

The Lowell Ledger

Volume 31 Issue 24

Serving Lowell Area Readers Since 1893

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Lowell Police Department adds another bike to fleet

By Dan Schneider

The Lowell Police Department recently added a third patrol bike to its stable.

The department has been patrolling on bicycles since 1997, when LPD first bought a Trek mountain bike and built it up for police use with funding from the Lowell Rotary Club. They later added a GT bike and have now purchased a Cannondale Interceptor patrol bike.

Over the past decade, bicycles have become an increasingly popular police tool.

"Sometimes you can do more on the bike than you can in a car," officer Steve Bukala said.

Patrolling city parks, for instance, is easier on a bike. A bike-mounted officer is faster than one on foot, and the bikes can get to places squad cars can't, such as the

trail around the lake at Stoney Lakeside Park. Bicycles will be ideal patrol tools for the Lowell Area Trailway, once it is completed.

Bikes also offer a degree of stealth.

"There's a multitude of times when you ride up on people and they don't even see you," Lowell police chief Jim Valentine said.

Bukala once rode up to a domestic dispute on a bicycle. He arrested the husband for domestic abuse before the man knew what was going on.

"You can ride right up to them and it doesn't click that it's a police officer unless they hear the radio or something," Valentine said.

With their greater maneuverability, bicycles can sometimes keep pace with patrol cars.

"I actually did beat a car from the Department of Public Works to Key Heights Mobile Home Park," Bukala said.

To a greater degree than squad cars, bicycles make

officers accessible to people.

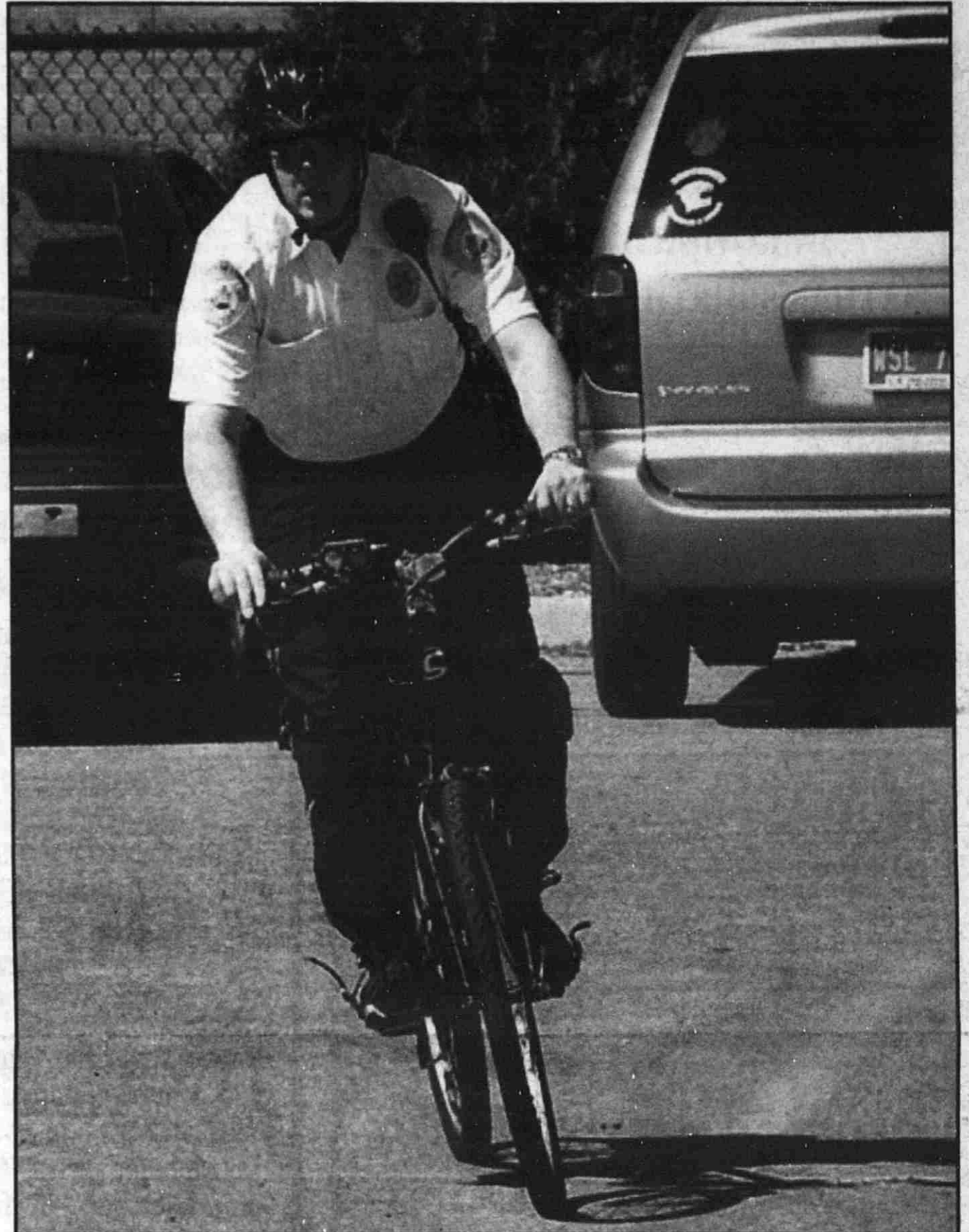
"You get to have a lot more contact with people," Valentine said. "They realize a police officer exists more than just from the shoulders up, because that's usually all they see."

The bikes do have drawbacks, especially if a suspect in a car is intent on escape.

"I got in a chase with a stolen vehicle that actually almost ended up running me over in the end," Bukala said.

He had chased the car to a deadend in the Bushnell Elementary parking lot. Before squad-car backup could arrive, the suspect escaped. He was later caught by the Wyoming Police Department.

Bukala has taken classes in bike patrol *Patrol bikes, cont'd., pg. 8*



Lowell police officer Steve Bukala tests out the department's new patrol bike. LPD has used bicycles since 1997.

Lowell - a good nesting spot



The Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce finally has a real duck ... and it may not be long before it has several more. Pictured is a mother mallard who recently laid seven eggs in a planter outside the entrance to the chamber office at 113 Riverwalk Plaza and has been minding them continually. The incubation period for mallards is approximately 28 days, so expect to see a male mallard handing out cigars along Riverwalk Plaza in about three weeks.

This is something Lowell has in common with the White House, as a mother duck has also made a nest in a flower bed at the home of the First Family.

Cost containment options presented at Monday's Lowell School Board meeting

By Dan Schneider

Shortening the school year and outsourcing transportation maintenance costs should be options on the table as Lowell Area Schools wrestles with its budget crunch, according to the recommendations of the cost containment committee.

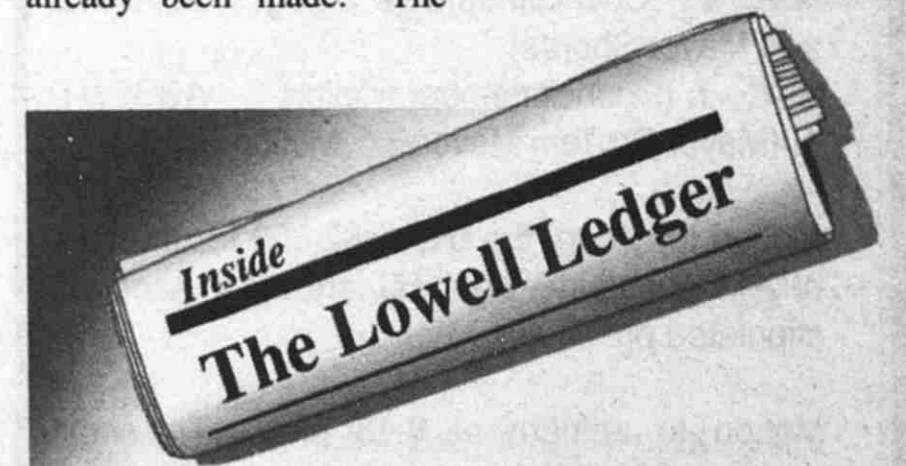
The 10-person committee, consisting of business and community leaders in the district, has met frequently for the past eight months to come up with ideas to help keep the district's expenses in line with declining revenues. Committee chairman Mike Blough presented a summary of its recommendations to the school board, Monday.

With nearly \$3 million

in cuts already made since the 2002-2003 school year, Blough said the committee approached its task with the mentality that "the easy decisions probably have already been made." The

committee worked with two primary guidelines in crafting its recommendations: that they stay as far as possible

Controlling costs, cont'd., pg. 8



Alcoholic Beverages At Summer Concerts ... Page 3

A Big Boy? ... Page 10

Asthma At LMS ... Page 20

Obituaries

DENKEMA - Richard L. Denkema, aged 71, of Remus, formerly of the Grand Rapids area, passed away Monday, April 4, 2005 at his residence. He was preceded in death by his father Edward Denkema, mother Peggy Denkema; Maurits, step-father Orville Maurits. He is survived by his wife of 25 years, JoAnn Denkema; children Rick (Deb) Denkema, Hope

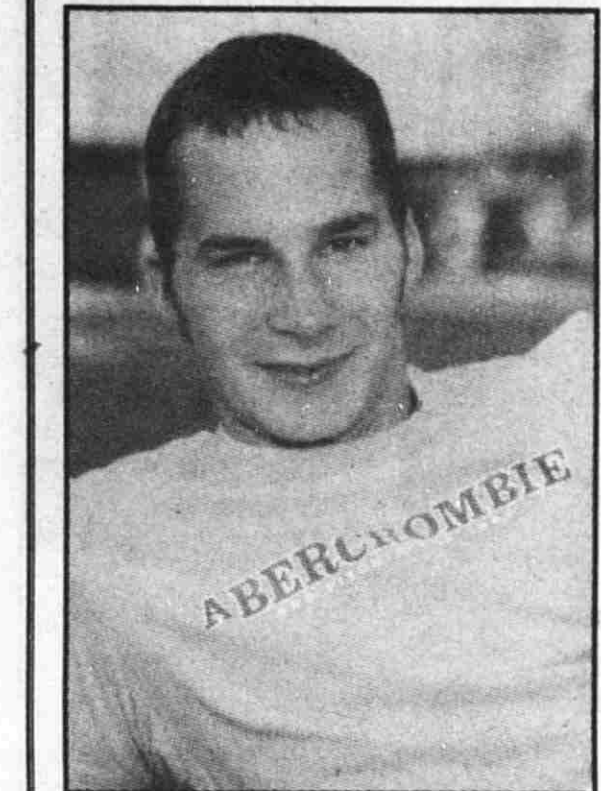
(Glenn) Lynn, Richard (Rene) Foerster, Virginia (Mark) McComber, Charity (Jim) Merrill; 13 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; step-mother Ada Denkema; sister Carol Stormzand; brother-in-law Clyde (Alice) Beckwith; also several nieces and nephews. Mr. Denkema served his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. During his

working career he worked for Consumers Power Co. and then as an air-frame and powerplant repair mechanic. He also restored antique aircraft in his spare time. Funeral services were held Friday at Oakview Community Church in Grand Rapids with Rev. John Delger and Rev. Wayne Boughan officiating. Memorial contributions may be made to Antique Aircraft Association, American Cancer Society or Hospice of Michigan.

VAN DEN BROECK - Peter J. Van Den Broeck, aged 68, of Alto, passed away April 14, 2005 at Tendercare in Hastings. Peter was preceded in death by his parents Royal and Viona Van Den Broeck,

son Kevin Mark Van Den Broeck, brother Charles Van Den Broeck. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Alice (Heacock); daughter Diana (Gary) Hager; son Peter (Deanna) Van Den Broeck II; five grandchildren; brothers John, Michael, Todd (Doris) Van Den Broeck; sisters Betty (John) Kehoe, Agnes (Dale) Pringle, Judy (Bob) Berg; many nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held Monday, April 18 at Bowne Center United Methodist Church, Rev. Dean Bailey officiating. Interment Bowne Center Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Bowne Center United Methodist Church, 12051 84th St., Alto.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF NATHAN'S BIRTHDAY APRIL 24, 1985



Missing you every day. Forever in our hearts. Thanks to our family, community & friends for your loving & thoughtful support.

The Junglas Family

SYNOPSIS REGULAR MEETING OF THE LOWELL CITY COUNCIL APRIL 4, 2005

Minutes of the March 21, 2005 meeting were approved as corrected and the accounts payable were approved.

The following motions were approved:

- Motion to adopt the resolution for collecting Lowell Area Schools summer taxes for 2005.
- Motion to approve the amendment to the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for King Milling Company to \$2,569,200.
- Motion to adopt the resolution authorizing notice of intent in the amount of \$600,000 to issue Michigan Transportation Fund Bonds.

YEA: 3. (Councilmembers Hodges, Mathews and Mayor Shores)
NAY: 1. (Councilmember Pfaller) ABSENT: 1. (Mayor Pro Tem Meyers). Motion carried.

- Motion to accept the bid of \$2,000 for the sale of 111 Riverside from Bif and Jeff Altoft as stipulated previously.
- Motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting will be Monday, April 18, 2005.

Complete minutes are available on the City's web page at www.ci.lowell.mi.us or at Lowell City Hall, 301 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 or by email to bmorlock@ci.lowell.mi.us

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk
City of Lowell

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BOWNE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 4.08 AND 5.05 REGARDING MINIMUM LOT AREA, MAXIMUM LOT AREA FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL DWELLINGS, AND MINIMUM LOT WIDTH IN THE AG AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT

Public notice is hereby given that the Bowne Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Thursday, May 12, 2005 at 7:30 p.m., in the historic Township Hall, located at 8240 Alden Nash Avenue, Alto, Michigan, to hear public comments regarding a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed amendment:

- amends Section 4.08, Schedule of District Regulations, to reduce the minimum lot area in the AG Agricultural District from 3 acres to 1 acre, reduce the minimum lot width in the AG Agricultural District from 330 feet to 250 feet, and add a footnote 11 to provide that the maximum lot area in the AG District for non-agricultural residential dwellings shall not exceed 3 acres.
- amends Section 5.05 to reduce the minimum lot area in the AG Agricultural District to 1 acre, reduce the minimum lot width in the AG Agricultural District to 250 feet, and establish the maximum lot area for non-agricultural residential dwellings in the AG Agricultural District to 3 acres.

Interested parties may be heard at the public hearing. Written comments will be received until the close of the public hearing. The proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance may be examined at the Township Hall, 8240 Alden Nash, Alto, Michigan, on Wednesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and on Fridays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

April 20, 2005
Sandra L. Kowalczyk, Clerk
Bowne Township

Fatal crash in Grattan Township

A car crash early Tuesday morning in Grattan Township killed a Gowen man and put a woman in the hospital.

The 46-year-old woman was driving northbound on Lincoln Lake Ave., returning home from a third-shift job in Lowell. Police reports indicate her vehicle crossed

left of center and collided head-on with the vehicle driven by the 45-year-old Gowen man.

The woman was transported by ambulance to Spectrum Health Butterworth Campus in Grand Rapids. Names were not available as of press time. The accident remains under investigation.

Arrest made after stabbing at park

A man was stabbed in the leg during a fight two weeks ago at Stoney Lakeside Park.

According to police reports, on Monday, April 4, a 34-year-old man had confronted Bryan Wolfe, 20, of Lowell, at the park. According to the older man, Wolfe had been threatening his son. A fight broke out between the two and Wolfe reportedly pulled out a knife and stabbed the man in the upper thigh, just missing the femoral artery.

