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Lake Odessa faces setback in hiring search

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

The Lake Odessa Village Council may be back to square one – again – in its search for a new lead administrator. Or, maybe not.

Interim Village Manager Gregg Guetschow had reportedly made a "conditional" offer to William Joseph, the former Mt. Pleasant mayor and Paw Paw village manager, for the position of deputy manager. That was following a unanimous vote by the Lake Odessa Village Council on June 16 recommending Joseph for the position.

Village officials had created the deputy manager's post, based on a suggestion by Guetschow after ending a hiring search for a full-time manager in December 2024 without offering the job to either of two finalists. In hopes of attracting a broader range of applicants, the council agreed to the new deputy manager position, with plans for the individual to be mentored by Guetschow for a year before then being considered for promotion to manager.

After receiving more than a dozen applications, council members interviewed four candidates, including Joseph, during a special meeting May 31.

But, the hiring process took a surprise turn last week when Joseph informed Guetschow he was withdrawing his name from consideration for the deputy manager's post.

"It has been my pleasure these past few months during the deputy manager hiring process to meet with your staff, learn about your community and speak with you about the future of Lake Odessa," Joseph stated in a letter dated Thursday, June 26. "I was very honored to earn your recommendation to fulfill this position and join your community. I regret to inform you that after some detailed conversations with Manager Guetschow, and personal reflection, that I will no longer be seeking the appointment of deputy manager.

"The opportunity to work and become a leader in the community of Lake Odessa will be exceptional for the person who is the right fit and be amongst very professional and friendly staff, council and community members," he added. "I wish you and your community the very best, and thank you for your time and service."

With their top choice for deputy manager having turned down the job, the village council hosted a special meeting Monday, June 30, to consider their options, including whether to repost the position or move on to their second choice, current Department of Public Works staffer Jacob Hanson.

But, first, Village President Karen Banks asked Guetschow if he had any more details on Joseph's decision.

"It's a personal decision on his part," Guetschow said.

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City, county, state and community officials, along with representatives from CopperRock Construction break ground at the site of the future Hastings Riverwalk Lofts on Tuesday, July 1. **Photos by Randy Passeno**

Officials break ground at Hastings Riverwalk Lofts

Molly Macleod
Editor

When city and county officials, community leaders and developers took their shovels to the ground at 328 and 420 E. Mill Street in Hastings this week, the dirt thrown meant more than the beginning of a construction project that will bring sorely needed housing to Barry County. It is a catalyst for greater impact in Hastings and Barry County — and the continuation of a late philanthropist's dream.

Construction at the Hastings Riverwalk Lofts is officially underway after a ceremonial groundbreaking was held Tuesday, July 1. Hundreds gathered for the event, with speakers highlighting the long road developers, city and county officials, and community organizations such as the Barry Community Foundation (BCF) and the Barry County Chamber & Economic Development Alliance (BCCEDA) and more took to see the project come to fruition.

CopperRock Construction, the project's Grand Rapids-based developer, plans to construct 135 units between the three buildings split between the adjoining 420 E. Mill St. and 328 E. Mill St. properties. The apartments will be offered in 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units. A portion of the units will be set aside for affordable housing.

Construction on the project is set to be wrapped up by June 2026.

Developers will also construct a fourth, 15,000-square-foot building on the site meant for community use. The community building will contain a commercial kitchen and space for the Mill Street Market, a local food co-op offering. Additionally, the building will house a daycare center.

"We're very excited about this project," said CopperRock senior development specialist Greg Taylor on Tuesday. "You can see from our sign over here we have a lot of support from a lot of folks — city, county, the state, multiple lenders…"

Developers got creative when it came to funding the housing project. After jumping through multiple bureaucratic hoops at the city, county and state levels, CopperRock was able to secure tax increment financing through a brownfield redevelopment plan, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing, Michigan State Housing Development Authority funding, support from private and community donors, along with a recent boon from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) program. That recent funding from the state contributes another $921,510 — bringing the project's total investment in Hastings to roughly $33.5 million.

Michele Wildman, MEDC senior vice president of community planning and development, said MEDC chose the Hastings project because it fit with the agency's greater goals in Michigan.

"Part of the goals of this program are to revitalize vacant and underutilized properties and to add amenities to the com-

See **LOFTS** on 5

Second installment of Hastings Pride Festival brings together hundreds

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

With the second year of the Hastings Pride Festival now in the books, organizers are hitting their stride in turning it into a successful annual celebration of the LGBTQ community and those who belong to it.

Thornapple Plaza in downtown Hastings once again played host to the event, held Saturday under sunny, warm skies. The family-friendly Pride celebration featured live music, vendors, LGBTQ resources, and a drag show.

While many Pride events take place throughout West Michigan and beyond during June, the small, six-person Hastings Pride Committee felt it was important for members of the LGBTQ community in Hastings to have an event in their own backyards — rather than having to travel to places like Grand Rapids or Lowell, where Pride festivals are already well established.

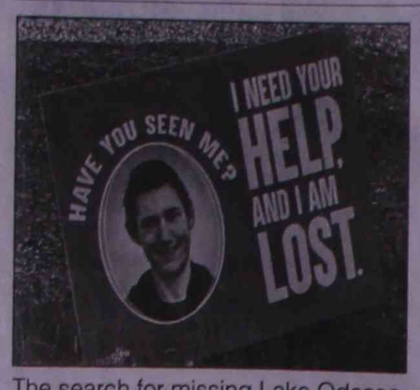
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TK FFA barn project underway — Members of the Thornapple Kellogg FFA chapter get the first shovels full of dirt out of the ground on Friday, June 27, at the site of their future barn set to be built on Bender Road in Middleville just south of the high school near the TK Schools bus garage. Thornapple Kellogg High School revived its FFA chapter during the 2022-23 school year, offering FFA opportunities to students for the first time since the mid-1960s. The main structure is set to be complete by the fall, with finishing touches on the inside completed throughout the school year. The group includes TK FFA advisor Alyssa Hamlin, TK FFA president Erika Wolowicz (front with shovels from left), vice president Emma Reil and treasurer Alexa Hoeksma, as well as (back from left) Hunter Seaben, Carter Hondorp, Maguire Simmons, Kadyn Palmateer, Allison Wolowicz, Alexa Hoeksma, Paige Sheely and Vivian Hansson.
Photo by Brett Bremer





The search for missing Lake Odessa teen Devlin Tait continues after he was last seen near Carl's Market in Lake Odessa on April 21. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**

Authorities still searching for missing Lake Odessa teen

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

Law enforcement officials still do not suspect foul play is involved in the case of a missing Lake Odessa teen, as the search for the individual enters its fourth month.

Devlin Tait, 19, of Lake Odessa was originally reported missing after last being seen at Carl's Market in downtown Lake Odessa at about 8:20 a.m. on April 21, allegedly traveling on foot.

Despite a three-month search, Ionia County Sheriff's Office investigators have not found any evidence of Tait's potential whereabouts.

ICSO Detective/Sgt. Phillip Hesche on Monday, June 30, said the search for Tait remains ongoing, with investigators continuing efforts to review phone records and social media platforms for information on his potential location.

"It takes time," Hesche said. "Devlin was known to carry more than one phone. He'd change his phone quite often.

"(But) he rarely forgot a phone number."

Hesche added the review of Tait's phone records is complicated by the fact that multiple phone carriers are involved.

"We've put significant time into this," the detective said. "We've continued to follow up on leads.

"We still have no reason to suspect foul play," he added. "(Though) we're not sure of his whereabouts or his status."

According to a description of Tait posted online, he's reported to be 6-foot tall and weighing 170 pounds. He reportedly was wearing a black zip–up sweatshirt, white T-shirt, blue jeans and cowboy boots when last spotted in downtown Lake Odessa.

A candlelight vigil in honor of Tait was held on Saturday night, June 28, on the village beach by the Buddy's On The Beach restaurant in Lake Odessa in hopes of bringing awareness to the ongoing search for the missing teen.

Persons who might have seen Tait since the time of his reported disappearance are urged to contact the ICSO by calling 616-527-5737.

Tips may also be provided anonymously online through the Silent Observer website, silentobserver.org, or by calling the Grand Rapids-based, nonprofit organization at 616-774-2345.



Customers peruse the selection at the Hastings Farmers Market on Saturday, June 28. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

Long-standing Hastings Farmers Market is in full swing

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

On the occasional Saturday, Michael Hoskins has to make slight adjustments to the layout of the Hastings Farmers Market.

"There have been a few Saturdays where we try to figure out 'Do we need to put people on this sidewalk, as well?'" said Hoskins, who works for the Barry Community Foundation and serves as the Market Master for the Hastings Farmers Market.

This year's market is in full swing, having kicked off in May and scheduled to continue through Halloween. The Hastings Farmers Market is set up outside the Barry County Courthouse and runs every Wednesday and Saturday.

Hoskins said attendance has been solid in the early months. In the late summer and early fall, the market tends to pick up even more as additional produce comes in season.

"It's been pretty decent, I think," Hoskins said. "We have had a good amount of people customer-wise but I also think there are a decent amount of new vendors."

One of those new vendors is Micki Graham, a Bellevue resident who operates M&G Custom Design Works. Her business spans vinyl decals, embroidery, and metal work, but recently she's been focusing on a growing niche: sourdough goods.

"I took up sourdough this year — in January," Graham explained. "I started with bread when I realized you can do so much so I took it and ran with it because sourdough is becoming so popular. Most people only do breads and I try to stay as different as I can."

Graham's offerings now include not just bread, but buns, cookies, scones, brownies and more.

She's new to the Hastings Farmers Market this year, but you can expect to see her there every Wednesday and Saturday. On Thursdays, she also sells at the Charlotte Artisans and Farmers Market.

For small-scale, homegrown businesses, farmers markets offer a low-overhead way to gain exposure and sell directly to the public.

"It's always easy and accessible," Graham said. "As long as it's not over $20 or $30 to have a spot, it's usually worth it."

Space at the Hastings Farmers Market is just $10 per day. Graham previously sold at her hometown farmers market in Bellevue, but that one eventually fizzled out, a fate that's become increasingly common among farmers markets across the state, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

So far, Graham said her time in Hastings has been a positive experience.

"There are so many other vendors and a lot of traffic that comes through," she said. "We had people who, just a few weeks ago, they were here from Hawaii. That was really cool."

DK Schools seeking non-homestead millage renewal next month

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

In next month's Aug. 5 primary election, voters in the Delton Kellogg Schools District will be asked to renew a 19.2-mill authorization on non-homestead properties. The renewal is not an increase in tax from the current millage.

Superintendent Jeremy Wright said the renewal is paramount to the overall funding for the district. He encourages everyone to get out and vote.

"While the renewal does not impact primary residences, it is a percentage of the allowance we get for each student," Wright explained. "The renewal pays for 25% of our overall budget or about $4 million a year, which covers operating expenses and allows us to get the full foundation allowance from the state."

Passing a renewal would support core district priorities including, hiring and retaining qualified teachers, aides, counselors and support staff. Additionally, an approved renewal would enable the district to purchase up-to-date textbooks, technology and classroom supplies. Furthermore, it would provide funds for transportation, special education and extracurricular programs, plus maintain safe, inclusive learning environments.

The millage applies to commercial property, rental property and vacation homes, and is not a tax on voters' primary residence. The state requires that non-homestead millages be voted on every 5 years and that all school districts levy at least 18 mills annually to secure their full foundation allowance per student.

According to the district's website, revenues from the non-homestead millage provide the DK Schools with roughly $4.25 million in revenues yearly from the school district's approximately $15-million budget.

The cost to a taxpayer with non-homestead property with a taxable value of $200,000 would be roughly $3,800 a year. If the millage does not pass, the school district would be faced with cutting teachers, programs, transportation and other essential services.

