

The Lowell Ledger

Volume 28, Issue 20

Serving Lowell Area Readers Since 1893

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Lowell man's son killed in Air Force helicopter mercy mission

••• Jason Plite, the son of Lowell's Thomas Plite, was one of six people killed in a U.S. Air Force helicopter crash during a mercy mission to help two injured Afghan children.

Jason Plite died doing what he loved - being a pararescueman, helping people in need, and serving his country.

A U.S. Air Force helicopter crashed in southeastern Afghanistan killing Plite and five additional Air Force crew members aboard on Sunday, March 23.

The HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter from the 41st Res-



Senior airman/pararescueman Jason T. Plite.

cue Squadron at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia was on its way late Sunday (8:50 p.m.) to pick up children, who had suffered head injuries.

The remains of the six people on board were recovered and flown to Bagram Air Base and prepared for transfer back to the United States.

The helicopter crash occurred about 20 miles north of Ghazni, Afghanistan - north of the capital, Kabul.

Plite, cont'd., page 10

Watching, Waiting & Worrying

Lowell families keep a vigilant eye on the war in Iraq as loved ones take part in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

By Thaddeus J. Kraus
 Lowell Ledger Editor

The eyes of two-year old John-Luc, his sister Olivia and brother Alex light up when they hear the door open.

While they cannot yet tell time, instinctively they know it's that time of day when dad usually comes through the door.

It's not dad, this time, however, it's their aunt (Andrea). It's also a reminder that their father is away on a trip.

Karen Richmond and her children Olivia, Alex and John-Luc said goodbye to their husband and father, Ben Richmond on Feb. 20 as he



Karen Richmond sits with her children Olivia, John-Luc and Alex. Their husband/father Ben (upper right) left on Feb. 20.

left for Camp Pendleton (California) to join the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

From there, the Marine reservist left for Kuwait where he serves in the command element with the combat engineers.

"Ben told the kids before he left that he was going to help get medicine and food to people and to get rid of the bad guys in the desert," Karen Richmond said. "The kids are

Richmond, cont'd., page 8

School district set to break ground for new elementary building

The Lowell Area School District will break ground for the new Murray Lake Elementary School on Monday, March 31 at 5:30 p.m.

The elementary school, which will be located on the north side of the district, is part of a \$27.5 million bond issue approved by voters in September 2000. The new elementary is estimated to cost \$7.4 million, and will total 59,000 square feet.

It will be comprised of four wings that will serve kin-

dergarten through fourth-grade. Additionally, plans call for a stage area connected to the gymnasium.

Over a year ago, the Lowell Board of Education put the project on hold, due to flat student growth. Bids for construction were sought when student numbers increased significantly.

The 30-minute ceremony will include remarks from Lowell School Board president, Nancy Hopkins; superintendent, Shari Miller; and

assistant superintendent to curriculum and instruction, Jim White.

Participating in the groundbreaking will be school board members, administrators, representatives from Grattan, Vergennes and Lowell townships and the city of Lowell, and four elementary students.

The 400-student school, located at the corner of Lally and Alden Nash Avenue, is scheduled to open in the fall of 2004.



'EXPO'nding 'Lowell'rizons

With over 120 booths of vendors, services and organizations, Lowell's 2003 EXPO provided attendees with a large selection of vendors from which to visit on Saturday.

Photo Collage Courtesy
 Bruce T. Doll

By Thaddeus J. Kraus
 Lowell Ledger Editor

Kris and Peggy Kropf sent their only son to Kuwait.

Now they wait, watch and pray for the safe return of their loved one as well as all of the other young men and women deployed in "Operation Freedom."

Aaron Hanson, International Guard, left for Kuwait on March 6 with the 100th Fighter Wing. He is a munitions specialist (loads bombs into A-10s and is responsible for making sure all munition systems are working).

"The last phone call we received from Aaron was on March 6. Our last e-mail came on Thursday (March 20)," said his mother, Peggy Kropf.

Her son sounds in good spirits and he said they were all anxious to get started so that they can get back home.

