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THE HASTINGS BANNER

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Rock the Country brings 53,000 to Hastings



Over 53,000 people funneled into the Barry Expo Center last weekend for the two-day Rock the Country music festival. **Courtesy photo**

Molly Macleod
Editor

Barry County residents who looked to the sky Saturday evening may have noticed strange flying objects hovering above the Barry Expo Center. No, it wasn't a bird, nor plane, nor UFO — it was Kid Rock.

The Michigan native's aerial entrance above the Barry County fairgrounds was one of many highlights that entertained audience members, nearby homeowners and passers-by during last weekend's Rock the Country music festival. Kid Rock and some of his band members jumped from his plane overtop the Barry Expo Center Saturday evening, parachuting down to the fairgrounds.

Hastings was named one of 10 cities across the country selected as a host site for the Rock the Country festivals. Music began around 2 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, June 13-14, and stretched past 11 p.m. both nights.

With roughly half of the festival dates having passed already, Hastings holds the crown of the site with the most ticket sales.

According the Barry County Sheriff Dar Leaf, roughly 23,000 people funneled into the fairgrounds on Friday, with 30,000 coming on Saturday. Though many locals made the

See **ROCK** on 3



Demonstrators make their way along the south side of State Street in downtown Hastings during the "No Kings" protest hosted by Barry County Indivisible Saturday afternoon. Members of the group believe President Donald Trump is not properly preserving, protecting and defending the Constitution of the United States. **Photo by Brett Bremer**

'No Kings' demonstration stretches across downtown Hastings

Brett Bremer and Jayson Bussa
Banner Staff

Roughly 400 citizens who are concerned about the state of their democracy and the policies and actions of President Donald Trump gathered in downtown Hastings Saturday as part of nationwide "No Kings" demonstrations.

Protesters' concerns included educational and science funding, immigration enforcement, equality and more.

The event was hosted by MI Barry County Indivisible, and the turnout far exceeded organizers' expectations. The MI Barry County Indivisible webpage says it is a nonpartisan group dedicated to organizing, educating and inspiring our fellow citizens to protect the Constitution and strengthen democracy in America.

"I am here to go ahead and support people of all different kinds, whether that be trans, whether that be gay, it doesn't matter," Cheryl Yearly of Hastings said. "It's all about them and

See **DEMONSTRATION** on 8

Commissioners recommend body cam purchase

Molly Macleod
Editor

The Barry County Board of Commissioners will vote next week on whether to approve a contract with Motorola for the replacement and upgrading of the Barry County Sheriff's Department portable and mobile radios, in-car cameras and the addition of body cameras.

Commissioners at the committee of the whole meeting this week unanimously recommended approval to the full board at next week's meeting.

The contract, if approved, would spell a large financial hit to the county. County Administrator Eric Zuzga said approaching the commission with an unbudgeted purchase this large mid-budget year is unusual. Because of that, Zuzga proposed financing the purchase with a $848.358.73 installment purchase agreement from Highpoint Community Bank for three years with an interest rate of 3.99 percent.

Commissioner Mike Callton asked why this purchase wasn't budgeted for in the regular budgeting cycle.

"I don't like the fact that we're coming mid-year. New radios have to be tackled this year, we have an encryption requirement that needs to be done by this fall. But we're taking that opportunity to package a project to get a greater discount at this time. Right, wrong or indifferent, we're looking at the size of even the radio bid, I don't feel comfortable hitting this in one budget cycle," said Zuzga. "I understand we don't love debt, we don't have a

See **CAM** on 3

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LAKEFRONT OWNERS ENCOURAGED TO BUY FLARES FOR 'RING OF FIRE'
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Lake Odessa council votes on its choice for new deputy manager

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

The Lake Odessa Village Council may have just found the village's next full-time manager by recommending to hire a new deputy manager.

Council members voted unanimously, 7-0, at their regular monthly meeting Monday, June 16, to recommend the hiring of William Joseph, the former village manager for Paw Paw and former Mt. Pleasant mayor, to fill the new position of deputy village manager.

According to village officials, Joseph will serve as deputy manager under the mentorship of interim Village Manager Gregg Guetschow for up to a year. The council will, at the end of the training period, vote whether to appoint Joseph as manager.

"This is only a recommendation," said Village President Karen Banks, referring to the council's vote Monday night. "The final decision is Gregg's."

Guetschow on Tuesday said he had been in contact with Joseph and made a "conditional offer," pending the completion of a background check. If all goes well, Guetshow added that he expects Joseph to begin his duties as deputy manager in early July.

According to Guetschow, the advertised annual salary for the deputy manager's position was between $68,500 and $74,000.



William Joseph, the former manager for the Village of Paw Paw, interviews for the position of deputy manager with Lake Odessa during a special village council meeting on May 31. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**

Joseph was one of four candidates to be interviewed by council members at a special meeting May 31, with more than a dozen reportedly having applied for the position.

Also interviewed were Grand Rapids resident William Christy, current village Department of Public Works staff member Jacob Hanson, and attorney and former U.S. Sen. Harry Reid's chief of staff Drew Willison.

For Joseph, it was his second trip to Lake Odessa to sit before the village council. He also previously interviewed for the village manager's post during the council's hiring search last year. And, after the May 31 interviews, it was Joseph who seemed to draw the most praise from council members.

The graduate of Central Michigan University was, according to reports published by The Morning Sun, appointed to the Mt. Pleasant Planning Commission in 2016 and later ran unsuccessfully for a city commission seat later that year.

But, he was elected to a three-year term in 2017 and then mayor in 2019 before leaving Mt. Pleasant for Paw Paw in 2021, where he served as village manager for two years.

The runner-up in the selection process was Hanson, a village employee since 2014 who graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration, with a major in human resources, from Western Michigan University in 2020.

Most council members cited Joseph's previous experience in leadership roles as the deciding factor. Though, both Guetschow and council members agreed they should invest in Hanson to prepare him for potential larger roles in the village's administrative office that may become available in the future.

If he is later promoted to manager, Joseph will be the village's first full-time manager since December 2023. That's when council members agreed to a separation agreement with then Village Manager Ben Geiger less than seven months after his accepting the job in May of that year.

For more on Lake Odessa's deputy manager hiring process, look to this weekend's edition of The Lakewood News.

Yankee Springs officials share updates, swear in fire officers at township meeting

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

Over 35 attended the Yankee Springs Township meeting on June 12 and watched history in the making at the swearing-in of four fire officers.

Everyone paused for the solemn moments conducted by Yankee Springs township Clerk Tom Hopkins as he administered oaths to Fire Chief Dan Miller, Deputy Fire Chief Doug Katsma, Captain Al Bouma and Lieutenant Skyler Henion.

"This is big having our own fire department and swearing in our team," said Yankee Springs Twp. Supervisor Rob Heethuis. "That's a milestone for this board and our community."

The board also introduced Daniel Ramey, the township's newest firefighter, who recently graduated as valedictorian of his academy class.

"It makes all of us at the Yankee Springs Township Fire Department (YSTFD) feel good to be able to get Yankee Springs Township to have their own Fire Department now," Miller said. "We have command officers from chief, deputy chief, captain, lieutenant and temporary training officer. Other positions to be filled will be health and safety officer and training officer."



Members of the Yankee Spring Township Fire Department attended the Yankee Springs Twp. meeting on June 12. Pictured are (front row, from left) firefighter Kyle Ritsema, resource probationary firefighter Nikki Mendez, firefighter and EMT Makayla Konecny, (back row) Deputy Chief Doug Katsma, Chief Dan Miller, Captain Al Bouma, Lieutenant Skylar Henion and firefighter Daniel Ramey. **Photos by Deb Mousseau**

Miller has been in fire service for a little over 50 years. He said there are currently 20 personnel who are firefighters, EMRs (Emergency Medical Responders) or both for the YSTFD.

"We have great personnel who have gotten us where we are currently at to serve the public in time of need," Miller said.

All current Yankee Springs firefighters can apply for the health and safety officer position and the training officer position. Miller said the first step in applying is to write a letter of commitment and drop it off at the Yankee Springs Township Fire Department or email it to danmiller@yankeespringstwp.org.

"Dan has been with us for almost 30 years. He is well respected by our citizens," Heethuis said. "Being sworn in as fire chief is a crowning honor."

In other business on Thursday, Treasurer Deb Mousseau presented a comprehensive financial report. The board unanimously approved six detailed budget amendments affecting general operations, fire equipment, weed control, veterans' memorials, and liquor law enforcement. All adjustments were adopted by roll call votes.

The board also approved a new audit services contract with Siegfried Crandall at a cost increase of $150.

Thornapple Kellogg Varsity Cheer Coach Madelynn Lula proposed a community pickleball tournament fundraiser for August 2 at Thursday's meeting. The event would be held at the township park and include other family-friendly activities. The board expressed support and will formally consider the request at its July meeting.

Gun Lake Improvement Board representative Bill Bryker reported upcoming treatments to combat invasive aquatic plants in Gun Lake.

The board unanimously approved a new pond ordinance, the first in township history, to regulate pond creation and avoid misuse for gravel mining.

Planning Commission updates shared last week included discussion on a revised master plan, short-term rental approvals and a pending gravel ordinance.

Other zoning matters included that a Barry County judge has ordered the VanderKam property on M-179 into full compliance by October. Enforcement benchmarks are in place to ensure fulfillment.

Township infrastructure updates were

See **OFFICERS** on 4



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Weller resigns from Lakewood school board

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer


Darin Weller

Just days after voting to appoint one new member to its ranks, another seat on the Lakewood Public Schools board of Education has opened up.

Darin Weller, the school board's current vice president who had also previously served as board president, reportedly informed district officials he was resigning from the board effective Thursday, June 12.

"I am writing today to inform you of my decision to resign from the Lakewood Public Schools Board of Education effective immediately," Weller stated in a letter. "In January of 2025, I faced some major shifts in my work environment and there are unannounced shifts coming in the next couple of months. The previous shifts have made it difficult to maintain my position on the board and the upcoming shift will make it impossible.

"It has been an honor to serve on the board for the last four and a half years," he added. "I truly believe that this district is in a great position to succeed, and I look forward to supporting the district in any way possible moving forward. Thank you for your time and patience with me as we have worked together for the last few years. I wish you all the best of luck."

Jamie Brodbeck-Krenz, president of the LPS board, confirmed that Weller had also called her and Superintendent Jodi Duits to notify them of his intent to resign.

Weller's announcement comes just three days after school board members voted 5-0 to appoint David Burd to fill a vacancy on the seven-member board at its June 9 meeting at the Lakewood High School Media Center.

Burd succeeds former board member Kerry Possehn, who had notified Duits and Brodbeck-Krenz via email of her intention to resign at the conclusion of the school board's May 12 meeting due to increased work commitments. Burd will serve the remainder of Possehn's term in office, which is set to expire on Dec. 31, 2026.

Persons interested in applying to complete the remainder of Weller's term of office are encouraged to do so in writing and mail a letter of interest to the Lakewood Board of Education, 223 W Broadway, Woodland, MI 48897.

According to district officials, applicants should include a brief biographical sketch and a statement regarding the reasons why the person desires consideration, as well as the individual's philosophy concerning public education.

To serve on the board, candidates must be a citizen of the United States, as well as a qualified and registered elector of the LPS school district.

For more information on the application process, interested individuals may contact the LPS superintendent's office by calling 616-374-8043.


The Barry Expo Center was transformed last weekend to accommodate the Rock the Country music festival.

ROCK
Continued from Page 1

trek to the fairgrounds this weekend, many festivalgoers came from far and wide — with many driving from out of state.

Thanks to months of planning amongst Barry County emergency crews and festival staff, things went about as smoothly as they could on Friday and Saturday, Leaf said. There were major no injuries during the festival and officers only made two DUI arrests following the concerts. Leaf added those arrests may have been unrelated to the concert.

But, those expecting traffic backups along M-37 near the Expo Center this weekend were not disappointed.