Delton Kellogg School officials are encouraging voters to get out and vote by locating their polling place at Michigan's official site. Voting will be open on Tuesday, Aug. 5 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The non-homestead revenue funds everyday operational expenditures such as teachers' salaries and instructional materials, special education, transportation and extracurricular activities — not expenditures for capital projects.

"The community has been great and very supportive and we are hopeful that this will continue," Wright said. "It is not a new tax and it has been something that has been approved many times in the past."



Under sunny skies, the Hastings Pride Festival took over the Thornapple Plaza in downtown Hastings on Saturday. Hundreds were in attendance. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

PRIDE

Continued from Page 1

"Hastings isn't really a suburb of anywhere else. It has its own cultural identity. It has a great cultural life — there is a lot of philanthropy here, there is a great arts program here and it's got its own identity," said J Maizlish Mole, one of the event's organizers. "People who grew up here, or are growing up here who are part of the LGBTQ community, they need their own thing. It should be homegrown. We've been to Lowell and Grand Rapids, they're great festivals but people should have one in their own town."

Last year marked Hastings Pride's full-scale debut at Thornapple Plaza, following a smaller "pop-up Pride" held the year before at a local coffee shop. That grassroots effort quickly grew into a full-fledged community festival.

Organizers estimated that roughly 700 to 800 people attended the event last year — a strong showing for a new event.

"Everybody was overjoyed with it last year," Mole said.

Turnout was similarly strong this year, with organizers estimating between 500 and 600 attendees. The number of vendor booths roughly doubled compared to last year, and the event attracted sponsorships from local businesses, including the Full Moon Saloon, which also hosted a post-Pride celebration.

Funds from Hastings Pride, including additional money raised through the drag show and a local booth operated by Julie Coon, totaled $850 and will be donated to the Hastings High School Gender and Sexuality Alliance.

Hastings Pride, like others around the country, took place amid a tense and polarized political climate.

Many members of the LGBTQ community feel under attack by recent policy changes by the Trump Administration. A recent one included the discontinuation of LGBTQ-specialized suicide prevention service, which was included in the 988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline.

"Absolutely it is more important," said Mole, when asked if such events carry greater weight in today's political climate. "It's not about being in people's faces; it's about people in this community being able to see each other and the fact that the rest of the town can see us is an added bonus. But we organize this so people can find each other and celebrate each other and have solidarity. A lot of people do feel under attack and they're not wrong. Civil rights across the board are in crisis right now."

"Politically and socially it's important to be seen in this town because there is a lot of pushback in general about the LGBTQ cause," Mole added. "It's important to be seen and it's important to see each other."

Hastings isn't the only Barry County-area municipality to host a Pride event. Middleville's festival has been going strong for a few years, and Christine Terpening, who runs the nonprofit organization I'll Be Your Rock, has created a vibrant Youth Pride event in Vermontville.

"It's really important. In small towns, people can feel very isolated and very alone if they feel different from their peers," Mole said. "Also, this is everywhere. We are everywhere. It's easy for people to look at the situation and think that's a city thing and those are city people. And it's not the case. We're everywhere. And we're every age and stripe and skin color. It's important to know that."

Like many Pride events, Hastings Pride faced a small group of protesters situated outside the event space. The Hastings Police Department was present as well.

In a memorable moment, a group of attendees formed a human wall, using large banners from participating food and beverage vendors to block out the protesters, who were attempting to disrupt the event with large signs and a portable PA system.

"It was quite an unforgettable scene," Mole said.

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Family Support Center names Barry County native program director

Molly Macleod
Editor


Zoey Ziny

Zoey Ziny has been involved in nonprofit work in Barry County for nearly as long as her memory stretches back. The Class of 2023 Thornapple Kellogg High School graduate is back in Barry County in a new, but familiar role — program coordinator at the Family Support Center of Barry County.

Despite being early in her professional career, Ziny has amassed lots of experience with Barry County nonprofits. She credits some of that to her mother, Barry County Commission on Aging Executive Director Courtney Ziny.

"I've been working in nonprofits since I started working, and, with who my mom is, I've been in that world since I was born," said Ziny.

Her new role at FSC hits home for Ziny, whose younger brother is adopted. "I like helping kids…It's close to home to help people try to learn how to care for their kids better," she said.

FSC offers support for parents and guardians in Barry County. By offering parent education and kinship care, FSC helps prevent child abuse. Ziny said FSC has resources for parents or guardians in just about every circumstance.

"My advice to anybody – any parent, any grandparent, anybody planning to be a parent – it never hurts to ask. It never hurts to take the class and learn the resources," Ziny said.

All are welcome to utilize FSC's resources, Ziny said.

Ziny comes with some real experience under her belt in the nonprofit sector, with stops working with the Barry Community Foundation, Barry County United Way, the Barry County Commission of Aging and the First Presbyterian Church in Hastings. Ziny won the Youth Volunteer Award from Barry County United Way in 2022 and was involved with the Youth Advisory Council in high school. She also has helped with the county's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program since a young age.

She keeps busy, juggling her new role as FSC program coordinator while finishing up her degree at Western Michigan University. Ziny plans to graduate in a year with a bachelor's degree in nonprofit and public administration.

Ziny said she plans to marry her fiancé, Ethan Hey, in October of this year. The two have two dogs, Mabel and Moe, and are closing on a house in Hastings in the coming week.

"I am so excited to really start my career in the nonprofit world with an amazing organization like Family Support Center," said Ziny. "I love this community with all my heart and could not imagine living or working somewhere else."

The Family Support Center of Barry County is affiliated with Children Trust Michigan, serving as the designated Barry County prevention partner. It is also a Barry County United Way agency and is supported by CareWell Services.

For more information on factors that protect children from child abuse, contact the FSCBC by calling 269-945-5439.

Local builder acquiring 25 acres of land in Delton for housing development

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

A local builder with connections to the Delton community is in the process of acquiring 25 acres of land from the Southwest Barry County Sewer Authority. Clark Brothers Construction Building Contractors plans on building affordable housing on the property located behind the Faith United Methodist Church on Grove Street in Delton.

"He's buying the property from the sewer authority," said Jim Stoneburner, chair of the sewer authority. "He made an offer and we accepted the offer. It was property that we had bought a few years ago. The land is farmed by Osborn Farms."

Ben Clark, owner of Clark Brothers Construction, is not disclosing the amount of the sale yet. "We have a purchase agreement signed on this but we have not actually finalized this deal, yet," Clark said.

Marsha Bassett is the president of Revitalize Delton. The organization was formed a few years ago with the aim to bring growth into the community by making Delton a place where businesses and families want to live, grow and send their kids to school.

"From day one, Ben has been engaged in this project and he's taken initiative. He's community-oriented and very open to all of our ideas about how to make this housing affordable," Bassett said. "He's been to many meetings. It's a work in progress but he has been agreeable to everything we talked about because he wants this housing to be affordable as well."

Barry County Planner Jeff Keesler said he is looking forward to working with Clark. "He's been really great and truly has a heart for the community and doing projects that make things better," Keesler said.

While addressing the audience at the Revitalize Delton meeting on Thursday, June 26, Keesler said he is on board with an open space concept in the new housing development and keeping it natural and open to all residents to use and enjoy.

Clark said there are about 15 acres of wetland in the 25 acres of land. He said he hopes to build boardwalks and maybe a playground near that wetland where the community can use it effectively. There may even be a bike path. "But that is something that has to be worked out with the planning commission," Clark said. "In some of the wetland and the wooded area, we are hoping to supply some recreational resources for the community."

The wetland lies in the southeast corner of the parcel.

"I just want to express gratitude first and foremost to the sewer authority. They have been fundamental in helping to bring this project to life. They've really been a big part of it," Clark said. "Not with just the sale of the land but with their commitment to helping with the infrastructure and everything that goes with it."

Clark said 14 team members, including his brothers, work for Clark Brothers Construction Building Contractors. He's owned the company for 17 years and has lived in Delton for 18. He has been in construction his whole life.

Bassett said Clark has been nothing but engaging about plans he has for the new housing development, and at the same time, open-minded in listening to ideas from the RD organization and agreeing to keep the housing affordable in the Delton community.

"I am grateful for Revitalize Delton's role in helping to bring this to fruition as well," Clark said. "And last we're just grateful to bring something I think is going to be a great addition to our community."

Clark said his team projects approximately 30 homes and 12 apartments will be built in the new development with one permanent entrance. "We'll need to review with the planning commission as well. There may be conversations about having a second entrance strictly for emergency egress," Clark said. "But that's something we'll need to work through with the planning commission."

Clark will present plans for the housing development at the rescheduled Revitalize Delton meeting on Aug. 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Delton Kellogg High School in the LGI building.

"The sewer board is on board with what the plans are for the future of that property," Stoneburner said. He added that the sewer board can help in a lot of different ways with infrastructure.

"We are working with Barry Township because they have a water tower now so the development will have sewer and water," Stoneburner explained. "It's going to be a good plan. I feel confident now we have something that's going to be a benefit for the community in the future."

HIRING

Continued from Page 1

The discussion then quickly moved to Hanson, who was reportedly the only internal candidate to have applied for the position and also interviewed with the council at the May 31 special meeting. A village employee since 2014, Hanson holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, with a major in human resources, from Western Michigan University.

In his opinion, Guetschow said Hanson remained as the "next best choice," despite his lack of experience and knowledge in administration, as well as concerns "we don't want to set Jake up to fail."

"My thought is to take an intermediate step," Guetschow added.

Rather than hiring Hanson as deputy manager, Guetshow suggested he work as an "administrative assistant" for a three-month trial period. Hanson, who reportedly works four days a week currently for the village's DPW, would see his schedule increased to five days a week, including three days working on DPW projects and then two under Guetschow's direct supervision.

"Then, with some mentoring, we can see if he can move into the village manager's role," Guetschow said. "In some respects, it wouldn't be much different than if we'd hired William Joseph.

"We were going to make an investment in Jake anyway," he added. "This would just accelerate it a bit."

Possibly the biggest difference, according to Guetschow, is that Hanson would be allowed to return to his DPW duties if the trial period proved unsuccessful.

"It is a trial period," Guetshow said. "It's different from what we advertised, different from what we planned for.

"(But) he's always understood he could be sent back to the minors."

Most of the council seemed open to the idea.

"I like the sound of it," said Trustee Bob Green. "It's a good idea."

Trustee Martha Yoder, however, said she had reservations about promoting Hanson, even for a trial period, due to potential miscues, such as failing to thank the council for being invited to interview and then not attending Monday's special meeting.

"I do have serious concerns," she said. "I don't see anything from Jake to promote himself.

"I haven't seen any of that. I'm wondering about the commitment of the individual to that."

Yoder added she was also concerned that, if Hanson wasn't successful, the council would be delayed from reposting the deputy manager's position.

While stating she also had some "misgivings" about Hanson's lack of experience, Banks said she supported Guetschow's recommendation.

"I'm willing to give this three-month trial period a shot," she said.

"I don't want to ignore Martha's concerns," added Trustee Michael Brighton. "(But) if we were ever set up to succeed, it's now. If you want to give it a shot, it's now."

If not, Brighton questioned whether Banks would be willing to take on the duties of manager in addition to her role as village president.

"I don't know if that would be a good thing for the community," Banks said. "I think we're better served by hiring a professional manager."

The council stopped short of making any type of recommendation during the 40-minute meeting Monday at the Page Memorial Building after Brighton asked whether the council should take any action with trustees Ben DeJong and Terri Cappon absent from the discussions.

"I'd want them to support this also," he said. "This is a big decision."

Council members then agreed to tentatively schedule yet another special meeting for 6 p.m. on Thursday, July 10.

Yoder suggested Hanson be invited to the special meeting so that council members could hear from him directly.

