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THE HASTINGS BANNER

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Developers seek zoning changes before moving forward with Lake Odessa project



The July 28 meeting of the Lake Odessa Planning Commission featured a packed crowd. One item on the agenda was a pre-application conference for a proposed housing development on a former football field. **Photo by Dennis Mansfield**

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

A former football field in the Village of Lake Odessa could soon be the home of up to 48 apartments, if the developers of the proposed project and village officials agree to changes in the village's zoning ordinance.

The Lake Odessa Planning Commission heard from representatives of Indigo Design and Copperrock Construction during a pre-application conference at the Planning Commission's regular meeting Monday, July 28, at the Page Memorial Building.

Greg Schmidt, a partner at Indigo Design, said the two Grand Rapids-based companies are seeking to build two, three-story buildings that would include a mix of one- and two-bedroom apartments on a more than 2.7-acre site off of Jordan Lake Avenue, the site of a former football field.

The property is currently owned by local residents Dr. Lee Stuart and his wife, Ruth Ann, who have successfully spearheaded the construction of "senior-friendly" condominium units on Third Avenue, between Fourth and Second streets, at what used to be the site of the former East Elementary School.

Ruth Ann Stuart recently stated the couple, both retired and now in their 70s, had a potential agreement to sell the former football field, allowing for its development to meet the area's need for additional housing.

But, at Monday's meeting, Schmidt said the two companies would need changes to the village's zoning ordinance relating to density and parking guidelines before they could move forward with the purchase of the property and its development.

According to interim Village Manager Gregg Guetschow, the plan calls for a unit density of 18 per acre, while the village ordinance calls for a density of eight units per acre. However, in checking with other municipalities, he said the plans submitted by the developers are "not out of line."

Schmidt said a storm drain running through the property has created various challenges in the planning

See **PROJECT** on 2



Shelbyville-based Helder Greenhouse Construction Inc. will negotiate with Hastings City Manager Sarah Moyer-Cale for the purchase of a 7.5-acre city-owned parcel located at the end of Hayes and Orchard streets. Helder plans to construct at least 50 to 60 housing units on the parcel, consisting of duplexes and townhomes. Representatives for the company said they are willing to construct as many as 100 units on the property, should the city desire. **Photo by Molly Macleod**

Council selects local builders for new development

Molly Macleod
Editor

After hearing competing proposals from two developers, the Hastings City Council voted unanimously on Monday, July 28, to authorize Hastings City Manager Sarah Moyer-Cale to negotiate a purchase and development agreement with Shelbyville-based Helder Greenhouse Construction Inc.

Should negotiations go smoothly, Helder could start pre-construction work on the 7.5-acre parcel as soon as this year.

The property both developers competed 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 the city considered 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 the winning proposal. The other came from a heavy-hitter in the home building industry, Allen Edwin Homes.

The Helders' proposal calls for up to 50-60 units on the parcel, consisting of

See **DEVELOPMENT** on 3

Rep. Johnsen testifies in support of state funding for Barry County Jail

Molly Macleod
Editor

State Representative Gina Johnsen (R-Portland) testified before a House appropriations subcommittee last week in support of key infrastructure investments in the 78th District, which includes portions of Barry, Eaton, Ionia and Kent counties.

Johnsen advocated for financial support from the state budget for several projects across the district, including support for the construction of a new Barry County Jail and justice center. Johnsen said replacing the outdated facilities will strengthen public safety and judicial operations.

Elected officials, county employees and court staff agree that a new jail is a dire need for Barry County. In February, the Barry County Board of Commissioners voted to approve a proposal from Kalamazoo-based consulting firm Abonmarche Byce to conduct a jail feasibility study, which would essentially jump-start the local government's attempts to address the outdated Barry County Jail.

Barry County paid the firm $42,000 for the process, which will provide insight into how to most effectively move forward with the project. The extensive study

See **FUNDING** on 3

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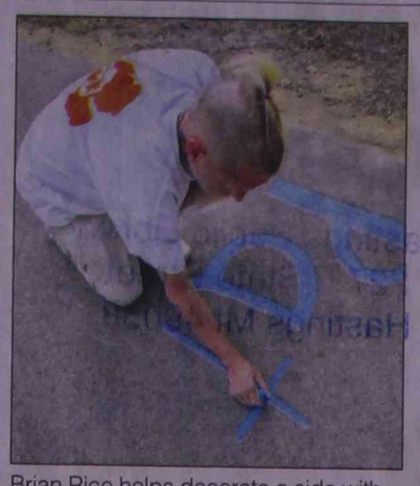
LAKE ODESSA HOSTS ANNUAL ART FESTIVAL AUG. 2
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Brian Rice helps decorate a side with his artistic efforts during the "Chalk the Walk" in Lake Odessa on Tuesday, July 29. The event was held in preparation for the 50th annual "Art in the Park" celebration on Saturday, Aug. 2, at the Lake Odessa Village Park.



Lake Odessa Area Arts Commission members Elizabeth Stoneman (left) and Aurora Rice pose with some of the artwork created during the "Chalk the Walk" in Lake Odessa on Tuesday, July 29. **Courtesy photos**

Lake Odessa hosts annual art festival Aug. 2

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

Lake Odessa is ready to show its creative side, with the village set to host its 50th annual "Art in the Park" celebration from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 2, at the Lake Odessa Village Park.

Organizers helped mark – literally – the coming of the annual event with the "Chalk the Walk" on Tuesday, July 29. Persons of all ages helped decorate sidewalks in preparation for the main event Saturday.

Art in the Park is organized and hosted by the Lake Odessa Area Arts Commission and is again set to provide festival-goers with the opportunity to browse and buy various forms of arts and crafts from artists and artisans from all across the state – and beyond.

According to organizers, more than 5,000 people attend Art in the Park. And, this year, those who attend will be able to visit over 90 arts and crafts booths displaying a variety of offerings, as well as choose from a plethora of food vendors.

Throughout the day, visitors will also be treated to the sounds of Michigan-area musicians and will have an opportunity to win door prizes each hour starting at 10 a.m.

In addition to musical entertainment, activities for the younger set will be available near the south end of the park at the "Kids' Zone." From 9 a.m. to noon, kids will be able to participate in painting a mural, coloring, making bracelets and creating sock puppets.

There's also balloon animal fun with "Buttons the Clown" and a magic show at 10 a.m., and activities courtesy of the Lake Odessa Community Library at 11 a.m.

The 50th Art in the Park has been made possible with support from local businesses and community organizations, as well as a grant from the Michigan Arts & Culture Council.

Free on-street visitor parking will be available throughout the village within walking distance to the park. Handicap parking and wheelchair check-out will be available at the First Congregational Church on Fourth Avenue, with the site being staffed by local Boy Scouts. While the handicap parking and wheelchairs are available free of charge, scouts will be accepting free-will donations.

For more information, pick up a copy of the 2025 Art in the Park Visitors Guide at area businesses or view it online at LakeOdessaArts.com.

Hastings council adopts sidewalk ordinance

■Hastings Sidewalk Sales are Aug. 15-16

Molly Macleod
Editor

The Hastings City Council adopted an ordinance that installs guidelines on how downtown businesses may utilize the sidewalks outside of their establishments during its regular scheduled meeting Monday, July 28.

The ordinance adopted this week 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 permits movable sales racks and temporary seating, 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 new ordinance, the city will 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.

The new ordinance will not take effect until after the upcoming Sidewalk Sales coming to downtown Hastings Friday, Aug. 15, and Saturday, Aug. 16. Council members unanimously adopted Resolution 2025-21 on Monday, which allows for the sidewalk displays until the new ordinance takes effect in the coming weeks.

—Contributing writer Jayson Bussa contributed to this report.



Members of the Lake Odessa Planning Commission discuss plans for a proposed development on the site of a former football field, located off of Jordan Lake Avenue, during their July 28 meeting at the Page Memorial Building. **Photos by Dennis Mansfield**

PROJECT
Continued from Page 1

process for the proposed development, with plans calling for one building housing 36 apartments and a second only 12 units.

"It's the only thing that makes sense for that property," said Ben DeJong, a Planning Commission member and trustee on the Lake Odessa Village Council.

"I know housing, affordable housing, is a big issue, especially for younger people," DeJong added. "We want to keep them here."

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to have the proposed development placed again on the agenda for its upcoming meeting on Sept. 16, with the meeting also including a possible public hearing on any needed changes to the village zoning ordinance.

"I'd like to keep this moving forward," said Village President Karen Banks, who also sits on the Planning Commission.

One concern on the proposed development was voiced by Planning Commission member Beth Barrone, who asked whether the three-story buildings would include elevators.

Without elevators, Barrone said persons with mobility issues would be limited to first-floor units, reducing their housing options.

"Just pointing that out," she added.

Schmidt said the buildings would be "walk-in" structures without elevators, characterizing the individual units as "not luxury apartments" but "also not subsidized" or low-income housing. If the project is approved by the Planning Commission and then the village council, he added construction would begin in 2026.

The developers were requested to submit any additional information on the project at least two weeks prior to the Sept. 16 meeting.

"We need to make sure there's no obstacles," Guetschow said.

A schedule of upcoming village meetings, as well as agendas and other information, may be found online at LakeOdessa.org.





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DEVELOPMENT

Continued from Page 1

duplexes and two-story townhomes. The Helders will purchase the city-owned property for $100,000.

Marv Helder was present at both this week's Hastings City Council meeting, as well as Monday, July 14's meeting, to advocate for his company's proposal. He said that if his company's proposal was approved, construction on the site will begin as soon as possible. He hopes to have the entire project wrapped up within five years.

Helder said affordability is key to his company's proposal.

"Ours will be regular rentals; they will be market-rate like the other rentals that we have in the area. But the whole idea is affordable. So that's really the difference in the proposal is affordable now," said Helder. He added that his company could put up to 100 units on the property, depending on the desires of city officials.

Representatives from Allen Edwin Homes were also present on Monday. Allen Edwin's proposal would have called for 17-19 single-family detached homes, each around $350,000. Around 20% of the units would be reserved for workforce housing rentals. If approved, Allen Edwin would have sought 20 years of tax increment financing for the project. Allen Edwin offered to buy the 7.5-acre parcel for $102,200.

"They're (Allen Edwin) talking building four or five homes on the property per year, and a five-year buildout type of a thing. That's a pretty slow buildout on a property that's been sitting for 30 or 40 years," said Helder. "Ours would probably be five years, but depending on how rentals go and things like that, it may be much faster than that.

"We are aware that Meijers is probably going to build a new Meijer store a mile from here. Those employees are going to live somewhere, and they are going to bring 200-300 new employees to this area and they are going to be more than likely the same kind of employees that are around here. $20 an hour, $22, $18 — they can't afford a $350,000 house, even if the rent's $1,800 a month in a rental.

"It's a totally different way of looking at it. I think with the need for housing now, I mean, all the employers that I talk to, the biggest problem is you gotta drive 25 miles to work in Hastings because you can't find a place to live. Well, 17 or 18 homes is a really good start, but 100 will solve the problem a lot quicker."

Helder said he and his company will be looking for support to make the project cheaper wherever they can get it.

"We will probably start as soon as we get permitting," Helder said. "… But our goal is to get this thing built, because I'm not getting any younger."

— Contributing writer Jayson Bussa contributed to this report.

Nashville library receives grant for new door, website

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

The Putnam District Library in Nashville recently got a helping hand in funding a pair of projects, including a new automatic door to increase accessibility and an updated website.

According to the library's director, Krista Vincent, the district library received the funding through a "Libraries Transforming Communities" competitive awards program by the American Library Association, in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries.

The grant awards included $6,200 for the installation of an automatic door on the district library's rear entrance and another $3,600 for development of a new website.

The new door has already been installed, with the project having been completed in May.

"The rear door automatic opener was needed for sure," Vincent said. "If someone in a wheelchair came to the library and could not open the door for themselves, they had to call our phone number for us to come open the door for them.

"Now, they can open the door for themselves which is a point of independence for people," she added.

The redesign of the library's website is planned to begin in mid-August.

"The current library website was outdated and not easily read on mobile devices or by website readers," Vincent said. "This grant will cover the cost of a fully accessible website."

