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Vol. 130-No. 14 April 2, 2002

Nashville couple charged with meth trafficking

by Shelly Sulser
Staff Writer

A Nashville couple arrested in a raid of their Thornapple Lake Estates home Jan. 24 appeared in Barry County Circuit Court Thursday.

Autumn Watson, 34, was sentenced to one year in jail while her husband, 37-year-old Darrell Watson, waived his arraignment on methamphetamine charges. He is scheduled for a pretrial hearing April 18.

The couple was arrested after Darrell Watson was stopped by Lake Odessa police officer Chris Hanson earlier that morning for not using a turn signal while driving on Jordan Lake Avenue at Emerson Street.

The officer subsequently found ingredients for producing methamphetamine in the rear of Watson's pickup

truck, which led police to his Nashville area home, where they found Autumn Watson living with the couple's two minor children.

A day-long search of the home by the West Michigan Enforcement Team and the Barry County Sheriff's Department turned up a large amount of finished product, four guns, various chemicals used in the production of methamphetamine, scales and two cookers.

Autumn Watson was taken into custody on an unrelated Eaton County warrant while Darrell Watson was charged with methamphetamine possession in Ionia County.

Autumn entered a guilty plea in Barry County to one count of operating a methamphetamine lab in the presence of minors, a 20-year felony, in exchange for

two felony weapons charges being dismissed.

"I believe she got wrapped up in this due to her husband," said defense attorney Manzir Grewel of Charlotte. "She acknowledges the lab was in her residence with minor children and she should have done something about that."

The two, pre-teenaged children are now living with their grandmother, Grewel told the court.

"I realize I owe a debt to society because I was wrong," Autumn Watson said. "I made a bad choice. I've never been in trouble before so I see where probation would be a beneficial thing so I can take care of my children."

Barry County Chief Trial Court Judge James Fisher told Watson that she is otherwise a good mother, ac-

ording to letters he received on her behalf.

"You're lucky they weren't killed," said Fisher about the children. "These labs have a danger of blowing up, were you aware of that?" to which Watson replied, "yes."

Fisher added that the sentencing guidelines call for a prison sentence for Watson though he sentenced her instead to jail.

She was given credit for two days served, was ordered to serve three years on probation and to pay \$1,000 costs, a \$60 crime victim fee, a \$60 DNA testing fee and a probation oversight fee.

Watson will be allowed to perform community service work in lieu of her total costs and will be eligible for earned early release from jail.

The judge denied Watson's request to report to jail on Monday rather than immediately following sentencing to get her affairs in order, said Grewel.

"She's known for several weeks that she's going to jail," said Fisher. "I think it's beneficial for her to report to jail today. She needs to understand she's committed a criminal offense and she needs to go to jail like all the other criminals today."

Barry County Prosecutor Gordon Shane McNeill has called methamphetamine "a major problem in Barry County," saying "it's only going to get worse."

The Watsons were the third couple in the past six months known to have been arrested for manufacturing methamphetamine in their in Barry County homes in the presence of their small children.

Previously arrested and convicted were Bernard and Jamie Hunderman of Orangeville Township while Donald and Angela Rose were charged after a raid on their Assyria Township home last December.

They were arrested and charged again for methamphetamine possession after a Feb. 4 raid on the North Avenue home of Bert Lee Morales, which netted a total of six meth and marijuana related arrests.

Another couple with minor children was arrested March 14 after officers found a clandestine methamphetamine laboratory involving two cookers in their Gun Lake home.

Arrested and awaiting prosecution are Matthew Gilson, 32, who is being held in the Barry County Jail on \$100,000 bond, and Ann Reigler, 30, both of Blue Lagoon in Orangeville Township.

Summer traffic woes ahead in Nashville

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer

Nashville can expect a summer of traffic woes, with the streets being torn up for the more than \$2 million dollar water project, and the Reed Street resurfacing project.

Work has already begun on both projects, with Reed Street being turned to dirt on the north side last week.

Village President Frank Dunham said residents should anticipate detours and construction at many

different times and locations throughout the summer and fall.

"It's going to be a bit hectic, but it will look really nice once it's finished," said Dunham.

The Reed Street upgrading and resurfacing spans from Main Street to Curtis Road.

A federal grant handled through the Michigan Department of Transportation is paying for 80 percent of the cost of the project, with the village picking up 20

percent.

Dunham said the improvements to the street include some widening, to make the width of the street uniform, new curbs, and replacing of the old ones, and new storm sewers on the east end, where there were none before, and 1.49 miles of new surfacing.

The council recently approved street lighting improvements, replacing the current poles and lights with a more efficient light, and adding a few new ones.

"Work has already started, as everyone can see," said Dunham, who added that work started before schedule. "There will be some trimming of trees and we do have to remove some trees. We hate to see them moved or trimmed, but we have to for progress. The ones that are slated for trimming or removal are marked."

At the council meeting, Dunham said he has been in touch with Maple Valley Superintendent Clark Volz about the work being done on the streets, though he said it's all subject to change as of location of water repairs.

Dunham said the street will be done in sections starting in the west and moving east, though he said the contractors will try to keep it passable for local through traffic only.

"We are putting in the new water main too, while the street is torn up, which saves us considerable money, and will be upgrading all the utilities under the road, so hopefully we won't have to disturb the road for quite some time," he said.

Dunham said the project is tentatively slated for completion in September, but said it would vary on the weather.

"How long exactly we will have to put up with this is anyone's guess," he said at the council meeting.

Nashville man killed in fire

A 22-year-old Nashville man died after suffering from burns in an accident Monday evening after starting a fire with gasoline, according to a preliminary report.

According to a hospital spokesperson, Matt Pennington died at Spectrum Hospital in Grand Rapids early Wednesday morning as a result of the burns sustained on his body after the accident.

A call came into Barry County 911 at 5:39 p.m., shortly after the fire, according to reports. The report stated that Pennington's clothing caught fire after he attempted to start a fire with gasoline, and that burns were covering a large portion of his body. At 5:47, the Nashville Department was

called on the scene after it was reported that the house at the address was filled with smoke. It was only 10 minutes later that Aeromed transport was requested at the scene.

Pennington is the son of 4-H Youth Program Assistant Kathy Pennington, and her husband, John. He graduated from Maple Valley High School in 1997, is survived by his wife, Melissa, an unborn child due in September, and sisters and many relatives.

His obituary stated that Matt attended the Charlotte Assembly of God, was a longtime 4-H participant and FFA member, avid outdoorsman and enjoyed working with tools and various equipment.



Construction has started on Reed Street, and will not be completed until sometime around September. With the street being repaired, and the water mains all over town being replaced Nashville will face traffic woes.

In This Issue...

- Nashville man with weapon in vehicle arrested
- New service offered for parent educators
- Nashville gymnast takes first at State; plans Finland trip
- Local athletes named to All-Barry County team



Zachary Orsborn looks over books to purchase at the book fair.

Scholastic Book Fair held at Fuller and Maplewood



P.T.O. members Lisa Lapham (left) and Diann Richards stand by the teacher wish list bags.

