cedar Springs came down to the final bout of the 14, with Cedar Springs returning state medalist Luke Egan managing to pin Lakewood's Bryce Goodemoot at the close of the second period.

Things were back and forth in the dual to that point with Lakewood getting a technical fall win from Bryson Boucher at 157 pounds, a wild 13-12 win from Owen Prowdley at 190, and a major decision from Hoel Simon at 215 pounds. Lakewood added a forfeit win by Jacob Everett at 285 pounds and a pin from Dakota Harmer to hold a 24-15 lead with six weight classes to go.

Cedar Springs bumped in front 30-24 with a technical fall, a major decision and a pin at 113, 120 and 126.

Vincent Stamm pinned Cedar Springs' Blake Falan in the 132-pound bout to even the scoreboard and then Kade Boucher put the Vikings in front in the penultimate match with a 12-9 win over Gavin Bravata.

Bryson Boucher, Prowdley, Everett, Stephen Aldrich and Kade Boucher had pins for Lakewood in the win over Tri County with Lydon Rogers, Simon and Stamm adding technical falls. Austin Rohrbacher and Dakota Harmer had forfeit wins for the Lakewood team.

Bryson Boucher, Everett and Rogers all had pins in the dual with Whitehall for Lakewood, and Kade Boucher and Stamm added decisions.

In one of the top matches of the day, Whitehall's Wyatt Jenkins managed to pull out a 2-0 win over Lakewood' Joel Simon. Simon placed third in Division 3 at 215 pounds at the state finals last season and Jenkins was eighth at 175 pounds. Jenkins managed a reversal in the second period for the only two points of their 285-pound bout and then rode Simon through the third period.

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ALL-BARRY COUNTY FALL 2024

Pair of state medalists among county's best at pool

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The state finalists from the Delton Kellogg/Hastings and Grand Rapids Gator varsity girls' swimming and diving teams were the last to still be competing from the area to compete during the 2024 fall season.

A trio of divers, all members of the Hastings Community Diving Club, competed in state finals in late November with Delton's Aubrey Yarger capturing a Division 2 State Championship.

The Delton Kellogg/Hastings and Grand Rapids Gator teams continued to try and grow their ranks. The Gators, a co-op made up of Thornapple Kellogg, Hopkins, West Michigan Aviation Academy and Grand Rapids West Catholic, got to spend some practice hours in the renovated Thornapple Kellogg High School pool this season.

That Gator team was led by new head coach Jeff Saltzgaber.

The Gators swam their way to a fifth-place finish at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship at the end of the season. The Delton Kellogg/Hastings girls placed eighth at the Southwestern and Central Michigan Swim Conference Championship.

Here are the 2024 All-Barry County Girls' Swimming and Diving First and Second teams.

All-Barry County
Girls' Swimming & Diving
First Team

Mia Bergman, Grand Rapids Gators: A top sprinter for the Grand Rapids Gator team She reached the B Final in both of her races at the conference meet in Hastings at the end of the season.

Bergman placed 13th in the 100-yard freestyle with a personal best time of 1 minute 7.02 seconds. She was 14th overall in the 50-yard freestyle after having set a personal best of 29.35 seconds in the 50-yard freestyle preliminaries.

Abigail Dumond, Grand Rapids Gators: Dumond capped off her senior season with her third appearance in the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals. She placed 23rd in the diving competition at the D1 Finals.

Dumond placed third at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship behind a pair of fellow state finalists.

Petra Foster, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A sophomore, Foster turned in her fastest 500-yard freestyle yet at the 2024 SCC Championship. She placed 15th in the race with a time of 6:45.09.

She was also 20th in the 200-yard freestyle at the conference meet. She had a top time of 2:31.55 in that race during a late season dual with Battle Creek Central.

Naomi Grummet, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A top distance racer and a team captain for her team as a senior this fall. Grummet was 24th in the 200-yard freestyle at the SCC Championship and 19th in the 500-yard freestyle.

Grummet had a top time of 2:52.47 in the 200 freestyle this season and 8:05.67 in the 500 freestyle.

