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INSIDE
TODAY'S EDITION
'DAWN PATROL' RETURNS
PAGE 4



SAXON ALL-STARS RETURN TO TEACH FAVORITE TECHNIQUES
PAGE 9



DNR PLANNING HALL LAKE DRAWDOWN OVER THE NEXT YEAR
PAGE 3

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County officials move forward with agreement to protect park

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

Barry County officials are taking the necessary legal steps to ensure the natural preservation of the county's newest park.

During its Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday, July 15, the Barry County Board of Commissioners continued its efforts to approve a conservation easement agreement with Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy for the Bailey Nature Preserve.

Ownership of the park, which is located in Assyria Township and includes Metcalf Lake, was transferred to Barry County last year from its previous owner, the City of Battle Creek.

The Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy worked with both Battle Creek and Barry County to transfer the 160-acre parcel, which county officials have vowed to make only minimal upgrades to in order to maintain the area's natural beauty.

Part of that vow now includes putting a conservation easement on the property to ensure that, regardless of what government entity might own it in the future, only minimal development may be completed on the land.

"Back, about two years ago, when we first started discussing the Bailey Nature Preserve ownership … we were also discussing the conservation easement concept and having that placed on the property," said Dan Patten, Barry County Parks and Recreation director.

"This is just the culmination of that and the next step in the process for that," he added.

After clearing the Committee of the Whole, the measure will be placed on the agenda for the county board's next regular meeting for final approval.

A couple of commissioners at Tuesday's committee meeting did seek clarification on the concept of a conservation easement, concerned that such an agreement might handcuff the county from making any necessary changes to the park in the future.

Patten assured commissioners that the parks department had worked alongside the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy to create an agreement that had the foresight to address any enhancements needed for the park.

The agreement includes a carve-out that allows the county 50,000 square feet to carry out projects, such as vaulted toilets for hikers or a kayak launch. The agreement also does not restrict the county from completing necessary maintenance work, including clearing trees.

"We're trying to preserve it in the most natural state it can and this is certainly an act that will do that," Patten said.

David Hatfield, the county board's vice chairman, pointed out that the move is simply a belated step in the agreement that was made from the very beginning.

"We would not have been given this property if we did not agree in concept to what is being proposed," he said. "It's kind of after the fact – this was all a part of the original gift. We're just honoring the commitment we made to them back when we accepted the parcel."

County fair continues in full swing through Saturday



Hastings High School senior Audrey Wieringa (right) answers questions from judges during the non-livestock project judging at the Barry County Fair. The judging took place on Saturday, July 12, and allows students to submit projects in a variety of disciplines, from painting and drawing to metal work, scrapbooking and ceramics. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

A couple youngsters zipped through the dark midway Monday night, zig-zagging from one ride to the next.

They took turns standing in front of the signs measuring whether or not they were too tall, too small or just the right height to run through a fun house or ride each ride.

The Elliott's Amusements at the 2025 Barry County Fair, where "Kids Rock" were set to start spinning Tuesday afternoon – kicking the fair into high gear on what was expected to be the hottest day of the week with temperatures approaching 90 degrees.

Temperatures in the Hastings area are forecast to dip down into the upper 70s for Thursday and Friday, July 17-18. There are some predictions of scattered rain showers throughout the rest of the fair week.

The midway amusements open at 3 p.m. Thursday and Friday and then get rolling at noon on Saturday, July 19. The fairgrounds are open from 8 a.m. until at least 10:30 p.m. now through Saturday.

The 4-H events kicked off with Youth Dog Judging in the show arena Saturday morning, July 12. Youth Non-Livestock Judging was held throughout the day. Rabbit, Cavy and poultry took the 4-H spotlight the following day on Sunday, July 13.

Open class home economic entries like photographs, paintings, jellies and jams, vegetables, breads, antiques, crochet and quilted items, etc., started making their way into the expo building Sunday afternoon and judging took place in those

See **FAIR** on 2

Getting outdoors:

■Hastings council completes first read of proposed ordinance

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

The Hastings City Council completed the first reading of an ordinance that would install guidelines on how downtown businesses may utilize the sidewalks outside of their establishments during its regular scheduled meeting Monday, July 14.

"In years past, whether it was items on the sidewalk or whether it was goods or wares being sold by the merchants inside, it would require a stay of the ordinance, like during sidewalk sales," said Dan King, the city's community development director and zoning administrator.

"This ordinance gives a little more flexibility to the merchants so they can pull some things out on the sidewalk, some additional signage or some chairs, basically to make the downtown a little more inviting and to offer people who are window shopping a little more hands-on action with the merchants," King added.

The ordinance, which was only reviewed and not voted on, dictates that merchandise loading must be done within alleys and back entrances (when present) of downtown businesses, ensuring that items are not stacked on the front sidewalk, and do not impede foot traffic or the view of the businesses.

Meanwhile the ordinance reportedly would permit movable sales racks and temporary seating,

See **OUTDOORS** on 5

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TWO-YEAR-OLD TROTTERS SET RECORDS AT FAIR RACETRACK
PAGE 10

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Italian company to buy iconic cereal-maker

Iconic cereal manufacturer WK Kellogg Co. is set to be under new ownership.

Officials of the Battle Creek-based company, along with representatives from the Italian family-owned Ferrero Group, announced Thursday, July 10, that the two companies had entered into an agreement that would see Ferrero acquire Kellogg for $23 per share in cash, representing a total value of $3.1 billion.

The acquisition, which includes the manufacturing, marketing and distribution of WK Kellogg's portfolio of breakfast cereals across the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, is reportedly part of Ferrero's plan for strategic growth and expands the company's reach with renowned brands and strong consumer relevance.

After the transaction closes, officials stated that Battle Creek will remain a core location for the company and will be Ferrero's headquarters for North America cereal.

"We believe this proposed transaction maximizes value for our shareowners and enables WK Kellogg Co. to write the next chapter of our company's storied legacy," said Gary Pilnick, Kellogg's chairman and CEO. "Since becoming an independent public company in October 2023, we have made excellent progress on our journey to become a more focused and more profitable business – driven by our tremendous people and a winning culture – all while building a strong foundation for future growth.

"Joining Ferrero will provide WK

See **CEREAL-MAKER** on 5





Kids enjoy some of the first rides on the mechanical swings Tuesday afternoon, July 15, at the Barry County Fair, held at the Barry Expo Center. The 172nd annual fair continues through Saturday. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

FAIR

Continued from Page 1

classes beginning Monday morning.

Audrey Wieringa, who will be a senior at Hastings High School this fall, entered the non-livestock division for both drawing and painting. She said that she embraces the criticism from the judges because it helps her perfect her art over time.

"There are certain guidelines overall that you have to follow," said Wieringa, who also showed chickens and rabbits at this year's fair. "You want to show that you're putting in effort and can talk through your technique, why you came up with the design, what you did to prepare yourself and why you chose the medium."

While students like Wieringa are the ones who receive and benefit from the feedback, volunteers such as Kay Bursley and Melissa Willard are the ones who give it out. The duo served as judges for sewing at this year's fair.

Bursley, the director of G.W. Spindler Memorial Library in Woodland, said she volunteered because a library patron implored her to and that she "knows her way around a crochet hook, knitting needle and sewing machine."

"I'm a crocheter and I say crocheting brings me great joy," Bursley said. "If it doesn't bring me great joy, I'm not going to do it.

"So when a child finds something that they really love to do, then they're going to have a passion for it. It's really like that for everything in life."

Willard added that she's seen how non-livestock projects in 4-H can plant a seed for later in life.

"My kids did 4-H when they were younger and one of my daughters would enter cake decorating (projects) and that's what she's doing now for a job," Willard said. "She works as a cake decorator."

Judging of the 4-H events continues throughout fair week. The small animal sale begins at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday in the show arena. The livestock sale kicks off at 9 a.m. on Friday, also in the show arena.

The Ladies' Day Program begins at 10 a.m. in the expo building Thursday.

All of that and more is happening during the final days of the fair.

Grandstand events continue in the evenings this week, as well with Michigan Truck and Tractor Pullers the entertainment on Thursday, Unique Motor Sports Off Road Derby and Demolition Derby will be Friday and the Michigan State Fair Super Cross races Saturday. Those shows begin at 7 p.m. each evening with additional ticket fees on top of the regular fair admission.

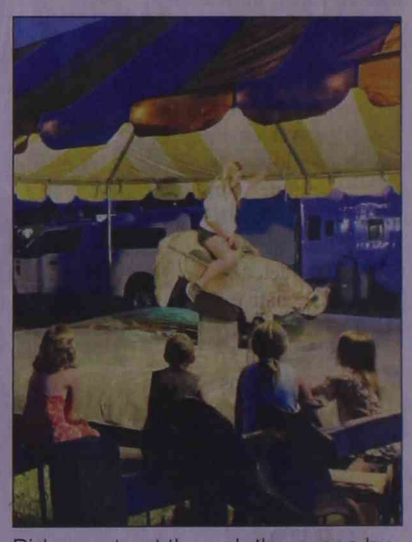
Fair admission for adults is $8 per day throughout the week. Kids 8 and under are free.

Parking is free all day every day. Credit cards are now being accepted at the gate, as well as cash.

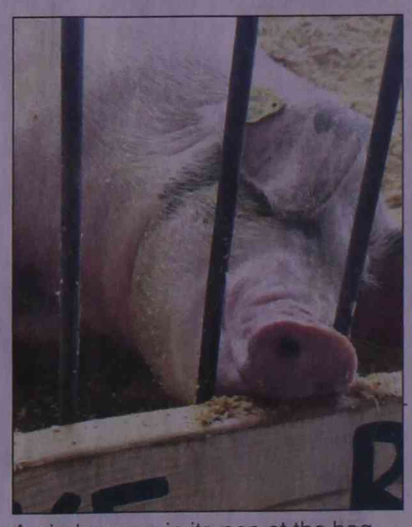
For more information, as well as a complete list of events, persons may visit online at www.barryexpocenter.com/fair.

– Freelance writer Jayson Bussa contributed to this report.





Riders get put through the paces by the mechanical bull Monday, July 14, during one of the opening evenings of the 2025 Barry County Fair. The fair runs through Saturday, July 19. **Photo by Brett Bremer**



A pig lounges in its pen at the hog barn during the Barry County Fair, which runs through Saturday, July 19. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

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DNR planning Hall Lake drawdown over the next year

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The North Country National Scenic Trail winds along Hall Lake's western edge in the Yankee Springs Recreation Area, as well as a bit of the lake's namesake trail.

Not far from where those two paths coalesce, there is a perpetual lean-to "fort" in a section of pine forest that has served as a playhouse for generations of youngsters. A boat ramp on the southeastern tip of the lake has been used by families of anglers for decades as they look to snag bass, perch, bluegill and the like.

The lake's edge will slowly move away from the trails and the lean-to over the coming months, and it appears eventually the Michigan Department of Natural Resources may look into putting in a carry down boat access site.