"Aaron said there are five times as many people as the base can support," Kropf said. "He believes they are there for the right reasons."



Aaron Hanson sits inside an A-10 cockpit.

Hanson, cont'd., page 8

OBITUARIES

GREEN - Eleanor Green passed away unexpectedly Saturday, March 22, 2003 at age 86. She is preceded in death by her husband James A. Green. She is survived by her sister Cleone Peet of Texas and her sister-in-law Grace Green of Lowell; also her children Lila Lee (Bob) Grummet of Alto, Steven (Carol) Green of Mena, Ark., and Linda (Denny) Hawk of Alto. She also leaves behind a loving family that included 10 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. The funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 26 at the Roth-Gerst Funeral Home, Lowell. Rev. Dean Bailey officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Alto United Methodist Church Building Fund or the American Cancer Society.

POORMAN - Gerald A. Poorman Jr., "JR" aged 42.

was to be with his Lord very unexpectedly March 21, 2003 at his home. He is survived by his three beloved children Joshua, Samantha and Jacob Poorman; his father and mother Gerald Sr. and JoAnn Poorman of Comstock Park; three sisters Joy (Dave) Ford of Lowell, Kathy (Scott) Porter and Elizabeth (Roger) Helmer both of Grand Rap-

ids; many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. Cremation has taken place. Memorial Services will be held Wednesday, March 26 at 11 a.m. at St. Paul's Anglican Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, the family wishes memorial contributions to be made to St. Paul's Anglican Catholic Church for his three children's higher education.

Herbicides and timing combined can effectively treat crabgrass

Crabgrass is one of the most prevalent grassy weeds in Michigan lawns. But every weedy lawn isn't crabgrass, and the same control approaches don't work for all of them. Knowing when crabgrass is likely to be present is key in proper identification and control. Homeowners often complain about crabgrass in lawns in April and May, but what they're usually seeing is tall fescue, nimblewill or quackgrass.

Crabgrass grows from seed each year, and germination doesn't usually begin until the soil warms to 62 degrees F. - usually in mid-to-late May, well after forsythia blossoms have dropped.

Chemical control for crabgrass involves the use of pre-emergence herbicides - weed killers that affect seedlings before they push through the soil. If they're properly timed, they can be very effective against crabgrass. They are not at all effective, however, against established plants.

The appearance of crabgrass in a lawn may indicate some underlying problems with the growing conditions there. Open and weak turfgrass areas are prone to crabgrass infestations because of higher soil temperatures, which enhance germination. So the best defense against weed invasion, especially by annual weeds such as crabgrass, is a dense, healthy turfgrass stand. A thick turf canopy shades the soil and reduces the number of seedlings that can get established.

Proper mowing is key. Setting mower blades at a height of 3 - 3.5 inches is recommended as well as mow-

ing frequently enough so that you remove no more than one third of the grass blades at a time. Scalping - cutting the grass close to the soil - weakens the grass plants and reduces their ability to complete with weedy species. Good mowing combined with judicious fertilization will increase turfgrass vigor and thicken the lawn, as well as make it difficult for weeds to get a foothold.

Information on a host of lawn establishment and maintenance topics - including mowing, fertilization, and weed and pest control is available at the Ionia MSU Extension office.

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High Speed Internet?

The dish services have a far more costly high speed internet service, but "Xstream" high speed internet is a faster and more affordable option. It's only available to Lowell Cable customers.

Local Service?

Nope! If you have dish trouble you'll be directed to one of several 'independent contractors'. There aren't any based in or around Lowell. However most Lowell Cable service issues are resolved within a day by our own local service technicians.

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They're right here. Lowell Choices Plus gives you from 60 to over 80 new digital networks (no throw away channels) for as little as \$12.95 per month. Plus you'll get an amazing interactive program guide, pay-per-view access and up to a dozen new premium (movie) channels for the price of one.

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*Data based on Dish Network web site for Grand Rapids residents (The information here based on the America's Top 50 package)

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Lowell's annual Spirit of Community recognizes gift of service

••• Sally Gunberg, David Davis and Jim Doyle will receive community awards for their respective work in the schools, arts and historic district.