Malia Hamby, Grand Rapids Gators: Hamby capped off her senior season by putting together her fastest 100-yard butterfly and her fastest 200-yard individual medley races at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship.

Hamby turned in a time of 1:19.38 in that 100-yard butterfly that put her in 11th in that race and she was 14th in the 200-yard IM with a time of 2:53.99. Hamby also had a personal best 50-yard freestyle time of 29.65 early in the season.

Aubrey Hawks, Grand Rapids Gators: A senior, Hawks had a pair of top ten finishes in the distance races at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship at the end of the season. A time of 6:19.48 in the 500-yard freestyle put her in tenth in that race. She was ninth in the 200-yard freestyle with a season best time of 2:17.46.

She put together a personal best 500-yard freestyle time of 6:14.92 earlier in the season.

McKenna Hawks, Grand Rapids Gators: A freshman, Hawks placed ninth in the 100-yard breaststroke and tenth in the 100-yard freestyle at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship in November with personal best times in each race.

Hawks finished the 100 breaststroke in 1:23.00 at the conference meet and the 100-yard freestyle in 1:03.83. She had a top time of 30.01 in the 50-yard freestyle early in the season too.

Annabelle Kuck Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A freshman who was instantly one of her team's top performers. Kuck placed seventh in the 100-yard butterfly at the SCC Championship and set her PR in the prelim's with a time of 1:08.96.



Aubrey Hawks

Kuck had a personal best time of 28.07 in the 50-yard freestyle and 1:07.06 in the 100-yard freestyle this season, and she also worked to score as a diver for the DK/Hastings team.

Lilly Randall, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: The top scorer for the DK/Hastings team as a freshman at the SCC Championship, Randall was eighth in the 50-yard freestyle and tenth in the 100-yard freestyle to close out the season.

She set her 50 freestyle personal best at 26.85 and her 100 free personal best at 1:00.26. Randall also had a top time of 2:38.87 in the 200-yard individual medley this fall.

Jenna Robinett, Grand Rapids Gators: A junior, she swam her fastest 200-yard individual medley yet at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship this fall. She had a time of 3:08.54 in the prelims and then swam to a 16th-place finish.

Robinett also had her top 100-yard freestyle time this fall at 1:18.80 in early September and her top 50-yard freestyle time and 100-yard backstroke times this season too.

Jolee Schumacher, Grand Rapids Gators: Schumacher, a senior, was the Gator team's leader in the 100-yard backstroke at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship with a time of 1:24.70 and a 15th-place finish.

She also had a couple personal best freestyle performances including a time of 1:07.97 in the prelim's of the 100-yard freestyle.

Lydia Slagel, Grand Rapids Gators: A sophomore who is now a two-time state finalist in diving. She earned her first state medal at the MHSAA Division 1 Lower Peninsula Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals where she placed fourth with an 11-dive score of 375.20.

Slagel was the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Champion this fall to with an 11-dive score of 378.70 and was a regional champion with a score of 391.80 at the D1 regional in Zeeland in November.

Aubrey Yarger, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: The MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 Girls' Swimming and Diving champion in the diving competition as a freshman this fall, Yarger took a Southwestern and Central Michigan Conference Championship and was a regional runner-up before capturing her state championship at Oakland University in November.

Yarger put together an 11-dive score of 367.30 points at the state finals, besting her closest competitor, East Lansing senior Bronwyn Minnick, by 1.9 points. Minnick had beat out Yarger by about 24 points for a regional championship earlier in the season. Yarger had a score of 371.45 points at that regional. She won the SCC Championship with a score of 398.85 points in early November.

All-Barry County
Girls' Swimming & Diving
Second Team

Kaya Bender, Grand Rapids Gators: A number three diver for her team who would have been number one on a number of teams across the state. Bender capped her senior season with a 28th-place finish at regionals in November.

Bender placed seventh at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship with an 11-dive score of 261.30 points. That was just off a personal best score. She had a top six-dive tally this season of 173.15 points.

