

The Lowell Ledger

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Wednesday, March 23, 2005

Anonymous tip causes lockdown at middle school

By Dan Schneider

Lowell Middle School was under police lockdown for five hours last Thursday after an early morning anonymous phone call claimed a gun was in the building.

The lockdown lasted until early in the afternoon, when police completed a search of the building without finding a gun. Normal school activities resumed around 1 p.m. The last police officer left the building at 2 p.m.

The middle school

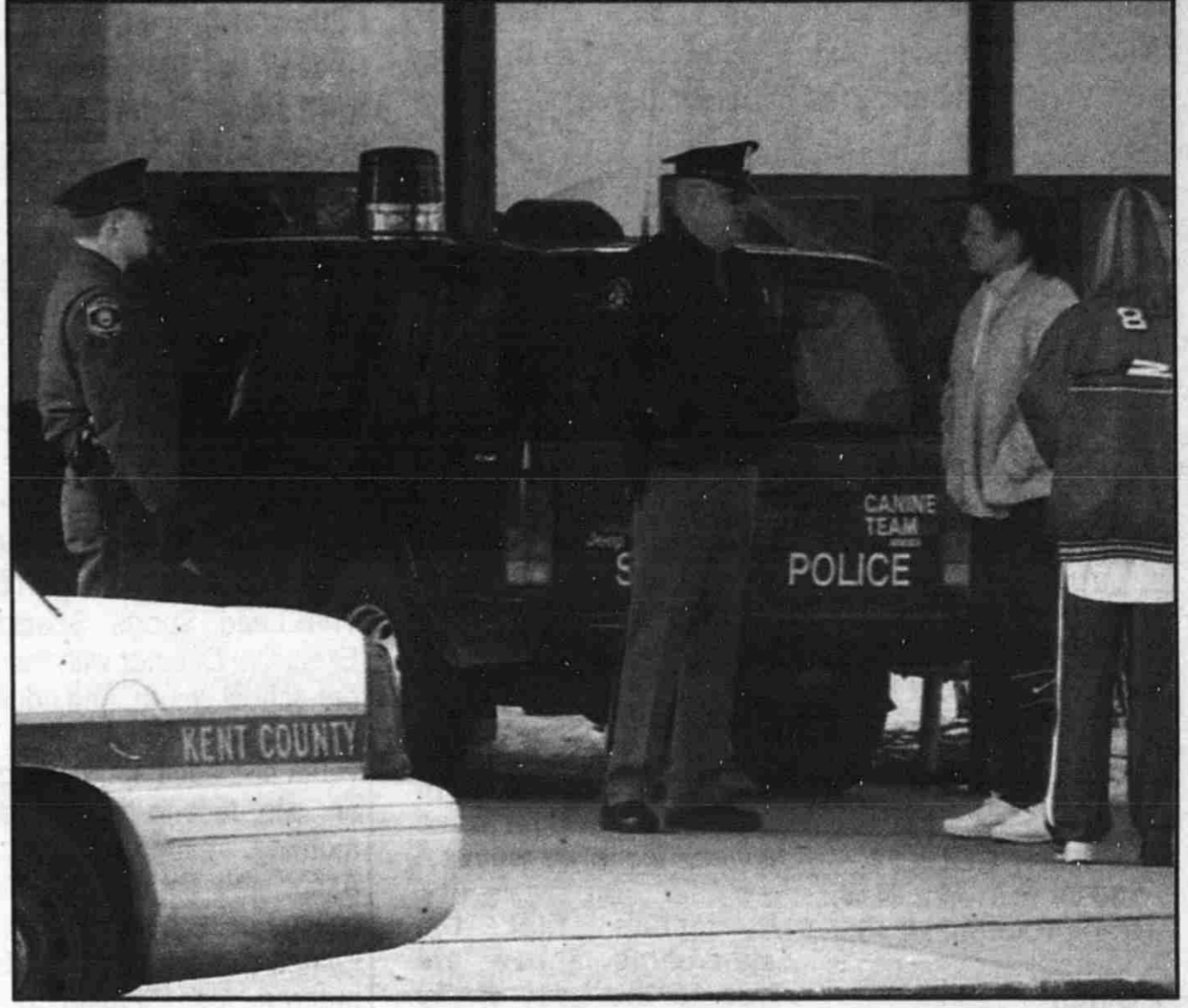
received the anonymous call at 7:45 a.m., shortly after school started. According to Lowell Area Schools superintendent Shari Miller, it was a "very short conversation, absolutely no details."