David Davis Jim Doyle Sally Gunberg

By Thaddeus J. Kraus
Lowell Ledger Editor

The gift of service comes in many diverse packages. Whether contributing its endless hours of one's time to help enrich the lives and education of today's youth... Or dedicating a lifetime to the arts - being there for the implementation of the community arts council and freely sharing one's artistic talents... Or being instrumental in the growth and prosperity of a downtown district while also

ensuring the preservation of its storied history. The gift of service will be honored at Lowell's annual Spirit of Community on Friday, May 2. The event is a collaborative effort of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, Lowell Area Arts Council and Lowell Area Schools. Lowell's Sally Gunberg will be honored with the Marsha Wilcox Community Service Award for her dedicated volunteerism at all lev-

els of the Lowell School District. "Sally is not only a very capable person, but is also a very fun and happy person," Wilcox said. It is fitting that David Davis will receive the Arty Award on this Lowell Area Arts Council's 25th anniversary. "David has poured his heart and soul into his work and volunteer efforts for all 25 of those years," said Lowell Area Arts Council mem-

ber, Jim White. "David has a brilliant creative mind." Jim Doyle, this year's recipient of the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce's "Person of the Year" award, is president of the Lowell Area Historical Museum and was instrumental in its formation. The celebration begins at

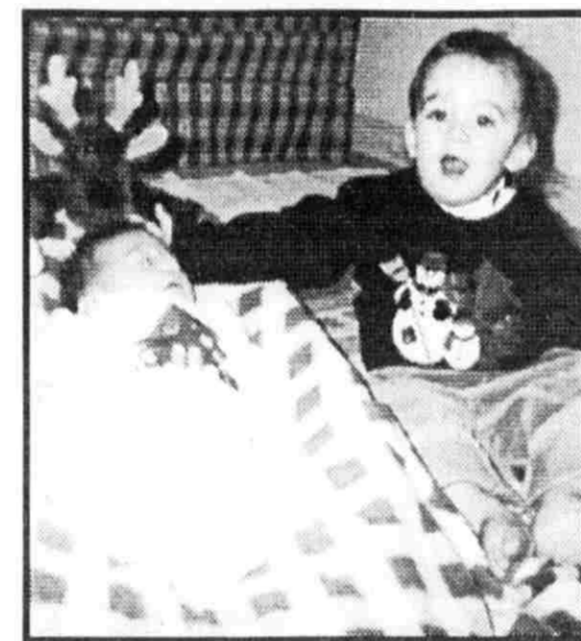
The 1977 Lowell High School graduate has also been instrumental in the formation of the city's Downtown Historic District and its placement on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

7 p.m. with the "Essence of Lowell" (an appetizer and dessert social) in the high school cafeteria. Donations will be taken at the door. The award ceremony will follow at 8 p.m. in the Lowell Performing Arts Center.

The celebration begins at

AREA BIRTHS

Big brother, Amos Micheal Grummet, is excited to welcome home his sister, Ester Rose, born on December 20, 2002.



Proud parents are Travis and Lyndsay Grummet of Alto.

Also welcoming her home are Grandpa and Grandma Robert J. Grummet and Grandpa and Grandma Glen as well as a host of uncles and aunt.

Frank and Kirsten Marshall of Lowell are proud to announce the birth of their son, Henry Frank on March 6, 2003

at 1:02 p.m. He weighed 7 lbs. 7 oz. and measured 20 1/2 inches.