Ella Jongmans, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A team captain for the DK/Hastings team that battled injury during the season. She competed in backstroke, butterfly and freestyle races for her team. She had a top 100-yard freestyle time of 1:29.86, a top 100-yard backstroke time of 1:45.06 and top 100-yard butterfly time of 2:10.89.

Jongmans competed on a couple of relay teams for the DK/Hastings team at the SCC Championship.

Eloise Nichols, Grand Rapids Gators: Nichols swam personal best times in the 200-yard individual medley and the 100-yard breaststroke at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship this season.

Her top finish came in the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1:33.65 that put her in 15th place.

Kassidy Peake, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A freshman competing in breaststroke and freestyle races this fall, Peake scored a personal best time of 1:41.23 in the 100-yard breaststroke at the SCC Championship. That time put her in 26th in the event.

She had a top 50-yard freestyle time of 343.68 this season, a top 100-yard freestyle time of 1:18.95 and a top 200-yard freestyle time of 2:58.67.

Amelia Price, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: Amelia price – senior. She did a wonderful job. Swimming limited and a heart of gold did whatever. Learned butterfly and breaststroke to swim IM and butterfly in conference meet. Some courage

Esther Saurina, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A senior captain for the DK/Hastings team this fall, Saurina was 19th in the prelim's of the 200-yard individual medley at the SCC Championship in November with a personal best time of 3:26.93.

she also had a personal best time at the conference meet of 1:40.91 in the 100-yard breaststroke and led off a 200-yard freestyle relay team with a personal best 50-yard time of 33.22.

Leah Schumacher, Grand Rapids Gators: Schumacher swam her fastest 100-yard breaststroke ever at the OK Rainbow Tier II Conference Championship turning in a time of 1:38.85 in the prelim's.



Aubrey Yarger

She was 30th in the prelim's of the 50-yard freestyle with a personal best time of 32.93 at the conference meet too.

Jayda Villareal, Delton Kellogg/Hastings: A freshman, Villareal had one of her top days at a late-season meet against Otsego where she finished the 50-yard freestyle in 33.99 and the 500-yard freestyle in 7L45.46 – both personal best times.

She also swam the backstroke for the DK/Hastings team this fall and had a time of 1:31.96 in the 100-yard race to finish 22nd in the prelim's of the event at the SCC Championship.

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 30, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:

Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Jesse Carver, SP and Stacey Nowack, single person

Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns

Foreclosing Assignee (if any): U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its Individual Capacity but Solely as Owner

Trustee for RCAF Acquisition Trust

Date of Mortgage: July 24, 2007

Date of Mortgage Recording: August 6, 2007

Amount claimed due on date of notice: $149,240.81

Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Yankee Springs, Barry County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 8, Pleasant Valley Plat according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 4 of Plats, Page 13 of Barry County Records.

Common street address (if any): 1733 S Patterson Rd, Wayland, MI 49348-9329

The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).

If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.

This notice is from a debt collector.

Date of notice: January 2, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515

1549018
(01-02)(01-23)

STATE OF MICHIGAN
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE
COUNTY OF BARRY
FILE NO.24- 790 -CH
ORDER TO ANSWER
HON. VICKYL. ALSPAUGH

WILLIAM AND CHRISTINE MOSHER,
Plaintiffs,
vs.
LINDA R SIMMONS, THOMAS J. MARRIOT, BETTY G. MARRIOT, MICHAEL T. MARRIOT, DAWN J. MARRIOT, JOSEPH E. MARRIOT, CONSUELO A. MARRIOT, ROBERT J. WIRSING, MARGARET A. WIRSING
Defendants.