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by **Shawna Hubbarth**
Staff Writer

The Maple Valley school system held its once a year Scholastic Book Fair last week.

The fair is put on by Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) members, to raise money for various school-related projects. Diann Richards and Mary Ann Curth

organized this year's fair, which ran last week at Fuller Elementary and Maplewood school.

PTO member Lisa Lapham said that new this year was a system of helping teachers get donated "wish list" books.

"We got together with the teachers and found out what books they needed or wanted for their classrooms, and made a list. Then we contacted local merchants for donations and made bags with each teachers name and classroom on it. Parents

could just come and purchase a book they say that their student's teacher wanted and place it in the bag," explained Lapham.

She said that each child in the school received a free \$5 certificate toward a book.

"Last year the merchants donated over \$100," said Lapham.

Organizers said the fair is a chance for parents and kids to purchase books at a decent price.

This year the theme at Maplewood was "Under the Sea" for the book fair.

Card of Thanks

WE WOULD LIKE to thank each and everyone who attended our party at my daughters home last Saturday. We had a wonderful time and enjoyed visiting with everyone. Also thanks for the cards, money, food and gifts given to us that day. It was a great 55th anniversary celebration. Charles and Chloe Martin.

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Wednesday Evening:
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Fellowship Time 10:30 a.m.
Adult Class 10:50 a.m.
PASTOR JEFF BOWMAN

NORTH KALAMO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Worship Service 9:30 a.m.
PASTOR MARK THOMPSON

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Sunday School 10 a.m.
A.M. Service 11:15 a.m.
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NASHVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

304 Phillips St., Nashville
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A.M. Service 11 a.m.
P.M. Service 7 p.m.
Wed. Service 7 p.m.
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PASTOR DANIEL E. SMITH
ASST. PASTOR LES ANDERSON

VERMONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Church Service 11 a.m.
PASTOR JEFF BOWMAN

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FATHER PAUL ANDRADE

New service offered for parent educators

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer

The Eaton County Childhood Connections program is offering a new service for parents to receive free home visits from educators.

The educators advise and help parents use curriculum from Parents as Teachers.

Parent Educator Merrill Evans said, "The enrichment program is designed to enhance learning activities most families are already

practicing. Each visit is custom tailored to the needs of the child and family. It offers a personal visit, a monthly group meeting, periodic screenings to detect any potential needs, and a resource network to let families know of services in the community."

Evans said the program in Eaton County covers children from birth to age 3, though in the fall there is a chance of the program being

expanded to include 4 and 5 year olds. She said there was a growing need to provide services to all parents and families, not only those with special needs.

"Parents as Teachers has been used throughout the United States for 21 years," she said. "Numerous evaluations show that by age 3, PAT children are more advanced than comparison children in language, social development, problem solving and other thinking

skills."

Evans said that those advantages carry over into the classroom when the children start school.

"Parents also become more involved and confident, and that is a key component of each child's success in school."

Families who would like more information on the program are encouraged to call Early Childhood Connections at (517) 645-4500 or toll free at (866) 215-

KIDS. The parent educators presentations to community are also available for PAT groups.

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Man with weapon in vehicle arrested

A 19-year-old Nashville man was arrested in Hastings on suspicion of driving with a concealed weapon in his car March 14 after Sgt. Dennis Lajcak stopped a pickup truck for speeding and squealing its tires on Green Street.

Lajcak reported that after stopping the man and arresting him for being under the influence of alcohol at 11:48 p.m., a search of the car produced a loaded Taurus .45 handgun in a bag behind the driver's seat.

The man said he had drank about 1 1/2 beers at a home on Mill Street in Hastings and registered a .09 percent bodily alcohol content on a preliminary breath

test, Lajcak reported.

After the man was placed into handcuffs, officer Eric Ingram found the semi-automatic handgun which contained a loaded magazine though no bullet was found inside the guns' chamber. The magazine contained eight rounds, police said.

"The handgun was not cased but simply placed in an accessory pouch that is standard equipment for the vehicle," police said. "The handgun was accessible to the driver."

The driver lodged in the Barry County Jail on the felony weapons charge though he had not been arraigned as of press time Wednesday, March 27.

Woman declines kidnapping charges

A female victim in a suspected domestic dispute did not want to pursue kidnapping charges against her estranged husband after police were called March 19 to in-

vestigate her possible abduction, according to the Hastings Post of the Michigan State Police.

Troopers were called to an area of South Jefferson Street by a third party who reported an abduction in progress.

"The people involved were going through a divorce and a friend of the female watched the estranged husband take her against her will," troopers said.

Troopers were able to locate the suspect and the victim unharmed at a home in Castleton Township.

"The victim said she didn't want to go with him, but she did get into the car," police said. "She didn't feel she was abducted."

The 37-year-old Nashville man is being charged with violation of a personal protection order, domestic violence, possession of marijuana and resisting and obstructing police for fighting with troopers during his arrest.

No injuries were reported.

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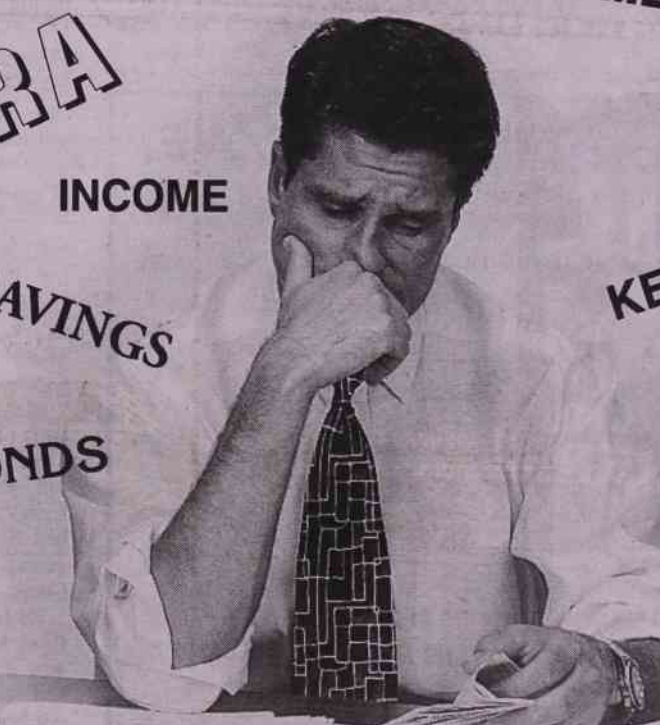
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12:10, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:10

E.T. THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL (PG)

12:00, 2:30, 4:50, 7:20, 9:45

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Area Obituaries

Gerald L. Shoup

NASHVILLE - Gerald L. Shoup, age 86, of Nashville, died Monday, March 25, 2002 at Thornapple Manor in Hastings.

Mr. Shoup was born on Oct. 21, 1915 in Battle Creek, MI, the son of Roy and Jessie (Webb) Shoup. He attended schools in

Reading and Philadelphia, PA.

He worked at American Marsh Pump in 1937. On Sept. 3, 1939 he married Jane Spark. He served in the US Navy from 1943-1945 and upon his discharge settled in Urbandale. He moved to the Nashville area in 1950 and worked at Clark Equip-ment until his retirement in 1974.