Once it is completed, the updated website will include a community calendar, links to community resources, as well as images and video of the library's upstairs archives, "which is the most complete collection of Maple Valley history in the area," Vincent said.

"Without the grant, it is unlikely that we would have prioritized redoing our website yet," she added. "However, the American Library Association recommends that all public libraries have websites that can be read by people who are blind or need to use a reader."

Currently, local library officials are looking for community input on the design of the new website.

"Residents of our community are encouraged to share their thoughts on how we can provide relevant information and resources through our website," Vincent said. "We have already been interviewing people who come to the library about their thoughts. We are hoping to get community input in the next few weeks."

Cooperation between victims, LOPD helps lead to arrest

Dennis Mansfield
Staff Writer

A series of larceny complaints in the Village of Lake Odessa might have led to the arrest of a person who reportedly could be tied to similar crimes in other communities.

And, Kendra Backing, the chief of the Lake Odessa Police Department, is crediting the cooperation of the victims and efforts of investigators for breaking the case.

According to a recent departmental report to the Lake Odessa Village Council, the LOPD responded to several larceny from automobile complaints by residents in the 700-900 block of 6th Avenue on June 17.

"These thefts occurred to unlocked vehicles sometime the night prior and valuables ranging from money, personal identification information, keys and financial transaction devices were stolen," the report stated. "The victims reported credit card notifications from businesses in the Lansing area."

While victims were instructed to contact their credit card companies to cancel the cards, follow-up investigative efforts by LOPD officials were conducted at businesses to gain security footage of the unauthorized use of the cards.

Through those efforts, Backing said a suspect profile was developed. The images were also shared with law enforcement networks and, so far, has led to the arrest of at least one individual, a 21-year-old Lansing area man, in what the LOPD chief characterized as an "ongoing" investigation.

"It was just a really good example of cooperation with the victims and outside agencies," Backing added. "I was just proud of the investigative work that went into this.

"It was a really good example of solid police work."

According to Backing, the suspect, who has yet to be arraigned on any charges, is being housed in the Kent County Jail on "multiple holds" from other area law enforcement agencies, including Hastings, Grand Ledge and in the Lansing area.

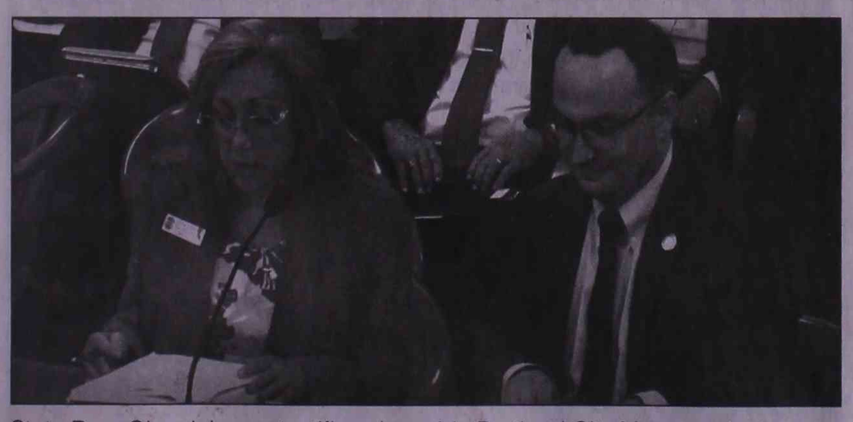
"It's one person right now," she said. "I don't believe this person acted alone.

"Likely, more charges will come down for his (potential) accomplices."

Along with praising the effort and cooperation involved in the investigation, Backing said the crime spree also showed that residents need to be vigilant and safeguard against being too complacent. In her report to the village council, she stated that people need to be reminded to lock their vehicles and not leave any valuables inside.

"You just never know," Backing said. "You can get too comfortable in your neighborhood.

"These crimes were significant," she added. "He was on a mission."



State Rep. Gina Johnsen testifies alongside Portland City Manager Andrew Dymczyk in support of funding for wastewater infrastructure. Johnsen also advocated for state funds to support the construction of a new Barry County Jail in front of the House appropriations subcommittee last week, on Thursday, July 31. **Courtesy photo**

FUNDING

Continued from Page 1

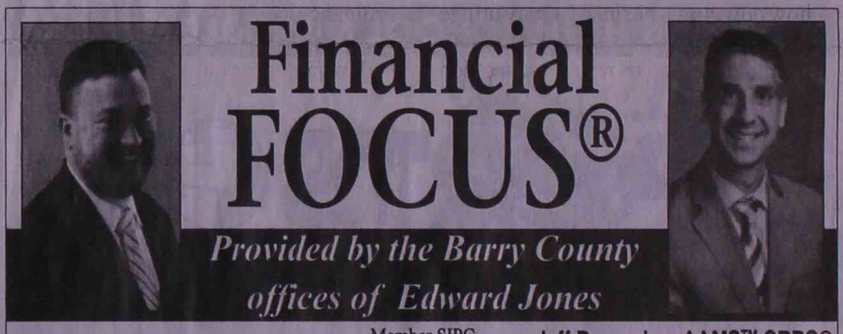
was expected to take from four to six months. The study results have not yet been shared.

Commissioners voted to establish a jail stakeholder committee in April to begin the planning process. Should all go to plan, the study results could help the committee craft a proposal to bring to voters.

The study probes the feasibility of a few different scenarios: building a new jail at a new site, building a new jail on the existing site, renovating the existing jail at its current site, renovating and expanding the existing jail at its current site and other alternatives that may arise during the study.

Johnsen also testified in support of other projects across the district on Thursday, July 24. These include support for replacing the Odessa Township Fire Hall and funding bridge repairs across Ionia County. Johnsen is also seeking funding for upgrades to the Portland Water Treatment Plant and major road repair investments in Barry County.

"These are taxpayer dollars going to roads, bridges, water systems, and public safety," she said. "This is exactly what responsible government should fund."



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Investing With Heart: Find a Financial Advisor Who Shares Your Values

When it comes to managing your money, there's more to consider than just the bottom line. For many people, investing isn't only about building wealth or reaching goals — it's about making sure their dollars support charitable causes and principles that are in line with their closely held values.

Whether your focus is on protecting the planet, aligning with your faith or giving back to your community, a financial advisor who understands your values can help you build a portfolio that reflects what matters to you. Here's how to help find a good fit.

Know What You Stand For

Before you start searching for a financial advisor, take a moment to reflect on your own values. Are you passionate about sustainability? Do you want your investments to avoid companies that conflict with your faith? Is charitable giving a big part of your life and something you want to incorporate into your financial strategy?

Make a list of your top priorities. Understanding what drives you can help make it easier to find a financial advisor who shares and respects your vision.

Do Your Homework

Once you've clarified your goals, start looking for financial advisors who focus on values-based investing. Terms like "socially responsible investing" (SRI), "faith-based investing," "impact investing" or "ESG" (which stands for environmental, social, and governance) are good keywords to use during your search.

Browse financial advisor websites and check their credentials. Some may highlight their experience with sustainable funds or philanthropic planning. Look for signs that they're comfortable helping clients invest with a conscience.

Ask the Right Questions

After narrowing your list, schedule a few introductory discussions, which can be done in person or remotely, depending on your preference. These chats are your chance to learn more about how the financial advisor works and whether they'll be a good fit.

Ask about their investment approach:

- Do they offer portfolios with a focus on ESG or faith-based filters?
- Have they worked with clients who have similar values to yours?
- How do they assess charitable giving strategies or donor-advised funds?
- Do they know the complex tax rules associated with charitable giving?

Listen closely to the questions they ask of you. Are they truly interested in what matters to you? Do they understand your values and priorities?

Also, consider their communication style. Will they keep you updated regularly? Are they open to collaboration when you want to adjust your plan?

Trust Your Instincts

Choosing a financial advisor is a personal decision. Beyond their professional qualifications, you want someone who listens well and respects your goals. Don't hesitate to meet with several financial advisors before making your choice. The right person will make you feel understood and supported, both financially and personally.

Ideally, you and your financial advisor will forge a long-term relationship that spans the changes and milestones in your life. As the details of your financial strategy may change, you'll still want to hold onto your values in your investments.

Investing With Purpose

Whether you're hoping to reduce your carbon footprint, stay true to your faith or make the world a better place through giving, you don't have to choose between your values and your financial future. Many good financial advisors can help you do both.

Taking the time to find someone who shares your vision can help you feel confident that your investment strategy can align with your personal beliefs.

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BOVINE INTERVENTION

— BANNER JULY 26, 2018 —

Cattle lying down is a sign of impending rain. These cows were on all fours, curiously walking about their pasture along Cogswell Road Tuesday evening. After four days with rain, the cattle may have grown tired of lying down – or were interested in discovering new vegetation brought on by much-needed rains. **File photo**

Institute to host free open house Aug. 9

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, a nature center, biological field station and environmental education center in Hastings, is inviting community members to a free, family-friendly open house set for 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 9.

According to organizers for the event, the afternoon will provide visitors – both newcomers and long-time supporters – an opportunity to explore the institute's grounds, learn more about its mission and enjoy the great outdoors.

During the open house, guests can enjoy:

- Free MOO-ville Creamery ice cream;
- Free hotdogs and treats;
- Yard games and activities;
- Access to the institute's trails and facilities;
- A new art exhibit; and

Interactive stations highlighting educational programs, facility rentals, land stewardship and membership benefits.

Barry County Transit will offer transportation to the event. A shuttle will depart from the Barry County Courthouse at 11 a.m., with $2 round-trip fare per person.

"We're excited to welcome guests of all ages to experience everything the PCCI has to offer," said Katie Kelly, the institute's development director. "Whether it's their first visit or their 15th.

"It's a great chance to play, learn and connect with nature."

The event is free and open to the public, but registration is appreciated. Persons may go online at http://bit.ly/46oS4Bp to sign up.

Or, for more information, individuals may call 269-721-4190 or visit the institute's website, CedarCreekInstitute.org. — *DM*

Cordelio hosts second open house on wind project

After hosting an open house in March, representatives of the Canadian-based Cordelio Power recently announced they will host a second, similar event at the Hughe House on Velte Road in Lake Odessa from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, July 31.

Stephanie Buway, senior director of development with Cordelio Power, said the event will include a brief presentation at 5:30 p.m., with a question and answer period afterwards. Light snacks and refreshments will be provided.

The Tupper Lake project is projected to have a capacity of 198 megawatts, with between 44 to 47 – depending on the type used – interconnected wind turbines to be installed in Campbell, Odessa, Sebewa, Boston and Berlin townships.

Those planning to attend the open house are urged to RSVP by calling Buway at 989-292-9924 or via email at tupperlakewind@cordeliopower.com.

Report compiled by staff writer Dennis Mansfield.

Whitmer appoints local to Veterans' Facility Board of Directors

Last week, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced several appointments to state boards and commissions. Among those appointments, a Hastings resident was named to the Michigan Veterans' Facility Authority Board of Directors.

Carla Wilson-Neil, of Hastings, is the former chief operating officer of Spectrum Health Pennock and a member of American Legion Post 45. Wilson-Neil holds a Bachelor of Arts in communications from Michigan State University and a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in management from Aquinas College. Wilson-Neil is appointed as a representative of the interests of one or more congressionally chartered veterans' organizations for a term commencing July 21, 2025, and expiring April 15, 2029. Wilson-Neil succeeds Leon Bauer, whose term has expired.

"I am honored to have been selected to serve on the Michigan Veterans' Facility Authority Board," said Wilson-Neil. "The organization's history dates back to 1885 when Michigan Act 152 authorized creation of a dedicated home for veterans, with the first home opened in Grand Rapids in 1886. In 2016, the Michigan Legislature updated the governance and oversight functions with a focus on ensuring facilities continued adherence to nationally recognized healthcare standards and established a board of directors to oversee these functions, along with the appeals board for admissions and related decisions. Membership on this Board includes representation from veteran organizations and I am pleased, as a member of American Legion Post 45 in Hastings, to serve my fellow veterans."