Middle school principal Linda Warren instructed teachers to keep students in classrooms. Lowell police responded to investigate the threat; state police troopers conducted a search of the building with tracking dogs.

Police searched lockers while school staff monitored hallways and bathrooms. Students went to lunch as usual, but were searched

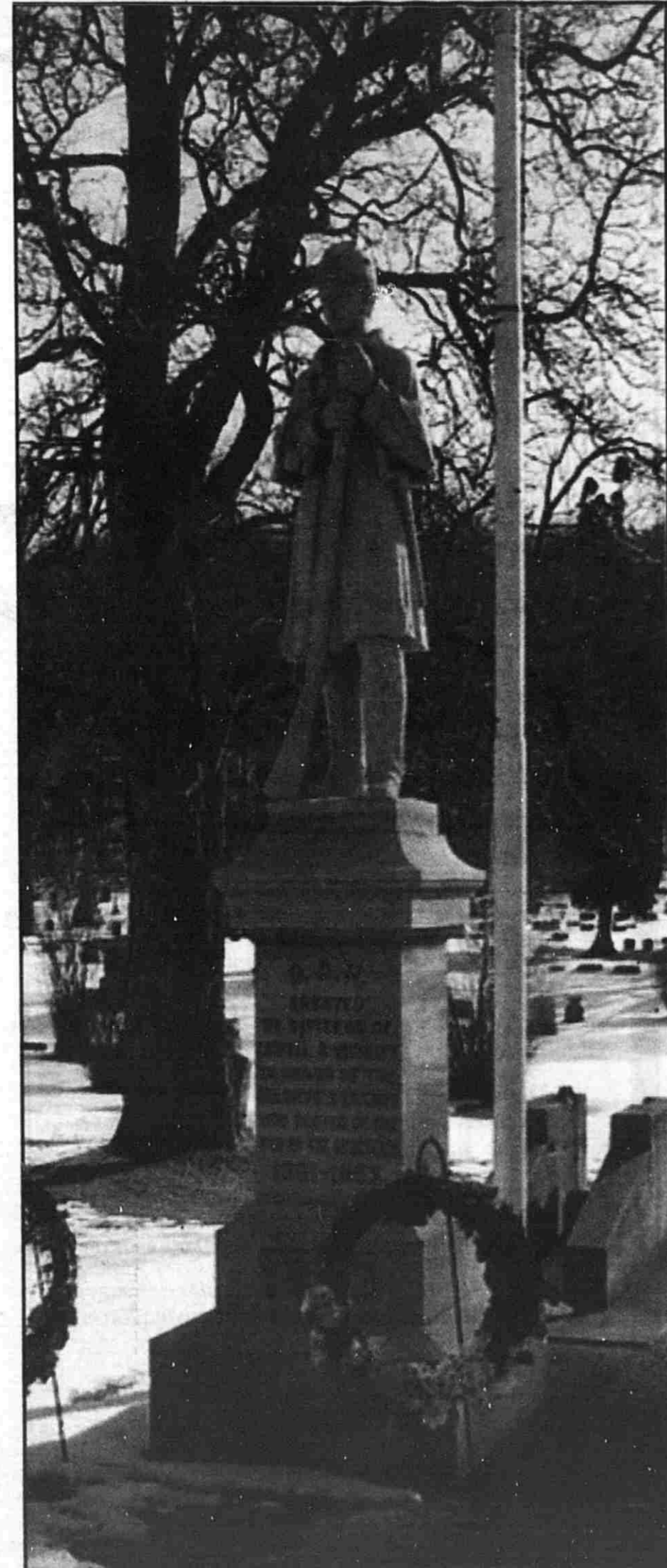
on the way with metal-detecting batons. With approximately 1,000 students attending Lowell Middle School, batons were brought in from Grand Rapids Public Schools and the Transportation Security Administration at Gerald R. Ford International Airport. Students were allowed to enter and leave the building under special circumstances, such as pre-arranged pick-ups for doctor's appointments.