It was a small knife, and the man was able to leave the park and call the police from his home. He then sought his own medical treatment at an area hospital, where he received several stitches. The Lowell Police Department obtained a warrant for Wolfe's arrest on charges of felonious assault and being a habitual offender. Wolfe was arrested Tuesday, April 5, lodged in Kent County Jail and freed on a \$5,000 bond. He was arraigned last Wednesday and awaits trial.

LOWELL AREA SCHOOLS BOARD CANDIDATE FORUM

The Lowell Area Schools will be conducting a Board Candidate Forum for candidates running for the one vacant Board seat.

Tuesday, April 26, 2005
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Runciman Administrative Building - Board Room
300 High St., Lowell

Candidates are:
Sterling Massey
James Turner

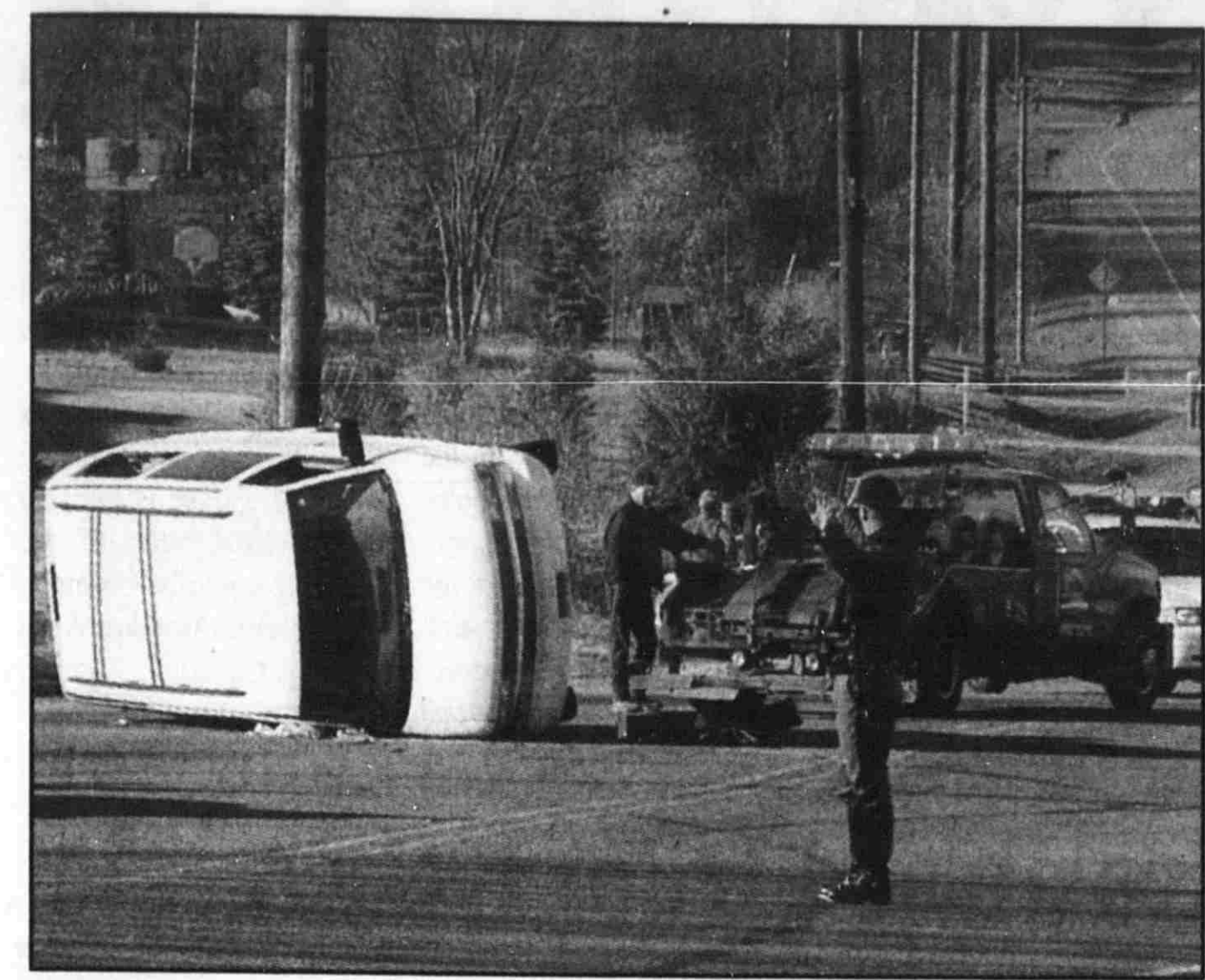
Each candidate will be given 3 minutes for opening remarks and then there will be 30-45 minutes for written questions from the audience. Candidates will then be given 2 minutes for closing remarks.

The public is encouraged and invited to attend this forum.
This Board Candidate Forum will be broadcast on Channel 20 on April 27, 28 and 29 at 7 p.m.

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No serious injuries in rollover accident



A car accident at 5:40 p.m. last Thursday evening left a Buick Park Avenue smashed up and this Chevy Astro van overturned but no one was seriously injured. The accident occurred at Alden Nash Ave. and Foreman Road. Melissa Kasalina of Lowell was northbound and waiting to turn left from Alden Nash in the van. The Buick, driven by Bragley Amidon, 17, of Lowell, crashed into the back of the van, causing it to roll over on its side. One of the van's three passengers was taken to Spectrum Health's Butterworth Campus with minor injuries. No one else involved in the crash was injured.

Flat River Grill gets permission to serve alcohol on Showboat at summer concerts

By J. Lobdell
Contributing Writer

The Flat River Grill once again has received the city's endorsement to serve alcoholic beverages on the Lowell Showboat during the Showboat Summer Concerts.

The temporary authorization to do so is approved by the Liquor Control Commission which does ask the city if it supports such a matter. The city council unanimously recommended that the temporary license be issued to the restaurant, which is located at 201 E. Main St.

Under the license, Flat River Grill would be allowed to serve alcohol on the boat for up to 12 events. Chris West, manager of the restaurant, said because of the success of last year's program with the grill offering alcohol on the boat, the Lowell Chamber of Commerce asked that the restaurant extend the special service. This year, it will cover all of the Thursday night summer concerts events along with the Folk Festival program, June 18,

and the Riverwalk Festival, July 8 and 9. The Folk Festival does run Friday and Saturday in June, but Flat River Grill will only operate on the boat for the one day.

The total number of events is 11, leaving one date open for the Flat River Grill to use for a special event.

The area is totally roped off, and patrons are only allowed to drink the beverages on the boat. Flat River Grill usually has someone at the entrance to assure that patrons comply, and Liz Baker, executive director of the chamber,

said a year ago, some of her people helped man the door station.

Councilman Jim Pfaller asked about rental fees for the use of the showboat. Currently, Baker said no fee is charged because the chamber receives up to 15 percent of the grill's gross profits. That money is redirected into the event costs and other programs. Pfaller noted that none of the money comes back to the city to help maintain the showboat. Because the city does charge for other

facilities, including the gazebo at Creekside Park (in the city's ordinance), Pfaller requested that an agenda item be added to include discussions on fees for the showboat and other city facilities.

"We should have a fee structure for all city facilities such as the Foreman building for the Folk Festival," Pfaller said.

The council agreed to put the fee structure on a future agenda. Pfaller made the motion to recommend the temporary license.

Lowell resident will speak at Ionia Women's Festival

Dorothy Teesdale, of Lowell, will be the featured speaker at the Ionia Women's Festival on Saturday, April 30.

Teesdale, a retired registered nurse, will talk about Peripheral Neuropathy, an incurable condition, and its many symptoms, as well as supply information that makes living with it easier.

The festival will be held at Ionia High School. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. and the day's activities start at 8:30 a.m. Admission is \$10; lunch is \$5.50.

I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose, I would always greet it in a garden.
-Ruth Stout

Calling All Lowell High School Alumni
2nd Annual ALL ALUMNI GATHERING
SAVE THIS DATE
Saturday, May 28, 2005
11 a.m. for Brunch at Lowell High School
11700 Vergennes Road
Please mark your calendars and join us!
Watch for Registration Forms in the Ledger, Buyers Guide, Lowell Alumni Newsletter. Also available at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce

ADA-LOWELL 5
M-21 5 Minutes East of Ardenway H.O.
CALL 897-FILM
\$5.25 Kids all shows | \$5.50 Seniors
\$6.00 Students & Late Shows Fri & Sat
\$5.75 DAILY Matinees 11-6pm | ALL SCREENS DIGITAL STEREO
No passes
Unlimited Free Drink Refills & 25¢ Core Refills
MOVIE GUIDE
FREE
SPRING MATINEES
FOR EVERYONE
SATURDAY & SUNDAY 10-11 AM
FAT ALBERT (PG)
SHOWTIMES 4/18 - 4/21
TITLES & TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE
AMITYVILLE HORROR (R)
1:30, 3:40, 5:35, 7:35, 9:40
SAHARA (PG-13)
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
FEVER PITCH (PG-13)
2:25, 4:45, 7:10, 9:30
GUESS WHO (PG-13)
2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:15
MISS CONSERVATORY 2: ARMED AND FABULOUS (PG-13) 7:05, 9:25
ROBOTS (PG) 1:25, 3:15, 5:10
COUPON
FREE 20oz DRINK
with \$2.50 purchase
of 4oz. bag of hot/cold popcorn
BEST DEAL! *In store only. See sign.
www.ada-lowell5.com

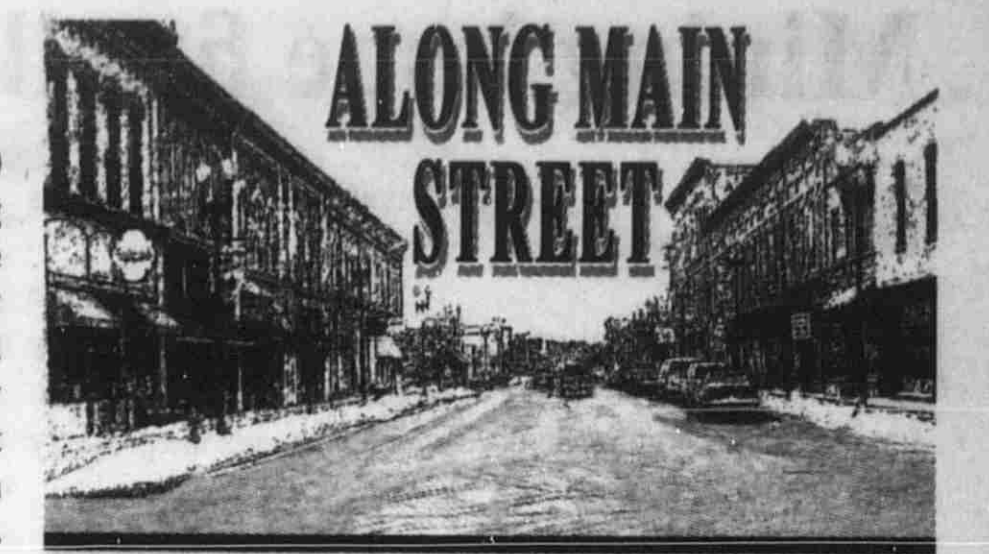
COME JOIN THE FUN!
Bushnell Elementary & Cherry Creek Elementary invite you to attend the annual **Spring Fling** on Thursday, April 28, 2005

Bushnell Activities (6:00 - 7:30 p.m.)

- Book Fair in the Media Center
- Cookie Decorating
- Bookmark Making
- A Maraca Walk
- Family Links will raffle off two "Book and Board Game Baskets"

Cherry Creek Activities (6:30 - 8:00 p.m.)

- Ice Cream Social - Enjoy ice cream in the cafeteria (50 cents per dish), served by our teachers and support staff.
- Family Portrait - Photographers from Geskus will be in the gym for families who have pre-arranged to have their picture taken. Please call the school office by April 27th to set up an appointment for your family photo session.
- Meeting for parents of students who will be attending Middle School in the fall.
- Jazz Band in the cafeteria.
- Family Links will raffle off four baskets: Lowell, U of M, Movie & MSU



THEBES PLAYERS DINNER THEATRE
The play "Wedding of the Year" will be held at Larkin's Other Place, Friday and Saturday, April 22, 23, 29 and 30; dinner 6:30 p.m./play 7:30 p.m.; matinee Sunday, April 24, 1:30 p.m. 897-8545

BLOOD DRIVE
Lowell Area Fire Dept. blood drive for the Michigan Community Blood Center, Wednesday, April 20, 2-7 p.m. at Look Memorial Fire Station.

PLANNING MEETING FOR 2006 CLASS TRIP
Junior parents will have a planning meeting on Thursday, April 21 at 7 p.m. in Room A206 of the high school.

TRYOUTS FOR FAST PITCH SOFTBALL
Girls 12U fast pitch softball tryouts, Saturday, April 23 and 30, 1-4 p.m. at Lowell High School Softball Field. Registration: 12:30-1 p.m. Call Leann at 868-2065 or check out the website www.lowell-softball.org.

WORKSHOP FOR ACT TEST
An ACT test preparation workshop will be held Thursday, April 28 at LHS from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Cost: \$38; early registration is advised. Next ACT test: June 11. Call SSC at 987-2908 with questions. Sponsored by Academic Boosters.

TOTS SPRING SALE
The TOTS annual spring almost new sale will be April 30, 9-noon at Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center gym, 300 High St. Free to participate or shop. Reserve your spot with Kathy at 987-2532.

CROP HUNGER WALK
The 11th annual CROP Walk is scheduled for Sunday, May 1 beginning at 1:15 p.m. at 1st United Methodist Church in Lowell. There is a 2 mile and 6 mile walk. Call 897-5936 for info. or to sponsor a walker.

BEGINNING ORCHESTRA
Current 6th graders entering 7th grade have the opportunity to take beginning orchestra in the fall. Call LMS orchestra at 987-2868.

ORCHESTRA CLASS
Current string players interested in an orchestra class for the '05-'06 school year can sign up by calling 987-2868.

Mining issue finally addressed by planning commission

By J. Lobdell
Contributing Writer

It's been nearly a year, and now the Lowell Planning Commission will finally take a look at adding a new amendment dealing with mining.

The issue came about after councilman Jim Pfaller questioned whether Dykema Excavators could move dirt from one end of its property to the other. The property is owned by Grand Rapids

Gravel, which also owns Dykema.

Concern arose with the company crossing the newly reconstructed Bowes Road, which now cuts the property in half.

The company, which did the work last year, had filled in a 100-year flood plain area and was required by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to create a similar or larger cut in the same area. Dykema filled in about 6,000 square feet, but took out and stock-

piled another 14,000 square feet, which was rewarded by the DEQ because the measure should elevate any water run-off issues.

Pfaller asked for a clearer definition of mining last summer. After several months of review and looking at the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration guidelines, planning commission chair Clark Jahnke said it appears that the city has to deal with "borrow pits."

Borrow pits allow a company to extract material for the purpose of fill, and the extracted material does not go through any milling process. Jahnke said this appears to be what was taking place where the material was being moved. After some discussion, the commission decided to look specifically at addressing borrow pits in its ordinance since, as commission member Barbara Schmaltz pointed out, it seems to be where the city is having problems.

"For now, let's deal with borrow pits and take care of the other situations as they occur," Schmaltz said.

The difficulty is that the borrow pits doesn't usually allow for transportation over open roadway, Jahnke explained, adding that road damage and repair with the local municipality becomes an issue.

When the issue of the mining operation was first raised with the reconstruction of Bowes Road, several

commission members noted that Grand Rapids Gravel was helpful in getting the land to realign the road.

After talking, it was decided that Jahnke should put together a proposed borrow pits ordinance that would allow an operation to move its material 200 feet on public roadway. Jahnke is to bring the proposal back to the planning commission meeting, which is Monday, April 25 at the City Hall.

