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Your Hometown Newspaper Serving the Middleville, Caledonia and Gaines Township Areas

VANSTEE ONE OF '12 STARTERS' FOR CHAMPS
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Three finalists interviewing later this month for TK supe job

Molly Macleod
Editor

Residents in the Thornapple Kellogg Schools district are one step closer to knowing the identity of the district's next superintendent. TKS Board of Education members interviewed four candidates for the position this week, selecting three of the four interviewees to move on to the next round of interviews.

The three finalists include retired Hillsdale Intermediate Schools Superintendent Troy Reehl, Morrice Area Schools Superintendent Rob Pouch and Kent City Community Schools Superintendent Bill Crane.

The finalists interviewed along with Cedar Springs Public Schools Director of Human Services and Elementary Academic Services Dan Scoville on Monday and Tuesday this week in front of the board of education and a packed audience of TK administration, staff, students and parents.

TK BOE members took turns asking the candidates a list of 20 identical questions over an hour and a half each. Candidates fielded questions on their experience, leadership styles, how they plan to immerse themselves in the community and more.

The finalist interviews will be held on Tuesday, April 29 at TK's Early Childhood Center, 3316 Bender Road in Middleville. The public is strongly encouraged to attend.

Crane kicks off interviews at 5 p.m., followed by Pouch at 6:30 and Reehl at 8 p.m. The finalists will tour the district before the interviews.

Crane has served as the superintendent of Kent City Community Schools since 2022. Prior to that, he served

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The Rutland Township Board agreed to contract with Thornapple Township Emergency Services beginning May 1. The move comes after the township board rejected a subsidy request from Mercy Ambulance. **Photo by Molly Macleod**

TTES strikes agreement with Rutland, latest in a growing list of partnerships

■Move spells uncertainty for future of Mercy Ambulance

Jayson Bussa and Molly Macleod

Thornapple Township Emergency Services will now provide ambulance service to Rutland Township after an agreement was struck between both entities.

At Monday's Thornapple Township Board meeting, Bill Richardson, chief of TTES, spoke with the board as he looked to have trustees sign off on the measure. They did so unanimously.

The agreement stems from discussions between Richardson and Rutland Township administrators.

"We showed (Supervisor Marti Mayack) our service and talked about how our operations worked and I had already pulled their call volume," Richardson explained.

Richardson found that Rutland's needs clocked in at around 150 calls a year, with the vast majority of them in the northern portion of the township, which is near TTES's headquarters at 128 High Street in Middleville.

"The call volume isn't going to be inundating to the department," Richardson assured.

The contract starts on May 1 of this year and ends on June 30, 2026. The contract between the two entities will not automatically renew, but both parties can take the necessary steps to extend it.

Rutland Township will contribute $6,500 to Thornapple Township toward the cost of providing these services to its residents. The timing is advantageous for Richardson and his department as they just received the go-ahead from the township to hire two full-time

See **STRIKES** on 5



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Gaines trustees adopt amended township zoning ordinance

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

The Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees approved the first comprehensive update to the township zoning ordinance since 2007.

Trustees voted, 6-1, to approve the 292-page document at its regular meeting on Monday, April 14 with Trustee Dan Fryling casting the lone "no" vote.

The revised ordinance, which is broken down into 36 chapters, will serve as the primary legal document governing land development in the township.

"Keep in mind that over the next year we're going to find things in this ordinance that we're going to want to change, that aren't going to work that we're going to want to tweak later on," said Community Development director Dan Wells.

One example that was discussed is emerging battery energy storage technologies will require the township board to alter the zoning ordinance in terms of what is allowed. Township staff made some last-minute changes about battery systems and what is allowed regarding solar panels.

There is a clause in the ordinance that allows a homeowner to apply for a special-use permit through the Planning Commission, if that person wants to exceed what would typically be allowed by right for solar ground-mounted systems.

Another major change pertains to driveway access to roads classified by the Kent County Road Commission as county primary roads. The revised ordinance restricts the number of access points from public primary and secondary roads to development sites.

"Access points shall be limited to one, unless it can be shown that the property will generate sufficient traffic volumes to require two points of access or that additional access points are necessary for safe operations internal to the property," the ordinance states.

That language applies to single-family attached dwellings.

"If you recall, we have for years allowed duplexes to discharge onto county primary roads," Wells said. "And we want to stop that practice now due to safety concerns for that number of driveways going out. So, any driveway going from a two-unit or any multi-unit home now will have to go onto a collector driveway – minor private road – to get to one that would go onto that primary county (road)."

David Jirousek, a consultant with Horizon Community Planning, worked with township planners since August 2023 to develop the amended zoning ordinance, taking into account input from township officials, the public and other stakeholders that led to a new township master plan being adopted in April 2023. The master plan guides residential, commercial and industrial development by plotting where the growth and investment in the township should go over the next 10 to 15 years.

Jirousek said at Monday's meeting that the need for amendments to the ordinance was identified in a July 2023 audit that mentioned several steps to bring the zoning ordinance into align-

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FINALISTS

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as assistant superintendent at Kent City from 2020 to 2022.

Pouch has served as the superintendent of Morrice Area Schools since 2021. Previously, he served as principal at Linden Middle School from 2017-2021.

Reehl most recently served as superintendent at Hillsdale Intermediate School District from 2019 to 2024. Previously, he served as superintendent at Cheboygan Area Schools from 2016 to 2019.

TK Schools has been searching for its next superintendent since former superintendent Craig McCarthy retired at the end of last year. In the meantime, Tom Enslen has served as TK Schools' interim superintendent.

The Michigan Leadership Institute has helped the district in its executive search. The four candidates selected for first-round interviews came from a pool of 15 applications, with candidates' experience ranging from current and past superintendents, principals and central office staff.

MDOT, Caledonia discuss tree and shrub removal during upcoming M-37 expansion project

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

Representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation are seeking guidance from administrators in the Village of Caledonia on how to approach the process of removing trees on private property during the upcoming M-37 renovation project.

These MDOT representatives were present at Monday's regularly scheduled meeting of the Caledonia Village Council, partaking in a nearly 45-minute discussion period with members of the council.

The Michigan Department of Transportation is anticipating an issue that will arise during the rebuilding and widening of M-37, which is expected to kick off in the spring of 2026. This highly anticipated project will zero in on the oft-traveled stretch of the state highway between 76th and 92nd streets. Crews will rebuild and widen the two-lane road to alleviate the consistent traffic jams that form there.

Widening the road will force MDOT to utilize the existing 120-foot right of way surrounding the road, but because of the scope of the work, MDOT expects that it will affect property beyond the right of way.

During MDOT's visit to Monday's meeting of the village council, representatives wanted to specifically discuss the village's expectations if crews had to remove trees or shrubs that were located beyond the already-established right of way. They specifically highlighted a stretch of M-37 within the village along the Glen Valley planned unit development (PUD).

The MDOT officials wanted to know if the village would mandate residents to replace the trees and shrubs that were removed. If so, MDOT would compensate those property owners to cover the cost of doing so.

"In our discussion with property owners, they're asking the question is the village going to require to put those back in there," said Ben Bozek, who works for the real estate services division of MDOT. "That space is getting tighter and tighter with having to push the road out. …That's really the question on this corridor — what is the village's stance on landscaping?"

In the already-established right of way, MDOT plans to remove trees or shrubs as needed but vowed to preserve as many as possible. When removing those trees and shrubs, they are not obligated to replace them.

But, that's a different story when it comes to the new right away that

See **MDOT** on 7

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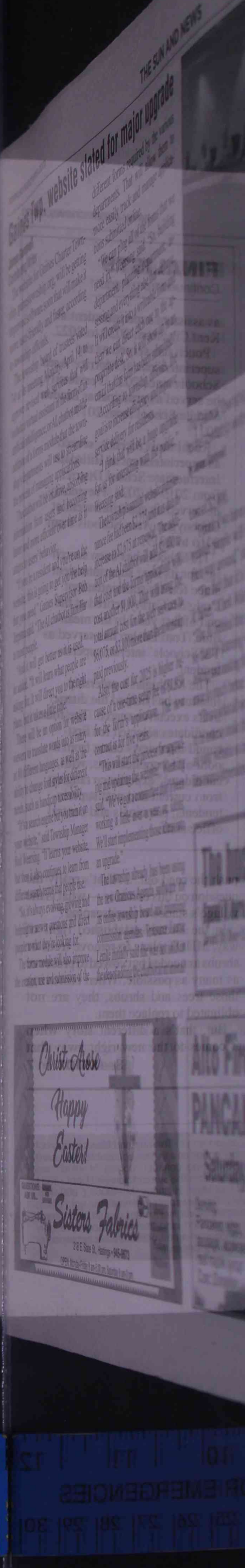
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Gaines Twp. website slated for major upgrade

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

The website for Gaines Charter Township, gainestownship.org, will be getting improved software soon that will make it more user-friendly and faster, according to township officials.

The township board of trustees voted 7-0 at its meeting Monday, April 14, to approve revised web services that will include a virtual assistant in the form of an artificial intelligence, or AI, chatbot and the addition of a forms module that the township's departments will use to streamline the process of managing applications.