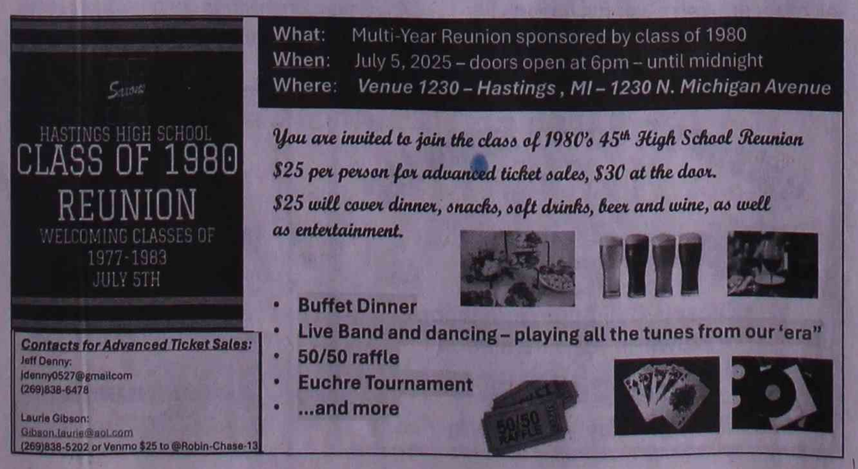
"It might be helpful to hear his thoughts," she said. "We've been kind of speculating."

The village has been without a 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.

According to Guetschow, the council has started hiring searches three times since then, a factor that would likely cause potential applicants some concern if the village were to repost the position in the near future.

"The fact you're going through this so many times has probably scared some people off," he said.

"We've set a really high bar," Brighton said. "That's why we've reposted so many times. We're not willing to settle."





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Your first step is to define what financial independence signifies to you. For many people, it means being able to retire when they want to, and to enjoy a comfortable retirement lifestyle. So, if this is your vision as well, consider taking these steps:

• *Pay yourself first.* If you wait until you have some extra money "lying around" before you invest for retirement, you may never get around to doing it. Instead, pay yourself first. This actually is not that hard to do, especially if you have a 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan, because your contributions are taken directly from your paycheck, before you even have the chance to spend the money. You can set up a similar arrangement with an IRA by having automatic contributions taken directly from your checking or savings account.

• *Invest appropriately.* Your investment decisions should be guided by your retirement goals, along with how long you have before you need the money and how comfortable you are with different levels of investment risk. If you deviate from these guideposts — for instance, by taking on either too much or too little risk — you may end up making decisions that aren't right for you and that may set you back as you pursue your financial independence.

• *Avoid financial "potholes."* The road to financial liberty will always be marked with potholes you should avoid. One such pothole is debt — the higher your debt burden, the less you can invest for your retirement. It's not always easy to lower your debt load, but do the best you can to live within your means. A second pothole comes in the form of large, unexpected short-term costs, such as a major home or auto repair or a medical bill not fully covered by insurance. To avoid dipping into your long-term investments to pay for these short-term costs, try to build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account.

• *Give yourself some wiggle room.* If you decide that to achieve financial independence, you must retire at 62 or you must buy a vacation home by the beach, you may feel disappointed if you fall short of these goals. But if you're prepared to accept some flexibility in your plans — perhaps you can work until 65 or just rent a vacation home for the summer — you may be able to earn a different, but still acceptable, financial freedom. And by working a couple of extra years or paying less for your vacation home expenses, you may also improve your overall financial picture.

Putting these and other moves to work can help you keep moving toward your important goals. When you eventually reach your own "Financial Independence Day," it may not warrant a fireworks display — but it should certainly add some sparkle to your life.

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

OBITUARIES

VIEW OBITUARIES ONLINE. HASTINGSBANNER.COM

Janice M. Dixon



Janice M. Dixon, a beloved member of the Nashville, MI community and a cherished resident of Charlestown, IN, passed away peacefully on June 18, 2025, at the age of 90. Janice was a vibrant spirit known for her unique way of bringing joy to those around her, often seen riding her tricycle through town, a symbol of her playful nature and zest for life.

Born and raised in Barry County, MI, Janice held a deep love for her hometown, where she created countless memories and friendships that lasted a lifetime. An avid yard sale shopper, she had a keen eye for treasures and a talent for finding the perfect items to share with family and friends. Her passion for sewing was evident in the beautiful creations she crafted, each stitch infused with love and care.

Janice was preceded in death by her devoted husband, Merrill Dixon; her son, Cameron Jarrard, and her brothers, Lyle and Norman Sandbrook.

She is survived by her loving sister, Donna Wilcox; her daughter, Kim Jarrard, and her cherished grandchildren, Eric and Rhonda Jarrard, Kristen Jarrard, and Erin Winkler, along with nine great-grandchildren who brought her immense joy.

Janice's legacy is one of love, creativity, and community spirit. She will be remembered not only for her unique hobbies but also for her unwavering kindness and the warmth she brought to every gathering. Her family and friends will carry her memory in their hearts, celebrating the life of a remarkable woman who touched so many lives.

A celebration of life ceremony will be held to honor Janice's life and the joy she brought to all who knew her. Once the date is known, it will be distributed by the family to all her loved ones.

July set to include more live performances in Hastings

The month of July is set to bring some "amazing" performances to Hastings, according to Steve Hoke, arts and events coordinator for the City of Hastings.

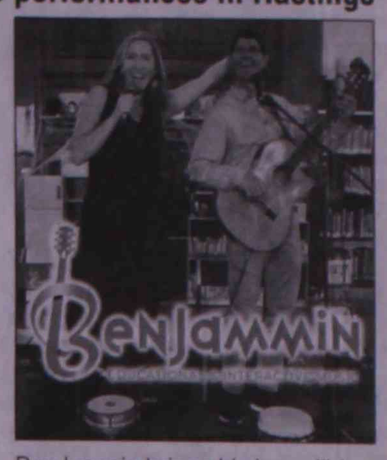
"With the Fourth of July being on a Friday this year, we will not be having any concerts on that day so people can enjoy and celebrate our country's birthday with friends and family," Hoke said.

"BenJammin" will continue this week's programming, taking the stage for the Playing at the Plaza for Children's Show at 11 a.m. on Thursday, July 3.

"Benjamin Gauthier and Emily Hewitt will rock out with your kids while they learn about health, self-confidence, conflict resolution and core subjects through interactive music," Hoke added.

The concert is set to include songs with guitar, hand drums, ukulele, piano, drumsticks, stories and a few puppets to teach children life skills through audience participation and song.

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, snacks, soft-drinks and more.



BenJammin brings his incredibly energetic show to our children this week Thursday, July 3. **Courtesy photo**

Smoking, vaping, non-service animals, and outside alcohol are prohibited.

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

Hastings Live is made possible through support from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as donations from Barry County Lumber, the Baum Family Foundation, Corewell Health Pennock Hospital, Highpoint Community Bank and other local businesses. — *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, July 3 – Movie Memories and Milestones watches a 1951 movie starring Marjorie Main and Percy Kilbride, 5 p.m.

Friday, July 4 – Library closed.

Monday, July 7 – Crafting Passions, 10 a.m.; Digital Literacy: AI Basics Today, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 8 – Baby Cafe, 10 a.m.; Youth Makerspace with 4-H: Textiles (grades 3-12), 10:30 a.m.; Design Your Own Pop-Sockets (grades 6-12), 1 p.m.; community mental health workers at the library, 2 p.m.; Powerful Tools for Caregivers (CareWell Services), 4 p.m.; mahjong, 5 p.m.; chess, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, July 9 – Itsy Bitsy Book Club, 10:30 a.m.; Open Art Studio, 11:30 a.m.; Chalk the Walk (all ages art project), 2 p.m.; Youth on the Trail: Good For Your Body, Brain and Heart (North Country Trail meeting immediately following), 6 p.m.

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

Community foundation to celebrate 30th anniversary at upcoming events

Barry Community Foundation officials recently announced a milestone anniversary celebration, "Capture Your Dreams," inviting the community members to join in a series of events designed to commemorate three decades of service.

Since 1995, the BCF has reportedly worked toward improving lives by fostering collaboration and bridging resources through the vision and generosity of donors.

"We are incredibly proud to reach this 30-year milestone, a testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers and the unwavering support of our community," said Bonnie Gettys, the foundation's president and CEO. "As we reflect on our past achievements, we are even more excited to look forward.

"This summer, we want to hear from you – what aspirations you hold for our shared future in Barry County," Gettys added. "These insights will be invaluable as we chart our course for the next 30 years of impact."

The "Capture Your Dreams" anniversary celebration will feature a series of events throughout August and September, including:

- Founders Festival in Delton on Aug. 9;
- Brew Fest in Nashville on Aug. 16;
- Summerfest in Hastings on Aug. 23; and
- Heritage Days in Middleville (date to be determined).

The public is invited to join in foundation members in celebrating the anniversary and contributing to a collective vision for the future.

For more information, interested persons may go online and visit the foundation's website, BarryCF.org. — *DM*

PIERCE CEDAR CREEK INSTITUTE EVENTS

— JULY 3-10 —

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

July 1-31 — July Storybook Walk: "Emile and the Field" by Kevin Young; illustrated by Chioma Ebinama. Young Emile loves the field close to his home. He loves the trees, the flowers, the grass. But he doesn't love sharing this field with the other children who come to sled during winter. Can Emile learn to share his beloved field? The Storybook Walk is free and self-guided on the purple and green trails.

July 1-31 — Summer Wildflower Trail (free and self-guided). Follow the green trail and enjoy the bright blooms of summer.

Thursday, July 3 — Social Hikes, 10 a.m. Join Institute staff for a social hiking experience. Bring a friend, or make a new one! Trails will have rocks, uneven terrain, mud and great views. All hikes are free. Water is required to hike. This is a safety precaution to prevent dehydration on the trail. The 1.2-mile hike is open to all.

Thursday, July 10 — Field Station Tour: Conservation on the Ground. Program: 11 a.m.-noon; lunch: noon-1 p.m.; optional afternoon field trips: 1-3 p.m. Learn about the conservation efforts happening "on the ground" at the Institute's field station this summer. Participants will be able to visit researchers and fellows in the field and discuss the research questions they are exploring, the art they are creating and the stewardship work they are doing. This program is presented in-person only. Those interested in the lunch must register by Wednesday, July 2.

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

Worship Together



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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THE HASTINGS BANNER

Hastings High School releases honor roll

Hastings High School has announced its honor roll for the second semester of the 2024-25 academic year.

The following honor roll is calculated based on a cumulative grade point average, starting with a student's first semester of high school through the end of the second semester this school year. An asterisk for students in ninth, 10th and 11th grades indicates a 4.0 GPA.

12th grade

Top honors (4.0 and above)

Isabel Gee, Donald Kuck, Alyson Miller, Lilyah Solmes.

Highest honors (3.75-3.99)

Naomi Grummet, Rachael Hewitt, Micah Johnson, Kennedy Lewis, Jordan Milanowski, Brennan Reser, Brandon Simmons, Brooklyn Strickland, Victoria Tack.

High honors (3.25-3.74)

Tanner Allerding, Tanner Armstrong, Jett Barnum, Justine Bayabay, Riley Bondurant, Anika Bourassa, Carter Favreau, Ella Ferguson, JoDee Gaskill, Ondreya Griswold, Baylie Guernsey, Makaila Hawkins, Jordan Humphrey, Emma Jeanette, Brett Johnson, Logan Kerby, Kalli Koning, Alan Li, Miles Lipsey, Preston Meece, MaeLynn Miller, Mia Miller, Jayse Peterson, Seth Pirtle, Amelia Price, Elijah Randall, Hayley Rasey, Heaven Simmet, Nicklas Stehr, Jennifer Stoline, Melany Vargas, Zoe Watson, Memphis White.