Lowell para-educator receives award from KCEA

The staff at Cherry Creek Elementary recently announced that Lynda Wright has been named Para-Educator of the Year by the Kent County Education Association (KCEA). She will receive her award on May 3 at the KCEA's 23rd

annual Spring Awards Banquet.

Wright, who works in a self-contained Special Education classroom, was nominated by teacher Amber Weber.

"Lynda is the most unselfish person I've ever

met. Not only does she never miss a day of work, but she shows up with a huge smile on her face, patient gentle hands, and a heart shining on her sleeve. She makes our classroom a home, a place the children can come to and know they'll be greeted with open arms," said Weber.

Wright encourages her students to do their personal best, by giving them pep-talks, writing when they can't or reading when the text is too difficult.

She has worked for Lowell Schools for the past six years as a classroom para-educator and as a student supervisor. She and her husband Rick reside in Lowell with their children, Jessica and Andrew.



Pictured, left to right, are Lynda Wright and Amber Weber.

FAXING
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\$1 for 1st sheet, 50¢ each additional sheet
The Lowell Ledger
105 N. Broadway, Lowell

Tri-Town Conservation Club
5616 Dunn NE, Lowell
Mark your calendar
TROUT NIGHT - April 23, 2005
Start serving at 5:30
All You Can Eat
Adults - \$6; Kids - \$3
(sloppy joes & hot dogs available)
Bring Your Friends!
Contact Dave Roskamp at 897-5288 for info.

ICNB
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David Lane, ICNB's Lowell office manager, has served as captain of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life team at ICNB for the past two years. As captain, David organizes various fundraising events to raise the necessary funds to help this community-based volunteer health organization reach its goals.
If you have goals that need bank financing, give David a call today!
616-897-6171

College News

A total of 2,042 people are on the official list of those who received degrees from Western Michigan University in December at the end of the fall semester of the 2004-2005 academic year.

From the Lowell area are: **Joseph Bem, Jennifer Gingerich, Courtney Hedlund, Kara Rose, Marlo Rose, Kurt Schulte and Tyler Yaeger.**

From the Alto area are **Amy Hutchinson and John Morrison.**

From the Ada area is **Joshua Butts, Sarah Rose and Gerrid Uzarski.**

Michigan State University lists 2,677 degree candidates for fall 2004.

From Lowell are: **Kyle Hines and Robert Prince;** from Alto are: **Todd Maines and Matt Trierweiler;** from

Ada are: **Heather Halbeisen and Leslie Richards.**

Following are a list of 3.5 or better grade point average students from Michigan State University for fall 2004.

Jennifer Adams, Kathryn Capps, Aimee Catlin, Helen Crimmins, Joshua Holliman, Kirk Johnson, Stephan Kansman, Lesley Kerr, Brittany Kleinpaste, Michael Lechner, Katherine McAlpine,

Lisa Penninga and Jared Warren, all from the Lowell area.

Nicole Ashley, Lori Bessey, Michael Drake, Melanie Glover, Emily Jacobson, Kacie Johnson, Kimberly Lafoy, Jennifer Luetkemeyer, Rabya Malik, Caroline Nelsen, Colleen Nelsen, William Pentecost, Jennifer Powers, and Matt Trierweiler from the Alto area.

Heather Halbeisen and Julie Halbeisen from the Ada area.

HUGE JOB FAIR
Where: The Brown Corporation
314 S. Steele St., Ionia, MI 48846
Hosted by Axios Incorporated
When: Wed., April 27
9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
TONS of industrial positions available!
Qualifications: Must have 6 months of verifiable work history within the last year.
Basic math & reading skills
Reliable transportation & means of communication
Motivated & eager to work
Prior welding & press experience a plus.
ALL OPPORTUNITIES ARE LONG-TERM AND FULL-TIME!
For directions or questions please contact
Axios Incorporated at 616-522-0500
EOE/APP

GRATTAN TOWNSHIP
NOTICE FOR TESTING OPTICAL SCAN PROGRAM FOR PRECINCTS #1 & #2
SPECIAL MAY 3, 2005 ELECTION
Notice is hereby given that the OPTICAL SCAN Program Testing for the May 3, 2005 Special Election will be conducted on Monday, April 25, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the Grattan Township Hall, 12050 Old Belding Road, Belding, MI. This testing includes the Belding, Rockford, Lowell School Districts.
Lana Green, Clerk

Viewpoint



Bobby is probably about fifty years old, but that is just a guess. His face is big and round. He wears a mustache that kinda turns up at the ends, but is mostly just in disarray. Under the mustache is a seemingly permanent cigar about the size of your average summer sausage. His work dress is shorts, work boots, a T-shirt (too tight in the chest) and an old-fashioned pith helmet. He doesn't cut a dashing figure, but his look is memorable. Not "GQ", but memorable.

Interestingly, it is not Bobby's appearance that is most startling. He is originally from Brooklyn, and I have never heard a thicker Brooklyn accent. Bobby is extremely loud, has a voice with the same timber as a cement mixer and during conversation he insists on being as close as his barrel chest will allow. Let's just say that you won't soon forget a conversation with Bobby. I don't care if you only talk about the weather ... you'll remember talking to Bobby.

Bobby is the sort of guy novelists dream up or cartoonists imagine. The only difference is, Bobby is for real ... very real.

So ... I approached the truck with a "Mornin' Bobby ... this as far as you made it coming home from the bar last night?" Bobby removed his cigar long enough to put an index finger to his lips and attempt to whisper (Bobby needs work with his whispering), "Shhhhh ... chickens" and he pointed with his cigar at the nearby bushes.

About this time I noticed a huge double-barreled shotgun across Bobby's thighs. I asked later if he had enough shotgun there in his 12 gauge. He immediately corrected me. It was an even bigger 10 gauge. Leave it to Bobby. Chicken hunting with a monstrous 10 gauge. It was probably loaded with buckshot.

I noticed a look of sleep deprivation around Bobby's eyes as a rooster crowed from the bushes. I won't repeat what Bobby said about the rooster.

Our chicken problem is a long story. Bottom line is somebody trapped a bunch of nuisance chickens and dumped them off out in our remote neck of the woods. The chickens are thriving, nobody is getting any sleep and Bobby has formed a one-man vigilante committee. If you don't think one man can be a committee, then you don't know Bobby.

Because of possible repercussions from P.I.T.A., A.S.P.C.A. and the Humane Society ... not to mention the local sheriff's department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and probably the Department of Homeland Security, I won't tell you how Bobby's chicken hunt turned out.

I will say this much. As soon as I've finished this column, I'm grabbing my i-pod and heading out for my walk. This morning I'm in the "Cs" and will probably start off with some Clash. When I round the corner with "London Calling" blaring in my headset, I'll bet Bobby's truck won't be parked alongside the road.

I walk several miles every morning. I hadn't gone far yesterday when I noticed a neighbor's pickup truck parked along the road, just around the corner. The driver's door was open and the engine, a noisy diesel, was not running. Because of my line of sight and the glare of the sun, I couldn't actually see Bob ... Bobby ... Big Bob ... or whatever you choose to call the guy. I knew he was in there though. The smell of his cigar permeated the entire vicinity.

The scene seemed a bit odd, but I made a right turn and continued on my normal route. I cruised along listening to my i-pod. This morning my daily mind-game had me limited to artists in the "B's". The Bodeans, Bob Dylan, The Beta Band, Bonnie Tyler, Blondie ... quite a weird mix. Nearly four miles and close to an hour later I was back at the corner where Bobby's truck still sat with the door ajar. With a Beatles' tune blasting through my headphones, I approached the big dually, crewcab behemoth with cigar smoke wafting from within.

I'm not sure where I'm going with this column, but if nothing else I want to introduce you to Bobby. I call him Bobby. Some call him Bob. Most call him Big Bob. His ex-girlfriend called him Robert in some futile attempt at sophistication. The operative part of that equation is "ex"-girlfriend. Bobby isn't about to change much.

Bobby is a contractor. He specializes in concrete. This suits him well, as a mental image of a concrete block and Bobby's physique are about one in the same. Seriously, Bobby is one of those guys whose chest is so big his arms can't hang at his side ... they sort of stick out from the shoulder, then hang at the elbow. Bobby might be considered overweight on a life insurance height and weight chart, but he is certainly not fat. Let me put it this way. If you were in charge of choosing sides for a bar brawl, Bobby would be your number one draft pick.

At a recent neighborhood party I was engaged in a conversation that had me looking at the back of Bobby's head as he talked with someone else. Bobby keeps his hair cropped to about an eighth of an inch. His head is huge, perfectly round and there appears to be no neck at all. I had this weird thought that the back of his head needs three faux finger holes and the Brunswick logo tattooed in his scalp.

Sharing
The Vision
With Nancy Hopkins
Board of Education President

Common threads of successful public school district leadership are a committed focus on community, collaboration and partnership. As social, political and financial pressures on public schools increase, successful school boards and administrators realize they can't shoulder their responsibilities alone. As a result, they are reaching out to parents, community members, nonprofit groups, businesses and other organizations.

Lowell Area Schools has a solid history of partnering with the community, and the results have been far-reaching. Here are just a few examples of community partnerships and other collaborations that have allowed our district to offer more to our students and families.

- Academic Service Learning Program (teachers, students, local businesses and organizations)
- Diversity and Anti-Racism Initiative (district staff, students, parents and representatives from local business

and government communities)

- Wellness Program (Lowell YMCA, district students and staff, and community members)
- Family Links Program (parents and various local and other resources)
- Ministerial support for district Crisis Team (ministers from local churches)
- Key Communicators (parents)
- Boosters for Academics, Athletics, FFA and other extra curricular activities

The Lowell Board of Education has appropriate involvement in either initiating or supporting these and other similar programs in our district. The Board is also involved in determining the success of a program in view of its primary objectives; did the program accomplish what it set out to do.

Community partnerships and collaborations play an important role in today's world of public education. They help promote our district's mission and advance student learning. In Lowell Area Schools, partnerships and collaborations are helping point the way toward success in our schools both today and in the future.

Comments may be made to the Board of Education at boardofed@lowellschools.com.

Ledger Entries

of 125, 100, 75, 50 & 25 Years Ago



By Priscilla Lusmyer

125 YEARS THE WEEKLY JOURNAL APRIL 21, 1880

The Syracuse Sunday Times says no temperance newspaper can live, with white paper at 11 cents a pound (expensive) and whiskey at a dollar a gallon.

Heavy rains took out 40 feet of the Ada mill dam last week.

Mrs. Hogan has the new millinery store on the bridge. Health journals advise only ice water as a beverage. Early returns on the vote for a constitutional amendment to raise the governor's salary show a decided defeat.

100 YEARS THE LOWELL LEDGER APRIL 20, 1905

Village Council grants the Grand Rapids and Ionia Electric Railway an extension of 60 days for plans and working on the three Flat River bridges. Road work may begin before May 1.

After the big fire: King Milling converts the old river bank sawmill to a cooper shop to replace the burned-out one.

S.P. Hicks and W.S. Godfrey received their insurance money Wednesday.

The Donovan Saloon is being conducted at Hotel Lowell.

F.T. King plans a two-story, brick and cement block building between the post office and Mrs. Moffitt's building, to house four stores.

75 YEARS THE LOWELL LEDGER AND THE ALTO SOLO APRIL 17, 1930

A long and tense battle in the County Board of Supervisors as they choose a chairman, gives the rural interests their turn at the chairmanship.

The editor takes a few days off to visit his home town of Almont, which he left 46 years ago.

Michigan Bell's campaign for selling extension phones pictures a man with lathered face running downstairs.

The Ledger continues printing its list of subscribers, started last week.

50 YEARS THE LOWELL LEDGER APRIL 21, 1955

The widening of Main Street (which is also M-21) can go ahead, now that the percentage that cities must pay has gone from 50 percent to 25 percent.

The bonding issue passed by a 3-1 approval, so the new elementary school construction will start in early summer.

Student Leonard Fase breaks the old school record, running the high hurdles in 16.5 seconds.

"Foreman Road" is one of the local columns, also the long-running "Star Corners" by Mrs. Ira Blough.

25 YEARS THE GRAND VALLEY LEDGER APRIL 16, 1980

The school board votes to convert buses to propane fuel.

Unless there are write-ins, the June 9 school board election will be for incumbents.

Films about organic gardening are available at the library.

During National Volunteer Week, Treva Johnson receives a Merit award for 31 years of volunteerism in Lowell.

Lend A Hand

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

ARTRAIN USA BACK AFTER 15 YEARS

The Lowell Area Arts Council is looking for volunteers to help staff tours when Artrain USA comes to town. Artrain USA is a traveling passenger train that has been converted into an art gallery. The present exhibit on board the train is titled "Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture." It is an exhibit of contemporary Native American art.

The train will be in Lowell the first week in June. Volunteers are needed to staff third- through fifth-grade tours on June 7 and 8 and for public tours June 11 and 12. Volunteers work three-and-a-half-hour shifts during the tours. **Anyone interested should contact the arts council at 897-8545 by May 13 for more information.** A volunteer informational meeting will be held May 16 from 7-8 p.m. at Lowell Township Hall.

The last time Artrain USA was in Lowell was in 1990. It was first here in 1976, before the arts council even existed. The group of volunteers who helped out during the Artrain's first visit ended up organizing the arts council.

VOLUNTEER FAMILIES NEEDED

The Council for Educational Travel, USA (CETUSA) is a nonprofit student exchange program, currently looking for volunteer families to host an international exchange student. All students are screened for academic, English and maturity levels, and bring their own money.

If you are interested in sharing your heart and your home with an international student, call Patti at 616-617-8722.

VOLUNTEER TRAIL PATROL PROGRAM

The Kent County Sheriff Department Community Services Unit coordinates the Volunteer Trail Patrol Program. It evolved from 15 volunteers in 2000 to 68 volunteers in 2004.

These volunteers, who wear a Sheriff Department-issued vest and carry a picture identification card, patrol the White Pine, South Kent and East trail systems. They receive a cell phone and two-way radio to use during their patrol. Volunteers are trained on how to report suspicious activity as well as trail maintenance issues that may need immediate attention. They have their choice of walking, riding a bike or using in-line skates to patrol.

Because of their dedicated efforts and several hundred hours of patrol, there have been no reported incidents of

crimes against trail users. Volunteers set their own schedule and a minimum of a two-hour commitment is requested.

Requirements for volunteering are that you be at least 18 years of age, have a friendly demeanor, and the ability to provide transportation for yourself to and from the trail system. An interview and criminal background check is done for every trail volunteer.

If you would like more information on this program, contact Sandi Jones at the Community Services Unit at 616-632-6221.

F.R.O.M. STATS

Lowell shoppers at the Flat River Outreach Ministries, Inc. Thrift Shop helped feed 43 families and assisted 43 families with emergency services such as utilities paid, eye glasses, well repair, furnace repair and mortgage payment during March.

ALTO ELEMENTARY NEEDS HELP INSTALLING NEW PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Alto Elementary needs volunteers from the community to help build its new playground. Construction will take place April 22, 23 and 24. Work starts at 5 p.m. and lasts until dark on the first day; from 9 a.m. with lunch provided at 1 p.m. on the 23rd; completion on the 24th.

New soccer goals, basketball hoops and football uprights have already been put up as part of the project. Installation is the last step.

Interested volunteers should call Alto Elementary at 987-2600.



Rev. Randy Meyers
Calvary Christian Reformed Church

It seems these days I'm reading more children's books than any other type. I recently read "Winnie-the-Pooh" to my son. Pooh had just eaten all of Rabbit's honey and condensed milk and could not get out of the rabbit hole. He was stuck. Rabbit went to get Christopher Robin who volunteered to read to Pooh for the week it would take for him to get thin. Pooh requested he read a Sustaining Book such as would comfort a bear in great tightness. That is the sort of book Christopher Robin read.