"It went better than we had anticipated. The crowd was great. The traffic — I thought my guys did fabulous with it, having two lanes and try packing 7,000 cars into a sardine can there, basically," Leaf said.

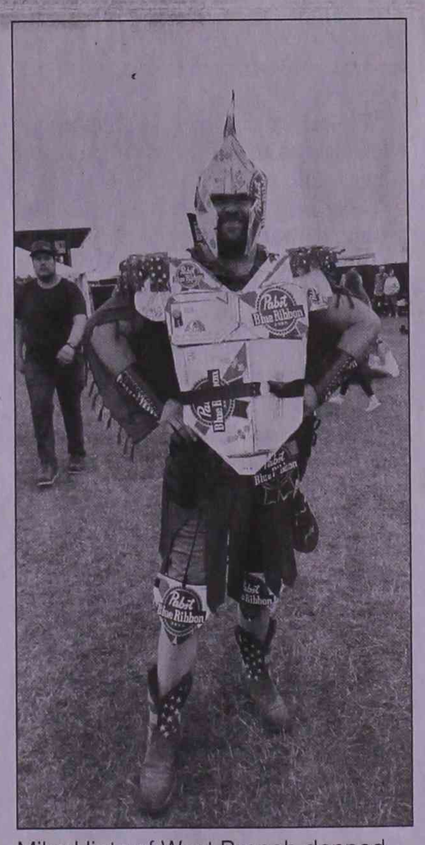
Sgt. Steve Lehman, Lt. Tim Stevens and Lt. Pete Nevins were the architects behind Friday and Saturday's traffic plans.

"It took a lot of manpower. It wasn't just at the gates there. It was several traffic points," said Leaf. At points, traffic was backed up along M-37 all the way to Bob's Gun and Tackle on M-43 and to Shaw Lake Road heading westbound.

"For the amount of traffic and things like that, we got people moved in and moved in pretty rapidly. (Going) out was pretty difficult, too, because the northeast part of the fairgrounds, there, they (Rock the Country staff) didn't park them all in the same direction so it was a pretty good mess out back there," Leaf said.

Traffic flowed much smoother on Saturday, Leaf said, after Rock the Country staff met with Barry County emergency teams and made adjustments based on Friday night's exiting issues.

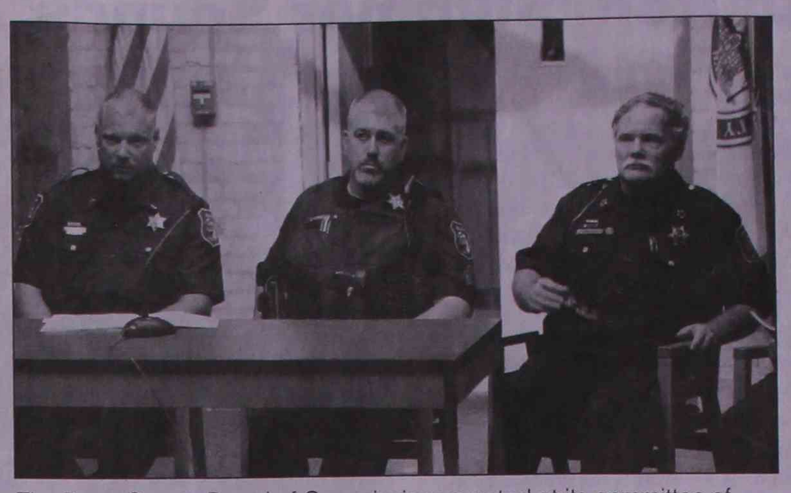
Canadian rock band Nickelback headlined Friday night, with artists like Travis Tritt, Big and Rich, Trick Trick, Sammy Kershaw, Ying Yang Twins, Little Texas and Logan Crosby setting the stage throughout the day. On Saturday, Lynyrd Skynyrd played "Simple Man" during Kid Rock's entrance from the sky before his headlining set. Other artists playing on Saturday included Afroman, Gavin Adcock, Mark Chesnutt, Deana Carter and Hudson Westbrook.


Mike Hintz of West Branch donned his suit of Pabst Blue Ribbon armor on Friday for the Rock the Country festival. **Photos by Molly Macleod**

Many Barry County residents reported hearing the bass thumping from the fairgrounds as far as 15 miles away.

"Congratulations to law enforcement and first responders and 911 and everyone involved in the planning of that," said County Board Chair David Jackson at Tuesday's Barry County Board of Commissioners committee of the whole meeting.

"I've done plenty of events over my career. Nothing obviously of this size — Barry County hasn't really seen anything this size — but I can tell you the cooperation in between the sheriff's department, 911, emergency management, state police, it was top-notch," said Barry County Administrator Eric Zuzga. "I sat through some of the planning meetings, the road commission was there, the health department, a lot of groups you don't see… they were there at the table, making sure we covered all the issues."


The Barry County Board of Commissioners voted at its committee of the whole meeting on Tuesday to recommend the purchase of body cameras, in-car cameras, mobile and in-car radios for the Barry County Sheriff's Department. The purchase, if approved, would cost the county roughly $850,000 financed over three years. Pictured here at Tuesday's meeting are (from left) Sgt. Tim Stevens, Sgt. Steve Lehman and Sheriff Dar Leaf. **Photo by Molly Macleod**

CAM
Continued from Page 1

lot of debt, but for short-term periods for capital projects at a sizable cost, I'm not afraid of it — when we get a reasonable bid."

Radio encryption standards changing in the fall and Motorola is including steep discounts not offered by competitors for the full technology package. In October, Barry County Sheriff's Department officers were involved in an officer-involved shooting in Delton. Though officers were cleared of any wrongdoing in that incident, the need for body cameras was felt more acutely after that incident, said Zuzga.

Body-worn cameras can help protect the county from liability. In turn, if an officer commits a wrongdoing, body-worn cameras can help hold that officer accountable for his or her misdoings.

The purchase, if approved, would furnish 30 new in-car cameras, 22 new in-car radios, the repurposing of 11 current in-car radios, four additional desktop radios, 36 new portable radios, the repurposing of current Kenwood radios to jail staff and 46 body cameras. Of those 46 cameras, 21 will be used by Barry County Jail staff. The rest will go to BCSD officers.

Zuzga warned commissioners not to get sticker shock. Commissioners voted on Monday to approve an application to the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority for up to $95,000 in grant dollars to help offset the cost of the Motorola purchase. Barry County Sheriff Dar Leaf also mentioned current efforts from Rep. Angela Rigas for a $230,000 state budget appropriation to the county to offset the cost of the cameras and radios purchase.

Zuzga said financing over three years allows him and county staff more time to apply for grants and chip away at that cost over time.

Commissioners will vote on whether to approve the purchase and its financing agreement next week during the Tuesday, June 24 regular meeting.



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Steps to take following a job loss

Perhaps you've heard the expression: "Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans." It's certainly true about an unexpected job loss. And it may cause stress over your financial situation. Here are a handful of steps you can take shortly after the loss of employment to help put yourself in the best financial position. Some of these are time-sensitive, so the sooner you act, the better.

File for unemployment – While unemployment insurance typically covers less than half of your previous paycheck, it can provide some financial relief — generally up to 26 weeks. Since filing a claim can be time-consuming, file immediately so payments begin as soon as possible. There are eligibility requirements, including your unemployment being involuntary and through no fault of your own, and meeting your state's time worked and wage requirements. You can learn more about your state's unemployment insurance program online.

• **Adjust your budget and spending** – You'll likely require some changes to your budget, at least temporarily. Try to focus on the essentials, like housing, utilities and food, and see where you can cut costs — or find cheaper alternatives — on nonessentials, like coffee shops and entertainment. If you're saving for longer-term goals, like retirement or college, you may want to pause those contributions temporarily.

• **Evaluate other sources of income** – In addition to any severance and unemployment payments, you can consider cashing in emergency or other savings and investment accounts. You could look for part-time work, which generally does not affect your unemployment insurance income as long as you're earning less than your unemployment benefits. Other possibilities are cashing in the value of insurance policies or annuities outside of surrender charge periods, accessing retirement accounts early, selling investments without taxable gains and borrowing money. Be aware that some of these options come with tax implications and fees. A financial advisor can help you navigate the trade-offs.

• **Understand your HSA and FSA options** – You'll want to get the maximum benefit from your flexible spending account (FSA) and health savings account (HSA). The funds in an FSA are subject to a "use-it-or-lose-it" rule, generally within 60 days from termination. Consult your Summary Plan Description to understand how your FSA works and how to use your funds. Your HSA is yours to keep after leaving a company, and there's no deadline to use the funds. While you typically can't pay health insurance premiums from an HSA, there are exceptions for COBRA premiums and some other health insurance premiums if you're receiving federal or state unemployment benefits. Your plan administrator can help guide you.

• **Ensure you have health insurance coverage** – Find out if your health benefits continue for any period and what is included. You generally can extend your employer's coverage up to 18 months under COBRA, though it's often expensive because you are liable for all monthly premiums. Joining your spouse's or partner's workplace plan could be an option, but you may only have 30 days to enroll. You can also look for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, a function of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), where lower-income households may qualify for subsidies. Learn more about ACA coverage at healthcare.gov.

Whether your next step is moving into early retirement or finding new employment, working through these steps may help you feel more confident in your financial position and more prepared to take on whatever comes next.

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Delton 'Summer Sounds' concert series in full swing

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

An idea is now a reality as the new "Delton Summer Sounds" concert series is in full swing under the band shell at William Smith Park. A crowd of almost 200 converged at the small park to hear "Jedi Mind Trip," who performed earlier this month, kicking off the music series of six expected performances wrapping up in August.

Through the Revitalize Delton (RD) Organization, Allie Steele-Rouse, who is the secretary, organized the summer event concert series at the Barry Township venue. The concerts are free of charge. Big Mike's Smokehouse Barbecue and Elephant Ears will be ready for customers at the next concert this Saturday. The Moose Lodge is on hand under the beer tent. A couple of local shopping vendors are available.

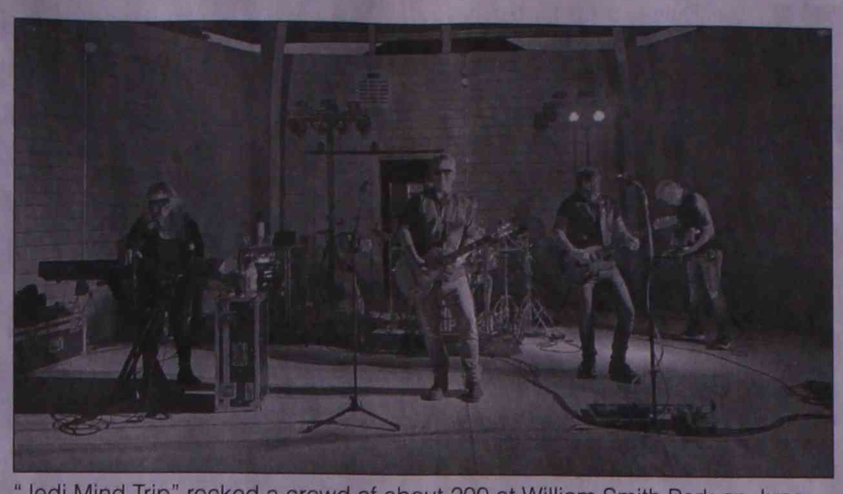
"This is the first time Revitalize Delton has done it. The township organized music in the park in the past but decided they weren't going to continue for various reasons," Rouse explained. "I wanted to prioritize events and things that bring the community together through my position in Revitalize Delton so decided to revamp summer concerts and make it bigger and better than ever."

She said input from the Revitalize Delton strategic planning workshop sparked the concert series idea in November. Rouse started planning "Delton Summer Sounds" in January.

"The township has been very helpful and supportive of the endeavor," Rouse said.

"The bands are all local bands that I've seen or people recommend as I was looking for bands."

Although the series is free of charge for anyone attending, the bands are being funded by generous donations from local businesses and residents.



