

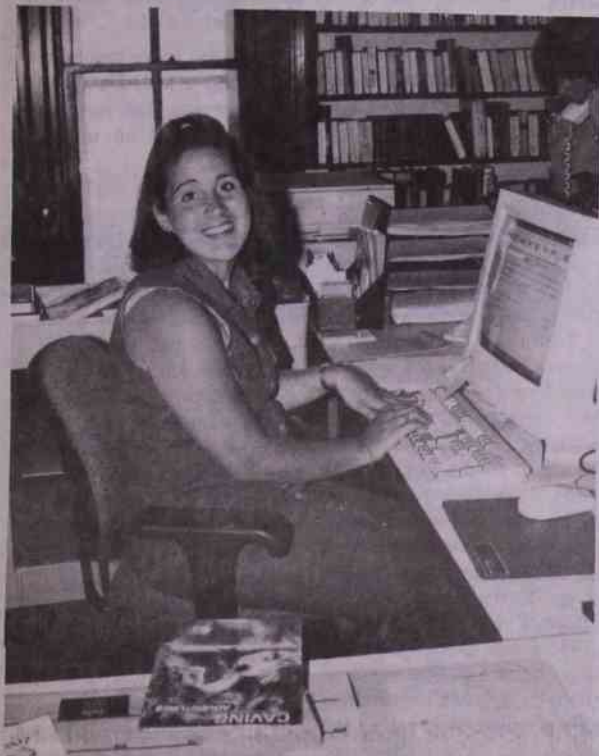
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Nashville girl beats the odds



by Sandra Ponsetto
Staff Writer
 A first job is a milestone in the life of any teenager. For 17-year-old Katie Clark of Nashville it is nothing short of miraculous. Since June, Katie has spent two hours three days a week, at Putnam Library shelving books, working on the computer and helping

Katie (fourth from left) poses with her family on the porch of their Nashville home. Her brother, Chris, and sister, Heather, (insets) were not there for the photo. The entire Clark family has been very supportive of Katie's rehabilitation.

Katie Clark works on the computer at Putnam Library in Nashville.



patrons check out books. Five years ago Katie's doctors thought she would never walk, talk, go back to school, or even recognize members of her own family

again. But she has proven them wrong time and time again.

On July 3, 1997, when Katie was 13, her boyfriend at the time wanted to see "Hercules." So her father, Gary, loaded Katie, her boyfriend and her younger siblings Heather, Emily, Amy and Chris into the family van and headed to the theater.

They were five miles from home, at the corner of Assyria Road and Bivens Road, when a young man ran the stop sign at about 70 miles an hour, hitting the Clark's van. The van spun around and rolled over at least four times, and flipped end over end, ejecting all but three of the occupants before it came to rest. Only the boyfriend, Heather and Gary remained in the van.

Amy had a severe concussion, Emily had a broken collar bone, a double skull fracture and a frontal lobe injury to her brain. Heather, Chris and Gary had mild head injuries.

But it was Katie who was injured the worst. She suffered a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) and multiple internal injuries.

Katie's mother Barb said that Katie and Amy were airlifted from the crash scene to Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids. When the doctors at Pennock discovered the extent of Emily's injuries she was airlifted to Butterworth as well.

"It was difficult to leave my family that was OK and going home and drive up to Butterworth not knowing whether Kate was alive or not. They wouldn't give me that information," said Barb. "I had one in ICU and one in peds. It was constant spinning around."

Emily and Amy were released from the hospital, but Katie remained in a coma for three months.

Katie has almost no memory of her hospitalization. When she came out of the coma her condition was described as "pre-infant."

"She had to start by learning how to breathe and swallow, drink and eat, everything," said Gary.

"They had told me that she would have to learn to walk and talk again and I thought, OK. But, then she woke up and she was below

See beating the odds, pg. 2

Local band enjoys creating music

by Sandra Ponsetto
Staff Writer

They bill themselves as a contemporary Christian band, but their sound is much more eclectic.

"We actually do a lot of different styles of music," said Teresa Pash who does vocals and keyboard for the group called Matthew's House. "I like to do music from the '20s and '30s, and we do a lot of dance stuff, rock and jazz. Sheri and Alan (other group members)

are very talented and versatile."

Pash said that the about half of the music the group performs is original.

"All three of us do the writing. It's kind of fun," said Pash. "Once we even sat down and said, 'let's create a song together.'"

It helps that all three band members and their sound technician, Pash's husband, Chris, all live within four blocks of each other in Nashville.

"It makes it real nice for practices and stuff," said Pash. The group practices at least once a week, sometimes more when they have a concert coming up.

The tightly knit group formed a little more than five years ago. All of them were members of the praise team at Grace Community Church in Nashville, which they still attend.

"We wanted to do this (form Matthew's House) to have more outreach and ex-

pand our ministry," said Pash. "Our church is big on outreach, and we wanted to go beyond Sunday morning."

The group's web site states the following as their mission: "...present the gospel message of hope and encouragement to those in the world who would not otherwise be reached by traditional Christian methods, and to inspire, edify, and strengthen the walk of fellow believers."

Their name, "Matthew's House" is based on Matthew 9: 9-12.

"As Jesus went from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners? On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.'"

Members of the group say their goal is to reach out to people just as Jesus reached out to them.

To achieve their goal
See creating music, pg. 5



Shari Carney, Alan Lentz and Teresa Pash of Matthew's House perform in the Thornapple Arts Council building in downtown Hastings last Friday.

In This Issue...

- Maple Valley graduate shows art at Hastings gallery
- Historic farms featured at 150th Barry County Fair
- Vermontville Township Library is host to 'Olympics'
- Youth Theatre production of Charlotte's Web begins Thursday

Beating the odds, continued from page 1

infant level and she couldn't even move her tongue, I was really quite surprised," said Barb. "But, she has gone way beyond what anybody ever anticipated."

The Clarks say they attribute Katie's recovery to God above all else.

"Katie's dedication, motivation, determination, her profound love of the Lord has certainly helped," said Barb. "She's a fighter."

"And her mother was instrumental and Heather Tobin and the whole support group at Harbor (Rehabilitation)," said Gary.

Heather Tobin has been Katie's speech therapist since she was released from the hospital in January 1998 and placed in Mary Free Bed, a rehabilitation facility for TBI patients.

Tobin said that Katie had

to start from scratch when learning how to talk.

"We had to work at the neuro-muscular level to get her tongue and lips, even breath support to work in tandem again," said Tobin. "Then it was the mental process of coming up with words and getting that to coordinate with the words coming out of the mouth."

Barb said that Katie could only mouth words to begin with and then started to talk in a whisper.

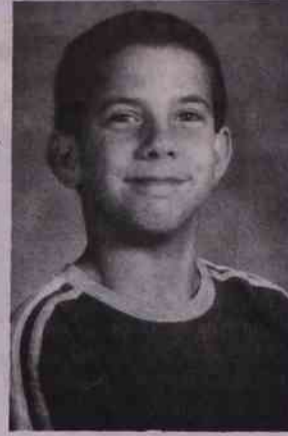
Tobin said that by February or March of 1998, Katie's family was able to understand her speech.

But, it wasn't always easy according to Barb.