As a pastor I wonder why it is we wait such a long time before we request the reading of a sustaining book? Maybe it is because most of the time we are too busy walking, and thinking, and humming to ourselves to stop and read those

New Arrivals



Logan Michael Smith

Mike and Jamie Smith are proud to announce the arrival of their bundle of joy, Logan Michael. He was born March 5, 2005 at 5:37 p.m. tipping the scales at 6 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 18 inches.

Proud grandparents are Ed and Connie Roth of Lowell, Dan and Marlene Smith of Hopkins and Scott and Jocelyn Leasure of Standale.

sorts of books. When we are faced with great tightness, we are usually forced to stop just long enough to receive comfort.

We have such wonderful collections of books. Most are regular old books which stir the imagination and start the creative juices flowing. Many, though, are sustaining books good for teaching, correcting and encouragement. I once heard that we would do better to read fewer books over and over to become intimately familiar with them than to read many books with passing interest.

How can I not recommend the Bible, the number one bestselling book of all time. Some traditions also have Sustaining Books that are distilled from the pages of scripture. These concentrated confessional books provide all the sustaining goodness in one easy-to-follow format. Beyond that there are wonderful books like Dallas Willard's, "Divine Conspiracy." Read this book to rediscover your hidden life in God. It will nourish your faith like no other. It is nothing like the pop-candy coated "DaVine Codish" books which wreck our appetite for sustenance. Feeling a little tight? Try a book guaranteed to reduce the weight you feel.



Alto Elementary runners

Alto Running Club is organized by fourth grade teacher Sharon Vensas; assisting her are fourth grade teacher Rachel Millhisler and third grade teacher Jan Hanson. Parents and grandparents of the students also volunteer with punching cards, handing out shoe tokens and serving snacks. Students in first through fifth grades can join. Kindergarteners are welcome if an older sibling is participating. Spring session runs through May. The goal of the club is to promote health through exercise. Pictured are second graders Josh Buechler (in striped shirt) and Austin Rife (behind Josh) leading the pack.

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

- Anne Bradstreet

'Hardt Happenings



TEEN BOOK DISCUSSION

The Englehardt branch invites teen readers, ages 13 and older, to get together for a friendly, informal book discussion on Monday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m.

For more information, call the branch at 647-3920. The library is located at 200 N. Monroe St., Lowell.

POETRY CONTEST WINNERS

This year, 281 teens submitted poems in the Kent District Library's 2005 Teen Poetry Contest.

From the Alto branch is winner who will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Schuler Books and Music.

Local poets Kenn Vidro and David Cope judged the 457 poems that were entered.

Happy Birthday

APRIL 21: Roxann Roth, Connie Phillips, Ernest Smith, Ian Newhouse, Daniel Titcombe.

APRIL 22: Mallorie VanderWarf, Tim Hill, Mackenzie Hacker, Sharon Potter.

APRIL 23: Nathan Roudabush, Jonathan Dixon, Karen Merriman, Nicole Cummings, Brandon Short.

APRIL 24: Gary Goff, Trevor Foss, Don Shaffer, Logan Propst.

APRIL 26: Casey Brown, Marsha Ray, Bonnie Baird, Audrey Bailey, Jonathan Christiansen.

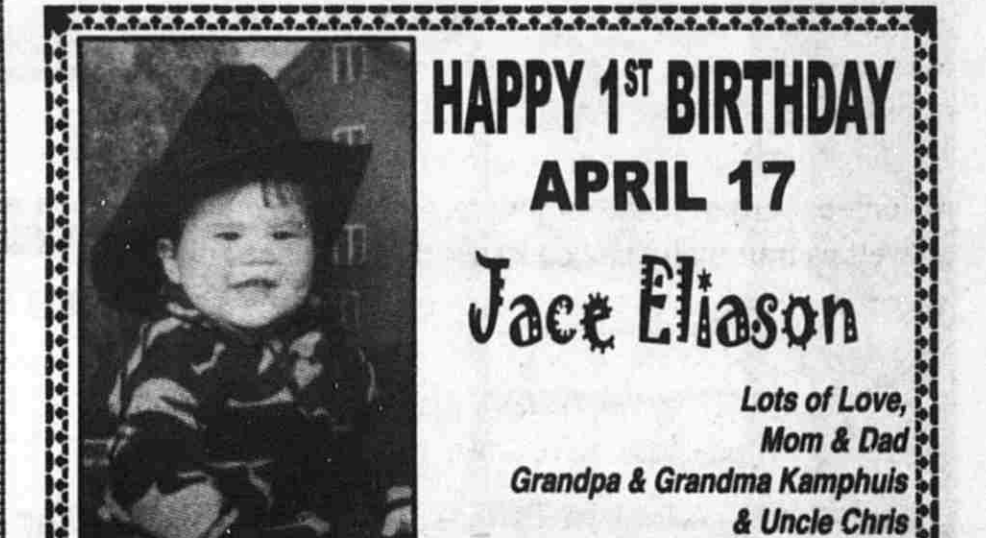
APRIL 27: Janice Ryder, Dennis Pretzel, Debbie Burrows.

LOOK WHO'S 50!!!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY
DALE DAWSON
APRIL 21st

Love,
Mary, Angie & Shane,
Tom & Danielle



HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY
APRIL 17
Jack Eliason

Lots of Love,
Mom & Dad
Grandpa & Grandma Kamphuis
& Uncle Chris

AREA CHURCH DIRECTORY

<p>ATTENTION: BIBLE BELIEVERS If you would like to attend a church where the King James Bible is held up as the perfect, preserved word of God with all the words of God for all English speaking people, then give us a visit at: 901 W. Main, Lowell</p> <p>897-6284 or 485-4195 10am Sunday School; 11am Morning Service; 6pm Evening Service; Wed. 7:30pm Prayer Meeting.</p>	<p>ALTO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Kirby and Harrison Alto • 616-691-8011 Worship.....9:30 A.M. Children's Church.....9:30 A.M.</p> <p>OPEN HEARTS - OPEN MINDS - OPEN DOORS Pastor Dean Bailey</p>	<p>Contemporary Services Lowell High School Auditorium (Nursery & Children's Ministry Provided) Sunday Mornings.....10 AM Impact Youth (Sunday's at the Pastor's home).....5 PM Phone us @ 897-0333 or 437-5093 Call for a free CD Service Sample</p>	<p>CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF LOWELL Rev. Randy Meyers • 897-7060 1151 West Main Street, Lowell, MI Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M. Sunday School.....11:20 A.M. Evening Worship.....6:00 P.M. Nursery available at both services Barrier-Free</p>	<p>ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH Fr. George J. Feleke 402 Amity St. • 897-9820 www.stmary-lowell.com Weekend Masses: Sat. 5 PM; Sun. 9:30 AM Weekday Masses: 7:45 AM Holy Day Masses: 9 AM & 7 PM Saturday confessions: 10-10:30 AM Prayer & adoration each Wed. 8:15 AM - 8 PM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, CHILDREN TO ADULTS - CALL BEVERLY BEHRENG 897-7815 SEE LOWELL CABLE CH. 48, EIGHTH FOR 24 HR. CATHOLIC BROADCASTING</p>
<p>FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF LOWELL 621 E. Main Street • 897-5936</p> <p>Worship Services 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Sunday School 9:45 a.m.</p> <p>DR. MICHAEL T. KONKIN, PASTOR Nursery & child care available at both services Barrier - Free Entrance</p>	<p>EVERGREEN MISSIONARY CHURCH 10501 Settlemood • Ph. 897-7185 Sunday School.....9:45 A.M. Morning Worship.....11 A.M. Evening Service.....6:00 P.M.</p> <p>Prayer and Praise - Wed., 7:00 P.M. Rev. Rick Ferguson • 987-6475 ALL ARE WELCOME! (Barrier-Free)</p>	<p>CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER (Assembly of God) 3050 Alden Nash S.E. • 897-1100 • Staffed Nursery Robert W. Holmes, Senior Pastor Dave Noonan, Asst. Pastor Jonathan & Stacy Holmes, Youth Pastors SUNDAYS: Worship: 9:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. WEDNESDAYS: Family Night: (For All Ages) 7 p.m. *XL* Youth: 7 p.m.</p>	<p>DAY BIBLE CHAPEL 9305 Centerline, Saranac</p> <p>Worship.....10:00 A.M. Sunday School.....11:20 A.M.</p> <p>Nursery & Jr. Church Provided Rev. Frank Lattimore, Pastor "A Nondenominational Ministry With A Blended Word Centered Service!"</p>	<p>FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ALTO 6015 Bancroft Ave. • 868-6403 www.fbcalto.com Sunday School.....10:00 A.M. Morning Worship.....11:00 A.M. Evening Service.....6:00 P.M. Wednesday AWANA (School year) 6:30 P.M. Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study, 7:00 P.M. Nursery provided Steven Harduk - Pastor Preaching the whole counsel of God. ALL ARE WELCOME!</p>
<p>GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH 10305 Bluewater Highway (Missouri Synod) Halfway between Lowell & Saranac on M-21 www.goodshepherdlowell.org Sunday School & Adult Bible Class. 9:00 A.M. Worship Service.....10:00 A.M.</p> <p>(Nursery available) Joseph Fremer, Pastor 897-6307 All facilities are wheelchair accessible</p>	<p>LOWELL CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 201 N. Washington • 897-8800 Sunday School.....9:45 A.M. Morning Worship.....10:50 A.M. Sunday Evening.....6:00 P.M. Wednesday Family Ministry.....7:00 P.M.</p> <p>PASTOR KEN ANDERSON Staffed Nursery Provided Barrier-Free Entrance</p>	<p>"Lowell Mission" of the Evangelical APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA Located at 404 North Hudson (First Congregational Church Facility) Christ Centered Sunday Worship.....4:00 PM Bishop Alex McCullough.....Clergy in Charge Reverend Deacon Mark O. Fleet, Clergy in Assistance Stacy, Ben, and Alex Fleet.....Musicians Personage.....(616) 897-2387 Corporate Web Page.....http://www.ecna.org May the Lord fill you and bless you this day!</p>	<p>SOUTH BOSTON BIBLE CHURCH (Kyser Road SE at Grand River Ave.) WE ARE YOUR NEIGHBORS - WE CARE ABOUT YOU Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M. Sunday School.....11:00 A.M. Word of Life for Jr. & Sr. High.....6:30 P.M. Evening Praise.....7:00 P.M. Wednesday Kids Klub (ages 2-9).....7:00 P.M. Olympians (1st - 6th grade) Prayer and Bible Study Library, Nursery, College & Children's Services provided - Wheelchair Accessible Church 897-7823 • Personage 897-5404 • sbccbc@juno.com</p>	<p>APOSTOLIC LIGHTHOUSE UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES 10:00 A.M. SUNDAY EVENING SERVICES 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:00 P.M. At 215 1/2 W. Main, Lowell (entrance in rear of building) CALL FOR FREE HOME BIBLE STUDIES Pastor Robert L. Hubbard Phone: (616) 897-1267 website www.aplighthouse.com</p>
<p>FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LOWELL 2275 West Main Street • 897-7168 Internet: http://www.fbcloowell.org Rev. David O. Sims & Rev. W. Lee Taylor Wayne Haines, Youth Pastor Sun. Worship Service.....9:30 A.M. & 6:00 P.M. Sunday School Hour.....11:00 A.M. AWANA CLUB J.C.Wed. 6:15 & 8:30 P.M. Contact Church Office For Prayer Meeting Times Nursery Provided • Barrier Free</p>	<p>ALTON BIBLE CHURCH Lincoln Lake Ave. at 3 Mile Road 897-5648 Sunday School.....10:00 A.M. Morning Worship.....11:00 A.M. Evening Praise.....6:00 P.M. Wednesday AWANA.....7:00 P.M. (Sept. - April) Prayer and Bible Study.....7:00 P.M. Pastor Ken Ford (Home) 897-6418 YOU ARE WELCOME!</p>	<p>FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LOWELL (United Church of Christ) 404 North Hudson • 897-5906 Worship.....10:00 A.M. Church School.....10:15-11:15 A.M. Dr. Roger LaWarre.....Pastor Shannon Hanley.....C.E. Director Barrier-Free.....Nursery Provided Come Join Us For Praise & Worship</p>	<p>APOLLO Lighthouse UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH SUNDAY SERVICES 10:00 A.M. SUNDAY EVENING SERVICES 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:00 P.M. At 215 1/2 W. Main, Lowell (entrance in rear of building) CALL FOR FREE HOME BIBLE STUDIES Pastor Robert L. Hubbard Phone: (616) 897-1267 website www.aplighthouse.com</p>	<p>shopgoodwill.com 1625 Fulton Street, Lowell</p>

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Controlling costs, continued... From Page 1

from directly affecting children, and that each recommendation could potentially create savings of \$100,000 or more.

As its first recommendation, the committee was involved in the district's decision to offer early retirement incentives to teachers.

"We were in the dialogue process as these things evolved," Blough said.

By encouraging the teachers at the top of the district's pay scale to retire early, the district could potentially see savings of \$500,000 to \$700,000.

The second recommendation was to reduce the number of days in the school calendar.

"No one on our committee looks at shortening the calendar in terms of shortening the minutes of instruction for any one of the students," Blough said.

Instead, some days would be eliminated while the length of the remaining

days would be extended to offer the same amount of instructional time. Fewer days of having facilities up and running would save the district money. Also, each day of round-trip bus runs costs the district about \$7,300, Blough said.

The third recommendation had to do strictly with transportation. The district could save money, Blough said, by "looking for other businesses in the area we could share maintenance costs with."

The fourth recommendation had to do with the services offered at the district's Lafayette Street warehouse. The building serves as a storage facility and copy center for the district. Finding a local supplier, particularly for a copy center function, could curtail expenses.

The other three recommendations had to do with increasing revenue, rather than cutting costs.

Number five was to establish an aggressive strategy for seeking grants

from private sources; the sixth was to offer another program that could generate revenue at the Unity High School building.

"The fact of the matter is, to implement the programs at Unity and Community Ed, and maintain the building, basically costs the district

Patrol bikes, continued ... From Page 1

techniques. He's learned to bunny-hop curbs, ride up and down steps, and was instructed in ways to use the bike for defense.

The course also included a number of tactical dismounts. In a ghost ride, for instance, the officer jumps off the bike, allowing it to cruise riderless past a subject. While the subject is distracted, the officer tackles him or her and makes the arrest. Bukala noted that this kind of dismount would be used only when there is cause for arrest.

For the last two years or so, Lowell police have

\$70,000 a year," Blough said, suggesting a new program could balance out that cost.

About the final recommendation, Blough said "this is probably the farthest out of the box that we could look." It was to get a one-time revenue boost

been using the patrol bikes less. But this summer, Valentine said, shift changes will allow the department to make more use of its bicycles. Police will make a presence on the bikes especially during outdoor community activities such as the Riverwalk Festival, the Kent County Youth Fair and Halloween.

Cannondale is one of two companies that makes bicycles custom-built to police specifications. The other is Trek. LPD's original bikes started out as standard mountain bikes. Modifications were added-

by developing the vacant property the district owns at the corner of Monroe and King streets.

Taken as a whole, the recommendations could potentially save the district just over one million dollars. But Blough cautioned that

suspension forks and padded seats for comfort, composite wheels for durability, and carriers and bags for stowing police equipment. Bukala said the department chose the Cannondale bike this time around because of its track record at other departments.

The bike was financed with a donation from the Rapid Wheelmen Bike Club in Grand Rapids which, for nearly 20 years, has held a charity bike tour, the Colorburst Tour, starting in Fallsburg Park. Proceeds from the annual event go to Mothers Against

the committee is "only one item or cog in this process." He said other measures need to be taken, such as encouraging state legislators to push for improvements in public schools funding.