"Jedi Mind Trip" rocked a crowd of about 200 at William Smith Park on June 5 as part of the Delton Summer Sounds concert series. Next, at 7 p.m. on Saturday, June 19, "All American Funk Parade" will take center stage under the band shell at William Smith Park in Delton. **Photo by Allie Steele-Rouse**

Donations for the concert series started rolling in three months ago. The generosity of the community has been overwhelming, Rouse said.

"I've received $8,250 from businesses and $2,960 from residents," Rouse said. "We've also received $3,100 from the Revitalize Delton fund through the Barry Community Foundation."

For over two years, RD has consistently and continues to have community meetings to focus on the growth of Delton. The aim is to increase school enrollment, housing and attract more families and businesses to the area.

The RD event, "Delton Summer Sounds", debuted the first of six bands on June 5.

Many who attended the first concert said they hope to attend the rest of the concerts throughout the summer.

Delton native Dan Belt plans on going to the next concert.

"Man, what a night! The first Delton Summer Sounds concert blew the roof off Delton — killer music, dancing everywhere and nothing but good vibes," Belt said. "It was awesome seeing our little community come together like one big family. This is what small-town summers are all about!"

She said she cannot wait for the next concert under the band shell at William Smith Park.

Toni Myers grew up about 15 miles northeast of Delton in Hastings. She also attended the June 5 concert.

"It was an incredible turnout for the first event. The crowd was super fun and the band was stellar," Myers said. "You don't want to miss the next one."

Administrator of the Delton Moose Lodge, Jill Young, runs the beer tent for special events at the park including Delton Summer Sounds. She said the crowd kept her on her toes at the June 5 concert.

"Sales were good — it was a nice, even flow of customers. Our Lodge retains the proceeds from the sales of beer and wine," Young explained. "The overall atmosphere was that people enjoyed the event. I believe that as long as the weather cooperates, the events will be well attended."

A longtime resident of Delton for 23 years enjoys social gatherings in her community. Kathy Forsyth plans to attend all the Delton Summer Sounds concerts under the band shell at William Smith Park.

"I love when our community can come together. It was a great evening, perfect weather and Jedi Mind Trip's music was top-notch," Forsyth said. "Looking forward to the rest of the summer concerts."

At the June 19 performance, a new business and boutique vendor, Whit Wanders & Co., will be there for shoppers. A henna tattoo artist will also be available.

"We loved the concert. This week is the next one which sounds like it'll be even better. Allie has a great group working with her," said Cheryl Bower. "Live music is always a good attraction to our park which has grown so much over the last few years."

Jewelry vendor Eternally Embrace set up at the June 5 concert and will be back again July 10 and Aug. 14.

On June 19, "All American Funk Parade" will hold the spotlight under the bandshell.

"It was so much fun. It was a fantastic event and it was awesome to see so many people out and about and enjoying our little Delton," said Rouse.

The outdoor performances start at 7 p.m. and continue twice a month through August and include, "All American Funk Parade" on June 19, followed by "Chirp" on July 9. Next, "Fleetwood Magic" takes center stage on July 24, OCD/C performs Aug. 14 and, lastly, Brena closes out the Delton Summer Sounds series on Aug. 28.

"It was refreshing seeing the community out enjoying our special little town. I look forward to more opportunities for us to gather," Marie Ferris said. "Delton has always been a close-knit town and I hope we never lose sight of that. It's what makes us more like extended family."

Consumers official again provides update on local solar project

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

If once is good, twice is better.

After updating county officials, Consumers Energy community affairs representative Gregory Moore again sought to address concerns over the Spring Creek solar farm project while attending the Johnstown Township Board of Trustees meeting Wednesday, June 11.

Moore had previously provided a similar update at the Barry County Board of Commissioners Committee of the Whole meeting June 3 and then attended the township's community picnic Saturday, June 7.

In addressing the township board and the 30-plus people in attendance at Wednesday's meeting, Moore said he was there to "correct some misinformation that's out there," as he'd done at the county meeting.

Moore discussed issues relating to the panels to be used in the solar farm project, tree removal and correcting statements that there was no decommissioning plan for the solar farm, once it had outlived its operational life.

The Barry County Planning Commission approved plans for the solar farm located on what previously was about 1,500 acres of farmland in Johnstown Township during a meeting last September. The vote came about a month after county commissioners OK'd an ordinance regulating the operations of solar farms within the county.

According to Moore, a decommissioning plan was part of the county's ordinance.

"Absolutely false," he said of the rumors. "We supported (having a decommissioning plan). It's in the county plan.

"There will be a decommissioning plan."

Moore added that another rumor he found concerning was that Consumers Energy would use eminent domain as part of its efforts to make the project a reality.

"We didn't use eminent domain on this project," he said.

During the exchange, Township Treasurer Karmen Nickerson pressed Moore on why the power company was reportedly reluctant to conduct testing of water at the site.

"We test our water all the time," Nickerson said. "We want to know our water is OK.

"Why will you not go ahead with testing the water?" she added. "Are you afraid there might be a problem? Is that why you don't want to test it?"

Moore said that's not the case.

"We're not afraid," he said. "It's just how much should we test, who's going to pay for it?"

According to Moore, testing might also be inconclusive, if there were an issue, on the potential source. He added it's also an issue that's being worked on at the county level.

"There are people who are looking at this," Moore said. "They'll settle it.

"Attorneys will work on it," he added. "They'll come up with an agreement."

But Hope Township resident Mike Goddard said another issue that township officials need to consider is the potential impact on area wildlife, specifically on the local bald and golden eagle population.

Goddard said the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protect Act, first enacted in 1940, would restrict any development that might impact or interfere with the eagles' breeding, sheltering or eating habitats.

"People know eagles are in there," he added. "This actually means (Consumers Energy) needs to stop what they're doing immediately."

While not addressing Goddard's statements on the federal act, Moore said he was not aware that any eagles were nesting or had been sighted in or near the solar farm project.

The solar farm is scheduled to become operational in 2026 and projected to generate 140 megawatts of power – enough to power 25,000 homes. The project comes as Consumers seeks to increase its portfolio of clean and renewable energy projects in response to stated laws that were passed in 2023 that call for Michigan to achieve a 100 percent clean energy standard by 2040.

Moore's full statement before the county board on Tuesday may be viewed on YouTube by searching Barry County "Committee of the Whole 6/3/2025."



Pictured here, Yankee Springs Township Trustee Dave Van Houten (left) and Yankee Springs Twp. Clerk Tom Hopkins (right) administers the oath to Dan Miller (middle) who was being sworn in as the Yankee Springs Township Fire Chief at the June 12 meeting

OFFICERS

Continued from Page 2

also given last week. A special assessment district was approved for Deer Sight Drive at approximately $52,000 along with an application for another for Payne Ridge Drive, with strong support from affected residents.

A large accounts payable amount of nearly $70,000 was approved, attributed to fire department payroll and the initial phase of park renovations.

Renovations on pickleball and basketball courts are expected to be completed by June 23.

The recycling committee recommended adding a bin and pad to avoid frequent "dry runs," supported in part by a $4,000 mini-grant.

The Clean Water Committee is set to meet on June 17 to discuss capacity issues and a proposed housing development that may require major water system upgrades.

Several residents voiced concerns over township financial reserves, transparency and public input during Thursday's public comment period.

Resident Mike Cunningham urged the board to reduce the general fund balance and called for putting trail planning on the ballot.

He and others, including Precinct Delegate Robin Laansma, asked the board to reinstate two public comment periods and live stream meetings.

"We've removed a valuable opportunity for the public to speak before decisions are made," Laansma said, echoing a broader call for accessibility and civic participation.

Key upcoming dates include a budget workshop on June 18 and a public hearing for final budget adoption on June 25.

"Tonight felt special," said Trustee Dave VanHouten. "A lot of hard work went into getting our fire team to this point. I'm really proud of what we've built."

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Hastings Live continues summer performance series



Ben Traverse is performing on the Barry County Courthouse lawn next week on Friday, June 20. **Courtesy photos**



Generation POUND will have kids rocking out and enjoying movement on Thursday, June 19.

The local performance series "Hastings Live" is in its third week of its 11-week summer schedule, with plenty for local residents to see and do.

This week's programming kicked off with the Hastings City Band's "A Night at the Movies" Wednesday performance. That will be followed by Generation POUND Pros Tricia Markovich and Kelly Shepherd, who have been rocking out together for four years, bringing the joy of movement to kids in Middleville and Caledonia, on Thursday, June 19.

To cap off the week, Hastings Live will host its Fountain series from noon to 1 p.m. on Friday, June 20, with folksinger, balladeer, educator, songwriter and Earthwork Music Collective member Ben Traverse.

Hastings Live guests are encouraged to bring blankets or lawn chairs. The concession stand, operated by volunteers from Hastings' Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, will be open for evening performances serving food. Smoking, vaping, non-service animals and outside alcohol are prohibited.

There is no rain venue for Hastings Live. Unless there is thunder or lightning, each show will be held as scheduled.

For more information on the Hastings Live series, persons may contact Hastings arts and events coordinator Steve Hoke by calling 269-945-6027 or via email at shoke@hastingsmi.gov. Additional details and schedules of upcoming events are available online at downtownhastings.com or thornapplearts.org/hastingslive. — *DM*

Johnstown Community Picnic sees healthy crowds



The annual Johnstown Township community picnic, farmers market and craft show from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 7, included a plethora of activities, including live music. The event also included free ice cream courtesy of the MOO-Ville Creamery in Nashville and food and refreshments served by the township's fire department. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**



Jordan Lake's annual "Ring of Fire" is set to return for a fourth year this Fourth of July, featuring hundreds of flares lighting the perimeter of Jordan Lake. **File photo**

Lakefront owners encouraged to buy flares for 'Ring of Fire'

Jordan Lake's annual "Ring of Fire" is set to return this year, along with another boat parade, on Friday, July 4.

The fourth annual "Ring of Fire" will feature hundreds of flares lighting the perimeter of Jordan Lake. Lakefront owners will display these flares along the shore at exactly 10 p.m. on July 4, creating a ring of fire around the perimeter of the lake for approximately 30 minutes. Those interested in seeing the unique sight can watch from the beach, while dining at Buddy's on the Beach or from a boat out on the lake.

All lakefront owners are encouraged to buy a flare for every 8 to 10 feet of lakefront property. Flares are $5 each and can be picked up via drive-through at the Swifty's Place parking lot on Saturday, June 28, from 9 a.m. to noon. Flares are to be lit at exactly 10 p.m. — and no sooner.

The annual boat parade will be on the Fourth of July at noon this year. Participants are asked to decorate their boats in accordance with this year's cartoons/comics theme. The parade will begin at noon on July 4 in front of the docks by Buddy's on the Beach. The boats will be judged when taking a lap around the lake. The boat crew with the best decorations will receive a gift card. —*MM*

Hastings church to host organ concert July 11

The Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Hastings is hosting a special musical performance at the church on Friday, July 11.

The Hastings church is set to host Zach Franklin's "An Evening of Early American Organ Music" at 7 p.m. on July 11 on its historic 1867 J.H. & C.S. Odell Tracker Organ.

The musical celebration is open to the public and an offering will be collected for the church's organ maintenance fund.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church is located at 315 W. Center St. in Hastings.

For more information, visit the church's website at emmanuelhastings.org. — *DM*

HASTINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY SCHEDULE

Adventure awaits at the Hastings Public Library. Join the Summer Reading Challenge from June 7 through Aug. 16. Read anything for 15 minutes or more a day, log your days and win prizes.

No library card is required for library programs and activities.

Thursday, June 19 – Novel Ideas Book Club, 1 p.m.; Movie Memories and Milestones watches a 1943 movie based on Edgar Rice Burrough's "Tarzan of the Apes" books, 5 p.m.

Friday, June 20 – Friday Storytime, 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, June 21 – Warhammer and Dungeons & Dragons, 9 a.m.