School lockdown, cont'd., pg. 10



Law enforcement officials restricted access to Lowell Middle School for five hours last Thursday following an anonymous phone call claiming a gun was in the building.

Civil War group gets city support to repair Oakwood monument



The Civil War monument at Oakwood Cemetery.

By J. Lobdell
Contributing Writer

A Grand Rapids Civil War organization is leading the charge to renovate and repair Oakwood Cemetery's civil war monument.

At its meeting Monday night, Bruce Butgereit, civil war memorials officer for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Gen. John A. Logan, Camp No. 1, came before the Lowell City Council seeking its support for fundraising to start renovating the 105-year-old monument.

"We know in economic times like this we can't come in with our hands out and expect the local government to pay for all of this," Butgereit said, adding the group has fundraising plans in place. The council gave its support, offering suggestions for fundraising such as seeking a grant from the Lowell Community Fund. The Sons are planning a special event set for April 16 at the Wittenbach Center.

The monument was installed on Memorial Day in 1900 by the local Women's Relief Corps and the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the Civil War Veterans group

and one of the first veterans' organizations in the United States. According to the Butgereit, the GAR was dedicated to helping its veterans by establishing veterans' homes, pensions, and aid for Civil War widows and children along with preserving the memory of the Civil War and what it was about.

As the group began to die out, it established the Sons, the Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War 1861-1865, the Ladies of the Grand Army, the Auxiliary to the Sons, and the Women's Relief Corps—all five groups are under the umbrella of the Allied Orders—to help preserve the memory of

those who fought in the Civil War and to continue the work of the GAR.

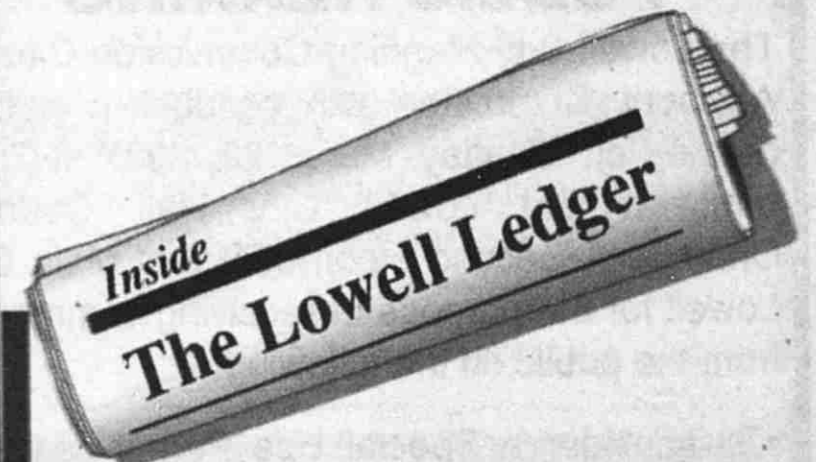
Along with providing educational programs, the Sons also work on renovating the memorials and monuments to those veterans.

The Lowell monument
Civil War monument, cont'd., pg. 11

Un"bearably" chilly Easter predicted



"Stumpy," the Bowes Road bear, tries on some ears for Easter. The bear has stayed fashionably with the season through the duration of his half-a-year existence. A chainsaw woodcarver rendered the bear out of a stump in Mark and Theresa Mundt's front yard shortly after the Kent County Youth Fair last August.