Carla Wilson-Neil

The Michigan Veterans' Facility Authority Board of Directors governs the Michigan Veterans' Facility Authority and consists of the Director of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and eight members appointed by the Governor who have professional knowledge, skill, or experience in long-term care, health care licensure or finance, or medicine.

This appointment is subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. — *MM*

HASTINGS HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL

FALL SPORTS FIRST PRACTICE INFORMATION

Hastings Saxon Physical Night will be held at the CERC on August 5th with the girls from 6:00-7:15 pm and the boys from 7:15-8:30 pm. Due to construction, please enter using the CERC entrance behind the High School.

Must have a parent signed MHSAA physical form at the time of the physical.

The physicals are free but a $10 donation would be welcomed with all proceeds going to the Hastings Athletic Boosters.

FIRST OFFICIAL FALL PRACTICES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Girls Swim and Dive - August 11th 3-5:30 pm at the CERC
Girls Golf - August 11th 3:30 pm at The Legacy Golf Course
Volleyball - August 11th 4-7:00 pm HS Gym
Football - August 11th F/JV 3:30-6:00 pm Report to Fieldhouse
Football - August 11th Varsity 8-11:00 am and 12:30-2:30 pm Report to Fieldhouse
Cross Country - August 11th 10am-noon XC Table at the High School
Boys Tennis - August 12th 3:30-5:00 pm at the Tennis Courts
Boys Soccer - August 11th 3:00-5:30 pm at Pierce Field
HS Sideline Cheer - August 12th 4:00 - 6:00 pm in CERC gym

Middle School Football - August 18th Meet in MS gym right after school.
Middle School Volleyball and XC - August 25th Meet in MS gym right after school.
Middle School Sideline Cheer - August 19th from 3:20 - 5:30 pm at MS on Park Street side.

As a reminder, all student athletes competing for Hastings Area Schools in the 6th through 12th grades must have a current physical on file on Final Forms/Athletic Office in order to practice and/or compete.

City Of Hastings
COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION 2025-21
TO STAY THE NECESSARY ORDINANCES FOR SIDEWALK SALES IN DOWNTOWN HASTINGS AUGUST 15, 2025, AND AUGUST 16, 2025

WHEREAS, the Hastings Business Connection, by way of correspondence, has requested permission to conduct Sidewalk Sales in downtown Hastings; and

WHEREAS, the Hastings Business Connection requests a stay under Section 22-2 of Hastings ordinances on August 15, 2025, and August 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Hastings Business Connection wants to ensure that said Sidewalk Sales is conducted in good taste and in accordance with all laws and regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hastings desires to support and encourage the businesses in downtown Hastings; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Hastings hereby stays for the purpose of said Sidewalk Sales on August 15, 2025, and August 16, 2025, in Article 22-I of the Hastings City Code, the following Ordinance:

Section 22-2

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

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly held and attended regular meeting the 28th day of July by the City Council of the City of Hastings, by a vote of nine (9) members voting in favor thereof and zero (0) members voting against, and zero (0) members absent.

Linda Perin, City Clerk

City of Hastings
COUNTY OF BARRY, STATE OF MICHIGAN

Resolution 2025-20
RESOLUTION TO AMEND GUIDELINES FOR GRANTING POVERTY EXEMPTION TAX REDUCTION

WHEREAS, the principal residence of persons who, in the judgment of the Board of Review, are unable to contribute to the public charge are eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation under Public Act 390 of 1994 (MCL 211.7u); and

WHEREAS, the City of Hastings finds it necessary to establish such guidelines, includes as Attachment A to enable the Board of Review to carry out its statutory duties; and WHEREAS, the City Council of Hastings approved guidelines at the January 23, 2023 City Council meeting; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed and seeks to amend the guidelines to suit the public interest;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that, pursuant to MCL 211.7u, the revised poverty exemption guidelines included as Attachment A are hereby adopted to be used by the Board of Review in determining whether a poverty exemption from property taxes should be granted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall supersede and replace any prior Resolution on the subject and that the designations and authorizations herein shall continue in effect until modified by the City Council of the City of Hastings.

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

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

NAYS:None

ABSENT: None

MOTION DECLARE ADOPTED.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted at a duly held and attended regular meeting the 28th day of July 2025, by the City Council of the City of Hastings, County of Barry, State of Michigan, by a vote of nine (9) members voting in favor thereof and zero (0) members voting against with zero (0) members absent.

Linda Perin, City Clerk

FROM THE SUPE'S DESK: 'The least of these'

Rich Franklin
Barry ISD Superintendent

A retiring Intermediate School District board member once charged us always to remember that we serve "the least of these." Have you ever heard that phrase? Who are the least of these? And what do they have to do with us?


Rich Franklin

It comes from a story in the biblical book of Matthew.

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

In a more contemporary reference, legendary American musician Johnny Cash sang about his mission as "The Man in Black," wearing his signature color, "just so we're reminded of the ones who are held back." He also said that he sang about "the poor and beaten-down, livin' in the hopeless, hungry side of town."

Another great American often spoke about "the least of these." In his last Sunday sermon ever, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said:

"This is the question facing America. Ultimately, a great nation is a compassionate nation. America has not met its obligations and its responsibilities to the poor. One day we will have to stand before the God of history and we will talk in terms of things we've done… It seems that I can hear the God of history saying, 'That was not enough! But I was hungry, and ye fed me not. I was naked, and ye clothed me not. I was devoid of a decent sanitary house to live in, and ye provided no shelter for me. And consequently, you cannot enter the kingdom of greatness. If ye do it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me.'"

In the 57 years since Dr. King's challenge, we still find ourselves asking, "What can we do for the least of these, our brothers and sisters? How will we serve them?"

How will we serve the forgotten children, the children who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, ill-clothed, disabled, sick, or in trouble with the law?

The little ones who are dirty, loud, rude, ill-behaved, unloved?

The teenagers who are defiant, depressed, difficult to deal with, difficult to love, or just different?

The black ones, the brown ones, the immigrants, the non-English speakers?

The ones whose words say, "I hate you," but whose eyes say, "Please see me. Please help me. Please love me."

The children who are nothing like we were, or maybe exactly like we were?

The wounded, the desperate, the hopeless?

I don't have all the answers, just the troubling questions. But I ask them because someone has to. And in your hearts, you are already contemplating the answers, because in our hearts, we all know the answers.

They're not easy answers. They may take us out of our comfort zones. They may demand sacrifice or commitment. They may be messy or complicated.

Speaking at the wedding of Britain's Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the Reverend Michael Curry put the answer into one word: love.

"We must discover the power of love, the redemptive power of love. And when we do that, we will make of this old world a new world, for love is the only way. There's power in love. Don't underestimate it. Don't even over-sentimentalize it. There's power, power in love.

"If you don't believe me, just stop and imagine a world where love is the way. Imagine our homes and families where love is the way. Imagine neighborhoods and communities where love is the way.

"Imagine governments and nations where love is the way. Imagine business and commerce where this love is the way. Imagine this tired old world where love is the way.

"When love is the way, then no child will go to bed hungry in this world ever again. When love is the way, we will let justice roll down like a mighty stream and righteousness like an ever-flowing brook.

"When love is the way, poverty will become history. When love is the way, the earth will be a sanctuary. When love is the way, we will lay down our swords and shields, down by the riverside, to study war no more.

"When love is the way, there's plenty good room–plenty good room–for all of God's children. Because when love is the way, we actually treat each other, well… like we are actually family."

When we make it our business to care for the least of these, we make it our business to care for all. If that's not what public education is about, I don't know what is.



Soul Syndicate, a Michigan-based 10-piece ensemble, will take center stage at the Thornapple Plaza at 7:30 p.m. Friday to provide a blend of funk, soul and dance music.

Hastings Live cools things down with Thursday foam party

As July turns to August, the lineup for the 2025 Hastings Live Summer Concert Series is set to feature foamy fun for kids, an emotions-evoking acoustic group and a band that boasts vocalists who deliver soulful melodies and harmonies, according to Steve Hoke, the arts and events coordinator for the City of Hastings.

The festivities will again slide over to the Thornapple Plaza at 11 a.m. on Thursday, July 31, with the Stormy's Foam Party.

"There is no better way to beat the heat than being covered from head to toe in refreshing foam," Hoke said. "Imagine a 30-by-60 play-space with sudsy, refreshing bubbles that kids of all ages can play in outdoors."

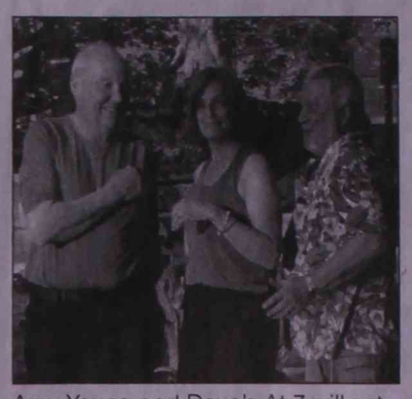
"Friday at the Fountain" at noon on Friday, Aug. 1, on the Barry County Courthouse lawn is set to feature Amy Young and Dave's at 7, a band that delivers songs that are toe-tapping to careful and contemplative.

Soul Syndicate, a Michigan-based 10-piece ensemble, will complete the week's musical slate when it takes the stage at the Thornapple Plaza at 7:30 p.m. Friday to provide a blend of funk, soul and dance music.

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

Smoking, vaping, non-service animals and outside alcohol are prohibited. There is no rain venue for Hastings Live. Unless there is thunder/lightning, each show will be held as scheduled.

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*


Amy Young and Dave's At 7 will set the tone for a beautiful weekend on the Barry County Courthouse lawn at noon on Friday, Aug. 1. **Courtesy photos**

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PIERCE CEDAR CREEK INSTITUTE EVENTS

– JULY 31-AUG. 7 –

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

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

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

Thursday, July 31 — Social Hike, 10 a.m.-noon. Join the Institute for a free social hiking experience. Bring a friend, or make a new one. Water is required to hike — this is a safety precaution to prevent dehydration on the trail. This is a 2.2-mile hike open to all.

Aug. 1-31 — Aug. Storybook Walk: "Mnoomin maan'gowing: The Gift of Mnoomin" by Brittnay Luby; illustrated by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley; translated by Mary Ann Corbiere. A seed is a gift to the future and a story you can hold. Follow the journey of mnoomin, or wild rice seed, as it encounters the wetland animals that prepare its way and the people who harvest it. Hike the trail and discover the forces that keep a wetland ecosystem balanced for mnoomin. The Storybook Walk is free and self-guided on the purple and green trails.

Aug. 1-31 — Walk the Planets. Take a hike around our solar system. Visit each planet and discover the solar system that surrounds Earth with a free, self-guided hike on the green trail.

Friday, Aug. 1 — Fun Friday, 10 a.m.-noon.

Friday, Aug. 1 — August Specialty Dinner: Fish Fry, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 5 —Sip and Ride accessible tours (ages 15+, under 18 with an adult), 10 a.m.-noon. Interested in wild, foraged drinks, but not interested in hiking the trails? This is for you! Tour and taste along the Institute's trails from the comfort of an all-terrain vehicle. Learn to ID the plants that make excellent teas, sodas, mocktails and more.

Wednesday, Aug. 6 — Sip and Ride accessible tours (ages 15+, under 18 with an adult), 10 a.m.-noon.

Wednesday, Aug. 6 — Field Station End of Summer Celebration, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 7 — Sip and Ride accessible tours (ages 15+, under 18 with an adult), 10 a.m.-noon.

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

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Tyden Park - Saturday, Aug. 23
The Jim Jensen MEMORIAL 3 ON 3 BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
THE HASTINGS BANNER
VIEW Newspaper Group
T-Shirts for first 100!
Regsiter online now through August 18 on the events page at mibarry.com
Check in begins 8:30 a.m.
Games begin 9:30 a.m.
$25 per 3-4 person team
Make checks payable to Hastings Summerfest 2025
Paper entreies must be to the Barry County Chamber of Commerce 138 W. State Street, Hastings, MI 49058 by August 18. Include team name, players names, player ages and captain contact info.
Boys & Girls (Ages 12-14) Boys & Girls (Ages 15-17) Men & Women (Ages 18-25) Men & Women (Ages 25 & up)
Age brackets subject to change based on participation.
Questions ?? ... email bbremer@mihomepaper.com or call (269) 351-1304

OBITUARIES

VIEW OBITUARIES ONLINE. HASTINGSBANNER.COM

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 31 – Movie Memories and Milestones watches a 1948 film starring Ralph Richardson and Michele Morgan, 5 p.m. A butler working in a foreign embassy in London falls under suspicion when his wife accidentally falls to her death, and the only witness is an impressionable young boy.