Drunk Driving and to law enforcement agencies with bike patrols throughout Kent County.

Last year's bike tour was the club's most successful in terms of donations. M.A.D.D. received \$5,221 and five local law enforcement agencies received money to maintain or enlarge their bicycle fleets. Lowell Police Department received the largest donation, \$1,227, this year.

The annual Colorburst Tour is in its 23rd year. It will take place Oct. 8, starting in Fallsburg Park.



Financial Focus

With Christopher C. Godbold

Edward Jones
Serving Individuals Investors Since 1871

TAX-SMART MOVES FOR 2005 ... AND BEYOND

Now that tax season has come to an end, you may want to review your returns for opportunities to brighten your tax picture for next year. Specifically, are you paying too heavy a load on your investment income?

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If so, you may want to explore some "tax-smart" moves for 2005 and future years. Consider these techniques; Tax-deferred investing, tax-free investing and tax-efficient investing. Let's take a look at all three.

Tax-deferred Investing

When you invest in a tax-deferred vehicle, you pay no taxes on your earnings until you start taking withdrawals, so your money can grow faster than it would if placed in an investment on which you paid taxes every year. (If you make withdrawals before you reach age 59 1/2, you may be subject to a 10 percent penalty.) You have several tax-deferred options available, including the following:

- **401(k)** - It's almost always a good idea to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. (In 2005, you can put in up to \$14,000 to your 401(k) or \$18,000 if you're 50 or older.) Your contributions are made with pretax dollars, so, the more you put in, the more you'll be able to reduce your adjusted gross income. And, of course, you get the benefit of tax-deferred earnings growth. Plus, your employer may match part of your contributions.

- **Traditional IRA** - In 2005, you can put in up to \$4,000 to a traditional IRA, or \$4,500 if you're 50 or older. Depending on your income level, your contributions may be tax deductible, but your earnings will always grow on a tax-deferred basis. Plus, you can fund your IRA with virtually any investment you choose: stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit, government securities, etc.

Tax-free Investing

One way to help reduce your investment taxes is to avoid paying taxes. And you can do that through municipal bonds and the Roth IRA.

- **Municipal bonds** - When you invest in municipal bonds, your interest payments are exempt from federal taxes - and possibly state and local taxes, as well. However, municipal bonds may be subject to the alternative minimum tax, and any increase in principal value may be taxable.)

- **Roth IRA** - Your Roth IRA earnings grow tax-free as long as you've had your account for at least five years and you don't begin making withdrawals until you're 59 1/2. Roth IRA contribution limits are the same as those for the traditional IRA, but certain income limits apply.

Tax-efficient Investing

- **"Buy and hold"** - Income taxes aren't the only types of taxes associated with investing; you may also have to pay capital gains taxes. That's why it makes sense to be a "buy and hold" investor. If you hold your stocks for more than one year before selling them, your gains will only be subject to a maximum capital gains rate of 15 percent (effective through Dec. 31, 2008). But if you sell your stocks within a year of buying them, your gains will be taxed at your ordinary income tax rate.

Start Thinking "Tax Smart"

To see if the ideas mentioned above are suitable for your individual needs, consult with your investment and tax advisers. But take action soon - the quicker you start making tax-smart investments, the better your results will be.

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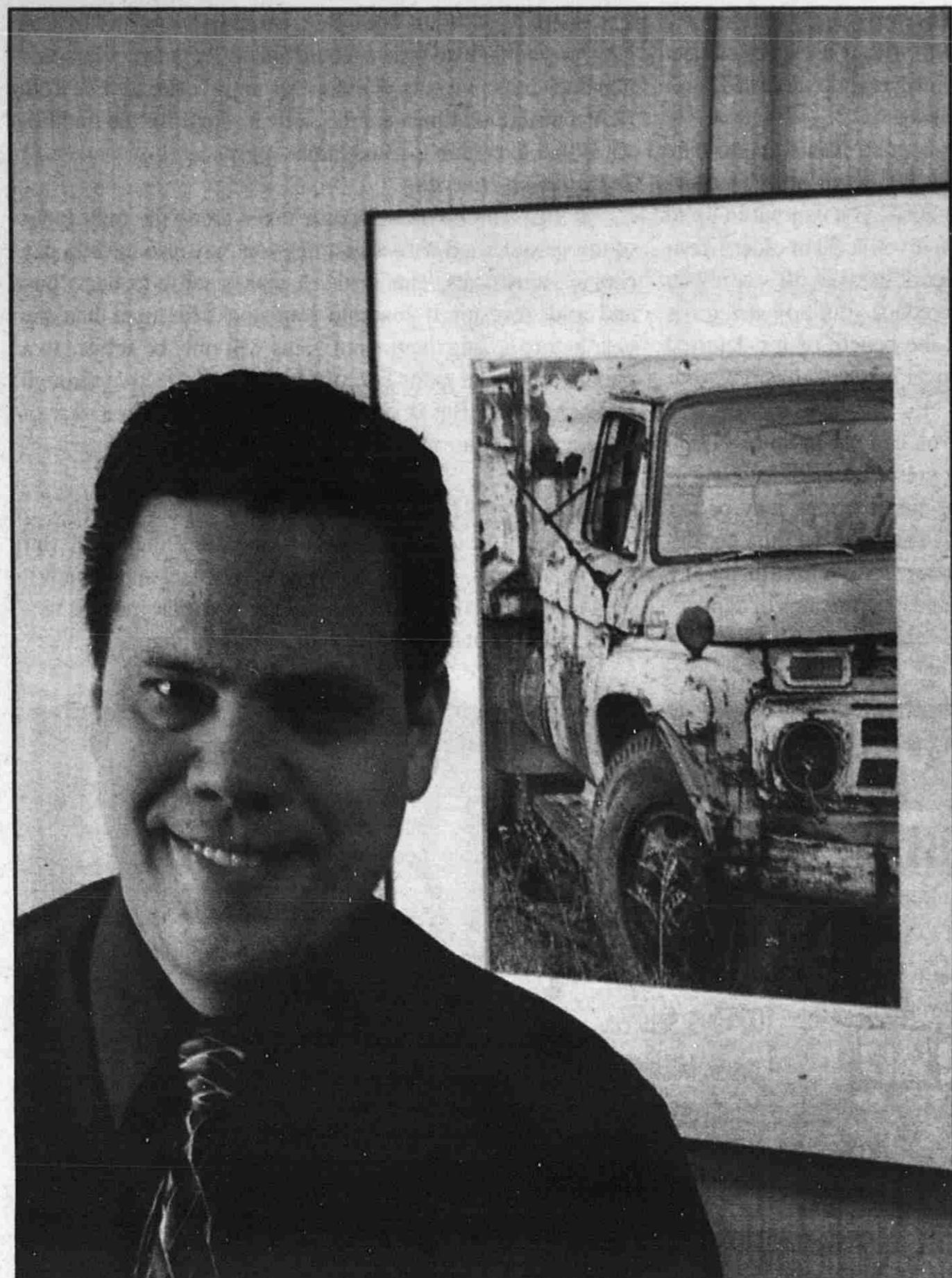
BUSINESSES SERVICES

Featured Artists Kevin Barrett

By Dan Schneider

It's been about a year since Kevin Barrett has displayed his photographs at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce.

Now he has quite a few



Lowell artist Kevin Barrett with his photograph "Old #7."

new ones at the Huntington Galleria on E. Main St.

It seems he's spent a lot of the last year taking pictures of flowers and rusty things, one of them being "Old #7," a former Belding municipal truck with old-time bodywork currently rusting in a yard in Lowell. It is the kind of thing Barrett likes to photograph in the golden light hour before dusk.

"Some of my favorite haunts are junkyards and car dealer lots," he said.

He found the subject

for "A New Pony" on a dealer lot. It's a closeup of the headlight of a yellow, late-model Ford Mustang in blazing sunlight.

Most of his shots are taken around Lowell; some are of the flowers in his backyard. Taking pictures up close of chrysanthemums is its own challenge. For his photo "Chrys," the camera was so close to the flower it made lighting tricky and manipulating the focus (depth of field) next to impossible.

"When you're working

with that much magnification, depth of field is razor-thin," Barrett explained.

What he likes about old rusty objects are "the forms, the colors, the textures," he said.

Most of the photographs in the show are local. Only one, of a red umbrella, is from out of state.

Barrett's exhibit, of which there are 13 pieces, runs through May 16.

More of his work is visible on his web site, www.kbphoto.com

Big Boy may soon be a reality

By J. Lobdell
Contributing Writer

A developer is slowly clearing the hurdles to put a Big Boy restaurant and other retail on the southwest corner of Bowes Road and M-21.

River City developer Jim Karris came before the Lowell City Council in hopes of getting (and he did) the council's blessing for a curb cut on Bowes Road for the site. The development is actually in Lowell Township with the road owned by the city.

Originally, city leaders had hoped to work out a 425 Agreement with the township in which the city would provide services to the site and, in exchange, would receive a share of

the tax dollars. Lowell city manager David Pasquale said that issue has since gone by the wayside.

Instead, Karris sought a site plan review from the Lowell Township Planning Commission, which he received in March, with the condition that the curb cut be approved by the city.

In a special meeting last week, the Lowell Planning Commission reviewed the site plan and approved it with conditions as well. Those conditions included installing the curb according to the city code, providing the latest site plan to the city council, allowing the city to use the cut to access its property next door, and landscaping/parking for the area on the south side of the entrance.

The commission also required that the city's engineer, at the developer's expense, review the curb cut. Williams & Works did so, offering some recommendations on culvert material. Ed Swanson, of Swanson Consultant Services, checked the site distance, reporting that "reasonable site distance was available. The location is an adequate distance from the traffic signal at Main Street (M-21) and Bowes Road."

The council agreed that money be placed in escrow for sidewalk south of the drive and waived a weight restriction on the traffic to the restaurant since the trucks would only weigh about 1,500 pounds.

"Mostly what they are carrying is bread with meat being their heaviest product," said Karris, adding that the trucks would be coming two to three times a week. "If they are really busy like they hope, it could be four times a week. If it's slow, it could be twice a week." The other issue was whether Karris would be able to hook up to the back portion of his property straight to the city sewer line. After some discussion, the council decided that Karris could hook up to the sewer line, but that he would still be a township patron and would therefore be billed by the township for the use of the sewer. The city collects its money from the township for the township's capacity use in the city's sewer system.

Karris said he would go back to the township with that recommendation on the sewer and hopefully clear the last steps before construction on the site can begin.

The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.

- Mark Twain

TOTS ANNUAL SPRING ALMOST NEW SALE
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Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center Gym - 300 High Street
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TOTS is an early childhood project of the Lowell Area Community Fund and the Lowell Area Schools

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Presentation teaches students about life during the Civil War

By J. Lobdell
Contributing Writer

As Angie Thode tried to bite into her hard tack, the Alto Elementary fifth-grade student learned firsthand why it had such a name.

"It's certainly hard," she said after pouring water on it and trying again. She was able to get a few nibbles before moving on to the turkey jerky made by Ron Thomure.

"It took 24 hours to soak and 18 hours drying it dry," Thomure said. Out of 18 pounds of meat, he only ended up with about two large Ziplock bags full of strips; still it was enough for the 50 people in attendance at the Lowell Area Historical Society's Civil War program held last Saturday at the Wittenbach Agri-science and Environmental Center.

The program is one of several offered by the historical



Students examine Civil War related items as re-enactors describe their function.



Lowell Area Historical Museum director Judy Straub slices up bologna for the Civil War luncheon.

society as part of its goal to bring history to life for its residents.

"We always knew that we needed to step out beyond just the four walls of the museum," said Lowell Area Historical Museum director Judy Straub. "We needed to help folks make a connection to the history, objects and events that took place."

"By doing that, they become better caretakers of the community, because it is no longer just a thing to them, but it has value to them."

This same sentiment was echoed by Marcia Butgereit, a presenter from B. Butgereit & Co. - Civil War Presentations.

"We do this to help the kids know about our history," said Butgereit, who talked about what women wore during the Civil War ... it left a strong impression with many of the students at the program. "By learning from our past, we are able to do more for our future."

That and learning about history is fun, Butgereit said, which is the reason she puts on the layers of clothing - chemise, corset, drawers, petticoats, hoop and stockings - just to wear her blue and white dress. The ensemble was topped off with a period bonnet. "I was really surprised by the amount of clothing that women wore," said Thode, who was dressed in modern shirt and shorts. She said because of her studies at school, she was aware of the men's uniform.

Ada Elementary student Kamilia Hazel got the opportunity to try something she had only read about in the "Little House on the Prairie." She was able to play with a toy that had a little man who danced between two sticks. "Laura got one of those for Christmas," Hazel said.

In the afternoon, the students, mostly eight to 13 years of age, were able to participate in classes that ranged from Civil War period games to living in a Civil War camp.

Participants came from all over ... Rockford, Alto, Belmont, Muskegon, Ada and the Lowell area. Straub said while the Lowell Area Historical Society concentrates its advertising in the Lowell community, word of mouth has spread about the programs, and more are scheduled this year including a colonial times event.

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LOWELL LEDGER APRIL 20, 2005

COMING EVENTS

Notices in the "Coming Events" are free to any nonprofit organization in the Lowell, Ada, Alto & Saranac areas. Keep notices brief; may submit by mail, but will accept notices by phone at 897-9261.

SUN.: Tri-town Conservation Club trap & skeet league, 5616 Dunn Rd. 12-5 p.m. Call Larry at 754-7104. Public welcome.

SUN.: V.F.W. Post 8303 Bingo. Doors open: 11:30 a.m.; 1st game: 1:30 p.m. at Lowell Veterans Center, 3116 Alden Nash S.E. Every Sunday except holidays.

MON.: LHS Fellowship of Christian Athletes & Friends, 7-8:30 p.m. in homes. Call 676-1355.

MON.: Overeaters Anonymous, 7 p.m. at Key Heights Mobile Home Park Community Building, no dues, no joining fee, no weight ins.

MON.: Women's over 30 drop-in basketball, 7-9:30 p.m. at Cherry Creek Elementary. Call Dave (YMCA) 897-8445. Fee \$3.

MON.: Boy Scout Troop 102, 11 & up or completing 5th grade, meets 7-8:30 p.m. at Scout Cabin, end of N. Washington St. Call Tim Vanderwulp at 897-4302 for more info.

MON.: Lowell Board of Education meets 7 p.m. in Administration Building, 300 High Street.

1ST MON.: V.F.W. Post #8303, 3116 Alden Nash S.E. at 7 p.m.

2ND MON.: Bowne Township Historical Society meets 7:30 at historic museum, 84th/Alden Nash.

3RD MON.: Fallasburg Historical Society board meetings at chamber of commerce or Fallasburg, 7 p.m. All invited. Call 897-7161 for info. or location.

3RD MON.: Women of the Moose meeting at 7:30 p.m.

3RD MON.: Peripheral Neuropathy support group, 7 p.m. at Schneider Manor Community Rm., 725 Bowes. Dorothy 897-9794.

3RD MON.: Lowell Showboat Garden Club meets at 7 p.m. at Lowell Church of the Nazarene in the Fellowship Hall.

4TH MON.: Clark-Ellis American Legion Post 152, 3100 Alden Nash S.E. at 7:30 p.m.

TUES.: Take Off Pounds Sensibly Tops MI#372 meets at Key Heights Mobile Home Park Community Bldg. Weigh-ins 5:45 p.m.

TUES.: Cub Scout Pack 3188 at 1st United Methodist Church, 6:30 p.m. Cubmaster Bruce Doll, 897-9782 / email: bruce@imagesofvision.com.