The chatbot will be intuitive, absorbing information from users and becoming faster and more efficient over time as it adapts to users' behavior.

"If you're a resident and you're on the website, this is going to get you the help that you need," Gaines Supervisor Bob Terpstra said. "The AI chatbot is familiar to most people.

"And it will get better as it is used," he added. "It will learn what people are asking for. It will direct you to the right place, but it takes a little time."

There will be an option for website viewers to translate words into as many as 80 different languages, as well as the ability to change font styles for different needs, such as handicap accessibility.

"It's a search engine but you train it on your website," said Township Manager Rod Weersing. "It learns your website, but then it also continues to learn from different search terms that people use.

"So, it's always evolving, growing and helping to answer questions and direct people to what they're looking for."

The forms module will also improve the creation, use and submission of the different forms required by the various departments. That will allow them to more easily track and manage applications submitted online.

"We can plug all of the forms that we need in," Weersing said. "So, building department, planning department, assessing and everything else that we have. It will create it into a writeable form and then we can direct each one to the appropriate desk. So, it will show up in an email that this form has been submitted."

According to township officials, the goal is to increase efficiency and improve service delivery for residents.

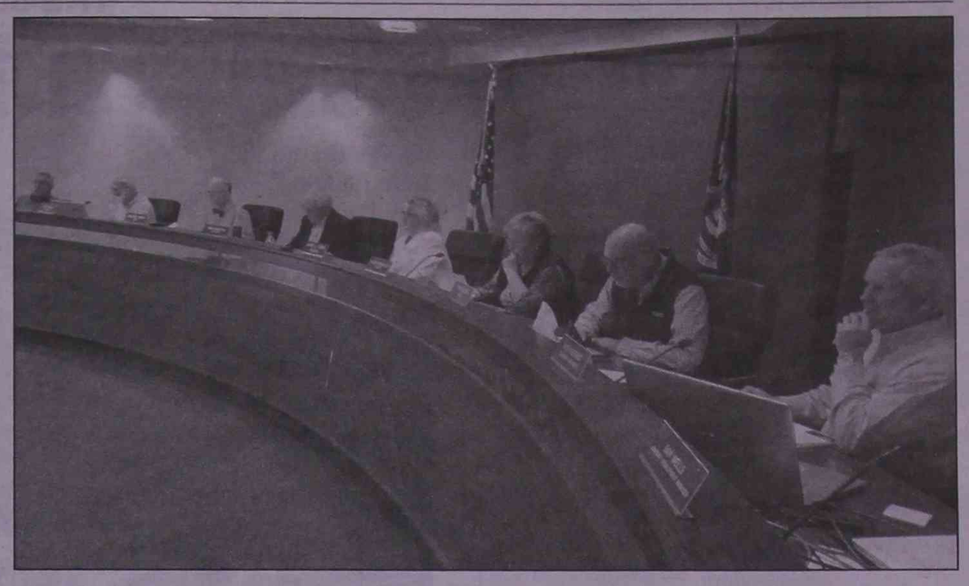
"I think that will be a huge upgrade for us for interacting with the public," Weersing said.

The township's annual website maintenance fee had been $2,275 and it is due to increase to $2,675 at renewal. The addition of the AI chatbot will add $2,400 to that cost and the forms application will cost another $1,000. That will bring the total annual cost for the web services to $6,075, or $3,800 more than the township paid previously.

Also, the cost for 2025 is higher because of a one-time setup fee of $1,950 for the form's application. The new contract is for five years.

"This will start the process for upgrading and updating the website," Weersing said. "We've got a committee that's been working a little over a year on ideas. We'll start implementing those ideas into an upgrade."

The township already has been using the new Granicus Agenda software for its online township board and planning commission agendas. Treasurer Laurie Lemke initially said she was not sold on the idea of adding the chatbot at an annual cost of $2,400.



The Gaines Township Board discusses potential software improvements to the township website at its April 14 meeting at the township hall. **Photo by James Gemmell**

"I think if we have a well-designed website people will be able to find their way around," she said.

"The fact that it's learning makes it faster," Clerk Michael Brew said. "The AI behind the scenes makes it so that it's learning what people are asking and making their web experience so much better.

"This is what all websites are going to in order to make the search ability of your website so much better, and less menu-dependent," Brew added.

There will still be a search engine box on the website. But, according to Brew, that it is not as fast as the AI chatbot will be.

"The old-fashioned search doesn't speed anything up," he said. "It uses keyword searches where we have to tell the key words. And they almost have to use our exact keywords in order to get it."

"And then, you get results from all over the place, and sometimes not even on the website," Trustee Tim Haagsma added.

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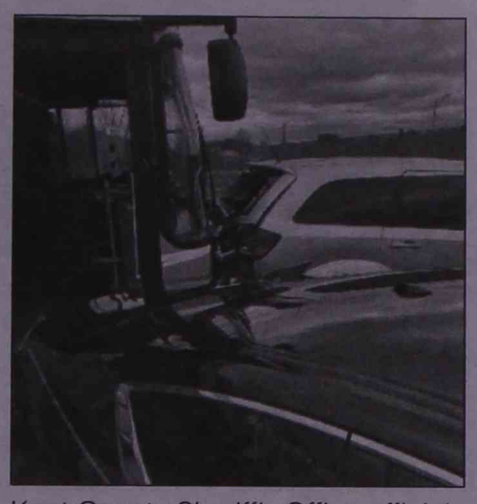
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Sheriff officials investigating crash involving transit bus

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

A Rapid Transit bus was reportedly rear-ended by another vehicle while traveling on Kalamazoo Avenue near M-6, leading to a multi-vehicle, chain-reaction crash Tuesday, April 15, according to the Kent County Sheriff's Office.



Kent County Sheriff's Office officials say a Rapid bus was rear-ended by another vehicle while traveling on Kalamazoo Ave. near M-6 on Tuesday, leading to a multi-vehicle, chain-reaction crash. **Courtesy photo**

KCSO officials stated a total of eight vehicles, including the bus, were involved in the accident that occurred at about 2:40 p.m. on Tuesday in the southbound lanes on Kalamazoo Avenue, just north of the Paul Henry Freeway (M-6).

According to KCSO Sgt. Eric Dietrich, there was no immediate report on what caused the accident or who was at fault. But he said the bus was struck by a vehicle from behind, which led to the chain reaction.

No one on board the bus was injured. and no names of persons involved had been released as of press time, with the accident still under investigation by the KCSO.

"Minor damage to the cars," Dietrich added. "There were some minor injuries, but nobody wanted to go to the hospital."

Firefighters responded to the crash, as well as KCSO deputies.

Lions Club seeks increased funding from Thornapple Township for Fourth of July celebration

Jayson Bussa
Contributing Writer

The Middleville Lions Club is already hard at work planning its annual Fourth of July festivities and this year, they're asking Thornapple Township for a little extra help to keep the celebration running strong.

The Lions Club, which has long been the driving force behind Middleville's Independence Day event, checked in with the township at its regular board meeting on Monday. Every few years, the group meets with local partners, including the Village of Middleville and the Middleville Downtown Development Authority, to gather feedback and discuss ways to improve the event.

During the meeting, Lions Club representative Andrew Beck walked the board through the day's usual schedule and shared insight into organizing the festivities, which have continued to grow in popularity.

The celebration kicks off in the morning at the downtown pavilion with bounce houses and music, and picks back up at 6 p.m. at the AYSO fields. There, families can enjoy a live band, laser tag, archery tag, ax throwing, and other family-friendly activities leading up to the evening's fireworks display.

Beck said the cost of putting on the event totals around $15,730.

He also asked the board to consider increasing its contribution to the event from $3,000 to $4,000. The Lions Club currently maintains a balance of about $7,000 in its account for emergency use. With current funding, Beck noted, the club would likely break even or come up slightly short.

Thornapple Township board president Eric Schaefer said the request will be added to the board's May agenda.

Beck emphasized how the celebration has become a major local draw, estimating that roughly 3,000 people attend each year.

"We say around 3,000, but families are learning about it and showing up, and due to the free events, more and more are coming. It's a big draw," Beck said.

This year's celebration will include many familiar favorites, with a few new touches in the works.

The Lions Club is partnering with the Downtown Development Authority to expand the morning programming.

"We'll be working with (Community Development Coordinator Kassandra Clark) to try to get more businesses to be open and for longer and also to help provide entertainment like sidewalk chalk, bubbles, little kids tattoos and things of that sort," Beck said.

One big change: This year's fireworks display will be handled by a professional service, rather than volunteers.

"We're using a fireworks company but we're literally getting it at the same price we would [pay] purchasing fireworks for," Beck said. "We've talked with this company—it would definitely make this safer for everyone doing it electronically. They've committed to what we've been paying for fireworks so it's not an added cost, but it will just be safer."

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STRIKES

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paramedic firefighters to take the place of three outgoing part-time members of the department.

Rutland Township's contributions will help further defray the cost of those additions to the department.

Thornapple Township Emergency Services already has similar agreements in place with both Irving and Yankee Springs Township. The agreement with Yankee Springs is still in its infancy. Last Thursday, Yankee Springs Township opted to sever its agreement with Wayland EMS.

