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BEING BETTER ON THE BOARD BOOSTS SLAGEL ON FINALS SCOREBOARD
PAGES 14-15



Planning Commission OKs senior living facility for Prairie Wolf Station

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

A more than 75,000 square-foot senior living center with medical and group living facilities will be built within the sprawling Prairie Wolf Station planned unit development in Gaines Charter Township.

That is, if a Kent County Circuit Court judge gives final approval to an amended consent judgment.

Members of the township's Planning Commissions voted 5-0 to approve the final site plan for the project at their Nov. 20 meeting at the Gaines Township Hall. Two commissioners were absent.

However, construction cannot begin until the judge reviews and approves amendments to a consent judgment that stemmed from a 2022 lawsuit filed on behalf of the developer, American

See **LIVING** on 5



Eric DeYoung, project manager with the Nederveld engineering and design firm, requests a site plan approval from the Gaines Township Planning Commission for a senior living center at the future Prairie Wolf Station. **Photos by James Gemmell**

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Kids and families can visit with reindeer, sip cocoa and enjoy free activities at MKP Reindeer Night this Thursday, Dec. 4, in Middleville. **Courtesy photos**

MKP Reindeer Night returns Dec. 4 for 10th year

Molly Macleod
Editor

Santa's coming to town — and he's bringing his herd of reindeer, too.

The 10th annual MKP Reindeer Night, sponsored and hosted by McKeown Kraii Professional, CPAs, is slated to return to downtown Middleville this coming Thursday, Dec. 4.

Festivities kick off at 5 p.m. on Thursday, with activities continuing until 8 p.m.

Attendees can enjoy visiting with live reindeer, a hot cocoa bar, Christmas cookies, fresh popcorn, gift bags and more on Thursday — all at no cost.

Highpoint Community Bank is also joining in the fun this year, providing a food truck with free hot dogs during the event.

Ashley Lantinga, MKP's director of Culture and Relations and a longtime organizer for the event, said Reindeer Night's 10th anniversary is special to her and the other organizers.

"I've been with our firm for 13 years, and this is a seed that we planted a long time ago – 10 years ago – and it's definitely a labor of love," Lantinga said. "Because it's a lot of legwork."

See **REINDEER** on 3

Live tree donated to Chief Noonday Car Park for annual celebration

Karen Turko-Ebright
Staff Writer

A live 52-foot northern spruce dressed up in close to 20,000 dazzling lights and adorned in an array of Christmas ornaments will be on display at the annual "Christmas on the Corridor" set for this Saturday, Nov. 29.

The holiday event begins at Chief Noonday Car Park in Yankee Springs at 3 p.m., with the tree lighting ceremony at 6 p.m.

Co-owner of Chief Noonday Car Park, Terry Cole, said the live tree was a gift from a local family.

"The tree was donated by a family in Gun Lake that planted the tree when they moved here." Cole said. "The tree grew so big, it became a hazard to the grandchild leaving the driveway.

"Now all of the Gun Lake community can enjoy the beautiful tree and the Christmas season," he added.

The Gun Lake Business Association, in partnership with Chief Noonday Car Park and community business sponsors, reportedly continues to work to expand the experience each year with new activities, partnerships and interactive community features, according to an announcement on the event.

"The start of Winterfest, which is going to be all winter here in Gun Lake, is going to kick off here at Chief Noonday Car Park at Christmas on Corridor," Cole said. "The team behind this epic community event are so excited to see the involvement the Gun Lake Business Association has put forth and then add the families and locals that seem to enjoy the buzz and positive energy that forms when a community comes together."

For more information about the holiday event, persons may follow the Gun Lake Business Association on Facebook.



Co-owner of Chief Noonday Car Park Terry Cole (left) and Brad Landman stand by a 52-foot live northern spruce Christmas tree will be lit at this year's third annual tree-lighting ceremony during "Christmas on the Corridor" on Saturday, Nov. 29, at Chief Noonday Car Park in Yankee Springs.The event begins at 3 p.m. with the tree lighting ceremony at 6 p.m. **Photo by Steve LaVoie**



The antique popcorn wagon is a favorite among Chief Noonday Car Park visitors and will be available at this year's "Christmas on the Corridor" at Chief Noonday Car Park in Yankee Springs on Saturday, Nov. 29. The event begins at 3 p.m. **File photos**



Festive trees decorate the grounds of Chief Noonday Car Park during a previous "Christmas on the Corridor" celebration. This year's event is set for Saturday, Nov. 2

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REINDEER

Continued from Page 1

Lantinga said the entire MKP crew helps set up for Reindeer Night during the day, before helping run the event in the evening.

The event has become such a focal point for the MKP staff that the firm even invites its interns, who don't start with the company until January, to come help out at the event.

"This is a great way to get to know the team, and, in the back end, shows us a little bit about their work ethic," Lantinga laughed. "So when they come in in January, they've already bonded with us."

Every year, MKP helps support Thornapple Kellogg Classmates Care during Reindeer Night. The C1lassmates Care program is run by students at Thornapple Kellogg Middle School. Classmates Care helps connect students in need with warm winter gear.

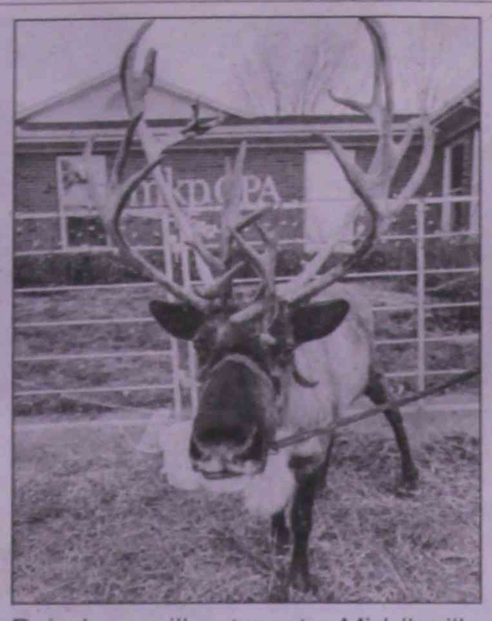
"This gives people a safe space and a way to request these things without feeling embarrassed or like they're somebody else's problem. This is a very comfortable environment," Lantinga said.

Representatives from Classmates Care told Lantinga the group is in need of all kinds of warm, winter clothing, but especially snowpants and winter boots.

"We want to make sure everything is always free at our event, because that's what it's about," Lantinga said. "And the beauty is, we give this big free event, and we say, 'Hey, if you've got these extra things that your kids grew out of them or you grew out of them, drop them off! Come have a great time, but come get them out of your closet — we'll take them.' And then they're able to fill those needs, which I know are coming in quite rapidly this year."

Lantinga said Reindeer Night is an opportunity for families to enjoy holiday fun without breaking the bank.

"Even as a mom, I think about pumpkin patches and those places you can go with your kids for the holidays — it's a fortune. I myself have had years where I go, 'Listen, we can't afford to spend $200 at a pumpkin patch. We can't afford to spend $100 to see Santa…'"



Reindeer will return to Middleville during MKP Reindeer Night on Thursday, Dec. 4, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Reindeer Night is something anyone can enjoy, regardless of money, Lantinga said.

Between Reindeer Night and next weekend's Christmas on the River, slated for Dec. 4 and 6, families have plenty of holiday fun to explore in Middleville. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be at the Holiday Market between 5 and 8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 4.

More holiday events continue on Saturday, Dec. 6, with the Christmas on the River Parade slated for 6 p.m. that night.

More information on MKP Reindeer Night can be found at mkp-cpa.com.

More information on Middleville's Christmas on the River can be found at middlevilledda.org/christmas-on-the-river.

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Drive-thru holiday display lights up the night at local tree nursey

James Gemmell
Contributing Writer

Area residents won't have to drive far if they live in southern Kent County, or northern Allegan or Barry counties, to enjoy a holiday drive-thru light display.

Christmas at Everett's Gardens is slated to feature thousands of lights that have been strung on trees in the Everett Gardens nursery on 84th Street, across from Brewer Park.



A locomotive with Peanuts cartoon characters aboard is set to be part of the annual Christmas at Everett's Gardens display, which runs through Dec. 27. **Photo by James Gemmell**

The drive-thru is a half mile long and only open Fridays and Saturday from 6 to 8 p.m. The pathway includes dozens of handmade displays of traditional holiday figures.

"Snoopy, the Grinch and Charlie Brown are a few of them," said Kayla VerWoert, marketing manager for Everett's Landscaping. "We have an elf workshop, basically."

VerWoert said the displays help define the true meaning of Christmas.

"We have all of our more Christ-centered themes, with the Story of the Three Christmas trees, a nativity scene, The Twelve Days of Christmas and an Advent calendar," she said.

The annual Christmas at Everett's

See **LIGHTS** on 4

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Obituaries

Steven Henry Mass

Steven Henry Mass, passed away peacefully on November 16, 2025, in Caledonia, MI, at the age of 67. Born on August 12, 1958, in Holland, MI, Steve was a beloved husband, father, son, and brother, whose vibrant spirit and infectious love for life left an indelible mark on all who knew him.

Steve is survived by his devoted wife of 35 years, Kendra (Weeks) Mass, and their cherished daughter, Lauren Mass. His mother, Patricia Sullivan, remembers him with love. Steve's legacy lives on through his siblings, Sue (Terry) Neyens, Tim (Beth) Mass, Marc (Stacy) Mass, Brandon Mass, and stepmother, Cindi Mass as well as his brothers-in-law, Brad (Beth) Weeks, Greg (Janice) Weeks, and Brent Weeks. His many nieces and nephews will hold dear their memories of Uncle Steve's warmth and generosity.