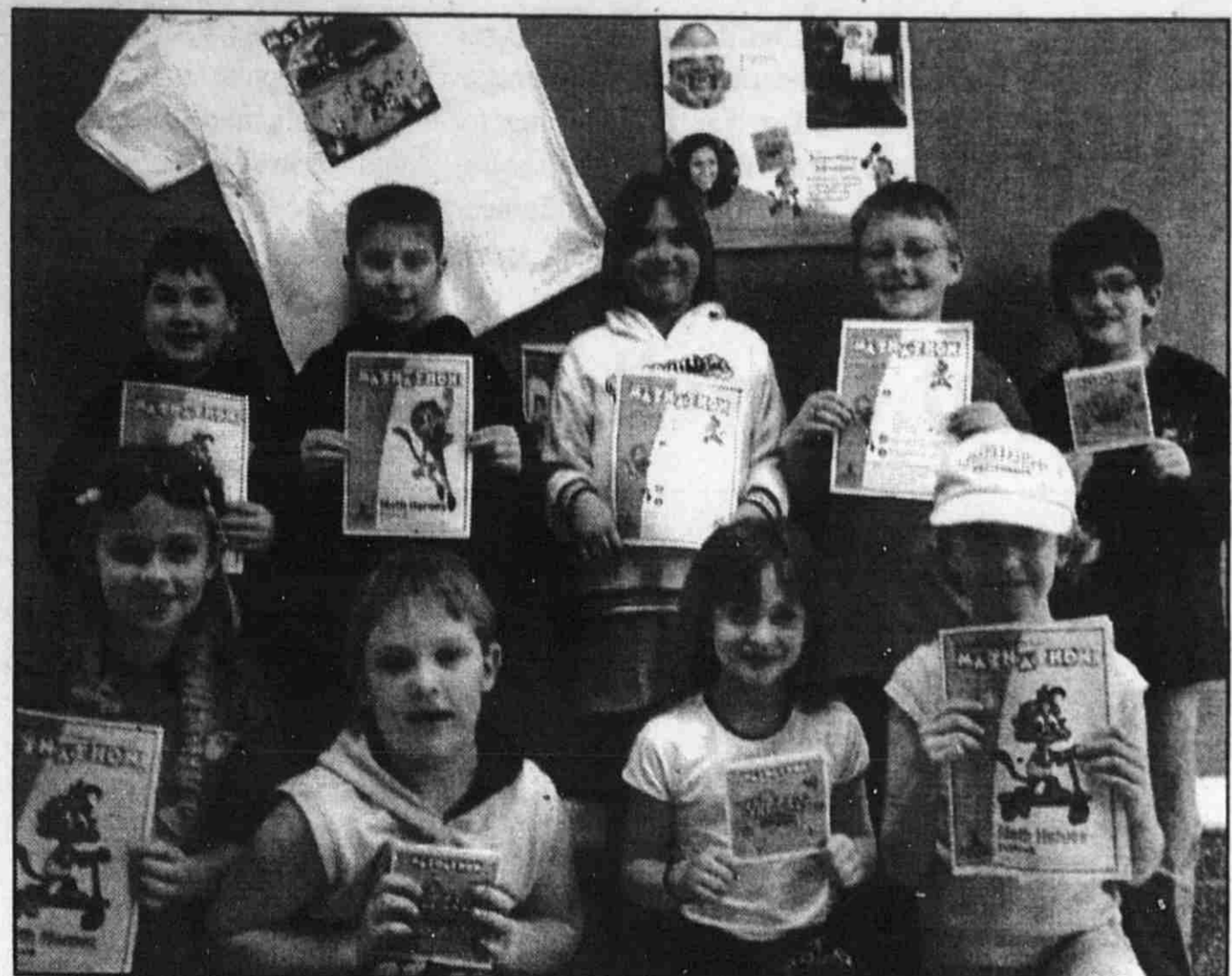
New Park Fees ... Page 3

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FFA Wins State ... Page 11

Elementary math-a-thons reach successful conclusions



Pictured, front row, left to right, from Murray Lake Elementary, are: Kiersten Ashenbrenner, Karson Murley, Kailee Dawson and Alexandra Chapdelaine; back row: Michael Swiger, Damien Hutton, Abbey Flentje, Caleb Flentje and Zach Dawson.