Yankee Springs Supervisor Rob Heethuis told The Banner that he and the board were impressed with TTES's service and infrastructure and that the department's proximity to Yankee Springs Township made them a better fit than Wayland EMS.

Mercy's future uncertain

Rutland's shift to contracting with Thornapple comes after a request from Mercy Ambulance for a subsidy of $274,992.00 from the five Barry County townships that currently contract with them, plus the City of Hastings, through the end of 2026. The subsidy, if agreed to, would be split between the city and the townships: Rutland, Baltimore, Carlton, Hastings Charter and Hope townships.

Mercy requested the subsidy citing increasing costs and staffing challenges. The future of the service could be in jeopardy if its current financial trends continue.

Rutland was the first municipality from the group to reject the subsidy request so far. The City of Hastings approved the subsidy at Monday's city council meeting. Several townships have yet to vote on the matter.

Mercy's proposal calls for the subsidy to be split between the municipalities that contract with them based on usage. The City of Hastings will take 34 percent of the extra costs, or $93,492 over the next year for emergency services. Rutland was requested to pay $52,250 over the next year, a stark difference from the $6,500 charged by Thornapple Township. Hastings Charter and Hope Township were asked to contribute an extra $38,500 over the next year. Carlton Township was asked to pay an extra $30,250 and Baltimore Township was asked for an additional $22,000 through January of 2027.

"The one thing I always think back on all the time when I started this job is 'What's best for the residents of this township?' and 'We have to be good stewards of this township's tax dollars,'" said Mayack. "… and I'm not 100 percent sure that paying Mercy is going to fill those two voids. On the other side of it, I went to other services to see what they would provide. Thornapple has the ability to provide service to our area and some other surrounding areas as well for far less, for far less money."

Mayack said he felt welcomed by his discussions with Richardson and TTES.

"They really wanted to serve the area; they were excited that I was there. And the discussions with Mercy are more on the side of they feel like they are down and out. And I get it — I mean, it's hard to come up and ask all these townships for this kind of money," Mayack said.

Though the move to TTES will spell a significant cost savings, Rutland township board members spent nearly an hour at last week's township board meeting discussing the pros and cons of the move. Concerns with increased response times at some points in the township were raised, along with concerns about supporting neighboring municipalities.

Brad Carpenter, Carlton Township supervisor, spoke during the public comment portion of last week's Rutland Township meeting.

"Carlton Township needs you guys as much as we need Hastings Township. We don't have potential options like you do if we another ambulance service that's generally in the vicinity like you guys have," said Carpenter. "I was a fireman for 10 years, a first responder, and I can tell you that response time is critical. A matter of minutes, and sometimes seconds, really matters."

After much debate last Wednesday, the Rutland Township Board agreed to contract with TTES in a 6-1 vote, with Gene Hall voting in dissent.

Middleville Planning Commission approves new 'The Other Body Shop' gym location

Hunter McLaren
Contributing Writer

The Middleville Planning Commission approved a special land use application for a gym located in the village.

Jon Hubbell, owner of The Other Body Shop Fitness Center, spoke to commissioners about the business at their meeting Tuesday.

"I think small towns especially, like Middleville for example, are really underserved for good facilities to be able to work out at affordable costs," Hubbell said. "I'd like to bring one to town."

The proposed facility will be housed in the shopping center at 4660 N M-37 Hwy, in the space formerly occupied by B2 Bargain Bins. The gym is planned to have locker rooms with showers and will be open 24 hours. Members will access the space with a provided keycard during unstaffed hours.

Commissioners approved the special land use application unanimously and identified no concerns with the proposal. No one was present to address the proposal during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

The Other Body Shop opened its first location in Hastings in 2019, opening a second location in Grand Rapids in 2022. Hubbell said he runs the business with his brother, and the two grow row crops and raise cattle in Hastings.

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Fire damages home and attached garage in Gaines Township

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

A fire did some damage to a house in Cutlerville on Wednesday morning, but the most significant damage was done to the attached garage.

Gaines Charter Township Fire Chief Ken Van Hall told The Sun and News there were no injuries to the residents of the single-story home or firefighters.

It broke out around 5:30 a.m. in the 500 block of 76th Street, west of Eastern Avenue.

"The cause (of the fire) is under investigation. There was pretty extensive damage to the garage and some damage to the attached home. The fire was discovered by the neighbors, who alerted the residents that their garage was on fire," Van Hall said.

Crews remained on the scene for a couple of hours.



You can see extensive damage done by a fire to the roof and side of an attached garage in Gaines Township on Wednesday on 76th Street. **Photo by James Gemmell**

Motorcyclist dies in two-vehicle crash in Gaines Twp.

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

A motorcyclist was pronounced dead at the scene of a two-vehicle accident after colliding with a minivan in Gaines Charter Township on Sunday, April 13, according to Kent County Sheriff's Office reports.

The crash reportedly occurred on Kalamazoo Avenue just north of 100th Street – about a mile north of the border with neighboring Allegan County – at about 5:20 p.m. Sunday.

According to police reports, both the motorcycle and minivan were traveling northbound on Kalamazoo Avenue at the time of the accident.

"The driver of the minivan was attempting to make a left turn," KCSO Sgt. Scott Dietrich, citing the initial findings of the KCSO Traffic Safety Unit. "The motorcycle was behind the minivan and (traveling) at a high speed and unable to avoid the collision."

The motorcyclist was identified as a 26-year-old resident of Allendale, while the driver of the minivan was reported to be a 41-year-old Caledonia woman. Names of the individuals involved in the accident had not been released as of press time, as the incident remains under investigation.

Dietrich said the Caledonia woman was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

"There's quite extensive damage to her minivan from the collision," he added.

Alcohol is not considered to be a factor in the fatal crash, though toxicology tests are being conducted on the motorcyclist.

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County plans to sell former DesignWear property in Middleville

Molly Macleod
Editor

Barry County is closing in on selling a property it "accidentally" acquired late last year.

Demolition crews from Pitsch Companies tore down the former DesignWear building at 118 W. Main St. in September 2024. The DesignWear building was once attached to the former Baby Bliss building, which was torn down earlier last year. The Barry County Land Bank Authority received funds from the Michigan State Land Bank Blight Elimination fund to pay for the demolition work.

Barry County Administrator Eric Zuzga said during Tuesday's Barry County Board of Commissioners Committee of the Whole that the county is closing in on a deal to sell the property on Middleville's riverfront.

"We have an offer on the property in Middleville that we acquired by accident," Zuzga said with a smile on Tuesday. "This property was acquired during the demolition of the Baby Bliss facility. It had a shared wall, if you all remember that. It's been taken down, it's been cleared."

Zuzga said the offer of $60,000 for the property from Nate and Jillian Otto would clear the county of the remaining debt taken on from taking over the property and its demolition.



County officials are closing in on a deal to sell the former DesignWear property on Middleville's riverfront. **File photo**

"Looking at this, I thought $60,000 was very low for a riverfront parcel, but it's also a very, very tiny parcel. It isn't really buildable and it does have some issues with the river being right there, and some stabilization things, that we've been talking about this for quite some time," said Board of Commissioners chair Dave Jackson.

"And we did advertise," Zuzga said. "We put (the property) on our website, the Chamber pushed it, and this was the only offer we received. That being said, we recommend selling the property to the Ottos."

"This clears the debt out that we took on when we accidentally acquired the building, so we are going to move forward with that," said Jackson.

The Committee of the Whole recommended approval of the sale at the commissioners' next regular meeting.

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Continued from Page 2

ment with the township's new master plan.

He also noted a section of the amended ordinance concerning previously approved Planned Unit Developments, or PUDs. One area concerned how to address a change of use.

Township officials decided that if something is a permanent use – for example, someone is changing the use of a multi-tenant space to another permitted use – it would require an administrative review. If something is being changed to a special land use, it would go through the special land-use process with the Planning Commission.

"We did go through and clean up the entire PUD process so that it would be simple," Jirousek said. "We're just falling back on a base district. We're using those standards. In a new PUD, the only difference would be that you would identify the modifications to that base zoning district. So, a very simple approach."

Any major changes to a previously approved PUD, such as reconfiguring buildings or adding a significant amount of square footage to a building, would require a project applicant to go through a Major PUD process. That would require a favorable Planning Commission recommendation and township board approval.

If an applicant proposes a project that goes beyond that in scope, and does not qualify as a minor or major change, the developer would have to come back to the township to seek an ordinance amendment.

"They would have to go through this new process to rezone to the PUD overlay with a base-zoning district," Jirousek said. "So, if something is so far beyond what your original intent was for that PUD, they'd have to go through your new process rather than just amending the old PUD."

Township Supervisor Bob Terpstra said a steering committee focused on residents first in conversations about updating the zoning ordinance, particularly concerning safety.

"There were certainly recommendations on how to handle things that were not agreed with," Jirousek said. "But, ultimately, we walked through every section of this ordinance as a steering committee.

"And I sometimes would offer multiple ways how to handle certain issues. And the steering committee would determine the best way," he added.