TUES.: Flat River Woodcarvers meet at LAAC from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

TUES.: Women's Community Bible Study. Free nursery and preschool story hour/craft time 9:45-11:15 a.m./women only at 7:15 p.m. Calvary Christian Reformed Church. Call 897-7060 or 897-7555.

1ST TUES.: Grattan Historical Society at O'Brien Room of Grattan Township Hall, 12050 Old Belding Rd. Public invited.

1ST TUES.: Diabetic Support group, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Schneider Manor Community Rm., 725 Bowes Rd. 897-2760 or 897-9160.

1ST TUES.: Adults with AD/HD at Calvin College, 7-9 p.m. Call Gary Engle at 897-6325 or 248-2423.

1ST & 3RD TUES.: Lowell Lions Club, 6:30 p.m., Look Memorial Fire Station, 315 S. Hudson St.

THIRD TUES.: G.R. Chapter of the American Sewing Guild, Plainfield Senior Center, 5255 Grand River Dr. NE. 6:30 p.m. meeting/program. Olga 616-975-9977/June 231-780-1249 for more information. Trunk show by Linda MacPhee, sewing expert. \$3 members; \$5 non-members.

2ND & 3RD TUES.: Quake-Zik Sportsman's Club, 11400 Foreman Rd. at 8 p.m. New members are welcome.

2ND & 4TH TUES.: MOPS - Mothers of Preschoolers... because mothering matters. 9:15-11:30 a.m. at Impact, a Wesleyan Church, 1070 N. Hudson. Call 897-8304.

2ND & 4TH TUES.: Saranac Needlers, needleart/quilting bee, 5-8:30 p.m., 4 Health Wellness Center, Bridge St., Saranac. All are welcome. Contact Bev or Melissa, 642-6466. Light dinner is provided.

2ND & 4TH TUES.: Knights of Columbus #7719 at St. Mary School at 7:30 p.m.

3RD TUES.: Parents of children w/AD/HD at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 32156 4 Mile NE/ E. Beltline) at 7 p.m. Call Linda: 874-5662; teen group: Sarah 281-6588.

EVERY OTHER WED.: 6:45-8:45 p.m. G.E.M.S. Girls Club - Calvary Christian Reformed Church. Ages 8-13. Call 897-8694.

WED.: Rotary meets at noon, Lowell Masonic Temple, 119 Lincoln Lake.

WED.: 8 p.m. ALANON upstairs at 1st Congregational Church, 404 N. Hudson St.

WED.: Tri-town Conservation Club trap & skeet league, 5616 Dunn Rd. 6-10 p.m. Larry 754-7104.

1ST WED.: GR area Scrabble Club at Schuler's Bookstore, 28th St. 5:30-9:30 p.m. Round Robin open play, all levels, walk-ins welcome. Call Jan 897-5759.

2ND WED.: Kent County Youth Fair Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., King Memorial Youth Center, 4-H Fairgrounds. Call 897-6050.

2ND WED.: Lowell Women's Club, noon in Schneider Manor Community Room, 725 Bowes Rd.

2ND WED.: Support group for Peripheral Neuropathy, 4 p.m., St. Paul's Anglican Catholic Church, Grand Rapids. Dorothy 897-9794.

3RD WED.: GR area Scrabble Club at Schuler's Bookstore, Alpine NW, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. Round Robin open play, all levels, walk-ins welcome. Call Jan 897-5759.

THURS.: Weight Watchers at Lowell Nazarene Church, 201 N. Washington St. 5:30 p.m. Register 1/2 hr. before the meeting. For info. 1-800-651-6000.

THURS.: Saranac Area Musicians and Singers practice at Saranac High School Band Rm. Choir: 6-7 p.m./band: 7-8. Kathy Maatman, 897-5981.

THURS.: Pottery classes at Franciscan Life Process Center, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. 897-7842.

THURS.: St. Mary's Pregnancy Crisis Center, 402 Amity St., non-denominational help for pregnant women/adolescents, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; Mondays: 5:30-8 p.m. 897-9393.

1ST THURS.: Michigan Hepatitis C Foundation support meetings, 7-8:30 p.m. Spectrum Health Kent Community Campus, 750 Fuller NE.

1ST THURS.: 4-H drama club meeting, Lowell Middle School choir room. Call 897-1502 after 5 p.m.

1ST & 3RD THURS.: Alto Lions Club meets at Monterey Grill at 7 p.m.

2ND THURS.: N.A.R.F.E., 1:30 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 2700 E. Fulton.

of the Moose, men's meeting at 7:30 p.m.

2ND THURS.: Genealogy-Alto Family Tree Club at Alto Library, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

3RD THURS.: 4 Health Wellness Center in Saranac. "Parenting For Success", 7-8:30 p.m. Topic: The Effects of Media on your Children. Call 642-6466 for info. and to preregister.

3RD THURS.: Rubber stamping at Christian Life Center 6-9 p.m. Call Dawn at 862-8841.

3RD THURS.: VFW #8303 Ladies Auxiliary, 3116 Alden Nash S.E. at 3 p.m.

3RD THURS.: Parents Supporting Parents group, Franciscan Life Process Center. Call 897-7842.

3RD THURS.: LaLeche League of Ada, Cascade, Lowell 6:30 p.m. socializing; meeting 7. Support for pregnant/breastfeeding women, Ada 752-8300.

2ND & 4TH FRI.: GR area Scrabble Club at Meijer Cafe, Knapp's Corners, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Round Robin open play, all levels, walk-ins welcome. Call Jan 897-5759.

FRI.: Arts/Crafts volunteers at Franciscan Life Process Center, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Call Pat or Judy at 897-7842.

2ND SAT.: Ada Historical Society, 10:30 a.m. at Averill Historical Museum, 7144 Headley, Ada.

2ND SAT.: Lowell Amateur Radio Club, Lowell Airport, 730 Lincoln Lake NE. 9 a.m. social time; 10 a.m. meeting. LARC sponsors 145.27 MHz area radio repeater system.

FRI., SAT. AND SUN.: Averill Historical Museum of Ada, 7144 Headley, 1-4 p.m. or by appointment. Call 676-9346.

LOWELL AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM: Tues., Sat. & Sun. 1-4; Thurs., 1-8. Families: \$10; individuals \$3; 5-17 \$1.50; members free. 897-7688.

ENGLEHARDT LIBRARY HOURS: Mon.-Wed., 12-8 p.m.; Thurs. and Fri., 9:30-5 p.m.; Sat.: 9:30-1:30 p.m. 200 N. Monroe. Call 647-3920.

ALTO LIBRARY HOURS: Mon. & Sat. 9:30 - 1:30 p.m.; Tues. & Wed. 12-8 p.m.; Thurs. 1-5 p.m.

LOWELL AREA ARTS COUNCIL: Tues.-Fri.: 12-5 p.m.; Sat., 1-4 p.m. Monday / a.m. by appt. 149 S. Hudson. 897-8545 or www.lowellartsCouncil.org.

high school softball field. Register 12:30-1 p.m. Call Leann 868-2065.

TUES., APRIL 26: The LAS board candidate forum will be held at 7 p.m. at Runciman Bldg., 300 High St. in the board room. Public invited to attend.

THURS., APRIL 28: ACT test preparation workshop at LHS, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. Call SSC at 987-2908 to register. Cost: \$38.

SAT., APRIL 30: TOTS annual spring almost new sale, 9-12 p.m. Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Center gym, 300 High St. Call Kathy at 987-2532 to reserve space.

FRI., APRIL 22: Lowell Rotary Club auction and raffle at Noto's. Tickets: \$5 donation for Orlando condo vacation \$3200 value. To benefit Rotary scholarship fund.

SAT., APRIL 23: Celebrate Earth Day at Englehardt Library, 10 a.m. Ages 5-16. Call 647-3920 for more information.

SAT., APRIL 23 & 30: Girls 12U, Fastpitch softball tryouts, 1-4 p.m. at

artsCouncil.org.

LOWELL SERENITY CLUB MEETINGS: (AA) Mon., Wed., Thurs: 12-1 & 8-9 p.m.; Tues./Fri: 12-1, 4:30-5:30 & 8-9 p.m.; Sat./Sun.: 10-11 a.m. & 8-9 p.m.; (NA) Mon./Thurs., 6-7:30 p.m. 101 W. Main. 897-8565.

FLAT RIVER OUT-REACH MINISTRIES THRIFT SHOP HOURS: Wed.-Fri. 12-6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 519 E. Main St. Call 897-2037.

THURS., APRIL 21: Junior parents senior trip planning meeting at LHS Rm. A206 at 7 p.m.

SUN., MAY 1: CROP Walk at Lowell 1st United Methodist Church, beginning at 1:15 p.m. 2 mile and 6 mile. Call 897-5936 for info. or to sponsor a walker.

MON., MAY 2: Belding-Ionia-Lowell Masonic Lodge #355, dinner at 6:30 p.m., 211 E. Main St. Belding. Regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. w/ K-9 team from Ionia Post of the MI State Police. All Masons are invited.

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LOWELL SENIOR NEIGHBORS CALENDAR

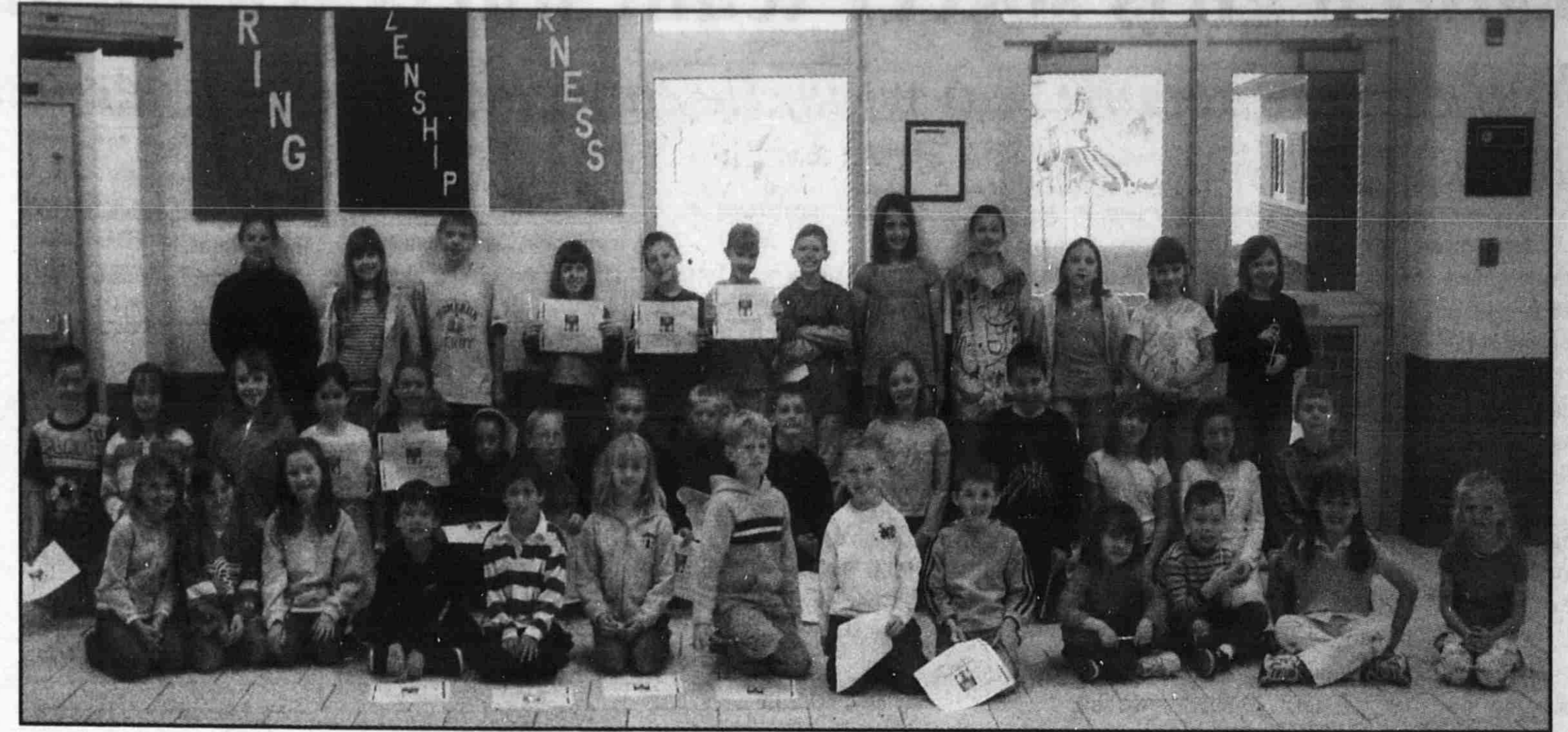
WEEKLY ACTIVITIES
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MON.: 9:00 a.m. Walk at Woodland Mall.
TUES.: 9:00 a.m. Walk at Woodland Mall; 12:45 p.m. Bible Study.
FRI., APRIL 20: 8:30 a.m. Traveling Breakfast "Real Food."
THURS., APRIL 21: 12 p.m. Cafe in the Woods and Shopping.
FRI., APRIL 22: 12:45 p.m. Bingo; 12:45 p.m. Shop Center Pointe Mall and Pals Diner.
MON., APRIL 25: 12 p.m. Potato Bar; 12:45 p.m. Games at Center.
TUES., APRIL 26: 10:15 a.m. Reading Grandparents; 12:15 p.m. Alto School Lunch.
WED., APRIL 27: Bosnia Shoppers 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. Math Games; 12:45 p.m. Shop Meijer.
FRI., APRIL 29: 12:45 p.m. Bingo.

Murray Lake Character In Action awards

The following students were nominated for the Character in Action Award by their teachers at Murray Lake Elementary for the month of March. These students displayed the character trait of Citizenship in their daily activities.

Pictured, front row, left to right, are: Mallery Yaw, Kailee Dawson, Emma McLane, Austin Grim, Robert Sheldon, Maranda Holloway, Ty Grasman, Calvin Warning, Roger Quiggle, Kaitlyn Senneker, Kenny Stump, Kennedy Coxon and Darby Fuller; middle row: Kyle Acker, Kaeziah Bladey, Alix Bohn, Allysen Dubisky, Rachael Walters, Sarah Sheldon, Grant Peterson, Jacob Stevens, Derek Krajewski, Brett Senneker, Hailey Stasiak, Trey Miner, Kelsey Ladner, Catherine Stump and Landon Nethercott; back row: Catherine Majinska, Lauren Blanchard, Matt Ligman, Ashley Bitely, Kelvin Anderson, Madelynn Willemstein, Zach Kaywood, Aubreigh Steed, TJ Butler, Taylor Harrison, Paige Wilson and Brooke Newhouse. Not pictured are Caleb Flentje, Savannah Rice, Eli Boulton, Benjamin Noffke and Joseph Heffron.



Second annual LHS all alumni gathering

Lowell Area Schools Education Foundation will host its second annual Lowell High School All Alumni Gathering on Saturday, May 28 at the high school.

A brunch will be served at 11 a.m., followed by a musical program by two student groups. The cost is \$18 per person and funds go toward the Lowell Education Foundation to provide grants for Lowell students and teachers.

Antique vehicles of local car buffs will again be on display, as well as tours of the high school and new Freshman Center. Alumni

from all Lowell graduating classes and their spouses/guests are invited to attend. Registration forms are available online at www.lowellschools.com, click

on Alumni Information or in the spring edition of the Lowell Alumni Newsletter. For more information call the school's central office at 987-2500.

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Lowell girls soccer team starts season strong

Red Arrows record two wins, tie in week two of soccer action

By Dan Schneider

The Lowell girls varsity soccer team finished last week with an 8-0 rout of Jenison at home.