Honor roll (3.0-3.24)

Elissa Bafaro, Zoey Bennett, Mason Benton, Abigayl Bower, Ashley Brown, Inga Clum, Hannah DuBois, Garrett Dunn, Alora Fish, Georgia Goldner, Isabella Harvath, Gage Holtrust, Isabella Kensington, Rachel King, Mathew Lehman, Kyle Lumbert, Deondre Mathis, Kyle Morgan, Ashley Norris, Heather Shakespeare, Anna Shaver, Madison Vickery, Jordyn Winters, Linda Wright.

11th grade

Highest honors (3.75 and above)

Annemarie Allerding, Reese Bernstein, Olivia Bucher, Matthew Domenico, Charlotte Drake, *Lauren Gee, Riley Gurtowsky, *Riley Herron, *Ethan Holman, Daniel Jensen, *Carter Krzysik, Adriana Meyers, *Josalyn Russell, Bayley Smith, Collin Tossava, *Mazie Waterman.

High honors (3.25-3.74)

Aden Armstrong, Ashlyn Bailey, Alana Brown, Kyla Brown, Aiden Byle, Hope Carley, Nella Coipel, Ellie Cousins, Shiloh Crandall, Spencer Crozier, Kyle Echtinaw, Bronson Elliott, Anderson Forell, Olivia Friddle, Tori Gardner, Olivia Goodrich, Reese Hammond, Jaqueline Herrera Nuno, Alexander Kohmescher, Reese Lehman, Isaac Lilley, Dezarae Mathis, Jadalie Miller, Claudia Minch, Ava Noteboom, Maylee Olin, Megan Ramey, Trapper Reigler, Tyce Richardson, Shealagh Rose, Carisa Rosenberger, William Shrubb IV, Matthew Shults, Natalie Snyder, Isabelle Stanton, Brayden Thielen, Dixie Verbeek, Madison Weatherly, Gracie Wilson, Mason Wright.

Honor roll (3.00-3.24)

Arika Alexander, Gavin Bagley, Carter Bell, Colten Denton, Madison Elzinga, Tanner Hill, Jacquelynn Johnston, Esther King, Natalee Klinge, Jaden Marble, Haley Merrick, Aiden Oliver, Alexia Owen, Madilynn Peake, Kyree Snider, Lainey Westworth.

10th grade

Highest honors (3.75 and above)

*Meredith Ansorge, *Alexa DeCamp, Petra Foster, Sadie Hanford, Ethan Hawthorne, *Sophia Haywood, Gabryella Juskewicz, *Alexa Lilley, Zachary Patterson, Caroline Randall, William Renner IV, *Mallory Rohe, Lucy Shafer.

High honors (3.50-3.74)

Ava Arens, Kyra Bishop, Brissa Hernandez-Hernandez, Colt Jousma, Cordelia Kniaz, Caleb Kramer, Ayden Schwartz, Madison Stora, Zikarra Warner, Raegan Wattles, Spencer Wilkins.

Honor roll (3.25-3.49)

Olivia Allen, Jaxon Blake, Ashton Brubaker, Sydnie Diljak, Quintin Eberly, Henry Elzinga, Lola Grego, Arika Harris, Logan Kimmel, Joshua Lawrence, Reese Loftus, Aubree Milcher, Tori Morgan, Tenleigh Nichols, Ava Patterson, Hailee Pickford, Hayden Van Zanten.

Ninth grade

Highest honors (3.75 and above)

*Audrey Acker, Violet Bivens, Allison Brown, Parker Castaneda, Dakota Cole, Parker Erb, Brooke Favreau, Carson Gole, *Graceyn Horrmann, Evyn Kindel, Alexis King, *Tanner Krzysik, *Nolan Lucas, Brennen Main, Olivia Malik, Jackson McKinney, Zane Ortiz, *Lilly Randall, Kaylee Roe, Isabella Strimback, Harrison Thomas, Alexander Timmers, Weston Troyer, Kaleb Watson.

High honors (3.50-3.74)

Jace Acker, Sophia Bucher, Olivia Buehler, Lillian Edger, Joseph Furrow, Elijah Gilbert, Jonah Hamp, Ethan Hetrick, Remington Jerzyk, Mya Luna, Jett Nofz, Avery Walsh.

Honor roll (3.25-3.49)

Ella Allyn, Morgan Casselman, Ryann-Lynn Cole, Thomas Cook, Kimberlee Coolidge, Graden Courtright, Landon Currier, Leeland Dinger, Ashlynn Goldsworthy, Jason Jimenez, Annabelle Kuck, Kaden Main, Charles Mattice, Angelia McGregor, Dennon Merrick, Isabella Ozdych, Sydney Patterson, Trevin Russell, Cora Shattuck, Jesse Talley, Grant Tossava. — *MM*

ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT



Langshaws Celebrated Their 60th Wedding Anniversary

Norm and Diana Langshaw from the Gull Lake area, celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on June 26.

Their son is L. Todd Langshaw and their granddaughter is Elizabeth Langshaw.

Cards can be sent to 14625 E 'C' Ave., Augusta, MI 49012.

Herb workshop scheduled for July 13

Area residents can learn about common herbs used for natural remedies at a free workshop this month.

Michigan State University Pollinator Champion and Master Gardener Robbin Glass will lead the workshop on Sunday, July 13, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Attendees of the class will learn the best herbs for common ailments like headaches, athlete's foot, cough and more. Glass will share some of her favorite herb mixtures and recipes. Attendees will learn how to make their own tea bags.

Glass will share herbal tea samples, mixtures, recipes, handouts and prizes — all for free.

The workshop will be held at the Hastings SDA School at 904 Terry Lane in Hastings.

All are welcome to attend the class; there is no need to register. For more information, contact Glass at 517-652-3056. — *MM*

GO ONLINE TO HASTINGSBANNER.COM

LOFTS

Continued from Page 1

munity that are going to help support residents, attract talent, support business. And so, we believe with the investment in this property in Hastings in particular, and its connectivity to some of the amenities that are in Hastings, its proximity to the Hastings Riverwalk, for example, that connectivity and walkability that helps support downtowns and the growth that comes along with it was really a strong fit for the goals of the (RAP) program," said Wildman.

Speakers at Tuesday's groundbreaking ceremony reflected on the history of the site, once home to the Royal Coach factory and the Hastings Chair and Table Company, as well as the significance of the project.

BCCEDA President and CEO Jennifer Heinzman said on Tuesday the Riverwalk Lofts project came together thanks to a collaborative community effort.

"The way this community works together to make things happen is unbelievable, and I'm so proud to be a part of it," said Heinzman.

The Hastings Riverwalk Lofts were part of a vision the late Larry Baum had for redeveloping the downtown riverwalk area. Baum started his work redeveloping the site, which had sat empty since the 1950s, in 2010 before selling the Royal Coach property to the BCF in 2017, according to BCF President Bonnie Gettys.

"Inspired by (Emil) Tyden's spirit and Larry Baum's vision, BCF focused on revitalizing this area. The Royal Coach property, rich in historical significance, presented a unique opportunity for redevelopment. Supported by several philanthropic partners, this initiative aims to honor the past while fostering economic growth and community development," said Gettys.

"This narrative of Hastings is not just about overcoming adversity but also about the power of community innovation, and the enduring impact of visionary leaders like Emil Tyden and Larry Baum. It serves as an inspiration for future generations to build on this legacy and to continue to create a vibrant and prosperous community," Gettys continued.



An aerial view of 328 and 420 E. Mill Street in Hastings. Construction on the Hastings Riverwalk Lofts is underway at the site.

A fire, later deemed an arson, destroyed the Royal Coach factory in October 2020. It was a devastating setback after BCF purchased the property a year and a half prior and had it set aside for development. Keigan Sochor of Hastings, then 21, was convicted of arson and breaking and entering in 2021.

The now-razed building was set to be developed into a 10,000-square-foot apartment complex with 78 units. MSHDA had set aside funds for the project, which were later used to help construct the Tyden Lofts apartments downtown.

Nearly five years after the fire, crews are busy constructing four new buildings on the site.

CopperRock President Dean Rosendall recalled starting his career with projects in Hastings. He was involved with the construction of the Family Tree Medical Associates building in 2002, along with the Hastings City Bank (now Highpoint Community Bank) remodel in the early 2000s and the construction of Thornapple Plaza in 2016.

Rosendall spoke on Tuesday about how the late Earlene Baum gave him encouragement as a young project manager after a less-than-ideal presentation to a local board.

"That introduced (me) to Larry Baum, who had such a great vision for this city. And that turned into more work and Larry's vision. It was really a lot of fun doing the (Thornapple Plaza) amphitheater. It turned into great energy — great town, great city. I'm just happy to be a part of this," said Rosendall. "So, I just wanted to thank you for that. We take this very seriously. To see Larry's dreams get closer, it's great — and everyone's dreams."

"This is more than a construction project," said Heinzman. "It is absolutely a catalyst, and it is going to be transformational for the community, not only because of the apartments, the housing that we are offering that is attainable but also for food access and childcare. These are all boxes that check off economic impact — we want to do all of these things in the community, and this project is going to do all of that."

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BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sofia Ann Patton, born at Corewell Health Pennock on May 21, 2025 to Terra Cloward and Zachary Patton of Nashville.

*****

Brycen J. Burtt, born at Corewell Health Pennock on May 31, 2025 to Jessi Burtt and William Burtt of Lake Odessa.

*****

Delilah Jean McManus Cosme, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 2, 2025 to Breanna Cosme and Wesley McManus.

*****

Brooks Allen Rose, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 7, 2025 to Chloe Rose and Jason Rose of Middleville.

*****

Helen Fawn Stoltzfus, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 13, 2025 to Natalie Stoltzfus and Kaleb Stoltzfus of Lake Odessa.

*****

Charlie Lynn Ranguette, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 13, 2025 to Kailyn Ranguette and Colton Ranguette of Saranac.

*****

McKenna Jo, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 14, 2025 to Kylie Clisso and Mac of Hastings.

*****

Harper Elizabeth Stovall, born at Corewell Health Pennock on June 20, 2025 to Shanna Dockter of Wayland.

*****

Benjamin Leo Vero, born at Corewell Health Pennnock on June 23, 2025 to Tia Vero of Hastings.