"It's not a policing document, it's a living document," Terpstra said. "I talked to Dan (Wells) earlier today about how, if we discover something in here that we feel is not the right thing to live up to, we will change it."

Ultimately, according to Wells, the updated zoning ordinance helps protect a resident's property rights.

"The great example is, if you're living in a suburban neighborhood, you don't want a pig farm showing up next to you or a slaughterhouse or an industrial site that's making a lot of noise," Wells said. "There are separations that are created by zoning in terms of uses are there for a reason. And that is ultimately to make sure that people can live their best lives in their comfortable homes and not be interrupted."

Trustee Rob DeWard said township officials typically try to first communicate with residents who are in violation of the zoning ordinance before resorting to enforcement.

"In my 30 years here at the township, we typically respond to citizen complaints on enforcement," he said. "We're not out driving around looking for violations. I know that some of the (recent) citizen comments almost implied that we are.

"That is not what we've been doing," he added. "I don't foresee us doing it in the future. But it does give citizens an opportunity, if they have a grievance, to the township's attention. And then we can investigate. And we have this whole process that allows the violator time to correct that."

Township board members agreed that zoning regulations also protect property values.

However, Trustee Dan Fryling said he felt a stipulation in the ordinance that makes it unlawful to store or park inoperable vehicles outside of an enclosed garage or building for more than 48 hours is too restrictive.

Township Manager Rod Weersing said township staff first checks a given property to make sure a vehicle has been there for more than 48 hours. If so, the township sends a letter to the property owner.

"Then we give them a month," Weersing said. "In that time, they can call and say, 'Hey, I've got a part that's on a slow boat from China, it's not going to be here for two months.' Okay, just show us you've ordered the part, and we'll give you some time.

"If we don't hear from them in a month and nothing has changed, then we issue them a second letter notifying them, 'Hey, there's a problem here that needs to be addressed.'" he added. "It gives them another opportunity to contact us. Again, we don't want to write citations, we want to work with residents. But we have to protect everyone."

The updated ordinance may be viewed online on the township website, gainestownship.org.

MDOT

Continued from Page 2

MDOT plans to acquire from property owners, and it wants to earmark the proper funding to compensate property owners for any damages that might be levied to their landscape through the removal of trees and shrubs.

"There are going to be some trees along the corridor that aren't going to be here anymore and we have the right to remove those because they're in the right of way," Bozek said. "It's just the ones beyond there — what is the village intending to do because that's something we're looking to discuss with property owners and help pay to put something in if it's required."

Bozek pointed to the fact that, in the past, some property owners have had trees or shrubs die and removed, and they were not replaced.

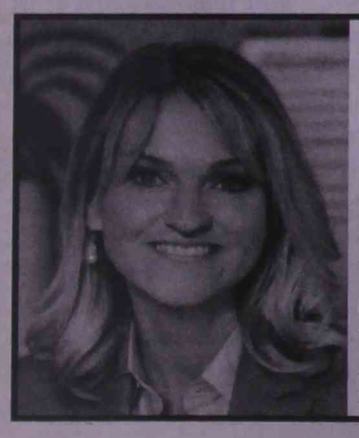
"In discussions on how we handle this as a united Caledonia front, I believe it's kind of leaning toward (the fact) we want some type of buffer there for noise and aesthetic," said Village President Jennifer Lindsey.

"We don't want one side to be full landscaping and then our side to be barren. Nothing is 100 percent, but we talked about one of the options is whatever we can put back should be put back."

Lindsey stressed that both the Village of Caledonia and Caledonia Township be on the same page on the matter.

Trustee Gerrianne Schuler echoed Lindsey's sentiments that the village should walk in lockstep with the township to bring consistency to the nearly three-mile project.

"If we can meet with the township and say...is there a way we can get a plan before we tell these property owners what has to go back? That's the only way it makes sense. If we make a decision and it looks totally different than the township side, it will look really silly. I think we do need to work with the township."


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Sporting News

Vanstee one of '12 starters' for champs

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Nothing slowed her down after the buzzer sounded.

A sleeve and pad covered her right knee. Her trademark blonde, bubble ponytail bounced behind her as she leapt onto the court. She was the first ever Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Sixth Woman of the Year award winner in 2024. In 2025, Thornapple Kellogg High School alumnus Paige Vanstee was the first Laker off the bench to get into the scrum celebrating her Grand Valley State University Women's Basketball team's NCAA Division II National Championship.

Vanstee, a redshirt junior guard, contributed 8 points, 3 rebounds, an assist and drew a charge as the Lakers defeated the University of California Dominguez Hills 70-58 in the National Championship March 28 inside UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse in Pittsburgh, PA.

"My coach said this before, but he's had people telling the whole season that this team's gonna win the national championships, this team's going to win the national championship. So when it happened, it just didn't feel real," Vanstee said. "But the amount of work that this team has put in. It's well, well deserved."

The Lakers close the 2024-25 season with a record of 38-2. It is the fourth consecutive 30-win season for the Grand Valley State University women, a feat matched only by the South Carolina ladies who were the NCAA Division 1 runners-up to the University of Connecticut this season.

Dominguez Hills with some tenacious full-court pressure early on built a 7-2 lead, but the Lakers eventually settled in and controlled the ballgame. The Laker lead grew to 35-19 with three and a half minutes to go in the second quarter after Vanstee twice got behind the Toros' defense for a lay-up.

Vanstee also had a big semifinal match-up for the Lakers as they knocked off Pittsburgh State 67-61 in Pittsburgh. She played a season-high 22 minutes in that ballgame finishing with 11 points, 5 rebounds and 2 steals.

Despite all the success, Vanstee has yet to start a ballgame for the Lakers. And that's totally okay. The Laker bench had 44 of the team's 70 points in the national championship game, and that wasn't really anything unusual for the GVSU ladies.

"I've heard my coach say that with this team we played 12, and we had 12 starters," Vanstee said. "I guess just coming off the bench is easier for me, like nerves wise. I'm just like okay, I'm not starting the game, but like I'm gonna be in soon. I think it's easy when the first five on the floor come out knowing the second five are gonna do just as well, and we never had a gap between the play. You could interchange every player on the starting five. So, I think everybody knew that it was more of like what you contribute to the team instead of like personal stats ... it was just more like we all play and it's doesn't matter minutes or who starts. It's just like what you can do to get a win. Like how you can contribute for your team to get a win."

Vanstee was really impressed with her teammates attitude. The Laker team even had a few girls who started throughout the 2023-24 season that started coming off the bench this season, and they didn't skip a beat.


Grand Valley State University redshirt junior Paige Vanstee beats Dominguez Hills' Nala Williams to the bucket for two points during GVSU's victory in the NCAA Division II National Championship game in Pittsburgh March 28.

This Laker team got the chance to start building chemistry last summer with a team trip to Italy.

"It was Rome, Venice and Milan were all the places that we played," Vanstee said, "and that was just cool because everybody played and you got to see just how the team would develop throughout the year. It was just kind of like a sneak peek of what the year would be like. So that was really cool to play over there and just take in the experience. It was it was amazing."

Basketball took Vanstee and the Lakers all over the world in 2024 and 2025. Vanstee had knee surgery in the offseason and got her first game action

See **VANSTEE** on 9

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Grand Valley State University redshirt junior Paige Vanstee (24), a 2021 Thornapple Kellogg High School graduate, is in the middle of the celebration as the confetti falls inside UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse in Pittsburgh, PA March 28 following the Lakers' 70-58 victory over the University of California Dominguez Hills in the NCAA Division II Women's Basketball National Championship.
Photos courtesy Grand Valley Athletics

VANSTEE

Continued from Page 8

in during an early November trip to open the season in Billings, Montana. The Lakers got to play Ohio State University in the big arena in Columbus in December. The GVSU team followed up its trip to Pittsburgh for the DII Elite Eight with a quick relaxing trip to Florida before getting back to Allendale to catch up on school work.

The national title is the second for the Laker women. Current head coach Mike Williams was also an assistant on the 2005-06 Laker women's team that won its program's first NCAA DII championship. He has nurtured a program where roles are embraced and clearly everyone is treated like a starter.

"I like to be a big energy kid," Vanstee said. "I think when you can contribute all you can off the bench when you're playing it is huge. My mom showed me something today about team culture and how you can determine a team's culture based on how their bench is, and I feel like our team has great bench energy, because I think we all like to see each other succeed and we're capable of like one game somebody has a really good game but the next game, it could be a completely different person and it could be one through 12, like it doesn't matter. We all are capable of being the main scorer for that game … so I feel like that's where I contribute is on the energy side and I always try to try to be aggressive for like rebounding or going for like the 50/50 balls on the floor, trying to be strong in those areas."

Vanstee said having knee surgery in the offseason did slow her a bit at the start of this season, but it wasn't too different from a normal year. She said through her first few collegiate seasons the Lakers have really been into GLIAC play before she's felt all the way up to speed.

Kind of like how things rolled in that national championship game. It took a little while, but once the Lakers were up to speed they were dominant. They led 38-21 at the half, and started the second half on a 9-0 run that gave them their biggest lead of the ballgame at 47-21.