He was preceded in death by his father, Henry Mass; stepfather, Don Sullivan, and brother-in-law, Randy Weeks, and sister-in-law, Brenda Coker.



A graduate of Holland High School in 1977, Steve then attend Northern Michigan University before earning his degree from Grand Valley State College in 1986. His professional journey was marked by over a decade of dedicated service in sales at Highland Appliance and MacDonald's Industrial Products, where he was not only a valued employee but also a genuine friend to his colleagues.

Steve's passions were manifold. A true Detroit sports enthusiast, he never missed a game of his beloved Lions or the University of Michigan Football team. His love for sports was matched only by his love for music, which was a constant source of joy and companionship throughout his life. Steve was the life of the party, always ready to share a laugh, a story, or a perfectly grilled meal with anyone lucky enough to be in his company. His culinary skills were legendary among his circle of friends and family, earning him the title of grill master.

A friend to many, Steve was known for his ability to connect with people from all walks of life. His magnanimous nature and capacity for friendship knew no bounds. A history buff at heart, he could often be found engrossed in a book or documentary, always eager to share fascinating tidbits with others.

Steve's passing leaves a void that can never be filled, but his spirit will continue to inspire those who were fortunate to know him. His laughter, wisdom, and unwavering kindness will be sorely missed, but the memories he created will be treasured forever.

Steve's family will receive friends on Friday, Dec. 12, 2025 from 5-7 p.m. at the Beeler-Gores Funeral Home, Middleville where his celebration of life service will be conducted on Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025 at 11:00 AM.

Please visit www.beelergoresfuneral.com to share a memory or leave a condolence message for Steve's family.

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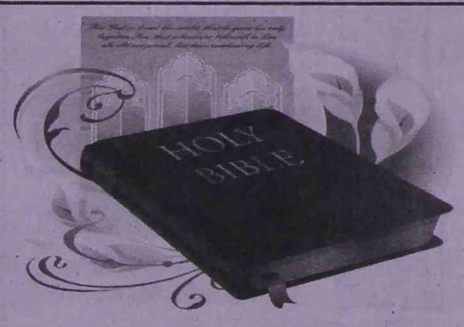
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LIGHTS

Continued from Page 3

Gardens drive-thru opened Nov. 21 and runs through Dec. 27. During December, it will also be open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, except for Dec. 25.

"Last year on our first weekend, we had a little over 300 cars come through," VerWoert said.

The cost is $10 per vehicle for the 10-minute trip through the course.

"After you drive, pull over to roast s'mores by the crackling fire," Everett's posted on a social media site. "And choose the perfect Christmas tree for your family."

LIVING

Continued from Page 1

Kendall Properties, after the township board of trustees rejected the original proposal for the Prairie Wolf PUD.

As part of the consent judgment agreed to by the township and the developer, the Indiana-based company agreed to drop the lawsuit after township trustees changed their vote and allowed the project to proceed.

The developer later decided, however, to move the senior living facility from the north side of the property to the south side for spacing reasons. Officials with an American Kendall subsidiary, AKP Gaines Township, requested in September for the township board to OK an amended site plan. Township board members agreed to that, but the changes require the judge to sign off.

A Planning Commission memo indicates the facility would contain 50 independent living units, plus 56 assisted living, and 34 memory care dwelling units, for a total of 140 units.

"We're happy to be proposing a compliant plan," said Eric DeYoung, a representative with the Grand Rapids-based Nederveld engineering and design firm, on behalf of the developer.

"They'll have some nursing facilities in there," added Gaines Community Development director Dan Wells. "It's for the care of the elderly population."

According to DeYoung, the northeast portion is going to house a café and a second lobby.

"The building is connected to the streetscape, which is one of the key goals of the PUD," he said. "There are sidewalks to the multi-modal trail. There is an outdoor patio that's on that northeast corner. Kind of a front-door portion where there's a covered canopy there, as people might do drop-offs or interface with the building."

Wells added the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy is imposing requirements for wetland preservation work to be done nearby.

"And they would like to do that here because it's right in front of their facility," he said. "They don't want it to just be a mud hole. So, hopefully, we'll be able to figure something out for that in the long run."

Wells also said the developer will have to wait for the judge to approve the modified consent judgment before the township can issue building permits for the project. Township planners said they do not know when the judge will make a decision on the amended consent agreement.

But Wells told Planning Commission members that, based on the architectural design plans he has seen, the senior living center will be a "beautiful addition for the community" and will address the demand for senior housing in Gaines Township.

"People want to stay close to their families, and they don't always have a good option for that in this area," he said, noting that there is only one other senior living facility in the south end of the township. "But it is much smaller."

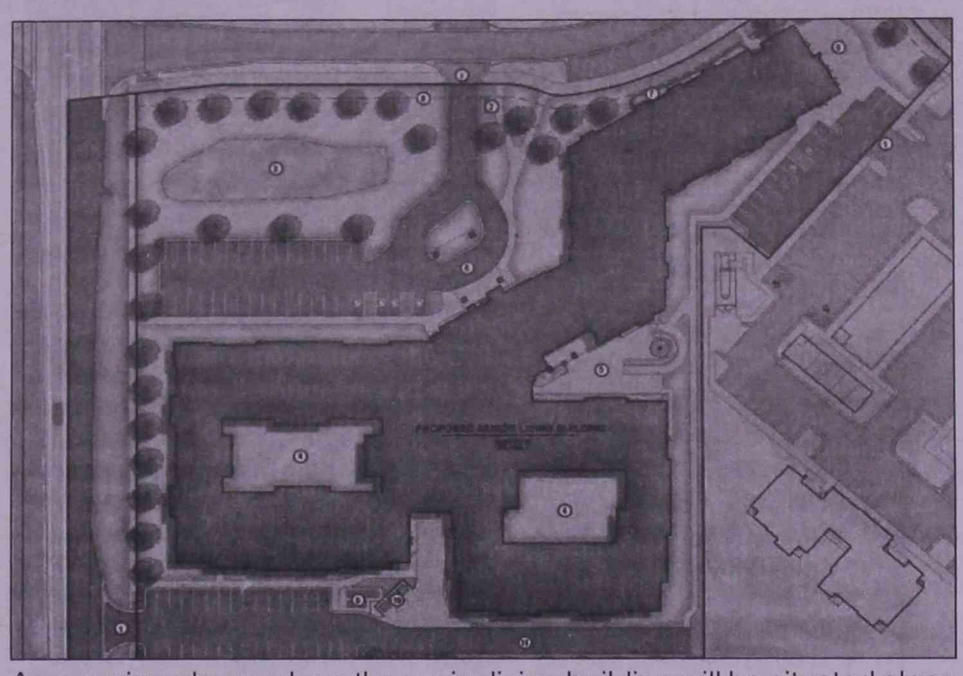
Prairie Wolf Station and the adjacent Prairie Wolf Landing are proposed to become a village center, with the project estimated to cost about $120 million. It will include single-family homes, condominium units, townhomes, apartments and commercial, office and retail buildings.

Representatives with Eastbrook Homes and its subsidiary, Signature Land Development, said they are planning to build Prairie Wolf Landing – which will include single-family dwelling units, detached site condominiums, terrace homes and two-story townhouse buildings – on the east end of the 82-acre property south of 84th Street. The Planning Commission voted in October to recommend township board approval of preliminary plans for the first two phases of the proposed development.

Because Prairie Wolf Landing does not have the same owner as Prairie Wolf Station, Wells said it will not be impacted by the consent judgment and work will proceed on the east end of the site.



Gaines Township Community Development director Dan Wells (at right) outlines features that will be included in the senior living facility at Prairie Wolf Station during the Nov. 20 meeting of the township's Planning Commission.



An overview shows where the senior living building will be situated along Kalamazoo Avenue near the south end of the Prairie Wolf Station mixed-use development. A restaurant-sized café in the upper right wing will serve residents and the public. **Source: gainestownship.org**

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TKS fourth-grader earns recognition as National Math Star

Move over "Young Sheldon," because Page Elementary School fourth-grader Lilly Griswold is on her way.

"Math every day," cheered the 9-year-old Griswold. "I just love math."

And she's good at it – very good, according to school officials. The fourth-grader is now a member of National Math Stars, a highly selective program designed to identify and nurture exceptional mathematical talent throughout the country, according to Thornapple Kellogg Schools officials.

Griswold reportedly is one of only 100 students in the nation accepted into the program for 2025-26 and one of only three from the state of Michigan.

"I love using math to solve problems," Griswold said. "One day on the bus, I decided I wanted to calculate the surface area of my bus, so I came up with equations to do it and by the time I got to school, I had the answer."

Her mom, Katherine Key Griswold, realized early in Lilly's development that she was gifted, but it wasn't until her third-grade math scores came in last spring that she realized her daughter is exceptionally gifted in math.

"Mr. Hanna told us her math scores blew the roof off the test," said Katherine. "So, from there we started looking at where we could get her into some gifted and talented programs."

The young math star began meeting with district administrators to gather all of her test scores and find options for her. Griswold's mom had lots of questions.

"Where do we place her and how do we do this?" Katherine said. "She's really doing sixth-grade math or higher right now. How do we keep her excited about learning and at the same time still challenging her?"

Griswold's family helped research program options to fit her accelerated learning and found the National Math Stars, a program which looks for students in the 98th and 99th percentile in the country. And she made the cut.

Griswold took multiple tests over the summer with math problems well beyond the fourth-grade curriculum. Still, she excelled.

Of the 6,384 applications for the program, 389 finalists were named and 100 were selected to be the newest members of the National Math Stars program, according to TKS officials.