But, MDNR officials also announced Friday, July 11, that the state agency is moving forward this summer with a phased plan for drawing down Hall Lake Dam to a lower lake elevation – a decision that reportedly addresses safety issues with the Barry County impoundment, while also allowing for continued recreation use at Hall Lake, according to state officials.

A routine spring inspection followed by an engineering analysis of the dam led the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy to issue an emergency drawdown order.

The MDNR will immediately apply for the necessary permitting to begin the gradual drawdown, which will begin later this month. The final project drawdown is expected to be complete by fall 2026 and is funded by an MDEGLE Dam Risk Reduction Grant. Those grant funds must be spent by October 2026.

"Given its classification as a significant hazard dam, the worsening condition of the culvert and embankment, the prohibitive cost estimates to undertake replacement by the state or local municipality, and the risk of expiration of grant funding for the project, reducing the lake level by decommissioning, or drawing down, of Hall Lake Dam is the only viable option," said Joseph Jandernoa, park manager at Yankee Springs Recreation Area.

Not everyone is in favor of the project, however. At its regular meeting Thursday night, July 10, the Yankee Springs Township Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a resolution to support the preservation of the Hall Lake Dam, marking a firm stance against state plans to drain the lake.

Yankee Springs Township trustee Dave VanHouten and Supervisor Rob Heethuis voiced strong opposition to the state's plan to eliminate the Hall Lake Dam, citing concerns over environmental impact and community loss.

VanHouten, who attended a recent MDNR and MDEGLE meeting, said no clear explanation was provided for why Hall Lake was targeted beyond a general liability reduction initiative.

The board voted, 5-0, to adopt a resolution opposing the dam's removal and authorized Clerk Tom Hopkins to draft letters to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the MDNR advocating for the dam's preservation.

"This is a beautiful lake and a vital part of our community," VanHouten said. "Draining it would be a huge mistake."

Originally an eight-acre lake about 6-feet deep, the Gun Lake Road embankment raised the water level about 6 feet when it was installed. A water control structure added in the mid-1960s raised the lake another six feet. Hall Lake currently covers roughly 46 acres.

MDNR officials reported that its Parks and Recreation Division met with various units of local government and other non-governmental organizations to discuss the possibility of transferring ownership of Hall Lake Dam. Unfortunately, no group was able to commit to financing the necessary repairs, including the ongoing monitoring and reporting of safety and maintenance concerns.

According to reports, MNDR Park and Recreation officials are no longer leading any efforts to find a new owner and are moving forward with plans for decommissioning of the dam and lowering of the impoundment.

According to the MDNR, the phased drawdown will protect the integrity of Gun Lake Road, which runs along top of the earthen berm dam. The project calls for an initial drawdown of 3 feet during the month of July and about another 3 feet in June 2026.

A gradual drawdown of not more than 6 inches per week is planned to protect fish and wildlife, as well as stabilize sediments as much as possible.

"Once the project is completed, a smaller body of water will continue to exist for outdoor recreation, similar to its original lake size," Jandernoa said. "And fortunately, there are other small lakes within Yankee Springs Recreation Area that can provide recreational experiences like those available on Hall Lake. These include Williams Lake, Long Lake, Baker Lake and Chief Noonday Lake."

Repairing the dam was the clear choice of those who voiced concerns with the plan during a spring open house on the project. When it became clear to the MDNR that local governments and agencies were unable to assume full responsibilities for the dam, state officials determined that drawing down the impoundment was the appropriate course of action.

During those discussions, MDNR officials reportedly learned that dam impoundment conditions had worsened and would need to be addressed quickly.

In 2022, MDNR Parks and Recreation Division initially engineered a project to replace the water control structure, culvert and a portion of the embankment. The competitive bid for that first phase of dam repairs came in at over $1 million, more than double the original budget of $500,000.

An estimate for that repair now in 2026 is $1.1-1.3 million. That project would also need to include a second phase of work to address additional embankment work to bring the dam back into compliance with MDEGLE's Dam Safety Unit requirements, a phase that never got close enough to reality to come up with an additional cost estimate.

Classified by MDEGLE as a significant hazard dam, failure of Hall Lake Dam could cause economic and environmental damage, or disrupt essential services downstream, though loss of life is unlikely. The dam also previously received a condition rating of "poor."

"It is the DNR's goal to ensure that Hall Lake and surrounding amenities remain valuable natural resources that are both safe and sustainable," Jandernoa said. "The short-term aspects of decommissioning the dam include a gradual lowering of Hall Lake to an approved level, removal of the outdated water control structures, installation of a new culvert under Gun Lake Road and full restoration of the road.

"Long-term, the drawdown will reduce the size and depth of Hall Lake but will allow this body of water as well as the North Country Trail and Hall Lake Trail to remain. Once the new lake level is established, the DNR will also explore replacing the existing boating access site with a carry-down access site."



Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials plan to begin a drawdown of Hall Lake in the Yankee Springs Recreation Area later this month as part of the plan to address safety issues with the earthen dam beneath Gun Lake Road. The plan is for 6 feet of water to be drained from the lake level by the fall of 2026. **Photo by Brett Bremer**

Commissioners tap mental health veteran to fill vacancy

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

The Barry County Board of Commissioners is filling a vacancy on the Barry County Community Mental Health Authority Board and doing so with an individual who wields decades of experience in the field.

Commissioners conducted interviews for the vacant seat on the 12-person board on Tuesday morning, July 15, during their Committee of the Whole meeting.

The county received two applications for the seat, but only one individual went through with the interview process.That was Jerry Wilson of Irving Township, who is now retired after spending decades in the world of mental health.

Wilson reportedly holds a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in social work and a doctorate in higher education administration. He was a county mental health administrator for 15 years, taught social work for 10 years and formed a mental health foundation in Cass County in 1991 that is still in operation today.

"I've been bumping around mental health for the last 45 years or so," Wilson said during his interview Tuesday. "I'm retired now … and I thought I had plenty of time."

His term on the local mental health board will expire on March 31, 2028.

Township to save by switching carriers"

The fate of a dam at Hall Lake wasn't the only agenda item before the Yankee Springs Board of Trustees during its regular monthly meeting Wednesday, July 10.

Board members also voted to switch its insurance provider to EMC Insurance through the Ted Hartleb Agency. The decision was made after a comparison of three quotes, with EMC offering broader coverage at a lower annual premium – $51,129 compared to the township's current $58,000 plan.

The new policy includes full replacement value for fire trucks and coverage for township signage and memorials previously left unprotected.

Board members also improved what they reportedly see as budget friendly infrastructure improvements, including a new digital phone system to replace its outdated analog lines. The system, provided by Ocean Omega, includes 14 lines and will cost $140 monthly – down from the current $200 – after an initial $2,600 equipment investment.

The board also OK'd to add another pad and bin for recycling funded by a $4,000 grant from Barry County Waste Management, as well as the scheduling of a public hearing on Aug. 14 for Payne Ridge paving improvements under Special Assessment No. 51.

The evening's public comment featured residents raising concerns about tax policy and board transparency, with former clerk Mike Cunningham sharply criticizing the board for maintaining a 1-percent administrative fee on tax bills. Cunningham stated it was unnecessary and showed a disregard for residents' pocketbooks.

"The board is supposed to notice when we can save residents money – and act on it," he said.

Also, precinct delegates Dave and Robin Laansma called on the board to restore a previously eliminated public comment slot at the beginning of meetings and pushed for live streaming to improve public access and accountability.

Robin Laansma accused the supervisor of suppressing voices, calling it "a sign of weak leadership."

In other business, township fire department officials reported strong community feedback following a busy Fourth of July weekend and noted that the old fire truck will be sold soon. Also, Park Committee projects – particularly the pickleball court and walking path – are reportedly nearing completion, while Planning Commission discussions included progress on a mining ordinance and a potential new blight ordinance.

And while the Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet this month, a tentative meeting scheduled for August.

Board members closed with praise for Tom Hopkins' work on the insurance policy and enthusiasm for local road improvements.

The next regular meeting of the board of trustees is scheduled for Aug. 14 at 6 p.m at the Yankee Springs Township Hall on North Briggs Road. The township does not stream meetings online, but recordings of previous meetings are available at the township office.



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Should you trust a 'finfluencer'?

In the age of social media, it's easy to find advice on just about anything — including how to manage your money. Content creators known as "finfluencers" — short for financial influencers — use platforms like TikTok, YouTube and Instagram to share their takes on investing, budgeting and building wealth. Many of them are charismatic and relatable, and they often speak from personal experience. But while their content may be engaging, taking financial advice from a finfluencer without digging deeper can come with significant risks.

While some finfluencers may have formal training or credentials, many do not. Instead, their influence stems from their popularity rather than professional experience. But popular advice may not necessarily be good advice. A 2025 study by the Swiss Finance Institute even found that unskilled finfluencers typically have larger followings than skilled ones.

Why be cautious?

For young or new investors, social media can make finance feel accessible. In fact, a 2022 FINRA study says that more than 60% of Americans younger than 35 get investing information from these platforms. But social media isn't regulated the same way traditional financial advising is, so anyone, qualified or not, can offer financial tips.

Unlike traditional financial advisors, finfluencers don't know your unique goals, financial situation or risk tolerance. And likely, they're not licensed (you can check here: Check Out Your Investment Professional | Investor.gov). Even well-meaning guidance might lead you down a risky path if it's not tailored to your needs. And unfortunately, some finfluencers have exploited the trust they build with followers to promote questionable investments or outright frauds.

Warning signs to watch for

Here are a few signs that a finfluencer's advice may be worth avoiding:

• **Unrealistic "get-rich" promises:** Claims like, "Turn $500 into $50,000 in a year," are highly improbable and may indicate a scam.

• **Hurry, hurry**: Be wary of advice that pressures you to act fast or plays on fear of missing out. Important financial decisions shouldn't come with a countdown clock.

• **Flashy displays of wealth:** Images of luxury cars, watches or cash can be more about generating views than offering sound advice. If a finfluencer is trying that hard to convince you to take an action, it often means they will profit — perhaps they'll get paid to promote a product or service, or earn a fee for referring you, or are trying to boost clicks and followers to earn more.

What you can do

• **Do your own homework.** Don't take finfluencers' advice at face value. Cross-check it with reliable sources. The finfluencer may even be under investigation by a federal or state securities regulator. Talking to a licensed financial advisor you trust can help you discern good advice from the bad.

• **Recognize conflicts of interest.** If a finfluencer promotes a product or service, find out if they're being paid to do so. And remember, online personalities make money by generating high viewership, not because their advice has a track record of success.

• **Use common sense.** When something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. And of course, never disclose your bank or brokerage account numbers to a finfluencer, and never send money.

Finfluencers can make financial topics more engaging and accessible. But when it comes to your money, a social media video from someone who doesn't know you is no substitute for informed, personalized guidance. Take the time to verify, research and, when in doubt, seek advice from a professional.