Nathan E. Tagg (P68994)
Tripp & Tagg, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, Michigan 49058
(269) 948-2900
Attorney for Plaintiff

Based on the pleadings filed in the above-entitled case, it is ordered that Defendants,
LINDA R SIMMONS
THOMAS J. MARRIOT
BETTY G. MARRIOT
MICHAEL T. MARRIOT
DAWN J. MARRIOT
JOSEPH E. MARRIOT
CONSUELO A. MARRIOT
ROBERT J. WIRSING
MARGARET A. WIRSING
Shall file a Notice of Interest in the real property located in the Township of Assyria, County of Barry, State of Michigan, described as follows:
BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE EAST AND WEST ¼ LINE OF SECTION 32, TOWN 1 NORTH, RANGE 7 WEST, DISTANT SOUTH 89°04'32" EAST
2246.22 FEET FROM THE WEST ¼ POST OF SAID SECTION 32; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 89°04'32" EAST ALONG SAID¼ LINE 175.00 FEET;
THENCE SOUTH 00°07'02" WEST, 350.00 FEET;
THENCE NORTH 89°04'32" WEST, 175.00 FEET;
THENCE NORTH 00°07'02" EAST, 350.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.
PARCEL #08-01-032-003-00
at least 3 days prior to the hearing date noted below to assert any interest in the above-described
property. If the Defendants,
LINDA R SIMMONS
THOMAS J. MARRIOT
BETTY G. MARRIOT
MICHAEL T. MARRIOT
DAWN J. MARRIOT
JOSEPH E. MARRIOT
CONSUELO A. MARRIOT
ROBERT J. WIRSING
MARGARET A. WIRSING,
fail to do so that shall constitute a default in the above-entitled matter, and on the 5th day of February, 2024 at 11 :00 A.M., this Court shall take proofs and shall terminate whatever interest
LINDA R SIMMONS
THOMAS J. MARRIOT
BETTY G. MARRIOT
MICHAEL T. MARRIOT
DAWN J. MARRIOT
JOSEPH E. MARRIOT
CONSUELO A. MARRIOT
ROBERT J. WIRSING
MARGARET A. WIRSING,
may have in and to the above-described property unless a Notice of Interest in the Real Property is filed, or unless Defendants or their representatives appear on that date and time.
Hon. Vicky L. Alspaugh P42572
Drafted by:
Nathan E. Tagg (P68994)
Tripp, Tagg & Storrs, Attorneys at Law
202 South Broadway
Hastings, MI 49058
(269) 948-2900
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Goals finally accomplished in 2024

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Finally!

There were a lot of reasons to go "finally!" during the 2024 Barry County Sports year.

Some of the reasons were big, like the Lakewood varsity competitive cheer team, a powerhouse on the west side of the state over the years, finally winning its first regional championship.

Some of the reasons were more personal, like Thornapple Kellogg senior volleyball setter Kylee Hoebeke's combination of joy and relief at finally getting a win over Wayland three-sport star Harmony Laker "because Harmony Laker has never lost to TK in her whole life. And we wanted to beat her, in anything."

Finally.

Thornapple Kellogg senior Jacob Draaisma finally decided to try and be a distance runner. Hastings sophomore Lilly Randall finally recovered from an injury to rejoin the Hastings varsity girls' cross country team in the fall. Thornapple Kellogg senior distance runner Ava Crews finally got her first cross country state medal in four tries at MIS.

Trojan senior golfer Ailana Leos finally got her first state medal.

Lakewood's varsity wrestling team finally got Barry County back to the state finals for the first time since 2017. Starting with the 2024-25 season there is finally a girls' team state championship to be won in wrestling – and while they won't be the favorites expect the Saxons to be in the hunt.

Everything finally came together for the Maple Valley varsity baseball team in the late innings and the Lions had a magical run to the MHSAA Division 4 State Semifinals at Michigan State University. After thumping Athens and Mendon for a district title, the Lions took one-run victories over Concord and Adrian Lenawee Christian to win a regional championship and then rallied for a two-run win over Hackett Catholic Prep in the state quarterfinals.

The Delton Kellogg varsity boys' basketball team finally beat Saugatuck by one in the MHSAA Division 3 District Finals, in the last second, on the Trailblazers home floor, after falling by an average of 22 points in their two Southwestern Athletic Conference Central Division meetings last season.