He served on the planning commission for many years and had several hobbies including working on clocks and watches and making model steam engines. He was a self taught woodcarver and played several musical instruments. He enjoyed summers at his cottage near Traverse City.

Mr. Shoup is survived by his wife, Jane Shoup of Nashville; sons, David

Shoup of Woodland and Steven (Brenda) Shoup of Nashville; daughter, Marilyn (Eric) Wright of Vermontville; brother, Orley (Betty) Gardner of Interlochen; sister-in-law, Rose Shoup of Battle Creek; five grandchildren; seven great grandchildren; three step great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roy and Jessie (Webb) Shoup; step-father, William Gardner; a granddaughter; and a brother.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, April 6, 2002 at Lakeview Cemetery in Nashville. Rev. Alan McCrimmon officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Putnam Library.

Arrangements were made by Maple Valley Chapel.

Give a memorial that can go on forever...

A gift to the Barry Community Foundation is used to help fund activities throughout the county in the name of the person you designate. Ask your funeral director for more information on the Barry Community Foundation or call 945-0526.

Matthew John Pennington

NASHVILLE - Matthew John Pennington, age 22, of Nashville, Michigan, died Wednesday, March 27, 2002 at Spectrum Health-Blodgett Campus in Grand Rapids.

Mr. Pennington was born on May 27, 1979 in Battle Creek, MI., the son of John and Katherine (Buckland) Pennington. He was raised in the Nashville, MI area and attended Maple Valley schools, graduating in 1997 from Maple Valley High School.

Matthew was married to Melissa K. Reynolds on September 22, 2001.

He was employed at Pennington's Bobcat and Backhoe Service in Nashville.

Matthew attended Charlotte Assembly of God, was a long-time 4-H participant receiving numerous awards, including the Jesse Snow Memorial award, was a FFA member receiving the Star GreenHand award, was an avid outdoorsman, participated in 9th grade



father-in-law, Diane and James Reynolds of Charlotte; sisters-in-law, Stephanie, Michelle, Jessica Reynolds; aunts and uncles, Marlowe and Suzanne Burns, Glenn and Julie Stoneburner, Patrick and Cindy Buckland, Gerald "Jack" and Gloria Pennington, James and Pat Pennington, Steven and Jeri Powell, Gordon and Janet Miller; many cousins; and grandmother, Catherine Rowden of Charlotte by marriage.

He was preceded in death by grandparents, Jack and Madelon Pennington.

Services were held Saturday, March 30, 2002 at Charlotte Assembly of God, 1100 E. Clinton Trail, Charlotte. Pastor Mark Woodbury officiated.

Burial was at Nashville's Lakeview Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to Barry County 4-H or the Matthew John Pennington Memorial Fund.

Arrangements made by Wren Funeral Home of Hastings.

baseball and enjoyed working with tools and various equipment.

Mr. Pennington is survived by wife, Melissa; unborn child, due September 2002; parents, Kathy and John Pennington of Nashville; sisters, Jessica and Amy Pennington of Nashville; grandparents, Mary and Gary Buckland of Dowling; great grandparents, Marciel and Wayne Buckland of Dowling; mother and

Earl Junior Linsley

CHARLOTTE - Earl Junior Linsley, age 76, of Charlotte, formerly of Battle Creek, died Thursday, March 28, 2002 at his residence after a short illness.

Mr. Linsley was born Sept. 25, 1925 in Kalamo Township, Eaton County, the son of Earl M. and Esther (Damm) Linsley and had lived in Charlotte four years, coming from Battle Creek.

He had been employed at Bliss Mfg. in Hastings and was a lifelong farmer. He had served in the Michigan Air National Guard and later in the U.S. Air Force during

the Korean War and was a member of the Lawrence Ave. United Methodist Church in Charlotte.

Surviving are two sisters, Marjorie (Fred) Hansen of Charlotte and Betty Rockford of Vermontville; one brother, Lloyd (Thelma) Linsley of Vermontville and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a sister, Lulu Linsley.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 2, 2002 at the Burkhead-Green Funeral Home, Charlotte with Rev. George Fleming officiating. Interment in the Riverside Cemetery, Bellevue.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Eaton Community Hospice.

Arrangements were made by Burkhead-Green Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Carroll A. "Pete" Lamie

DOVER, ARKANSAS - Carroll A. "Pete" Lamie, age 85, of Dover, Arkansas died Tuesday, March 26, 2002, at Stella Manor Nursing Center in Russellville, Arkansas.

A son of the late Joseph J. and Bertha Pierce Lamie, he was born Aug. 21, 1916, in Charlotte, Michigan.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce M. Jones Lamie; a brother, George Lamie; and a sister, Rita Collins.

Survivors include two

sons and daughters-in-law, Dennis and B.J. Lamie of Dover and Roger and Margaret Lamie of Lacey, Washington; a sister and brother-in-law, Neva and Vance Baker of Charlotte, Michigan; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren.

The body was cremated. The family will conduct a memorial service at a later date.

Arrangements are by Shinn Funeral Service of Russellville, Arkansas.

Cynthia Wetzel-Brooks

VERMONTVILLE - Cynthia Wetzel-Brooks, age 39, of Vermontville, Mich., died Friday, March 29, 2002.

Ms. Brooks was born June 26, 1962, in Alma, Mich., the daughter of Donald and Gloria (Smith) Wetzel of Vermontville, Mich.

She most enjoyed being a mother raising her two sons. She also enjoyed her family's dairy farm, photography and collected cow figures and items.

She was most recently employed by Balzers Tool Coating, Inc. In the past she was employed at Century Mutual Insurance Company, and as a DHIA milk tester for many years.

Cynthia is survived by sons, Daniel, Jarrod; her parents; sisters, Kim (Joel) Dixon of Connecticut, Pam (Mark) Root of Lansing; brothers, Kevin (Lisa) of Lansing, Jeff (Chelsey) of Nashville, Chad Wetzel of Vermontville; grandmother, Donnalee Wetzel of Vermontville; four nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, April 2, 2002 at Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte with Elder Larry Marlin officiating. Interment will be in Woodland Cemetery in Vermontville.

Arrangements were made by Pray Funeral Home. Further information available at www.prayfuneral.com.

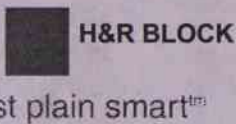
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SPECIAL DATES: April 16th, 7 p.m. - Kindergarten Parent Orientation and Story Hour at Fuller Street Elementary

If your child will be 4 yrs. old by Dec. 1st, call 852-2075 or 852-9794 (starting April 8th) for Early Fours Registration Information

If your child is between 2 1/2 - 4 yrs. old and you are concerned about your child's development, speech, coordination, behavior or learning, call 852-9468 (starting April 8th) for information about Pre-primary Services.



Vermontville woman graduates from Eaton leadership academy

Pam Kiln of Vermontville was one of 25 people who graduated with over 35 hours of training from the Leadership Eaton 2002 project Saturday, March 9.