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'Dawn Patrol' returns to Hastings airport

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

After taking a year off, the popular "Dawn Patrol Pancake Breakfast" once again landed at the Hastings City/Barry County Airport on Saturday, July 12.

The local airport hosted the event, which included an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast in the airport's hangar, vintage car cruise-in and a chance to fly the friendly skies thanks to the five volunteer pilots.

The annual Dawn Patrol has been going strong for over a decade and is hosted by the Hastings Flying Association, a group focused on promoting the local airport to the rest of the community. For 2025, HFA members got some help from the Middleville Lions Club, Middleville Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, and the Thornapple Flying Academy.

And, this year's event reportedly saw a steady flow of attendees, most of whom gathered on the airport grounds to enjoy the pancake breakfast, in addition to a series of raffles and prize giveaways.

One of the main attractions, however, for some was the opportunity to check off a bucket list item and cruise the open skies around Hastings and Barry County in a light aircraft.

A threat of potential rain and gusty winds lingered in the area, but it would not hamper the opportunity for those who purchased the opportunity to take a flight around the portions of the county.



A hungry crowd gathered at the Hastings City/Barry County Airport on Saturday, July 12, for the annual Dawn Patrol Pancake Breakfast, which includes an all-you-can-eat breakfast and the opportunity to purchase a flight around the area in a light aircraft. **Photo by Jayson Bussa**

The flights were open to passengers of all ages.

"It's fun seeing their faces," said Brad Knowles, a relatively new addition to the HFA who was coordinating flights for Dawn Patrol.

"Little kids are usually pretty quiet or maybe nervous at first but they think it's cool," he added. "A lot of time, with 16- or 17-year-olds, or maybe those in their low 20s, they get that look like 'Wow, I want to do more of this.'"

Knowles has been a pilot for 22 years – most of his career included flying helicopters for the U.S. Army and Coast Guard – and currently flies corporate airplanes out of Lansing.

While certainly not the primary reason for the Dawn Patrol event, organisers stated any time a kid or young adult becomes interested in aviation, it's a win for the industry as a whole which, like many others, is always looking to build a pipeline of young talent to continue staffing necessary jobs.

"The only issue is that it takes so long to make a pilot or a mechanic in this industry," Knowles added. "It takes so long to get that level of experience."

Council OKs temporary post in search for new manager

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

The Lake Odessa Village Council is hoping a temporary twist in its nearly two-year search for a new, full-time manager might pay long-term dividends.

Council members voted unanimously, 7-0, at a special meeting Thursday, July 10, to approve a recommendation for interim Manager Gregg Guetschow to promote current village employee, Jacob Hason, a member of the Lake Odessa's Department of Public Works staff, to the role of administrative assistant on a temporary basis.

According to discussions at the July 10 special meeting, Hanson would immediately begin to serve in the temporary administrative position two days a week for three months. He would continue with his DPW duties the other three days of each week.



Jacob Hanson (at left) addresses members of the Lake Odessa Village Council during a special meeting Thursday, July 10. At the meeting, council members unanimously voted to recommend Hanson, who currently works for the village's Department of Public Works, be promoted to a temporary role as an administrative assistant under interim Manager Gregg Guetschow. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**

Village President Karen Banks said Hanson's progress mentoring under Guetschow would be evaluated at the end of the three-month trial period, both by Guetschow and council members. If deemed successful, Hanson could then be promoted to the position of deputy manager and continue his apprenticeship under Guetschow for up to another year.

"If everything goes well, that would be the next progression," Banks said. "It's not automatic.

"Everything is an unknown right now," she added.

Hanson would also be given the option, after the initial trial period, to decline stepping up to the deputy manager's role and return to his DPW post.

Village officials had created the deputy manager's post, based on a suggestion by Guetschow, after ending yet another 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.

But, the hiring process took a surprise turn recently when the council's top pick for deputy manager, William Joseph, informed Guetshow he was withdrawing his name from consideration.

"It's a personal decision on his part," Guetshow said at the time.

Guetschow had already made a "conditional" offer to Joseph, the former Mt. Pleasant mayor and Paw Paw village manager, for the position of deputy manager. That was following a unanimous vote by council members on June 16 recommending Joseph for the position.

Council members then quickly moved from Joseph to Hanson, who was reportedly the only internal candidate to have applied for the position and also interviewed with the council at a 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 had 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."

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 applications some concern if the village were to repost the position in the near future.



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READ THEN RECYCLE



Officials for WK Kellogg company reportedly sold the iconic Battle Creek-based cereal manufacturer to the Italian family-owned Ferrero Group, according to an announcement released on Thursday, July 10, in a deal totaling $3.1 billion. Officials for the two companies stated Battle Creek will remain a core location for the company and will be Ferrero's headquarters for North America cereal. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**

CEREAL-MAKER

Continued from Page 2

Kellogg Co. with greater resources and more flexibility to grow our iconic brands in this competitive and dynamic market," he added. "As a family-owned, private company with values in line with our founder, W.K. Kellogg, Ferrero provides a great home for our people and has a track record of supporting the communities in which it operates. We look forward to collaborating with their team to deliver on the great promise of cereal, explore opportunities beyond cereal, and help us bring our best to consumers every day."

The news of the acquisition brought positive comments from Battle Creek officials.

"We welcome Ferrero to Battle Creek," said Mayor Mark Behnke. "We look forward to building a strong, long-term relationship that supports their success and secures their presence in our community for years to come."

Interim City Manager Ted Dearing added, "WK Kellogg Co. has shown a strong commitment to Battle Creek since its formation. We are hopeful that this commitment will continue under Ferrero's ownership."

U.S. Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-MI, also released a statement regarding the announced acquisition by Ferrero.

"For generations, WK Kellogg Co. has been synonymous with Battle Creek," stated Huizenga, who represents the state's 4th Congressional District. "The company and community have worked hand-in-hand to make the Greater Battle Creek area a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family.

"I am optimistic that Ferrero will follow through on this commitment to the city of Battle Creek and I will continue to fight to make sure good-paying jobs stay and are created here in Southwest Michigan," he added.

According to company officials, Ferrero and its affiliated companies in North America, currently total more than 14,000 employees across 22 plants and 11 offices.

The North America portfolio reportedly includes such brands as Nutella, Kinder, Tic Tac and Ferrero Rocher, as well as American brands such as Butterfinger, Keebler and Famous Amos. It also includes confectionery brands like Jelly Belly, NERDS and Trolli, and frozen treat brands including Blue Bunny, Bomb Pop and Halo Top.

Drawing upon its previous successful acquisitions in the United States, Ferrero plans to invest in and grow WK Kellogg Co's iconic brands including Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, Froot Loops, Special K, Rice Krispies and more that are well-loved by American consumers.

WK Kellogg Co has been in operation for nearly 120 years, while Ferrero has been in operation for more than 75 years.

"I am thrilled to welcome WK Kellogg Co. to the Ferrero Group," said Giovanni Ferrero, the company's executive chairman. "This is more than just an acquisition – it represents the coming together of two companies, each with a proud legacy and generations of loyal consumers.

"This news is a key milestone in that journey, giving us confidence in the opportunities ahead."

Upon the successful completion of the transaction, shares of Kellogg's common stock will no longer trade on the New York Stock Exchange and the company will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Ferrero.

The agreement reportedly has been unanimously approved by the Kellogg's Board of Directors.

The transaction is subject to approval by Kellogg shareowners, regulatory approvals and other closing conditions, and is currently expected to close in the second half of 2025.

–John Hendler

ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT





Spindlers celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary

James and Ellarie Spindler from Hastings, MI celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on June 26, 2025. The Spindlers met in college. They were engaged for two years until they wed on June 26, 1960.

They moved to Hastings in 1966 where they raised their five children.

Ellarie is a retired elementary teacher who taught kindergarten at Northeastern Elementary and Jim (otherwise known as "Doc") is a retired general practice physician. The success of their marriage was not only love and their Christian faith, but their ability to laugh together.

Their children Heidi Horn, Sandy Hisey, Anna Spindler and Christy Troy send their love and congratulations on this momentous occasion.

OUTDOORS

Continued from Page 1

enabling business owners to expand sales space and gain the exposure that comes with displaying items outside.

Displays and seating must be associated with a permanent business operating within the adjacent building and be placed as close to the building as "reasonably possible," per the ordinance.

A minimum of 5 feet of unobstructed pedestrian access along the sidewalk must also be maintained. The sales racks cannot exceed 150 square feet or 20 linear feet of frontage, and will only be present in the public right-of-way during business hours.

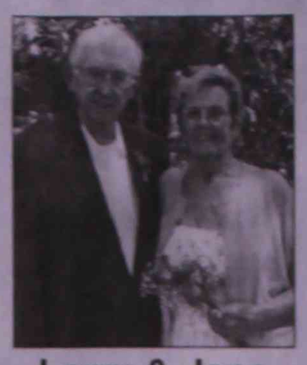
The ordinance also seeks to address sidewalk cafes and dining platform permits. That includes any portion of the public right-of-way permitted to be used by a licensed food service establishment.

Under the proposed ordinance, the city would issue permits lasting no longer than one calendar year – April 1 to Nov. 1 – to use a portion of the public right-of-way for dining.

Establishments, however, would have to meet several requirements, such as all furniture and décor must be temporary and in compliance with both building and fire codes. The businesses would then be able to conduct sales or serve patrons in the outdoor areas from 8 a.m. to midnight.

"This solves a lot of the issues that we've had over the years with people just putting things out (in the right-of-way)," Hastings Mayor Dave Tossava said of the ordinance.

ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT



Larry & Jane Neil Celebrate 65th Wedding Anniversary

Larry & Jane Neil will be celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary on July 30th. They were blessed with three children, 15 grandchildren and 24 great grandchildren. Please help them celebrate with cards. Cards can be mailed to 4905 E. State Rd. Hastings, MI 49058.

Council hears proposal to buy city-owned parcel

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

The City of Hastings has received dueling proposals for a long-vacant parcel of land on the southeast side of the city.

The Hastings City Council heard from one of those developers during a regularly scheduled meeting Monday, July 14, and awaits a similar public conversation with the other at its next meeting.

The property both developers are competing for is a 7.5-acre parcel of land located at the end of Hayes and Orchard streets, in the vicinity of BCN Technical Services.

Dan King, the city's community development director and zoning administrator, said the property has been city-owned and up for sale for more than two decades. However, city officials reportedly have not actively marketed the property.

Some interest in the property began percolating at the beginning of last year, and now the city has two proposals on its desk that would use the property for housing, though in drastically different fashions.

Father-and-son duo Marvin and Greg Helder, who already maintain some rental properties in Hastings, submitted one of the proposals. The other came from a heavy-hitter in the home building industry, Allen Edwin Homes.