Monday, June 23 – Crafting Passions, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, June 24 – Baby Cafe, 10 a.m.; Youth Makerspace with 4-H: Woodcrafts (grades 3-12), 10:30 a.m.; Tie-Dye Day (bandanas or bring your own small item), 1 p.m.; community mental health workers, 2 p.m.; Powerful Tools for Caregivers (CareWell Services), 4 p.m.; mahjong, 5 p.m.; chess, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, June 25 –Itsy Bitsy Book Club, 10:30 a.m.; Open Art Studio, 11:30 a.m.; walk-in tech help, 2 p.m.; Fauxkémon: Create your own Pokémon (grades K-5), 2 p.m.; acoustic jam, 5 p.m.

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

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GARAGE SALES

HUGE ESTATE SALE 4038 Heath Rd., Hastings; June 20th 21st, & 22nd; 9am-5pm. Log splitter, chainsaws, Arc welder, power tools, chains, hardware, concrete panels with hardware, 12" aluminum boat, fishing equipment, household stuff and more!

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OBITUARIES

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David Lee Chamberlain



David Lee Chamberlain, known to many as "Happy Dave", age 83, from Kalamazoo and Delton, MI, passed away with family and friends by his side on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

He was born April 13, 1942, in Galesburg, MI to the late Roy and Viola (Truax) Chamberlain. He proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War Era. During his working years he worked in construction with his brother-in-law/best friend Marvin Horn and as a tow truck driver with Billy and Susie Kline.

Happy Dave loved spending time with his children and their families. He had a special fondness for his grandchildren, both two and four legged! He was happiest when going for a ride to look for deer, fishing, and going to the races. In his later years, Happy Dave LOVED going to Baldwin with his daughter Annie and son-in-law Nate and a large group of friends to ride the trails in a SxS and sit around the campfire. Dad never turned down a chance to go for a "buggy ride"! Dad loved to go for a ride on the pontoon boat in the evening to watch the sunset on Crooked Lake. Happy Dave was a voracious reader and especially enjoyed westerns and military history. Fun fact is that less than one in a million will be struck by lightning, and Happy Dave was struck twice working the wrecker service! Dad was a survivor, and his grandson Jacob said it was because Happy Dave had tiger blood running through his veins.

Survivors include his five children, Clarice De La Fuente, Holly Biron, Annie (Nathan) Minshall, Nichole (Brett) Nash, and David Chamberlain; grandchildren, Cristian, Nicholas, Kenneth Charles (KC) (Amanda), Brandon, Brianna, Leah (Nicholas), Jacob (Lexi), Tamara (Jeremiah), and Jessie (Robbie); great-grandchildren, Faith, Ryleigh, Cole, Tessa, Harlei, Stassi, Hunner, Braelynne, Kenzi, Jackson, and Wyatt; brother, Roger (Beverly) Chamberlain; and many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and two very special friends Collin (better known as Kyle!) and Trish Hicks. Special thank you to daughter Nichole, and son-in-law Brett for Happy Dave's daily care.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roy and Viola Chamberlain; siblings, Betty (Gordon) Maneke, Gene (Barbara) Chamberlain, Barbara (Marvin) Horn, and Linda (Tom) Keefer.

A celebration of life will be held on October 4, 2025, at the Orangeville Township Hall.

The family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the staff of Corewell Health Inpatient Hospice and Butterworth Hospital for their compassion and care throughout this difficult time.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be given to Corewell Health Hospice.

To send a message of sympathy to the family, sign Happy Dave's online guest book, or to share a favorite memory, please visit: www.MichiganCremation.com.

Cremation arrangements were entrusted to Michigan Cremation & Funeral Care, Grand Rapids, 616-452-3006, exclusive providers of Veterans Funeral Care.

Ruth E. Geukes



Ruth E. Geukes, a lifelong resident of Middleville, MI, passed away peacefully on May 25, 2025, at the age of 90. Born on January 19, 1935, she was the daughter of Chester and Eleanor (Smith) Geukes.

Ruth graduated from Thornapple-Kellogg High School and immediately became an integral part of the local business community. She worked diligently at Geukes Market, Bradford White, and later found her calling as a respected insurance agent, where she helped many in her community find peace of mind through her guidance and expertise.

Her dedication to service was matched only by her love for Middleville United Methodist Church, where she was a devoted member. Ruth's faith was a cornerstone of her life, and she lived it with grace and compassion, inspiring those around her.

A true outdoorswoman, Ruth found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She was an enthusiastic horse lover and an active member of the Diamond Trail Riding Club. Her passion for horses was only paralleled by her love for golfing, where she spent many sunny afternoons perfecting her swing. Ruth was an avid bowler, her laughter echoing through the alleys as she celebrated both strikes and the joy of the game with friends. Ruth's kindness and warm-hearted nature could also be seen through her years of driving the courtesy cart at the Barry County Fair, a role she cherished as it allowed her to meet and help countless individuals.

Ruth was predeceased by her beloved parents, Chester and Eleanor, and her brother, Donald K. Geukes.

Her memory will be forever held in the hearts of those she leaves behind her sister-in-law, Janet Geukes; her niece, Jennifer, and her husband, Dan Myers; her nephew, Donald Jeffrey, and his wife, Sarah Geukes; and her treasured great-nieces and nephews, Nicholas, Taylor, Lauren Myers, Jack, and Emma Geukes. Each of them will carry forward the love and cherished memories that Ruth imparted throughout her life.

Ruth's family will receive friends on Friday, June 20, 2025 from 11 a.m. - noon at the Beeler-Gores Funeral Home, where her memorial service will be held at noon. Pastor Ron Worley from Middleville United Methodist Church will officiate. Private burial will take place at Mt. Hope Cemetery.

Memorial contributions to Thornapple Emergency Services will be appreciated. Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or leave a condolence message for Ruth's family.

VIEW OBITUARIES ONLINE AT HASTINGSBANNER.COM

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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:

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PIERCE CEDAR CREEK INSTITUTE EVENTS

— JUNE 19-26 —

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

June 1-Sept. 30 — Nature paintings exhibit by Al White. White's paintings will be on display and for sale in the Institute's Visitor Center through Sept. 30. Thirty percent of all sales will be donated to the Institute to further its mission.

June 1-30 — June Storybook Walk: "The Rainbow Hunters" by Andrea Farotto; illustrated by Martina Tonello. Join Bill and his friends as they look for a rainbow. This epic adventure leads them all over their neighborhood. Will they find a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? After your storybook adventure, stop by the Visitor Center to pick up an activity sheet. The Storybook Walk is free and self-guided on the Black Walnut Trail.

Thursday, June 19 — Social Hike, 6 p.m.

Friday, June 20 — Fun Friday, 10 a.m.-noon. Join the Institute for hands-on activities, special guests, games, and crafts centered around a new theme each week. This is a come-and-go event, and all caregivers must remain with their children during this free event.

Saturday, June 21 — MUCC On-the-Ground, 9 a.m.-noon. Join Michigan United Conservation Club (MUCC) at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute for a morning of planting in a newly restored prairie. Participants will learn about prairie restoration and native plants. Lunch is provided. Participants are asked to register online. Further details will be sent before the event. Register at mucc.org/on-the-ground.

Thursday, June 26 — Healthy Planet, Healthy People: E. coli. Program: 11 a.m.-noon; lunch: noon-1 p.m. Join the Barry-Eaton County Health Department for an engaging hour on E. coli. These bacteria are the culprits of many closed beaches in Barry County and are dangerous to the health of humans and our waterways. Join Environmental Health Supervisor David Cormeau as he discusses where these bacteria come from, how the health department works to keep swimmers safe during the summer, and exciting developments in microbial source tracking.

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

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

How business owners can make Social Security part of their retirement planning

HILLARY HATCH
Social Security Administration

Most business owners are focused on growing their business and legacy. But at some point, they must consider a plan for retirement. That's why it's important for business owners to begin thinking about how Social Security fits into their retirement planning. Social Security benefits are part of the retirement plan of almost every American worker – including business owners.

Since there are specific rules for business owners, they should speak with a financial advisor or accountant before applying for benefits. One of the biggest mistakes some business owners make – aside from starting retirement planning too late – is not having a plan at all. This is where a financial expert can give advice on how to prepare for retirement.

Business owners can use their personal my Social Security account at ssa.gov/myaccount to determine eligibility for retirement benefits as well as get a benefit estimate. The publication, "If You Are Self-Employed," at ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10022.pdf, provides important information about Social Security taxes for business owners as well as how to report earnings. Don't delay, start your retirement planning today! For more information, visit the Social Security Administration's "Plan for Retirement" webpage at ssa.gov/prepare/plan-retirement.

Hillary Hatch is the Public Affairs Specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525, or via email at hillary.hatch@ssa.gov.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

Hastings' first telephone service

DAVID MILLER
Special to The Banner

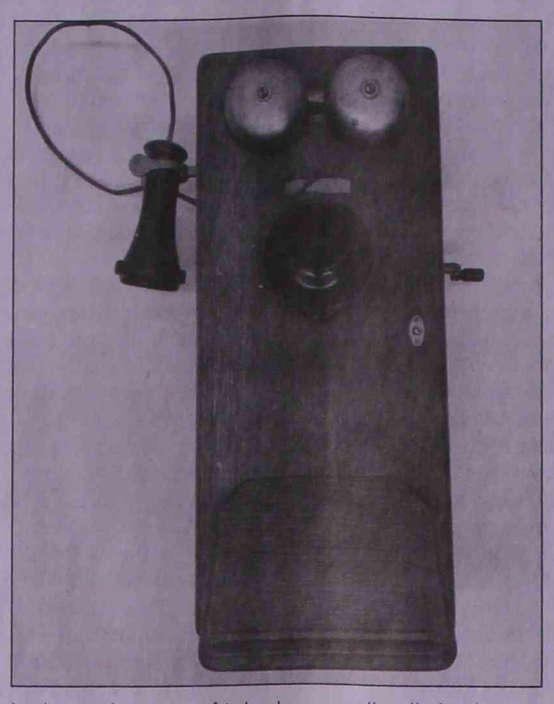
In a world buzzing with texts, tweets, and instant messages, it's easy to forget that modern communication began with a simple ring. As we now stand on the brink of yet another revolution—this time driven by artificial intelligence—it's worth asking: are we really more connected, or just more distracted? Before we rush ahead, let's rewind to where the conversation began—the invention of the telephone.

The telephone was invented in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell and made its quiet debut in Hastings in 1884 with a single toll line connecting the town to Grand Rapids. There were no home telephones—not yet. To place a call, one had to visit the office of W.A. Welton, who operated a makeshift telephone exchange at the Table Factory. Over the next two years, this single connection remained the only telephone service in the city, and only six local subscribers signed up for the service, a modest beginning for what would eventually become a vital part of everyday life in Hastings. (Source: "History of Hastings on the Thornapple," Moore, 2018, p. 212)

In those early years, every telephone call had to be manually routed through an operator. The phones themselves were equipped with crank handles and separate earpieces, earning them the nickname "crank telephones" or, more formally, "magneto phones." The term "magneto" refers to the built-in hand-cranked generator, which used large permanent magnets to produce the alternating current needed to ring the bell on the receiving end. If you're my age or older, you might remember what happened when the old magneto phones were finally retired. Curious schoolchildren—always eager for a bit of mischief—would take them apart to salvage the powerful magnets inside. But for those who left the magneto intact, there was another kind of fun to be had. With a quick crank and two exposed wires, you could persuade a brave classmate to grab hold—just in time for a harmless jolt that sent laughter (and maybe a yelp) echoing throughout the classroom.