Griswold is part of the "Voyager" program within the National Math Stars. It is a 10-year, fully funded program to support and inspire students in their mathematical journeys.

Over the 10 years, the program invests more than $100,000 in each star student. Members of the program receive personalized academic coaching, access to national-level math programs, family support, a math mentor and financial support.

Griswold gets to choose topics of interest to her. Each semester she will take advanced math courses she can work on independently in her regular school classroom at Page Elementary, as well as additional lessons at home.



Lilly Griswold at the National Math Stars Welcome Weekend in Houston, Texas. **Courtesy photos**

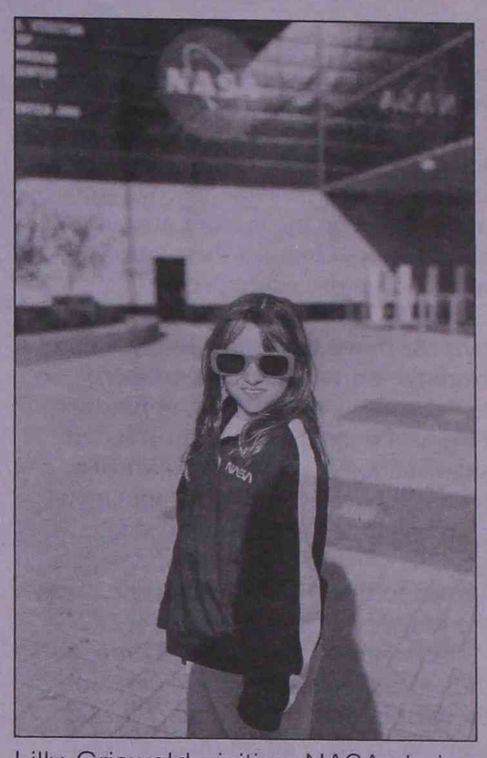
There's also support for Griswold to attend summer math camps, competitions and other enrichment opportunities. A dedicated family advisor is assigned to assist each family throughout the 10-year program with things such as college counseling, career exploration and collaboration with partners to advocate for the child's needs in schools.

"We wouldn't have access to these kinds of experiences without this program," her mom said. "They're really trying to diversify the opportunities for these students."

Griswold is excited about the program.

"I like coding a lot and I like art and the physics behind art," said the fourth-grader, who hopes to combine her passion for art along with her expertise in mathematics.

Recently, Griswold attended a welcome weekend in Texas for the new members of the Math Stars. While there she was able to pick different interests, meet other students and try a host of challenges.



Lilly Griswold visiting NASA during the National Math Stars Welcome Weekend in Houston, Texas.

One experience she particularly enjoyed was creating infinite rooms using mirrors to make it appear as if an image never ends. She also loved working with giant yo-yos, understanding the physics behind them and mastering tricks with them.

During the event, Griswold also visited NASA space center where she touched moon rocks, ate astronaut ice cream and got to submit questions to former astronaut Ellen Ochoa. Two of Lilly's

See **STAR** on 8




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Davenport nursing students collect winter clothing for those in need

Senior nursing students from the Davenport University's W.A. Lettinga Grand Rapids Campus recently demonstrated leadership and compassion by organizing a winter clothing drive to support the Refugee Education Center.

The students collected over 30 warm coats, as well as hats, gloves and other cold-weather essentials to help families prepare for the winter season.

Amanda Alemdar, assistant professor with the College of Health Professions, said the initiative met an important community need and also highlighted students' commitment to service, an integral part of the nursing profession. Their efforts reflect the core values of empathy, advocacy and community engagement that define our program.

"We extend our sincere appreciation to our senior nursing students whose hard work and generosity made this drive a success, as well as to everyone who contributed," she added. "Their dedication is making a meaningful difference in the lives of local refugee families."

According to Alemdar, the clothing drive is an initiative the nursing students have been involved with in the past and, when she proposed the idea recently, the students were immediately on board.

Carly Snyder, nursing student, grew up experiencing Michigan winters and knows how important an extra layer of clothing, especially a coat, is. That's why she was more than happy to be involved in the clothing drive.

"I am elated that the efforts of Davenport's Winter 2025 Nursing Cohort will help keep members of our community warm this winter," said Snyder. "Being able to provide those extra layers for those in need even made my life a little warmer and my smile a little brighter."

Nursing student Alycia DeBoer was equally excited about the clothing drive.

"This was an initiative that I could get behind because it involved helping out a vulnerable population that may not have the necessities they need," she said. "It was meaningful because it helped me realize what a small difference I can make in someone's life. It also allowed me to connect with other individuals who face obstacles that often go unnoticed."

Another nursing student, Anna Bowman, said the clothing drive was a meaningful project for her to be a part of.

"It reminded me how fortunate I am not to worry about basic necessities like warm clothes for the winter," said Bowman. "Having that perspective shift and the opportunity to refocus my energy on helping others was truly a joy. The Refugee Education Center does incredible work meeting needs in our community, so being able to contribute to their mission made this experience so impactful." — *DM*



Davenport University nursing students show off winter attire recently collected during a clothing drive to support the Refugee Education Center. The group included (back row, l-r) Ashley Dietrich, Melissa Maben, Alycia DeBoer, Carly Snyder, Anna Bowman and Adara Grey; as well as (front, l-r) Shannon Pomorski, Lily Mathieu, Nicky Chezick and Alec Sturr. **Courtesy photo**

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INCREASE:
A ROAD MAP TO FINANCIAL HEALTH

Trick yourself


Zach Santmier

Happy Thanksgiving week to you and your family! This is the time of year when we notice how full our homes and tables feel — so it's a great week to take a look at how full our financial tanks feel as well.

If your financial fuel tank is a little emptier than you'd like it at this time of year, take heart. We have been working on the eight marks that, when achieved in succession, create a full financial tank.

Over the past couple of weeks, we've already covered Step 1: Spending less than you make and Step 2: Giving 10%—which properly adjusts our mindset for the remaining 90% of our budget. And, today, we're moving to Step 3 on the Fuel Gauge: establishing something I call your "New Zero" in your checking account.

I still remember the feeling Lauren and I used to have early in our marriage. We were finally doing it right—we were spending less than we made (most of the time), we were tracking our spending and were on the same page. But every single month, there was a sense of anxiety as bills started automatically pulling out. Would the money be there? Would the electric bill or the mortgage hit before the paycheck? Would we dip under? Would we overdraft?

Maybe you've felt that too. That constant low-grade anxiety that hums under the surface even when you're "doing everything right."

So what did I do? I tried what most people try. I threw an extra little cushion in the checking account. Just a couple hundred here, a few hundred there. And here's the problem I ran into—and maybe you can relate: once that cushion was in there, I forgot it was a cushion.

I'd walk through a store, see something I didn't plan on buying, and think, "Well… I've got the money." And sure enough, before long, the cushion would shrink. Then disappear. And I'd be right back to stressing over the timing of bills.

And one day I realized: this isn't a budgeting issue… this is a clarity issue. I needed to know exactly how much money in that account was truly available—and how much wasn't.

So I tricked myself.

I saved up one full month of our living expenses—at the time it was about $3,000—and I told myself, "When my checking account hits this number, I'm broke." That $3,000 became what I called my New Zero.

Now, mentally, when I saw that number, it didn't look like money I could spend anymore. It looked like zero. It looked like the bottom of the tank. And once I hit it, the spending stopped. The bank was closed. The extra shirt or snack could wait. Takeout could wait. That New Zero served as a guardrail, and it brought peace into my finances that I had never felt before.

Even now, years later, Lauren and I still have a New Zero. The amount has changed—our expenses have gone up—but the principle hasn't. Every couple of months, I review it, round up to the nearest thousand, and adjust if needed.

So as we enter this consumeristic season, let's create a New Zero so you don't ever see an actual zero in your checking account.

How much do you spend on average each month? Remember, it needs to be less than you make! And then round that number up. That number is now your New Zero target. It's time to establish it and begin saving to fund it.

And give yourself the gift of never seeing a real zero in your checking account again once you have your fully funded New Zero.

Your future self—and your stress level—will thank you.

To get caught up on past articles, visit trumbleagency.com/increase where a complete library of all of the articles can be found.

Zach Santmier is the owner of Trumble Agency, Inc. and the author of the personal financial course, Increase. He focuses on helping families escape paycheck-to-paycheck living so they can freely pursue their ideal future.

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STAR
Continued from Page 6

questions were selected.

Ochoa is an American engineer, former astronaut and was the first Hispanic director of the Johnson Space Center. They also visited the Museum of Natural Science.

"It gave us a look at what opportunities look like for her and how she can continue learning and growing," Katherine said. "At some point she's going to outpace some of her educators and us as parents."

It was an exciting and eye-opening weekend.

"I find math all around me all the time," the fourth-grader said. "I love to self-teach. I ask myself questions and figure out ways to find the answers.

"I especially like getting to know more about coding and I want to find out what kind of math I can mix in with art because those are my two favorite things," she added.

Griswold has been a TKS student since kindergarten and she wants to continue her education locally with her classmates, but also in the Math Stars program. She has two additional math classes per week outside of school, a session with her Math Stars mentor and can work independently on math in her TKS classroom.

"We've really had incredible experiences with all the teachers here at TK," said Katherine. "I'm incredibly proud of Lilly and truly grateful to her TK teachers for the role they've each played in her academic journey.

"Lilly is where she is because of the teachers who have helped her already. We are one of two schools in the state with a student selected for this program."

Michigan does not require an "Individualized Education Program" for gifted and talented students, only for students with learning disabilities.

Griswold's mom hopes this experience can help spark future conversation about additional ways to help nurture exceptional talent.