The Toros got the Laker lead down to 12 points with two minutes to go, a couple Vanstee free throws helped keep the Dominguez Hills ladies at bay for a bit. The Toros did inch down to with ten points in the final minute, but the victory was never really in doubt for the GVSU ladies there before the blue and silver confetti started falling.

Pratt second at first OK Gold golf jamboree for TK

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Thornapple Kellogg varsity boys' golf team placed third as the OK Gold Conference gathered for its first jamboree of the season at Indian Trials Golf Course in Grand Rapids Wednesday.

Trojan senior Kylan Pratt was the day's runner-up with a two-over-par 35. He opened his round with back-to-back birdies on number two and number three and then tallied a third birdie on number seven later on.

He was one under through his first seven holes.

TK sophomore Parker Dahley was fifth overall on the day with a 37 and TK also got a 40 from senior Tyler Voss and a 46 from senior Ryan Skidmore.

South Christian won the day's team contest with an overall score of 145. West Catholic was second at 153 ahead of TK 158, Northview 162, Wayland 166 and Wyoming 224.

West Catholic junior Owen Kotowski shot a 34 to finish as the day's top individual. Pratt's 35 was matched by South Christian freshman Brody Shilts and sophomore Harris Hoekwater.

Caledonia boys place third at first Green golf jamboree

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity boys' golf team placed third as the OK Green Conference season opened at Railside Golf Club for the jamboree hosted by Byron Center Wednesday.

Mona Shores took the day's victory with an overall score of 155 ahead of Byron Center 163, Caledonia 167, Jenison 168 and Reeths-Puffer 173.

Senior Parker Little led the Caledonia team with an overall score of 40. He had three pars and a birdie on the par-4, number five during his round.

The CHS team score also included 42s from junior Camden Quigley and junior DJ Robinson and a 43 from senior Sam Miersen.

Mona Shores won with four guys among the day's top six scorers including freshman Cruz Beckstrom who was the runner-up with a one-over-37.

Reeths-Puffer junior Kristian Brown was the day's individual champ with an even-par-36.

The Scots were set to take part in the Kent County Classic Thursday and the TK Invitational Friday. They'll be back in action when the OK Green gets together again at Muskegon Golf Course Wednesday, April 23.



Some new events for TK, same great results

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Oops, she got a big PR.

Thornapple Kellogg senior Emma Dykhouse helped the Thornapple Kellogg varsity girls' track and field team to a pair of victories on the first day of the OK Gold Conference season in Middleville Wednesday with a winning mark of 34 feet 4 inches in the shot put and a runner-up discus throw of 88-2.

A new discus competitor this spring, who head coach Maggie Wilkinson said is very responsible, Dykhouse forgot to go compete in the event during the Trojans' tri with Wyoming and Grand Rapids Union until a reminder from TK throws coach Cary Saxton. Saxton got to Dykhouse just after the senior's run in the 4x100-meter relay, and she quickly rushed off to find her throwing shoes and get her throws in before the event closed.

Dykhouse said she felt like a quick practice throw flew better than any attempt in practice a few days earlier had gone, and then she ripped off a mark that ended up beating her previous best from last month by about 17 feet.

Mostly a sprinter and a long jumper at the start of high school, Dykhouse was just one spot shy of qualifying for the state finals in the long jump as a sophomore. She threw the shot once that season, at the OK Gold Conference JV Championship, and then nearly qualified for the state finals in that event last year as a junior.

She said she is quickly learning that the discus is a lot more technical than the shot put, and hasn't gotten the full spin down quite yet, but she is enjoying it so far. It was something she wanted to try this season. That wasn't something she could say when she started out in the shot put – but now the shot put is her favorite event.

"Because I'm good at it and then also I think because like it's something different for me to do that I don't normally do," Dykhouse said of enjoying the shot put. "It's just like very fun. I just started weightlifting a few years ago and it like helps show where my progress has gone with my weightlifting. So yeah, it's kind of fun. "

It was a day of shuffling a lot of things up for the TK ladies, who dominated their OK Gold duals. The TK ladies took a 117-19 win over Wyoming and a 122-15 win over Grand Rapids Union. The TK boys also secured two conference wins outscoring Wyoming 78-59 and Union 77-60. The Wyoming boys and Union girls took victories in the bouts between those teams.

Wilkinson said the Trojans' move up to Division 1 for MHSAA competitions at the end of the season has her really trying to change things up at every opportunity. She said many of her girls' big goals are all about competing at the state finals – something that will be at least a little tougher this spring in D1. She wants to explore every opportunity she can to help her girls reach those goals.

A regular 100-meter dash participant last season, Dykhouse ran the 200-meter dash Wednesday and ran a leg of the 4x100-meter dash, handing the baton off to new junior teammate Jordyn Fitros. That duo teamed with Sydney Martin and Leigha Jager to place second overall in the race behind a foursome from Wyoming. The Wolves' team in that race included junior Myah Nabors – who was the only girl ahead of Fitros all day.

Running the relay together for the first time, Dykhouse made sure to remind Fitros of two things before they headed off to their separate exchange zones:

You're fast.

I'll be tired.

In other words, don't take off too soon. In the end, maybe she could have taken off a little sooner, but there is nothing surprising about relay exchanges needing a little work in early April.

"I think it's great. It's like, I love this team," Dykhouse said. "It's really different without the seniors because I'm so used to having them. Like, I've had them since I was a freshman. But I really love this team, and it's a great team, and I'm really excited to see where we go to."

The rest of the relays were victorious for the TK ladies Wednesday. Fitros teamed with junior Mia Hilton, sophomore Ellie Harmon and senior Brooklyn Harmon to win the 4x200-meter relay in 1 minute 47.30 seconds. The TK sophomore foursome of Peyton Hardy, Alaina McCrumb, Carmen Reynolds and Isla Tillema won the 4x800-meter relay in 11:20.47. At the end of the night, the TK team of freshman Amya Gater, junior Payton Gater, junior Madison Kietzman and Hilton won the 4x400-meter relay in 4:36.80.



Thornapple Kellogg senior Ava Crews runs to a win in the 3200-meter race during the OK Gold tri against Wyoming and Grand Rapids Union Wednesday in Middleville.

Fitros was second to Nabors in the 100-meter dash with the Wyoming junior winning in 12.74 and Fitros coming in at 13.12. In the 200-meter dash Nabors won in 26.18 with Fitros coming in at 27.23.

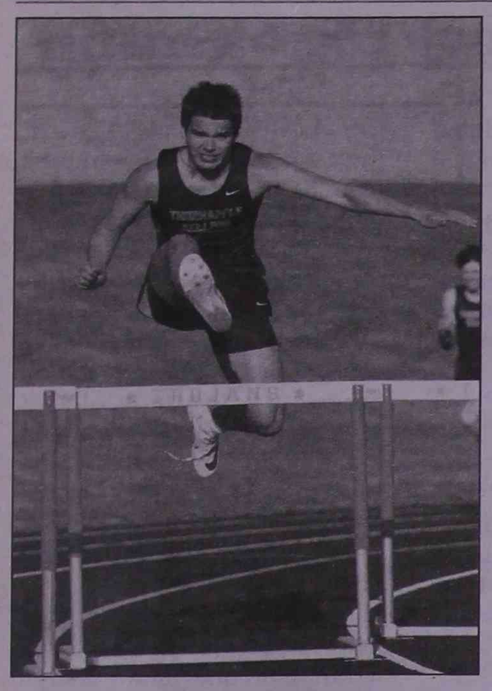
Senior Ava Crews swept the three longest races for the TK ladies winning the 3200-meter run in 11:32.11, the 1600-meter run in 5:23.13 and the 800-meter run in 2:31.56. Hardy was second in the 3200 and third in the 1600, and freshman Breanna Schut came in second in the 800.

The TK ladies swept the top three scoring spots in the 400-meter dash with Payton Gater winning in 1:03.40, sophomore Isla Tilleman second and junior Claira Kovich third.

The TK ladies also swept the two hurdles races powered by Brooklyn Harmon who took the 100-meter hurdles in 15.46 and the 300-meter low hurdles in 48.62. Hilton was second and Amya Gater third in that 100-meter hurdles race with Hilton setting her PR at 16.53. A couple freshmen were second and third behind Brooklyn in the 300 hurdles, Kayla Price and Addison Rocco.



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Thornapple Kellogg freshman Brekin McWhinney runs to a runner-up time of 48.85 seconds in the 300-meter intermediate hurdles during the Trojans' OK Gold tri with Wyoming and Grand Rapids Union Wednesday in Middleville.

There were sweeps of the top three spots in three field events for the TK ladies, including the shot put with senior Lilly McKeown second and junior Marlee Shuford third. Brooklyn Harmon won the high jump by clearing 4-10 and sophomore teammate Lydia Slagel improved her PR in the event to 4-10 to place second while sophomore Kimberlin Zavalza-Nava was third with a PR of 4-8. In the pole vault, Hilton won at 8-6, Slagel was second and sophomore Raylee Preston third for TK.

Ellie Harmon added a long jump victory with a mark of 14-3.5.