"I remember when she was mouthing words and I wasn't the greatest lip-reader and she would get so frustrated with me and the



Heather Clark



Chris Clark

one word I could I could pick out was, 'forget it,'" said Barb, sharing a laugh with Katie and the family.

"She wasn't supposed to do any of the things she is doing now," continued Barb. "She wasn't supposed to walk, she wasn't supposed to talk, she wasn't supposed to go back to school, she wasn't supposed to do any of those things, but she does. "She wasn't supposed to remember, she wasn't supposed to put days together, maybe she'd know her family," said Barb.

"She did forget me for a couple of weeks," added Barb.

"But we're not sure that was purposeful or not," jested Tobin to the amusement of the entire Clark family.

"It was a difficult two weeks," said Barb.

Barb said that the aftermath of the accident and Katie's rehabilitation has been a real emotional struggle for the whole family.

It has been especially hard for Katie's sister,

Heather, because she was the only member of the family who remained conscious throughout the whole accident.

"She saw who went out what door and window and she got out and searched for her siblings," said Barb.

"For the first six months I was up in Grand Rapids with Katie and even though I did commute, when I was home I wasn't really home because my heart and head were at the hospital."

"It's constant almost daily change for everybody," Barb said. "You reach one level and you think that's great and then something else occurs that's different and you work through that. I think the kids have had a hard time dealing with all the changes."

Barb reports that Amy, 15, was always very close to Katie and was happy to have her home again, but she quickly tired of the care taking.

"You really got tired of the fetch and run, fetch and run," said Barb.

Chris, who is now 10 years old, has been the most resilient, according to his mother. "He just adores Katie."

Chris said he would like to see Katie make enough progress that she would be able to dive into the pool and ride the school bus with him in the fall.

Tobin said that unlike breaking your leg, recovery from a TBI doesn't take a finite amount of time.

"Something like this is chronic. There's something about this family's life that will never be the same again," she said.

Barb noted that at first Katie was unaware of her deficits.

"She was always happy, always smiling, nothing bothered her. Now she has a really acute awareness of things that she can't do. Her little sister that is driving and one other is taking driver's training and that should be her," said Barb. "The awareness is wonderful, it means a lot of improvement but on the other hand it also means some depression and different things that go along with that."

Barb said that despite her difficulties, Katie never got frustrated or angry.

"I know that if I create a fuss, it will still be the same and people will just ignore me longer," said Katie.

"Every day is different," she added. It's certainly not a case of waking up out of the coma and saying, 'Hi Mom, let's go home.' It does encompass the entire family. But we are very pleased and grateful for what we have, that I didn't lose any children and we're certainly getting everybody back."

Barb said that if she could give one piece of advice to families going through the same thing it would be for the caregivers to make sure they take time for themselves.

"It was something I never did until a year ago when I crashed and burned," said Barb. "You have to take time for yourself. You can't help your kid if your own yourself. Find ten minutes a day for yourself so you can have a break from it."

Barb also recommends looking for head injury support groups.

Tobin, who has worked closely with Clarks for the past five years has become like a member of the family.

"It would be hard not to be a part of the family, and what a phenomenal family to be a part of. It's been a privilege. I've watched them do all the things they needed to do. I've watched them be elated, I've watched them be frustrated. I've watched them be afraid. I've watched them experience every emotion possible. It's really hard not to be there right along with them. I don't think I'd be doing my job very well if I was not."

By the fall of 1998 Katie was back in school. Because of her continued rehabilitation she attended school only half of the day and spent the other half of her day in therapy. In addition to speech therapy with To-

bin, Katie had physical therapy, occupational therapy, recreational therapy and visited with a social worker.

Despite missing a year of school because of her injuries and returning to school half-time the following year, Katie will be entering her senior year at Maple Valley High School this fall and plans to graduate with her class in the spring.

Katie was given academic credit for a lot of the time she spent in therapy and because she made such rapid progress she didn't fall too far behind her classmates, and caught up through home tutoring.

"Her biggest goal for herself was to graduate with her class and on time," said Barb. "It looks like she will achieve that goal."

"We had a couple years that were jam-packed with core classes and she did it,"

said Barb.

When asked if it was hard going back to school, Katie replied, "In a way, 'yes.' In a way, 'no.' I like being back in school."

Katie returned to school full-time during the 1999-2000 school year and is now on the honor roll with a 3.69 grade point average.

Academic success didn't come easy. Three or four days a week, after a full day of school, Katie would meet with a speech, occupational or physical therapist. After therapy Katie would do approximately three hours of homework a night.

"It didn't leave much time for being a kid. But, she's never been a kid; not even when she was an infant," said Barb.

Katie said she enjoys her job at the library.

"The people there are really nice," she said.

Katie's favorite part of the job is the computer.

"I like it because it's like secretarial job when I'm on the computer and I've always wanted to work on a computer," said Katie. "I love computer work."

Sandy Hosey, the assistant director at Putnam Library said they are pleased with Katie's work.

"We think she's just great," said Hosey. "She's really good. She's learning the job really well and she tries very hard."

Katie said she is not sure if she will continue to work at the library once school starts again in the fall.

Tobin said that she and Katie will wait and see how working at the library will fit into her after school schedule.

With the support of her family and therapists Katie will continue to beat the odds. Even though she must wait to see if she can continue working this fall, Katie is already making plans for what she would like to do after graduation.

"I would like to go to college," said Katie, who said she plans to attend Kellogg Community College.

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11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:20, 9:50
MEN IN BLACK 2 (PG-13)
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serve," says Fred Sterns, CEO of the Great Lakes Region of the American Red Cross.

The Region attempts to collect around 750 units of whole blood from volunteer donors every day. In recent weeks, the Region has averaged about 700 units daily.

"Although that shortfall seems minor, the current rate

of collection puts Michigan's blood supply in serious jeopardy," says Sterns.

Despite the shortage, the Region was able to respond to the needs of the nearly 70 Michigan hospitals in the 63 counties it serves throughout the Fourth of July holiday. The Red Cross, however, is urging all eligible donors to set an appointment to give

blood this month to help replenish depleted blood supplies.

The blood shortage prompted a rare, joint appeal two weeks ago by the American Red Cross, American Association of Blood Banks, American Hospital Association, America's Blood Centers and American Public Health Association.

The appeal is the first time in history that the five health-care organizations have joined together to issue a nationwide call for blood donors.

To schedule an appointment to donate blood, or for more information on a blood drive in your area, call 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

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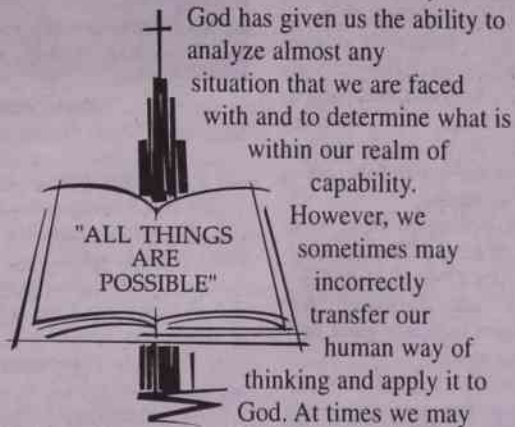
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God has given us the ability to analyze almost any situation that we are faced with and to determine what is within our realm of capability. However, we sometimes may incorrectly transfer our human way of thinking and apply it to God. At times we may believe that some problems are too big or that some situations are too insignificant to concern our Heavenly Father. The Bible tells us that with God, nothing will be impossible (Luke 1:37), and that we should pray about everything (Philippians 4:6). I am always amazed at how God answers prayer. It seems that when we ask our Lord for help with all of the different problems we encounter, they often get resolved in ways that we have not considered. We have to remember that God's ways are not always our ways, and that His ways are always perfect. We don't always have to understand what happens to us, we only have to have faith and trust in God that He loves us and wants what is best for us. God is true to His word and all things are possible according to His will.

Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.

R.S.V. Psalm 37:4

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Maple Valley graduate shows art in Hastings

by Sandra Ponsetto
Staff Writer

The paintings of Dustin London, a 1998 graduate of Maple Valley High School, are on display at the Thornapple Arts Council, 117 West State St. in downtown Hastings, from now through Aug. 10.

There will be an artist's reception on Friday, July 26, from 7 to 9 p.m.

London is finishing his

senior year at Michigan State University and in December will receive a bachelor of fine arts degree in studio art with an emphasis in painting.

Besides painting, studio art encompasses sculpture, printmaking, graphic design and more. While he has studied and worked in all of these media, it is with oil paints and canvas that London chooses to create his art.

"There's something about the physicality of paint, even on a flat surface, that you can't even approach with sculpture," said London. "I like the way I can create space with paint. It is more fascinating than any other media."

London said his interest in art and painting began in high school with a couple of small oil paintings. His paintings are anything but small now.

His studio at the Kresge Art Center at MSU is dominated by several large canvases, most taller than six feet. London applies paint to the canvas with the same kind of brush a person would use to paint the siding on their house.

According to Rose Heaton, director of the Thornapple Arts Council, London's style of painting has changed radically since high school as well.

"In high school his realism was just incredible," she said. "He did a painting of a woman carrying a child across a river and the drops of water on her face looked wet."

"Now his art is very abstract, very different."

When asked to describe his art, London replied that



Dustin London poses with some of his work in his studio on the campus of Michigan State University.

was a very hard thing to do.

"It's like having someone ask you what your life is about," said London.

Still, London said that if he had to say what his work is about, he would say it was, "based in phenomenology as a philosophy."

"Phenomenology is based on a mid-20th century French philosophy of perception and existence," he said. "I guess that's one of the reasons that I paint, it's more about philosophy than anything else."

When he entered MSU four years ago, London said he was enrolled as an art education major because he wanted to make a living. However, he changed his major after only one semester.

"Just making a living wasn't for me," said London. "The trick is to find work in life that's not really work."

London has sold some of his work and said he would like to earn a living creating and selling his paintings. He has shown his art at MSU, Key West and most recently Petoskey.

London said he may want to teach art at a university or art institute in the future and he is planning to pursue graduate studies, but hasn't settled on a particular school or program.

Heaton said that she hopes London's experience will encourage other aspiring young artists.

"I think it's really great to have local people like Dustin show their art here," she said. "It's good for them to see someone who graduated from the same school they're in and then went on to pursue a fine arts degree."

The Thornapple Arts Council is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. For more information, call the Thornapple Arts Council at (616) 945-2002.

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- Aug. 3 Open House Show, 8:30 a.m., Expo Center (Must have proof of negative Coggins test)
- Aug. 4 Speed Horse Show, 10 a.m. Expo Center (Must have proof of negative Coggins test)
- Aug. 5 Small Animal Sale Buyer Appreciation Banquet, 7 p.m., Expo Center.
- Aug. 7 Livestock Developmental Committee meet, 7:30 p.m., Expo Center.
- Aug. 10 State Dog Show, MSU Pavilion, East Lansing.
- Aug. 16-18 State Horse Show, MSU Pavilion.
- Aug. 18 Judged Trail Ride, 8 a.m., Lux Arbor.

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Area Obituary

Vidian Lawrence Roe

SARASOTA, FLORIDA - Vidian Lawrence Roe passed away peacefully in Sarasota, Fla., at the age of 88. He had been a summer resident of Grayling for the past 20 years. Born in Three Forks, Montana on May 7, 1914, he was the son of Vidian Lawrence Sr. and Lela T. Roe. Mr. Roe married his childhood sweetheart, Georgia Gribbin, who preceded him in death.

In his retirement years, he had divided his time between Sarasota, Florida and Grayling.

Vidian earned his BA degree from Michigan State University in 1938 with majors in communication and journalism. After graduation, he was employed by The Kalamazoo Gazette. Four years later he bought The Centreville Observer

serving as its editor and publisher until 1949 when he purchased The Fremont Times-Indicator. As owner, editor and publisher in Fremont, he fashioned a distinguished career. He was a strong community leader, served on numerous local, state and national commissions, was elected president of the Michigan Press Association and his paper was presented the Ernie Pyle Award for excellence in reporting Veteran's activities.

After retiring from the Fremont paper he served on the teaching staff and as Public Relations Officer for Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. During this period he married Louise Lentz Williamson who preceded him in death five years ago.

He enjoyed working on crossword puzzles, fishing, painting and the arts.

Vidian is survived by a son, Vidian L. Roe III and his wife, Carolyn Jeffs Roe, of Bradford, Vermont, his children: Tosha Shea Roe and Vidian L. Roe IV, and a daughter Linda McFarland of Grand Rapids, her children Kirk and Eric Bredin and their wives.

He also has one great-granddaughter. Also surviving are his brother William H. (Viola) Roe along with several nieces and nephews. A sister, Jean Barton, of North Carolina, preceded him in death several years ago.

Memorial services were held at Lakehouse West in Sarasota. A memorial service will be held at the Lakeview Cemetery in Nashville, Michigan on Thursday, July 25, at 2:00 p.m. Contributions in Vidian's name can be made to the charity of your choice.

Vidian touched many lives during his journey through life. He will be greatly missed by family and friends.

Special music, continued from page 1

Matthew's House has performed at Hastings Summerfest, Mattawan Train Days, the Vermontville Syrup Festival, the Pole Barn Jam in Cadillac and at other places. They also participate regularly in the ministry at Eaton County Jail in Charlotte.

"We are not to be Pharisees and point our fingers with judgment, but instead we are to be steeped in mercy; reaching those who are often overlooked by the religious community. It is our mission to bring such (people) into a personal relationship with Christ," says the group's brochure.

The members of Matthew's House also perform with Yesterday's Gospel, a group headed by Dan and Deb Cooper of Hastings.

Pash said that Cooper was instrumental in helping them get Matthew's House off the ground. He did their sound for them when they first started and showed them how to mix sound, incorporate sound effects and do other technical things.

When not performing, the

members of Matthew's House, all of them Nashville residents, lead very busy lives.

Chris Pash, who serves as the group's manager and sound technician, is a seventh grade geography teacher at Maple Valley Jr./Sr. High School. Teresa Pash teaches piano and plays for weddings and receptions and has recently cut two piano music CDs, one called "Christmas Memories" and the other, "Hymns of the Heart." Shari Carney, who does percussion, drums and vocals, works for the State of Michigan monitoring exams for state employees. Alan Lentz, who plays drums, rhythm, lead guitar and vocals, is the director of special education for Gales-

burg/Augusta Schools.