PES principal Amy Forman added that Griswold is an incredible student.

"We are excited to watch her grow and give her the time and space and do whatever we can do to help her along this journey," Forman said.

– Report courtesy of Thornapple Kellogg Schools

VIEW Group
SPECIAL SECTION



Holiday Gift Guide





Gifts for every music lover

Music provides the soundtrack for people's lives. Music evokes strong emotions and can inspire and motivate individuals while also helping them calm down and reflect. Finding the right gift for a music lover this holiday season can be a worthwhile endeavor, as the world of music offers an array of gift possibilities. Whether a gift recipient plays an instrument, loves live performances or enjoys singing, there is a gift out there to hit all the right notes.

THE LISTENING EXPERIENCE

People who prioritize the listening experience will enjoy quality audio equipment. High-fidelity headphones or an upgraded Bluetooth speaker can enhance daily listening sessions, allowing individuals to fully immerse themselves in their favorite tracks. Although digital music is the go-to nowadays, plenty of music lovers are vinyl enthusiasts. For them, a new record player with modern features, such as Bluetooth connectivity or record storage, would make an ideal gift. For others, a subscription to a quality audio streaming service will offer uninterrupted music on demand.

MUSIC CREATOR

Many music lovers enjoy creating their art. A gift that supports those endeavors will be cherished. Beginners may appreciate entry-level instruments, like a ukulele or a keyboard. Those already playing and creating might appreciate personalized sheet music, new guitar strings and capo, drumsticks, or upgraded software for recording and mixing sound.

DEVOTED FAN

Music fans enjoy expressing their devotion to favorite bands and other musicians. Therefore, artist merchandise can make fitting gifts. Vintage T-shirts, framed album covers, souvenirs from past shows, and any other band-related memorabilia will keep music fans happy.

LIVE MUSIC

A live show is many music lovers' ideal experience. Tickets to a concert, solo vocal night, theater show, or orchestra performance will certainly strike the right chords with music lovers.

— Source: Metro Creative Connection

Toy types to avoid when gifting kids under 5

The holiday season presents plenty of opportunities to spread cheer and bring joy into the lives of others. That's particularly true for parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles of young children. Few things are more enjoyable come the holiday season than watching a youngster's eyes light up upon receiving a sought-after gift.

Well-meaning adults and even older kids anxious to give a younger sibling or cousin a coveted gift must remember to keep safety in mind when shopping for especially young children. Certain toys may pose a threat to children age five and under. As holiday shoppers begin to search for gifts for children in that age group, they might want to avoid the following types of toys.

·Toys with lots of small pieces: Toys with small, detachable pieces can be hazardous to kids age five and under because kids might intentionally or mistakenly put the tiny pieces into their mouths, which increases their risk of choking. Legos are a wildly popular gift come the holiday season, but it's important that shoppers read the package and purchase a Lego set that's age-appropriate. According to a recent report from Consumer Product Safety Commission, 9 percent of toy-related injuries in kids age four and younger occurred while the children were playing with building sets. Though building sets provide a host of benefits, not the least of which is the fun children get from playing with them, it's imperative to purchase age-appropriate sets.



·Toys with an electronic component: Toys with electronic components can pose a number of dangers to children five and under. Such products can heat up, potentially causing burns. And wire coverings can fray over time and thus expose children to electrical currents. When shopping for children five and younger, skip toys with an electrical component.

·Motorized gifts: Motorized gifts like scooters, cars and non-traditional bicycles also pose a threat to children five and younger. Motorized gifts may reach speeds that kids cannot safely manage, as youngsters' motor skills are not fully developed by age five.

·Toys with sharp points: Sharp points also pose a threat to children five and younger. Kids can easily suffer lacerations, eye injuries or other issues that pose a threat to their physical safety when playing with toys with sharp points or edges. Toys with soft, rounded edges and no points are ideal for children age five and under.

·Projectile toys: Toys that shoot projectiles pose a danger to children and anyone who happens to be in the room with youngers playing with such items. Eye injuries and bruises are two injuries that can occur when children five and under play with projectiles.

The chance to light up a child's eyes with the perfect gift is part of what makes the holiday season such a special time of year. But it's imperative that shoppers find age-appropriate toys for children.

— Source: Metro Creative Connection

CALEDONIA LIBRARY

HOLIDAY BOOK SALE!

Public Sale
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Friends of the Library only Pre-Sale
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Courtesy of the Caledonia Friends of the Library!
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Ideal gifts for those who love the outdoors



Many people find that the great outdoors is the perfect place to spend their days. Activities run the gamut from hunting and fishing to hiking and camping. Plenty of other interests, like birdwatching or mountain biking, also maximize time spent in the outdoors.

According to the "Outdoor Participation Trends Report" from the Outdoor Industry Association, gateway activities like hiking, camping and fishing each gained more than two million new participants over the last year. There's also been a surge in participation in such activities among seniors and youth, contributing to a more multigenerational outdoors experience. There's also been participation growth among Black and Hispanic Americans, indicating long-term momentum toward equity and inclusion.

When it comes to holiday giving, tapping into the interests of outdoor enthusiasts is a great way to offer gifts that will be used and appreciated. Here are some ideas when making holiday shopping lists.

· **First aid kit:** No matter the activity, having an up-to-date and well-stocked first aid kit can be a lifesaver when spending time in the outdoors. The kit should include items like splints and bandage wraps for immobilizing ankles or limbs in the event of sprains.

· **Quality wool socks:** Nothing can derail an outdoor adventure faster than wet, cold or blistered feet. Wool socks are a must because they are moisture-wicking, warm and comfortable.

· **Insulated, waterproof jacket:** A high-quality jacket for outdoor adventures that will be efficient at trapping heat, windproof and water-resistant is a thoughtful gift. Patagonia is a popular brand of outerwear, but retailers like Columbia and REI also merit consideration.

· **Trail shoes or sandals:** Supportive, comfortable and non-slip footwear is a given when enjoying the great outdoors. Depending on the activity, there are plenty of options from boots to hikers to trail sandals to consider.

· **Waist pack:** Packing light for short jaunts in the wilderness may include stocking a waist pack (also known as a fanny pack) with must-have items. They are lightweight, comfortable and spacious enough for the essentials without getting bogged down by a backpack or another bag.

· **Buff:** A buff is a tube of lightweight, stretchy material that serves innumerable functions in the great outdoors. It can be used to shield the neck from the sun or wind, or to absorb sweat or keep hair out of the face. A buff can be useful on a hiking or backpacking trip, or just about any outdoor activity.

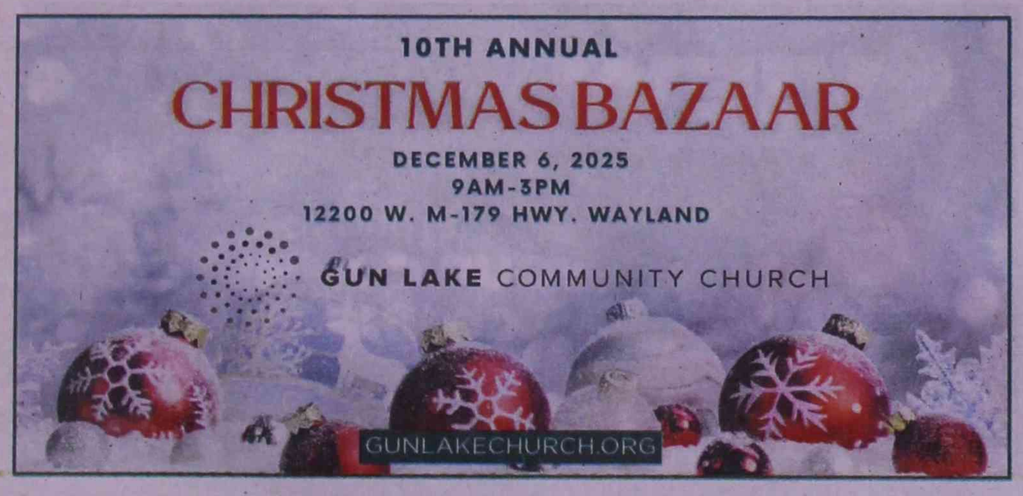
· **Headlamp:** Visibility is essential when enjoying the great outdoors, and many activities happen during dawn and dusk when light may be at a premium. A headlamp keeps things hands-free and sheds light on surroundings or up-close tasks, like setting up fishing hooks or field dressing game.

· **Satellite communicator:** A satellite communicator can keep outdoors enthusiasts safe and at ease when off the grid. Certain regions have spotty cell coverage, and satellite devices will do better at sending out messages or SOS signals should something go awry.

· **Hiking poles:** Telescoping hiking poles are adjustable and lightweight, and offer extra support and balance when on trails.

Outdoor enthusiasts will benefit from gifts tailored to their love of nature, wildlife and adventure.