The only girl better than Dykhouse in the discus was Union's Azaria Powell who had a PR of her own at 95-8.

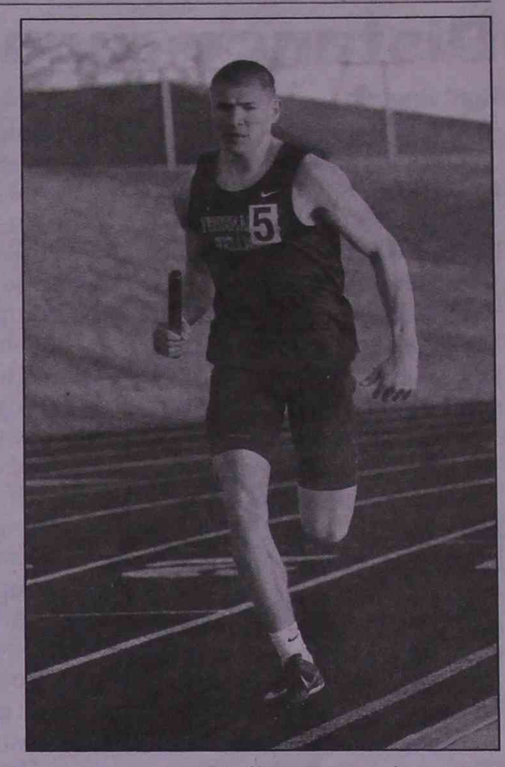
Senior Jacob Draaisma powered the TK boys to the win by matching Crews' sweep of the distance races. He won the 1600-meter run in 4:49.32, the 800-meter run in 2:07.84 and the 3200-meter run in 10:55.18. He won the 800 by about 12 seconds, the 1600 by nearly half a minute and the 3200 by more than half a minute.

Freshman Brekin McWhinney was also a standout for the TK boys. He won the 110-meter high hurdles in 17.79 seconds and placed second in the 300-meter intermediate hurdles in 48.85. Union junior Josiah Osei-agyeman got him by about two and a half seconds in that 300 hurdles race, but McWhinney had a more than one and a half second lead at the end of the 110s.

The Trojan boys capped off their victory with the team of Lucas McNabnay, Elliott Neff, Lucas Ploeg and Brandan Velting winning the 4x400-meter relay in 3:44.38.

The TK boys won two relays. The team of Case Dykhouse, Elijah Frazer, Layne Schilthroat and Draaisma opened the meet with a winning time of 9:08.90 in the 4x800-meter relay.

The pole vault was the top field event for the TK boys with Luke Archer taking the win by getting over the bar at 10-0 and Mark Gielincki second at 9-0. The TK team had Derious Robinson second in the long jump with a PR of 17-11, Camden Peter second in the high jump with a PR of 5-8, Kyle Porritt second in the discus with a PR of 125-2.5 and Adam Lozada second in the shot put with a PR of 41-0.



Thornapple Kellogg sophomore Brandan Velting gets up to speed on the anchor leg of the 4x400-meter relay during the Trojans' OK Gold Conference tri with Wyoming and Union in Middleville Wednesday.



Thornapple Kellogg junior Jordyn Fitros gets the baton from senior teammate Emma Dykhouse for the anchor leg of the 4x100-meter relay Wednesday during their OK Gold Conference tri with Wyoming and Grand Rapids Union in Middleville. **Photos by Brett Bremer**



Distance runners dominant as Scots outscore Muskegon

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia girls moved to 2-0 in OK Green Conference duals and the Caledonia boys got their first conference win Monday in Muskegon.

The Caledonia boys took an 88-49 win over the Big Reds, and head coach Ben Thompson said his guys came out of spring break ready to compete.

The Scots won with their depth, especially in the distance events. The CHS boys took sweeps of the three scoring places in the three longest individual races and won the two longest relays. Junior Noah Johnston led the way with a winning time of 4 minutes 40.24 seconds in the 1600-meter run and 10:10.63 in the 3200-meter run. Aidan Edgar was second and Kaden Van Ryn third in the 3200 for the Scots, in the 1600, Kort Thompson came in second and Mason Morrell third.

In the 800-meter run, Eli Velting led the way for the Scots with a winning time of 2:01.56 with teammates Luke Smith and Grant Feldpausch placing second and third.

Bennett Snapper, Sean Thompson, Feldpausch and Smith teamed up to win the 4x800-meter relay in 11:18.48. In the 4x400-meter relay, the Scots got a win from the team of Joshua Maier, Velting, Jonas Howell and Aaron Collins.

Collins was the 400-meter dash champ with a time of 52.48 seconds, and he was also the runner-up in the 200 with a personal record time of 23.81.

Jonas Howell won the 300-meter intermediate hurdles in 42.20 for the Scots and moved his PR in the 110-meter high hurdles to 16.97 to place second in that race.

The CHS boys swept the points in the high jump and the pole vault too. Senior Andrew Tava took the high jump with a personal record leap of 6 feet 2 inches. Junior Parker Lipsman was the runner-up with a PR of 5-8 and teammate Rydik Wrubel placed third at 5-6.

In the pole vault, CHS had senior David Potgeter win with a PR of 12-6, and Benjamin Moss and Peter Paarlberg placed second and third with their best vaults of the season so far.

Junior Liam Moore won the discus for the Scots with a throw of 151-4.

The Caledonia girls' team took a 101-36 victory with Jolie King, Olivia Hawkins, Hannah Dupuis and Brynn Ward winning two individual events each.

Ward, a freshman, won the 100-meter dash in 13.11 and the 200-meter dash in 27.46.

Like the boys, the Caledonia girls swept the three longest individual races. Dupuis won the 800-meter run in a personal record time of 2:36.76 with sophomores Maya Terryn and Akaela Daman placing second and third with PRs of their own. Dupuis also won the 3200-meter run in a PR of 12:22.08 with PR runs from senior Adysen Daman and senior Kiley Bommarito in second and third behind her.

Adysen was the winner in the 1600-meter run with a time of 5:51.66, finishing less than a quarter of a second ahead of Akaela. Senior Keira Bommarito was third in that one. All three girls set their PR.

The sophomore Hawkins swept the hurdles for the Scots. She won the 100-meter hurdles in 16.33 and the 300-meter low hurdles in 50.19.

Junior Sophia Douglass, junior Hannah Bennett, freshman Elise Clarin and sophomore Kylee Zimmerer won the 4x800-meter relay for the Scots in 12:35.93 and the team of sophomore Evie Huttenga, junior Brooke Bender, sophomore Maya Terryn and Hawkins won the 4x400-meter relay in 4:30.27.

King took two field events for the Scots. The junior won the discus with a throw of 83-8 with teammates Chiara Marta and Lillian Ward second and third in that one. King took the long jump with a mark of 15-3.

Freshman Lillian Ward led a sweep of the pole vault points for the Scots. She set her PR at 7-6 with sophomore Madison Trompmen and junior Joelyn Abraham second and third both clearing 6-0.

The Scots were set to participate in the Hastings Team Invitational Friday, one of the new early qualifier events for the state finals, and the OK Green season continues when the Scots go to Reeths-Puffer Tuesday, April 22.

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP BOARD
200 E MAIN ST.
MIDDLEVILLE, MI 49333
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING MINUTES
Monday, April 14, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with seven members present.

Items approved:

1. Printed Agenda approved as amended.
2. Consent Agenda approved as amended.
3. Approved the purchase of turnout gear storage not to exceed $2,200.
4. Approved the purchase of turnout gear from Wayland Fire not to exceed $1,750.
5. Approved the purchase of budgeted capital items not to exceed $41,100.
6. Approved hire of two full-time paramedic/firefighters.
7. Approved Emergency Services Protection Contract with Rutland Township.
8. Approved correction to the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2025.
9. Approved special meeting minutes of February 19, 2025.
10. Approved March 2025 Planning and Zoning report.
11. Approved 2025-2026 meeting schedule.
12. Approved continuation with EMC Insurance.
13. Approved continuation of cyber insurance through Hiscox.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Prepared by Deputy Clerk Brenda Hess. Approved by Township Supervisor, Eric Schaefer.

Copies of the meeting minutes are available upon request from the Township Clerk or by visiting https://thornapple-twp.org/meeting-minutes/. Office hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Doubles sweep helps Scots to first Green tennis win

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity girls' tennis team picked up its first OK Green Conference win outscoring Reeths-Puffer 6-2 at Caledonia High School Wednesday.

The Fighting Scots swept the four doubles flights and got a pair of singles victories to outdo the Rockets.

Freshman first singles player Berkley Nelson took a 6-0, 6-0 over Reeths-Puffer junior Olivia Smith at the top of the line-up. That was the only singles match that wasn't stretched to three sets.

Senior Flavia Iorizzo helped the Scots clinch the win with her fourth singles victory. She beat out Reeths-Puffer senior Mylie Neel in a tiebreaker in the first set 7-6(5) and then regrouped for a 6-1 win in a third set after Neel took set number two 6-3.

Caledonia's Audrey Duong at second singles and Claire Teunessen at third singles both won the opening set of their matches, but then fell in two close sets to close out the day.