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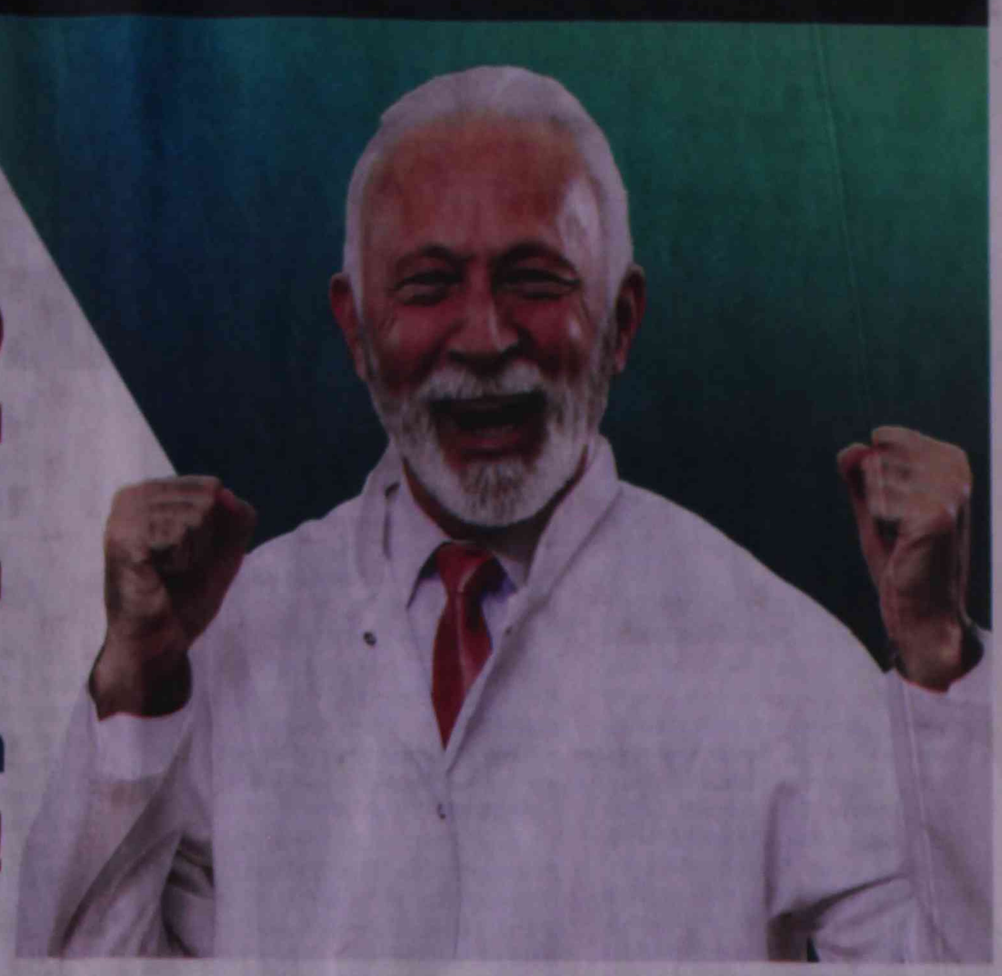
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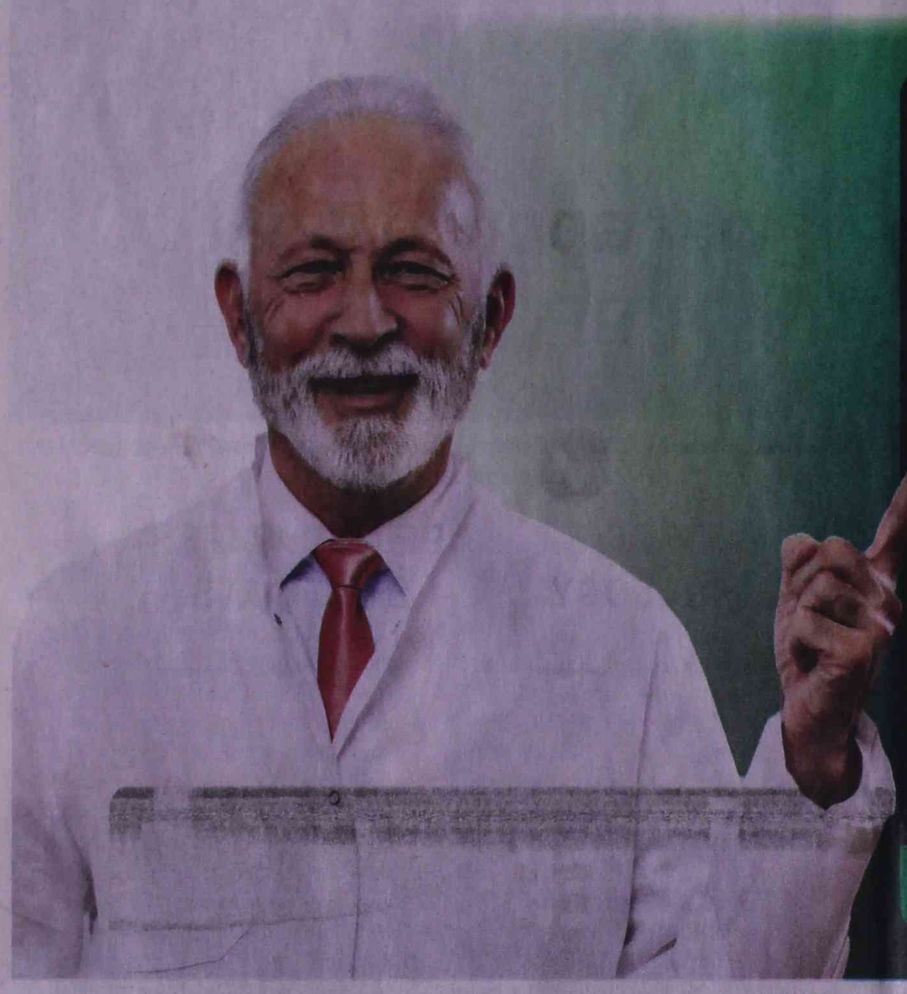
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*Certain types of hearing loss may require a hearing instrument model that is not appropriate for the trial. Hearing evaluation required. See clinic for details. Only available for selected hearing instruments. [1]Buy one Phonak Audéo Sphere™ Infinio 70 or 90 level hearing aid at our retail price and get another of the same make & model 50% off. Discount is based on binaural purchase. This limited-time offer may not be used in conjunction with any other offer or promotion. New orders only. Private pay only (not combinable with insurance or network). Not available on all levels of technology. [2]With $89 payment to start, a total of $2,901 will be financed at 19.90% APR on approved credit for 48-months. Additional upgrades and other financing options are available. Terms are subject to change without notice and other restrictions may apply. Please see office for details. Offers expire 07/18/25.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

The Barry County Historical Society 1964-2021

DAVID W. MILLER
Special to The Banner

The Barry County Historical Society (BCHS), incorporated on Oct. 24, 1964, with the mission to preserve, promote and share the history of Barry County, formally voted to disband on Sept. 15, 2021. This article offers a glimpse into the many accomplishments that marked the society's 57-year legacy.

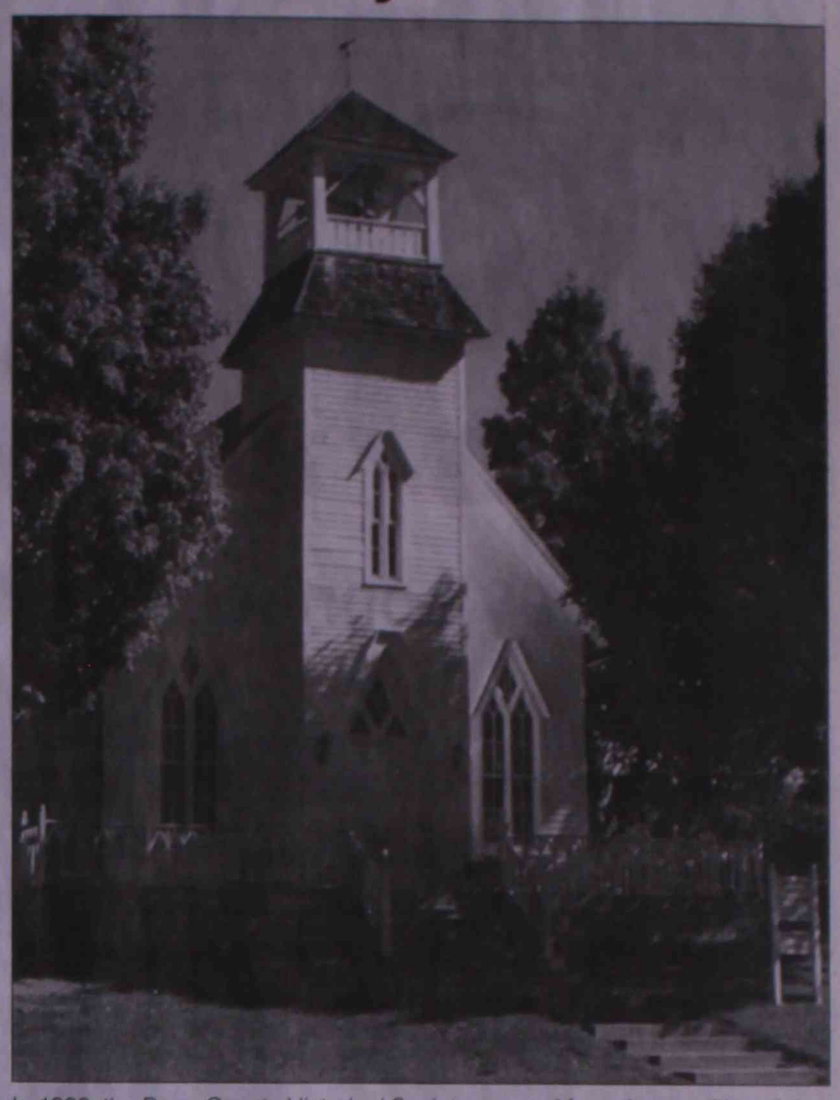
The Barry County Historical Society's first major undertaking began in 1964 when it successfully petitioned the Barry County Board of Supervisors to establish a Parks and Recreation Commission dedicated to the oversight and development of Historic Charlton Park. This formative effort, which extended through 1967, was led by the society's inaugural president, Esther Walton. She was joined in this initiative by an active core of charter members, including Rose Cook, Jeanne Gould, Cindy Sage, Juanita Slocum, Florabelle Stowell, and Richard and Rosemary Shuster. Their early leadership of 50 to 75 members laid the foundation for the society's enduring commitment to historical preservation and public engagement.

A lasting legacy of the Barry County Historical Society is its dedication to researching and placing historical markers throughout the county. In 1982, the society secured formal recognition of the Carlton Township Hall as a designated historic site. One of its earliest accomplishments was the placement of a historical marker at the site of Yankee Bill Lewis' famed Stagecoach Inn in Yankee Springs, originally installed in May 1966 and faithfully reinstalled in April 2018 after the original marker disappeared during the 1990s. Of the 30 official State of Michigan historical markers now found across Barry County, 20 were the direct result of applications and research efforts undertaken by the BCHS. In 1984, the society expanded this mission by launching a supplemental program to install its own commemorative plaques at sites of local historical significance. The first such marker was placed at the Walldorff and Sons Furniture structure built by Archie McCoy in 1865 and known as the Empire Block.

Among the Barry County Historical Society's most impactful contributions was the microfilming of local vital records—an effort that continues to benefit nearly every resident with ties to the community. One major undertaking involved the preservation of Barry County cemetery records, which were compiled in both print and microfilm formats. These records are now publicly accessible in the Michigan Room on the second floor of the Hastings Public Library. In tandem with this effort, the society also initiated the microfilming of Barry County newspapers, recognizing their immense value to genealogists and local historians alike. Building on that foundational work, the Hastings Public Library has since advanced the project by launching an online portal, allowing patrons to digitally access every issue of *The Hastings Banner* from 1862 through 2023—a remarkable archive now available to the world at the click of a button.

Barry County Historical Society Est. 1964

The Barry County Historical Society was established in October 1964. It disbanded in September 2021.
Courtesy photos



In 1982, the Barry County Historical Society secured formal recognition of the Carlton Township Hall as a designated historic site.

Of special interest to many ladies in the community has been the society's series of 18 collector plates, elegantly designed to commemorate 10 beloved sites throughout Barry County. These limited-edition plates were made available to both members and the public, celebrating landmarks which included: the Barry County Courthouse, Hastings City Hall and fire barn, the Soldiers Monument, the Michigan Mutual Tornado Tower, Windstorm Insurance Building, Woodland Township Hall, Brown School House (North Pine Lake), the Wishing Tree (Delton), T.D. French and Sons Flour Mill (Middleville), Hastings City Bank, the CK&S Depot (Hastings) and Bowens Mill (Yankee Springs).

These plates, which are highly collectible today, offered a graceful way to preserve a piece of local history—both as a decorative treasure and a symbol of community pride. Monthly meetings feature programs designed to share facts, items used in the past and information of interest to all who desire to preserve the heritage of Barry County.