The Helders are aiming to bring higher-density housing to the parcel in the form of townhouses, while Allen Edwin reportedly plans to build 17 to 19 single-family, detached homes that include 3-, 4- and 5-bedroom models.

Marv Helder said his project at Monday's meeting, acknowledging the housing crisis that has gripped Hastings.

"The city needs housing; it needs housing bad," he said. "I understand that in the last month, the township to the west of us just approved a new Meijer. That's 300 new employees coming to Hastings to spend their money here and live."

Helder added that his team would look to utilize townhomes, condos or duplexes to create affordable and dense housing, which he said was more conducive to the parcel or land and the community. He also said, ideally, they could build rental townhouses that would be set up with sewer and water to each. That would allow the units to be sold as single-family attached housing in five to 10 years.

According to Helder, traditional, single-family homes were not the move for the city-owned property.

"Unless you want to make some mighty big changes to lot sizes and build some 700-square-foot homes, there is just no way to justify the expense of putting in a road, putting in sewer and building single-family homes," he said.

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AUCTIONS

NOTICE - PUBLIC LAND AUCTION
The Barry County Treasurer will offer tax- reverted real estate at public auction online at www.tax-sale.info. The first auction will be held on August 26th, 2025 from 10:00am to 7:00pm EDT. Bids can also be placed up to 30 days in advance on the website. Assistance is available for those without computer or internet access.
Incomplete or voided sales from the August 26th, 2025 auction, if any, will be re-offered on September 26th, 2025 from 10:00am to7:00pm EDT.
Unsold tax reverted real estate from either of the previous auctions, if any, will be re- offered on October 31st, 2025 in a sealed- bid auction. All bids must be placed by 7:00 pm EDT for this final sealed-bid auction. Answers to common questions about the auction process and additional information can be found at www.tax-sale.info/faq For more information and to view a list of the properties being offered, please visit www.tax-sale.info or call 1-800-259-7470.
Auction listings may also be available at the County Treasurer's office.

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OBITUARIES

VIEW OBITUARIES ONLINE. HASTINGSBANNER.COM

Douglas Wayne Forbes



Douglas Wayne Forbes, age 80, passed away on July 9, 2025.

Born March 12, 1945, to Neal and Alice (Roerig) Forbes, Doug grew up in West Michigan and graduated from Wyoming Rogers High School in 1963. He later earned a welding degree from Ferris State University.

Doug spent his life working hard—as a farmer, at the County Post in Hastings, and as a truck driver covering both short and long hauls. On July 25, 2015, he married Heather Moore, and together they shared nearly 10 loving years.

A true handyman, Doug loved working on classic cars, restoring them, taking them to shows, and enjoying long drives. He was happiest building or fixing things and was always willing to lend a hand. Doug also enjoyed fishing now and then and was known for his unique sense of humor.

In a moment of courage and compassion, Doug earned the Liberty Bell Award after rescuing residents from a house fire in Barry County, an act that helped authorities solve a related crime.

Doug was preceded in death by his parents and sisters, Cheryl and Gwen Forbes.

He is survived by his wife Heather; children, Robert Forbes, Holly (Brock) Hanson, Abby Miller, and John Forbes; stepchildren, Wendy Menifee, Loree Bosman, John (Jenn) Moore, and Dan Moore; siblings, Nancy (David) Kocharoff and Sandy Forbes; and many grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Visitation was held Sunday, July 13, 2025, with a service on Monday, July 14, 2025, all at Girrbach Funeral Home, Hastings. A luncheon followed at the Green Street United Methodist Church.

Memorial contributions may be made to Faith Hospice: faithhospicecare.org/donate, 8214 Pfeiffer Farms Drive, SW, Byron Center, MI 49315.

Condolences may be left at www.girrbachfuneralhome.net.

Ellen Scott O'Laughlin



Ellen Scott O'Laughlin, passed quietly into the arms of Jesus on Sunday, July 6, 2025.

She leaves behind her husband, Ron; brother, Paul Scott (Lauren); son, Scott Banta (Kris) and daughter, Lisa Bell; She had eight grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

She spent a large part of her working career at Kentucky Friend Chicken as store manager. Meeting Colonel Sanders was one of her favorite memories. Later she transitioned into the insurance industry where she enjoyed meeting clients and customers.

Ellen loved animals. She and her dogs visited nursing homes and hospitals bringing joy to patients and staff.

A celebration of life will be held July 19, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. at Faith United Methodist Church, 503 Grove Street, Delton, MI.

Concert series returns full force July 16-18

After an abbreviated week due to the July 4th holiday, the 2025 Hastings Live Summer Concert Series is returning and will be back in full force during performances this week through Friday, July 18.

Rufus the Dufus Juggling continues this week's programming today, Thursday, July 17, from 11 a.m. to noon at the Thornapple Plaza.

The Barry County Courthouse lawn is the site for the Friday at the Fountain at noon on Friday, July 18, and will feature Geez Louise! Thelma, a combination of the Hastings Heartbeats and Geez Louise bands.

The local concert series then returns to Thornapple Plaza at 7:30 p.m. on Friday for the sounds of the six-piece band, Itchycoo Park, and its tribute to two decades of American musical history, from the late 1960s to the early 1970s.

"This six-piece band is one of the world's finest tribute shows for the times," Hoke added.

Hastings Live guests are encouraged to bring blankets or lawn chairs. The concession-stand, operated by volunteers from the local Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, will be open for evening performances serving food, snacks, soft drinks and more.

Smoking, vaping, non-service animals, and outside alcohol are prohibited. There is no rain venue for Hastings Live and unless there is thunder and/or lightning, each show will be held at its scheduled time and place.

According to organizers, Hastings Live is made possible through support from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and donations from Barry County Lumber, the Baum Family Foundation, Corewell Health Pennock Hospital, Highpoint Community Bank and other local businesses. — *DM*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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

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

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

Lake residents should prepare for shallow water

Dear Editor:

In the past few years, the water level of Delton's Chain of Lakes (Mud, Jones, Wilkinson, and Cloverdale) has dropped by several feet. This is despite the Delton area receiving almost 20 inches of precipitation in 2025 alone. This steady, near-constant lowering of the lake level has caused many problems for the residents, including an inability to remove speedboats from lifts, difficulty driving boats through the channels that connect the lakes, and even the appearance of a shallow sandbar near the north end of Wilkinson Lake. In fact, lakes all over Michigan, the Great Lakes included, have been losing water.

This drop in water level is likely due to the milder winters we have had in past years, which cause less ice to form on the lakes. When the lakes are not protected by a layer of ice and the air above the water is still cold — maybe not freezing, but still cold — the water begins to evaporate, thereby causing the overall level of the lake to drop. Spring rainfalls send the water levels up slightly, but the heat of summer causes more of the water to evaporate and float away.

Fortunately, most long-term weather reports suggest that lake levels may begin to rise next year, but I would still encourage lake house owners to make sure you are placing your boat launches in deep enough water and watching for shallow areas in the water. We can't make the water levels rise, but we can make sure that we are prepared and safe.

Isaac Cropsey
Delton

Worship Together



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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 17 – Friends of the Library Summer Book Sale, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Novel Ideas Book Club (at Tyden Park), 1 p.m.

Friday, July 18 – Friends of the Library Summer Book Sale, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Friday Story Time, 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, July 19 – Friends of the Library Summer Book Bag Sale, 9 a.m.-noon; Warhammer and Dungeons & Dragons (Michigan Room), 9 a.m.

Monday, July 21 – Crafting Passions, 10 a.m.; Youth Financial Literacy – create a duct tape wallet with Thornapple Credit Union, 2 p.m.; Lego Club, 4 p.m.; wildflower clay impression ornament (registration required), 6 p.m.

Tuesday, July 22 – Baby Cafe, 10 a.m.; Youth Makerspace with 4-H: Coding and Robotics (grades 3-12), 10:30 a.m.; Graffiti Party (grades 9-12), 1 p.m.; mahjong, 5 p.m.; chess, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, July 16 – Itsy Bitsy Book Club, 10:30 a.m.; Open Art Studio, 11:30 a.m.; Beat Street: A Percussion Adventure, 2 p.m.; acoustic jam session, 5 p.m.

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

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TURNING BACK THE PAGES

Christmas in July

DAVID W. MILLER
Special to The Banner

At first glance, the name "Christmas in July" might sound like a playful contradiction or the title of a Hallmark film. But in Hastings, Michigan, the phrase carries a more historical weight - drawing us back to the age of sepia tones, glass plate negatives and stiffly posed portraits. It points us to the quiet legacy of Henry J. Christmas (1852-1925), a man whose name was as memorable as the moments he captured.

Henry J. Christmas was among the first to bring formal photography to Barry County during the waning years of the 19th century. For decades, residents of Hastings - shopkeepers, Civil War veterans, proud mothers, and newlyweds - made their way to his studio above Huffman Bros. Store, dressed in their Sunday best, to sit beneath the canopy of his skylight and the watchful eye of his lens. A photograph in those days was an event, and Henry Christmas was the trusted artisan behind that experience.

According to the 1900 U.S. Census, H.J. Christmas was residing on Mill Street with his wife, Lillie E. Covert, and their daughter, charmingly named Merrie Christmas - a detail that has delighted local historians and genealogists alike. Though little is known about Merrie, her name lingers in records like a wink from the past.

Henry J. Christmas was a well-known figure in Hastings from 1894 until 1908, when he sold his photography business to Sherman Joy - a name also recognized by early collectors of Hastings photography. Joy operated the studio from 1908 to 1911, after which a succession of photographers carried on the local tradition, including Kenfield, Packer, Green, Brubaker, and Patton. Following the sale of his studio, Christmas moved to Eaton Rapids, Michigan, where he lived until his passing in 1925 at the age of 73.

Between 1894 and 1908, most personal photographs were produced as "Cabinet Photos" - a format consisting of a thin photographic print mounted on a card, typically measuring 4¼ by 6½ inches. These cards were designed to be displayed on parlor furniture and were large enough to be seen clearly from across a room, hence the name "Cabinet Photo." If you own such photographs and can identify the individuals pictured, it is advisable to write their names on the back using a pencil. In my experience, pencil inscriptions have remained legible for over a century without damage. By contrast, ink can bleed or transfer onto adjacent photos if they are stored in close contact.

While many of his images remain unsigned or uncredited, hundreds of 19th-century Hastings portraits - now tucked into family albums, historical archives, or antique shops - owe their quiet dignity to the work of H.J. Christmas. Occasionally, a cabinet card emerges with his name embossed in gold on the lower margin, providing a link not only to the sitter but to the man behind the camera.

Photographers like Henry J. Christmas in Hastings would likely have priced their services modestly to reflect small-town demand, probably within the $0.50 to $1.00 range per sitting, depending on whether multiple copies were ordered. To put this in perspective, 50 cents in 1900 is roughly equivalent to about $18 to $20 in today's money, making a professional photograph a special occasion purchase for many families.