Things were pretty evenly matched on the doubles side too. The Caledonia first doubles team of Sawyer Mertz and Anna Homrich and the second doubles team of Zoe Fleming and Hailey Markwat both won three-set matches.

The senior Mertz and sophomore Homrich scored a 6-2, 5-7, 6-4 win over the Rocket duo of seniors Malania Eilers and Gabrielle Borgeson. At number two, in an all senior match, Fleming and Markwat outscored Lauren Matz and Elana Weiden 6-2, 3-6, 6-4.

The Scots' two other doubles wins came in close two-set matches. Junior Kebe Fitzell and freshman Emery

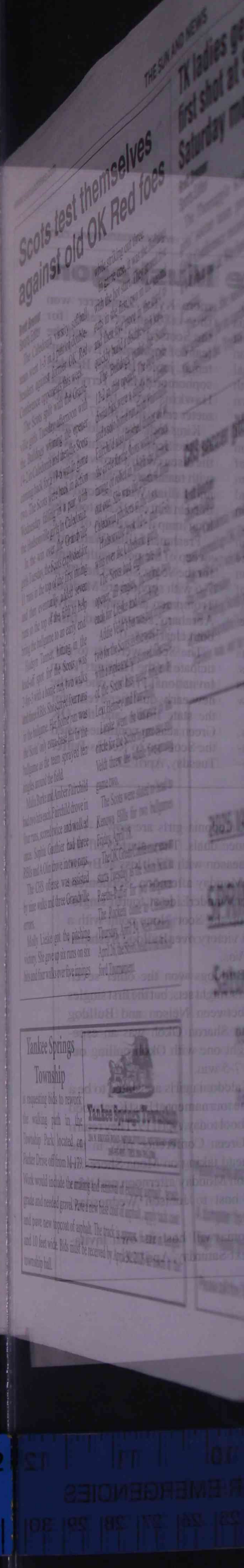
James outscored Rocket sophomores Ava Dietz and Kaitlyn Darow 6-4, 6-2 at third doubles. At number four, Scot juniors Maya White and Hellen Komera earned a 6-3, 6-4 win over Rocket junior Makayla Smith and sophomore Jayla Brink.

The Caledonia girls are now 1-1 in conference duals. They started off the league season with a 7-1 loss at Bryon Center Monday afternoon. Sophomore Gretchen VanderEide at fourth singles picked up the Scots' lone point with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Bulldog freshman Syd DeVos.

The Bulldogs won the other seven flights in straight sets, but the first singles match between Nelson and Bulldog freshman Sharon Okoh was an especially tight one with Okoh pulling out the 6-4, 7-5 win.

The Caledonia girls are slated to be a part of the tournament at East Kentwood High School today, April 19. They return to OK Green Conference play in the week ahead taking on Mona Shores in Muskegon Monday afternoon and then playing host to Jenison Wednesday, April 23.

Caledonia will host its own invitational next Saturday, April 26.



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Scots test themselves against old OK Red foes

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity softball team went 1-3 in a pair of double-headers against former OK Red Conference opponents this week.

The Scots split with the Grandville girls Tuesday afternoon with the Bulldogs winning the opener 14-2 in Caledonia and then the Scots coming back for a 19-6 win in game two. The Scots were back in action Wednesday falling in a pair with the Hudsonville girls in Caledonia.

In the win over the Grandville girls Tuesday, the Scots exploded for 11 runs in the top of the first inning and then eventually added seven runs in the top of the fifth to help bring the ballgame to an early end.

Hudsyn Tanner, hitting in the lead-off spot for the Scots, was 2-for-3 with a home run, two walks and three RBIs. She scored four runs in the ballgame. Her home run was the Scots' only extra-base hit in the ballgame as the team sprayed ten singles around the field.

Malia Burke and Amber Fairchild had two hits each. Fairchild drove in four runs, scored twice and walked once. Sophia Gauthier had three RBIs and A Olin drove in two runs.

The CHS offense was assisted by nine walks and three Grandville errors.

Molly Lieske got the pitching victory. She gave up six runs on six hits and four walks over five innings while striking out three.

In game one, it was the Bulldogs with the hot start. They scored five runs in the first, two in the second and then five more in the third to quickly build a double-digit lead.

The Bulldogs outhit the Scots 12-2 in that opener. The two Caledonia hits were a single by Lieske and a solo home run from Fairchild. Fairchild also finished things off in the circle for the Scots with a perfect inning of relief in which she struck out one. She was the fourth of four Caledonia pitchers in the loss.

Hudsonville took 12-2 and 17-3 wins over the Caledonia girls.

The Scots had eight hits in the opener, all singles, including two each for Lieske and Fairchild.

Addie Veldt's bat was hot in game two for the Scots as she went 3-for-3 with a triple and run scored. The rest of the Scots' hits were singles by Lexi Henney and Fairchild.

Lieske went the distance in the circle for the Scots in game one and Veldt threw the whole five-inning game two.

The Scots were slated to head to Kenowa Hills for two ballgames Friday, April 18.

The OK Green Conference season starts Tuesday as the Scots head to Reeths-Puffer for two ballgames. The Rockets come to Caledonia Thursday, April 24. Next Saturday, April 26, the Scots head to the Rockford Tournament.

TK ladies get their first shot at South Saturday morning

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Thornapple Kellogg varsity girls' soccer team pushed its OK Gold Conference record to 2-0 with a 4-0 shut out at Wayland Wednesday evening.

The victory, the second shut out of the season so far in conference play for TK, moved the Trojans to 4-1 overall on the season. They were set to face Wyoming in Middleville Thursday in another conference contest.

The Trojans have a big showdown today, April 19, playing host to South Christian inside Bob White Stadium. Game time is set for 11:45 am.

The Sailors are off to a 5-0 start to the season and will head into the weekend with a 3-0 conference record. They have only allowed one goal against so far this season in a 2-1 win at Grand Rapids Christian to open play last month. They outscored their four opponents since then 26-0.

CHS soccer girls win Green opener at Reeths-Puffer

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity girls' soccer team opened up OK Green Conference play with a 2-1 win at Reeths-Puffer on the road Tuesday.

The Fighting Scots upped their overall season record to 3-3 with the victory.

Jenison was set to visit Caledonia Thursday night for another conference contest, and the Scots are slated to be home against at Scotland Yard Saturday, April 19, taking on Grand Ledge.

In the OK Green next week, the Scots visit Muskegon Tuesday and Byron Center Thursday. Mattawan comes to Caledonia for a non-conference match next Saturday, April 26.

Yankee Springs Township

is requesting bids to rework the walking path in the Township Park located on Parker Drive off from M-179. Work would include the milling and removal of existing asphalt , finish grade and needed gravel. Pave a new base coat of asphalt , apply tack coat and pave new topcoat of asphalt. The track is approx. ½ mile in length and 10 feet wide. Bids must be received by April 30, 2025 at noon at the township hall.

Yankee Springs Township
284 N. BRIGGS ROAD- MIDDLEVILLE, MICHIGAN 49333
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Yankee Springs Township
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2025 YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP

SPRING CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, April 26, 2025

9:00 AM start @ the Fire Station
1425 S. Payne Lake Road
Finish (and Pizza!) around noon.

Please come and join us in cleaning along the roads in the township.

A dumpster for trash collected will be provided along with trash bags. Please bring gloves.

Please call the Township office at 269-795-9091 with any questions.

BUILDING BRANDS

Three tips to help you adapt as fast as a first grader



EMILY CASWELL
ecaswell@mihomepaper.com

There are many perks to my job, one of them being that every so often I'm invited to speak at a career day or a teacher will ask me to speak to his or her class about what it's like to work at a newspaper.

Two weeks ago, I was invited by a first-grade teacher at Chatfield School in Lapeer to do just that. I think first graders are the youngest group I've ever spoken to, so I wasn't sure how much they'd grasp. I've known this teacher for years, so I was comfortable asking for some advice. She suggested I talk about the various jobs at a newspaper. I prepared remarks, packed up some pencils, notepads and newspapers (swag is a must in any school) and headed to my speaking engagement.

Standing in front of 49 first graders is intimidating. Their energy is so high I worried I'd struggle to capture their attention, but they seemed to be hooked on my every word. What was helpful is that my arrival was perfectly timed during March is Reading Month when the entire school focused on reading newspapers. The school's musical this spring — Newsies — was even tied into the theme. When I was done speaking, I asked for questions.

The first graders had a lot of great questions. I especially loved the student who asked about the clothing options for each career choice. A girl after my own heart. The questions eventually turned into storytelling. I was getting lots of great info like, "This one time my brother was in the newspaper." "My dad gets a newspaper about cars." I enjoyed learning a bit more about the students, but understandably the teachers wanted to encourage more questions and said "remember, you are asking questions, not telling stories."

The students didn't miss a beat and almost immediately found a way to tell their stories in the form of a question. "Did you know my brother was in the newspaper once?" "Why does my dad get a newspaper about cars?" I loved it! The students had adapted incredibly quickly. How smart!