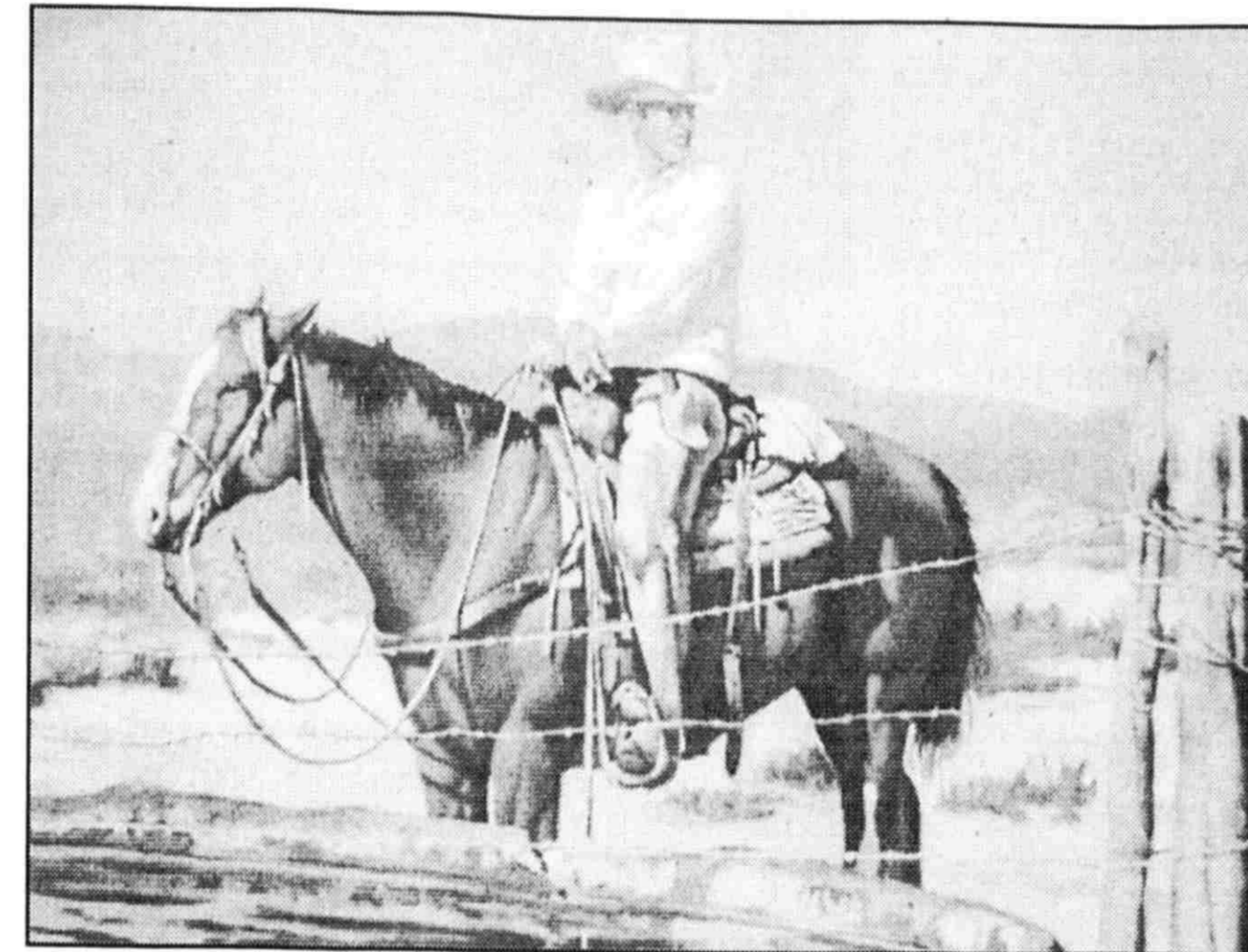
BUSINESS MATTERS

Mark Johnson, local agent for Farm Bureau Insurance, was honored at the recent Sales Convention held in Traverse City.

He was awarded the 2002 All American Award, which is presented to the top agents, in Michigan, in sales and client service.

He also received membership in the Multi-Line Sales Council (MLSC), an elite group of Multi-Line sales leaders, for outstanding insurance sales and service during 2002.

Former Lowell educator's artwork at Woolaroc



"Cool Water" by Keith Avery depicts New Mexico rancher, Carl Lane Johnson on horseback near a water tank on his ranch.

An exceptional painting titled "Cool Water" by Keith W. Avery, formerly of Lowell, is on display at Woolaroc Museum, located southwest of Bartlesville, Okla.