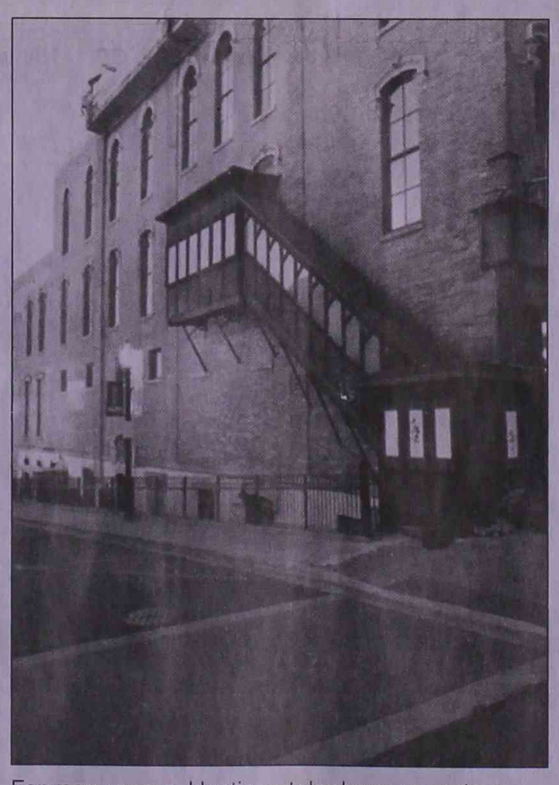
By 1930, phones were likely found in 30 to 40 percent of homes in Hastings, as direct-dialing replaced operator-assisted calls, and yet operators were still manning the switchboards for those who didn't have the newer direct-dial phone. Candlestick phones had cone-shaped earpieces that had to be held in one hand and the receiver in the other. These phones were largely obsolete in new installations, though some remained in service in rural areas or older buildings into the 1940s.

For many years, Hastings telephone operators climbed the narrow stairs at 105 E. State St. to take their place at one of three switchboard stations in the room above what is now Walldorff Brew Pub & Bistro. Among them was Sylvia Walters, who faithfully worked the 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. night shift for 35 years, from 1922 to 1957. I had the pleasure of knowing Sylvia in the 1960s and often visited at her home on Mill Street. Until Sylvia's retirement in 1957, they were still fielding calls from rural residents using crank telephones. It wasn't until the late 1950s, with the introduction of the dial system, that making a call in Hastings meant simply dialing four digits.

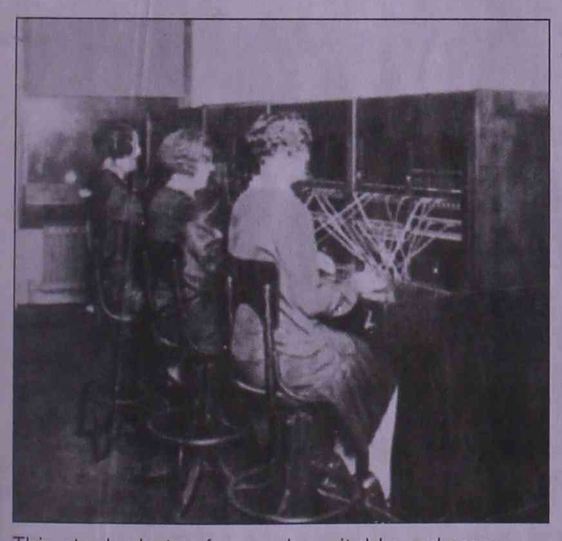


In the early years of telephones, all calls had to be manually routed through an operator. The large magnets used to ring the bell in these early phones earned them the moniker "magneto" phones. **Courtesy photos**

With the advent of rotary dial desk and wall phones in the 1940s and 50s, people could directly dial most numbers without operator assistance. By this time, 75 percent of the homes in Hastings would have this convenience, however, in many neighborhoods—especially in small towns and rural areas—households were still connected to a party line. A single line might serve an entire block, meaning multiple homes shared the same phone circuit. When you picked up the receiver to make a call, you might discover your neighbors already engaged in a conversation and would need to wait until they finished. Proper phone etiquette dictated that you did not listen in, but instead waited patiently for the line to become free. Of course, if the parties on the line were agreeable, a friendly voice might be invited to join the conversation.



For many years, Hastings telephone operators climbed the narrow stairs at 105 E. State St. to take their place at one of three switchboard stations in the room above what is now Walldorff Brew Pub & Bistro.



This stock photo of an early switchboard room resembles that of Hastings.

By this time telephone booths with public payphones appeared, allowing anyone with the correct change in coins to make a private call. The first booths were made of wood and had a door to keep out the weather. In the 1950s, glass and aluminum replaced wood as the building material of choice, making outdoor phone booths commonplace. There were payphones on street corners, in our two laundromats, in nearly every gas station, at Pennock Hospital, and neighborhood grocery stores around town. Payphones began to disappear in the mid-2000s, and the last public payphone was removed in 2022. The decline of payphones was caused by a number of factors, including cell phones and vandalism.

In the days when every phone was a landline, social interaction had a different rhythm. Conversations—whether at the local diner or in a neighbor's living room—were rarely interrupted by a ringing telephone. When the phone did ring, it was usually important. One-on-one conversations were more intentional and, in many ways, more trusting. We took each other at their word, with no expectation of real-time fact-checking or digital cross-referencing. What was said often stood on its own merit, and memory—rather than an intervening search engine.

Teenagers occasionally indulged in harmless telephone pranks—asking if someone's refrigerator was running, for instance—but these were more playful than malicious, a kind of social mischief that rarely crossed into cruelty. The anonymity and immediacy of today's technology had no counterpart in that era. A voice on the phone was personal, recognizable and rooted in community. Even the idea of screening a call was unknown—every ring held the promise of a neighbor, a family member or a bit of local news.

Telephone companies across the United States—including those serving Hastings—gradually transitioned their numbering systems to comply with the newly established North American Numbering Plan (NANP). In Hastings, this meant shifting from the familiar 4-digit local numbers to the standardized 7-digit format—for example, changing from "1234" to a number like "945-1234." This modernization effort likely occurred between 1950 and 1955, in step with a nationwide conversion. To ease the transition, Bell Telephone conducted public outreach and educational presentations, ensuring that residents understood and embraced the new dialing procedures.

Fast forward to the 2000s: As cell phone adoption surged nationwide, Hastings kept pace with the trend. Yet even into the 2010s, an estimated 70 to 80 percent of local households still maintained traditional landlines. Today, however, that number has dwindled to fewer than 20 to 30 percent, with most residents relying exclusively on mobile phones or internet-based calling. I still recall the first time I was caught off guard at the grocery store, thinking the man next to me was striking up a conversation—only to realize he was wearing earbuds and speaking to someone remotely. A quick glance around revealed others who also seemed to be talking to themselves. It was a striking sign of the times—when the private act of a phone call had suddenly become public, silent and nearly invisible.

Today, telephones are no longer fixed to walls or tied to cords. You can purchase one in nearly any store, and the once-monolithic Bell Telephone system has given way to AT&T and a host of competing carriers. Children now carry their own personal phones—devices far more powerful than the first computers—and nearly every phone doubles as a high-resolution camera. No longer just a tool for conversation, the modern phone is a multi-functional device, shaped by an ever-expanding world of apps.

The Hastings schools must now grapple with how to revise phone-use policies while acknowledging both the challenges and the educational potential these devices bring to the classroom. Amid all this innovation, one promising trend has emerged: the encouragement to occasionally unplug—to set the phone down and reclaim a moment of quiet, personal connection in a world that seldom pauses.

David Miller is a moderator for the "Hastings History" Facebook group.



This 1929 Bell Telephone advertisement in The Banner shows two ladies using "candlestick" phones.

The invention of the rotary phone reduced the need for an operator.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

Estate of Jean Marie Cook. Date of birth: June 12, 1936.

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Jean Marie Cook, died May 28, 2025.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Brenda Steele, personal representative, at 214976 Perry Rd., Lake Odessa, MI 48849 within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: June 17, 2025

Brenda Steele
14976 Perry Rd.
Lake Odessa, MI 48849
616-308-3864

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

This firm is a debt collector attempting to collect a debt. Any information we obtain will be used for that purpose.

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, Michigan, starting promptly at One o'clock in the afternoon on 10th day of July, 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.

The mortgage was made by BENJAMIN WILLIAMS and ASHLEY WILLIAMS, husband and wife (collectively, "Mortgagor"), to GREENSTONE FARM CREDIT SERVICES, FLCA, a federally chartered corporation, having an office at 3515 West Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823 (the "Mortgagee"), dated February 10, 2020, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for Barry County, Michigan on February 14, 2020, as Instrument No. 2020-001607, as partially released by a partial release of mortgage dated February 12, 2021, recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for Barry County, Michigan on February 19, 2021 as Instrument No. 2021-002163 (the "Mortgage"). By reason of a default under the conditions of the Mortgage, the Mortgagee elects to declare and hereby declares the entire unpaid amount of the Mortgage due and payable forthwith. Mortgagee is the owner of the indebtedness secured by the Mortgage.

As of the date of this Notice there is claimed to be due for principal and interest on the Mortgage the sum of Three Hundred Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Eight and 63/100 Dollars ($308,738.63). No suit or proceeding at law has been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage or any part thereof.

The premises covered by the Mortgage are situated in the Township of Woodland, County of Barry, State of Michigan, and are described as follows:

Parcel 1: That parcel of land lying and being South of the highway in the East 1/2 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 5, Town 4 North, Range 7 West, Woodland Township, Barry County, Michigan.

Parcel 2: The Northeast 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 8, Town 4 North, Range 7 West, Woodland Township, Barry County, Michigan.

Parcel 3: Beginning at the North 1/4 post of Section 8, Town 4 North, Range 7 West, Woodland Township, Barry County, Michigan; thence North 89 degrees 21 minutes 48 seconds East, 208.71 feet along the North line of said Section; thence South 0 degrees 11 minutes 19 seconds East 417.42 feet parallel with the North and South 1/4 line of said Section; thence South 89 degrees 21 minutes 48 seconds West 208.71 feet to said North and South 1/4 line; thence North 0 degrees 11 minutes 19 seconds West 417.42 feet along said 1/4 line to the place of beginning.

Together with all fixtures, tenements, hereditaments, and appurtenances belonging or in any way appertaining to the premises.

Commonly known as: 6400 Brown Road, Lake Odessa, Michigan 48849

P.P. #08-15-005-300-05; 08-15-008-100-02; 08-15-008-200-07

Notice is further given that the length of the redemption period will be six (6) months from the date of sale, unless the premises are abandoned. If the premises are abandoned, the redemption period will be the later of thirty (30) days from the date of the sale or upon expiration of fifteen (15) days after the Mortgagor is given notice pursuant to MCLA §600.3241a(b) that the premises are considered abandoned and Mortgagor, Mortgagor's heirs, executor, or administrator, or a person lawfully claiming from or under one (1) of them has not given the written notice required by MCLA §600.3241a(c) stating that the premises are not abandoned.

If the premises are sold at a foreclosure sale, under MCLA §600.3278 the Mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the premises at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the Mortgagee for damaging the premises 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.

Dated: June 5, 2025
GREENSTONE FARM CREDIT SERVICES, FLCA
Mortgagee
Timothy Hillegonds
WARNER NORCROSS + JUDD LLP
150 Ottawa Avenue NW
Suite 1500
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2487
(616) 752-2000

DNR: Spongy moths are waning, but keep an eye on your trees (and your picnic table)

The weather is warming up in Michigan, which means it is time for beach days, picnics, barbecues and fun times outside. While everyone is welcome to enjoy the outdoors, some uninvited guests such as invasive spongy moth caterpillars can spoil the fun.

These hungry caterpillars often group together on deciduous trees – those that shed their leaves seasonally – such as oaks. They can strip trees of leaves and release BB-sized pellets of frass (droppings) on whatever is below.

The most recent spongy moth outbreak reached its peak in 2021 but their numbers have been declining for the last few years. In 2025, state forestry officials expect to see some defoliation, or leaf loss, in southwest Michigan, but the moth population should be declining. There may be some small pockets of scattered defoliation in the Upper Peninsula, but Michiganders may see more defoliation from forest tent caterpillars than spongy moths. Native forest tent caterpillars emerge before spongy moths, but they can be found feeding on some of the same species.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has been keeping watch over the defoliation by surveying roughly 20 million acres annually from the air. The acreage of spongy moth defoliation mapped across the state for the past five years includes:

- 2024: 168,879 acres.
- 2023: 156,000 acres.
- 2022: 386,000 acres.
- 2021: 1,350,000 acres.
- 2020: 947,900 acres.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

According to Michigan State University's Enviroweather prediction model, spongy moth eggs should be finished hatching now in the Lower Peninsula. If spongy moth populations are a concern in your area, there are multiple steps you can take to reduce their impact.