The entire experience had me thinking about adaptability and how important it is to all of us and our brand. For better or worse, the pandemic proved that we can all be adaptable if we have to be, but five years later where do you rank on an adaptability scale? Changes in technology, personnel changes or even a career change can be just around the corner. Can you adapt as fast as a first grader?

A *forbes.com* article on the topic notes that "adaptability in the workplace is the 'top skill of the moment,' according to LinkedIn's report, The 2024 Most In-Demand Skills … McKinsey predicts that eight of the top 10 skills future workers will need are soft skills — like adaptability … Adaptability is the capacity to adjust quickly and easily to changes in your work environment. 'Adaptability is the best way to have agency right now,' says Aneesh Raman, VP, Workforce Expert at LinkedIn. Raman adds, 'at the core of managing change is building that muscle of adaptability.'"

Keeping that is in mind, here are three tips to help you adapt:

Don't take it personally: Be like the first graders, who clearly didn't see the instruction to ask questions instead of telling a story as a personal slight. They simply adapted and found a way to make it work for them. If you don't waste time taking changes personally, it'll be easier and faster to see the change as a positive.

Practice Deliberate Calm: This is a new concept to me that I'd like to do more research on, however, what I initially read in a Harvard Business Review article on the topics has me intrigued. From the article, "New, high-pressure situations often create a level of anxiety that triggers the very reactions that tend to limit us, stifling innovation. This is the adaptability paradox … 'Deliberate Calm' is a solution to the adaptability paradox. It enables leaders to act with intention, creativity, and objectivity, even in the most challenging circumstances, and it helps us to learn and adapt to novel challenges when the stakes are highest. 'Deliberate' refers to the awareness that you have a choice in how you experience and respond to a situation. 'Calm' refers to rationally considering how best to respond, without being governed by old habits."

Remind yourself you've done this before: We have all adapted at some point in our lives, and the world hasn't stopped turning. Remind yourself that no matter the change or the challenges it brings, you can do it!

What skills do you use to adapt to changes? Email me at *ecaswell@mihomepaper.com.*

Emily Caswell is the Brand Manager for VIEW Group, the branding division of View Newspaper Group.

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP NOTICE OF ADOPTED ORDINANCE TO RESTATE THE GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP

At a regular meeting of the Township Board of the Charter Township of Gaines, held on Monday, April 14, 2025 the Township Board approved a restated Township Zoning Ordinance and zoning map.

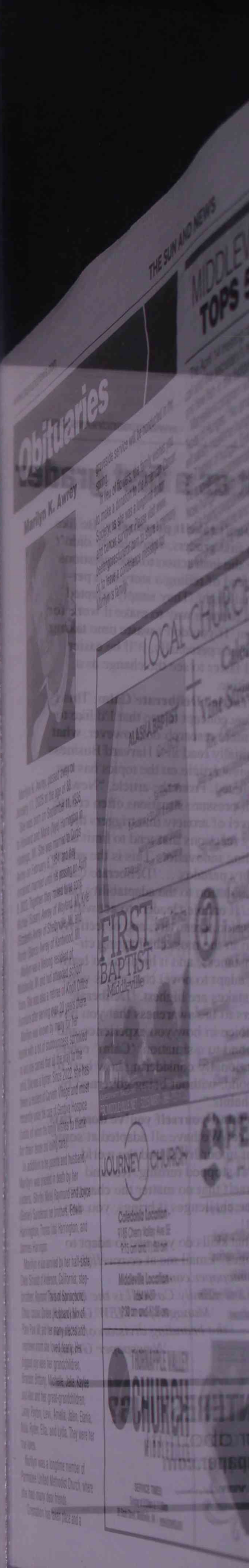
Formal notice of the adoption was published in The Grand Rapids Press on Thursday, April 17, 2025. The restated Zoning Ordinance will go into effect on Thursday, April 24, 2025.

A true and complete copy of the newly adopted Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map can be inspected or obtained in the office of the Township Clerk at the following address:

Gaines Charter Township
8555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE
Caledonia, MI 49316
616-698-6640

Charter Township of Gaines
Michael A. Brew, Clerk

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Obituaries

Marilyn K. Awrey



Marilyn K. Awrey, passed away on January 11, 2025 at the age of 88.

She was born on September 11, 1936 to Howard and Marie (Nye) Harrington in Hastings, MI. She was married to Curtis Awrey on February 6, 1954, and they remained married until his passing on April 8, 2022. Together they raised three sons: Michael (Susan) Awrey of Wayland, MI, Kyle (Elizabeth) Awrey of Shelbyville, MI, and Randy (Blanca) Awrey of Kentwood, MI.

Marilyn was a lifelong resident of Middleville, MI and had attended school there. She was also a retiree of Knoll Office Furniture after serving over 20 years there.

Marilyn was known by many for her spunk with a bit of stubbornness sprinkled in and she carried that all the way to the end. She was a fighter. Since 2022, she has been a resident of Carveth Village and most recently under the care of Gentiva Hospice (both of whom the family wishes to thank for their tender and loving care).

In addition to her parents and husband, Marilyn was preceded in death by her sisters, Shirley (Merle) Raymond and Joyce (Gene) Sanderson; her brothers, Edwin Harrington, Thomas (Ida) Harrington, and James Harrington.

Marilyn is also survived by her half-siste, Deb Shields of Anderson, California; step-brother, Raymond Travis of Springboro, Ohio; cousin, Darlene (Hubbard) Mix of Paw Paw, MI; and her many nieces and nephews whom she loved dearly. Her biggest joys were her grandchildren, Brandon, Brittany, Michelle, Jake, Kaylee and Alex; and her great-grandchildren, Laney, Peyton, Levi, Amelia, Jalen, Elania, Nalia, Ryder, Ella, and Lydia. They were her true loves.

Marilyn was a longtime member of Parmalee United Methodist Church, where she had many dear friends.

Cremation has taken place and a graveside service will be conducted in the spring.

In lieu of flowers, the family wishes you to make a donation to the American Cancer Society, as she was a longtime donor and cancer survivor. Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or to leave a condolence message for Marilyn 's family.

MIDDLEVILLE TOPS 546

The April 14 meeting opened with roll call and the secretary's report. There is one new fish in the fishbowl.

Maryellen's program was on the "7 Types of Hunger." No amount of snacking will satisfy mealtime hunger. There are 7 types of hunger. Eye hunger is the appearance/presentation of food. Nose hunger is from the aromas as food is being prepared. Mouth hunger concerns the texture and what it triggers as enjoyment in the tummy. Stomach hunger is made up of stimulants that are created in our tummy. Cellular hunger comes from when nutrients are off balance and compensation takes over. Mind hunger is when past eating habits require us to makes healthier choices. Heart hunger is when emotions trigger binges and restrictions. Knowing if we are really hungry or think we are is a balance club member's say they need to achieve.

Sue lost the Ha-Ha Box.

TOPS, a weight-loss support group, meets every Monday at Lincoln Meadows in Middleville. Weigh-in is from 3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m., followed immediately by the meeting. Press the white buzzer for entry.

Anyone with questions may call Virginia, 269-908-8036, or Maryellen, 616-318-3545. The first meeting is free.

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Sunday Worship..... 9:30 a.m.
Pastor: Rob Wurst
http://goodshepherdlcms.googlepages.com
Church: (269) 795-2391

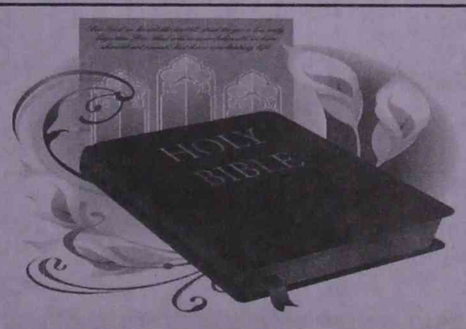
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"Shining Forth God's Light"
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Community Group.....11:00 a.m.
James L. Collison, Pastor
www.yankeespringsbiblechurch.org

West Catholic walks it off against TK in opener of Gold set

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Drew Brown came through with a two-out, bases-loaded single in the bottom of the seventh to give West Catholic a walk-off win over the Thornapple Kellogg boys in the OK Gold Conference opener Wednesday in Grand Rapids.

The Falcon varsity baseball team took a 3-2 win after TK had rallied to tie the ballgame at 2-2 with single runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

Bradley Moerman had a strong start on the mound for TK allowing two runs (one earned) on three hits and three walks through five innings. He struck out six.

Brown's game-winning single was the only hit of the seventh for the Falcons off of TK reliever Carsyn Redman who threw the final 1.2 innings for TK. He struck out one and walked one, and the run against him in the seventh was unearned.

Micah Dock doubled in a run for the Trojans and Spencer Yebema was 2-for-3 with a run scored and a walk. TK also got singles from Jayce Brummel and Jacob Davis. Cam Walters drove in one run and Davis scored one.

The two teams got through four innings with the Falcons leading 6-1 before play was halted Wednesday and set to resume Thursday (April 17) with the conclusion of game two and then game three of the conference set in Middleville.

TK will play host to Hastings, Delton Kellogg and Lakewood today, April 19, for the annual Barry County Invitational.

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