Avery was born in Michigan in 1921 where his father was a photographer during the Depression. He owned his first horse at age eight and would "sit in the corner and sketch" portraits during the evening. In high school he earned a scholarship to the Chicago Professional School of Art but could not afford to attend until later, after earning money breaking horses and guiding guests at a resort.

He worked as a horse trainer and cowhand on Florida and Western ranches and through years of participation in rodeos and horse

shows, he brings to his work an unquestioned authenticity. His subjects are cowboys and horses because artist Frank Tenney Johnson once told him, "If you want to paint something, you've got to be it first."

Avery received his degree from New Mexico State University in 1955 and was a recipient of an honorary doctor of letters from his alma mater. He taught at Judson Ranch School in Scottsdale, Az., and, as some of you may remember, at Lowell High School.

In 1994, Avery received

New Mexico's highest artistic honor, the New Mexico Governor's Award for "excellence and achievement in the arts." He was the first cowboy poet selected to represent New Mexico at the National Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nev. His paintings and drawings have appeared on covers of the Quarter Horse Journal and Western Horseman, and in 20 years he has had 400 pieces published. Many of his paintings are in private collections throughout the United States.

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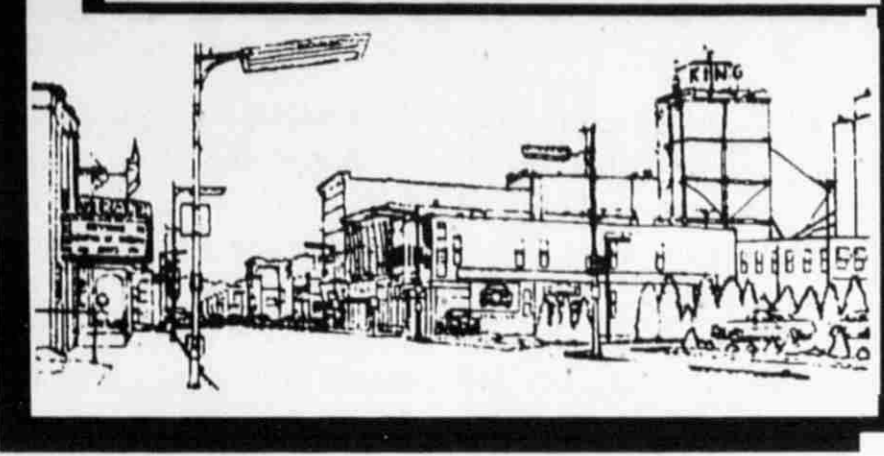
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SPRING ATHLETIC MEETING

The parent/coach's meeting for spring athletics is Wednesday, March 26 at 7 p.m. in the Lowell High School cafeteria. Your attendance is mandatory if you did not attend the fall or winter meeting.

"GREASE" - THE MUSICAL

Lowell High School Performing Arts Center will present the last two days of Grease on Friday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 29 at 1:00 and 7:30 p.m. Dinner (\$5 at 6 p.m.); Musical \$6 (students/senior citizens), \$7 adults. Tickets available at high school (897-4125). Dress in a '50s costume!

Richmond, cont'd... From Page 1

doing okay. They ask about their daddy every day." Richmond, who served on active duty for five years, has been a reservist since 1998. "He'd like to finish his career with the reserves (10 more years)," Richmond said. "I'd prefer he not stay in the reserves, but I support his desire to serve his country. He feels strongly that it is his duty as an American." Karen and the children have received e-mails from Ben -

the most current mail was dated March 10. "He called on Wednesday (March 19), but we weren't home and missed his call." Richmond said with disappointment in her voice. Richmond says she watches the news coverage. Knowing what's going on helps her feel more in control. In fact, Olivia, four years old, has used the coverage to

practice and enhance her ability to print. "She's into writing and copying words. Recently, she wrote the word, Iraq on a sheet of paper. She saw it on the TV screen," said Richmond. Ben Richmond is a 1993 Naval Academy graduate. "We have received overwhelming support from family and friends since Ben's departure," Richmond said.