The renovations at the Thornapple Kellogg High School were finally completed, and that gave the members of the Thornapple Kellogg, West Michigan Aviation Academy, West Catholic, Hopkins girls' swimming and diving co-op the chance to practice in the pool in Middleville occasionally.

Finally.

The divers from the squad still had to head to Hastings for practice where they meshed with the Delton Kellogg/Hastings student athletes and the Hastings Community Diving Club to create something really special.

Delton freshman Aubrey Yarger finally got to compete on the varsity level after years of competing in club events and she finished right where she planned to – on top of the state medal stand. Yarger was the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 Girls' Swimming and Diving champion in the diving competition at Oakland University in November.

Her HCDC partner, Grand Rapids Gator (the TK co-op) sophomore Lydia Slagel, earned her first state medal too with a fourth place finish in the diving competition at the D2 Finals in Holland in November where she was joined by senior teammate Abigail Dumond – a three-time state qualifier herself.

It all started in the Community Education and Recreation Center pool in Hastings.

"They're both really amazing," said HCDC assistant coach Francesca Pileci after a practice in between regionals and the state finals. "They're two super kids who work really hard. They were doing big dives way before other kids were. They were so tiny that they could hardly bounce the board."

"Yeah, we had to change our approaches just so we could," Slagel said.

"Exactly, we changed their approaches, but we are so proud of them. They deserve everything," Pileci said.

Pileci coached Slagel and Dumond in Holland at the finals while HCDC head coach Todd Bates was with Yarger at the finals at Oakland.

Yarger won with a final score of 367.30 points, which was just 1.9 ahead of her nearest competitor.

"It is insane. I don't even know how to explain it," Yarger said of being a state champion. "Like, so much stuff went down and it's just so exciting."

"I was in the lead after the first eight, and then it got to the first dive Saturday and she was like ten points ahead of me, and I was like oh, crap. That's it. I'm dead meat. Then we got to the last dive and my name was at the top of the leaderboard, and I was like holy crap, I just won state."

Barry County student-athletes were chasing state championships all through 2024.

Hastings bumped its wrestling program up to Division 1 in hopes of a better shot at getting to the state finals and captured its program's first D1 district title, after having Jackson Northwest steal away the crown of top team in the Interstate-8 Athletic Conference back from the Saxons at the end of the regular season. The 2024-25 season starts with the Saxons looking to climb back on top of the I-8 and already among the teams ranked in the top ten in the state in Division 1.

The 2023-24 season saw the Saxons have Keegan Sutfin and Isaac Fiddle earn medals for top eighth finishes at the MHSAA Individual Wrestling Finals at Ford Field the first weekend of March. For Friddle, it was his third all-state medal in three varsity wrestling seasons. Friddle was eighth at 215 pounds in Division 1 and Sutfin fifth at 144 pounds.

The medal stand at the finals was filled with area wrestlers. The top finish came from Lakewood senior Jonathan Krebs who won his way to a runner-up finish in Division 3's 144-pound weight class. The Viking team also had Joel Simon fourth at 215 pounds and Vincent Stamm seventh at 120.

Delton Kellogg put Gauge Stampfler at 132 pounds and Mitchell Swift at 285 pounds in fifth place in the Division 4 competition, and both guys are back looking to finish higher up on the medal stand this winter.

Hastings had a pair of girls on the state medal stand at Ford Field too. Dezarae Mathis placed fourth in her 120-pound weight class and Naomi Grummet was eighth at 155 pounds.

Hastings, Delton Kellogg, Lakewood, Thornapple Kellogg and Maple Valley all had others who were state qualifiers in wrestling last season.

Lakewood's wrestling team was the first one from the county to earn a spot in the team state finals since 2017. The Vikings upended rival Portland in districts and then ran through their regional to get to the state quarterfinals in Kalamazoo – where the seeding process put the Vikings as the eighth seed. That meant Lakewood had to take on powerhouse Dundee in the opening round of the finals and it was a match-up the Vikings (or any other D3 team in the state) couldn't overcome.