"We have a lot of fun when we're together," said Pash. When you see us perform, what you see is genuine. We like to have fun and laugh. We have a really neat dynamic that is not contrived. It's just all very natural for us.

The group is currently working on recording its first CD, featuring their original music.

Matthew's House will perform in the concert venue in the parking lot of First Presbyterian Church in Hastings during the Hastings Summerfest Aug. 23-25.

For more information about Matthew's House call (517) 852-9159 or log onto their web site at matthewshouse@angelfire.com.

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All parents want the best for their children. If you would like information on parent educators that can help you explore ways to interact with your child, call and ask about our Building Strong Families and Parents as Teachers programs, call Early Childhood Connections at 517-645-4500.

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Antiques

ALLEGAN ANTIQUE MARKET: Sunday, July 28. Rain or shine, 400 exhibitors-over 300 inside or under cover. Located right in Allegan, Michigan at the fairgrounds. 7:30am to 4:00pm. \$3 admission. Free parking.

Automotive

FOR SALE: 1991 Geo Storm 2 door coupe, 5 speed. A/C, AM/FM CD. New clutch, runs good, drives good, **MUST SELL! BEST OFFER!** Please call (269)792-6829 after 6pm.

Business Services

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NASHVILLE: very nice 1 bedroom apartment, (517)852-9386.

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1YR OLD 30" 10hp riding lawn mower. Mulching blade, \$550. Call (517)852-0847.

BED: LOG POST, king. Never used. Includes mattress. Cost \$1,100. Sell \$195. (989)227-2986

LARGE 3 PIECE blue sectional: in excellent condition, 2 seat sections recline and the middle section has a snack table that pulls down with a small table tray and 2 cup holders. New full size bed at the end of the couch. \$800. (269)948-7921

LOG CABIN BED: queen w/mattress set. (New) Cedar sturdy. Cost \$800. Sell \$175. (517)719-8062

Garage Sale

GARAGE SALE: July 26th & 27th, 9am-4pm at 10145 Maple Grove Rd. South of Nashville on E. M-79 to south on Clark Rd. one mile to Maple Grove turn east, first house on the left. Crib, jogging stroller, 3-in-1 stroller/car seat - excellent. Books, clothes, toys, kitchen and decorating items.

MULTI FAMILY GARAGE SALE: Friday & Saturday, July 26th & 27th. 9-5pm. Sofa bed, livingroom tables, love seat and other furniture, Whirlpool washer & dryer, infant & toddlers clothing, carseat & Exersaucer & household items. 472 Frey Rd. Vermontville. 1 half mile east of Ionia Rd off M-79.

2 FREE GARAGE SALE signs with your ad that runs in any of our papers. Get them at J-Ad Graphics, 1351 N. M-43 Hwy., Hastings. At the front counter.

GARAGE SALE: Sat., July 27th 2002, 9am-4pm. 37 Mead St., just off Heath Rd. - just follow the green signs. Variety of items and sizes. Put on by Barry County employees. All proceeds go to the Relay for Life 2002 American Cancer Society.

Household

PILLOWTOP DELUXE MATTRESS SET: luxury firm. Any size, brand new, includes frame, \$800 value. Sell \$225. Can deliver. (517)626-7089

Lawn & Garden

WATER GARDENING: Water Lilies & Lotus, Aquatic plants, Goldfish & Koi, liners, pumps, filters. Apol's Landscaping Co., 9340 Kalamazoo, Caledonia. (616)698-1030. Open Mon-Fri., 9am-5:30pm; Sat., 9am-2pm.

Miscellaneous

IT'S TIME FOR schools to get quotes on upcoming years form & newsletter needs. Call Print Plus 945-9105.

PRINT PLUS- Your printing center for all types of printing. Check us out for a quote on your print job. Call 945-9105.

National Ads

CONSTRUCTION/LINE-MEN: TO \$24.03/HR. (cable-hookup) fiber-optics! Training provided. (616)949-2424 Jobline.

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HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS/BILLING: to \$12.70/Hr. + benefits pkg. Entry level, great advancement potential. (616)949-2424 Jobline.

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GAYLORD AREA: 4.85 beautifully wooded acres, ideal camping/hunting base, short drive to state land and Jordan River. Driveway, cleared site, electric, \$26,900, \$500 down, \$330 month, 11% land contract. www.northernlandco.com, Northern Land Company, 1-800-968-3118.

Fajnor-Widenhofer united in marriage



On Dec. 30, 2001, Kristin Katherine Fajnor and Joshua Patrick Widenhofer were united in marriage.

The bridesmaids were Jennifer (Fajnor) Mitchell and Jessica (Fajnor) Porritt, sisters of the bride.

Groomsmen were David Widenhofer and Ralph Widenhofer, uncles of the groom. Ringbearer were Brandon Wilson, nephew of the bride.

Flower girls were Hana Wilson, niece of the bride,

and Layla Widenhofer, cousin of the groom.

Kristin is the daughter of Tyfanie and Sherman Garity, and Robert and Roberta Fajnor.

Joshua is the son of Sueann Kerry.

Kristin and Josh honeymooned in Chicago. Both are students at the Indiana University of Culinary Arts in Punxsutawney, PA, from where they will graduate in August 2002.

Chris and Cindy Hall marriage announced



The families of Chris and Cindy Hall are pleased to announce the couple were recently wed in Reno, Nevada.

After a private ceremony on June 17, 2002, accompanied by close friends Lewis and Carol Bolton, the couple honeymooned in South Lake Tahoe.

Cindy, (formally Cindy Smith) is the daughter of Russell and Joan Keech of

Nashville. Christopher is the son of Dolores and the late Dale Hall of Hastings.

The newlyweds are welcomed home by children, Lisa Gerard LaPonsie, Julie (Ron) Melton, Kolene (Loren) Tanis, Jessica (Scott) Mueller, Pete (Angie) Smith, Jamie Smith, and fourteen grandchildren.

Both are employees of the United States Postal Service.

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AFFORDABLE COUNTRY LIVING!
Cute 3 bedroom, 1 bath home on 1 acre with 2 car garage & additional shop or storage area. Priced to buy. Call Nyle. (CH-167)

NASHVILLE - CLOSE TO STORES
4 bedroom newer ranch on corner lot. Full basement, one block from downtown. Great starter or retirement home. Listed at \$89,900. Call Jerry or Homer for more details. (N-162)

NEW LISTING!
Beautifully updated & remodeled farm house on 10 +/- acres, oak kitchen cabinets, garden area, fruit trees, too many newer updates to mention. Central air, peaceful setting, horse lovers take a look! Call Jerry. \$159,900. (CH-168)

NEWER "COUNTRY" RANCH HOME.
...on 1 acre south of Vermontville, paved road, fenced yard. Call Nyle. (CH-165)

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BUILDING LOT IN VERMONTVILLE!
Suitable for "walk-out" basement, wooded, good location, all surveyed. Call Nyle for details. City water & sewer. (VL-150)

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2.4 ACRES AT J. ST. \$26,900!
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Historic farms featured at 150th Barry County Fair

by Patricia Johns
Staff Writer

Several Maple Valley area farms were featured in the survey of centennial and sesquicentennial farms exhibited at the 150th Barry County Fair last week.