Hanson, cont'd... From Page 1

Because he serves in a support position, Hanson's base throughout the war will be in Kuwait. The heat and sandstorms are daily challenges for the service men and women. They sleep in a pole-barn type facility in their chemical warfare suits.

Kropf says she is very grateful for the television coverage of the war. "Actually I'm watching quite a bit of it. It's good because it allows everybody to see what we're actually doing. It prevents others from saying the U.S. is doing this or that." The Lowell mother adds she is so thankful for the many

people who are reaching out to her and her family and praying for Aaron's safety. "I never thought I'd be able to get out of bed when this started, but through the support, I'm getting the strength that I need."

CLASS OF '83 PLANS REUNION
Lowell High School class of 1983 is looking for classmates to help plan their 20-year class reunion. Call Kristi (Dine) Alguire at 897-1777 ext. 247.

CHERRY CREEK STUDENTS NEED YOUR HELP
If you would like to get rid of your old phonebooks, you may drop them off at Cherry Creek Elementary or give them to a Cherry Creek student. They are participating in a recycling challenge with other area schools and collecting them to be recycled into insulation for "Habitat for Humanity homes."

PRESCHOOL GYMNASTICS NIGHT TOTS
Wiggles and Giggles will have a gymnastics night on Thursday, March 27 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center Gym, 300 High St. Older siblings and grandparents are welcome. \$1 donation per family.

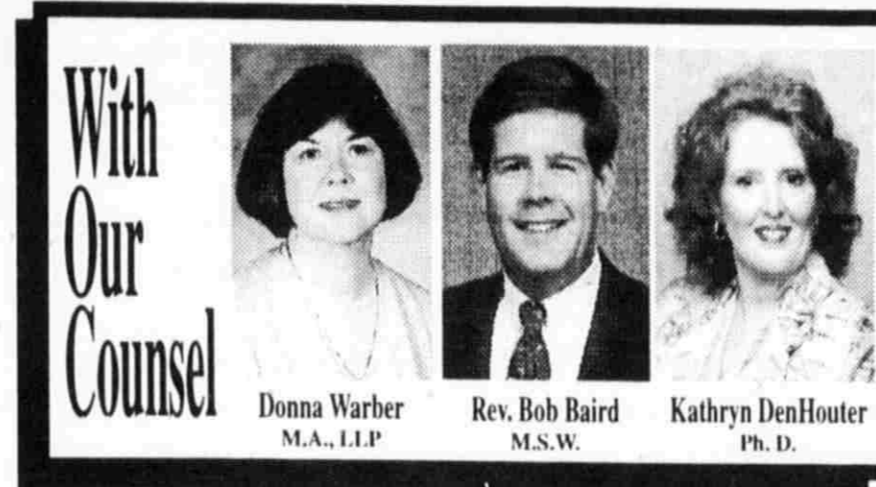
SPAGHETTI SUPPER
Kent County Youth Fair will hold an all you can eat Spaghetti Supper on Saturday, March 29 from 5-7 p.m. at

King Memorial Bldg. (Lowell Fairgrounds). Supper includes garlic toast, salad, dessert and beverage. \$5 adults; \$3 6-10; and free 5 and under.

"FOUND TREASURES" EXHIBIT AT LAAC
The Lowell Area Arts Council will host the Rivertown Artists Guild's exhibit from March 30 - April 30. A reception to meet the artists will be held on March 30 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at 149 S. Hudson, Lowell. Call 897-8545 for more information.

DEADLINE FOR SENIOR CLASS TRIP
The final date to make reservations and to complete payments for the senior class trip is April 3. Make checks payable to Lowell Senior Parents and turn in to the LHS office. Photos for the senior video may be dropped off in the media center through April 3. Candy money is due now. Donations of raffle gifts and food, and volunteers for Van Andel are still welcomed. Call Carol with questions at 897-8785.

ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB MEETING
Due to spring break, the regular business meeting will be held on Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m. in the staff lounge.



Donna Warber M.A., L.L.P. Rev. Bob Baird M.S.W. Kathryn DenHouwer Ph.D.