— Source: Metro Creative Connection



CALEDONIA TOWNSHIP
6th ANNUAL HOLIDAY
Luminary Walk



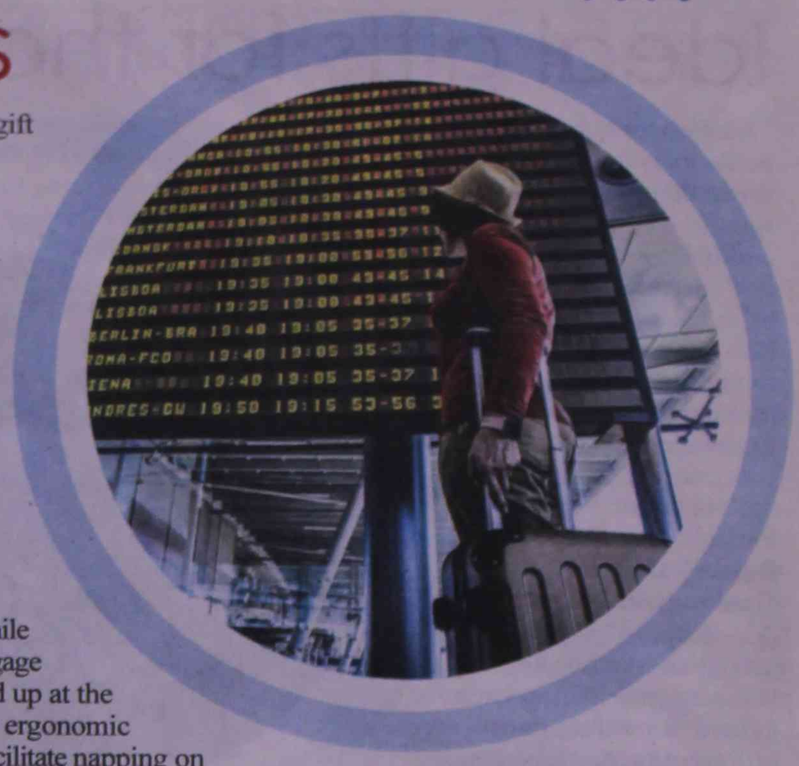
PLEASE JOIN US once again for our 6th Annual Holiday Luminary Walk!

Come enjoy a walk down the Caledonia Trail, located near the Community Green Park and the Caledonia Library (9309 Dobber Wenger).

The trail will again be lit with over 1000 luminaries. Grab a donut and a cup of hot chocolate at the Pavilion, then visit Santa at the Amphitheater before you start your walk. The Dickens Carolers will again be joining us. We will have a Toys for Tots box if you would like to donate an unwrapped toy.

In case of inclement weather, the walk will be moved to December 14th at the same time.
Any questions, feel free to contact the Caledonia Township office. 616-891-0070

Thoughtful gifts for seniors



Gifts from friends and loved ones can make people feel cherished and valued. When these people are the older adults in one's life, such as parents or grandparents, gifts take on additional meaning because they can warm the hearts of very special people.

Finding unique gifts for seniors can be challenging because these individuals have been receiving gifts for many years, and many may already have everything they need. Inspiration is everything when shopping for the ideal gifts for the older adults in one's life, and the following are some categories that can serve as a springboard for what to get seniors this holiday season.

COMFORT AND MOBILITY

Although people like to say, "age is just a number," getting older may come with a few aches and pains and even some limitations. Gifts like seat cushions that correct posture or easy on/off sock helpers can be helpful. Cloud foam slippers or even a grab bar that attaches into the hood of the car door can be great gifts.

FITNESS AND FUN

Gifts that cater to interests, well-being and more can be ideal. Active seniors may appreciate a fitness tracker or exercise equipment (yoga mat, light dumbbells, resistance bands) to facilitate fitness goals. Storage solutions for hobbies and craft items also can be fitting. See-through containers to store paints or beads or an organizer for fishing tackle can make seniors' hobbies even more enjoyable. A roll-up puzzle mat is great for puzzle enthusiasts to protect their work until completion.

FAMILY GIFTS

Seniors also may appreciate gifts that touch the heart. A custom recipe cutting board that features a treasured family recipe may become a cherished item. A customized photo calendar that features family members' birthdays and other key events also is thoughtful. A photo jewelry locket makes a nice gift for a special senior woman.

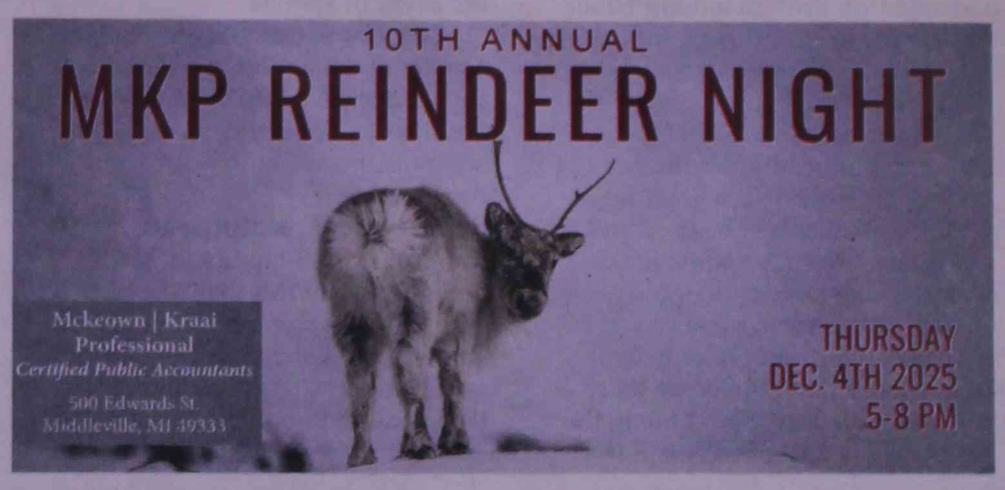
TRAVEL GIFTS

Seniors typically have more time to devote to travel than younger adults, and gifts that cater to their wanderlust are a perfect fit. Digital GPS-based devices that connect to keys or luggage can help prevent lost items while traveling. Bright luggage that won't get mixed up at the baggage carousel or ergonomic neck pillows that facilitate napping on a flight also can be appreciated. Those who know destinations the seniors in their lives may want to visit can purchase plane or cruise tickets as a generous gift for someone special.

Various categories can provide ample inspiration when shopping for gifts for seniors this holiday season.

— Source: Metro Creative Connection







Sporting News

CHS alumnus, McKenzie, named top GLIAC football player in 2025



Saginaw Valley State University red-shirt sophomore quarterback Mason McKenzie, a 2023 Caledonia High School graduate, has been named the 2025 GLIAC Football Player of the Year after leading the Cardinals to a 5-2 conference record and leading the conference in total offense. **Photo courtesy Saginaw Valley State University**

Saginaw Valley State redshirt-sophomore quarterback Mason McKenzie, who guided the Caledonia varsity football team to a state runner-up finish as a senior in 2022, has been named the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) 2025 conference Player of the Year.

It is the second major GLIAC award for McKenzie who was named the 2024 GLIAC Freshman of the Year.

McKenzie led the SVSU Cardinals in both passing yards (2,086) and rushing yards (942) this season, topping the GLIAC in total offense with 275.3 yards per game—a mark that ranks 22nd in Division II. He hit the 200-passing-yard mark four times this season and rushed for 100 yards five times, combining the passing and rushing totals twice this season (Northeastern State 243 passing/101 rushing and Northern Michigan 243 passing/110 rushing). He scored 27 total touchdowns (17 passing/10 rushing), scoring at least one of each in 10 of the 11 games this year. His best performance came in week 10, where he accounted for five of the six Cardinal touchdowns in the game (2 passing/3 rushing).

McKenzie was one of 16 All-GLIAC selections for the Cardinals this season and one of four to earn first team honors.

"Mason was the most exciting player in the GLIAC this season," SVSU head coach Ryan Brady said. "It has been incredible how quickly he has developed. I credit Mason's relentless work ethic and his desire to be elite. He is an outstanding leader, and his teammates thrive off his competitiveness and will to win. Mason is one of the best players I have ever coached, and he's just scratched the surface of his true potential. One of my favorite qualities about Mason is he loves to compete at everything."

McKenzie played in three games as a true freshman and then took over as the full-time signal caller for the Cardinals as a red-shirt freshman in 2024.

The Cardinals were 6-5 as a team this fall with a 5-2 GLIAC mark. They won their first four GLIAC ballgames before back-to-back losses to Davenport University and Ferris State University.

SVSU closed out the 2025 season with a 24-21 win at Michigan Tech Nov. 15 with McKenzie firing a six-yard touchdown pass to Braden Hill with eight seconds to go, at the end of a 75-yard drive, to clinch the win for the Cardinals. He was 30-of-46 passing for 240 yards and three touchdowns in the win.

— *BB*

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GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Zoning Text Amendment

At a regular meeting of the Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees, held Monday, November 10, 2025, at 88555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE, Caledonia, MI 49316, the Board considered a proposed ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance of Gaines Charter Township to limit the allowable hours of electronic changeable message (ECM) signs in Residential zoning districts and to allow ECM signs as special land uses for non-residential uses in Residential zoning districts.

The proposed ordinance makes modifications to Chapter 24 Section 24.40 D.4 of the Gaines Charter Township Zoning Ordinance: changing "4. Hours. In residential zoning districts. ECM signs shall be shut off between 11pm and 6am." To "4. Hours. In residential zoning districts, ECM signs shall be shut off between 10pm and 7am." Additional changes are proposed for Chapter 24, Section 24.80, Table 24.80, to allow electronic changeable message (ECM) signs as special land uses for non-residential uses in residential zoning districts, and for Table 24.80 to read in its entirety as follows:

TABLE 24.80: PERMANENT SIGNS-REIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

TYPE	REQUIREMENTS	
Freestanding Sogn: Ground Sign for Non-Residential Uses or Bed and Breakfasts	Zoning District	All residential districts
	Maximum Number	1 per lot
	Maximum Size	16 s.f. for bed and breakfasts 32 s.f. for all other uses
	Maximum Height	6 ft.
	Maximum Setbacks	10 feet from street right-of-way or easement 20 feet from all other property lines
	Illumination	External – for bed and breakfasts Internal and external (permitted) and ECM (special land use) – all other non-residential
Freestanding Sign: Ground Sign for Residential Development Entry Point	Zoning District	All residential districts
	Maximum Number	1 per entry
	Maximum Size	48 s.f.
	Maximum Height	6
	Minimum Setbacks	10 ft. from all property lines
	Illumination	External
Wall Sign: for Non-residential Uses, Bed and Breakfasts, or Major Home Occupations	Zoning District	All residential districts
	Maximum Number	1 per building
	Maximum Size	8 s.f. for bed and breakfasts and major home occupations 32 s.f. for all other non-residential uses
	Illumination	External

The Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees shall hold a public hearing Monday, December 8, 2025 during their regularly scheduled meeting which commences at 7:00PM, to consider these proposed changes.