Displays of farms throughout the county focused on the many generations of families who have lived on the same land for more than 100 years.

Pictures of families, old farm equipment and even copies of deeds were included in the display. Many of the names are familiar: Wing, Mapes, Otto, McQueen, Pennock, Maple Grove and Hartleigh Farms in Nashville.

These centennial farms, recognized by the State Historical Commission and Consumers Energy, can be found throughout the county. Farms pictured included:

- The Stanton Centennial Farm first established in 1857 in Assyria Township.
- The Neighann-Geiger farm from 1883, now farmed by Doug McKenzie.
- The Vanderbok farm on Gun Lake Road, which was started in 1868.
- The Pioneer Farms started in 1836, farmed for generations in the Edmonds family.
- The Townsend Farm in Orangeville Township in Delton, now owned by Clarilla Townsend, who is the great grand-daughter of David and Sarah Townsend.
- The Woodman Farm, started in 1849, which received a letter from President Ronald Reagan congratulating the owners on their accomplishments.
- The Fuller Homestead Farm in Coats Grove, which has been in operation since 1850.
- The Andrus Farm in Freeport, which was purchased in 1883.
- The Wing Centennial Farm, which has been in agriculture for five generations.
- The Pennock Centennial Farm, established in 1890. Wayne Pennock stopped by on the first day of the fair to see the display.

• In the Middleville area the McQueen Otto farm was started in 1846.

• In Maple Grove, the Cheeseman Farm started in 1850 and the McKelvey Farms in 1880.

• The Bronaheld Farms in Prairieville predate the fair by nine years, having been established in 1843.

• The Spire Potter Carpenter Farm stated in 1868 and the Ferris Centennial Farm, just purchased by Pennock Hospital, was started in 1872.

• The Kenyon Farm on Green Lake Road is one of the oldest farms in the county, having been started in 1833.

• The Irving Heights farms started by the Buehler family was established in 1851, with agriculture still active today.

The Centennial Acres Farms of the Blaisdell, Robinson and Meade families in Nashville has been farmed for seven generations.

From Freeport to Woodland and from Hastings to Maple Grove centennial farms dot the Barry County landscape. Some farms in the area have changed owners and so are not yet qualified to meet the 100 years in the same family requirements.

For information on registering a centennial farm call Leila Haublitz at 517-852-0721.

Sunshine Party set for July 26

The 65th annual Sunshine Party will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, July 26 at the Vermontville United Methodist Church to honor the elder women in the community.

The event, sponsored by the First Congregational Church of Vermontville and the Methodist Church, is open to all women in the community.

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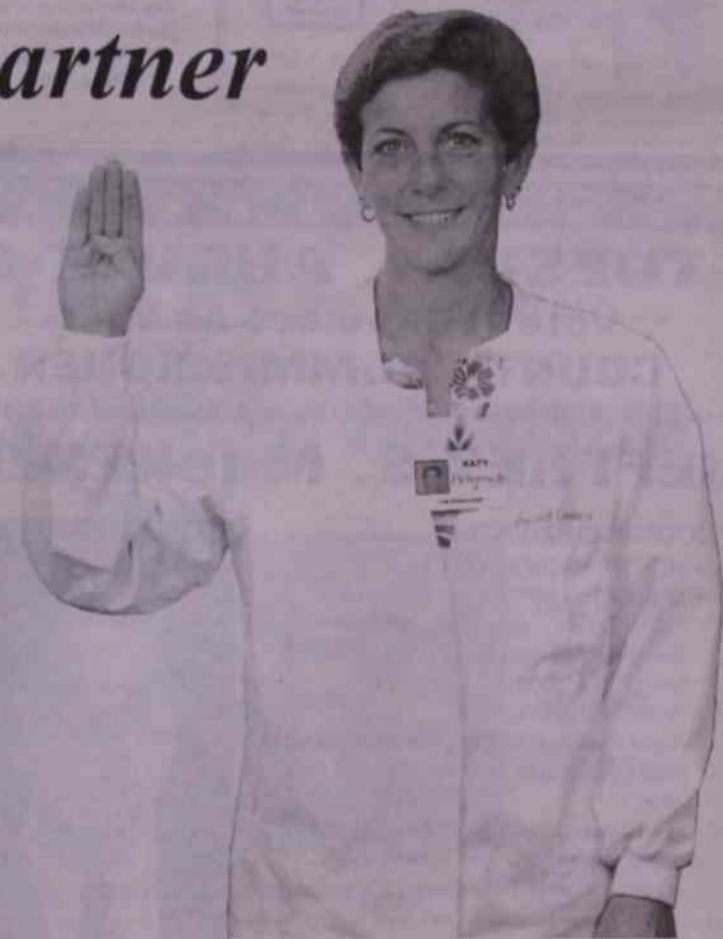
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COA MENU & SCHEDULE

Hearty Meals
Wednesday, July 24
 Chef's Special.
Thursday, July 25
 Roast beef, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, peaches, dinner roll.
Friday, July 26
 Baked fish, California blend, wax beans, rice pilaf, plums.
Monday, July 29
 Chicken parmesan, cauliflower, green beans, pasta, cookie.
Tuesday, July 30
 Turkey noodle casserole, broccoli, winter squash, pudding.

Events
Wednesday, July 24 - Hastings, crafts, nails; Nashville, exercise; Woodland, trivia; Delton, Medicare, Legal aid.
Thursday, July 25 - Hastings, music; Nashville, bingo; Delton, swimming at Tech.
Friday, July 26 - Hastings, bingo; Nashville, popcorn, social; Woodland, bingo.
Monday, July 29 - Hastings, music; Nashville, game day; Woodland, game day; Delton, exercise.
Tuesday, July 30 - Hastings, exercise, Our Kids; Nashville, Grandmas Kids, crafts.



In My Own

Write

by Sandra Ponsetto

"As I was cruising down the road, I thought how lucky and truly blessed I was to be able to make a living doing what I love."

Work that's really not work

Sometimes you find truth in the most unexpected times and places.

For me it was in a sweltering third-floor artist's studio on the campus of Michigan State University on one of the hottest days of the year.

I had driven out there to do a feature story on Dustin London, a 1998 graduate of Maple Valley High School, who is majoring in art at MSU and preparing to show his work at the Thornapple Arts Council this week.

I endured the oppressive heat as I photographed his work and asked him about his painting and the philosophy which inspires it (I won't even pretend to understand it). Then I asked him about his plans after graduation.

His answer was a breath of fresh air. "The trick in life is to find work that's not really work," said London.

He's a young man who has yet to leave the insular world of college. What does he know about life and work? Plenty.

I'm nearly twice his age and have been out of college for 15 years and his words neatly summed up my experience.

I put myself through college working a variety of jobs. I was a waitress, a receptionist, a clerk at an art gallery and frame shop, a greenhouse assistant and a sales clerk. With the exception of the job as a sales clerk, I was either laid off or it was politely suggested that I find other work soon.

Just before I graduated from Western Michigan University with a degree in behavioral psychology, a professor in the English department asked me why I wasn't pursuing a degree in writing.