COLLEGE NEWS

Lowell's **Cherie Gillman** has been selected into the Western Michigan University chapter of The Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi. It is the largest and most respected honor society open to graduates and undergraduates in all academic disciplines. Approximately 10 percent of students in their respective classes are admitted to membership.

Gillman, in her sixth semester at Western Michigan University in the speech language pathology program, has been on the dean's list each semester. Saginaw Valley State University has recognized 1,215 students for their academic achievements by placing them on the dean's list for the fall 2002 semester. From the Lowell area is **Karen L. Dykstra**.

Kelsey L. Scheider, a 2002 Lowell High School graduate, pledged the Albion College Phi chapter of Alpha Xi Delta during the 2003 spring semester. Scheider is a freshman at Albion College and the daughter of Michael and Marcia Scheider of Lowell.

Central Michigan University has announced its dean's list for 2002 fall semester. **Brian Fitzpatrick**, a 2000 graduate of Lowell High School, has received dean's list recognition. He is the son of Dan and Jean Fitzpatrick of Ada.

gression is replaced by depression, and we move into the "leave me alone" stage. The child becomes sad, exhausted and drained. Then the child moves into the final stage which is sometimes called the "hangover" stage. The child is tired, but starts to move into normal activities, and it seems as if they have forgotten the tantrum altogether.

Tantrums are common occurrences in young children. However, tantrums become a problem when they become the favorite or sole strategy for solving problems. Most often, when tantrums become habitual, this indicates that the tantrums have been advantageous for the child. In other words, they have gotten their way, so the tantrums have been a "successful" strategy for controlling their environment. Solving problems through words, and asking for help is what you ultimately want from your child. It might take some time to develop these skills in your young child, so patience and persistence are essential for the parents of a "tantrummy" child. Here are some other reasons why children tantrum, and some ways to prevent tantrums.

Anger is a normal reaction when we're frustrated or attacked. A temper tantrum is generally because of an accumulation of frustrations rather than a wrong done to the child. As a parent of a

"tantrummy" child, it is very important to model appropriate ways of dealing with frustrations. Also, children tend to be less able to deal with frustrations when they are hungry or tired, so taking care of these physiological needs is essential. Give your child good coping skills such as deep breathing and counting strategies to help them control their anger. Do not over-restrict your child by putting too many unnecessary or arbitrary demands on their behavior since this increases their level of frustration.

Probably, the single most important skill you can give your child is to talk, talk, talk out their frustration. Examples of this would be to model some feeling statements (i.e., Did anything happen that is making you angry? Or, are you angry about having to pick up your room?" etc.). Your child is young, so talk-

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FEBRUARY SMILE OF THE MONTH:

NAME:.....Michael Barnes
AGE:.....5 years old
BIRTHDAY.....3/6/98
HOBBIES.....Hockey, bike riding, roller blading
Michael receives a prize for his great checkup.

February "No Cavities" Club Members

Alli McClellan	Abby Carey	Joe Sweet
Paige Rash	Maggie Carey	Mekael Barclay-Trefil
Jessica Rehl	Blake Bergy	Kelsey Wold
Jordan Newton	Madison Schram	Mary Hassebrock
Zeth Dean	Emily Lundquist	Paige Newton
Christian Barnes	Megan Willemstein	Ashley White
Michael Barnes	Jacob Sweet	Makayla Plekes
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LOWELL AREA SCHOOLS PARENT MEETING
Tues., April 1, 7:00 p.m.
Middle School Cafetorium
"EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS"

The Lowell Area Schools has invited Lt. Jim Van Bendegom from the Kent County Sheriff Department to share information with parents on emergency preparedness for all hazards and the steps that schools and parents should take if an incident occurs during the school day.

All community members are welcome to attend

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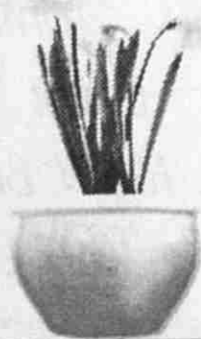
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