As we reflect on the legacy of Henry J. Christmas and the era he so carefully documented, we might be prompted to consider our own family photographs - those fragile links to generations past. Whether tucked away in shoeboxes, displayed in frames, or passed down through the years, these images hold more than faces; they hold stories. Take a moment to examine your family's photo collection. Are the names clearly labeled? Are the photographs stored safely, away from heat, moisture, and light? Properly preserving these visual records ensures that the faces, fashions, and histories they capture will not fade into obscurity, but remain a legacy for future generations to discover and cherish - just as we now rediscover the quiet artistry of Hastings' own H.J. Christmas.



Henry J. Christmas was among the first to bring formal photography to Barry County during the waning years of the 19th century. **Courtesy photos**

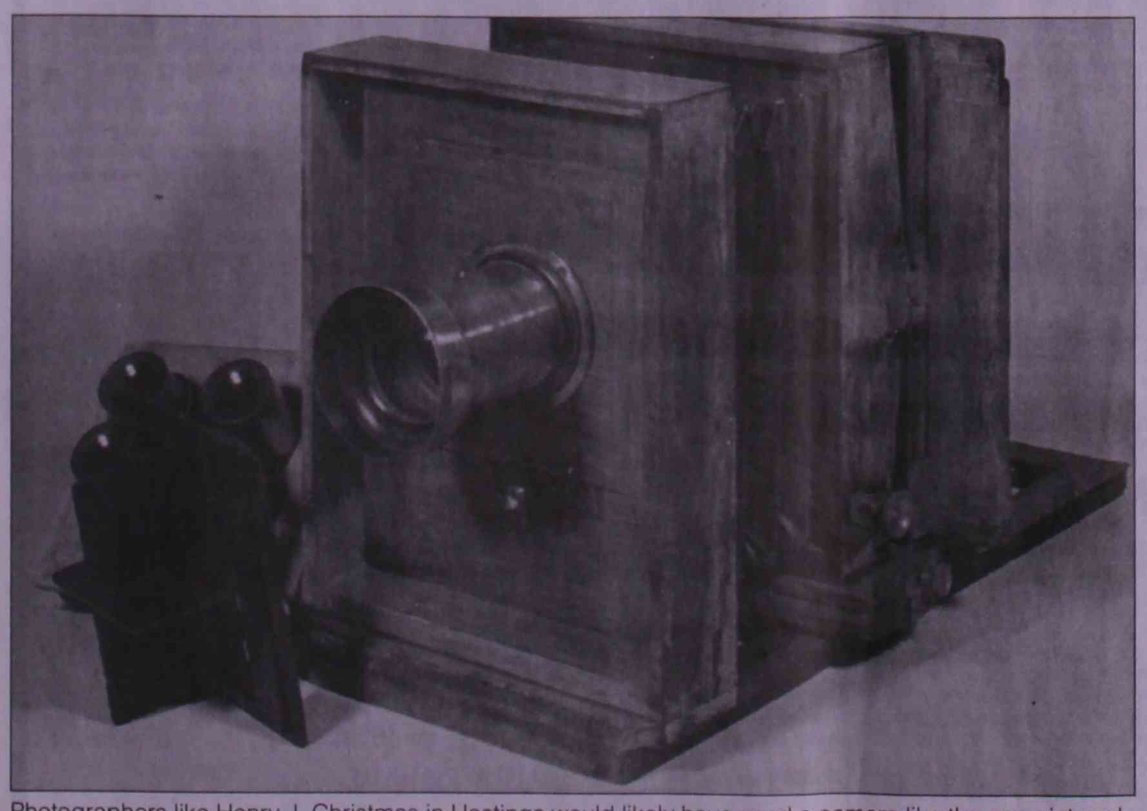
Information like that contained in our recent "Turning Back the Pages" column is largely the result of research and information gathered within the Facebook group "Hastings History." This group is moderated by Jonathan Hook and David W. Miller. Their personal mission is to record images and memories of a vanishing era in hopes that the community's founders are credited with their hard work and creativity. We would be amiss if we didn't also mention the work of Paul James Moore, PhD, who has published "History of Hastings on the Thornapple," a 485-page book that chronicles the history of the Hastings area in easy-to-read chronological order from the 1700s to 2018; available on Amazon. A second edition of Dr. Moore's book is soon to be released.

Reminiscing, particularly in later life, serves as more than mere nostalgia - it is a vital expression of "generativity," the desire to contribute meaningfully to future generations. When individuals reflect on their past, they often uncover patterns of resilience, love, and purpose that not only enrich their own sense of identity but also become a legacy for others. Sharing stories, lessons learned, and cherished memories fosters intergenerational connection, grounding younger people in a deeper understanding of their heritage. This process nurtures a sense of continuity and belonging, transforming personal memories into communal wisdom. In this way, reminiscing becomes a life-affirming act that blends reflection with a forward-looking hope - an affirmation that one's life has mattered and continues to bear fruit beyond oneself.

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



This "cabinet photo" depicts an unidentified Hastings couple in crisp attire with a steady gaze, reflecting the formal sensibilities of the era. This photo is part of David Miller's photographic archive. If you are able to identify the couple, please contact the editor; Mr. Miller would be glad to see the photograph returned to a local descendant.



Photographers like Henry J. Christmas in Hastings would likely have used a camera like the one pictured here and priced their services modestly to reflect small-town demand, probably within the $0.50 to $1.00 range per sitting, depending on whether multiple copies were ordered.



Henry J. Christmas was behind many of the early photographs depicting Hastings residents.

Additional college-sponsored Merit Scholarship winners announced

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation announced the names of nearly 800 additional winners of National Merit Scholarships financed by colleges and universities, according to a statement released Monday, July 14.

And those additional winners included Thornapple Kellogg High School's Cole Novak, who is set to attend Michigan State University to prepare for a potential career in microbiology/immunology.

The recent Merit Scholar designees join more than 2,900 other college-sponsored award recipients who were announced in June.

Officials of each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from among the finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program who will attend their institution. College-sponsored awards provide between $500 and $2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship.

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You're our friends, our family, our neighbors... and our future.
VIEW Newspaper Group
Your Community Connection

Local Mega trucks battle for Mud Run championship



Bill Valkema steers his Jeep Willys through the mud during the Mud Mitten Race Series 35 Mod Class competition at the Barry County Fair grandstand Monday. **Photos by Brett Bremer**



Alan Endsley of Hastings races his Suzuki Samurai to a victory in the Mega truck class of the Mud Mitten Race Series Monday in front of the grandstand at the Barry County Fair.

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The sun set on the first night of grandstand action a the 2025 Barry County Fair with a couple of local guys going 1-2 in the Mega class of the Mud Mitten Race Series Monday in Hastings.

Alan Endsley in his Subaru Samurai raced through the 150 feet of close to four-foot deep mud in 4.478 seconds to take the victory, beating out Bryan Wilder in his new Chevy monster truck by a few hundredths of a second.

Mud flew throughout eight classes of competitors. There was some tough running through the thick mud. One of the highlights of the evening came as "Wild" Bill Valkema maneuvered his Jeep Willys across the finish line in the 35 Mod Class.

Valkema was the sixth of eight competitors in the class, and billed as one of the pioneers of Michigan mud running before, and he was the first of the eight to make it across the finish line prompting "now that's some boggin' right there" shouts from the grandstand stage.

In the end Bentley Cermak blew through the man made mud bog to win the class championship. A third generation driver, his grandfather Henry Cermak Sr followed up Bentley's win by taking the 36-40 Mod Class.

More mud flew Tuesday as Unique Motor Sports hosted Off Road Derby action at the grandstand, and there were plans for a Super Kicker Rodeo Wednesday evening.

Grandstand shows continue tonight, July 17, with the Michigan Truck and Tractor Pullers competing. Entry into the grandstand Thursday is $10, in addition to the regular fair admission.

Unique Motor Sports will be back Friday to host Off-Road Derby and Demolition Derby. The finale of the week is the Michigan State Fair Super Cross Saturday. The cost for entry into the grandstand Friday and Saturday is $15.

The grandstand shows begin at 7 p.m.

No coolers are allowed in the grandstand. Gates open one hour prior to the event, but lines stretching the length of the midway have been known to form in ideal weather for the most popular events.

Lakewood student council set for annual community 5K

Sign-up is going on now for the annual Vikings on the Run 5K which will be held Aug. 16 at Lakewood High School.

The race is a community fundraising event hosted by the Lakewood High School student council. The goal is to create an event that draws in families from the community and helps support projects and activities as a student council. The money raised from the 5K will be used to help fund future events such as pep assemblies, homecoming events, host blood drives, teacher appreciation, student recognition and many other events that help promote school pride.

This is a fun run for all ages and it is not an official timed event. T-shirts are included with the registration fee, but must be ordered by August 1, 2025 to guarantee a shirt on race day. T-shirts are not available for that that register after Aug. 1, but you can still register to run.

Registration will remain open through Aug. 15.

Race day check-in begins at 8:30 am at Unity Field at the high school – where the start and finish lines for the race will be. The run is slated for a 9:30 am start. There is a two hour window to complete the event.

Online registration can be completed at runsignup.com. A link to the sign-up page is also on the school district's Facebook page, Lakewood Public Schools District.

— BB

RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP
BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF ORDINANCE SUBMITTAL

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

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE proposed Ordinance #2025-197 as appended hereto was introduced for first reading by the Rutland Charter Township Board at its July 9, 2025 meeting.

This proposed ordinance will be considered for adoption by the Township Board at a regular meeting on August 13, 2025 commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Charter Township Hall.

Rutland Charter Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon seven (7) days' notice to Rutland Charter Township. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF RUTLAND
BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN
ORDINANCE NO. 2025-197 (PROPOSED)
ADOPTED:
EFFECTIVE: SEE SECTION X

STATE CONSTRUCTION CODE ORDINANCE (BUILDING, ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING CODES)

An Ordinance enacted pursuant to MCL 125.1508a to assume responsibility for administration and enforcement of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act, as amended (MCL 125.1501 et seq.) and all of the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder pursuant to MCL 125.1504 within the Charter Township of Rutland to whatever extent such responsibility was not previously assumed by the Township pursuant to, cumulatively, Ordinance No. 38 adopted March 10, 1993 (Building and Electrical), including the supplemental assumption of responsibility pursuant to Ordinance No. 2009-134 adopted April 21, 2009 to address floodplain management provisions of the State Construction Code, and Ordinance No. 2024-195 (Plumbing and Mechanical); to ratify and continue the responsibility to administer and enforce all such provisions of the Act and State Construction Code assumed by the Township previously, and herein; to designate an enforcing agency to discharge the responsibilities of the Township hereunder, and to reserve the right to provide by agreement or contract with any other township, village, city or county for joint administration and enforcement hereunder; to provide for the establishment of a fee schedule by the Township Board; to ratify and further provide for the Rutland Charter Township Construction Board of Appeals established by Rutland Charter Township Board Resolution 2015-191; to provide for civil penalties and remedies for the violation of this Ordinance or the Act or State Construction Code promulgated thereunder and adopted herein; and to repeal all existing Township ordinances in conflict herewith.