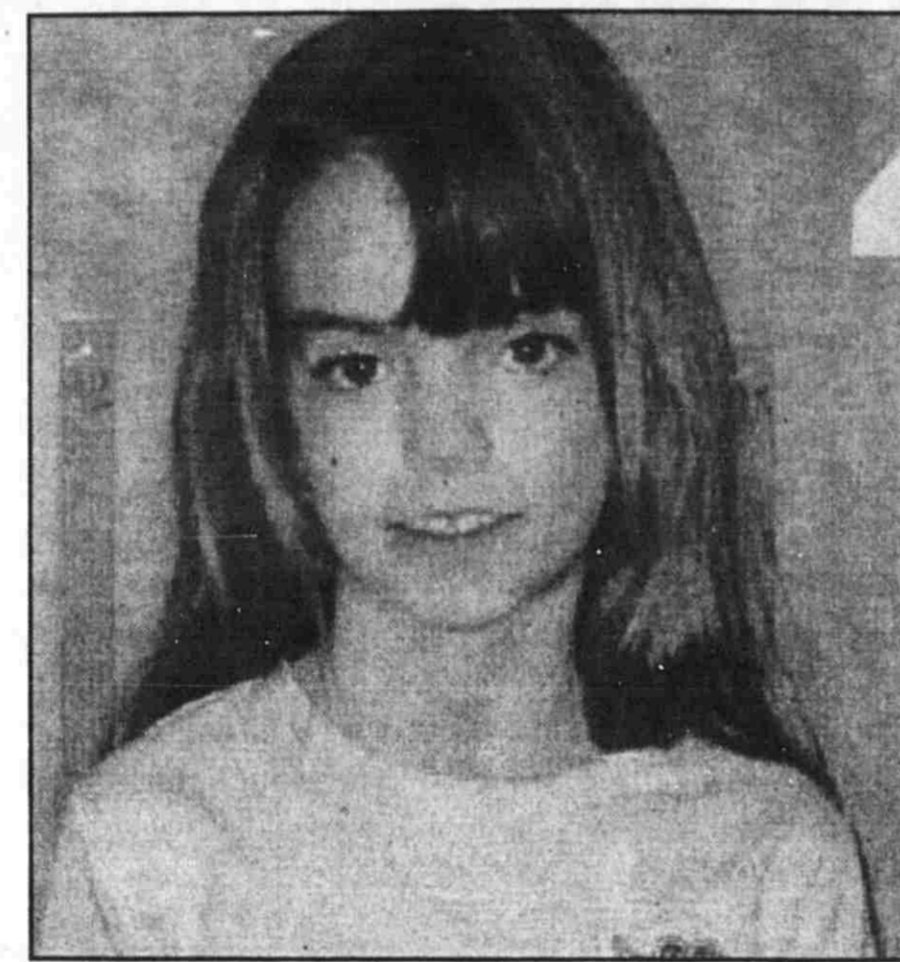
There were 65 students who participated in the Math-A-Thon at Murray Lake Elementary. Each raised over \$100 for the St. Jude Children's Hospital, totaling \$3,865.

Students solved approximately 200 math problems, while having friends and family pledge donations for each problem they solved.

The Math-A-Thon at Cherry Creek Elementary raised \$4,376.09 this year and had 84 participants.

The math program encourages kids from kindergarten to ninth grade to use their math skills to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Hospital. Students obtain pledges from

family members and friends, in an amount-per-problem or a one-time donation. Then they go to work using the Math-A-Thon workbook or interactive CD - adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing - honing their math skills and helping fight childhood cancer in the process. Second grader, Maggie Doane collected the most pledges, \$242. For her outstanding effort, she won a super slim portable CD player.



Maggie Doane

Area martial artists dominate national tournament

Young Olympic hopefuls plan to travel to China for training

Rob Coffey and Mariah Moore competed in the 2005 Midwest National Tournament which was presented by Young Americans Self Defense on Feb. 19.

The event, held in Chicago, hosted hundreds of young martial artists from all over the Midwest. To participate, entrants had to first pre-qualify by placing third or better in the Michigan State Tournament in Grand Rapids on Jan. 12.

At the state level, Coffey placed first in Forms and fourth in Sparring; Moore earned first in Forms, Self-Defense, Most Powerful Kick; fourth in Sparring.

At the national level, Moore, a member of Full Force, Michigan's Demonstration Team, performed to oriental music

with their original Dragon Dance. Full Force placed third overall in this event.

Next, Coffey and Moore choreographed an event which requires two or more martial artists to perform a synchronized martial arts routine. They are judged on originality, skill, entertainment and overall cohesiveness. With over 15 teams of all belt ranks and ages from 6-18 entering this competition, the Lowell duo placed second.

In the individual competition, Coffey placed first in Forms and Sparring in his division.

Moore completely swept her division taking first in Forms, Sparring, Self-Defense, The Three Combination Strike and Weapons when she performed a Wushu Kata using a broad-sword.

"To sweep a local tournament would be an incredible accomplishment. To sweep a national tournament is unheard of and truly amazing due to the fact that at the national level, you are competing against the best of the best from across the country. I'm just really proud of my students. They work hard and it shows," said Sensei Aaron Bailey.