The host Red Arrows played to a deadlock last Wednesday against Rockford.

Controlling the ball the majority of the game, Lowell couldn't capitalize on their few trips into goal-scoring range. They came close on a few occasions, including pranging one off the left

goal post late in the first period, but for the most part the Rams managed to clear the ball anytime Lowell put pressure on the goal.

"We just couldn't finish," Lowell coach Paul Legge said. "We were great possessing the ball but in the last third (of the field) we couldn't get it done. It's disappointing because I felt we completely controlled the entire game."

Rockford coach Wayne VanderMerwe said the game

met his expectations as a contest.

"It was a great game, Lowell played very fast, hard, aggressive, direct," he said. "We always expect a good game against Lowell."

The Rams made mid-game adjustments, focusing a more aggressive defensive attack on the ball.

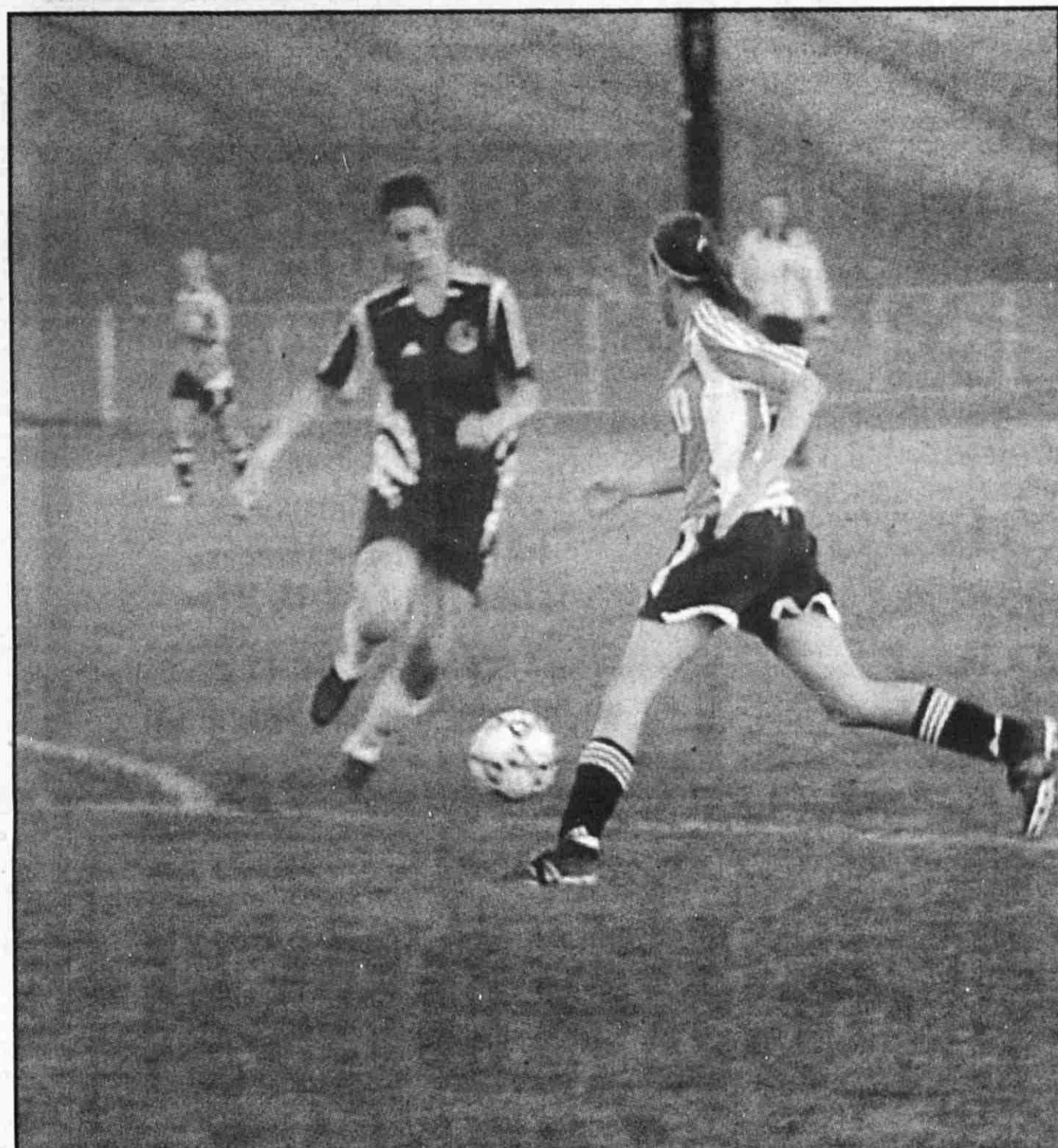
"In the second half we really put a lot of pressure on it," VanderMerwe said.

The Red Arrows traveled to Middleville last

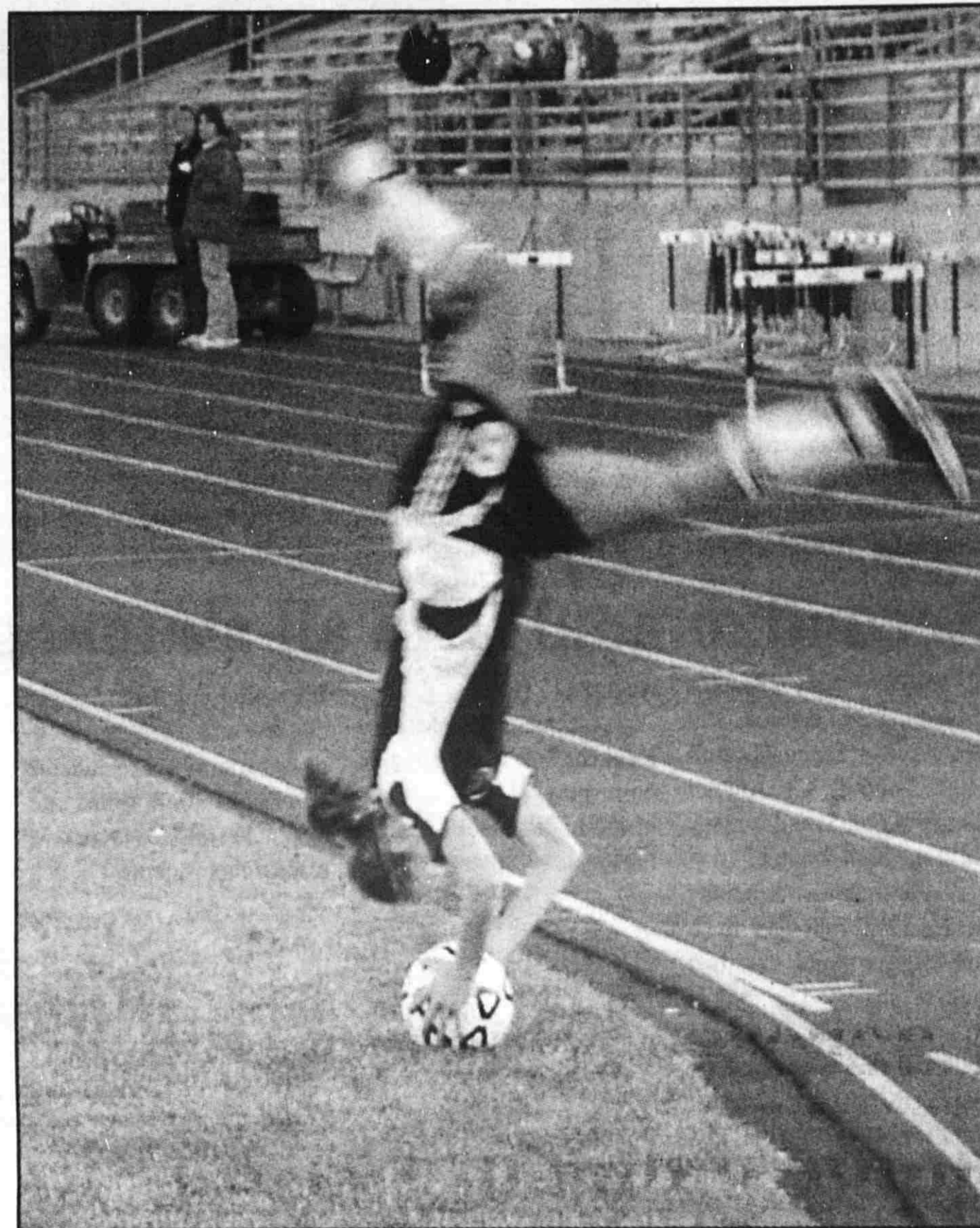
Tuesday where the varsity team beat the Trojans 5-0. The junior varsity defeated

the Trojans 2-1, but lost 6-0 to the Rams. Beating Jenison puts

Lowell's record at 4-0-1. The next game is Wednesday night at East Grand Rapids.



Lowell's Amy Oberlin, left, moves the ball upfield against Rockford defenders during last Wednesday's 0-0 tie at Red Arrow Stadium.



Lowell's Rebecca Underwood executes a flip throw-in late in last Wednesday's home tie against Rockford.

Girls golf team wins first three meets

The girls varsity golf team has won all its dual meets so far this year.

The Red Arrows started with a 204-263 win over Forest Hills Eastern at Deer Run Golf Course last Monday. Then they beat Unity Christian 212-227 in

their away conference opener a week ago Wednesday. The Arrows shot their best nine-hole team score to date last Friday at Deer Run, beating Lakewood 195-220.

Lowell finished fifth in the 18-hole pre-conference tournament Saturday at

Boulder Creek. The Red Arrows' team score was 396 which put Lowell behind East Grand Rapids and ahead of Unity Christian. Northview won the tournament with a team score of 364.

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Plummer pitches no-hitter to start softball season

By Dan Schneider

The Lowell varsity softball season is off to a strong start despite two losses in Saturday's tournament at East Kentwood.

The Red Arrows started out the season at Caledonia a week ago Tuesday, where they defeated the Fighting Scots 4-0. It was the second perfect game of Becky Plummer's pitching career. The junior struck out 14 batters in the game.

"Really, nobody hit the ball that hard," Lowell coach Bob Rodenhouse said. "Nobody really got around on her."

Lowell scored two runs in the third inning, one each in the fourth and sixth, and had 11 hits total in the game. Plummer had three hits; Chelsea Wolbers, Ashley VanderWal and Katie McElroy each had two.

The Red Arrows won by mercy rule in the first game of a home doubleheader against Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg last Thursday, 10-0 in the fifth inning. Plummer allowed only one hit and struck out 11 batters from

the mound while getting four hits including a home run at the plate. Ashleigh Inman, Andrea Dewey and Sam Lambert had two hits apiece. Lambert's double in the fifth knocked in two runs to end the game.

Freshman Katie McElroy started game two of the doubleheader for her first varsity win. The Arrows beat the Trojans 10-4 in that game. They scored five runs in the first inning of the big-hitting game, with 14 total hits. Inman hit two triples and a double; Lambert hit two RBI doubles. Wolbers and Brittany Bueche each had two hits. Plummer finished the game after McElroy allowed three walks and three hits in the fifth inning.

Lowell lost 3-0 to a strong-pitching East Kentwood team Saturday.

"They're a really good team," Rodenhouse said. "Their pitcher is probably the best in the state."

Plummer struck out six in the game for Lowell and walked none. Wolbers had one hit.

Errors crippled the

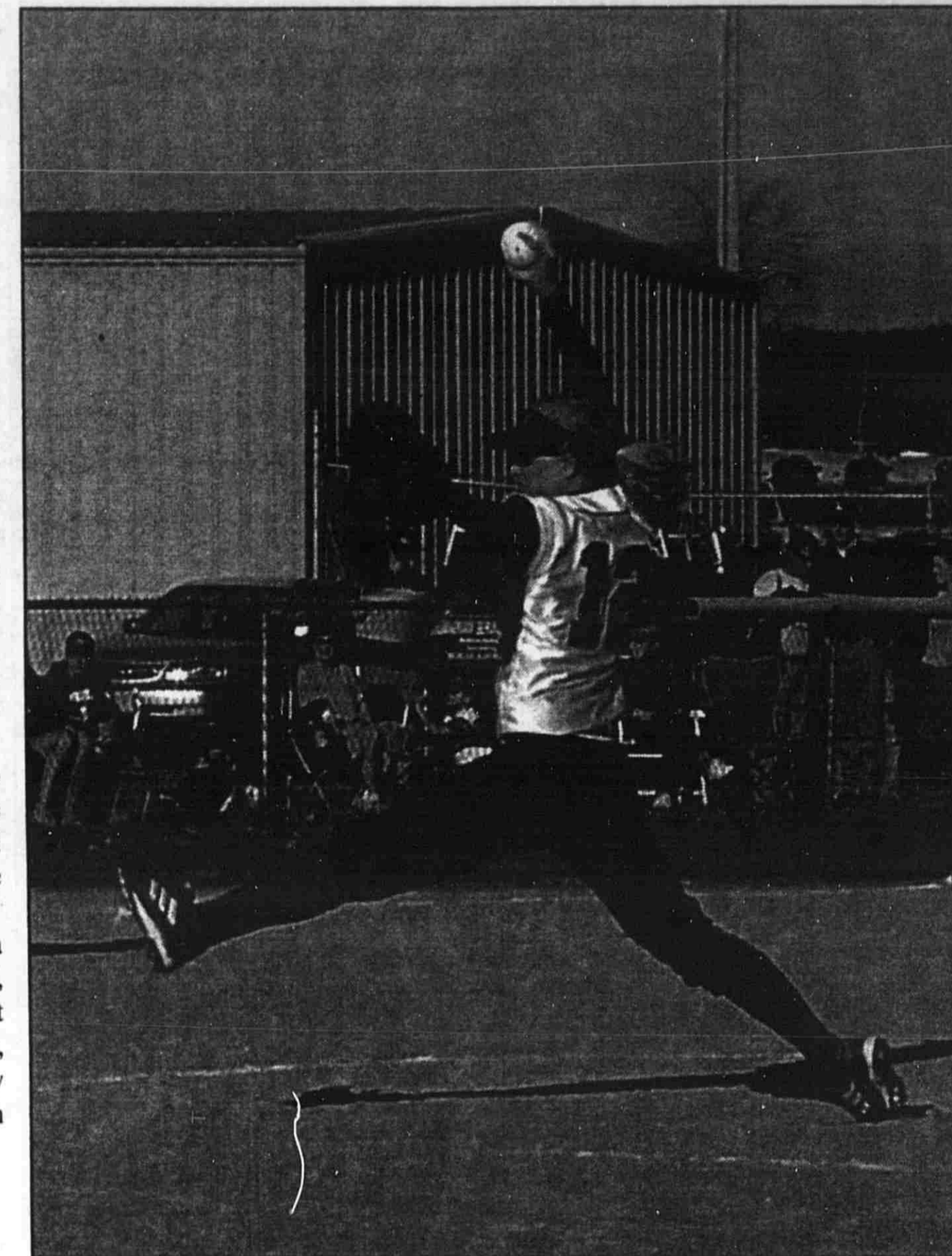
Arrows against Rogers in game two of the tournament. They had seven errors, losing 7-0 to a Rogers' team that scored four earned runs.

But the day ended on a high note when Lowell scored four runs in the bottom of the seventh to come from behind and beat Traverse City West 8-7. Inman walked to first to start the inning for Lowell. Ashley Nawrocki hit a single, then Plummer homered to drive in three runs and tie the game. With two outs against the Arrows, Bueche stretched a base hit into a double.

"That was just good base running," Rodenhouse said.

Then McElroy, who pitched the game, hit a single to drive home Bueche and secure her second win of the season.