In 1983, the Barry County Historical Society established a memorial fund dedicated to honoring members whose selfless volunteerism and generous contributions left a lasting impact on both the society and the broader

See next page

BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
FOR MICHIGAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING FOR CDBG HOUSING IMPROVING LOCAL LIVABILITY (CHILL) GRANT – HOMEOWNER REHAB

Barry County will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, July 8, 2025 at 9:00am in the Barry County Commissioners' office on the third floor of the Barry County Courthouse at 220 West State Street, Hastings, MI 49058, for the purpose of affording citizens an opportunity to examine and submit comments on the proposed application for a CDBG grant.

If funded, Barry County proposes to use CDBG funds in the amount of $354,000 to assist low to moderate income residents in repairing homes to housing quality standard (HQS/HUD and local regulations) within the City of Hastings, Villages of Middleville, Nashville, Woodland and Freeport, and the unincorporated Villages of Delton and Hickory Corners. All activities, upon completion, will benefit low to moderate income households. No residents will be displaced as a result of the repairs.

Further information, including a copy of Barry County's Community Development Plan and CDBG Letter of Intent for the application are available for review. To inspect the documents, please contact Eric Zuzga, County Administrator, 220 W. State St., Hastings, MI 49058 or 269-945-1284, or review at the Barry County Clerk's Office, 220 W. State St., Hastings, MI 49058. Comments may be submitted in writing through July 7, 2025 at 4:00pm, or made in person at the public hearing.

Barry County has an Emergency Home Improvement Program that is funded with Program Income, which will be used solely for emergencies and not the CHILL grant.

Citizen views and comments on the proposed application are welcome.

Barry County
David Jackson, Chairman
269-945-1284

STATE OF MICHIGAN
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT - FAMILY DIVISION
BARRY COUNTY
PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF HEARING REGARDING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE
CASE NO. and JUDGE 25-30148-NC WILLIAM M. DOHERTY

TO ALL PERSONS, including (specify non-custodial parent's name here, if applicable) Skyler Hanicq whose address is unknown and whose interest in the matter may be barred or affected by the following:

TAKE NOTICE: Jade Diamond Reynolds has filed a petition for name change. A name change hearing will be held on 7/23/2025 at 2:00 p.m. at 206 W. Court St., Ste. 302, Hastings, MI 49058 before Judge William M. Doherty to change the name of Serenity Marie Hanicq to Serenity Marie Reynolds.

City Of Hastings
COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION 2025-18

TO AMEND THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hastings has established the City's budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager has recommended that said budget be amended based on the availability of new information; and

WHEREAS, this Council is authorized by the City Charter and State statute to amend the budget throughout the fiscal year as it determines necessary; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Hastings amends the budget for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, incorporating amendments as detailed in Attachment A – General Fund Budget Amendments and Attachment B – Other City Governmental Funds.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the funds appropriated shall be drawn from the treasury of the City for the purposes approved pursuant to the authority granted by the Hastings City Charter.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution being offered by Member Stenzelbarton, with support by Member Devroy:

YEAS: Barlow, Bergeron, Brehm, Devroy, McLean, Resseguie, Rocha, Stenzelbarton and Tossava
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly held and attended regular meeting the 23rd day of June, 2025, by the City Council of the City of Hastings, by a vote of nine (9) members voting in favor thereof, zero (0) member voting against, and zero (0) member(s) absent.

Linda Perin
City Clerk

City Of Hastings
COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION 2025-19

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PROPERTY PURCHASE OF 133 E STATE STREET

WHEREAS, under Section 78m(1) of the General Property Tax Act ("GPTA"), the City has the right to purchase foreclosed property within the City if certain conditions are met, including that the purchase is for a public purpose and that the City pays the minimum bid to the foreclosing governmental unit; and

WHEREAS, the City Council determined that it is in the best interests of the City to exercise its right under Section 78m(1) of the GPTA to purchase the property identified in the Application to Purchase Tax Foreclosed Property ("Property"), which is attached to this Resolution ("Application"); and

WHEREAS, the City is purchasing the Property for the public purposes of (1) reducing the number of vacant tax-reverted properties within City limits, thereby minimizing the real and present dangers they present; and (2) placemaking and other economic development; and WHEREAS, it remains unknown if the city's application to acquire the property will be accepted and approved by the Barry County Treasurer and/or if there will be claimants on the property resulting in a change in the amount required; and

WHEREAS, the City Council determined that it is in the best interests of the City to authorize and direct Sarah Moyer-Cale, the City Manager, to execute any necessary action, including but not limited to submitting the Application and implementing legal action, to purchase the Property for the City, subject to review and approval by the City's legal counsel.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes and directs Sarah Moyer-Cale, the City Manager, to execute any necessary action, including but not limited to submitting the Application and implementing legal action, to purchase the Property for the City, subject to review and approval by the City's legal counsel.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution being offered by Member McLean, second by Member Devroy:

YEAS: Barlow, Bergeron, Brehm, Devroy, McLean, Resseguie, Rocha, Stenzelbarton and Tossava

NAYS:None

ABSENT: None

MOTION DECLARED ADOPTED

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly held and attended regular Resolution 2025-19 Page 1 of 1 June 23, 2025 meeting the 23rd day of June 2025, by the City Council of the City of Hastings, by a vote of nine (9) members voting in favor thereof, zero (0) member(s) being absent, and zero (0) members voting against.

Linda Perin
City Clerk



The Barry County Historical Society released a set of 18 collector's plates featuring 10 historical sites around the county.

Continued from previous page

community. That same year, a $500 donation was made to the Charlton Park Church Steeple Fund in tribute to Gertrude Mathews, Dorothy French, Florabelle Stowell and Ernest Appelman—each remembered for their steadfast service and civic dedication.

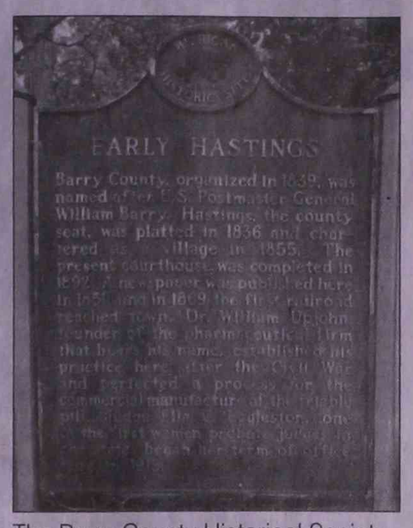
In October 1984, the Barry County Book Committee made up of several members of the BCHS was established with the goal of compiling and publishing a comprehensive history of Barry County families. Nearly a century had passed since any major work on the county's history had been undertaken. Earlier publications included the "History of Allegan and Barry Counties" (1880), the "History of Barry and Eaton Counties" (1885), and a 270-page volume authored by William W. Potter in 1912. The committee's dedicated efforts culminated in the publication of a 625-page volume—an invaluable record chronicling the lives and lineages of 19th- and 20th-century families across Barry County.

We owe a lasting debt of gratitude to individuals such as Esther Walton, Joyce Weinbrecht, Howard and Kathryn Ferris, Norm and Gordon Barlow, Mike Hook, Tom and Doris Niethamer, Marge Barcroft, John Cheeseman, Curtis Lawrence, Norman and Nyla Stanton, Roy Kent, Diane Hawkins, and many others whose dedicated efforts contributed to the creation of the 1985 Barry County history volume. Their collective commitment to preserving the stories and heritage of the county has left an enduring resource for future generations.

Twenty-three years later, in 2008, a new volume was published to once again record the history and families of Barry County. This effort was led by a group known as the History Preservation Association of Barry County, which had been founded and incorporated as a nonprofit organization in August 2002; not to be confused with the BCHS. The first major undertaking of this group was to once again gather and compile historical and genealogical information about the county and its families, both past and present. The result was a 304-page book, bound in navy blue and titled simply "Barry County, Michigan." Both the 1985 and 2008 editions serve as invaluable reference works for historians and genealogists alike and are available for public use in the Michigan Room on the second floor of the Hastings Public Library, at 227 E. State St., Hastings, MI 49058.

The desire to learn about the men and women who built Barry County will inevitably lead you to the very sites marked by historical plaques—placed there through the tireless efforts of the Barry County Historical Society. Their dedication to preserving the past is further reflected in the many books, pamphlets, and historical records they compiled—each the product of countless hours of careful research by local volunteers. These resources offer a valuable gateway to local history for anyone wishing to explore it. The legacy of the society lives on—not only in the landmarks they helped protect and the publications they produced, but in the enduring spirit of remembrance they instilled. Through their work, the stories, people and places that shaped Barry County will continue to educate and inspire generations to come.

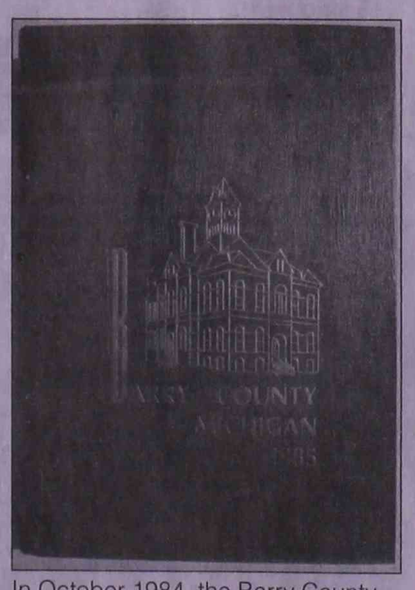
David Miller is a moderator for the "Hastings History" Facebook group.



The Barry County Historical Society led an effort to place historical markers throughout the county.



In 2008, a new volume titled "Barry County, Michigan" was published to once again record the history and families of Barry County



In October 1984, the Barry County Book Committee was established with the goal of compiling and publishing a comprehensive history of Barry County families.

YOU'RE NOT JUST OUR READERS.

You're our friends, our family, our neighbors... and our future.

VIEW Group

Your Community Connection

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

BARRY COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

Sealed proposals will be received at the office of the Barry County Road Commission, 1725 West M-43 Highway, P.O. Box 158, Hastings, MI 49058, until 11:00 A.M. July 16, 2025 for the Removal and Replacement of Select Existing Concrete Slabs on Grade.

Specifications and additional information may be obtained at the Road Commission Office at the above address or at our web site at www.barrycrc.org.

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to waive irregularities in the best interest of the Commission.

ROAD COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF BARRY

David Solmes	Chairman
Jim James	Vice Chairman
Jamie Knight	Member

SYNOPSIS
RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
June 11, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Regular meeting called to order and Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Hawthorne, Greenfield, Watson, Mayack, Hall, James

Absent: Bellmore

Approved the Agenda as amended

Approved the Consent Agenda

Monthly Treasurer's Report

Monthly Clerk's Voucher/Payroll Report

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-310 BIRCH Fire Agreement renewal. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Motion to approve L-4029 Tax Rate requests. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Motion to approve to pay MTA dues for 2025/2026. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Motion to pay invoice for new furnace. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Motion to approve the Hold Harmless Agreement for Image SFX. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Motion to approve the concept of an ambulance for BIRCH and to commit financial support not to exceed $50,000. Roll Call Vote – All Ayes, motion passes

Adjournment 8:15 pm

Respectfully submitted, Robin Hawthorne, Clerk
Attested to by, Marti Mayack, Supervisor

SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - BARRY COUNTY

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 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): Sabrina L. Wright, single woman Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: March 29, 2022 Recorded on March 31, 2022, in Document No. 2022-003411, and re-recorded via Affidavit of Correction on May 29, 2025, in Document No. 2025-004462, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): M & T Bank Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Sixty-Four Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-Six and 27/100 Dollars ($164,996.27) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Barry County, and described as: Lot 5, Block 6, Chamberlain`s Addition to the City, formerly Village of Hastings, according to the recorded plat in Liber 1 of Plats, Page 7, Barry County Records. Commonly known as 236 W Nelson St, Hastings, MI 49058 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. M & T Bank Mortgagee/ Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400

1565878
(07-03)(07-24)

GO ONLINE TO HASTINGSBANNER.COM

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
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)

Church brings in Chips to grow basketball community

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Lakewood varsity boys' basketball coach Jason Solgat wandered through the crowd of thundering basketballs in the Lakewood High School gymnasium with a big grin on his face.