"Sure, I love to write," I said with the infinite wisdom

born of inexperience. "But, you just can't make a living at it."

After graduation I worked as a shift facilitator in a group home for mentally ill adults and then as a behavioral technician at a rehabilitation facility. After being laid off from the rehab facility (I think there's a pattern here), I decided that I was not cut out for the field of psychology and decided that I needed to pursue my real passion-- writing.

For the two years, before I left after the birth of my first daughter, I worked as a reporter for the Hastings Banner and The Reminder. I loved my job, I loved getting out and meeting new people and learning new things. Every day was an adventure.

As my children got older and started school, I looked for part-time work and found it at the preschool run by our church. After three years the director politely suggested that I should return to writing (there's that pattern again) and I agreed.

Not long afterward a series of circumstances, too strange to be coincidental, brought me back to J-Ad Graphics as a full time reporter for Maple Valley News. Outside of having a different area to cover and learning how to use a new computer system, it was like I had never left.

I felt like I had come home. I get out of bed each morning wondering what stories will cross my desk that day, how I will cover them and write them up.

I love getting out of the office and talking to people. More specifically, I like listening to people. I love to hear their stories.

I feel privileged that they allow me to get a glimpse into their lives and interests and I love the challenge of writing about what I learn.

Unfortunately, I don't always live up to the challenge. I make mistakes, and there's no use trying to deny them because they are there in black and white for all the world to see. But, that's also what I like about journalism; it keeps you honest and it keeps you humble. All you can do is admit your mistakes and try to do a better job next time.

I like meeting new people and learning new things. I like writing. I like driving all over the county. I like deadlines. I like pressure. I like everything about my job. My job's not work, it's pleasure that I just happen to get paid for.

"The trick in life is to find work that that's not really work."

On the way to the studio that morning, I had endured more than an hour in a hot car, nearly rear-ended a Cadillac, found that I couldn't get a permit to park in front of the Kresge building because the museum that issues them was closed, (I decided to risk a ticket and park there anyway), got hosed off by an errant sprinkler (it felt great on a hot day but it meant disaster for my make-up), and huffed and puffed my way up three flights of stairs in a sunny (very hot) stairwell.

But, suddenly none of that really mattered, because I was a reporter. I was doing exactly what I wanted to do.

I hope that London and all other young people like him never give up and stop searching for "work that isn't" because that's the key to success and happiness, doing what you love.

Believe me I know. If everyone loved their work as much as I do, this would be a happy world indeed.

That morning I got into my car (I didn't get a ticket) and I drove back to Hastings with the air conditioning in my car cranked up high, my favorite music on the stereo and my head filled with story ideas. As I was cruising down the road, I thought about how lucky and truly blessed I was to be able to make a living doing what I love.

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 6

Vote to Re-elect As Your COUNTY COMMISSIONER

5th District; Castleton, Maple Grove & Woodland Townships

JEFFREY S. MacKENZIE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- NO TAX INCREASES
- BUDGET SURPLUS
 Barry County completed 2001 with a \$600,000 budget surplus and is on budget for 2002.
- ACCESSIBILITY
 Night meetings of the county board were held in township halls for the first time ever.
- A Discount Prescription Drug Program is being implemented to benefit every county citizen.



JEFFREY S. MacKENZIE
 REPUBLICAN

Call me at
 (517) 852-9885

EXPERIENCE:

- Farmer of 1,000 acres in family business.
- Attorney with degree in accounting from Michigan State University.

ENDORSED by the following elected township officials:

Maple Grove—Rod Crothers, Susan Butler, Darla Cady, Jim Heyboer
 Woodland—Doug MacKenzie, Cheryl Allen, Nancy Potter, Gary Smith
 Castleton—Justin Cooley, Lorna Wilson, David DeMond,
 Patricia Baker-Smith

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Vermontville Township Library is host to 'Olympics'

The first week of the summer reading program "Join the Winner's Circle - Read" activities started last week with 35 children attending the first ever Vermontville Township Library Olympics.

Events include Noodle Javelin, Stinky Shoe Kick, Ring the Pin, Muffin Ball Toss, Discus Throw, and the Long Jump. Gold, Silver, and Winner Medals were awarded for each event.

Results of the games were: Noodle Javelin: Group 1-Gold Medal: Teketha Wright, 30 feet, Silver: Darren Reid, 28 feet; Group 2-Gold: Tyler Williams, 29 feet 3 inches, Silver: Dallas Haight, 20 feet 7 inches. Stinky Shoe Kick: Group 1-Gold: Tyler Williams 70 feet, Silver: Nathan Hale 65 feet; Group 2-Gold Teketha Wright 51.5, Silver: Chelsea

Hale, 50.5 feet. Ring the Pin: Group 1-Gold: Nicole Johnson, Silver: Bridget King; Group 2-Gold: Alison Johnson. Discus Throw: Group 1-Gold: Nathaniel Williams, 59 feet, Silver: Tyler Williams, 58 feet, Group 2 - Gold: Chelsea Hale, 39 feet, Silver: Becky Williams, 33.9 feet. Long Jump: Group 1-Gold: Tyler Williams, 10.8 feet, Silver: Nathaniel Williams 9.5 feet, Group 2-Gold: Garret Shaw 12.4 feet, Silver: Jacob Ramey 8.6 feet. Winner medals for all events were awarded to: Anthony Cook, Joe Cook, Amanda Forest, Molly Galvin, Caitlin Hale, Chelsea Hale, Cody Hale, Nathan Hale, Alison Johnson, Heather Johnson, Ian Johnson, Nicole Johnson, Bridget King, Forrest King, Alexis Knapp, Jacob Ramey,

Darrin Reid, Jonathan Rhodes, Christopher Rumsey, Garret Shaw, Kayla Shaw, Katrina Williams, Nathaniel Williams, Rebeka Williams, Tyler Williams, Teketha Wright, Summer Haight, Dallas Haight, Tyra Curth and Jeannie Hale.

Refreshments were served, and then the children visited the library to pick out books. They will earn tokens to exchange for prizes by reading for the next four weeks.

Today (Tuesday, July 23) the activity planned is a NASCAR race. Children will work in groups to decorate a cardboard race car, and a race will be held, complete with pit stops. Activities begin at 2 p.m. and are held on the back lawn of the library.

Family Fun Month celebration includes Toddler Time sessions

Are you having fun yet? Drop in on Toddler Time this August for Family Fun Month.

Toddler Time is an infant-toddler story hour that meets Thursdays in Vermontville. Activities include stories, crafts, songs, finger play and games designed for children ages birth to 3. For Toddler Time, a parent or other caregiver accompanies each child.

All families are welcome. The story hour is funded by

a grant from the Michigan Department of Education, and there is no charge. No preregistration is needed.

Occasionally, portions of the Toddler Time story hours will be held outdoors if weather permits.

Toddler Time will meet on Thursdays from 11-11:45 a.m. at the Vermontville Library, 120 East First St. on Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29.

For more information, please contact Merrill Evans at Early Childhood

Connections, 400 S. Nelson, Pottersville, or phone 645-4500.

WMU grads include two local students

Two local students received degrees at the end of the winter semester for the 2001-02 academic year at Western Michigan University.