The others graduating included Connie Boucher, Sharee Burdick, Claudine Hannold, Janet May, Shelley Maycroft, Laraine Owens, Sherry Pabst, Lisa Payne, Tamra Ross, Suzalyn Nelson, Cindy VanSingel, Terry Wellman, Karen Richards, Karen Wilson, Ashley Wood and Michelle Yoder of Charlotte; Karen Dunham and Jo Lehman of Potterville; Sarah Leitch and Tamilyn Nixon of Grand Ledge; Dave Mateer and Courtney Quinn of Lansing;

Peggy Parrott of Olivet and Raymond Dutcher of Dimondale.

Leadership Forum 2002 provided exposure to a number of leadership development skills: how to conduct effective meetings, public speaking, team building, recruiting and maintaining volunteers and how to raise funds and develop grants. In addition, specific educational issues were explored: how village and township governments are run, public school issues, legalities of running for elected office, including a panel of distinguished present and former elected officials - Sheriff Rick Jones, Judge Thomas Eveland and former Mayor

David Brown, and learning about "Can Do" community visioning process.

The Leadership Eaton 2002 project was co-led by Jon Tomlanovich, superintendent of Eaton Intermediate School and Mona Ellard, director of MSU Extension in Eaton County. The project was sponsored in part with funds from "Can Do," Lansing Community College and Spartan Motors.

Those who have an interest in enrolling in a similar project next year may contact Mona Ellard at 517/531-2310 or Jon Tomlanovich at 517/53-5500.

Vermontville couple joins cast in Bellevue production

The cast has been announced for the Bellevue Community Theatre production of the Neil Simon comedy "God's Favorite."

Don and Linda Pierce of Vermontville will appear as Joe and Rose Benjamin. Tim Nolan of Bellevue as their son David, Debbie Lundeen of Charlotte and Scott Smith of Bellevue as twins Sarah and Ben Benjamin, Tim Lake of Marshall as Sidney Lipton, Denise Poyer of Bellevue as Mady, and Don Gobben of Battle Creek as

Morris.

In "God's Favorite," Neil Simon hilariously transfers the biblical Book of Job to a Long Island mansion where tycoon Joe Benjamin and his family reside. One night a messenger from God enters, sporting a big "G" on the front of his shirt. When

modern-day Job won't renounce God, a series of maladies befall him, from unmentionable itches to a blazing inferno, all riotous tests of modern-day Job's faith.

The audience is left wondering who is going to prevail in this Neil Simon comedy. The New York Daily News described "God's Favorite" as "awesomely funny... The work of a man of vision."

"God's Favorite" directed by Bill St. Andrew of Charlotte, will be performed at Bellevue High School April 19-21.

For ticket information call the box office at (616) 763-3793 or e-mail bellevuetheater@yahoo.com

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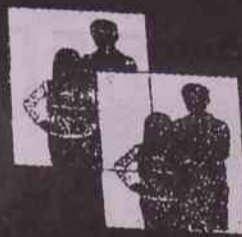
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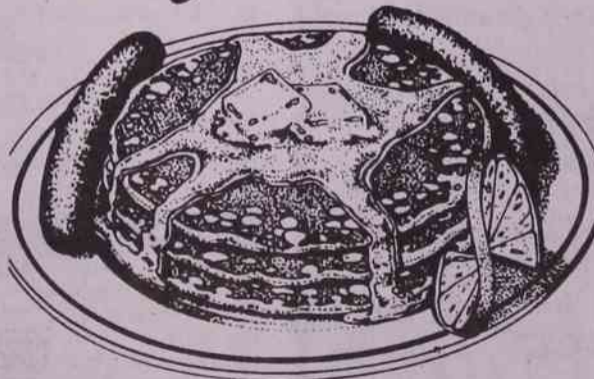
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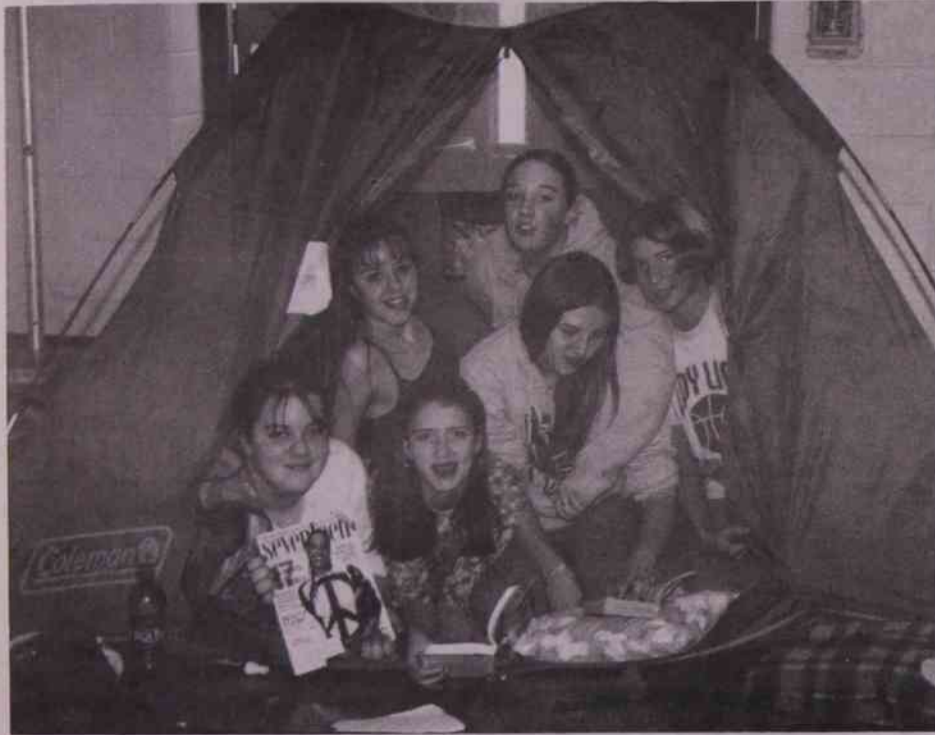
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Junior high students mark Reading Month completion



Students lay on sleeping bags to read during the half day read-a-thon.

sleeping bags, we have some tents, and lots of kids in their P.J.s," said eighth grade English teacher Sandy Briggs.

In between reading, there were regular breaks in which the Advanced Placement students at the school led the students through reading games.

In one game they drew a poem out of a can and drew another emotion word out of

another can, and had to read the poem in the specified emotion.

"We also had the Junior High Honors Choir sing for a break," said Briggs. "They sang three songs, and sounded great, so that was nice."

Briggs said the students were told to bring water and nutritional snacks, no pop.

"We pretty much let them choose what to read —

books of course, and magazines, comics and other materials, too."

Students sprawled all over the gym, reading until school ended at noon.

"It was a great way to celebrate March Is Reading Month," said Briggs. "It's the first time we have done something like this, we just wanted to emphasize how important reading is."

Some students brought tents to read in at the Junior/Senior High School last week.

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer

Maple Valley Junior High School ended March Is Reading Month with a half day long read-a-thon in the gym last Thursday.

Students were told to dress comfortable and bring reading materials for the half day.