In areas where populations are high, it is important to remember that healthy trees will rebound, so management efforts should be concentrated where the caterpillars will cause the most problems.

Before eggs hatch, inspect decks, outdoor furniture, fences and trees (focusing on your favorite outdoor areas) for tan-colored, fuzzy egg masses about the size of a quarter. Scrape any accessible egg masses into a bucket of soapy water or burn or bury them.

Note: If an egg mass has small holes or is falling apart, the eggs may have already hatched.

After hatching has occurred, use a broom to sweep young caterpillars into a bucket of soapy water. Soak them in the water overnight and then dispose.

Create a tree trunk trap: Cut a strip of burlap 18 inches wide and long enough to go around the tree trunk and overlap. Tie a string around the center of the band to make a two layered skirt around the trunk. When the caterpillars climb the tree to eat, they will get caught in the band. You can then scrape them into a bucket of soapy water and dispose.

If you decide to use a pesticide, use one containing Btk (Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki), a highly effective pesticide for spongy moths but with little impact on humans, pets or beneficial insects. This pesticide should be applied to the leaves of trees because it works when the caterpillars ingest it. Timing is everything, as this pesticide persists for only a couple weeks after application. It works best on young caterpillars and should be used within one to two weeks of hatching. Be sure to follow the label instructions to ensure safe application.

DON'T PANIC, STAY SAFE

If you are in an infested area, know that it is impossible to completely get rid of all spongy moth caterpillars. Consider cost, safety and environmental health when you are deciding how to handle the insects.

Stay safe: Avoid climbing trees or using ladders on any unstable surfaces to get to egg masses.

Focus on protecting young and vulnerable trees first. Watering at least once a week can help trees keep their vigor.

Do not overuse pesticides. Choose the right product in the right amount for the situation by following the label instructions. In Michigan, the label is the law.

If you feel it is needed, have larger trees treated by a certified professional.

Caterpillar hairs can cause skin irritation, so you may want to wear gloves while managing caterpillars.

THE GOOD NEWS

Spongy moth outbreaks are cyclical and last up to three years. Populations will collapse due to environmental viral and fungal diseases and remain at unnoticeable levels for eight to 12 years.

These caterpillars feed for about six to eight weeks, usually slowing in midsummer.

Hardwoods that are affected will usually releaf in mid- to late July.

LEARN MORE

More information on spongy moth is available at Michigan.gov/Invasives.

If further information is needed, email questions to DNR-FRD-Forest-Health@Michigan.gov. Note that responses may be delayed due to high volume during the spring and summer.

— Michigan Department of Natural Resources

DEMONSTRATION

Continued from Page 1

everyone else that needs our support in this world. The Constitution needs to go ahead and be looked at to be respected and followed."

Yearly held a sign reading, "No Kings, just equal rights for all" with artwork depicting a black cat holding a pride flag and swatting at a Republican party elephant logo topped by the president's signature hairstyle.

Indivisible event organizer Mary Beth Adyniec took a moment after the event to thank Hastings Chief of Police Dale Boulter for his team's presence downtown throughout the afternoon. Officers from the Hastings City Police were stationed on street corners and a few patrolled the area in vehicles after watching over the opening rally at Thornapple Plaza.

Boulter noted the unexpected size of the demonstration. Initial thoughts were that maybe 35 folks would attend. The number grew to 150 on the official Indivisible sign-up rolls, and the group swelled to two or three times that size.

"Amazing," Indivisible financial chair Marshall Zebe, of Hastings, said of the crowd. "So many more than we were expecting. Originally, we had about 150 signed up and just seeing the crowd wrap completely around the courthouse was insane. I guess it's about three times that, probably."

"We're a brand-new organization," he added. "We're just still trying to get a word out and joining on with the 'No Kings' rally, I think is what really helped boost us … it was an amazing turnout, an amazing event."

President Trump had a handful of defenders downtown as well, many shouting their support from vehicles as the gathering at Thornapple Plaza turned into a march around the Barry County Courthouse and back to the plaza.

The line of protesters stretched along at least three-quarters of the block surrounding the courthouse at its apex from the corner of S. Church Street and W. Court Street, west to S. Broadway Avenue, north to W. State Street and then back east beyond S. Church Street.

A gentleman in a cardboard crown took some time to draw up some signs to protest the protesters in the Ace Hardware parking lot, and then rolled through the streets in his vehicle reminding the demonstrators that "Obama deported 3 million," with his sign.

Issues with the way deportations are being handled brought Diego Cano from Dowagiac to participate.

"We're out here to support all the immigrants who are going through like a rough time with the whole deportation, especially with the riots that are happening in California, and that's expected to spread throughout different states," Cano said. "So we're just out here making sure that people are aware of what's going on and also supporting education, because education is key and they're trying to defund education, a lot of programs. It all ties in. Immigration. Education. Medicaid. We need to stand up and protect all these things that we have because once they take them away, it's hard to get them back … we're out here supporting a friend who invited us."

He said it was his first time in Hastings, and he called it a beautiful place saying it was amazing to see "all the people coming together to support all these different issues."

The event coincided with a military parade in Washington D.C. Saturday to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the start of the United States Army, and protesters commemorated that anniversary with a banner as well as their own handmade signs.

Kicking off at Thornapple Plaza, the group of protesters gathered to listen to speakers and participate in both chants and singing.

Michael Lynch, one of the keynote speakers at the rally, is an economist from Alma who ran against Republican John Moolenaar in the 2024 race for Michigan's 2nd Congressional District. He suffered a one-sided loss in the heavily Republican district.

Lynch, a Democrat, aims to earn the seat again in the 2026 mid-terms.

Lynch's message focused on empowering individuals and encouraging open dialogue to help bridge divisions and find common ground.

"The power of this country and the greatness of this country is not in our leaders. It's not in our icons. It's not in the beauty of our land. It's in our people and our people are you," Lynch said to cheers.

"When we initially think about 'no kings' what comes to mind is the authoritarian and fascist activities in the executive branch. But, it goes deeper than that," Lynch added.

Lynch explained that a king mentality doesn't necessarily originate at the highest levels of power; rather, any time an authority figure tries to take away someone's rights, it reflects a king mentality.

As Lynch and other speakers addressed the crowd, several vehicles driving down State Street honked their horns in support. Protesters stood beside the street holding their signs.



"No Kings" protesters look on during a rally at Thornapple Plaza in downtown Hastings Saturday afternoon. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**



Marcia Szumowski, an organizer with Barry County Indivisible, speaks to the protesters gathered at Thornapple Plaza in downtown Hastings Saturday afternoon during a "No Kings" protest. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**



A Dodge Ram truck with a "MAGA" sign and United States flags responds to the "No Kings" protestors marching along State Street in downtown Hastings Saturday. **Photo by Brett Bremer**



"The Golf Guys" gather together during their annual trip to northern Michigan. The group raised over $1,200 for youth golf in the Barry County area through donations this year.

Golf Guys' annual trip continues to help fund local youth golf

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

They're affectionately known as "The Golf Guys" and their annual trip to northern Michigan once again has helped raise funds for local youth golfers.

The group, organized by Ron Martin and Ray Rose, enjoy friendly competition and camaraderie on multiple courses from May 28 to June 1. Each year, the group's goal is to support the YMCA of Barry County youth golf program held at The Legacy in Hastings. The group provided the Y with $1,225 in donations this year which helped with financial assistance, appropriate equipment and course fees for the young players.

Gina McMahon, YMCA Recreation and Outreach Director, noted that 39 kids are signed up for golf this month and they are learning skills from the course pro Matt Townsley on Mondays and Wednesdays at The Legacy.

More about how the YMCA and how local donors impact the community can be found at ymcaofbarrycounty.org.

The Legacy also hosts the Barry County Junior Golf Association and PGA Junior League competitors throughout the summer. A few of the PGA Jr. League players were even able to take in some of the golf at the Meijer LPGA Classic last weekend at Blythefield Country Club in Belmont.



Lakewood senior Bryan Aguilera is surrounded by family and teammates after signing on with the Muskegon Community College Wrestling program May 14 at Lakewood High School.



Lakewood senior Joel Simon (seated center) is joined by Cornerstone University wrestling coach Chris Williamson (clockwise from top right), Lakewood head coach Tony Harmer, Lakewood assistant coach Nic, Boucher and Lakewood assistant coach Tim Grove to celebrate signing with the Cornerstone Wrestling program May 1 at Lakewood High School. **Photos provided**

Vikings make plans to fill collegiate wrestling rooms

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Lakewood varsity wrestling team had one of its best seasons ever in the winter of 2024-25 and now some of the most talented members of the graduating class of 2025 have plans set to wrestle on the college level.

Recent Lakewood High School graduates Bryan Aguilera and Korin Mitchell signed on with the Muskegon Community College Wrestling program last month during ceremonies at Lakewood High School and Joel Simon finalized his plans to join the Cornerstone University Wrestling program. They join LJ Rogers who finalized his plans to wrestle for Adrian College back in February.

The Lakewood varsity wrestling team won conference, district and regional championships on its way to the MHSAA Division 3 State Semifinals. The Lakewood varsity girls' wrestling team competed in duals for the first time this winter as well.

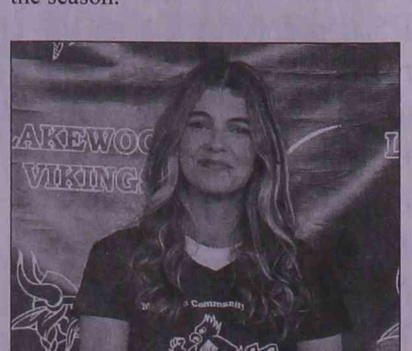
Simon was the MHSAA Division 3 state runner-up at 215 pounds as a senior while compiling a record of 52-5. He was a four-time state qualifier in high school and a three-time state medalist. He was third at the MHSAA Individual Wrestling Finals as a sophomore at 215 pounds and fourth as a junior.

In a shortened season at heavyweight, Aguilera was 14-5 as a senior and was a regional qualifier.

Rogers had 39 wins in his senior season.

Mitchell closed her senior, and only varsity wrestling season, with 27 victories including 26 by fall.

"No one carried our team more," said Lakewood girls' coach Lane Allen after the season.



Lakewood High School senior Korin Mitchell celebrates signing to join the Muskegon Community College Women's Wrestling program at Lakewood High School May 1.