Friday, Aug. 1 – Friday Storytime, 10:30 a.m.

Aug. 2-9 – Scavenger Hunt Around Town, all day.

Monday, Aug. 4 – Crafting Passions, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 5 – Baby Cafe, 10 a.m.; mahjong, 5 p.m.; chess, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Aug. 6 – Itsy Bitsy Book Club, 10:30 a.m.; Open Art Studio, 11:30 a.m.; Digital Literacy: Computer Basics; Windows 11, 2 p.m.

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



Darryl R. Rummins Celebration of Life

August 9th, 2025 Starts at 1pm

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THE HASTINGS BANNER
VIEW Newspaper Group

Richard LaRue Walker



Richard (Dick) LaRue Walker, a longtime resident of Hastings, MI passed away Wednesday, July 23, 2025, at Carveth Village in Middleville.

Dick was born in Kalamazoo, MI, on March 2, 1931, to Mrs. Zela Walker and Claude Walker. Claude passed away in December 1930 in Massachusetts, prior to Dick's birth. Zela and Claude's family had lived in the Kalamazoo area, so Zela returned there with her two sons after her husband's untimely death from a ruptured appendix. Dick was born three months after her return to Kalamazoo. Claude Walker had been a manager for Shakespeare Rod and Reel in Kalamazoo and at corporate offices in Massachusetts.

Dick had two older brothers, Claude Jr. and Robert Walker, who both served in WWII. They lived in Florida for many years and are now deceased.

Dick attended Kalamazoo Public Schools and graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School in 1948, followed by enlistment in the Navy (1948-1953). He was an original 1949 crew member of the Salem CA-139. After five and a half years of Mediterranean tours during the Korean War era, Dick enlisted in the Air Force (1968-1970). He worked with long-range ground radar with postings in Texas, Zaragoza, Spain, and Pennsylvania. He retired from the military in 1970.

Dick was married to Mary A. Gracey for 47 years until her passing in 1999. They had two children. In 2002, he married Thelma Buehler Poll, residing in Hastings until her passing in 2006. He remained close to Thelma's children, especially Bob and Tammy Beuhler. Dick was also preceded in death by his mother, Zela, and his brothers, Claude and Robert of Jacksonville, FL.

Folks in Hastings will remember Dick as an avid bowler and euchre player who enjoyed a good story. Members of Emmanuel Episcopal Church will recall how much he enjoyed their fellowship times. In his later years, he became quite a reader and was addicted to his Kindle. During this time, he traveled extensively with his partner, Ruth Hill, and together they enjoyed watching the wildlife on Algonquin Lake and regularly followed the Detroit Lions. He also remained close with Ruth's children, Beth Gowen of Okemos and Jeff Komar, as well as their families.

He will be remembered fondly by his son, Steven Richard of Cathedral City, CA; daughter, Bonnie Lee of Portage, MI; grandson, Peter (Christina) of Seattle, WA; granddaughter, Judge Helena Walker of Washington, D.C.; and great-grandchildren, Victoria and Stephen of Seattle, WA.

A memorial service followed by a luncheon will be held at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Hastings on Saturday, Aug. 2, 2025, at 1 p.m. Military Honors by American Legion Post 45, Hastings.

Memorial contributions can be made to Michigan Parkinson's Founation https://parkinsonsmi.org/ (Donate). Interment will be at Kalamazoo Riverside Cemetery.

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

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VIEW Group

Worship Together



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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ASK DR. UNIVERSE

Take a deep breath

May I ask how fish breathe?
— Nghi, 11, Vietnam

Dear Nghi,

When you and I take a deep breath, we pull air into our lungs. That's because humans and cats are mammals. But fish aren't mammals. They usually don't breathe air. They usually don't have lungs.

That's what I found out from my friend Michael Berger. He's a biologist at Washington State University.

He told me that you can actually see a fish breathe water. Its face gets bigger when it takes in a big gulp of water. Just like when you take a big bite of food.

When you look at a fish, you can usually see the gill openings—called gill slits. Most fish have five gills on each side of the body, right behind their heads.

If you peek inside the gill slits, you'll see the gill filaments. They're small, thread-like bits that make up the gill. Each filament is full of tiny blood vessels called capillaries.

To breathe, a fish takes in a gulp of oxygen-rich water and pushes the water down to the gills. As it flows over the gill filaments, oxygen in the water moves into the blood-filled capillaries. Then the fish's blood transports that oxygen all around its body.

Animals use oxygen to change nutrients we eat into the energy that powers our bodies. That process makes some waste—called carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide waste leaves a fish's body through the gills. It flows out along with water that's depleted of oxygen.

Trading oxygen and carbon dioxide like that is called gas exchange.

Berger told me that gills work because a fish's blood flows through its gills in the opposite direction the water flows. That's a counter-current exchange system. It makes the gills work better. So, those fish can take in more oxygen and get rid of more carbon dioxide.

All kinds of water-living animals breathe with gills. That includes many fish, amphibians, worms, mollusks and aquatic insects.

But some fish don't have gills or only use them part-time.

They might breathe air using lungs like us. That's how African Lungfish breathe. They rise to the surface and grab a gulp of air.

Or they could breathe air through their skin or mouth tissue. Mudskippers get about half their oxygen that way. That's handy when they're hanging out outside the water. So long as they stay moist, they skin-breathe just fine.

You could say it's a very useful a-gill-ity.

— Dr. Universe

Do you have a question? Ask Dr. Universe.
Send an email to Washington State University's resident scientist and writer at Dr.Universe@wsu.edu or visit her website,askdruniverse.com.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

FAIRWAYS OF TIME: A century of sport and fellowship at the Hastings Country Club

DAVID W. MILLER
Special to The Banner

The game of golf found firm footing in Barry County with the founding of the Hastings Country Club, formally organized and incorporated on April 18, 1921. Just eight days later, 80 acres of gently rolling farmland on North Broadway were purchased for the purpose, with an additional three acres leased on a 30-year agreement, bringing the total acreage to 83. The land was ideally suited for golf, with natural contours and a farmhouse that served—at least initially—as the clubhouse.

A general membership meeting held on May 19, 1921, set the stage for the Club's future. Officers were elected: J.B. Renselaar as president, Fred Hill as vice president, J.M. Townsend as secretary, and J.E. Clark as treasurer. Golf course professional Jack Duray, from Highland Country Club in Grand Rapids, was enlisted to lay out the course design. Charlie Pickle was appointed as on-site overseer for construction and grading.

The Hastings Country Club held its official public opening on Thursday, Sept. 22, 1921, marking the first formal event at the new club grounds. The day was designed as a festive, family-friendly occasion with a basket lunch at noon and a full schedule of activities to welcome the broader Hastings community. Golf contests, tennis matches and ring-toss games were held throughout the day, with special prizes awarded—including for longest drives by both men and women. The event emphasized informality and fellowship, encouraging members, their families and even newcomers to become acquainted with the club. This inaugural gathering set the tone for the club's future as a welcoming place of sport, leisure, and community connection.

A new, purpose-built clubhouse was opened on May 20, 1923, with a festive carry-in dinner and games for the whole family. The structure itself was notable for its creative integration into the course: The tee for the fifth hole was positioned on the clubhouse roof, with players driving off the top. Below, the pro shop and men's locker room occupied the basement level. The locker room soon became insufficient for growing membership, prompting an expansion project during World War II, carried out under the direction of Ed Monica, with labor assistance provided by the Hastings Manufacturing Company.

One of the earliest legends in the history of the Hastings Country Club was 50-year-old Frank Carrothers, DDS, who achieved a remarkable milestone during the club's inaugural years. On Aug. 26, 1922, Dr. Carrothers recorded the club's first-ever hole-in-one, an impressive feat made all the more memorable for having occurred on the fifth hole. This singular shot from the roof of the clubhouse earned him national recognition as the 700th member of the Hole-in-One Club, a distinction that underscored both his individual skill and the growing prestige of the Hastings course. His accomplishment became a point of pride for the club and marked one of the earliest recorded moments of sporting excellence in its long history.

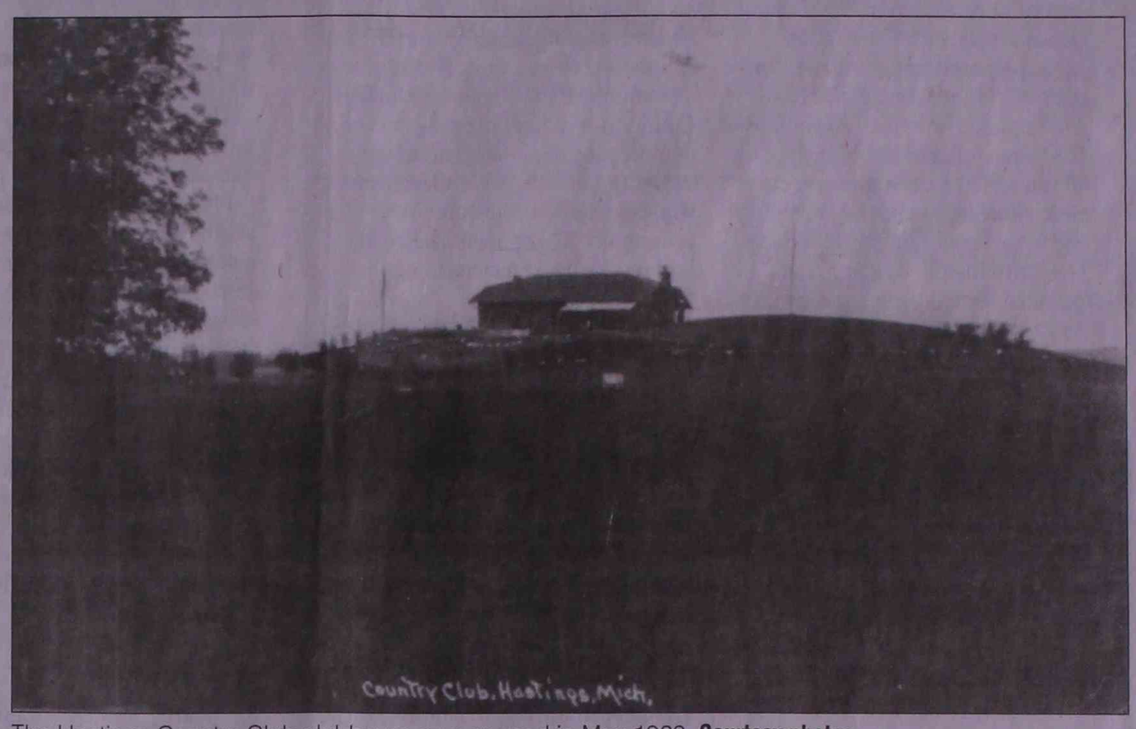
As membership grew, so did demand on the course. On Dec. 2, 1959, the club purchased 40 additional acres from Luther Dryer with the goal of expanding from nine to 18 holes. The new course layout—including revisions to the original nine—was designed by Bruce Matthews, a well-regarded golf course architect from Grand Rapids. Construction was overseen by greenskeeper Rene Ganguillet and completed by the Club's grounds crew. The full 18-hole course opened on July 24, 1965, celebrated with an informal ribbon-cutting and potluck dinner for all members.

Over the decades, the Club was shaped by a succession of professionals and managers. The first pro was Fred Leitz, followed by a long and colorful list that included Ed VanPopering, Bill Marsh, George Davis, George Wells, Joe Merdzinski, Dick Reinsma, Bill MacDonald, Bud Taylor (who served as manager), Ross Martin (both professional and manager), and finally Gene Mazza.