"I've never had this many people in my gym," he said.

More than 100 youngsters signed up and participated in a youth Skills for Success Basketball Clinic run by the Central Michigan University Men's Basketball program Wednesday, June 25. The Chippewas were brought to the area by the First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa, which is hosting its third annual three-on-three tournament at the church July 2 and July 9.

The Chippewas worked to build positivity as much as basketball skills over the course of a steamy two hours inside the Lakewood High School gymnasiums.

"Lots of high fives today," Central Michigan University assistant head coach Brooks Miller told the kids as he kicked off the clinic. "The only thing we're counting is how many high fives you can give today. You should give 30 high fives. I want you to count those in your head. 30 high fives, and then you should meet two people that you didn't know before."

There were dribbling drills and passing drills early on in the clinic, but also a hustle drill with ballplayers diving out onto the floor after a loose ball. It was about more than hustle though. While one player skidded across the court after the basketball two more followed cheering them on ready to help them up off the floor once they'd secured the ball.

There were enough participants that the clinic split after a few drills to send the more experienced ball players into the old gym at the high school.

That made it all the more obvious that the organizers from the First Congressional Church made a good choice when Solgat contacted them in hopes of brining the clinic, that was offered free to the youngsters, to the high school rather than have it on the two half-courts in the church parking lot.

Andy Bronkema is the first-year head coach of the CMU Men's Basketball team. Bronkema, from McBain, played college ball at Cornerstone University. He spent the past 12 seasons coaching the Ferris State University men on the NCAA Division II level where the Bulldogs won a a national championship and nine Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championships. He started as an assistant coach at Ferris State in 2007.

Bronkema played alongside Josh Liggins, now a Lake Odessa resident, at Cornerstone. They've been friends ever since. In the run up to this year's three-on-three tournament at the church, Liggins asked his neighbor Pam Swiler at a church basketball committee meeting if she'd ever thought about the church hosting a clinic.

"I'm like sure. That sounds great, but who do we get? … He got on his phone and called [Bronkema] right then and there," Swiler said.

"That started the ball rolling," she added.

"We had received some funds that were slated for events for kids. That is our ministry. So, this was one of those events. The three-on-three has been one of the events, and now this clinic was another one. That is how we could offer it free to the kids and their families. There are some of those kids that could never afford to go to one of these clinics because they can be pretty pricey. We were thrilled to be able to do that. The parents were very appreciative, and the kids were eating it up."



New Central Michigan University Men's Basketball head coach Andy Bronkema cheers on youngsters picking up a teammate off the floor during a hustle drill at Lakewood High School Wednesday, June 25. The First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa brought the Chippewas to Lakewood for a free youth basketball clinic. **Photos by Brett Bremer**

It was Josh Liggins' son Isiah (now age 8) who kind of got this whole basketball thing rolling at the First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa a couple years ago.

"This whole three-on-three thing started when his son was over in our

See **BASKETBALL** on 12

City of Hastings

COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION 2025-17
FEES FOR VARIOUS SERVICES

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hastings has determined that it is necessary to set fees charged for various services; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the fees set by this resolution shall go into effect on July 1, 2025 and remain in effect until changed by the Hastings City Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that service fees be set by the Hastings City Council as follows:

CLERK	
Check or ACH Transaction Returned for Any Reason	$50.00
Copy Charges (Per B/W Page)	$0.10/per FOIA Policy
Downtown Handicapped Parking Permit	$20.00
Entertainment Venue, Large - Refundable Security Deposit	$300.00
Entertainment Venue, Large - Up to 4 hours (City Residents/Taxpayer)	$200.00
Entertainment Venue, Large - Up to 4 hours (Non-residents/Non-resident Taxpayer)	$300.00
Entertainment Venue, Large - Additional time (per hour)	$50.00
Entertainment Venue, Small - Refundable Security Deposit	$300.00
Entertainment Venue, Small - Up to 4 Hours (City Residents/Taxpayer)	$100.00
Entertainment Venue, Small - Up to 4 Hours (Non-residents/Non-resident Taxpayer)	$150.00
Entertainment Venue, Small - Additional Time (per hour)	$25.00
Fish Hatchery Building Rental - Refundable Key Deposit	$20.00
Fish Hatchery Building Rental - Refundable Security Deposit	$300.00
Fish Hatchery Building Rental - Up to 4 Hours (City Residents/Taxpayer)	$150.00
Fish Hatchery Building Rental - Up to 4 Hours (Non-residents)	$200.00
Fish Hatchery Building Rental - Additional Hour (per hour)	$25.00
Fish Hatchery Conference Room Rental - Up to 2 Hours	$50.00
Fish Hatchery Conference Room Rental - Additional Time (per hour)	$25.00
Going Out of Business Sale Permit	$50.00
Liquor License Application (Including Transfer)	$50.00
Map - City Map from Plotter	$25.00
Map - Original Plat	$15.00
Notary Service (Per Document)	$10.00
Online Access (via Internet) to City Charter and Updated Municipal Code	$0.00
Park Pavilion Reservation (City Residents/Taxpayer)	$50.00
Park Pavilion Reservation (Non-residents/Non-resident Taxpayer)	$80.00
Park Use Clean-up Fee - additionally (Groups of 50 or More)	$80.00
Sidewalk Cafes (per year)	$50.00
Tax Information – non-taxpayer (per parcel)	$5.00/per FOIA Policy
Tax Information – online access or for taxpayer	$0.00
Telecommunication Permit Application	$500.00
Truck Parking (E State St) fee (per month)	$50.00
Truck Parking - Electric service (per month)	$35.00
Voter Registration List (per label)	per FOIA policy
Voter Registration List (per name)	per FOIA policy
Voter Registration on Disk (+ per name)	per FOIA policy
Wedding Administrative Fee	$25.00

CODE ENFORCEMENT	
Keeping of Animals Administration Fee	$25.00
Keeping of Animals Permits	$100.00
Noxious Weed, Vegetation Control, Blight Elimination *(Plus labor, equipment rental, supplies, and contractual service)*	$165.00
Vacant/Foreclosed Property Registration	$25.00

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Address Application Form (per address)	$20.00
Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Exemption Certificate Fee	$1,200.00
Commercial Redevelopment District Exemption Certificate Fee	$1,200.00
Commercial Rehabilitation Exemption Certificate Application Fee	$1,200.00
Export of entire Assessment/Property Tax Data File (per season)	actual cost
Export of limited Assessment/Property Tax Data File	actual cost
Industrial Facilities Exemption Application Fee	$1,200.00
Lot Combinations	$35.00
Lot Splits	$100.00
Lot Splits - per parcel created	$25.00
Neighborhood Enterprise Zone	$1,200.00
Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Application Fee	$1,200.00
Property Data - per parcel *(No charge will be made during the Board of Review or to the Property Owner)*	actual cost

FIRE DEPARTMENT	
False Alarm Run *(Only for mechanical alarms that have more than 3 occurrences per calendar year)*	$750.00
Fire Reports	$5.00

PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT	
Basic Application Fee	$380.00
Escrow for Direct Costs (Additional Direct Cost Escrow May Be Required)	$1,250.00

PLANNING & ZONING	
Fence Permits	$25.00
Re-zoning Request	$350.00
Site Plan Review - Application	$250.00
Site Plan Review - Escrow	$1,250.00
Site Plan Review - Storm Water Review	$200.00
Site Plan Review - Administrative Fee	$100.00
Site Plan Review - Outside Sales Fee	$250.00
Special Use Permit Application	$250.00
Special Use Permit Escrow	$1,250.00
Zoning Application/Letter Form	$30.00
Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Variance Request	$350.00

PLAT REVIEW	
Plat - Sketch	$300.00
Plat/Site Condominium - Preliminary Flat Fee (+ Per Lot)	$1,500.00
Plat/Site Condominium - Preliminary Per Lot	$20.00
Plat/Site Condominium - Final	$1,500.00
Vacating Public Right of Way Application	$300.00
Vacating Public Right of Way Escrow	$1,000.00

POLICE DEPARTMENT	
Bicycle License	$1.00
Breath Test (Preliminary)	$5.00
Documents (e.g., photos) on CD-ROM	per FOIA policy
Door-to-door solicitation – daily only	$25.00
DVD Video	per FOIA policy
False Alarm Responses *(Only for mechanical alarms that have more than 3 occurrences per calendar year)*	$250.00
Hawker/Peddler/Transient (Street) Vendor or Dealer (Daily)	$25.00
Hawker/Peddler/Transient (Street) Vendor or Dealer (Annually)	$100.00
Liquor License (24 Hour)	$25.00
Notary Service (Per Document)	$10.00
Second Hand & Junk Dealers' License (Annually)	$20.00

PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT	
Banner Installation	$100.00
Building Disconnection or Demolition Sewer Inspection Fee	$150.00
Data Log (one free per calendar year) additional	$112.00
Driveway Permits (Initial)	$100.00
Driveway Permits (Reconstruction)	$80.00
Pavement Cut Permits	$100.00

RIVERSIDE CEMETERY	
Burial Rights - Babyland Space (Bonafide legal resident of the City/Non-resident taxpayer)	$150.00
Burial Rights - Babyland Space (Non-resident)	$450.00
Burial Rights - Certificate Transfer (Plus difference between resident/taxpayer and non-resident fee)	$25.00
Burial Rights - Cremation Space (Bonafide legal resident of the City/Non-resident taxpayer)	$150.00
Burial Rights - Cremation Space (Non-resident)	$450.00
Burial Rights - Regular Lot (Bonafide legal resident of the City/Non-resident taxpayer)	$300.00
Burial Rights - Regular Lot (Non-resident)	$900.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Adult (Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM)	$700.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Adult (Saturday, Holiday, Other Hours)*	$850.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Child, coffin 4 ft or less (Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM)	$350.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Child, coffin 4 ft or less (Saturday, Holiday, Other Hours)*	$450.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Cremains (Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM)	$200.00
Grave Opening/Closing - Cremains (Saturday, Holiday, Other Hours)*	$300.00
**Note: Holidays include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.*	
Monument Foundation (per square inch)	$0.50
Winter Burial Fee (additional) November 15 – March 31	$150.00

HAZ-MAT COST RECOVERY FEE SCHEDULE

PERSONNEL: Personnel cost shall be calculated as the actual labor expenses including eligible backfill and over-time rates in accordance with the fire department's existing labor contracts and pay schedules. In the event the incident requires the Hastings Fire Department utilize fire, police and public service or other mutual aid agreements, the Hastings Fire Department will recover costs for other agencies. These costs will consist of the actual labor expenses including eligible backfill and overtime rates in accordance with the mutual aid agency's actual labor expenses including eligible backfill and overtime rates. Mutual aid fire equipment will be billed at the rates contained in this fee schedule. Non-fire department equipment will be billed at the provider's rates.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS FROM OTHER DISTRICTs: In the event volunteer firefighters from a mutual aid agency are utilized, the rate shall be that agency's predetermined rate.

APPARATUS: Cost shall be calculated according to the following schedule; mileage and fuel rates are included in the hourly equipment rates. Cost for fire mutual aid agencies will also be calculated using this schedule. Additional non-fire department equipment shall be compensated according to that agency, department, or private contractor's schedule of charges.