The students, their hometowns, parents, types of degrees, major fields of study and special academic honors, where applicable, were:

• Angela Rose Rumsey of Nashville, daughter of Wayne and Joan Rumsey, bachelor of business administration, accountancy.

• Sarah J. Bentley of Vermontville, daughter of Larry Bentley, bachelor of arts, art teaching, magna cum laude.

NOTICE

The Village of Vermontville is seeking a five acre parcel of land for the use of a new water well. Please contact the village office by phone 726-1429 or by mail PO Box K.

Vermontville Village Council
114

PRIMARY ELECTION TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS

Notice is hereby given that a Primary Election will be held in the Township of Vermontville **TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2002**

At the Village Office, 121 Eastside Dr., Vermontville FOR THE PURPOSE OF NOMINATION CANDIDATES OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES FOR PARTISAN OFFICES AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF NOMINATING CANDIDATES FOR NONPARTISAN OFFICES

Governor, US Senator, Representative in Congress, State Senator, State Representative, County Commissioner, Township Treasurer, Appeals Court Judge, Circuit Court Judge, Probate Court Judge, District Court Judge, and Delegates of the County Convention of the Republican and Democratic Parties

AND

State Proposal 02-1 and State Proposal 02-2 THE POLLS OF SAID ELECTION WILL BE OPEN AT 7:00 A.M. AND WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL 8:00 P.M. OF SAID DAY OF ELECTION.

Marcia K. Grant, Clerk

116

From Our Readers

Local Citizens Speak Out On Issues

Unborn sacred to Geiger

To the editor:

There is just one conservative choice for the Michigan State Senate in the 24th District, which includes Barry, Eaton and Allegan counties. That choice is Terry Geiger.

Terry understands that the lives of our unborn are sacred. He also recognizes the fact that abortion is detrimental to women and families.

During the last two years of Terry's six years as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives, he served as the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Since he was the first pro-life chairman in many years, he worked to advance pro-life issues; such as working to give funding preference to organizations that do not provide abortions.

What sets Terry Geiger apart from others is his leadership. Terry sponsored legislation almost four years before final passage to regulate abortion clinics and force mandatory reporting, which previously was not necessary. This bill wasn't given to him, but was introduced by him. That's leadership!

Terry represents people in his district and reflects the values of the 24th Senate District. Check into candidates' records. When you do, I'm sure you'll find that there is just one conservative choice in the 24th District, and that choice is Terry Geiger.

I urge you to talk to your family, neighbors and friends about Terry Geiger, and then cast your vote for Terry Tuesday, Aug. 6. I know I will.

Sincerely,
Indya K. Morton
Director, Alpha Women's Center - Hastings

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NOTICE

Castleton Township Residents

Notice is hereby given that the PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST for the August 6, 2002 Primary Election has been scheduled for July 26, 2002 at 11 a.m. at the township hall located at 915 Reed St., Nashville, MI. The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to determine that the program and computer being used to tabulate the results of the election, counts the votes in the manner prescribed by law.

Interested parties are invited to attend. For further information contact:

Lorna L. Wilson, Castleton Township Clerk
Phone: 517-852-9479
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New asian pest identified as killer of ash trees

A tree-boring pest that is killing ash trees in southeastern Michigan has been identified as the emerald ash borer (*agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire), an Asian pest previously unknown in the United States.

It was discovered this summer by David Roberts, Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) district agent and horticultural spe-

cialist in southeastern Michigan. The larval stage of the pest kills both healthy and stressed ash trees "with surprising aggressiveness," says Deb McCullough, MSU forestry entomologist.

"Ash trees in Michigan and surrounding states have had a number of problems in recent years with diseases such as ash yellows and ash decline, which is brought on

by drought, poor growing conditions and secondary pests that kill stressed trees," McCullough says. "There was a high number of ash trees dying in southeastern Michigan, and no one had identified what was causing the high mortality rate until this year."

Beetles emerging from infested sections collected from newly dead ash trees in June defied identification through the regulatory process of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which includes the insect collection at the Smithsonian Institution. It was only after specimens were sent to Bratislava in the Slovak Republic that the species was identified as a native to China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan and the

Russian Far East.

The pest has been found killing ash trees in Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw and Wayne counties. Larvae, which are between 10 and 14 mm long, are 10-segmented and cream-colored with a small brown head and little pincherlike appendages. They feed on the tree's phloem and outer sapwood, producing S-shaped galleries that look like roadways. Adult beetles chewing their way out of the tree leave distinctive D-shaped exit holes on branches and trunk.

This exotic pest has a one-year life cycle. Adult beetles are currently laying eggs on the bark of ash trees and will continue through the end of July. The adult beetles are bright green, about 3/8 to 5/8 inch long. The beetle eggs hatch within one or two

weeks. Larvae will remain under the bark during the winter and pupate next spring. The next generation of adults will likely begin emerging and laying eggs next May.

Most infested ash trees die in two to three years. It is estimated that the pest has been in Michigan for at least five years.

"There are more than a dozen other insects that bore into dying ash trees, but this one is different because it infests quite healthy trees as well as stressed trees," McCullough says. "So far it has been found only in ash trees, but it can apparently kill all species of ash, including green, white and black ash, as well as several horticultural varieties."

The Interagency Invasive Species Task Force - made up of specialists from MSU, the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), APHIS, the USDA Forest Service and Michigan Technological University - is gathering what little information there is on the biology of the pest. Task force members have visited sites with infested trees in the

Detroit suburbs several times to learn as much as they can, as fast as they can, about the pest, what it's doing to the trees and how widely distributed it is. MDA personnel have also checked nursery stock and ash trees in parking lots, along roads and in other urban locations. The pest has not yet been found outside of the five-county area. Regulations now being developed to slow the spread of this pest will affect shipments of ash nursery stock, ash logs and other products out of the infested area.

McCullough urges all homeowners with ash trees, especially those in the five-county area surrounding Detroit and beyond, to check their trees. She also urges anyone cutting dead ash for firewood not to transport it to other locations for burning. The MSU Diagnostics Laboratory can help homeowners and others identify this and other plant pests.

For more information about or identification of the emerald ash borer, contact the MSU Diagnostics Laboratory at 517-355-4536 or the MDA Emerald Ash Borer hotline at 866-325-0023.

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—Joe Gordon, TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT, Johnstown

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LOST STREAM MAP

The STREAM MAP OF MICHIGAN resembles another map—known to Pennsylvania anglers as the "Lost Stream Map."

The "Stream Map of Pennsylvania" was completed in 1965 after a thirty-year effort by Howard Higbee, a former Penn State Professor.

Professor Higbee succeeded in creating a map of the highest detail possible—a map that shows every stream and lake. He painstakingly plotted by hand, the location of 45,000 miles of streams onto a 3 by 5 foot map.

The map sold extremely well—until it was lost several years after it first appeared in print. Incredibly, the printer entrusted with the original drawing and printing plates, declared bankruptcy, then carelessly hauled Higbee's 30 years of work to a landfill.

The few remaining dog-eared copies became a prized fisherman's possession. Professor Higbee was offered \$400 for one of his last maps. And state agencies were forced to keep their copies under lock and key.

Experts told Professor Higbee that reprints were impossible, because the maps were printed in non-photographic blue.