The same weekend the wrestlers were competing at the Individual State Finals, the top cheer teams in the state were gathered in Mount Pleasant for the state finals hosted by Central Michigan University.

That group included Lakewood which placed eighth in Division 3 and the Thornapple Kellogg team that placed sixth in Division 2.

Lakewood had to share the 2023-24 Capital Area Activities Conference Championship with Portland, but then beat out the Raiders to win a district championship and nailed round three at regionals to beat out Portland and pass Paw Paw for the program's first regional title.

"The girls before this. These 28 teams before this. They paved this path, and they are just as much the reason for this as this team is," Lakewood head coach Kim Martin said after the emotional victory.

Thornapple Kellogg was in a battle with Cedar Springs all season long, and couldn't quite beat out the Red Hawks in the postseason. TK was one spot behind Plainwell at districts and then one spot behind the Cedar Springs girls are regionals to finish as the runner-up both times.

The TK coach was okay with her girls saving their best for last though.

"We always peak at districts or at regionals and then we come and get swallowed up in this big arena and swallowed up by these big huge teams and whatever. They didn't do that," TK head coach Madelynn Lula said after the D2 Finals. "They went out there and they peaked at the state finals. They went out there and did exactly what I asked them to do. They did exactly what I asked them to do. They went out there and got the highest scores of the season."

The cheer season also included the Hastings girls winning their third consecutive Interstate-8 Athletic Conference Championship in 2024.

The winter season also saw the Hastings varsity girls' bowling team qualify for the MHSAA Division 2 Girls' Team Bowling Finals where the Saxons were 16th in qualifying and the Lakewood varsity boys' bowling team qualify for the Division 3 Team Finals. The Viking squad placed eighth in qualifying to earn a spot in the match play bracket at the finals.

The Saxon team also sent junior guys Hunter Pennington and Mason Lipsey to the MHSAA Division 2 Singles State Finals the following day along with senior Ally Herder from the girls' team. The Lakewood boys' team was led by senior Phillip Butler who qualified for the D3 Singles competition and placed seventh in qualifying to get into the match play tournament.

Butler by the way also finally tallied his first 300-game in league action this fall.

When winter finally broke it was the area track and field teams filling the state finals with local athletes. And those athletes filled the medal stands.

Hastings freshman Bella Friddle did it on her own winning the state championship at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 Track and Field Finals at Hamilton High School in June by clearing the bar at 5 feet, 5 inches. Added to that she was eighth in the state in the long jump, and qualified for the finals in the pole vault but decided to save some energy for her other events.

TK senior Lucas Van Meter finally found his stride. He set a school record for TK in the 800-meter run in winning the OK Gold Conference championship in the race and then improved his time further to 1 minute 55.98 seconds to finish as the state runner-up in the race at the D2 Finals.

The TK girls' team continued to be a powerhouse in the hurdles with junior Brooklyn Harmon setting her PRs in third-place finishes in both the 100-meter hurdles and the 300-meter low hurdles. Sophomore teammate Mia Hilton was eighth in the 300 hurdles. Those two also teamed with sophomore Payton Gater and freshman Ellie Harmon to place sixth in the 4x400-meter relay at the end of the meet.

Both TK 4x400-meter relay teams finished the day on the state medal stand as the boys' foursome of seniors Jaxan Sias, Ethan Bonnema, Kyle VanHaitsma and Van Meter placed fourth in their finals race.

Hastings, Lakewood and Thornapple Kellogg all had a handful of other state qualifiers in Division 2 at the track and field finals. At the D3 Finals, Delton Kellogg had a handful of competitors highlighted by senior Rhys Bedford who placed seventh in the 110-meter high hurdles. Maple Valley senior Evan Brandenburg earned medals in two events at the D4 State Finals with an eighth-place finish in the 200-meter dash and a third-place finish in the long jump.

While those track and field finals were happening around the outskirts of the Grand Rapids area, the Maple Valley varsity baseball team was sweeping its way to an MHSAA Division 4 District Championship. The Lions turned out to be cardiac cats in the postseason.