Fire Engine (Pumper)	$125.00 per hour
Ladder Truck (Aerial)	$225.00 per hour
Rescue Unit	$125.00 per hour
Tankers	$90.00 per hour
Grass Trucks	$55.00 per hour
Hazardous Materials Units	$75.00 per hour
Support* Units	$50.00 per hour

**Support Units support haz-mat units, i.e., air units, mobile command posts, etc.)*

MILEAGE RATES: Mileage is paid for vehicles that are not eligible for hourly rate compensation. Payment rates are "wet rates" - all fuel, oil, insurance, maintenance, repair, and other costs are included in the rate.

All vehicle mileage rates shall equal the rate set by the Internal Revenue Service from time to time.

SUPPLIES: Consumable supplies shall be billed at the actual replacement cost.

GENERAL GUIDELINES: All costs shall be submitted utilizing provided forms. Additional documentation shall be submitted if requested.

A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution being offered by Member Rocha, second by Member Stenzelbarton:

YEAS: Barlow, Bergeron, Brehm, Devroy, McLean, Resseguie, Rocha, Stenzelbarton and Tossava
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

MOTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly held and attended regular meeting the 23rd day of June 2025 by the City Council of the City of Hastings, by a vote of nine (9) member(s) voting in favor thereof, zero (0) member(s) voting against, and zero (0) member(s) absent.

Linda Perin

Linda Perin, City Clerk



Mary Free Bed Overdrive attacker Nate Boersma (back) looks to take the ball away from a Motor City opponent during the finals of the MK Battery United States Power Soccer Association Conference Cup Series Founders Cup Championship, June 22 in Fort Wayne, Ind. **USPSA photos by Katie Pierce**



Jonah Westcott (left) and Kyle Friar head towards their bench area while celebrating Friar's goal in double overtime that clinched the Founders Cup Championship for their team, the Mary Free Bed Overdrive, at the MK Battery United States Power Soccer Association Conference Cup Series Championships June 22 in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Local guys help Overdrive to Power Soccer national title

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

A clockwise spin from Mary Free Bed Overdrive's Nate Boersma punched a corner kick to teammate Kyle Friar at the top of the goal box five and a half minutes into a second overtime period in the championship match.

With the Motor City Eagles' goalkeeper on the near post and a defender on the center of the line, Friar turned to hit Boersma's pass just inside the far post to give the Overdrive a 1-0 golden goal victory in the MK Battery United States Power Soccer Association (USPSA) Conference Cup Series Founders Cup Championship, June 22 in Fort Wayne, Ind.

"I just passed it. I don't even pick a play half the time," Boersma said of his corner kick that led to the Overdrive's championship clinching goal. He said going quick before everyone is set up works out to his advantage a lot of times.

The Overdrive, one of the top seeds in the Founders Conference heading into the tournament, did not allow a single goal all weekend long. The team shut out opponents 5-0, 3-0 and 1-0 during pool play, took a 7-0 win in the quarterfinals and a 2-0 win in the semifinals.

Boersma, a seventh grader at Thornapple Kellogg Middle School, said he enjoyed "destroying" teams at the tournament. As far as earning six straight shut outs, he said "our defense was just on point and our goalie was playing really good."

Those victories put the Overdrive, based out of Grand Rapids, into the championship game against one of their local rivals, the Motor City Eagles from Northville. Power Soccer games consist of two 20-minute halves played on a basketball court in specialized $12,000 powered wheel chairs with cages on the front built for knocking the ball around and protecting feet. A six-meter goal is at each end of the court. Games are played 4-on-4 with three "field" players and a goalkeeper on each side.

The Overdrive team compiled a 13-7-1 during the 2024-25 season playing in the Founders Conference, and earned a promotion up to the Presidents Conference with their championship finish in Fort Wayne.

Boersma, primarily an attacker, was second in the Founders Conference with 16 goals this season and led the conference in assists with 14 in 21 games. New seasons begin in November, and teams play in tournaments throughout the winter and spring to earn spots and seeding for the national championship tournament each summer.

Jonah Westcott of Hastings is also a member of the Overdrive squad after earning a spot on the Mary Free Bed traveling team for the first time this season. Westcott came on late in the first ten-minute overtime period and was on the floor with Boersma and Friar as they clinched the national title.

Friar was named the tournament MVP, and the Overdrive's keeper Alec Lundy had to be high in the voting for that award with his six shut outs and a rare save of a penalty kick.

The Overdrive team, one of the youngest at the tournament in any division, was coached by Pete Kaiser this season with Nate's father Jason Boersma and Livvie Berger on the staff as assistant coaches.

"Pete is a pure soccer player and has been his whole life," Jason said. Kaiser played at Aquinas College, and while power soccer is new to him, he has been able to transition some things from the pitch to the court.

The USPSA is the governing body for power soccer, which is dubbed as the first competitive team sport for power wheelchair users. Power soccer empowers athletes with diverse disabilities, such as quadriplegia, Muscular dystrophy, arthrogryposis, and cerebral palsy, to compete independently at all skill levels according to the organization.

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports began its power soccer program in 2019, and after a bit of a set-back during the pandemic in 2020, started playing games and competing in tournaments in 2021.

"The first year you just played games and we had hand-me-down chairs, and they went in and it was like taking an old rust bucket F-150 truck with cattle guards on them playing against Corvettes," Nate's mother Vikki Boersma said.

"My chair kept falling apart," Nate said.

The Lori's Voice non-profit helped the Overdrive acquire some better chairs, and that made a ton of difference, and Nate has managed to get a chair even more specific to his own needs since then. It takes some work to modify chairs so they best support the abilities of each individual driver with the placement of switches and such. The chairs also need to be torqued to not be more than their drivers can withstand. Chairs are tested before and after matches to see that they don't exceed 6.2 miles per hour (10 kph) in both the forward and backward direction. Players mostly use foot guards to move the 13-inch ball.

Jason's role as an assistant coach has more to do with his engineering skills than X's and O's he provides.

It has become a whole family sport. Nate's big sister Morgan Boersma, a TK freshman, works on the pit crew. Jason took some of his RC racing experience from his childhood and has her cleaning tires with acetone. All the parents in the stands had "Pit Crew" shirts made up for themselves as well. TK junior Karsyn Boersma isn't quite as into the competition as the rest of the family, but sometimes she enjoys the travel.

There is a lot of travel. Vikki said finding gymnasiums that can also support the electricity needs for a fleet of battery powered wheel chairs is one of the sport's big challenges.

Tom Flynn is one of three sports coordinators in the Mary Free Bed wheelchair and adaptive sports department, the one who tasked with handling power soccer as well as wheelchair tennis and para standing tennis and goalball for the blind and visually impaired. The Mary Free Bed program also offers wheelchair basketball, wheelchair lacrosse, wheelchair rugby, hand cycling clinics and competitions too.

"Over this whole season, coach Pete [Kaiser] always has his white board out at practice. They're always scouting other teams," Flynn said. "I've seen coach Pete watch film while they're driving home from tournaments. All the coaches are so invested in this. They draw up the plays. They scout. They know who those other players are and what kind of defense we want to play, or who we want to have playing on offense."

"The players bought in," Flynn added. "The coaches got the players to buy in that this system will work. The players know they have to play on offense or defense, you can't just play offense or defense. There are even times where our goalie … he will take the ball up the court and then somebody knows to come back and play defense. They just have an offensive and defensive mindset, and they players know they have got to do what they have got to do … it is so much fun to be involved. When I started in 2023, the program was up and running. To see the progress from then to now is incredible."

Players have their regular chairs, and transition into the specially equipped Strike Force power wheel chairs with guards for the contests. There are rules against 2-on-1 play to help limit contact to not only protect the players, but their pricey equipment as well.

"We are 95 percent philanthropy. Fortunately, we have people that support us. We pay travel expenses for players or tournament fees, coaches fees, rental fees for gym space … we're very fortunate that we have the support that we have," Flynn said. "This equipment, at $12,000 apiece if you have 12 players on your team there is $144,000 in equipment. It is a fun sport to watch and it is fun for these kids."

The Overdrive program has players in it from nine years old to 32 years old. The Founders Conference is the lowest of four levels in the USPSA with national championship competition. The Premier Conference is the top level with a Champions Conference, the Presidents Conference and the Founders Conference the other three steps in the ladder. There are also non-conference and recreational play opportunities in the USPSA, like the ones the Overdrive started with not so long ago.

"It's pretty exciting," Vikki said. "They're kind of the up and coming team."

More information on the Mary Free Bed programs or how to help support them financially can be found on the wheelchair and adaptive sports page of maryfreebed.com.



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- St. Clair Area View



Marilyn Smith (pictured) of Smith Housing Consulting spoke at Tuesday's Barry County Board of Commissioners Committee of the Whole meeting in favor of the county submitting a grant application that would help low- to moderate-income homeowners in dire need of home repairs. **File photo**

Commissioners set public hearing for second CHILL grant application next week

Molly Macleod
Editor

If once is nice, twice is better.

Residents in Barry County may soon have another opportunity to receive funding to help complete critical home repairs. The Barry County Board of Commissioners heard from Marilyn Smith from Smith Housing Consulting on Tuesday, who explained the state is reopening a grant that can help local homeowners make critical repairs to their homes that will make them viable for years to come.

The grant comes from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's (MSHDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Dubbed the CDBG Housing Improving Local Livability (CHILL) Program, the grant could stand to afford the county up to $354,000. These funds would be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis to qualifying homeowners in the City of Hastings, the Village of Woodland, the Village of Freeport, the Village of Middleville, the Village of Nashville, Delton and Hickory Corners with low to moderate incomes in need of home improvements.

Commissioners will hold a public hearing considering the grant application next week, Tuesday, July 8, at 9 a.m.

Some residents in Barry County are already feeling the impact of the grant after the county received $200,000 from MSHDA in the last round of CHILL grant funding in Fall 2024.

"The program has very generous guidelines," said Smith. "Up to $10,000 is completely forgiven once the home is finished. $10,001 up to $40,000 is forgiven in five years —no interest, no payment. So it's an amazing program. We always want to make sure that people know that they have to stay there for five years, or they will have to pay the whole thing back. It's not prorated, forgivable."



Central Michigan University sophomore Phat Brooks pesters DJ Sutherlin from Lansing during a dribbling drill early on in the CMU Basketball Clinic at Lakewood High School June 25.

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BASKETBALL

Continued from Page 10

parking lot just playing with a basketball and told the pastor that he wished we had some basketball hoops. Pastor Marilyn [Danielson] brought it back to the church and said, well why can't we put up some basketball hoops. But if we're going to do it, let's do it right. We asked Josh if he would come and help us with what kind to get and help us with placing them where they should be so they'll get the most use, and helping us with finding the people to mark it and all that stuff. He has been really instrumental in helping with anything that has to do with basketball. He has just been so supportive of that. We appreciate him so much."

Swiler said some of the members on the new "basketball committee" at the church didn't know anything about basketball. She has been a lifelong fan of the sport and Gunnard Johnson is another big basketball fan on the committee.

"The pastor didn't really know anything about basketball. It has been a learning experience from all different directions for all of us," Swiler said. "The one thing that we all share in this committee is number one, we all love the Lord. And number two we love our community and the kids in it. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get to know the kids in neighborhood and in the community, and it's just a good outreach."

The clinic ended with a lot of high fives, and a lot of photos and autograph sessions. Some kids were looking for whatever scraps of paper they could find to get signatures from the handful of Chippewa ballplayers helping run the clinic.

That group of Chippewa players included Tamario Adley, Phat Brooks, Kayden Nation, Jorden Brooks, Rodney Johnson Jr. and Will Ashford and director of player development Josh Fleming also helped put the youngsters through the paces.

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