A true and complete copy of the proposed ordinance is available in the Office of the Clerk at the Gaines Charter Township Hall, located at 8555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE, Caledonia, MI 49316.

Michael A. Brew, Clerk

Gaines Charter Township

Being better on the board boosts Slagel on Finals scoreboard

■TK junior D1 Diving state runner-up

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Grand Rapids Gators junior Lydia Slagel went two steps up the medal stand Friday, Nov. 21.

Slagel finished as the state runner-up at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals hosted by Oakland University in Rochester improving on a fourth place finish from her sophomore season at the finals.

Slagel was in third place following Thursday evening's prelim's and semi-finals, and then with successes on some tougher dives late in the competition she moved up into second place.

Kalamazoo Central senior Kiya Bowman made sure no one was catching her after she came out of Thursday's semi-finals with the lead. She won the state championship with an overall 11-dive score of 422.60 points. Slagel closed the meet with a score of 389.80.

Both girls were really outstanding right from the start. Slagel had the lead after the first three dives, even with Bowman earning a stellar 50.60 points on her back 1 ½ somersault dive in the pike position in round two. Slagel scored more than 40 points on three of her first four dives of the competition.

Slagel performed a strong dive 403C in round four, an inward 1 ½ somersault dive in the tuck position, that earned her 41.80 points. Bowman had the same dive in the round and tallied a total score of 44.00 points to move into the lead. Bowman led the rest of the competition.

"She really hit everything," Slagel said of Bowman, "and she put together a spectacular meet."

"I was really just going for second or third. That is what I came here to do, and I did it," Slagel added.

It was third place for Slagel after the five preliminary dives, and she was still in third at the conclusion of round eight, the end of the semifinals. She moved into second with her forward two somersault dive in the pike position in round ten and then held that spot through the end with a strong inward dive in the pike position in round 11 that was judged one of her top dives of the meet.

"Really, I'm happy with all of them," Slagel said of her state finals dives. "Everything [was better than at regionals], I put in the work and I fixed things, and I made things work better than what they were."



Grand Rapids Gators junior Lydia Slagel holds her pike position as she spins over the pool at Oakland University in Rochester during the finals of the diving competition at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals Friday, Nov. 21. Slagel finished as the state runner-up and is now a two-time state medalist.

She said most of that work happened on the board – better approaches and a better mindset.

Slagel said she'll start working on bigger and better things soon in hopes of moving up the medal stand at the state finals again as a senior. There isn't too much to do, possibly swap some tuck position dives for pike position dives which have a higher degree of difficulty.

She plans to be a manger for the boys' co-op this winter and to spend some time working with those guys. The Grand Rapids Gators girls' team is a co-op with Thornapple Kellogg, West Michigan Aviation, West Catholic and Hopkins. The boys' team, the Grand Rapids Gars, combines Thornapple Kellogg, Hopkins,



Grand Rapids Gators junior Lydia Slagel celebrates with her all-state certificate and her medal after placing second in the diving competition at the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals at Oakland University in Rochester Friday, Nov. 21. **Photos by Brett Bremer**

Unity Christian, West Michigan Aviation Academy and West Catholic.

Over the years, Slagel has trained and competed in the Hastings Community Diving Club, and club coach Francesca Pileci has coached the Gators' divers this fall.

"She does everything," Slagel said. "She is the best person. I come into practice every day and she is just right there ready to go. She is always there saying you're going to do great, you've got this. I'll be there standing behind the board and I'll look over and I just see her big smile. It just helps me to know that I am okay and all this work we have put in is here to pay off. We're going to do great.

"She has always just been there for me. Let me tell you, I have some rough days and she is just like, 'girl you're going to be fine,' and we make it through. She's my deck mom. I love her like a mom."

The top 16 in each event at the state finals earned medals. Slagel was the only diver among the top six scorers who was not a senior.

Slagel's 17 points put the Gator program in 24th-place in the overall final team standings. Unsurprisingly, Ann Arbor Pioneer won the MHSAA L.P. Division 1 team championship with 404 points. Jenison was a distant second with 249 points ahead of Northville 193, Zeeland 179, Canton 109, Brighton 108, Rockford 89 and Caledonia 79 in the top ten.

Pioneer girls won seven of the meet's 12 events and West Bloomfield senior Elizabeth Eichbrect was an individual stand-out with state championships in the freestyle distance races. She set state finals records in the 200-yard freestyle and 500-yard freestyle races Thursday and then took state championships in both events Friday. She set the record in the 200 freestyle at 1 minute 45.05 seconds in the prelim's and then won with a time of 1:45.98. in the 500 freestyle, she set a record in the prelim's at 4:42.00 and then won the championship in 4:42.89.

Pioneer sophomore Tallulah Beg was the only other girl to win two individual events. She took the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:03.42 and the 200-yard individual medley in 2:04.15. Beg was also a part of Pioneer's winning 200-yard medley relay team.

Freshman Kia Alert was a part of the Pioneer 200-yard medley relay and 200-yard freestyle relay wins, and she won the 50-yard freestyle in 22.91. Senior teammate Katelyn Van Ryn won the 100-yard freestyle in 49.94 and was a part of the 200-yard freestyle relay and 400-yard freestyle relay wins for the Pioneer squad.

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the following request:

Summary of Request: Request for an amendment to the zoning map to rezone a 40.5-acre parcel from PUD (Steelcase) to Light Industrial..
Property Address: 7147 Patterson Ave SE, Caledonia, MI 49316
Parcel Numbers: 41-22-12-100-031
Applicant: Chris Sander; Microsoft Corporation
Date and Time of Hearing: December 18th, 2025, at 7:00 pmm
Location of Hearing: Gaines Charter Township Offices, Board Room
8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Any interested party may appear and be heard on said proposal. Information related to this request may be inspected, by appt., during regular business hours at the Planning Department window located in the Gaines Charter Township Offices. For information related to this request, contact Dan Wells at (616) 980-6188 or dan.wells@gainestownship.org. To be entered into the public record, signed written comments must be received by 5:00 PM on December 18th, 2025.

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations should contact Kim Triplett at (616) 698-6640 one week prior to the meeting to request mobility, visual or any other assistance.

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Gaines Charter Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the following request:

Summary of Request: Request for a special use permit to construct a 4,800 square foot accessory building in the Agricultural/ Rural Residential zoning district.
Property Address: 8610 & 8620 Kalamazoo Ave SE, Caledonia, MI 49316
Parcel Numbers: 41-22-21-100-007, 41-22-21-100-009
Applicant: Peter Sherman
Date and Time of Hearing: December 18th, 2025, at 7:00 pmm
Location of Hearing: Gaines Charter Township Offices, Board Room
8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, MI 49316

Any interested party may appear and be heard on said proposal. Information related to this request may be inspected, by appt., during regular business hours at the Planning Department window located in the Gaines Charter Township Offices. For information related to this request, contact Dan Wells at (616) 980-6188 or dan.wells@gainestownship.org. To be entered into the public record, signed written comments must be received by 5:00 PM on December 18th, 2025.

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations should contact Kim Triplett at (616) 698-6640 one week prior to the meeting to request mobility, visual or any other assistance.

TOWNSHIP BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF THORNAPPLE
Barry County, Michigan

Board member Campbell, supported by Board member Stanton, moved the adoption of the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 01-2025

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE 21.42, AS ADDED); TO AMEND ARTICLE XXI PERTAINING TO GENERAL PROVISIONS; AND TO AMEND SECTION 32.2 PERTAINING TO DEFINITIONS.

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP, BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN, ORDAINS:

Section 1. Amendment of Article XXI. Article XXI of the Thornapple Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the following Section 21.42, which reads as follows:

Section 21.42 Bubblers and Ice Retardant Systems

(a) Purpose. The use of bubblers or other ice retardant systems interferes with the safe, convenient, and reasonable use and navigability of bodies of water in the winter. Absent regulations, bubblers and ice retardant systems may be dangerous to people who are present on the ice, including, but not limited to, snowmobilers and operators of ATVs, children playing, pedestrians, cross-country skiers, and individuals ice fishing.

(b) Prohibition. The use of bubblers or other ice retardant systems, as defined herein, shall be expressly prohibited on Duncan Lake and the Thornapple River, unless otherwise required for the maintenance of essential services, public infrastructure, or in the case of an emergency, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.

Section 2. Amendment of Section 32.2. Section 32.2 of the Thornapple Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the following Section 32.2.17.1, which reads as follows:

Section 32.2.17.1 Bubbler or Ice Retardant System
Means any machinery, motor, engine, item, equipment, mechanism, pump, compressor or compression system or any structural, mechanical or other system whether automatically or manually operated and which is designed, intended or functions to interrupt, stop or slow down the natural freezing of waterways or to break up any ice surrounding or adjacent to any boat, vessel, pier, dock or seawall as a means of a wet storage system for such boat or vessel, or protection for any dock, structure, pier or seawall, during the winter months. This definition also includes any system or apparatus that uses aerators, forced air, props, a pump, agitation or other motion to weaken or prevent ice within a lake or body of water.