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF RUTLAND
BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN
ORDAINS:

SECTION 1
TITLE

This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as the Rutland Charter Township State Construction Code Ordinance.

SECTION II
ASSUMPTION OF STATE CONSTRUCTION CODE/ACT RESPONSIBILITIES BY TOWNSHIP AND RATIFICATION AND CONTINUATION OF STATE CONSTRUCTION CODE/ACT RESPONSIBILITIES PREVIOUSLY ASSUMED BY TOWNSHIP

In accordance with and pursuant to Section 8b of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act, as amended (1972 Public Act No. 230, as amended; MCL 125.1501 et seq.), the Charter Township of Rutland hereby assumes responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the Act and all parts of the State Construction Code promulgated pursuant to Section 4 of the Act (MCL 125.1504) currently in effect and as same may from time to time be modified or amended pursuant to said Section 4 of the Act, to whatever extent Rutland Charter Township may have not previously assumed such responsibility pursuant to the prior ordinance actions referenced in the preamble paragraph of this ordinance; and hereby ratifies and continues the Township's previous assumption of such responsibility.

SECTION III
DESIGNATION OF ENFORCING AGENCY AND RESERVATION OF RIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR JOINT ENFORCEMENT

In accordance with the aforereferenced Act, and pursuant to the provisions of the State Construction Code, the Rutland Charter Township Board hereby designates and/or ratifies the prior designation of the Building Official of Rutland Charter Township, the Electrical Official of Rutland Charter Township, the Mechanical Official of Rutland Charter Township and, the Plumbing Official of Rutland Charter Township as the enforcing agency to discharge the responsibility of Rutland Charter Township assumed hereunder. The Township Board is hereby authorized to designate by resolution the person or persons qualified by experience or training to perform the duties associated with those offices and otherwise in accordance with the Skilled Trades Regulation Act (2016 Public Act 407, as may be amended; MCL 339.5101), and any successor state law pertaining to the same subject matter. The Township Board is further authorized to remove by resolution any such person(s) from such offices, in the sole discretion of the Board. The Township specifically reserves the right to provide by agreement or contract with any other township, village, city or county in the State of Michigan for joint enforcement and administration of this Ordinance and the Act and the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder and adopted herein, and to contract with a private organization to perform any one or more of the duties as specified in MCL 125.1509.

SECTION IV
ESTABLISHMENT OF FEE SCHEDULE

The Rutland Charter Township Board is hereby given the authority to establish by resolution at any public meeting a schedule of fees, rates and charges for the administration and enforcement of this Ordinance and the Act and the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder and adopted herein, and for the conducting of various activities authorized by the Act or Code and this Ordinance; provided that the same shall be reasonable and bear a reasonable relationship to the cost and expense of such administration, enforcement and activity. The Township Board shall further have the right to amend by resolution the aforementioned schedule from time to time within the foregoing limits of reasonableness.

SECTION V
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS OF STATE CONSTRUCTION CODE

A. Ratification and continuation of previously assumed responsibility. Rutland Charter Township hereby ratifies and continues the responsibility the Township previously assumed pursuant to Ordinance No. 2009-134 adopted April 21, 2009 to administer and enforce the provisions of the State Construction Code pertaining to floodplain management, and specifically Appendix G of the Michigan Building Code.

B. Designation of regulated flood prone hazard areas. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Study (FIS) entitled Barry County, Michigan (all jurisdictions) dated May 4, 2009 and the Flood Insurance Rate Map(s) (FIRMS) panel numbers of 260656C (26015C-0175C-0189C-0190C-0191C-0193C-0300C-0306C-0325C) dated May 4, 2009, and any future revisions of any of same, and any Map Amendment Determination Document, are adopted by reference for the purposes of administration of the Michigan Construction Codes.

SECTION VI
CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS

A. Members. The Rutland Charter Township Construction Board of Appeals (hereafter the RCT Construction Board of Appeals) previously established by Township Board Resolution 2015-191 is hereby ratified, pursuant to the other provisions of this section.

B. Qualifications. Each member of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be qualified by experience or training to perform the duties of that Board; provided that any member of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals who has a direct financial interest in the outcome of any matter coming before the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall recuse himself or herself from participating in that particular matter as a member of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals.

C. Appointment. Each member of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be appointed by the Township Supervisor as the chief executive officer of the Township. The Township Supervisor's appointments of the members of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be subject to ratification by the Rutland Charter Township Board before any such appointment is effective.

D. Term of office. The term of office of all members of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be two years, and until a successor is appointed and ratified. Any vacancy on the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be filled by appointment pursuant to preceding subsection C. Any currently serving member of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall continue to serve until the expiration of their current term.

E. Powers and duties. The RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall have the powers and duties prescribed for a construction board of appeals by sections 14 and 15 of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act (MCL 125.1514 and 125.1515) and any other applicable statute.

F. Meetings; quorum; rules of procedure. The RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall meet at such times as may be necessitated by business to come before the Board, pursuant to the notice requirements and other applicable provisions of the Open Meetings Act. A quorum of the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall be three members. The RCT Construction Board of Appeals may establish its owns rules of procedure; in the absence of any such adopted rules the RCT Construction Board of Appeals shall conduct its business in an orderly manner pursuant to reasonable procedures affording due process and in accordance with any applicable legal requirements.

SECTION VII
VIOLATION OF ORDINANCE; SANCTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

A. Any person or corporation, including an officer, director, or employee of a corporation, or a governmental official or agent charged with the responsibility of issuing permits or inspecting buildings or structures, who does any of the following commits a violation of this Ordinance:

1. knowingly violates the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act (MCL 125.1501 et seq.) or any provision of the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder and adopted herein, or a rule for the enforcement of the Act or Code.
2. knowingly constructs or builds a structure or building in violation of a condition of a building permit.
3. knowingly fails to comply with an order issued by the enforcing agency, the Rutland Charter Township Construction Board of Appeals, a board, the State Construction Code Commission pursuant to the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act, or any provision of the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder and adopted herein, including the failure to comply with a stop construction order validly issued by the enforcing agency.
4. knowingly makes a false or misleading written statement, or knowingly omits required information or a statement in an inspection report, application, petition, request for approval, or appeal to the enforcing agency, the Rutland Charter Township Construction Board of Appeals, a board, or the State Construction Code Commission.
5. knowingly refuses entry or access to an inspector lawfully authorized to inspect any premises, building, or structure pursuant to the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act.
6. unreasonably interferes with an authorized inspection.
7. knowingly issues, fails to issue, causes to be issued, or assists in the issuance of a certificate, permit, or license in violation of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act or a rule promulgated under that Act or other applicable laws.
8. having a duty to report violations of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act or a rule promulgated under the Act or other applicable laws, knowingly conceals a violation.
9. in any other manner violates a provision of a Code adopted herein.

B. A violation of this Ordinance is a municipal civil infraction as defined by Michigan statute punishable by a civil fine determined in accordance with § 45-6 of the Rutland Charter Township Code.

C. Additionally, the violator shall pay costs which may include all expenses, direct and indirect, to which Rutland Charter Township has been put in connection with the municipal civil infraction.

D. Any violation of this Ordinance shall also constitute a basis for any judgment, writ, or order necessary to enforce the Ordinance, in addition to any other relief or sanction allowed by law.

E. Each day that a violation exists shall constitute a separate offense, except as may be otherwise specified by Section 23 of the State Construction Code Act (MCL 125.1523).

SECTION VIII
SEVERABILITY

Should any portion of this Ordinance, or 1972 PA 230, as amended, or the State Construction Code promulgated thereunder be declared unconstitutional, illegal, or otherwise of no force or effect by a court of competent jurisdiction, such portion thereof shall not be deemed to affect the validity of any other part or portion thereof.

SECTION IX
REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND SAVINGS CLAUSE

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed and shall be of no further force or effect upon the effective date of this Ordinance; provided, however, that construction permits validly issued before the effective date of this Ordinance shall not be invalidated by this Ordinance and the construction may be completed in compliance with any such permits, or renewals thereof, and in compliance with any previous construction codes under which the permits were issued. Further, any pending proceedings, including prosecutions for violations, or rights and liabilities acquired or incurred under any previous ordinance or Township construction code being repealed hereby shall not be affected by this Ordinance and may be continued pursuant to the previous ordinances and codes.

SECTION X
EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall take effect 30 days after publication or upon such later date as the Ordinance is approved by the State Construction Code Commission.

Robin Hawthorne, Clerk
Rutland Charter Township

Saxon all-stars return to teach favorite techniques



Former Hastings High School and collegiate wrestler Matt Watson works with young wrestlers during the Hastings team camp at the high school. **Photos provided**



Hastings varsity wrestling coach Jason Slaughter officiates contests on the mat at midfield of Baum Stadium at Johnson Field Wednesday to conclude the Saxons wrestling program's team camp.

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

A couple dozen wrestlers took part in last week's Hastings High School wrestling team camp, a week billed as a "Local Legends" clinic thanks to the list of outstanding Saxon alumni who helped lead the sessions.

Current Hastings varsity wrestling coach Jason Slaughter said it was a really solid turnout for the program's annual summer camp.

"We had it set up to do technique sessions from 5-7pm each day. We brought in former Saxon wrestlers to show technique and some of their 'favorites' each day," Slaughter said.

In total, 11 former Hastings wrestlers and coaches shared techniques including Bill Blair, Terry Dull, Mike Goggins, Raiden Macleod, Gage Pederson, Darrell Slaughter, Robby Slaughter, Matt Watson and Sophia Sunior.

Pederson, Blair and Watson spent some extended time leading skills sessions. Pederson focused a lot of leg riding skills. Blair shared hand fighting techniques and leg attacks. Watson put a lot of emphasis on skills in the bottom position and leg attacks.

Coach Jason Slaughter added that Mcleod focused on upper body attacks, Robby Slaughter featured chip whips, Keegan Sutfin displayed his half nelson skills, and Darrell Slaughter concentrated on bear hugs.

Mike Goggins, Sunior and Naomi Grummet worked mostly with the girls' at the camp.

"The team got to see a lot of different technique in the three days," coach Jason Slaughter said. "Overall it was awesome to see former Saxons come out and share knowledge with the current team. We have a really great community around wrestling at Hastings and I think this shows that."

He said that Wednesday, July 9, was the biggest day of the camp.

"We had a little team bonding trip to play paintball, followed by technique, followed by our dual on the football field," Jason said.

The Saxons once again rolled out the wrestling mats at midfield inside Baum Stadium and Johnson Field about 7:30 pm for a dual consisting of matches that were won by the best-of-three take downs.