SYNOPSIS
Hastings Charter Township
Regular Meeting
June 10, 2025

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

All board members present

Approved agenda / consent agenda

Received financial audit report

Discussed township services

Approved payment of bills

Dept. reports received and put on file

Motion to adjourn 8:00 pm

Submitted, David J. Olson – Clerk
Attested to by
Jim Partridge – Supervisor

Synopsis
Hope Township
Regular Board meeting
June 9, 2025

Meeting opened at 6:30 pm

Approved:

Consent agenda

Tax Rate request L-4029

Audit engagement letter

Budget amendment for audit services

Resolution 2025-7 Primary Bank Depository

Proceed with Wall Lake Weed control renewal

Resolution 2025-8 Foreclosed properties

Adjourned at 7:21 pm

Submitted by:
Deborah Jackson, Clerk
Attested to by
Doug Peck, Supervisor

FORECLOSURE 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 01:00 PM, July 17, 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 certain mortgage made by Michael David Soya, an unmarried man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as Mortgagee, as Nominee for Amerifirst Financial Corporation, its successors, and assigns, Mortgagee, dated November 19, 2019, and recorded on December 26, 2019, as Document Number: 2019-012696, Barry County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated May 30, 2025 and recorded June 04, 2025 by Document Number: 2025-004591, , on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Fifty-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Ten and 15/100 ($59,210.15) including interest at the rate of 4.25000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Township of Assyria, Barry County, Michigan, and are described as: Beginning at a point 10.12 chains South of the Northwest Corner of Section 22, Town 1 North, Range 7 West; Thence South 16 1/2 feet; Thence East 3.162 chains; Thence North 16 1/2 feet; Thence West 3.162 chains to the place of beginning. Also conveying commencing 41 rods, 12.4 links South of the Northwest Corner of Section 22 of said Assyria Township; Thence East 12 rods, 16.2 links; Thence South 12 rods 16.2 links; Thence West 12 rods, 16.2 links; Thence North to beginning, all in Town 1 North, Range 7 West. Commonly known as: 13165 S M-66 HWY, BELLEVUE, MI 49021 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) 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. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: June 19, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 25MI00398-1 (06-19)(07-10)

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 July 3, 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): Pamela Wurm, a single woman Original Mortgagee: United States of America acting through the Rural Housing Service or successor agency, United States Department of Agriculture Date of mortgage: March 05, 2004 Recorded on March 10, 2004 Recording Instrument 1123431. Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Forty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Forty-Five and 34/100 Dollars ($142,645.34) Mortgaged premises: Located in the Township of Hastings, Barry County and described as: LOT 20 OF BROOKFIELD ACRES, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER 5 OF PLATS ON PAGE 29. Commonly known as 1989 Campground Rd, Hastings, MI 49058. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall 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 property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 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. ALAW 5404 Cypress Center Drive, Suite 300, Tampa, FL 33609 (813) 221-4743 24-031216

(06-05)(06-26)

GO ONLINE TO
HASTINGSBANNER.COM

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 JULY 3, 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 Perry Snook, married man, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Union Home Mortgage Corp., Mortgagee, dated April 1, 2021 and recorded April 5, 2021 in Instrument Number 2021-004544 and Loan Modification Agreement recorded on June 20, 2024, in Instrument Number 2024-004599, Barry County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Eighty-Five and 48/100 Dollars ($182,685.48).

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 JULY 3, 2025.

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

Lot 34, Sundago Park, Township of Hastings, Barry County, Michigan, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 2 of Plats, Page 71, Barry County Records.

65 Sundago Park St, Hastings, Michigan 49058

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: June 5, 2025
File No. 25-007226
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(06-05)(06-26)

NOTICE
Case No. 24-629-CZ, Barry County Trial Court – Circuit Division NOTICE OF SALE BY COMMISSIONER TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to the Order of the Circuit Court for the County of Barry, entered on May 12, 2025 and in accordance with Michigan Court Rule 3.403(B), the undersigned Commissioner, William Buhl, having the authority to do so, will sell at public auction the real property situated in the Township of Baltimore, County of Barry, State of Michigan, more particularly described as: Parcel I: The East ½ of the Southeast ¼ and the Southeast ¼ of the Northeast 1/4, Section 16, Town 2 North, Range 8 West, EXCEPT: that portion of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 16, Town 2 South, Range 8 West, lying South of the centerline of Maple Grove Road. Also: Any portion of the North ½ of the North ½ of the Northeast ¼ of Section 21, Town 2 North, Range 8 West, lying North of the centerline of Maple Grove Road, Baltimore Township, Barry County, Michigan. Parcel II: Commencing at the Southwest corner of the North one-half of the Southwest one-quarter of Section 15, thence North on the West line of said Section 100 rods, thence East at right angles to said Section line 20 rods, thence Southeasterly to a point 40 rods North of a point on the South line of said North one-half of the Southwest one-quarter of said Section 15, 60 rods East of said Southwest corner, thence South 40 rods to said South line of said North one-half of the Southwest one-quarter, thence West on said South line of the North one-half of said Southwest one-quarter of Section 15, 60 rods to the place of beginning, Baltimore Township, Barry County, Michigan. Commonly Known As: Vacant Land Parcel Nos: 08-02-016-276-00 and 08-02-015-301-00, respectively (the "Property"). The Property is comprised of the two (2) parcels referenced above. For the purposes of the sale, the legal description shall not be separated, and the Property shall be conveyed in its entirety to the successful bidder. If the street address or tax identification number(s) above are inconsistent with the legal description above, the legal description shall govern and control. The sale will be conducted on July 17, 2025 at 1:00 PM at the following location: The Barry County Courthouse, in the City of Hastings, County of Barry, State of Michigan, being the building where the Circuit Court for the County of Barry is held. Terms of Sale 1. The sale will be conducted by public auction to the highest bidder. 2. The successful bidder will be required to pay in cash or certified funds the full purchase immediately at the time of sale. 3. The property is sold "as is" and "where is," without any warranties or representations as to the condition of the property. 4. The sale is subject to all existing encumbrances, easements, and restrictions of record. 5. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property, and potential purchasers are encouraged to contact the Barry County Register of Deeds Office or a title insurance company for additional information, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Additional Information For further information regarding the sale, interested parties may contact the undersigned Commissioner at: William Buhl 35903 64th Ave, PO Box 411 Paw Paw, MI 49073 269-716-0318
Dated: May 27, 2025
(06-05)(07-10)

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FORECLOSURE NOTICE (ALL COUNTIES)
AS A DEBT COLLECTOR, WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. 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 a.m./p.m. on June 26, 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 having been made in the terms and conditions of a certain mortgage made by Leroy S. Martinez of Barry County, Michigan, Mortgagor to Kellogg Community Credit Union dated the 13th day of August, 2018, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds, for the County of Barry and State of Michigan, on the 22nd day of August, 2018, in Document No. 2018-008112 of the Barry County Records on which mortgage there is claimed to be due, at the date of this notice, for principal of $189,442.57 plus accrued interest at 5.62500% percent per annum. Which said premises are described as follows: All that certain piece or parcel of land situated in the Township of Johnstown, in the County of Barry and State of Michigan and described as follows to wit: Beginning at a point in the highway running along the Southerly side of Fine Lake distant North 87 degrees 15 minutes West, 122 feet from the Northwest comer of the recorded Plat of Shore Acres Plat No. 1, on the Southwest fraction of Section 29, Town 1 North, Range 8 West, running thence South 87 degrees 15 minutes East, 69.2 feet; thence South 16 degrees 15 minutes East, parallel with and distant 3 feet Easterly from the East side of Cottage, a distance of 155 feet; thence South 73 degrees 45 minutes West 56 feet to Weed`s East Line; thence North 19 degrees 15 minutes West, along Weed`s East line, 176.8 feet to the place of beginning. Together with all right, title and interest of first parties in and to the land between the Northerly extension of Easterly and Westerly lines of parcel herein described and Fine Lake and subject to the rights of the public in and to the highway running over and across the Northerly end of the parcel herein described. Commonly known as: 60 East Hickory Road, Battle Creek, MI 49017 Tax ID: 09-029-022-00 If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale the borrower, pursuant to MCLA 600.3278 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. The redemption period shall be six months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. Dated: May 29, 2025 By: Benjamin N. Hoen #P-81415 Weltman, Weinberg & Reis Co., L.P.A. 5990 West Creek Road, Suite 200 Independence, OH 44131 Telephone: 216-739-5100 Fax: 216-363-4034 Email: bhoen@weltman.com WWR#: 25-000381-1
(05-29)(06-19)

MHSAA now registering officials for 2025-26

The Michigan High School Athletic Association is accepting registrations online or by mail for game officials for the 2025-26 school year.

The MHSAA registered 8,891 officials for the 2024-25 school year, another of a recent series of increases as registrations continue to trend back to pre-COVID totals.

All officials who register may sign up for up to two sports as part of their registration. Officials also will receive membership in the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), which comes with a variety of educational and training resources and the NASO's Shield liability insurance that will provide $6 million in coverage for officials while they are working both MHSAA and non-MHSAA events.

For new and returning officials, a $70 fee covers registration for up to two sports. Officials may register for additional sports at $16 per sport.

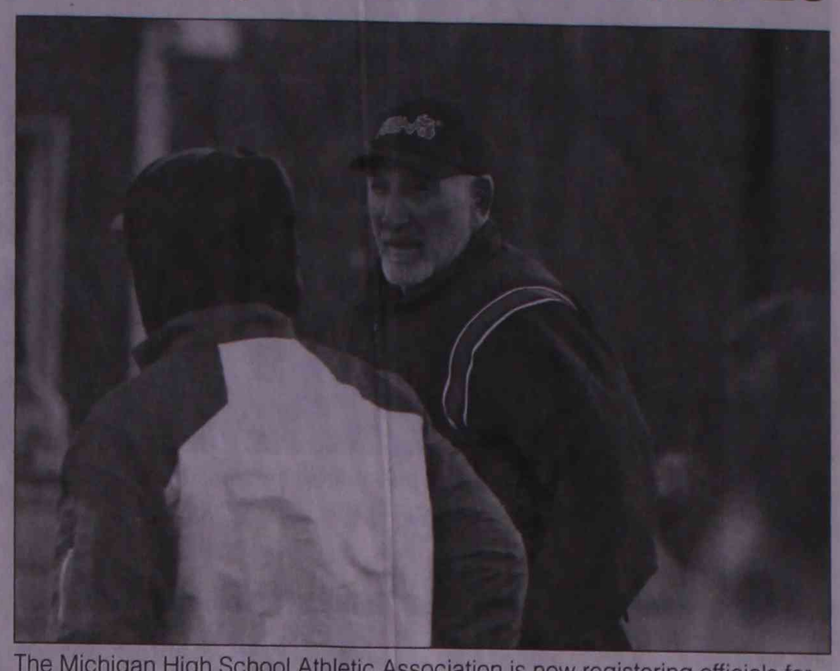
To avoid a $30 late fee, all fall sport registration applications must be received by Aug. 18, 2024. Winter sports registrations must be received by Nov. 17 to avoid the late fee, and spring sports registrations must be received by March 25, 2026.

Online registration can be accessed by clicking "Officials" on the home page of the MHSAA Website at mhsaa.com. More information about officials registration may be obtained by contacting the MHSAA by phone at (517) 332-5046 or by e-mail at register@mhsaa.com.

There is an officials' registration test for first-time officials, derived from the MHSAA Officials Guidebook. New officials and those who didn't officiate during 2024-25 also must complete the online MHSAA Principles of Officiating course. Additional exams must be taken by those registering for football or basketball for the first time or those who were not registered for those sports during the previous school year. Links to the Officials Guidebook, Principles of Officiating presentation and the football and basketball mechanics manuals can be found by following the "New Officials" link on the Officials page of the MHSAA Website.

There also are opportunities to officiate for students at least 14 years old and in grades 9-12 through the MHSAA Legacy Program. Juniors and seniors may officiate subvarsity contests, while freshmen and sophomores may officiate contests at the middle school/junior high levels. Mentor officials will work events with Legacy participants to provide guidance and support. Find information on the Legacy Program by clicking "Officials Registration" on the Officials page of the MHSAA Website and reading under "Student Legacy Program Requirements."

- BB



The Michigan High School Athletic Association is now registering officials for the 2025-26 school year. Tony Joostberns was one of nearly 9,000 officials working high school sports in the state of Michigan last school year.

PRAIRIEVILLE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PRAIRIEVILLE, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing will be held on July 10, 2025, commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Prairieville Township Hall, 10115 S. Norris Rd., Delton MI, 49046 within the Township, as required under the provisions of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act and the Zoning Ordinance for the Township.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, In addition to participation during an public hearing, members of the public may also provide comments for the Planning Commission's consideration by emailing or mailing those comments to the Planning Commission for receipt prior to the meeting, in care of the Township Zoning Administrator, Mark Thompson (mthompson@pcimi.com) or by leaving a phone message prior to the meeting with the Township Zoning Administrator, Mark Thompson at 269-948-4088.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the item(s) to be considered at said public hearing include, in brief, the following:

1. A request from property owner, Dan Rogers, 12705 Merlau Ave, Plainwell, MI 49080 for a Special Land Use/Site Plan Review to allow for an accessory building on vacant property and failing to meet the size requirements pursuant to provisions in Section 4.20"Residential Accessory Buildings" of the Prairieville Township Zoning Ordinance. The subject site is unaddressed with an unassigned parcel number split from parcel 08-007-006-50, 12705 Merlau Ave, Plainwell, MI 49080. The subject site is currently zoned R2- Medium Density Residential.
2. Such other business as may properly come before the Planning Commission

The Prairieville Township Planning Commission and Township Board reserve the right to make changes in the above-mentioned proposed amendment(s) at or following the public hearing.