The duo recently received personal invitations from Grand Master Wu Bin, Jet Li's personal coach, to represent the USA and train at his world renowned Wushu Training center in Beijing, China in June, 2005 as two of the top athletes in the United States.

Murray Lake staff person of the month

Joan Weeber was named staff member of the month at Murray Lake for February.

The administrative assistant was previously an administrative assistant at Bushnell Elementary before coming to Murray Lake this year. A lifelong resident of the Lowell area and a Lowell High School graduate, Weeber has worked six years for Lowell Area Schools.

"I enjoy my job because I get to deal with students, parents and a great staff. Murray Lake Elementary is an exciting place to be!" said Weeber.

Nominated by fellow staff members, they said, "She always goes above and beyond with a big smile on her face. She is very welcoming to parents and community members too."

Weeber assists Brent Noskey, principal for Murray Lake. Noskey quotes, "Joan is my 'right hand lady.' I would be lost without her. She has played a major role in getting this school off and running. She is a professional who is very thorough and dedicated. She also has a great sense of humor. I am extremely pleased to have her as my assistant and my friend."



Joan Weeber

Remember our deadline is Fridays at 4 p.m. for the Wednesday publication.

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GRATTAN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC NOTICE BUDGET HEARING
Notice is hereby given that Grattan Township Board will hold a public hearing for the purpose of answering questions, reviewing and adopting the annual budget for the 2004/2005 fiscal year.
The meeting will be held on Monday, March 28, 2005 in the Grattan Township Hall, 12050 Old Belding Road, Belding, Michigan at 7:00 p.m.
"The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing."
All interested parties are welcome. A copy of the proposed budgets can be viewed at the Township Hall prior to the public hearing.
Lana F. Green, Clerk

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ADULT SPRING SOFTBALL LEAGUES Register by April 3
Monday: Co-ed (Church & Open) • Tuesday: Women • Wednesday: Men • Friday: Men
Leagues begin Mon, April 11, Tues, April 12, Wed, April 13, and Fri, April 15
Teams will play 6 games over a 4-5 week schedule. \$240.00 for all teams.

ADULT SUMMER SOFTBALL LEAGUES Register by May 6
Monday: Co-ed (Church & Open) • Tuesday: Women • Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: Men
Begins Mon, May 16; Tues, May 17; Wed, May 18; Thurs, May 19; Fri, May 20
Teams will play 12 games. \$460.00 for all teams.

T-BALL April 18-June 6 Preschool-1st Grade
Mondays or Tuesdays, 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. Member: \$30 • Program: \$40 • Non-Mem: \$49

SOCCER LEAGUES Register by March 28
INSTRUCTIONAL LEAGUE (3-5 years)
Thursdays (6-7 p.m.) or Saturday mornings
Member: \$30 • Program Member: \$40 • Non-Member: \$49
RECREATIONAL LEAGUE (Grades K-5)
Member: \$34 • Program Member: \$47 • Non-Member: \$60
MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6-8)
We are joining a middle school league with other communities in the area. Games will be at "home" in Lowell, as well as "away" at other area schools.
Member: \$34 • Program Member: \$47 • Non-Member: \$60

ROKEN KARATE (ages 6+) All classes held at the Lowell YMCA in the Teen Center
BEGINNER: Tues. & Thurs: 6-7:00 p.m. • ADV. BEGINNER: Tues. & Thurs: 7:10-8:25 p.m.

CALL 897-8445 for more information or to sign up!
LOWELL YMCA • 1335 W. MAIN STREET
THANK YOU!
If you see any of the individuals below, please thank them for volunteering their time and energy to coach our kids' basketball programs and making a positive difference in their lives... Dan Anibel, David Powell, Mike Minier, Brian Worsley, Chris Vanoss, Jay Brenner, Jon Garter, Phil Beachler, Phil Ritchie, Sue Groom, Renee Fox, Ed Nausieda, Ryan Kyes, and Jeff Fuller... a special "thank you" to girls' varsity basketball coach Dee Crowley, for coming in on her birthday to help out with our basketball coaches meeting/training... and to the Lowell High School Leaders Club participants for all their hard work in volunteering time at the basketball games!

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