"It was a beautiful night," Jason said. "We had a good amount of spectators … It was really great to see people supporting the team come out and watch and fun to be able to wrestle outside."

The Saxons have some more training in the week ahead. Jason's former teammate at Western Colorado University, Sammy deSeriere will visit to work with some of the Saxon heavyweights and members of the girls' program. The team's open mat sessions at the high school continue throughout the summer as well.

deSeriere is currently an assistant coach with the women's wrestling program at Chadron State College in Chadron, Neb.

Aldrich takes over AD role at Lakewood High School

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Lakewood graduate and long-time Lakewood Public Schools teacher Matt Aldrich officially starts his tenure as the new Lakewood High School Athletic Director the beginning of August, but he's already working to settle into his new position.

Aldrich was named the high school athletic director after going through the interview process June. He replaces Mike Quinn who spent a decade leading Lakewood athletics after 15 years in the same position at Gibraltar Carlson.

Aldrich didn't have much time for mentoring from the previous AD, but is still in contact with Quinn whose retirement officially began July 1. Aldrich said he has a lot of folks to lean on as he acclimates to the job including middle school athletic director Brienne Guiles, director of curriculum Lauren Christensen, a former athletic director herself, and Amanda Evans, the athletic secretary at the high school.

Aldrich graduated from Lakewood High School in 2002. He played a couple seasons of football and basketball and was a baseball player for four years in high school. That 2002 Lakewood varsity baseball team his senior season reached the MHSAA Division 2 State Semifinals with Aldrich at third base.

He went on to earn his teaching degree from Spring Arbor University, and then after some time working in insurance, finally found a career teaching students. He spent five years as a third grade teacher and spent years teaching fourth and fifth graders as well. He spent the past year as a technology instructor at Lakewood Middle School.

He is married to Allison Aldrich, the current Lakewood Middle School principal. Together they have five children who Matt said are into nearly every single sport on the slate between them.

Matt earned his masters in administration and educational leadership from Grand Canyon University in 2022.

"It has always been on the horizon to maybe one day do that," Matt said. "I see how my wife can impact a school and I guess I want an opportunity to do that as well - to make a bigger impact in the community. So, as a classroom teacher, which I was for five years, you impact your 24-25 students, but I am hoping to make a wider impact as an administrator."

"For me, athletics is really an extension of the classroom I would say, where kids can really learn life lessons in real time," he added. "That is the draw. It is just good for kids to learn hard work, preparation, being a part of a team, sacrificing. All those values that you learn in life of after school they get a glimpse of before they get there."

The Vikings have had some big success in recent years especially in sports like volleyball, wrestling and cheerleading. that Matt will try to build on, and there are certainly some challenges ahead.

The Lakewood programs are still adjusting to being a part of the Capital Area Activities Conference White Division where it is no longer one of the biggest schools in the conference as it was in the Greater Lansing Activities Conference a few years ago. He is excited to see second-year head coach Tim Swore continue to build up the Viking football program.

A small project he sees on the horizon is making the Lakewood High School weight room a more hospitable place. Hopefully decorating white walls with some graphics and making sure the student-athletes really have the up to date equipment they need.



Matthew Aldrich has been named the new Lakewood High School Athletic Director. **Photo provided**

A big project ahead for the Vikings is continuing to work to find a way to refurbish the track at Unity Field to allow athletes to compete on their home turf again.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO. and JUDGE 25-30157-DE
William M. Doherty

Court address: 206 West Court Street, Ste. 302, Hastings, MI 49058
Court telephone no.: 269-945-1390

Estate of Daniel Richard Greer. Date of birth: 2-7-1958

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Daniel Richard Greer, died 2-13-2025.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Robin Frohlich, 1600 W. Dowling Road, Dowling, MI 49050, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 206 West Court Street, Hastings, MI 49058 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 07/07/2025
Michael J. McPhillips P33715
121 West Apple Street, Suite 101
Hastings, Michigan 49058
269-945-3512
Robin Frohlich
1600 W. Dowling Road
Dowling, MI 49050
269-953-4423

SYNOPSIS
Hastings Charter Township
Regular Meeting
July 8, 2025

Meeting called to order 6:34 p.m.
All board members present
Approved agenda/consent agenda
Discussed emergency svc, ESTA, zoning, recycling, Board of Review
Approved payment of bills
Dept. reports received
Motion to adjourn 7:31 pm

Submitted, David J. Olson – Clerk

Attested to by
Jim Partridge – Supervisor

RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP

NOTICE OF BOARD OF REVIEW

Pursuant to provisions in MCL 211.7cc (19), MCL 211.7b, MCL 211.7u and MCL 11.53b, the Board of Review will meet on **Tuesday, July 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.** in the office of the Assessor at Rutland Charter Township Hall, 2461 Heath Road, Hastings, Michigan to consider appeals related to Poverty Exemptions and to Correct Qualified Errors.

Dennis McKelvey, Assessor
RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP
2461 Heath Road
Hastings, MI 49058
(269) 948-2194

RUTLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP
BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AMENDMENTS AT AUGUST 6, 2025 MEETING

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF RUTLAND, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ALL OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE the Rutland Charter Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at its regular meeting on August 6, 2025, which begins at 7:00 p.m. at the Rutland Charter Township Hall located at 2461 Heath Road, within the Charter Township of Rutland, Barry County, Michigan. The items to be considered at this public hearing are as follows:

1. § 220-5-3.H of the Rutland Charter Township Code (in Article V of the Rutland Charter Township Zoning Ordinance) pertaining to the keeping of livestock as a special land use in the CR Country Residential District is proposed to be amended so as to allow the Planning Commission to approve a special land use permit for the keeping of a maximum of 12 hens and chickens on a lot with an area of less than 3 acres but at least 1 acre, pursuant to the otherwise applicable approvable standards and requirements; other minor terminology changes are also proposed.

The Rutland Charter Township Code, Master Plan, and the tentative text of the above-referenced proposed zoning text amendment(s), may be examined by contacting the Rutland Charter Township Clerk at the Township Hall during regular business hours on regular business days maintained by the Township offices from and after the publication of this Notice and until and including the day of the hearing/meeting, and further may be examined at the hearing/meeting.

The Planning Commission reserves the right to modify the proposed amendment(s) at or following the hearing/meeting and to make its recommendations accordingly to the Township Board.

Rutland Charter Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at the meeting/hearing to individuals with disabilities, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered, upon reasonable notice to the Township.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township Clerk as designated below.

Robin Hawthorne, Clerk
Rutland Charter Township
2461 Heath Road
Hastings, Michigan 49058
(269) 948-2194

FORECLOSURE NOTICE

ATTENTION TO HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than ninety (90) days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Notice of Lien at the telephone number stated in this notice. Default has been made by Douglas Cisler and Debra Cisler (the "Owner"), in the terms and conditions of the recorded Master Deed for Thornapple Hills Site Condominiums located in the Township of Thornapple, County of Barry, State of Michigan dated November 18, 1992, recorded in Liber 560, Page 417, Barry County, Michigan records, as amended, by reason of Owner's failure to pay annual dues and other sums owed to THORNAPPLE HILLS SITE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, a Michigan nonprofit corporation (the "Association"). A Notice of Lien for nonpayment of Association assessments ("Notice of Lien") was recorded with the Barry County Register of Deeds on April 7, 2025, as Instrument No. 2025-002828, and has been served upon the Owner. The amount owed under the Notice of Lien as of the date of this Notice is Four Thousand Six Hundred Ninety-Two and 50/100 Dollars ($4,692.50). Notice of foreclosure by advertisement – notice is given under Section 3212 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212 and under the power of sale contained in the Master Deed for Thornapple Hills Site Condominiums dated November 18, 1992, recorded in Barry County, Michigan records, that the above Notice of Lien will be foreclosed by a sale of the liened premises, or some part of them, at public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Barry County, (that being the Barry County Courthouse, 220 W. State St., Hastings, Michigan, 49058), starting promptly at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, the 14th day of August, 2025. The amount due on the Notice of Lien may be greater on the day of the sale and may include interest, costs, charges, and expenses, including attorney fees, and also any sums which may be paid by the Association in order to protect its interests. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the premises. 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. Said premises are situated in the Township of Thornapple, County of Barry, State of Michigan, and are described as: Unit 6, Thornapple Hills Site Condominium, a Condominium according to the Master Deed recorded in Liber 560, Page 416, Barry County Records, and designated as Barry County Condominium Subdivision Plan No. 5, and amendments thereto, if any, together with rights in general common elements and limited common elements as set forth in the Master Deed, as amended, and as described in Act 59 of the Public Acts of 1978, as amended; PPN: 08-14-185-006-00 Commonly known as: 4191 Thornapple Hills Dr., Middleville, MI 49333 The redemption period shall be six (6) months from the date of such sale unless the premises are determined to be abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 or 600.3241a, as the case may be, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the premises is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, as amended, then under applicable law, including MCL 600.3278, the owner of the premises will be held responsible to the person who buys the premises at the foreclosure sale and/or to the Association for damaging the premises during the redemption period. ATTENTION PURCHASERS: This sale may be rescinded by the undersigned. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: July 8, 2025 Stacey A. George, Attorney for Thornapple Hills Site Condominium Association VARNUM P.O. Box 352 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501 (616) 336-6000 (07-17)(08-07)

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BARRY COUNTY, HASTINGS, MICH.
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO. and JUDGE 25-3007-DE
William Doherty

Court address: 206 West Court Street, Ste. 302, Hastings, MI 49058
Court telephone no.: 269-945-1390

Estate of Christine E. Hill. Date of birth: 1/11/1948

TO ALL CREDITORS: Notice is hereby given that Dawn Kepler has been appointed Personal Representative for the estate of Christine E. Hill 2078 Bristol Rd., Dowling, Mich. 49050. All persons having claims against said deceased are required to present their claims within 4 months of the date of this notice or said claims will be barred forever. Claims must be presented to or mailed to Dawn Kepler at 1670 Otto Rd., Charlotte, Mich. 48813 or contact at 517-588-1641, or filed with Barry County Probate Court Hastings, MICH 49058.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Christine E. Hill, died 3/7/2024.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Dawn Kepler personal representative, or to both the probate court at 206 West Court Street, Hastings, MI 49058 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Dawn Kepler
1670 Otto Rd., Charlotte, MI 48813

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 30, 2025 for the following project.

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.

Exterior Painting of (3) Buildings at the Barry CRC

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

BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF BARRY

David Solmes	Chairman
Jim James	Vice Chairman
Jamie Knight	Member

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 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.

Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Derek Morris, an unmarried man and Sara Juarez, an unmarried woman, as joint tenants, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Equity Prime Mortgage LLC., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated September 22, 2023 and recorded October 4, 2023 in Instrument Number 2023-007868 and Affidavit Affecting Realty recorded on July 7, 2025, in Instrument Number 2025-005506, Barry County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by MIDFIRST BANK, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Two Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Two and 41/100 Dollars ($223,962.41).

Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Barry County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025.

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

THE EAST 200 FEET OF THAT PART OF THE WEST 1/2 OF THE SOUTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 15, TOWN 2 NORTH, RANGE 7 WEST, MAPLE GROVE TOWNSHIP, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THAT LAYS NORTH OF HIGHWAY M-66.

6600 S M 66 Hwy, Nashville, Michigan 49073

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

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

Dated: July 17, 2025
File No. 25-008915
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(07-17)(08-07)

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)

Two-year-old trotters set records at fair racetrack

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

One got broke and one got shattered.

A pair of track records fell in front of the grandstand at the Barry County Fair in Hastings Sunday as a couple of two-year-old trotters had the fastest runs ever on the 35-year-old track.

In the third race of the day John's Baby Colt driven by Bart Stimer won the Michigan Bred Colt Stakes 2-year-old Colt Trot with a time of 2:01.3 breaking the track record by nearly four seconds. The previous record was set in 2023 at 2:05.1 in the 1-mile race on the half-mile track.

John's Baby Colt is owned by Raelee Beecher and trained by John Beecher Jr.

That record run came on the heels of Weezabouttofindout setting a new track record in the Michigan Bred Colt Stakes 2-year-old Filly Trot of 2:04.2 in the second race of the day. That bested another 2023 record which was set at 2:04.3.

Justin Irvine was the driver on both of those record runs in 2023.

Kent Hess drove Weezabouttofindout to the victory Sunday. He also trained the horse owned by Ted Boschma.

Sunday was the second of two days of Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association racing at the fair.

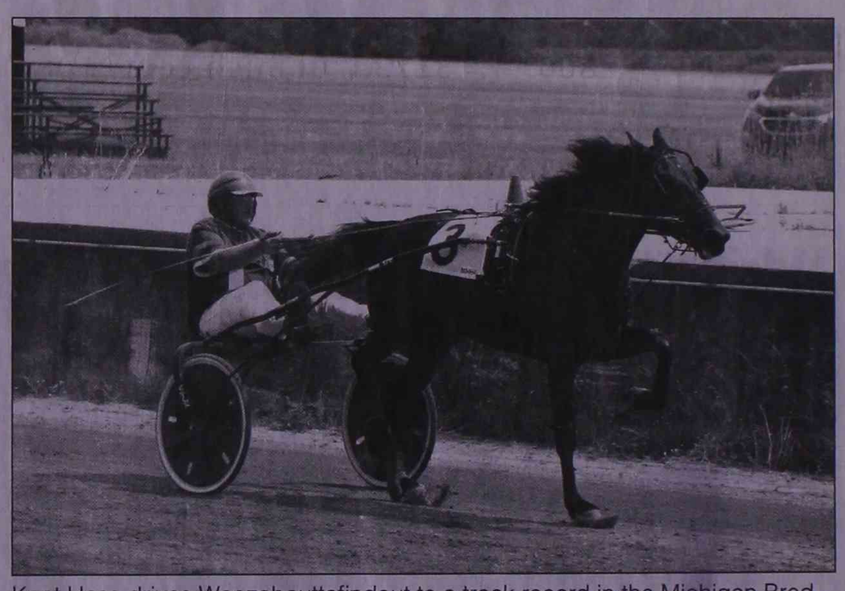
Sunday's card included 16 races following 15 races Saturday.

July 12, 2025 MHHA Winners
Race 1 MIFS 2FT: Global Time
Race 2 MIFS 2FT: Jk Bucket Of Fries
Race 3 MIFS 2CT: Kaa Dee Arthur
Race 4 MIFS 2CT: Powerful Ending
Race 5 MIFS 2FP: She Said She;s Bad
Race 6 MIFS 2FP: Maize N Boo
Race 7 MIFS 2CP: Letsgo Gibbs
Race 8 MIFS 2CP: Ena Mega Delight
Race 10: MIFS 3FT: Fireball Kate
Race 11 MIFS 3CT: New Plan Stan
Race 12 MIFS 3CT: Paragon Magicway
Race 13 MIFS 3FP: Taylor Dawn
Race 14 MIFS 3CP: Ena Gottabebondi
Race 15 MIFS 3CP: Blue Eyed Bondi

July 13, 2025 MHHA Winners
Race 1 MIFS 2FT: Special Credit
Race 2 MIFS 2FT: Weezabouttofindout
Race 3 MIFS 2CTL John's Baby Colt
Race 4 MIFS 2FP: When Punky Speaks
Race 5 MIFS 2CP: Alittledab'lldoya
Race 6 MIFS 3FT: Help Me Im Red
Race 7 MIOFS 3CT: Bandsrompawaykid
Race 8 MIFS 3FP: Anna Bri And Me
Race 9 MIFS 3CP: Perpetrator
Race 10 FFA Trot: Hillbilly Bert
Race 11 Maiden Trot: This Is Sparta
Race 12 Maiden Pace: Crooked Kingdom
Race 13 Maiden Pace: Bocephus
Race 14 FFA Pace: Legendary Doowrah
Race 15 FFA Pace: Don'tcallmefrancis
Race 16 FFA Pace: Itsonlyrocknroll A



No one else is even close as John's Baby Colt driven by Bart Stimer sets a track record at the Barry County Fair in Hastings Sunday in the Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association Michigan Bred Colt Stakes 2-year-old Colt Trot. The team clocked in with a time of 2:01.3, breaking the track record by nearly four seconds. **Photos by Brett Bremer**



Kent Hess drives Weezabouttofindout to a track record in the Michigan Bred Colt Stakes 2-year-old Filly Trot Sunday at the Barry County Fair in Hastings. The team tallied a time of 2:04.2.

TK cheer program planning first pickleball tournament

The Thornapple Kellogg cheer program is hosting the first of what it hopes to be an annual pickleball Tournament fundraiser Saturday, Aug. 2, at Yankee Springs Township Park.

Sign-up is going on now and a link for online sign-up can be found on the TK athletics Facebook page. A team's spot is confirmed once both the online registration form and payment have been received.

The bracket style tournament is scheduled to run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Entry is $50 for teams of two. All ages are welcome.

In addition to the tournament play, there will be a skills competition, raffles, silent auction, food and more.

Summerfest 5K Run/Walk and Fun Run sign-ups ongoing

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Registration is already underway for the annual Hastings Summerfest 5K Run/Walk and Fun Run as a part of the annual celebration in downtown Hastings the final weekend of August.

The race is set for Saturday, Aug. 23. The cost to participate in the 5K Run/Walk is $35 for those over 18 and $25 for those 18 years old or younger. The price increases beginning Aug. 1 for those over 18. Registration can be done online at the Hastings Summerfest page of runsignup.com.

The free kids 1-mile Fun Run begins at 9 a.m. There will be free T-shirts for the kids. Adults receive a 5K race T-shirt as part of their registration. Sign-up for the fun run can be done on runsignup.com as well.

Packet pick-up and late registration for the race can be done Friday, Aug. 22, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Corwell Health Pennock Wellness Center. Day of packet pick-up and late registration will be held at Thornapple Plaza from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. for the 5K and from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. for the fun run Aug. 23.

The 5K race opens at the corner of Railroad Street and State Street in downtown Hastings and mostly follows the riverfront before returning to finish at Thornapple Plaza.

The race, hosted by the Corwell Health Pennock Wellness Center, will take off at 8 a.m. All proceeds go to the Corwell Health Foundation at Pennock Hospital to reinvest in programs offered through the Pennock Wellness Center.



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***Annual Percentage Yield accurate as of 5/14/2025. $500 minimum deposit to open and earn APY. Fees may reduce earnings. Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal. Following the conclusion of the 12-Month Special CD promotional period, the account will be renewed with Union Bank's standard 12-Month CD if you do not withdraw the funds prior to expiration of the grace period. This is a limited time promotional offer, ending 8/1/2025 and subject to change at any time without notice.

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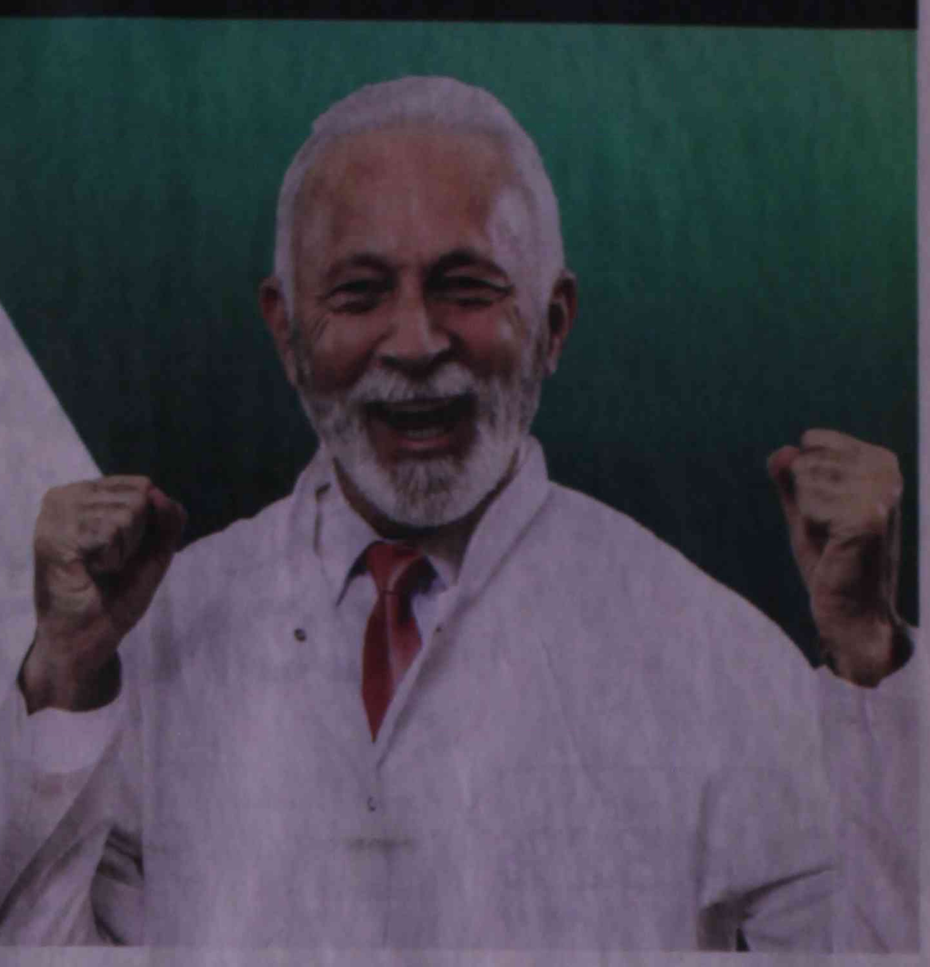
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