"We wrote down goals at the beginning of the year and this was one of them right here," Lion sophomore Connor Milbourn said of earning a trip to East Lansing for the final four. "At the beginning of the year, we kind of figured there was a low hope of it, but now we got it.

"This was the big one."

The Lions closed out a 29-8 season with a 5-1 loss to top ranked Beal City in the state semifinals at Michigan State.

The senior pitcher Callan Hoefler and senior centerfielder Ayden Wilkes were named second team all-state in Division 4.

The Lion head coach Bryan Carpenter said he is looking forward to what the enthusiasm for this state tournament run means for the high school program in the future.

"The impact of this senior class is hard to tell. We will measure this in three, four, five years when we see our numbers go up and kids excited about baseball at Maple Valley and all of that. They have no idea what they have accomplished, and what they have done, and what that means. We will get the benefits of their efforts for a long time now."

The spring season also saw Thornapple Kellogg senior Emma Schut earn all-state honors in Division 2 on the girls' soccer field, Lakewood softball's senior catcher Lily Federau earn first team all-state in Division 2, and Hoebeke the TK softball team's senior shortstop earn honorable mention all-state in Division 2.

Federau led the Lakewood team to a share of the Capital Area Activities Conference White Division championship in the spring of 2024.

All-state honors kept rolling in for area athletes in the fall. Senior Isaac Friddle was named first team all-state as a defensive lineman for the Hastings varsity football team. Lakewood senior Abbigail Pickard earned all-state honors for the third time with a spot on the all-state first team in D2 for volleyball.

Randall and Crews earned all-state honors on the course at Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn at the end of the 2024 fall cross country season. Randall, who missed the spring track and field season with an injury and most of the fall cross country season, returned for the Saxons in time to win the Interstate-8 Athletic Conference Championship for the second year in a row and then placed 20th at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 State Finals in November to earn her second all-state medal in the sport. Crews, a four-time state qualifier, secured her first all-state cross country medal by placing 26th at the finals.

The area also sent Hastings senior Brandon Simmons and TK senior Draaisma to the state finals. For Simmons it was the culmination of four varsity seasons of growth and improvement. For Draaisma, it was the follow up to a successful first track and field season in the spring and an exciting first and last varsity cross country seasons. Draaisma and Crews both won individual OK Gold Conference titles in the fall.

Delton Kellogg sophomore Landon Madden also kept dropping time throughout the fall to qualify for the cross country state finals in Division 3.

The fall state finals events also included Thornapple Kellogg senior Leos at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 Girls' Golf Finals for the second season in a row. Leos was the OK Gold Conference's individual champion and went on to place sixth at the state finals at The Meadows in Allendale in late October. She shot a 78-82-160 to earn her spot high atop the leaderboard.

Leos just missed out on a state finals appearance as a sophomore falling in a three-person playoff at regionals and then qualified for the state finals for the first time as a junior in 2023.

The conference titles Leos, Draaisma and Crews won came in a new conference as it was as year of change for the entirety of the OK Conference. TK joined West Catholic, Northview, Wyoming, Wayland, Grand Rapids Union and South Christian in an new rendition of the OK Gold Conference for most sports. The OK Conference how has separate football conferences and the TK team competed in the OK Black Conference along with Grand Rapids Catholic Central, Ottawa Hills, East Grand Rapids, Holland Christian and Northview.

The Trojans just missed the football playoffs, but Hastings made a return trip to the state football postseason and won a playoff game for the fifth season in a row knocking off Ionia in the first round of the Division 4 state tournament before losing out to a tough Portland team in the district finals the following Friday.

The Saxons string of Interstate-8 Athletic Conference Championships on the football field was brought to an end at four as Harper Creek ran through an undefeated I-8 seasons that included a 32-0 shut out of the Saxons.

Lakewood's varsity volleyball team won itself another conference championship by sweeping through the Capital Area Activities Conference White Division, but didn't get the postseason victory it was looking for as the Vikings were beat out in the district finals on their home court by a tough South Christian team.