"Some of them brought



During the read-a-thon students play games, one of which has them drawing poems out of a can to recite for their classmates.

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School Lunch Menus

Elementary Schools (Maplewood & Fuller)

Lunch Menu
Wednesday, April 3
 Spring Break.
Thursday, April 4
 Spring Break.
Friday, April 5
 Spring Break.
Monday, April 8
 Corn dog, baked beans,

pear halves, Animal Crackers, 1/2 pt. milk.
Tuesday, April 9
 Taco, whole kernel corn, peaches, apple brownie, 1/2 pt. milk.
 Note: Maplewood Elementary will be serving breakfast this year starting the first of the school year.

Maple Valley Jr./Sr. High School Lunch Menu
Wednesday, April 3
 Spring Break.

Thursday, April 4
 Spring Break.
Friday, April 5
 Spring Break.
Monday, April 8
 Choose One - Corn dogs, pizza, chicken sandwich, salad bar. **Choose Two** - Garden salad, baked beans, pear halves, juice. Milk.
Tuesday, April 9
Choose One - Rib sandwich, pizza, cheeseburger, taco bar. **Choose Two** - Garden salad, whole kernel corn, peaches, juice. Milk.

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Three trustees thanked for service in Nashville



Steve Wheeler, (from left), Mary Coll, and Carroll Wolff are sworn into office at last weeks council meeting.

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer

The Nashville Village council bade goodbye to trustees Ed Sheldon, Karen Betts and Dan Kellogg at last weeks council meeting.

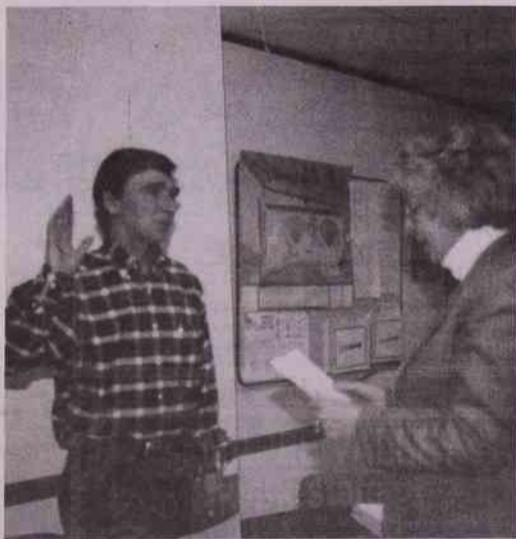
Sheldon was absent from the meeting.

Village President Frank Dunham said, "To the two leaving, you will both be missed and we thank you for your effort on the council."

Council Trustees Ralph Kirk and Steve Wheeler, who also won a seat in the last election also thanked them.

Karen Betts said, "It was interesting, I really learned a lot. There is lots more to learn and I might be back some day."

Two of the three trustees who will fill their seats, Mary Coll and Carroll Wolff, were sworn in after the meeting. New Trustee



Village President Frank Dunham is sworn into office last week, by clerk Penny Ruff.

Chelsey Wetzel will be sworn in next meeting. Incumbents Wheeler and Dun-

ham were also sworn in after the meeting, which was unusually short.

In other business at the meeting, the council:

- Agreed to request from Drinking Water Revolving Fund and Rural Development to be reimbursed for \$4,700 in legal services pertaining to the water project.
- Paid \$1,000 to the Transfer Recycling Board.
- Paid \$4,646.73 to Benefits Service for employee insurance.

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FROM OUR READERS

Local Citizens Speak Out On Issues

Local schools betrayed teachers

To the editor:

I moved to Nashville in 1975. There was no plan, initially, to make it my permanent home. However, as time went on, I decided Nashville and Maple Valley Schools would be a good place to have my children grow up. I still believe that.

I also felt very fortunate to be able to work in the community. Getting to know the local families and being near my children was a big plus.

Lately, feelings of betrayal have crept up on me. How can an employer get away with going back on its word and just cut a person's pay? Why would an employer take a chance on ruining morale and the future rela-

tionship with employees?

These questions I cannot answer. However, for the first time in 27 years, I've considered living and working in another community.

The action the administration and the board took without regard to the financial and emotional toll this

would take on its staff is very hurtful. It makes me feel that I cannot trust what the Maple Valley administrator says. Why sign a contract if it's not going to be honored?

D. Laureen Pettengill,
Sixth grade teacher
Maple Valley schools

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For more information please contact the clerk at 517 852-9193 or 517 852-9479.

102

MAPLE GROVE TOWNSHIP

The regular board meetings of the Maple Grove Township Board are the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Maple Grove Township Hall, located at 721 Durkee St., Nashville, Michigan 49073. The meeting dates are as follows:

April 3, 2002	October 2, 2002
May 1, 2002	November 6, 2002
June 5, 2002	December 4, 2002
July 3, 2002	January 8, 2003
August 7, 2002	February 5, 2003
September 4, 2002	March 5, 2003

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Susie Butler, Clerk
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(517) 852-1859

109

MAPLE VALLEY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION NOMINATING PETITIONS

School board nominating petitions may be obtained at the superintendent's office by anyone interested in being a candidate for a position on the Maple Valley Board of Education. The terms of Frank Dunham and David Favre expire on June 30, 2002.

The following terms of office are to be filled at the annual election to be held on Monday, June 10, 2002:

Two four-year terms—July 1, 2002, through June 30, 2006

Nominating petitions must be filed at the superintendent's office, 11090 Nashville Highway, not later than 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 8, 2002. Any candidate filing a nominating petition may withdraw only by filing written notice of withdrawal, signed by the candidate, not later than 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2002. The superintendent's office is open from 8:00-5:00 Monday-Friday through March 30. Office hours during Spring Break will be Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Local junior high student wins 'heroes' essay contest

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer

Maple Valley Junior High student Katelyn Boss won first place recently in an essay contest in Grand Rapids, on the subject of "Everyday Heroes."

The contest, said her English teacher Ruth Craven, had Boss winning over numerous area school students.

"I had all of my 119 students write essays, and out of those I picked what I thought were the top ten. She won first place out of the whole contest in her age division, which was fifth- to seventh-graders," said Craven.

Craven said students were instructed for the contest not to write about famous people but about people every day who touch their lives and define the meaning of hero to them.

Boss wrote on the topic of



Katelyn Boss, who won first place in a Grand Rapids area wide essay contest.

firefighters, and emergency services personnel.

Part of her essay read, "Some people may think heroes can fly way up high or are overgrown turtles with Ninja powers. To me a hero

is someone whose face hides behind an ash stained helmet or chases the bad guy's away. Some people think heroes aren't real. To me those people aren't looking hard enough. I have heroes in my own family. One of them goes into burning buildings, not thinking about the fire though. He's thinking about the innocent child stuck on the second floor. I hadn't really thought about my uncle's job until Sept. 11. You never know when someone is going to risk their lives just to save another's. My uncle is dedicated to his job and his family and I love him for that."

Boss won a \$40 gift certificate to Media Play, said Craven.

"All of the essays from Maple Valley, along with the other schools were on display at the Breton Village Mall. We are proud of her."