Boys' golf has been a recognized interscholastic sport in Michigan since at least 1925. At Hastings High School, the earliest documented success in the sport appears in the MHSAA records, which lists Hastings as the Division 1 state champion in 1966 under the leadership of Coach Robert Carlson. Although the precise year the school's golf program was established remains unclear, this achievement confirms that by the mid-1960s, Hastings had developed a competitive and well-organized team.

The Country Club has long been more than just a haven for golf enthusiasts—it has served as a cherished gathering place for the broader Hastings community. Over the decades, its clubhouse and surrounding grounds have hosted a variety of social events that extend well beyond the fairways. For many years, it was the elegant setting for the high school's beloved Snowball Dance, a winter tradition marked by music, formal attire and youthful excitement.

During the snowy months, the hillside in front of the clubhouse transformed into a lively scene of sledding and tobogganing, drawing families and children who delighted in the natural slope and wide-open space. In warmer seasons, the club has consistently been chosen as a favorite venue for high school reunions, community banquets, and weddings—its sweeping views, mature trees, and classic charm providing an ideal backdrop for celebrations and shared memories. In every season, the Country Club has remained a social heart of Hastings, offering hospitality, tradition and a sense of belonging.



The Hastings Country Club clubhouse was opened in May 1923. **Courtesy photos**

In 2011, Lynn Janson, a member of the Michigan Golf Hall of Fame and who had won every major Michigan championship as a professional or amateur PGA Tour Professional, returned to his hometown roots in Hastings and purchased the Hastings Country Club. He and his wife Norma had recently acquired a home within walking distance of the course, reflecting their deep personal investment in the community. During his tenure as owner, Janson served as the club's PGA Golf Professional, bringing decades of professional experience to bear on the revitalization of the course. Under his leadership, the club saw meaningful improvements in course conditions and programming—most notably through the introduction and management of the PGA Junior League, which helped foster a new generation of local golfers.

For six years, Lynn and Norma nurtured the club's long-standing traditions while enhancing its regional reputation as a welcoming and well-maintained facility. In 2017, the Jansons made the decision to step away from the golf business and embrace the next chapter of their lives. Recognizing the importance of preserving the course for the Hastings community, a group of local business leaders and dedicated golf enthusiasts stepped forward. Motivated by a shared love for the game and the land it's played on, they joined forces to ensure the course would remain a lasting part of the community's recreational and social life.

Today, thanks to the dedication of those who refused to let this historic course fade into the past, The Legacy at Hastings continues to thrive—not only as a destination for golf, but as a welcoming place to connect, belong and enjoy the outdoors. Its enduring success is a tribute to the generations of members, professionals and community leaders who recognized the importance of preserving both the landscape and the legacy of the club. Now home to over 200 members, The Legacy remains fully open to the public. Whether you're returning to the game after time away or picking up a club for the first time, the friendly staff at the pro shop are ready to assist you with equipment, lessons, and everything needed to enjoy a round. As golfers of all ages walk its fairways, they do more than play a game—they become part of a century-old tradition rooted in the heart of Hastings.

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



1st ROW - J. Fisher, D. Coleman, R. Moyer, R. Wieland, D. Fisher, T. Hahn, S. Williams. 2nd ROW - D. Lewis, D. Rose, G. Chandler, J. Miller, B. Cove, S. Rohde. 3rd ROW - Coach Carlson, D. Haywood, R. Francisco, J. Cummins, R. Morgan, J. Peterson.

Coach Robert Carlson with his 1968 golf team, composed of Hastings High School athletes, posed proudly beside the Hastings Country Club clubhouse.



Dr. Frank Carrothers, DDS, made the first-ever hole-in-one at the Hastings Country Club in Aug. 1922.

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HCB Financial Corp., Highpoint Community Bank announce expansion into Ottawa County

Highpoint Community Bank announced this week its intent to expand its West Michigan footprint with a new full-service branch in Hudsonville, Mich., pending regulatory approval from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The proposed branch will be located at 4675 32nd Avenue. The facility will undergo interior renovations. The new full-service branch will offer a suite of consumer and commercial banking services, including deposit accounts and loan products. The anticipated opening date is expected early in the first quarter of 2026.

"Hudsonville is a vibrant and growing community, and we are excited about the opportunity to bring our personalized approach to banking to this market," said Mark Kolanowski, chairman of both HCB Financial Corp. and Highpoint Community Bank. "Entering Ottawa County is a natural progression for us, reflecting our long-term strategic vision for growth in West Michigan while maintaining our core values of community engagement, personalized service, and financial integrity." — *MM*

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING DEADLINES

AD-VISOR & CHRONICLE
Monday at 4 p.m.

BATTLE CREEK SHOPPER NEWS
Monday at 5 p.m.

THE HASTINGS BANNER
Tuesday at Noon

THE REMINDER
Wednesday at Noon

THE SUN AND NEWS
Wednesday at Noon

VIEWnewspaper Group
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Garden workshop scheduled for Aug. 10

Area residents can learn about composting and organic garden fertilizers at a free workshop this month.

Herbalist, Michigan State University Pollinator Champion and Master Gardener Robbin Glass will lead the workshop on Sunday, Aug. 10, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Attendees of the class will learn how to compost and how to solve common composting problems. Glass will also explain organic fertilizers and which fertilizers are harmful to pollinators.

Glass encourages attendees to ask gardening questions during the question-and-answer portion of the class.

Attendees have the chance to win prizes from a free drawing.

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

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

Sporting events for all ages and skills at 2025 Summerfest

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The 2025 Hastings Summerfest is right around the corner and will once again include a softball tournament at Fish Hatchery Park, the annual Jim Jensen Memorial 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament at Tyden Park and the Summerfest Weightlifting competition downtown as well as the Backwoods Triathlon.

There will also be a youth kickball tournament this year at Bob King Park Saturday, Aug. 23, at 1 p.m.

Players may sign up as an individual and be placed on a team at the event, or sign up as a team. Teams must include at least eight players and have a maximum of two adults on the field at all times. Adults are not necessary for a team to participate. Contact youth.greenstreetumc@gmail.com for more details.

Weightlifting will be held Saturday, Aug. 23, beginning at 9 p.m. The competition will run until about noon. Registration is $10 and can be done at the event.

Sign-up is going on now for the annual Corwell Health Pennock Summerfest 5K Run/Walk and Kids Fun Run. The run will take off from the Thornapple Plaza at 8 a.m. 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.

The 2024 Jim Jensen Memorial 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament will be held Aug. 23 at Tyden Park. Registration is going on now through Aug. 18. Links to online registration can be found on the sports page at hastingssummerfest.com or on the events calendar at mibarry.com.

The cost to participate is $25 for teams of three or four players. The plans is for contests in 12-14, 15-17, 18-25 and 25-and-up divisions, although often times the two older groups are joined to an 18-and-up bracket based on participation.

The first 100 players to check in the day of the tournament receive a T-shirt. Registered teams may begin checking in at 8:30 and games will start no later than 9:30 a.m.

Contact Aaron Snider to sign-up for the softball tournament at 517-927-9912. The cost to participate is $175 per team and is open to the first 12 men's teams to sign up.

The Backwoods Triathlon includes golfing, cornhole and bowling events for teams of two with proceeds going to Happiness for Veterans of Barry County. The event opens with a 9 a.m. shotguns tart at Gun Ridge Golf Course. The cornhole tournament will also run at Gun Ridge, followed by the Scotch doubles bowling competition at Hastings Bowl.

The cost to participate in the triathlon is $100 per team for those that preregister by Aug. 16, and $125 for late registration should it be available. There is a 54-team limit. Register with Michelle Gdula at Mgdula310@yahoo.com or by calling 269-223-4292.

JOHNSTOWN TOWNSHIP
BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT PUBLIC HEARING
MILL LAKE AQUATIC PLANT CONTROL

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

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Township Board of Johnstown as authorized by PA 188 of 1954, as amended, proposes to undertake an aquatic plant control project (with associated activities) in Mill Lake in Johnstown Township as more particularly described below and to create a separate special assessment district for the recovery of the costs thereof by special assessment against the properties benefited.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the special assessment district within which the foregoing improvements are proposed to be made and within which the costs thereof are to be specially assessed include all parcels with frontage on and/or access to Mill Lake in Johnstown Township and are more particularly described as follows:

JOHNSTOWN TWP PROPOSED DISTRICT: The properties indicated by parcel numbers:

09-021-001-00	09-040-011-00	09-040-040-00	09-040-057-00	09-040-078-00	09-125-006-00	09-125-022-00
09-021-003-00	09-040-012-00	09-040-041-00	09-040-058-00	09-040-080-00	09-125-007-00	09-125-023-00
09-021-004-00	09-040-015-00	09-040-042-00	09-040-059-00	09-040-081-00	09-125-008-00	09-125-024-00
09-021-005-00	09-040-018-00	09-040-043-00	09-040-060-00	09-040-082-00	09-125-009-00	09-125-025-00
09-021-006-00	09-040-019-00	09-040-044-00	09-040-061-00	09-040-083-00	09-125-010-00	09-125-026-00
09-021-007-00	09-040-020-00	09-040-046-00	09-040-062-00	09-085-001-00	09-125-011-00	09-185-001-00
09-021-026-00	09-040-023-00	09-040-047-00	09-040-063-00	09-085-002-00	09-125-012-00	09-185-001-10
09-021-027-00	09-040-027-00	09-040-048-00	09-040-067-00	09-085-003-00	09-125-014-00	09-185-002-00
09-021-028-00	09-040-028-00	09-040-049-00	09-040-069-00	09-085-005-00	09-125-015-00	09-185-002-10
09-021-029-00	09-040-029-00	09-040-050-00	09-040-070-00	09-085-006-00	09-125-016-00	09-185-003-00
09-040-003-00	09-040-031-00	09-040-051-00	09-040-071-00	09-085-007-00	09-125-016-01	09-185-004-00
09-040-004-00	09-040-033-00	09-040-052-00	09-040-072-00	09-125-001-00	09-125-017-00	09-185-005-00
09-040-005-00	09-040-034-00	09-040-053-00	09-040-073-00	09-125-002-00	09-125-018-00	09-185-006-00
09-040-006-00	09-040-036-00	09-040-054-00	09-040-075-00	09-125-003-00	09-125-019-00	09-185-007-00
09-040-007-00	09-040-038-00	09-040-055-00	09-040-076-00	09-125-004-00	09-125-020-00	09-185-008-00
09-040-009-00	09-040-039-00	09-040-056-00	09-040-077-00	09-125-005-00	09-125-021-00	

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board has received plans showing the proposed aquatic plant control project, associated activities, any proposed improvements and locations thereof, together with an estimated total project cost of $64,000 (including legal and administrative costs). The Township's project cost will be raised through a special assessment district upon benefitted properties in the Township. The Township Board has passed Resolution No. 2025-7-1, tentatively declaring its intention to undertake such project and to create the above-described special assessment district at its meeting held on July 9, 2025 at the Township Hall, 13641 S. M-37 Highway, in the Township.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board has placed the project plans and costs estimate on file with the Township Clerk and said plans, cost estimate and the special assessment district may be examined at the Clerk's office from the date of this Notice to the date of the public hearing and may further be examined at such public hearing. PROPERTY SHALL NOT BE ADDED TO THE PROPOSED SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT AND THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE OF COST SHALL NOT BE INCREASED BY MORE THAN 10% WITHOUT FURTHER NOTICE AND PUBLIC HEARING.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board proposes to make a per-parcel special assessment each year for a period of six (6) years (2026-2031 inclusive). Assessments will be billed beginning in December 2025 for treatment to begin in 2026.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a public hearing on the plans, the district and cost estimates will be held at the Johnstown Township Hall, 13641 S. M-37 Hwy, Battle Creek, Michigan, on August 13, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. At the hearing, the Board will consider any written objections and comments to any of the foregoing matters which are filed with the clerk at or before the hearing, and any objections or comments raised at the hearing; and at the hearing (or any adjournment of the hearing which may be made without further notice), the Township Board may revise, correct, amend, or change the plans, cost estimates, or special assessment district.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if written objections to the project are filed with the Township Board at or before the hearing, signed by the record owners of land constituting more than 20% of the area within the proposed special assessment district, then the Township may not proceed unless petitions in support of the project, signed by record owners of more than 50% of the area to be made into a special assessment district, are filed with the Township. Written comments or objections may be filed with the clerk at the address set out below. Appearance and protest at the public hearing is required in order to appeal the amount of the special assessment to the State Tax Tribunal within 30 days after the special assessment roll is confirmed. An owner or party in interest, or his/her agent, may appear in person at the hearing to protest the special assessment, or shall be permitted to file at or before the hearing his/her appearance or protest by letter and, in such case, his/her personal appearance shall not be required. All interested persons are invited to be present in person or by representative and to submit comments concerning the establishment of the special assessment district, the plans and the cost estimates.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if the Township Board determines to proceed with the special assessment, the Board will cause a special assessment roll to be prepared and another hearing will be held, after notice to record owners of property proposed to be specially assessed, to hear public comments concerning the proposed special assessments.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the foregoing hearing and all proceedings associated with this special assessment matter shall be conducted in accordance with and pursuant to 1954 Public Act 188 and in accordance with and pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act and any other applicable law.
Johnstown Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon four (4) days-notice to the Township Clerk.