Then, in 1991, at the age of 91, Howard Higbee's dream came true. Computers made it possible to reprint the map. Holding an updated map, Howard said, "I never thought I'd live to see this day."

Then, by combining Professor Higbee's knowledge with computer technology—the STREAM MAP OF MICHIGAN was created.

La Leche League to meet

Breastfeeding or thinking about breastfeeding? Come and join us at our July meeting in the Vermontville area.

La Leche League offers support, information, and encouragement for breastfeeding mothers. We have a lending library with books on childbirth, breastfeeding, child development and nutrition. If you are breastfeeding or pregnant and thinking of breastfeeding we welcome

you to come to our informal meetings. We welcome all babies and toddlers. This month's topic will be "Art of Breastfeeding and Overcoming Difficulties."


This month's meeting will be on Thursday, July 25, at 10 a.m., 5777 Irish Rd., Vermontville. For directions to the meeting and/or information on breastfeeding, call Kathy at 517-726-1264.

CURTIS

REPUBLICAN FOR COUNTY COMMISSION

What Wayne Curtis stands for...

- Willing to do what it takes to make our district and county the best it can be.
- Always do complete research before voting in an issue.
- You are number one. I will come to you the voters to find out what your needs are and how you feel about the issues before I vote on them.
- Never give up fighting for the needs of our district and our county. Work with legislators to make things happen for Barry County.
- Enthusiastic about how I can help our districts be the best they can be.



Remember...
VOTE AUGUST 6th
Wayne Curtis
County Commission

(Paid for by committee to elect Wayne Curtis)

Nashville teenager killed in police chase

A 14-year-old Nashville area youth died early Monday morning when the car he was driving plunged into the Thornapple River while being pursued by the Michigan State Police and a Nashville police officer.

The incident occurred about 3:58 a.m. Monday. The 14-year-old male failed to obey verbal orders and hand signals to stop his vehicle and fled the Michigan State Police and Nashville Police Department. The offi-

cers tried to stop the vehicle during the 40- to 50-mile per hour pursuit.

The car driven by the teen left the road on Kellogg Street in Nashville and plunged into the Thornapple River.

Two Nashville police officers and the State trooper entered the river and tried to remove the victim. The victim was removed from the vehicle after being submerged for approximately

five to ten minutes by the dive team from the Barry County Sheriff's Department. He was transported to Pennock Hospital in Hastings, where he was pronounced dead.

Later investigation showed that the vehicle had been stolen from Barry County. Alcohol appears to be a factor. The name of the victim is being withheld pending notification of family.

Four local students earn degrees at MSU

Four local students received degrees at the end of the winter semester for the 2001-02 academic year at Michigan State University.

The students, their home-

towns, types of degrees, major fields of study and special academic honors, where applicable, were:

- Jessica Dean Smith of Nashville, bachelor of science, crop and soil sciences, honors.

- Erin M. Booher of Vermontville, bachelor of arts,

hospitality business.

- Jeremy Douglas Campbell of Vermontville, bachelor of arts, English, high honors.

- Nichole Marie Hansen of Vermontville, bachelor of science, child development, honors.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act and the Michigan Civil Rights Act which collectively make it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, age or marital status, or an intention, to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.



Area farmers eligible for disaster assistance

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has named 50 counties in Michigan, including Barry County, as agricultural disaster areas. The farmers in these areas are now eligible for USDA/Farm Service Agency emergency farm loans.

The adverse weather conditions in Michigan have caused farmers many problems. In the week of April 14 there were record highs, and then the next week there was frost, freezing and wind. Lots of crop damage was also reported in May due to cold temperatures, hail and wet weather.

"We will continue to implement every available USDA program to assist farmers through these difficult conditions," said David Conklin, Michigan's State executive director.

The 50 counties were divided into primary and contiguous disaster damage areas. Barry County is considered a contiguous disaster area.

Farmers in these counties are eligible for low-interest loans from the Farm Service Agency, provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers have eight months from the date of declaration to apply for loans to help cover losses.

The 26 counties in the primary disaster area are Allegan, Antrim, Benzie, Berrien, Cass, Genesee, Grand Traverse, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lapeer, Leelanau, Livingston, Macomb, Manistee, Mason, Newaygo, Oakland, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Clair, Shiawassee and Van Buren counties.

Those in contiguous disaster areas are Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Charlevoix, Clinton, Crawford, Eaton, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Kalkaska, Lake, Lenawee, Mecosta, Missaukee, Montcalm, Osceola, Otsego, Saginaw, St. Joseph, Sanilac, Tuscola, Washtenaw, Wayne and Wexford counties.

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Youth theatre production of Charlotte's Web begins Thursday

by Patricia Johns
Staff Writer

This summer the Thornapple Arts Council summer youth theater production of Charlotte's Web will be held on Thursday and Friday, July 25-26 at 7:30 p.m. and on Saturday, July 27 at 2 p.m. in the Leason-Sharpe

Hall of the First Presbyterian Church in Hastings.

Over the last several years, the productions have been held at the Central Auditorium, but lack of air conditioning has been a drawback. The large number of seats in the auditorium have been difficult to fill as

well. While the Leason-Sharpe Hall is also not air conditioned, cross ventilation is good. The Thornapple Arts Council hopes to "sell out" the hall this year.

The cast has been working for the last two weeks on blocking and lines. They



The Thornapple Arts Council youth theatre production of "Charlotte's Web" will begin Thursday at Leason-Sharpe Hall at the Hastings First Presbyterian Church.

have also been learning about theater careers and learning acting techniques.

Nashville residents Hannah Johnson, Scott and Stephanie Davis are featured in the production.

This year's cast includes Betsy Acker as the announcer, Emily Benningfield, Alexandria deGoa and Angela Kennedy as the cho-

rus, who are responsible for setting the scene and moving the action along.

Loreal Giranda is multi-voiced playing the reporter, photographer and lamb. Jesse Doe is Avery Arable and the Gander.

Keith Anderson and Christopher White play the young and older Wilbur, the pig. Hannah Johnson brings considerable talents to the role of Charlotte.

Rebecca Dufresne who appeared in the title role of "Anne of Green Gables" last year stretches her acting skills as Templeton, the arrogant rat.

The rest of the Arable family is played by Elena Gormley as Fern, Sigmund Rumpf as John, the father, and Jenna Radant as the mother, Martha.

Scott Davis is Homer Zuckerman, and Stephanie Davis plays his wife Edith.

Elliot Anderson is Lurvy. Mariah Burd and Shannon Jenkins create a barnyard dialogue as the Goose and the Sheep.

Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$4 for seniors, students and children. They are avail-

able at Progressive Graphics and the Jefferson Street Gallery on South Jefferson Street in Hastings and the Thornapple Arts Council downtown location at 117 State St. Any group which would like to see the play should call the TAC at 945-2002.

The Summer Youth Theatre program is made possible by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, the Sue Drummond Fund, Mike Humphreys and other local businesses and patrons.

Videotaping of this summer's workshop and play was made possible by a grant from the Barry Community Foundation's Youth Activity Council.

Information about supporting Youth Theatre Programs or other Thornapple Arts Council programs is available at 945-2002.

Call 945-9554
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