COMMISSION ON AGING MENU, SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Commission of Aging
Lite Meals

Wednesday, April 3

Seafood pasta, pea and cheese salad, cole slaw.

Thursday, April 4

Cottage cheese, carrot raisin salad, mandarin oranges, dinner roll.

Friday, April 5

Egg salad, cucumber salad, pears, whole wheat crackers.

Monday, April 8

Chicken pineapple salad, potato salad, mixed fruit, dinner roll.

Tuesday, April 9

Cheese spread, broccoli raisin salad, peaches, rye krisps.

Hearty Menu
Wednesday, April 3

Beef stew, Brussels sprouts, biscuit, fruit crisp.

Thursday, April 4

Sausage, country potatoes, peaches, french toast sticks, apple juice.

Friday, April 5

Cheese ravioli, corn, broccoli, pineapple.

Monday, April 8

Bean w/ham soup, asparagus, bread pudding, crackers.

Tuesday, April 9

Baked chicken, sweet potatoes, green beans, seasoned rice, fruited jello.

Events

Wednesday, April 3 - Hastings, crafts/nails; Nashville, trivia; Woodland, trivia; Delton, b/p day, music, Harlan.

Thursday, April 4 - Hastings, line dancers, music; Nashville, bingo; Delton, trivia.

Friday, April 5 - Hastings, bingo; Nashville, popcorn day; Woodland, bring a friend.

Monday, April 8 - Hastings, music; Nashville, bring a friend; Woodland, bring a friend; Delton, exercise.

Tuesday, April 9 - Hastings, line dancers, exercise, our favorite kids, kinship care, 7 p.m.; Nashville, Grandma Kids.

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Shirley Harmon,
Village Clerk

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Full speed ahead for financing, building new COA, Health Dept.

by Elaine Gilbert
Assistant Editor

With one sweeping resolution Tuesday, the Barry County Board of Commissioners finalized details previously hanging in the air for months concerning proposed plans for new County Commission on Aging (COA) and District Health Department buildings.

Commissioners, voting 6-2, approved spending \$3,276,687 from the county's Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund, which also is known as the Tax Umbrella Fund, to pay for property and the entire cost of both projects and to extend its option to purchase the proposed site. Commissioners Tom Wilkinson and Tom Wing voted against the resolution.

Some reimbursement, perhaps more than \$150,000, is expected to be put back in the fund through a grant and sale of other county-owned property.

Previously, the County Board had said it would buy the property, which includes a vacant church for the COA, and fund the cost of a health department structure, but it never had said it would pay for the costs of remodeling the proposed COA building.

"It is in the best interest of the county, its residents and taxpayers to proceed with the purchase of the parcel and the Commission on Aging project and the District Health Department project..." the County Board said in its resolution.

COA Executive Director Tammy Pennington appeared elated.

"I'm excited," she said after the meeting. "The commission has just really supported us a lot, and I think this move shows how much they support senior citizens in Barry County."

"I admire the commissioners who were able to keep the senior citizens number one in this whole issue. There were so many different things to look at. I appreciate that the majority of them were able to put the needs of the senior citizens first," Pennington said.

The current COA headquarters is antiquated and lacks sufficient parking.

Regarding the plans for the health building, District Health Department Officer Tom W. Spencer said, "I feel really good. We've put a lot of work into it. There's been a lot of thought given to it. People sometimes express that this was without a plan, but it was not without a plan."

"The Health Department has been working on this and planning at it since I've been here since 1995. Before that, there was another effort, starting in 1990...The health department needs the space, and they need to have the space more functional than it is. We don't have enough usable space for staff...or programs."

The current facility has

been used 20 years beyond its time, Spencer said. "It's not handicapped accessible...There are lots of problems."

One of the largest audiences in recent history was present for the evening County Board meeting at what is believed to be the first time (at least in recent memory) the board has conducted a regular meeting outside the city of Hastings.

About 63 people packed the Barry Township Hall in Delton where the meeting was held, and County Board Chairman Jeff MacKenzie said he was "overjoyed." Nearly 50 in attendance were interested citizens and the rest were county elected officials, employees or present because of county-related business.

While some opposition from the audience was expressed against the proposed building projects, the majority of the group did not speak.

Delton resident Jim Alden, who was in the audience, said commissioners' actions to pass Tuesday's resolution, will be considered in voting deliberations at the August primary.

"I believe I speak for a number of citizens in the audience tonight," he said. All of the commissioners' terms expire at the end of the year, so those who seek re-election will have to be candidates in the primary.

Another Delton citizen, Drew Chapple, wondered why the County Board didn't seriously consider property owned by Kellogg Community College on the west side of Hastings. He said that site would be more centrally located for outlying communities.

"I just liked to see that some of the new commissioners stood out. They brought up some good questions. There were some that didn't, and I'm concerned about that," Chapple said near the conclusion of the meeting.

Citizen Tom Bustance said the location of the former church property is "a bad idea." The public should vote on whether they approve the proposed projects, he said, and the County Board should not use a "slush fund" to pay for it.

Some controversy, especially in the Delton area, has been brewing about the expense and location of the proposed projects ever since the County Board last year approved an option to purchase 6.75 acres, which includes the former Peace Community Church, for \$519,500. The land is located at 1330 N. Broadway on the southwest corner of Woodlawn in Hastings.

A special use permit had been granted by the City of Hastings Planning Commission for the property, but the site plan has not been approved yet because the firm the county hired, Northstar Management & Consulting Inc. of Charlevoix, failed to

complete its work, county officials said. Northstar is affiliated with the nonprofit Northern Health Foundation.

The County Board this week could have decided not to purchase the property without penalty because a clause in the purchase agreement allowed the county to back out if all governmental approvals had not been received by April 1. Instead, the county decided to extend its option to purchase the land from Top Properties LLC (Don and Sandi Drummond) through 4 p.m. June 14 to have additional time to secure required site plan approvals from the city.

In a nutshell, also as a result of the County Board's Tuesday action:

- Landmark Design of Grand Rapids is 'in' as the architect of the proposed COA and Health buildings and Northern Alliance is 'out' as a prospective designer, builder and financier of the health structure. Landmark also has been authorized to subcontract a planning/engineering firm to complete the site plan and submit it to the City Planning Commission no later than its June meeting.

- The size of the proposed new health department building has been scaled down from 16,000 square feet to approximately 13,400 square feet.

- A grant of about \$150,000 from the Michigan Department of Community Health for a COA adult day care program will be given back to the county as a credit or reimbursement for the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund.

- Proceeds from the sale of the current COA and District Health Department buildings also will reimburse the county's Revolving Fund.

Commissioner Wilkinson tried to amend the board's resolution to eliminate most of the binding financial content and other issues, but only he and Commissioner Tom Wing were in favor of the change. Wilkinson indicated he favored making decisions about most of the meaty issues at a future time.

Basic renovation of the vacant church for the COA is expected to cost between \$350,000-375,000. That figure includes, new flooring, new paint, new doors and hardware, roof repair, new toilets, code requirements, new electrical service, new heating and air conditioning and an entry canopy.