Sheri Babcock, Clerk at Johnstown Township, 13641 S. M-37 Hwy., Battle Creek, MI 49017
(269) 721-9709 Ext. 202

Parcel on Long Lake part of DNR surplus land auction

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is busy preparing 126 properties for sale via online auctions later this summer. River frontage, lake frontage and forested acreage surrounded by private ownership – these characteristics describe some of the parcels that will be available in August and early September.

The list of parcels include a couple in Hope Township, in southern Barry County including a .26-acre parcel on Peake Road east of the Wilkins Road intersection and a 12-acre parcel south of the intersection of M-43 Highway and S Shore Drive with 20 feet of frontage on Long Lake. The auction of these couple local parcels is set to take place Aug. 26.

A detailed property list including minimum bid, acreage, maps and location information can be found at Michigan.gov/LandForSale. Interested bidders are encouraged to review the DNR Land Sales: Terms and Conditions.

It may seem counter-intuitive that the DNR should make any land available for sale, but it's important to note that the public benefit of some properties is severely limited due to factors such as lack of legal public access, size limitations that prevent appropriate public use, and development on adjacent privately owned land that impacts public use such as hunting. Further, the proceeds from surplus-land sales are deposited into the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund and specifically used to acquire replacement properties that are usable by the public, protect important natural resources and provide accessible, quality recreation opportunities.

For all of those reasons, the DNR determines some properties to be more suitable for private ownership.

These surplus land sales are a regular part of the DNR's public land strategy (one supported and further defined by the Michigan Legislature with the passage of Public Act 240 in 2018). And since such parcels were determined to be better suited for private ownership, they could prove to be the perfect fit for the right owners.

Scott Whitcomb, director of the DNR's Office of Public Lands, said that parcels selected for public auction don't make it there without first having gone through an extensive review process.

"State forests, state parks, wildlife areas, trails and more, the DNR manages approximately 4.6 million acres of public land on behalf of the people of Michigan," Whitcomb said. "These lands are used for a variety of recreation activities and also support the state's economy through tourism, the timber industry and job creation."

Whitcomb stressed how critical it is for the department to be strategic in that effort.

"More than half of the land the DNR manages came to the state due to owners' nonpayment of taxes, so those parcels were not ones we purposefully sought out and purchased," he said. "Our land review process is effective in pointing out parcels that don't fit the department mission to balance conservation, recreation and economic development.

"Before parcels ever get to public auction – a management tool the department has used for several decades – we've already evaluated all other options, whether it's a land exchange for land that's a better fit, or perhaps a situation where it makes more sense for another governmental agency or conservation group to hold the property."

Such land exchanges yield meaningful additions to the DNR's public land portfolio, which results in better outdoor recreation and conservation outcomes. Since January 2020, more than 80 parcels totaling over 6,500 acres were purchased (through the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund or an LEFF subfund) for public benefit.

This year, land is available throughout Lower Michigan and the Upper Peninsula in the following counties: Alger, Allegan, Barry, Genesee, Gogebic, Grand Traverse, Kent, Lake, Lapeer, Luce, Manistee, Marquette, Mecosta, Midland, Missaukee, Montmorency, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Schoolcraft, Washtenaw and Wexford.

Eleven online auctions are scheduled and will feature land parcels by county, starting Aug. 1 and concluding Sept. 5.

Interested bidders may preregister and get more information about the online auction schedule at www.tax-sale.info/. Anyone who plans to bid on a property must register before the property's auction date. Absentee bids can be made up to 30 days before an auction.

The "interactive" bidding portion of an auction will open at 10 a.m. on that auction date. At that time, bidders will be able to see current high bids for each property. Bidders can continue to place bids on a property until 7 p.m. when bidding closes and the winning bidder is determined.

Properties for sale range in size from under an acre to 200 acres. Many of the surplus properties highlighted in the auction are in Allegan, Lake, Newaygo, Schoolcraft and Wexford counties. There are over 15 properties available that are 40 acres or larger, mostly throughout the Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower Peninsula.

Notable waterfront properties that are accessible in the Lower Peninsula include an island in Genesee County in Lake Ponemah (Lot #10049), a Montmorency County property with frontage on the Thunder Bay River (Lot #10076) and two properties in Wexford County on Lake Mitchell (Lot #10124) and Pleasant Lake (Lot #10127).

Notable waterfront properties in the Upper Peninsula include a property in Gogebic County on Duck Lake (Lot #10050) and Schoolcraft County properties with frontage on the West Branch Manistique River (Lot #10114) and the North Branch of Stutts Creek (Lot #10115).

Some large-acreage properties that are accessible include an 80-acre property in Oceana County along West Jefferson Road (Lot #10099), a 43-acre-plus Grand Traverse County property along Hoosier Valley Road (Lot #10051), a 20-acre parcel in Allegan County on 105th Avenue (Lot #10046), a 94-acre-plus property in Montmorency County along M-32 (Lot #10077) and several properties in Schoolcraft County between 18 acres and 124 acres in size (Lot #s 10107, 10108, 10114 and 10115).

Many of the sale parcels are forested and/or have road or river frontage but are better suited for private ownership. Much of the land offered in these auctions is isolated from other DNR-managed property, which creates some management challenges, while other parcels are included because they offer limited public recreation benefits.

Most of the properties included in the auction were designated as surplus properties during the DNR's state land review. In fact, 98% of the parcels offered at auction this year were part of that review process, which aims to examine isolated state-managed parcels that are 200 acres or smaller with a substantial private-public boundary.

Certain properties, such as boating access sites and designated trails, were removed from the review because they have been confirmed to contribute to the department's mission. The review process was conducted on a county-by-county basis throughout the entire state.

For more information about the sale of surplus, state-managed public land, contact Michael Michalek, resource specialist in the DNR's Real Estate Section, at MichalekM1@Michigan.gov or 517-331-8387.

Auction proceeds will help provide future outdoor recreation opportunities in keeping with the DNR's mission to conserve, protect and manage the state's natural and cultural resources for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations.

— BB

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STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO. and JUDGE 24-30130-DE
William M. Doherty

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

Estate of Lewis Harold Christ, decedent. Date of birth: 1935.

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Lewis Harold Christ, died March 23, 2025.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Jeffrey J. Wengle, 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: July 25, 2025
Kenneth U. Lucas P-33741
200 Woodland Pass, PO Box 1296
East Lansing, Michigan 48826-1296
517-351-3550
Jeffrey J. Wengle
7489 Lehring Road
Bancroft, Michigan 48414
(517) 351-3550

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO. and JUDGE 2024-29864-DE
William M. Doherty

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

Estate of Sager Junior Miller, Deceased. Date of birth: September 3, 1934.

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Sager Junior Miller, Deceased, died May 23, 2024.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Steven D. Miller, 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: July 23, 2025
The Probate Pro
Darren Findling P51350
414 W. Fifth Street, Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 399-3300
Steven D. Miller
4220 82nd Ave. North, Pinellas Park, FL 33781
(717) 776-0633

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BARRY COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate
CASE NO. and JUDGE 25-30141-DE

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

Estate of Nicole Michelle Wagner. Date of bith: 11/26/1975.

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Nicole Michelle Wagner, died 06/01/2022.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kimberly C. Miller, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 206 West Court Street, Ste. 302, Hastings, MI 49058 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 07/24/2025
Jessica L. Brandow P82951
P.O. Box 2233
Battle Creek, MI 49016
(269) 888-9455
Kimberly C. Miller
8998 Cox Road
Bellevue, MI 49021
(269) 275-6151

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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)

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 28, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:

Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Joyce J. Dennie, unmarried

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

Foreclosing Assignee (if any): NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing

Date of Mortgage: July 17, 2014

Date of Mortgage Recording: July 30, 2014

Amount claimed due on date of notice: $9,797.45

Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Woodland, Barry County, Michigan, and described as: Lot Twelve (12) of Innovation Subdivision according to the recorded plat thereof being located in the Northwest one-quarter of Section 3 Town 4 North Range 7 West, Woodland Township, Barry County, Michigan.

Common street address (if any): 7795 Woodland Rd, Lake Odessa, MI 48849-9323

The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.

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

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

This notice is from a debt collector.

Date of notice: July 31, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515

1568098
(07-31)(08-21)

GO ONLINE TO HASTINGSBANNER.COM

NOTICE

THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISMENT. 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 1pm, on Thursday, August 21, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. The foreclosure sale is pursuant to the terms and conditions of a Mortgage made by CHRISTOPHER B. WALKER and SHANNON J. WALKER, Mortgagors, to First National Bank of America, Mortgagee, dated November 9, 2004, and recorded November 17, 2004, in Instrument Number 1137316, of Barry County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due as of the date of this notice $82,990.36, including interest at 9.95% per annum. Said premises are situated in Irving Township, Barry County, Michigan, and are described as: Beginning at the NW corner of the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 9, T4N, R9W; thence 26 2/3 rods East; thence South 12 rods; thence West 26 2/3 rods; thence North approximately 12 rods to the place of beginning. Together with rights of ingress and egress over the currently established road, except that part deeded to the State of Michigan in Liber 246 on Page 589; c/k/a 6153 Cain Creek, Freeport, MI 49325. The redemption period shall be six months from the date of the sale, unless the premises are determined to be abandoned pursuant to MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be one month, or until the time to provide the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c) expires, whichever is later. The redemption period further may be shortened pursuant to MCL 600.3238(10) if the property is not adequately maintained, or if the purchaser is denied the opportunity to inspect the property. Please be advised that if the mortgaged property is sold at a foreclosure sale by advertisement, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale, or to the mortgage holder, for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Dated: July 24, 2025 Randall T. LeVasseur P41712 LeVasseur Dyer & Associates, PC Attorneys for Mortgagee 3233 Coolidge Hwy Berkley, MI 48072 (248) 236-1765

(07-24)(08-14)

All-America honors pile up for HCDC divers at nationals

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Hastings Community Diving Club has never had a more successful season of national competitions than the one that just wrapped with the AAU National Championships in Riverside, Calif.

Club diver Major Vance won the national championship in the Men's Masters Silver 1M (19-49) competition with an overall score of 204.25 points after the finals July 16.

Vance, who broke a nearly two-decade old Grand Rapids Union scoring record as a diver during his senior season last winter, has plans to compete for Aquinas College this season. He scored 5.5s and 6.0s throughout much of his competition at the Riverside Aquatics Complex, and had a top single dive score of 40.80 his dive 403B – an inward dive with 1.5 somersaults in the pike position.

Fellow HCDC divers Aubrey Yarger and Lydia Slagel both earned AAU All-American honors too. Slagel has earned All-American honors three times this summer.

HCDC head coach Todd Bates said he celebrated the successful meet by doing a front somersault off the 10-meter platform.

"It's been the most successful Nationals season to date," Bates said. "The divers finaled at USA Diving Regionals earlier in the year and qualified and represented the AAU Red White Blue National team where they also medaled."