All interested persons are invited to be present at the aforesaid time and place, or, if an electronic meeting is held, to participate via the electronic meeting.

Prairieville Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon four (4) days' prior notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township Clerk at the address or telephone number listed below.

PRAIRIEVILLE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
By: Fritz Bork, Chairperson
Prairieville Township Hall
11015 S. Norris Rd.
Delton, Michigan 49046

LEGAL NOTICE FOR 2025 BARRY COUNTY CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

The Barry County Conservation Easement (BCCE) Board is pleased to announce the 2025 application cycle for the Barry County Farmland Preservation Program. **Deadline for submission is FRIDAY, August 1, 2025 at the Barry County Administration Office.** The BCCE program was created to help landowners place conservation easements on their parcels to permanently preserve important farmland and natural land. Landowners retain ownership of their land and may receive compensation for their conservation easement based on a state approved appraisal of their land. Participation is completely voluntary. A land owner work shop is scheduled for Thursday, July 3, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., at the Tyden Center Community Rm., 121 S. Church St., Hastings. Interested landowners may obtain an information packet and application for this voluntary program by contacting Heather Wing at 269-275-2351 or heatherlwing@gmail.com.

Waterways Grant funding to help fund Delton boat ramp

Delton is one of 12 communities throughout the state getting a share of $3.8 million in Waterways Grant Program funding to boost recreational boating the the Michigan Department of Natural Resources announced last week.

This year, projects in Alger, Baraga, Barry, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Huron, Mackinac, Macomb, Mason and Sanilac counties were approved for projects that include marina renovation, dock replacements, seawall improvements, fuel tank replacement and engineering studies.

The grant award will help cover the cost of ramp replacement at Upper Crooked Lake Park in Prairieville Township. The grant amount requested through the program was $28,000 to cover half of the $56,000 project.

"Michigan is surrounded by 20% of the world's fresh water and defined by our lakes, rivers, wetlands and coastlines," said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. "There's nothing more quintessentially Michigan than getting out on the water for a day fishing, boating or just having fun. These Waterways grants will open Michigan's great outdoors to more Michigan families and make our state a better place to live, work and play. Let's keep working together to protect Michigan's treasured natural resources and pass them on to future generations."

The funding is made possible through the DNR Parks and Recreation Division's Waterways Grant Program, which began in 1949 with the goal of expanding the harbor system along the Great Lakes and boating access sites throughout the state. Today, the system includes more than 1,200 state-sponsored boating access sites, 19 state-managed harbors and 63 local state-sponsored harbors of refuge along the Great Lakes.

"Michigan is home to great boating and fantastic freshwater recreation opportunities," said Kristen Kosick, DNR Parks and Recreation Division chief. "We have residents who live on the water, those who travel all over the state to boat and visitors who come here from around the world because it's the Great Lakes State. Our beautiful state offers outdoor recreation opportunities and picturesque views not found anywhere else, so it's critical that the DNR helps invest in and fund Michigan's harbors and boating access sites for the benefit of all."

Local units of government and state colleges and universities are eligible to apply for grant assistance for recreational boating improvements and development at grant-in-aid harbors and public boating access sites. The grant-in-aid program provides matching funding to help support quality recreational boating infrastructure. Communities are asked to match 50% of required funds.

The Waterways Program Grants webpage shows the full list of 2025 Waterways Grants/description of projects.

The grants are funded through the Michigan State Waterways Fund, a restricted fund derived primarily from boat registration fees and a portion of Michigan's gas tax that supports the construction, operation and maintenance of public recreational boating facilities.

The application period for the next round of Waterways Grant Program funding is due April 1, 2026.

- BB

SPORTS

Watson throws herself onto Olivet U. track team

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

There was steady progress for recent Hastings High School graduate Zoe Watson in the discus circle throughout four years of varsity track and field.

She'll hope for more of the same at Olivet University.

Watson signed on with the Comets last month to join their Women's Track and Field program next season.

"I think they have a good criminal justice program, and I really like the environment and like the campus," Watson said.

She said she wants to study criminal justice because "I think that's one way I can directly make a difference in my community."

Watson closed her senior season with a personal record of 97 feet 9 inches in the discus and 29-5 in the shot put. She was fifth at the Interstate-8 Athletic Conference Championships this spring in the discus and tenth in the shot put, and she was a regional medalist in the discus.

She added nearly ten feet a year throughout high school in the discus after only getting one season of throwing in the shot put during middle school due to Covid. Her first competitive throw her freshman season went 62-6 in the discus. She had a throw as far as 70-1 before the season was up, got to 82-1 her sophomore spring and then 92-6 as a junior.



The Saxons' Zoe Watson closes out her senior year signing on with the Olivet University Women's Track and Field team alongside Hastings track and field throws coach Jamie Murphy and some of her throwing teammates May 12 at Hastings High School. **Photo by Brett Bremer**

Watson grew to like the discus competition more than the shot put through high school.

"I like that it's more technical rather than like brute strength.

"It's really about driving your chest up and stomping down on your left foot and getting your block through," she added, noting her improvements. "I think I've done a good job at getting those through, and getting out of my head a lot. In the past couple of years I've been in my head and I've been doing a lot better at getting out of it."

She was hoping to hit the 100-foot mark before the end of her senior season, but came up just short of that, but she really enjoyed her final spring with the track season. Watson said it was the most cohesive throwing group that the Saxons have had throughout her high school years.

Watson said she was really appreciative of Hasting track and field throws coach Jamie Murphy spending extra time after practices to work on technique and mental improvements, and she credited him with really helping to boost her confidence.

Collegiate track and field also includes javelin and hammer throws.

"I messed around with javelin a couple years ago, but that's mostly for sprinters because you have to be kind of fast to do it, but I think I'll be good at hammer. I'm really looking forward to that," Watson said.

Throughout high school, Watson has also been a part of the Hastings High School basketball, sideline cheer, competitive cheer and girls' swimming and diving programs.

Correction:

Kylee Hoebeke, the Thornapple Kellogg varsity softball team's senior shortstop, was incorrectly identified by her sister's name in the story on the TK softball team's district semifinal contest with Wayland on page 8 of the June 5 edition of the Hastings Banner.



Hastings senior Hunter Pennington signs on with the Kellogg Community College Men's Bowling team during a ceremony at Hastings High School May 21. **Photos provided**



Hastings senior Miles Lipsey celebrates signing on with the Kellogg Community College Men's Bowling program at Hastings High School, May 14.

Saxon duo taking its winning ways to KCC

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Saxons won their first Interstate-8 Athletic Conference boys' bowling championship last winter, and now a couple of Saxons will try and help Kellogg Community College chase championships.

Recent Hastings High School graduates Miles Lipsey and Hunter Pennington both last month signed on to join the Bruin Men's Bowling program next season.

Lipsey was a four-year varsity bowler for Hastings and earned spots in the state finals at the end of his sophomore and junior seasons. He rolled a high game of 241 in his senior season and averaged a score of 174 pins per game this season.

Lipsey was the runner-up at the 2025 Interstate-8 Athletic Conference Singles Championship.

Pennington was the anchor for the Saxons throughout his senior season and closed the year with a scoring average of 180 per game. He had a high game of 253 in his senior season.

The Kellogg Community College Bruins were fourth in the western division of the Michigan Community College Athletic Association competition last season and placed fifth at the ten-team MCCAA Bowling Championships.

The next Bruins' bowling season begins in early January, 2026.



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We are a growing company of 21 community newspapers serving 15 Michigan counties that are delivered weekly to more than 335,000 households with an additional 500,000 monthly online readers.

Trojans celebrate their college-bound athletes

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor



Thornapple Kellogg High School celebrated its senior athletes who have earned the chance to compete in collegiate athletics in the high school auditorium with a signing day event last month. The group included (front from left), Abby Dumond, Aubrey Hawks, Kylee Hoebeke, Lydia Schilthroat, Brooklyn Harmon, Kenzie Bouma, Lucas McNabnay, Jacob Draaisma, (back) Ava Crews, Emma Gibson, Ailana Leos, Hunter Tietz, Isaac Ruth, Jacob Davis, Bradley Moreman, Brody Wiersma and CJ Lennert. Missing from photo is Simeon Biltawi. **Photo provided**

Many of them just finished their sporting days with the Trojans.

Brooklyn Harmon on the medal stand at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Track and Field Finals, and Jacob Draaisma cruising around the track there at the finals in Kentwood too.

Kylee Hoebeke pushing Wayland to the limit as the TK varsity softball team worked to try and upend the Wildcats for a district championship.

Thornapple Kellogg High School honored a group of 18 senior student athletes who will continue their playing days on the collegiate level during the annual senior signing day event last month.

Harmon and Hoebeke are headed to Grand Valley State University, Harmon to run the hurdles for the Laker Women's Track and Field team and Hoebeke to play for the Laker Women's Softball team. Ava Crews, another track and field and cross country stand-out for TK, will join Harmon in the GVSU running programs.

Draaisma is the lone member of the group headed to a university competing on the NCAA Division 1 level with his decision to join the Chicago State University Men's Track and Field program.

Draaisma, who didn't start running competitively in high school until the spring of his junior season, was the OK Gold Conference Champion, the Barry County Meet Champion and an individual state qualifier in cross country as a senior, his lone season of running varsity cross country at TK. His junior track and field season he was the OK Gold Conference runner-up in the 1600-meter run and a Division 2 state qualifier in the 800-meter run. This spring, Draaisma won the 800-meter run and the 1600-meter run at the OK Gold Conference Championships, placed fourth in the 3200-meter run.

"Initially, I just emailed a bunch of schools around and kind of see saw who would respond," Draaisma said. "They called me back and I talked to them and I went on a visit there. I love the area, kind of getting out of the smaller town just to feel it for college. It seemed like a great place to go."

Harmon, who became the Trojans' first ever Division 1 state medalist this spring with a seventh-place finish in the 100-meter hurdles at the track and field finals, is looking forward to progressing with her technique and speed a little closer to home.

"I didn't want to go super far away from home just because my family and I are really close," Harmon said. "So I felt like it was a good fit. I can be away, but still super close. They have a really good track program and the facilities are super nice, and I love their coaches."

Crews earned all-state honors in cross country last fall, and Draaisma just missed that honor. Hoebeke was named honorable mention all-state at shortstop in Division 2 this spring for the Trojan softball program.

Harmon and fellow 2025 graduate Brody Wiersma were named this year's OK Conference Athlete of the Year award winners at TKHS. Wiersma, who missed out on competing in football, basketball and baseball throughout his senior season due to an injury sustained on the Trojans' first offensive drive of the fall football season, is looking forward to getting the chance to return to the baseball field next season for the Aquinas College Saints.

Wiersma is one of three TK baseball players headed to the next level, joined by Bradley Moerman (Trine University) and Jacob Davis (Alpena Community College.)

The Trojan group also included CJ Lennert (Olivet Nazarene University Football), Lucas McNabnay (Aquinas College baseball), Aubrey Hawks (Alma College swimming), Abby Dumond (Alma College diving), Hunter Tietz (Davenport University swimming), Mackenzie Bouma (Grace Christian University softball), Lydia Schilthroat (Grand Rapids Community College basketball), Isaac Ruth (Grand Rapids Community College soccer), Simeon Biltawi (Grace Christian University soccer), Emma Gibson (Albion College wrestling) and Ailana Leos (West Florida University golf).

The list includes all-conference honorees, captains, all-state award winners and more.

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