In addition, future work could cost an additional \$160,000 to \$200,000 for new windows, new ceilings, a storage addition, new light fixtures and patios.

A citizen at this week's meeting, Jim Rhodes, indicated that the County Board may be wasting its money on renovation like previous boards did when they purchased an old church building in downtown Hastings many years ago for the for-

mer Courts and Law Building (now demolished). Previous County Boards poured thousands of dollars into the structure to keep it functional. Rhodes suggested that the county "would save money in the long run" if it demolished the former Peace Church and built a new structure for the COA.

A breakdown of the costs for the COA and Health Department projects shows \$34,562 in closing costs. Of that amount, \$19,187 is property taxes on the land and \$8,050 is for the seller's interest and utilities because the purchase wasn't finalized in February as originally intended.

Construction of the health department building is expected to cost \$1.34 million and \$100,000 has been budgeted for furnishings. Site costs for parking, drives and landscaping on the property are anticipated at \$500,000. Legal and other miscellaneous expenses for the projects are estimated to be \$20,000.

When asked about Northern Health Alliance being rejected from the project, Health Officer Spencer said he didn't have any feelings one way or the other.

Citizen Gene Willison told the board that he hopes local workers and contractors will be able to be hired for the projects due to the unemployment situation.

The county has more than \$5.6 million in the savings account it calls the Tax Umbrella Fund, accumulated from interest and fees on delinquent taxes. Commissioner Tom Wing noted that the County Board's plans to pay for the building projects will deplete about half of that fund. He also wondered whether the county's bond rating will drop.

Ralph Deal, a citizen in the audience, said the County Board "has just committed the next six years to not spending any more money out of the Umbrella Fund if you want to have it be at its current level again. I think that's a little low."

Using that fund is a "true travesty" and "disheartening for me," Delton citizen

Drew Chapple told the board. He said he is in favor of improvements for both agencies.

"...When we put all of our ducks in one basket, who are we really serving - are we serving the whole of Barry County or are we serving just one general population?" he asked.

Delton resident Wes Knollenberg has been spearheading a petition drive urging the County Board to cancel the sales agreement for the purchase of the former Peace Community Church property in Hastings because he believes remodeling the church building for the COA and building a new health department out of the downtown Hastings area is not in the best interests of county citizens, especially those in Southwest Barry County.

Knollenberg said Wednesday the petition drive is continuing despite Tuesday's vote. He said even if the petitions had been presented this week he doesn't think they would have made a difference because commissioners had already "made up their minds."

He said he will be re-thinking strategy and re-evaluating the situation in coming weeks.

Speaking during public comment at Tuesday's meeting, Knollenberg said "the COA needs to focus on how to better deliver their programs, so that they reach more senior citizens throughout the county."

He said the "real job of the COA" is to double the number of seniors served.

Knollenberg said he is disturbed about statistics regarding COA programs and services from the last two COA annual reports.

"The number of seniors served by the COA has decreased by as much as 25 percent in nine of the 12 outlying townships" outside of the Hastings area - 10 of 16 townships countywide. "The percentage of seniors served is less than 10 percent in 10 of the 12 outlying townships" - 13 of 16 townships countywide, he said.

"In comparison, 18 percent of Hastings seniors received COA services in 2001, a 15 percent increase over the previous year. This is great for the seniors of Hastings (where the COA is based), not so great for someone who is 75 years old, lives in an outlying township and must drive half-way across the county in January for a COA program," Knollenberg continued.

Commissioner Tom Wing received applause when he said senior services everywhere in the county should have the same privileges as Hastings.

During an annual COA report for 2001 at the meeting, Pennington said the agency tries hard to reach every corner of the county and tries not to look at where seniors live, but what their needs are.

Later in the meeting, she said the COA needs to hear constructive, specific suggestions about program ideas that senior citizens want.

"Delton needs to communicate with us," Pennington said.

She said a goal is to make more information available about what services are available.

"We are so pleased that people in Barry County are taking such a great interest in senior citizen services, and we're all working together truly with the hopes of making things better for senior citizens in Barry County," she said. "I trust that's why we're all interested in not just the agency but the project itself."

"Our mission, as it has been for the past 28 years, is to provide services to older adults in their homes so that they can remain independent in their homes," she said.

In addition, COA Friendship Centers operate in Woodland, Delton, Hastings and Nashville for meals and other activities. The Meals on Wheels program drivers traveled 61,885 miles last year. "...We are getting out a lot around the county," she said.

See COA, Health Dept., pg. 11



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High student essay contest

AGING MENU OF EVENTS

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WRESTLING CLUB RESULTS

The Maple Valley Wrestling Club competed in a tournament at Olivet High School on Mar. 23, where a whopping 86 percent of its participating wrestlers earned medals. Results:

Group 0:
Colyn Reed, 3rd Place (27 lbs)

Landon Hess, 1st Place (55 lbs)

Group 1:
Nicholas Iszler, 1st Place (40 lbs)
Alex Reed, 2nd Place (49 lbs)

Devin Greenfield, 2nd Place (52 lbs)
Paul Hosmer, 2nd Place (55 lbs)

Hunter Hess, 1st Place (61 lbs)

Andrew Lamance, 2nd Place (67 lbs)
Chantz McManamey, 3rd Place (72 lbs)
Colton Parish, 2nd Place (Hwt)

Group 2:
Niko Rose, 3rd Place (55 lbs)

Garrett Reid, 4th Place (60 lbs)
Brandon Aiston, 2nd Place (70 lbs)
Cole Hess, 3rd Place (70 lbs)
Levi Totten, 3rd Place (87 lbs)

Group 3:
Ryan Brooke, 1st Place (95 lbs)

Jesse Miller, 1st Place (100 lbs)
Jorge Miller, 1st Place (105 lbs)
Jesse Scott Miller, 3rd Place (140 lbs)

Group 4:
Raven Skirlock, 3rd Place (85 lbs)

Tyler Corwin, 1st Place (90 lbs)
Jamie Corwin, 2nd Place (95 lbs)

Christopher James, 4th Place (100 lbs)
Cole Flowers, 4th Place (125 lbs)

Cadets:
Ben Boss 1st Place
Joe Desrochers 3rd Place
Kevin Fassett 4th Place
Eric Totten 2nd Place



Local athletes named to All-Barry County team

Maple Valley's All-Barry County athletes for boys' basketball, volleyball and wrestling (from left): Miranda Farr (v), Jason Silsbee (w), Nick Jones (b), Darin Thrun (b). (Photo by Perry Hardin)

Miranda Farr vaults to school record as track season opens

The Maple Valley girls' track team revved up for the coming season with some stellar efforts at the Mid-Michigan Indoor Track and Field Meet, a non-scoring, multi-team event held at Central Michigan University last Wednesday.

Leading the way was senior pole vaulter Miranda Farr, who set a new indoor school record by clearing the bar at 9 feet, 3 inches, besting the second-place finisher by a full nine inches. Teammate Tera Gordonski placed sixth with a vault of 7-6.