"College coaches are recognizing our diver athletes and it's exciting to see them move on to the next level," he added.

Slagel, an all-state diver in Division 1 for the Thornapple Kellogg co-op varsity girls' swimming and diving team last fall, had a top finish in Riverside of seventh in the Girls A1 16-year-old 1M Finals. She placed tenth in the same division on the three-meter board and added a 26th-place finish in the 16-18 Girls Platform Finals.

She also reached the finals in two synchronized diving events. She was 16th along with in the 16-18 Girls 3M Finals diving with Yarger and teamed with Kiyana Perez from the Northside Diving Academy to place 24th in the 16-18 Girls 1M Finals.

Yarger , the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 2 diving state champion last fall from the Delton Kellogg/Hastings co-op, also competed in the synchronized 16-18 Girls 1M Finals with teammate Taniya Ott and the duo scored a 15th-place score.



Hastings Community Diving Club coach Todd Bates and divers (from left) Hollen Emmick, Abigail Dumond, Aubrey Yarger, Taniya Ott and Lydia Slagel gather for a sunset photo during the AAU Diving National Championships in Riverside, Calif. **Photos provided**

The top finish of the meet for Yarger came in the Girls A1 16-year-old 3M Finals where she was ninth. She also competed in the meet's 16-18 Girls Platform event.

HCDC diver Abigail Dumond, who is set to dive for Alma College next season, reached the finals of the synchronized 16-18 Girls 1M competition with Emmick and the duo placed 25th.

It was the first nationals appearance for both Emmick and Ott.

Club teammate Dawn Miller placed 33rd in the 16-18 Girls Platform Finals.

In all, there were more than 600 divers competing at the AAU National Championship which ran from July 12-23.

"We are honored to host this incredible event in Riverside," said Shaheen Roostai, Executive Director of the Riverside Sports Commission. "It not only brings the best divers in the world to our city, but highlights Riverside's world-class dive and aquatic facilities. Additionally, it generates tremendous excitement for the sport of diving and significant economic benefits for the city of Riverside."

MHSAA sports participation numbers highest since 2018-19

Michigan High School Athletic Association member high schools reported a combined participation of 275,684 athletes in MHSAA-sponsored tournament sports during the 2024-25 school year – the highest number of participants in those activities since 2018-19 and despite another decrease in combined enrollment across those 754 schools.

This past year's participation total was 5,020 students – or 1.9 percent – higher than in 2023-24, while enrollment at member schools fell by 1.3 percent. Boys participation was up 1.9 percent to 161,329 – also its highest since 2018-19 – and girls participation was up 1.8 percent to 114,355, its highest count since 2019-20. MHSAA participation totals count students once for each sport in which they participate, meaning students who are multiple-sport athletes are counted more than once.

Two sports set participation records during 2024-25. Boys track & field counted 24,759 participants – a 3.7 percent increase from a year ago in breaking its previous record from 2005-06. Girls lacrosse participation was up 0.9 percent from last year to 3,970 participants in setting a record for the second-straight season.

Another 15 sports saw participation increases this past school year. Girls tennis saw an increase of 6.4 percent to 9,485 athletes, followed by boys and girls wrestling's combined increase of 5.2 percent to 12,422 participants – with boys wrestling participation up 3 percent and girls up an incredible 24 percent to 1,505 athletes. Girls track & field (18,108 athletes) and boys cross country (8,209) also saw some of the largest jumps at 4.5 and 4.1 percent, respectively.

Also reporting increased participation during 2024-25 were boys tennis (3.7 percent, 6,163 total athletes), football (3 percent, 36,210), girls volleyball (2.9 percent, 19,679), boys golf (2.7 percent, 7,416), girls competitive cheer (2.4 percent, 6,319), boys basketball (1.7 percent, 20,541), girls cross country (1.4 percent, 6,826), boys soccer (1.1 percent, 14,112), boys bowling (1 percent, 4,333), boys swimming & diving (0.9 percent, 4,073), and girls soccer (0.7 percent, 11,090). — *BB*



Hastings' Odin Twiss was a part of a record-setting number of student-athletes participating on MHSAA varsity boys' track and field teams this spring. Boys' track and field and girls' lacrosse both reached record levels of participation during the 2024-25 school year. **Photo by Brett Bremer**

CITY OF HASTINGS
County of Barry, State of Michigan

ORDINANCE NO. 631
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ARTICLE 22-1, SECTIONS 22-1, 22-2, AND 22-3 OF THE HASTINGS CODE TO REGULATE LOADING, SIDEWALK DISPLAYS, AND SIDEWALK CAFES IN THE CITY OF HASTINGS

THE CITY OF HASTINGS ORDAINS:

Section 1. Amendment and Restatement of Chapter 22, Article 22-1 Sections 22-1 LOADING AND UNLOADING MERCHANDISE, Section 22-2 SIDEWALK DISPLAYS, and Section 22-3 SIDEWALK CAFE AND DINING PLATFORM PERMITS are hereby amended and restated in their entirety to read as follows:

Sec 22-1 Loading Or Unloading Merchandise

1. Generally. Where alleys or rear entrances exist, a person engaged in business or the sale of goods, wares or merchandise shall at all times use such alleys or rear entrances to their place of business for the loading or unloading of merchandise.
2. Use of sidewalk. No person engaged in the sale of merchandise shall use any part of the public sidewalk in front of his place of business for the unloading of goods or merchandise, except and only as such goods, wares and merchandise shall be promptly removed from the sidewalk immediately after the deposit of the same on the sidewalk. In case of emergency, the City Manager or their designee may for some cause shown, issue a permit or order a longer time to remove the goods, wares or merchandise.
3. Municipal civil infraction. A person who violates any provision of this section is responsible for a municipal civil infraction, subject to payment of a civil fine as set forth in section 52-38. Repeat offenses under this article shall be subject to increased fines as set forth in section 52-38.

Sec 22-2 Sidewalk Displays

1. *Display of wares or merchandise.* Temporary movable sales racks and movable sidewalk furniture (i.e., chairs and tables where patrons can sit, but where food or drink service is not provided) are permitted on the public sidewalk provided that:
   1. Such items are associated with a permanent business operating in a building immediately adjacent to the sidewalk where the items are placed;
   2. Such items are placed as close to the building as is reasonably possible;
   3. A minimum of five feet of unobstructed, pedestrian access along the sidewalk is maintained;
   4. Sales racks do not exceed one hundred fifty (150) square feet or twenty (20) linear feet of frontage and are only present in the right-of-way during business operating hours. These limitations do not apply during community events authorized by the City; and
   5. Items are in good condition and fit the general aesthetic and character of other elements nearby.
2. *Municipal civil infraction.* A person who violates any provision of this section is responsible for a municipal civil infraction, subject to payment of a civil fine as set forth in section 52-38. Repeat offenses under this article shall be subject to increased fines as set forth in section 52-38.

Sec 22-3 Sidewalk Cafe And Dining Platform Permits

1. Sidewalk cafes. As used in this section, a sidewalk cafe shall be any portion of the public right-of-way that is permitted to be used by a licensed food service establishment for service of food and beverages in accordance with the provisions of this section.
2. Permit conditions. The city clerk may issue to an adjacent food service establishment a revocable sidewalk cafe permit for not more than one calendar year, to occupy a portion of the adjacent city right-of-way to place tables and chairs for selling and consuming food and beverages under the following terms and conditions:
   1. *Prohibitions.* The occupancy must not:
      1. Interfere with the use of the right-of-way for pedestrian or vehicular travel.
      2. Unreasonably interfere with the view, access to, or use of property adjacent to said street.
      3. Reduce the pedestrian travel area of any sidewalk to less than six feet in width. The pedestrian travel area shall not include trees, bushes, walls, parking meters, fire hydrants, tree grates, or any other fixtures permanently located in the right-of-way.
      4. Cause damage to the street or sidewalk or to trees, benches, landscaping, or other objects lawfully located in the right-of-way.
      5. Cause violation of any state or local laws.
      6. Be principally used for off-premises advertising.
      7. Conceal or detract from the appearance of landscaping features in or adjacent to the street.
      8. Be in or adjacent to property zoned exclusively for residential purposes.
      9. Be attached to or reduce the effectiveness of or access to any utility, sign, or other traffic control device.
      10. Cause increased risk of theft or vandalism.
      11 . Locate any cooking apparatus in any portion of the public right-ofway.
      12. Violate regulations adopted by the city manager pursuant to this Code.
   2. *Requirements.*
      1. Any improvements to be installed in the public right-of-way by a sidewalk cafe shall be temporary in nature and be approved by the city manager or their designee. The improvements shall be removed at the end of each season or within five days upon notice by the city requiring removal, or upon termination of the permit. All costs and expenses of the improvements, removal of improvements, and restoration of the right-of-way shall be borne by the applicant/occupant.
      2. All improvements installed pursuant to a sidewalk cafe permit shall be in compliance with all building and fire code requirements prohibiting the obstruction of exits.
      3. All lighting in outdoor service areas shall be shielded downward and away from adjacent properties. No loudspeakers, music, or public address systems or other sound amplification equipment shall be permitted that will generate noise that can be heard from adjacent properties.
      4. All sidewalk cafe areas in which alcohol is to be served must comply with all Michigan Liquor Control Commission requirements.
   3. Fee. Prior to the issuance of a permit, a fee in the amount established by resolution of the city council shall be paid to the city clerk.
   4. Insurance. The permittee shall show proof of and maintain comprehensive general liability insurance and worker's compensation and employer's liability insurance and have the city as an additional named insured. The amount of such insurance shall be determined by the city council.
   5. Food service establishment. Food service establishment shall be defined in accordance with its meaning in the Public Health Code. (MCLA 333.12901)
   6. Regulations. The city manager may adopt an executive order controlling the occupancy pursuant to a sidewalk cafe.
   3. *Duration.* Permits shall be for the period of April 1 to November 1 for the year in which they are granted, and hours of operation shall be limited to between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m.
   4. *Hold harmless.* To the fullest extent permitted by law, the licensee agrees to defend, pay in behalf of, and hold harmless the city, its elected and appointed officials, employees and volunteers, and others working in behalf of the city against any and all claims, demands, suits, losses, including all costs connected therewith, for any damages which may be asserted, claimed or recovered against or from the city, its elected and appointed officials, employees, volunteers or others working on behalf of the city, by reason of personal injury, including bodily injury and death, and/or property damage, including loss of use therefore which arises out of or is in any way connected or associated with this permit.
   5. *Permit revocation.* Any permit may be revoked by the city manager upon a finding that the occupancy does not meet the standards of this Code, any other provisions of this Code, or other applicable law or regulation, or that the right-of-way is needed for other street or utility purposes.
   6. *Appeal.* Persons who are refused a permit or have had their permit revoked may request in writing a hearing on that determination before the city manager. The decision of the manager may be appealed to the city council. Requests for a hearing or an appeal must be made within five days of the permit revocation.
   7. *Appearance tickets.* The police chief and the appointed officers of the police department or such other officials as are designated by the city manager, are hereby authorized to issue and serve appearance tickets with respect to a violation of this chapter. Appearance tickets shall be in such form as determined by the city attorney and shall be in conformity with all statutory requirements.

Section 2. Repeal. All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption and publication as provided by the City Charter.

Moved by McLean, with support by Devroy, that Ordinance No. 631 be adopted as read.
YEAS: Barlow, Bergeron, Brehm, Devroy, McLean, Resseguie, Rocha, Stenzelbarton and Tossava
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
Adoption Date: July 28, 2025
Effective Date: August 12, 2025
First Reading: July 14, 2025
Second Reading: July 28, 2025
CITY OF HASTINGS
By: Linda Perin
City Clerk

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, being the duly qualified and acting Clerk of the City of Hastings, Michigan, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of an Ordinance adopted by the City Council of the City of Hastings, at a regular meeting of the City Council on July 28, 2025, at which meeting a quorum was present and remained throughout, and that the original of said Ordinance is on file in the records of the City of Hastings. I further certify that the meeting was conducted, and public notice was given pursuant to and in compliance with Act No. 267, Public Acts of Michigan of 1976, as amended, and that minutes were kept and will be or have been made available thereby.