Section 3. Severability and Captions. This Ordinance and the various parts, sections, subsections, sentences, phrases and clauses thereof are hereby declared severable. If any part, section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby. The captions included at the beginning of each Section are for convenience only and shall not be considered a part of this Ordinance.

Section 4. Repeal. Any existing ordinance or resolution that is inconsistent or conflicts with this Ordinance is hereby repealed to the extent of any such conflict or inconsistency.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance is ordered to take effect eight (8) days following publication of adoption in *The Sun and News*, a newspaper having general circulation in the Township, under the provisions of 2006 Public Act 110, except as may be extended under the provisions of such Act.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
YES: Schaefer Medenblik Bouchard Campbell DeMaagd Rairigh Stanton
NO: None

Declared adopted on: November 10, 2025

DNR advises waterfowl hunters to safeguard against bird flu outbreak

Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials would like to remind waterfowl hunters to take precautions to protect themselves and domestic animals from highly pathogenic avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu.

This fall, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has reported increasing outbreaks of HPAI in commercial and backyard poultry flocks, including new detections in counties with popular waterfowl hunting destinations.

The DNR reports more HPAI detections in 2025 than were found in 2024; 130 wild birds have tested positive for HPAI in Michigan, with most detections in Canada geese, bald eagles and red-tailed hawks. Wildlife detections and pending cases are posted on the DNR's HPAI webpage.

The disease has been found in every Michigan watershed, indicating that it has occurred throughout the state.

HPAI has been detected in surrounding states and other parts of the U.S. as well. Hunters traveling out of state are advised to follow all health and safety precautions regardless of where they are hunting. Those interested may visit the USDA H5N1 Influenza webpage for more information about national detections and response.

Michigan's earliest waterfowl season opened Sept. 1 and the final season closes Feb. 15.

"Make sure to take appropriate precautions when field dressing wild birds. In order to kill the virus, use a food thermometer to ensure that meat is cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit," said Dr. Scott Larsen, DNR wildlife veterinarian. "It's also important to properly clean and disinfect gear and equipment before coming into contact with domestic birds."

HPAI is a highly contagious respiratory disease that causes sickness and sometimes death in wild birds and mammals. HPAI infections can occur at any time of the year, but upticks are expected during spring and fall waterfowl migrations. Wild birds can carry HPAI without appearing sick.

Anyone who observes a die-off of six or more wild birds is asked to report it through the DNR Eyes in the Field online tool or a local DNR field office.

The risk of HPAI infecting people is low, but the virus can spread through direct contact with infected animals or material. Hunters should always take precautions when handling wild birds to avoid contracting or spreading bird flu.

Those precautions include things like:

Do not harvest or handle wild birds that are obviously sick or found dead.

Process wild birds in the field. Remains from processed birds should be buried on-site or double-bagged and disposed of with household trash.

Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling and cleaning wild birds, and wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand cleanser, even if hands are not visibly soiled.

Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth when handling wild birds.

Do not eat, drink or smoke while handling or cleaning wild birds.

Cook all meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit to kill any viruses.

Thoroughly clean and disinfect all knives, equipment and surfaces that come into contact with wild birds.

If you have close contact with obviously sick or dead wild birds, or surfaces contaminated by them, monitor for these symptoms for 10 days after your last exposure:

Fever with temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit or chills. Fever may not always be present.

Sore throat.

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.

Eye tearing, redness or irritation.

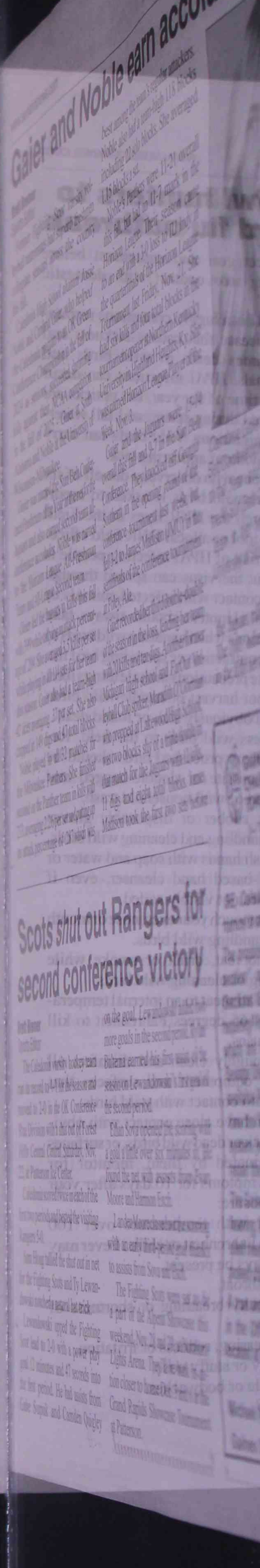
Runny or stuffy nose.

Muscle or body aches.

— *BB*

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CALEDONIA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes

The minutes for the November 5, 2025 Township Board of Trustees Meeting that were approved on November 19, 2025 are posted at the Township offices at 8196 Broadmoor Ave, and on the website at www.caledoniatownship.org .


THE SUN AND NEWS VIEW

Gaier and Noble earn accolades

Scots shut out Rangers for second conference victory

Gaier and Noble earn accolades in first NCAA action

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

Former Fighting Scot varsity volleyball teammates had superb freshmen collegiate seasons across the country this fall.

Caledonia High School alumni Josie Noble and Cambria Gaier, who helped the Caledonia program to an OK Green Conference Championship in the fall of 2024 as seniors, succeeded slamming kills against their NCAA competition in the fall of 2025 - Gaier at South Alabama and Noble at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Gaier was named the Sun Belt Conference Freshman of the Year at the net for the Jaguars and also earned second team all-conference accolades. Noble was named to the Horizon League All-Freshman Team and All-League Second team.

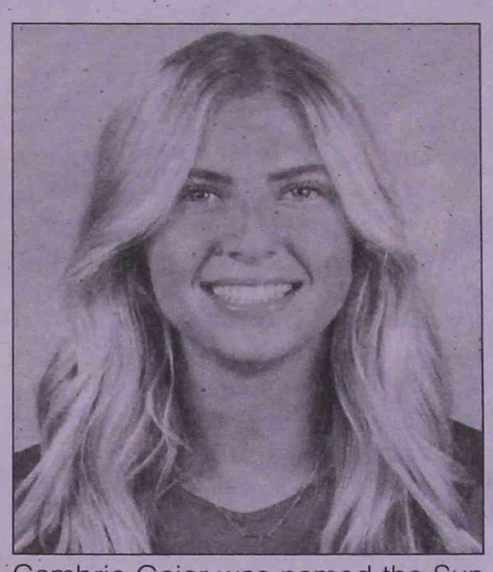
Gaier led the Jaguars in kills this fall with 399 while tallying an attack percentage of .204. She averaged 3.5 kills per set while playing in all 114 sets for her team this season. Gaier also had a team-high 42 aces averaging .37 per set. She also chipped in 149 digs and 47 total blocks.

Noble played in all 32 matches for the Milwaukee Panthers. She finished second on the Panther team in kills with 233, averaging 2.26 per set and putting up an attack percentage of .287 which was best among the team's regular attackers. Noble also had a team-high 118 blocks including 22 solo blocks. She averaged 1.15 blocks a set.

Noble's Panthers were 11-21 overall this fall, but had an 11-7 mark in the Horizon League. Their season came to an end with a 3-0 loss to IU Indy in the quarterfinals of the Horizon League Tournament last Friday, Nov. 21. She had six kills and four total blocks in the tournament opener at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, Ky. She was named Horizon League Player of the Week, Nov. 3.

Gaier and the Jaguars were 15-14 overall this fall and 9-7 in the Sun Belt Conference. They knocked off Georgia Southern in the opening round of the conference tournament last week, but fell 3-2 to James Madison (JMU) in the semifinals of the conference tournament in Foley, Ala.

Gaier recorded her third double-double of the season in the loss, leading her team with 20 kills and ten digs. Another former Michigan high school and FarOut Volleyball Club spiker, Maradith O'Gorman who prepped at Lakewood High School, was two blocks shy of a triple double in that match for the Jaguars with 12 kills, 11 digs and eight total blocks. James Madison took the first two sets before the Jaguars rallied to even the match. The JMU ladies pulled out a 21-19 win in the fifth set to advance to the conference tournament championship game where they were bested by top-seeded Arkansas State.



Cambria Gaier was named the Sun Belt Conference Volleyball Freshman of the Year and earned a spot on the All-Sun Belt Conference Second Team in her first season at the University of South Alabama.



Josie Noble was named to the Horizon League Volleyball All-Freshman Team and the All-League Second Team in her first season playing for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. **Courtesy photos**

Scots shut out Rangers for second conference victory

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia varsity hockey team ran its record to 4-1 for the season and moved to 2-0 in the OK Conference Rue Division with a shut out of Forest Hills Central Central Saturday, Nov. 22, at Patterson Ice Center.

Caledonia scored twice in each of the first two periods and bested the visiting Rangers 5-0.

Sam Hoag tallied the shut out in net for the Fighting Scots and Ty Lewandowski notched a natural hat trick.

Lewandowski upped the Fighting Scot lead to 2-0 with a power play goal 12 minutes and 47 seconds into the first period. He had assists from Gabe Supuk and Camden Quigley on the goal. Lewandowski added two more goals in the second period. Rylan Bultema earned his first assist of the season on Lewandowski's first goal of the second period.

Ethan Sova opened the scoring with a goal a little over six minutes in. He found the net with assists from Evan Moore and Harmon Esch.