Donna Cripe placed fifth in the 55-meter dash (8.1 seconds), Stefanie Joostberns placed second in the 400 (1:03.9), Megan Garvey placed third in the long jump (15-2), and Cashel Harp placed second in the shot put (31-11 1/4).

In relay events, the 4x200 team of Cripe, Amy Strickland, Micah Tobias and Garvey placed second in 1:56.3. The 4x800 team of Joostberns, Jessica McMillen, Chayla Robles and Summer Hill took third in 11:08.1. In the 4x400, Joostberns, Lisa Hamilton, Hill and Garvey combined for a second-place

finish in 4:34.7. Both track teams return to action this Saturday, April 6 at the Kent City Relays.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Barry County MSU Extension Office

- April 2 Horse Judging Clinic, 6:30 p.m., open to all, questions or directions call Stacey at 616-795-7655.
- April 3 Livestock Development Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the Expo Center.
- April 4 Fair Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Expo Center.
- April 6 Michigan Master Gardener Association Spring Workshop, 8:45 a.m., Courts and Laws Bldg.
- April 8 Sheep & Swine Nutrition Workshop, 6 p.m.
- April 8 Horse Developmental Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., HHS Cafeteria.
- April 10 Horse Judging Team Meeting, 6:30 p.m., HHA in Ag room.
- April 13 4-H Babysitting Classes start 9 a.m., Extension Office.
- April 17 4-H Advisory Council, 7 p.m.
- April 18 Fair Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Expo Center.
- April 18 Shooting Sports Leaders Meeting, 7 p.m.
- April 22 Rabbit Developmental Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., HHS Ag Room.
- April 24 Horse Judging Team meeting, 6:30 p.m., HHS, Ag room B 123.
- April 27 4-H Judged/Comp Trail Ride (Ionia)
- April 27 Horse Jamboree at MSU - State Horse Judging Competition.
- April 29 Mandatory Fair Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Expo Center.

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Nashville gymnast takes first at state; plans summer trip to Finland

Nine-year-old gymnast Mitchell Hamilton of Nashville took first place in his class in all-around competition at the boys' state meet in Detroit on Mar. 17.

Hamilton, a member of Twistars Gymnastics Club in Lansing, topped the Class 6 competition for 7- to 9-year-olds with an all-around score of 56.35. He was the Class 7 champion two years ago.

In individual events, Hamilton placed first on the still rings with a 9.65, third on the floor with a 9.7, third on the high bar with a 9.3, fifth on the pommel horse with a 9.0, seventh on the parallel bars with a 9.35 and 10th on the vault with a 9.35.

Hamilton has some big plans for this summer. He will attend a gymnastics camp at the University of Michigan and make a trip all the way to Finland to practice with the Finnish National Team. Hamilton's coach, Juha Tanskanen, was once a member of Finland's team.

Hamilton practices year-round, currently hitting the gym four days a week for three- to four-hour sessions each time. His parents are Alan and Julie Hamilton.



Mighty Mite: Nashville gymnast Mitchell Hamilton took first place on the still rings en route to a Class 6 all-around title at the state meet in Detroit. Hamilton will travel to Finland this summer to train with the Finnish National Team.



Imhoffs to celebrate 60th wedding anniversary

Charlie and Shirley Imhoff of Nashville will be celebrating their sixtieth wedding anniversary at an open house on April 6, from 2 to 5:30 p.m. at the Vermontville Opera House. They were married in Grand Ledge on February 2, 1942. The couple has three children, Nancy Kent (Wayne), Marilyn Frye, and Linda Boldrey (Ed); nine grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren. Family and friends are invited to share this happy day. No gifts, please.

COA, Health Dept., from pg. 9

The COA has 25 employees. Only four are full time. Other issues brought up during public comment times during the meeting included concerns from Delton citizen Barb Cichy about the Southwest Barry County Sewer and Water Authority's "illegal discharges" and release of raw sewage "into lower levels of our homes, city streets, properties and streams."

She wondered if the County Board, "as owners" of the system through the financing of bonds for the project, was aware of that the Authority doesn't have insurance coverage for residents regarding the discharges and releases of sewage, which she said "often constitute a serious environmental and public health threat."

"Without insurance, will the county be paying for the damages of cleaning up our homes, properties and medical claims? I doubt it. Every resident on the system will be paying a portion of the costs of these illegal discharges," Cichy said.

She also talked about documentation showing that the Southwest Barry Authority has more discharges than

surrounding cities and counties and wondered why?

Cichy also asked the county to contribute \$2 million to pay for repairs to bring the Delton area system into compliance.

Alden asked that the county begin taping all public meetings and committee sessions so that if a member "questions the transcript for the minutes, the tape would reflect the accurate state-

ment made at a meeting."

Because of Wilkinson's suggestion, public comment times were included at the beginning of the meeting and at the end. Usually, the County Board has one public comment time.

Regarding attendance, "I'm very pleased. I think it proves we were right in doing this and maybe we should be doing more of it," said County Board Chairman Jeff MacKenzie, discussing the public turnout after the Delton meeting. "People are interested in their government. If we make it accessible to them, they will participate."

The county board is planning three other meetings outside of Hastings in the next few months.

In other business, the

board:

• Heard MacKenzie say he thought the tone of emails he has received about the Charlton Park issue (see separate story in this issue for details) "have been getting increasingly hostile."

"...We don't need hostility. You know my phone number... You've never had to threaten me," he said to Commissioner Tom Wing.

"I didn't threaten," Wing responded.

Wing said he thought the emails were confidential, and MacKenzie said he believes they are public documents when public officials are involved.

Commissioner Jim French suggested getting a legal opinion about email, phone calls, etc. between commissioners. MacKenzie asked

County Administrator Michael Brown to contact the county prosecutor or the county's attorney to give a presentation about email and other forms of communication.

• Set a public hearing for 10 a.m. May 14 at the County Courthouse in Hastings to discuss the establishment of a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. The board adopted a resolution of intent to create such an authority to promote revitalization and redevelopment of environmentally distressed areas in the county.

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CALENDAR EVENTS

Newborn?

injections at

Essay contest winners named

by Shawna Hubbarth
Staff Writer
Three Maple Valley

eighth-graders placed in a student essay contest sponsored by State Farm Bureau

Insurance agency, and one of those students, Pam Cook, will compete at the

state level for more than a \$1,000 in scholarships. The essay contest was



Amanda Kirchhoff, and Meghan Keasler. First place student Pam Cook was not available for photo.

based on "Why I am grateful to U.S. Veterans."

Amanda Kirchhoff placed second place, and Meghan Keasler placed third.

The contest focused on the after effects of Sept. 11. Keasler and Kirchhoff said they wrote their essays in about two weeks.

"Mine took about that long from the first draft to the completed version," said Kirchhoff. "I also interviewed my grandfather and some other veterans for the essay."

Keasler said she added a poem to hers and learned through writing about some of the sacrifices veterans have made for her freedoms.

"I really learned a lot," added Kirchhoff. "My grandfather was able to tell

me about the history of veterans in my family, and what war they fought in and their experiences."

Cook's essay will be judged along with many other student essays from across the state soon. The winner of the state contest will received more than \$1,000 in scholarships.

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