CITY OF HASTINGS
By: Linda Perin
City Clerk

Dated: 07/29/2025

Saxon alumnus, Steward, added speed as KCC harrier

Gale Fisher
Special to the Banner

Alex Steward, spent five years as a student athlete running for Hastings Area Schools in middle school and high school.

He was not one of the fastest members of his Saxon teams during his first few years and was fine with that, but eventually decided he wanted to improve. Although he progressed, as a high school cross country athlete, his potential remained untapped. He eventually found the formula to compete at a higher level after graduating from high school.

Steward has left a legacy as a Kellogg Community College runner making phenomenal improvements over two years with the Bruins. He currently sits at number five on the all-time leader board with his PR of 27 minutes, 45 seconds for the 8K. He ran an 8K race at 20 seconds per mile faster than his high school 5K PR.

"I'd say my commitment, willingness to learn, and I guess my understanding of running have led to my success," Steward said. "I definitely got better from upping my mileage and following an actual training schedule. Learning from our coaches and the training plans developed by one of our assistant coaches, Rob Lillie, has played a major role in my getting faster. Developing an understanding of running and knowing when to take it easy and when to run hard has allowed me to avoid major injuries while also increasing my speed. Learning about what heart rate zone to train in for specific types of runs has improved my efficiency as a runner."

Steward followed up his KCC cross country career this spring with a top-five finish at the Kalamazoo Ziegler Half Marathon with a finish time of 1 hour, 21 minutes and 28 seconds the first weekend in May.

He played some soccer as a youngster and didn't really get into any kind of competitive running until middle school.

"When I was in eighth grade, I decided to try cross country. Running was something that I enjoyed, so I thought cross-country might be fun. I developed a love for it immediately," Steward said.

While he loved running, the competitive edge that exists for him now was not there early on.

"I was pretty slow. I recall my first race in middle school was around 22 minutes for two miles," Steward said. "My best two-mile run in middle school was around 16 minutes. I didn't necessarily care how fast I was; I just loved running and being part of the team. It became a social thing. Many of my teammates became my friends."

During his first few years as a Hastings cross country runner, Steward only ran during the season. His season-best time his sophomore year was about two minutes slower than his season best as a freshman, and that really spurred him to push himself in the offseason between his sophomore and junior campaigns. There were mental improvements along with physical ones.

"I seemed to pick up more strategies, techniques, and nuances as a runner every year I ran," Steward said. "Eventually, I was always looking to improve."

The commitment began to pay off. He made a more than four-minute drop in his PR during his junior season with a new best of 20:59 . He was able to shave off another two minutes for his senior season, setting his high school personal record that year with a time of 18:24.

He followed up that performance in the fall by finally being talked into joining the track team for the spring season his senior year.

Steward always planned to attend college after high school, but didn't necessarily focus on continuing running at the next level. He opted for two years at KCC before moving on to a four-year school. KCC offered a cybersecurity program, which Steward was interested in.

"My high school coach, Mr. [Steve] Collins, encouraged me to pursue running for KCC."

Steward didn't reach out to Tom Shaw, KCC's cross-country coach, but he didn't necessarily need to. Collins put Steward and Shaw in contact, and then Shaw attended a Saxon meet to see him.

After seeing Steward in action, Shaw was intrigued by the idea of him racing the 8 kilometer collegiate distance. He talked Steward into joining the team, although it didn't take much convincing.

"He told me he wanted me to run for KCC's cross country team," Steward said. "He felt that I would make a great transition from the 5K distance to the 8K distance. After this conversation, I decided that I would run for KCC, since I knew that I was already going there as a student."

Competing as a college athlete and bonding with teammates appealed to Steward, but those were not his main reasons for continuing to compete. He felt he still had room to develop.

After graduating from Hastings High School in June of 2023, Steward shifted his focus to KCC cross country. Classes didn't begin until the end of August, and Steward trained on his own much of the summer. He began implementing the training schedules suggested by KCC's coaches in the first few weeks of June.

Steward wasn't immediately sold on was the utilization of recovery days and easy runs in the plan. His line of thought was more about hard effort for every run, but eventually he bought into the importance of rest and recovery.

His goal going into his freshman season was to break 30 minutes for the 8K distance, a time that required him to match his high school PR pace for an extra three kilometers.

Steward was willing to put in the work and expected to see results immediately, but he would have to remain patient.

"Initially, after implementing my new training schedule, I wasn't sure I could meet my goal. My speed work training times weren't translating to what I was targeting, which was a 6-minute per mile pace for five miles. This discouraged me somewhat. Mentally, it was hard. I wanted to work hard, but also felt that I was working hard and still wasn't getting the results that I had anticipated."

Despite feeling a little discouraged, he continued to work and he eventually experienced the fruits of his labor.

"In my first 8K race, I cleared a mental hurdle. I was able to break 30 minutes for this race, and my 5K split was faster than my 5K PR," Steward said.

It provided him with a huge mental and emotional boost, and it qualified him to run at nationals that season. He had reached his goal early in the season, so it was time to up the ante.

"After my first 8K race, I thought that I might be able to chip away and finish under 29 minutes. I was able to get a PR mid-season in a race in Ancilla, Indiana, with a time of 28 minutes, 35 seconds."

The transition from high school student-athlete to collegiate student-athlete was positive for Steward.

"Running my freshman year at KCC was fun. I enjoyed competing at nationals and as a college athlete. I also realized that I liked competing at distances longer than 5K. I thrived on the transition as a student from high school to college. I wasn't tied to school all day and liked the flexibility of showing up to classes and studying, and running in between these times."

With his mentality of always trying to improve as a runner, Steward didn't have much downtime during the offseason between his freshman and sophomore years at KCC. He talked about getting ready for the next season of cross-country.

"After my freshman year, I made two goals going into my sophomore season. I wanted to go under 27 minutes, 45 seconds, and I wanted to earn All-American status. I was able to hit my PR near the end of my sophomore season with a time of 27 minutes, 45 seconds at a race in Muskegon, but was unable to earn All-American status at nationals. I was KCC's number two for the entire season. I enjoyed having our number one runner, Julian, pace me during our practices."

Coach Shaw trusts the science of running and how it can help his runners reach their potential, but even with this confidence in the system, what Steward accomplished during his two years running under him has surprised him. Shaw gave his assessment of Steward.



Hastings alumnus Alex Steward in action during his sophomore season with the Kellogg Community College Men's Cross Country team. **KCC Photo**

"Steward is a self-made runner who has dedicated himself to being the best he can be. He came to us as an average high school runner and followed our protocol. He worked hard in the weight room. Where he started and where he finished two years later is nothing short of incredible. He has been self-motivated, shown high academic performance, been a quiet leader who has led by example, and willed himself into being a top ten career runner at KCC. All of these things have made him a perfect college athlete. I couldn't be more impressed and proud of him."

Steward has plans to transfer to Ferris State University this fall to earn a degree in cybersecurity, while living at home and taking classes virtually for the fall semester. He will continue to train and run some races unattached. He would like to run at Ferris State during his senior year, and plans to keep going beyond that.

"I will continue to run even after I am finished with college. I enjoy making progress and improving my speed and want to continue to evolve as a runner."

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE TO CREDITORS REVOCABLE TRUST

In the Matter of: The Haff Family Trust

TAKE NOTICE: The Haff Family Trust ("The Trust") was established on October 22, 2013.

The Settlors, Clifford J. Haff and Nora Jean Haff lived at 12978 Merlau Avenue, Plainwell, Michigan 49080. Clifford J. Haff was born on December 7, 1934, and died on May 26, 2025.

Nora Jean Haff was born on May 30, 1936, and died October 13, 2024.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: Creditors of Clifford J. Haff and/or Nora Jean Haff, Settlors, and/or "The Trust" are notified that all claims will be forever barred unless presented to: Kathryn J. Klarecki, Successor Trustee, of 809 Ives Avenue, Big Rapids, Michigan 49307, within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Dated: July 22, 2025

David F. Kiel (P 43048)
ORTON, TOOMAN, HALE, McKOWN & KIEL, P.C.
314 Trowbridge St., P.O. Box 239
Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 673-2136



Tournament draws 50 teams on Duits' birthday

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Family, friends, acquaintances, teammates, neighbors and just plain old volleyball players gathered Saturday, July 26, for the annual Emily Duits mEMorial Sand Volleyball Tournament which has been ongoing now for two decades.

In a rare occurrence Emily's mother, Selena Duits, took the microphone as the crowd gathered in Fred Morris the during the lunch hour. She celebrated some of her daughter Emily's former friends and teammates, many of whom have helped make sure the annual memorial to her daughter continues on.

"We appreciate the teamwork of those that have supported us to get us where we are today," Selena said. "The memories made can be the best in times of defeat, holding us together on the court and in life."

Emily, a Lakewood High School student at the time, passed away in the fall of 2005 due to injuries sustained in a car accident.

"Thank you for your attendance today all spectators and players," Selena told the crowd as it finished up a lunch of pulled pork, beans, potato salad and chips. "Thank you to all who have come to take part in the great game of volleyball. We love you and we love that you are here, and your presence really does mean so much.

"Today is Emily's birthday. Birthdays include gifts," she added as she welcomed the members of the Emily Duits Memorial committee to receive some gifts from Em's family - including Selena's husband Jeff and their oldest daughter Sarah Wrubel who were in attendance as well Saturday.

From there it was on to the annual raffle with an impressive list of prizes including a Blackstone grill, Yeti cooler, youth volleyball camp packages, a KitchenAid Mixer and even a Nintendo Switch 2 among other things either paid for or donated by area businesses and community members.

Fundraising and fees from the event once again allowed the board to distribute $6,000 in scholarships to area high school students, including a total of $5,000 to three members of the Lakewood High School graduating class and another $1,000 through the FarOut Volleyball Club which Emily was a member of and is now headed by former Lakewood volleyball coach Cameron Rowland. Close to that much was also donated through the event board for other good works throughout the Lakewood community.

There was once again free MOO-Ville ice cream for all in attendance throughout the day. Ice cream was a welcome treat on a hot, humid day on the six sand volleyball courts at the fairgrounds. The adults moving their recreational and competitive tournaments to the morning session leaving the high school and youth divisions to play out in the afternoon didn't even provide the older folks much relief from the weather.

New Lakewood graduate Abby Pickard, who will begin playing volleyball at Northern Kentucky University this year, was a FarOut Duits Memorial Scholarship winner this year. She was also a tournament champion. She teamed with Mallory Johnson, Navea Gauthier and Amelia Gagnon to win the recreational division championship.

Becky Pickard, Abby's step mom, at first thought she should find somewhere to sit right at the net in the middle of the two sides of the recreational final. She had Abby and her teammates on one side of the net with daughters Ally Pickard, Brooke Francisco and their teammates Caden Francisco and Ethan Walker on the other side.

"Mom who are you cheering for?" shouted Brooke, the current Lakewood High School varsity volleyball coach. "Your favorites are over here."

The champs were on the other side though as Abby's crew pulled out a 15-13 win in the third set to clinch the victory.

The foursome of Logan Blough, Caleb McKinney, Madison McKinney and Zari Kruger took the day's competitive division championship in the morning. The high school championship went to the team of Lauren Luchies, Whitney Swiercz, Tyler Strick and Parks Vugteveen. The youth division title went to the team of Teagan O'Keefe, Torrie Tacia, Skylar Stephens, Brooklyn Barriger and Brielle Eveland.

Gabby Gole was this year's Spirit of the Game award winner at the end of the day.

In all there were 51 teams registered to compete this summer.



Ally Pickard gets in a quick round of rock, paper, scissors with Navea Gauthier on the other side of the net do decide on which team will serve first in their recreational division championship match Saturday at the annual Emily Duits mEMorial Sand Volleyball Tournament at the Lake Odessa Fairgrounds.
Photos by Brett Bremer



Emily Duits Memorial board member Ashton King gets a hug from Emily's mom, Selena Duits, during the lunch hour festivities Saturday at the annual Emily Duits mEMorial Sand Volleyball Tournament at the Lake Odessa Fairgrounds.

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