Landen Moore closed out the scoring with an early third-period goal thanks to assists from Sova and Esch.

The Fighting Scots were set to be a part of the Alpena Showcase this weekend, Nov. 28 and 29, at Northern Lights Arena. They'll be back in action closer to home Dec. 5 and 6 at the Grand Rapids Showcase Tournament at Patterson.

GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
Gain More

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Proposed Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 493

At a regular meeting of the Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees, held Monday, November 10, 2025, at 88555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE, Caledonia, MI 49316, the Board considered a proposed ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 493 of the Water & Sewer Ordinance.

The proposed ordinance makes modifications to "mandatory connection" requirements for water and sewer in the Township (Sections 1003 and 1008). Owners of an existing building using or requiring Potable Water, which are located in the Township and which are currently served by a private water well or private Sewage Disposal Facility, shall not be required to connect to an available Public Water Main, or available Public Sewer, until such time the Kent County Health Department determines the existing system (water and/or sewer) has failed , and it is not possible to repair the system. No other changes are proposed.

The Gaines Charter Township Board of Trustees shall hold a public hearing Monday, December 8, 2025 during their regularly scheduled meeting which commences at 7:00PM, to consider these proposed changes.

A true and complete copy of the proposed ordinance is available in the Office of the Clerk at the Gaines Charter Township Hall, located at 8555 Kalamazoo Ave., SE, Caledonia, MI 49316.

Michael A. Brew, Clerk
Gaines Charter Township

Fighting Scots top ten at D1 Swimming and Diving Finals again

Brett Bremer
Sports Editor

The Caledonia girls spent their Friday (Nov. 21) going from the starting block to the water, to the medal stand and back again at the Oakland University Aquatic Center in Rochester.

Caledonia senior Sophie Gaylord and junior Mya VanderZwaag were both four-time state medalists Friday, and they were two of five Fighting Scots who earned state medals throughout the course of the two-day MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals. That duo was joined in medal-winning relay performances by senior Aliya Van Hofwegen, freshman Caitlyn Morris and freshman Kailey Hall.

The Caledonia varsity girls' swimming and diving team was tenth at the finals a year after finishing as high as eighth.

Gaylord upped her state medal count to 11 in three varsity seasons at Caledonia, and she'll be back in the Oakland pool before too long as she has already made plans to join the Grizzlies' Women's Swimming and Diving program next season.

"The team has just grown every single year," Gaylord said. "The girls are working themselves harder every single year. The dedication and the change in team atmosphere, especially this year, I could feel it. Everyone was just so excited to be here, be racing, to be racing together, and everyone wanted the best for each other. So, I think that just gives a really good feel to the team and helps everyone do their best when everyone is supporting each other."

The top finish for Gaylord came in the 100-yard freestyle where she turned in a stellar time of 51.42 seconds to place third. She placed fifth in the 50-yard freestyle in 23.45 seconds putting herself in consideration for All-America honors in that event. The 50-yard freestyle sprint has turned into her favorite individual event.

"I can't understand," Van Hofwegen said of Gaylord's speed. "She looks so smooth on the water. It is so crazy how she goes so fast. I definitely look up to her when I try to swim. She is just so smooth and she has such good technique."



Caledonia senior Sophie Gaylord nears her final turn in the 100-yard freestyle championship final during the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals at Oakland University in Rochester Friday, Nov. 21. Gaylord placed fifth in the race with a time of 51.42 seconds. **Photos by Brett Bremer**

Gaylord said she especially likes the technical aspects of swimming the 50 free. Without a great start, a great turn, just the right underwaters and breaths there isn't much chance of competing in such a short race.

VanderZwaag placed 15th in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 24.71 and was the last Scot out of the pool with a 16th-place time of 1 minute 8.32 seconds in the penultimate event of the meet - the 100-yard breaststroke.

"It's a great experience here. I just love the environment," VanderZwaag said. "It is such a cool experience to be with all these fast people. It's like, wow. There are a lot of fast people here who will probably go to the Olympics or something. It's really fun to be able to make finals and everything."

They all agree that the 200-yard medley relay is near the top of their list of favorite events.

Gaylord, VanderZwaag, Van Hofwegen and Morris earned a fifth-place time of 1:48.38 in the 200-yard medley relay finals. Caledonia had the team of VanderZwaag, Hall, Morris and Gaylord ninth in the 200-yard freestyle relay with a time of 1:38.27. They won the consolation final of that race.

"I feel like we're all just really encouraging of each other," Van Hofwegen said. "We're always just hyping each other up, and it really helps to make state something really fun to look forward to and to be motivated to do well in.

The Fighting Scot squad also had the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Hall, Van Hofwegen, Morris and sophomore Amelia McCann place 21st in the prelim's of their race (3:47.30.)

Ann Arbor Pioneer won the team championship with 404 points making it six straight D1 state championships in a row. Jenison was a distant second with 249 points. Northville was third in the final team standings with 193 points ahead of Zeeland 179, Canton 109, Brighton 108, Saline 107, Rockford 89 and Caledonia 79 in the top ten.

Among its top finishes, Jenison was second to Ann Arbor Pioneer in both the 200-yard medley relay and the 200-yard freestyle relay. Jenison senior Emma Albrecht was a part of those two relay finishes, she won the 100-yard butterfly in 55.12 and placed fourth in the 50-yard freestyle just ahead of

See next page

HUDSONVILLE FALL 2025 AUCTION
Live & Online Bidding
Saturday, December 6, at 10:00 am EST
Hudsonville Fairgrounds – 5235 40th Ave, Hudsonville, MI



Multi Ring auction selling construction equipment, farm equipment and support items.

We start accepting equipment from 8-5 on Monday, December 1.

We stop taking small items on Thursday, December 4. We will still accept heavy equipment on Friday, December 5 until 3:00 pm.

AUCTION CONTACT:
Chuck Ranney – Auction Manager
Phone:616-560-0839 Email: chuck@1800lastbid.com

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Caledonia senior Aliya Van Hofwegen swims the butterfly leg of the 200-yard medley relay Friday, Nov. 21, during the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals at Oakland University in Rochester.



Caledonia's 200-yard freestyle relay team of (clockwise from bottom left) Caitlyn Morris, Kailey Hall, Sophie Gaylord and Mya VanderZwaag celebrates on the medal stand after a ninth-place finish in the MHSAA L.P. D1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals Friday, Nov. 21, at Oakland University in Rochester.

Continued from previous page

Gaylord. Gaylord was happy for her club teammate.

She had a couple club teammates in those freestyle sprints with Zeeland senior Madison Ensing the runner-up in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle. Albrecht will be joining Gaylord on the Oakland University team next season.

Pioneer girls won those two freestyle sprints. Freshman Kia Alert took the 50-yard freestyle in 22.91 and senior Katelyn Van Ryn won the 100-yard freestyle in 49.94. In all, Ann Arbor Pioneer girls won seven of the 12 events.

With Gaylord looking forward to junior nationals and then collegiate swimming and Van Hofwegen having competed in her final varsity race Friday, there will need to be new leaders to keep the Caledonia program one of the best in the state.

VanderZwaag is looking forward to that responsibility next season, and also welcoming her freshman sister to the team. Gaylord thinks the future looks bright for the Fighting Scots.

"Amelia McCann, a sophomore this year, she is fiery and she is going to be a leader.," Gaylord said. "But I also see Caitlyn Morris, she's a freshman, and she is just super dedicated, super fun. She is a little quiet, but I think she is going to come out of her shell. She definitely showed up this weekend. I am excited to watch them be leaders on the team, but also continue swimming well."



Caledonia junior Mya VanderZwaag races to a 16th-place finish in the finals of the 100-yard breaststroke Friday, Nov. 21, during the MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 1 Girls' Swimming and Diving Finals at Oakland University in Rochester.

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IRVING TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETING SYNOPSIS
November 18, 2025

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm at 3425 Wing Rd. Hastings, Michigan 49058

Present: Lydy, Stout, Brummel, Nagel, and Buehler

Agenda approved as presented

Approved October 21, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, as amended

Fire Reports and Commissioner Report presented

Approved Treasurer's Report

Approved to pay bills in the amount of $5,680.82

Approved to pay election wages in the amount of $2,127.00

Engle Rd, Natural Beauty Designation, Road Commission to hold second public hearing

Township Website – issue has been corrected

Wolverine Power Cooperative Ordinance – tabled until November 2025 Board Meeting

Planning & Zoning – discussed bringing in-house. No action taken.

Election Summary – Nov 4, 2025 election held, 18% turnout

Upcoming Dates: December 16, 2025 Township Board Meeting at 6:30pm

Adjourn 6:54pm

Full minutes are available at Irvingtownship.org or at 3425 Wing Rd, Hastings, MI 49058.

Prepared by Irving Township Deputy Clerk, Shelly Lake.
Attested to by Supervisor, Dan Lydy.

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TRUMBLE

Medicare

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Saving Money and Getting Better Coverage
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Don't Believe Everything You Hear on the Phone
Another client switched plans after a phone rep promised her "something better." When we reviewed it together, her original plan had stronger coverage and lower out-of-pocket costs. We helped her get back on the plan that truly fit her needs.

Helping a Veteran Get Extra Money Back
A veteran we worked with wasn't using his plan much since he gets care through the VA. We helped him find a plan that gives him over $100 back each month through the Part B giveback benefit — while still keeping his VA care.

Schedule your appointment today before open enrollment ends Dec 7!



Josh Lamphere
Medicare Specialist

269.213.3232
josh@trumbleagency.com
www.barrycountymedicare.com
128 S. Jefferson St. Hastings, MI 49058

Disclaimer: We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.