Lowell played a doubleheader at Portland, Monday. The Arrows' next game is Wednesday at Ionia, also a doubleheader. They travel to Forest Hills Eastern on Thursday.



Lowell's Katie McElroy winds up to throw in game two of last Wednesday's home doubleheader against Thornapple-Kellogg. McElroy won her first varsity start.

Lacrosse wins first home game of season

By Dan Schneider

The Lowell varsity lacrosse team won its home opener last Thursday against Portage Central.

Down 2-1 at halftime, the Red Arrows scored three unanswered goals to rally back in the second half.

Scott Devroy scored Lowell's first goal on an assist from Adam Bowers in the first quarter. Gregg Wierenga scored the tying goal in the third quarter.

Bowers put Lowell in the lead during the fourth quarter with an unassisted goal. Then Austin Blough put the nail in the Mustangs' coffin with a goal assisted by Ben Nugent.

It was the first time Lowell has beaten Portage Central at lacrosse. In fact, the Red Arrows lost 13-4 when the teams met last year.

"They played probably the best game they've played

since I've been coaching them," Lowell coach Eric Bredin said. "They played extremely intense in the second half and it was a complete team effort."

The Arrows lost 6-4 in their previous game a week ago Tuesday at Holland Christian. They also suffered a disappointing 12-2 loss Saturday at Okemos.

Lowell played West Ottawa Tuesday.

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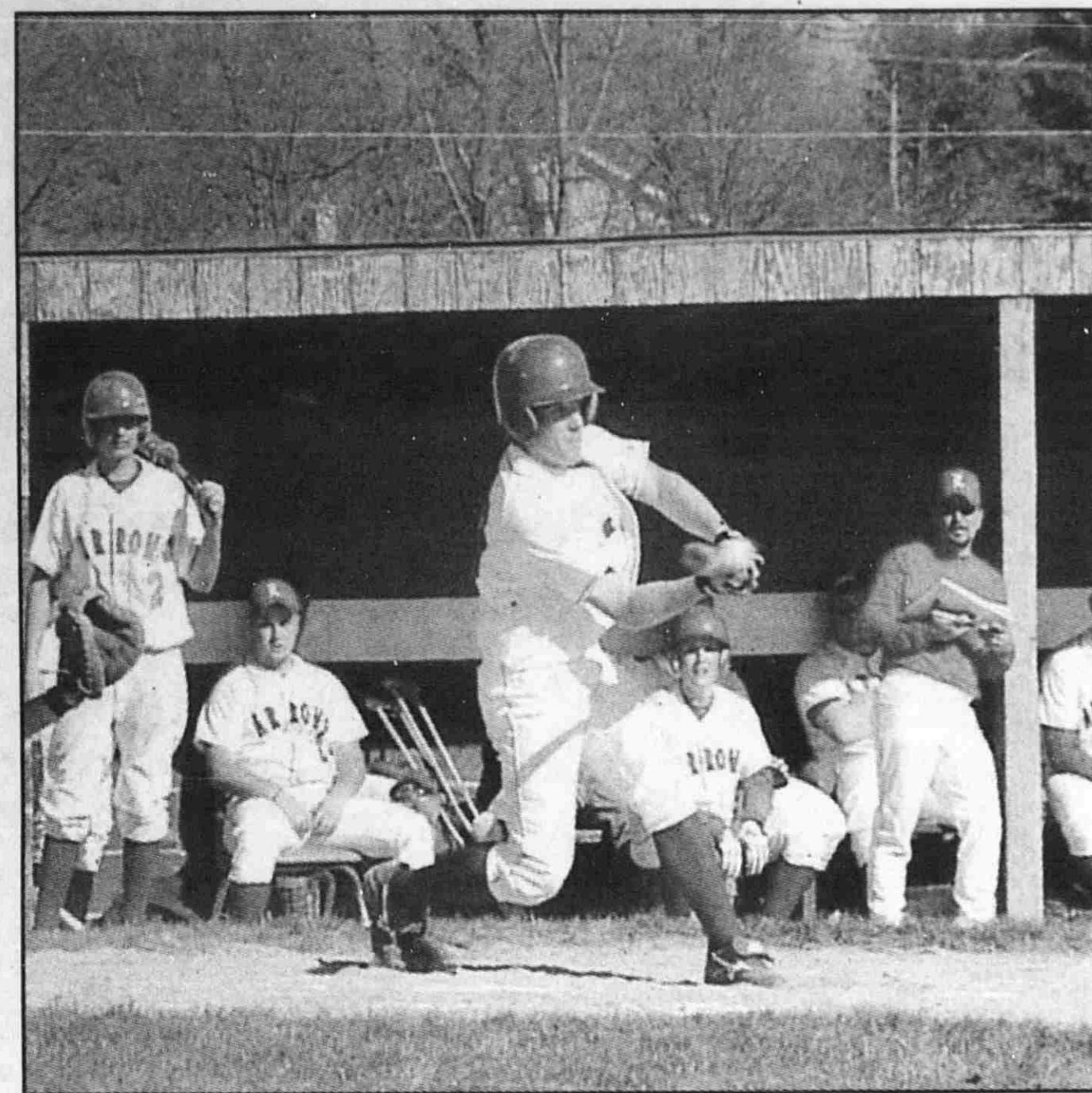
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Baseball hits ups and downs as season begins

Red Arrows win big in home opener, finish last in Lowell Invitational



Lowell's Zach Burger connected on this pitch for a base hit in the fourth inning of last Wednesday's 10-4 win over Middleville.



Lowell's Eric Schumm struck out six batters and allowed two earned runs pitching for his first win of the season last Thursday in game one of a doubleheader against Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg. The second game was called due to darkness.

By Dan Schneider

The competition at the Lowell Invitational Tournament was hard on the home opener, the Arrows lost 6-1 in the first round to powerhouse Grandville. The Bulldogs went on to beat Plainwell 14-3 for the

tournament championship. Lowell lost in the consolation round 9-2 to Byron Center. The first game of the season, last Tuesday at Caledonia, was also a loss for Lowell. The Red Arrows fell to the Fighting Scots 8-2.

But in last Thursday's home opener, the Arrows came out and won. In the first game of what would have been a doubleheader

had the second game not been called due to darkness. Lowell beat Middleville 10-4. The Red Arrow bats came alive in the fourth inning with Lowell scoring four runs to take a commanding 8-0 lead. Middleville scored two runs each in the fifth and sixth innings but it was too little, too late.

Eric Schumm pitched 5.2 innings to get the win for Lowell. Jason Welsch went 4-4 for Lowell, scoring

two runs and batting in four more. Tony Adrianse went 3-3 with an RBI, and scoring two runs.

It's the first year coaching varsity at Lowell for Juston Miller. He coached junior varsity with Dustin Gless last year while he was student teaching at Lowell. Miller played baseball with Gless, now the varsity assistant, at Aquinas College.

Miller coached varsity at Wyoming Park while in college. Gless was an all-state pitcher on the 1999 district champion Lowell team.

The new coaches have already lost to injuries some key players from the outfield.

Jon Eickhoff hurt his ankle, requiring surgery, during a routine slide in practice. Andy Schultz dislocated his shoulder while batting Saturday.

Miller said he hopes to bring some intensity to the team, and he's happy with the way the Arrows have responded so far.

"They're fired up," Miller said. "They do everything I ask, they're hardworking kids."

Lowell played a doubleheader at Portland Monday. They travel to Ionia for a doubleheader Wednesday and play at Forest Hills Eastern on Thursday.

Freshmen a factor on this year's varsity tennis team

By Dan Schneider

Contributions from young players have been a characteristic of Lowell varsity boys tennis so far this season. Two freshmen, Travis Trapp (second singles) and Brett McMahon (fourth singles) won victories in Lowell's 5-3 win at Middleville Thornapple-Kellogg last Tuesday. Lowell defeated all four singles opponents and number two doubles (Andrew Hopkins and Alden Nyson) for the victory. Kyle Wittenbach won first singles; Brett Hobla won third singles. Two freshmen are

teamed with seniors on the doubles teams. Josh Hobla plays first doubles with senior Justin Quist, and Tony Dubbink plays third doubles with senior Devon Huisman.

"The freshmen in the class have been in the summer program for a long time and it's showing in these boys," said varsity coach Bonnie Wall.

The Red Arrows struggled in doubles matches against Forest Hills Eastern, losing 6-2. Trapp and McMahon were victorious in second and fourth singles, respectively.

Last Thursday, Lowell bounced back against Lakeview with a 7-1 victory. In straight sets, the Arrows were triumphant in all the

singles matches and won all but first doubles.

The host Red Arrows won the Lowell Invitational, Saturday, with a score of 25. They beat Buchanan, a team that won in both its previous appearances at the invitational. This year, the Bucks placed second with 21 points. Alma scored 18 and Greenville, 16.

Crew regatta Saturday



Tiffany Wilkins, right, and the rest of the girls crew team will race their boat, known as a "shell," in Saturday's regatta at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids.

The Red Arrow crew team, now in its third season, will compete in a regatta at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids this Saturday, April 23.

There are 27 girls and four boys on this year's team. Lowell will compete in the four-person and eight-person boats, racing a junior women's 8 boat, junior men's 4 boat, novice women's 4 boat, senior women's 4 boat, and junior women's 4 boat.

Through fundraising and donations, the Lowell crew team has been able to purchase two 4-person

boats, two 8-person boats and a trailer that holds nine boats.

Forest Hills Northern, Eastern and Central along with Rockford, EGR, Northview and city schools

will be competing this Saturday with crews from all over the state.

The next regatta is the Hebda Cup which is in Wyondotte on April 30.



The Red Arrow boys tennis team won its own invitational Saturday. Pictured with the trophy are: (front row, left to right) Josh Hobla, Brandon Lawrence, Kyle Wittenbach, Brett McMahon and Travis Trapp; back row: Justin Quist, Brett Hobla, Tony Dubbink, Devon Huisman, Ben Ritzema, Andrew Hopkins and Alden Nyson.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BOWNE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION PROPOSED REZONING OF CERTAIN PROPERTY IN SECTION 4 FROM R-3 URBAN RESIDENTIAL TO IND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Public notice is hereby given that the Bowne Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Thursday, May 12, 2005 at 7:30 p.m., in the historic Township Hall, located at 8240 Alden Nash Avenue, Alto, Michigan, to hear public comments regarding the rezoning requested by Steve Vander Ziel from R-3 Urban Residential District to IND Industrial District for the following property:

6325 Alden Nash Avenue, S.E.

Part of the North 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4 of Section 4, Town 5 North, Range 9 West, Bowne Township, Kent County, Michigan, lying South of the South line of the C & O Railroad right of way (100 feet wide) and Easterly of Pratt Lake Drain, except the East 470 feet thereof, also the South 150 feet of the East 470 feet of the North 1/2 of the Northeast 1/4.

(Permanent Parcel No. 41-24-04-200-010)

The proposed rezoning amendment may be examined at the Township Hall, 8240 Alden Nash, Alto, Michigan, on Wednesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and on Fridays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

April 20, 2005
Sandra Kowalczyk, Clerk
Bowne Township

CITY OF LOWELL

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

The Lowell City Planning Commission-Citizen Advisory Committee will conduct a public hearing at their regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, April 25, 2005 at 7 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, Lowell City Hall, 301 E. Main St., Lowell, MI for the purpose of receiving comments from the public on the following:

- An Ordinance to amend Sections 20.05 (Exempted Signs) and 20.05 (Residential District Signs), Chapter 20 - Signs of the Zoning Ordinance of the Code of Ordinances of the City Of Lowell.

Copies of the proposed Ordinance are available for public inspection during normal business hours at City Hall and at the Englehardt Public Library.

Interested person may submit written comments to City Hall, 301 E. Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 prior to the meeting or appear in person.



Betty R. Morlock
City Clerk
616-897-8457

CITY OF LOWELL PUBLIC NOTICE CEMETERY SPRING CLEAN-UP

The annual spring clean up of the Oakwood Cemetery in Lowell, Michigan will be the week of:

APRIL 25 THROUGH APRIL 29, 2005

Please remove all arrangements, baskets, etc., you wish to keep by:

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2005

Please be sure your gravesites are in conformance with the Rules and Regulations that are posted on the cemetery building. Any items not allowed will be discarded.



Betty R. Morlock
City Clerk



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LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP

NOTICE FOR TESTING OPTICAL SCAN COMPUTER PROGRAM FOR THE SCHOOL ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Optical Scan Computer Program Testing for the May 3, 2005 School Election will be conducted Monday, April 25, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the Lowell Township Hall, 2910 Alden Nash S.E., Lowell, MI 49331.

Linda S. Regan, Clerk
Lowell Charter Township

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CITY OF LOWELL/WASTE MANAGEMENT

YARD WASTE PICKUP PROGRAM FOR 2005

The City of Lowell yard waste pickup program is scheduled for the first and third full week of each month. Yard waste pickup will be the same day as your refuse/recycling pickup is. The dates are listed below.

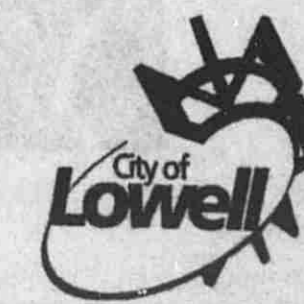
Tuesday Yard Waste Pickup Schedule

April 5th & 19th, May 3rd & 17th, June 7th & 21st,
July 6th & 19th, August 2nd & 16th, September 7th & 20th

Thursday Yard Waste Pickup Schedule

April 7th & 21st, May 5th & 19th, June 9th & 23rd,
July 8th & 21st, August 4th & 18th,
September 9th & 22nd

If you have any questions please contact either City Hall (897-8457) or Waste Management (724-2149).



U.S. Airborne gymnastics team places at state championship



The U.S. Airborne boys gymnastics teams, coached by Brian Franson, competed at the 2005 State Championship in Battle Creek on March 19 and 20. Placing first were the Level 4 and 5 teams and placing sixth was the Level 6 team.

Placing at Level 4, pictured right, from left to right, were: Nick Hughes, 1st place, 7 year olds; Parker Groom, 2nd place, 8 year olds; Dallas VanBelkum, 1st place, 9 year olds; Garrett Ruppall, 1st place, 8 year olds (highest score of all age groups in Level 4, 56.45); and Nick Haskins, 6th place, 7 year olds.

Placing at Level 5, left to right, were: Tyler Garcia, 5th place, 7 and 8 year olds; Jake Wallin, 4th place, 10 year olds; Kevin Hagan, 2nd place, 10 year olds; and Nate Limmex, 1st place, 7 and 8 year olds (highest score of all age groups in Level 5, 56.8).

Tyler Gorczyca, Level 6, not pictured, placed 4th among 10 and 11 year olds.



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Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land has announced the addition of automated self-service stations to the 10 PLUS offices and two SUPER!Centers across Michigan.

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Customers simply follow the touch-screen directions and scan the bar code on their renewal notice. Upon verifying the information and accepting the credit card, the self-service station prints a vehicle tab and receipt

for the customer. Single transactions usually can be accomplished in seconds.

To use the station, customers must have: a renewal notice with their correct name, address, vehicle information and personal identification number (PIN) as well as a valid Visa, MasterCard or

Discover credit card.

Self-service stations cannot be used to renew motorcycle and Gross Vehicle Weight tabs.

Land-reminded residents that they can "skip the trip" to a branch office altogether and renew their tabs via the Internet, phone or mail. The station is a great option for

those who run out of time to renew by Internet, phone or mail.

In our area, visit the Grand Rapids Area SUPER!Center at 3665 28th St. SE, Centerpointe Mall. For services and hours, go online to the department Web site at www.Michigan.gov/sos.

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I don't support Bush, never will. Does anyone else think that these Republican extremists have gone too far! "Hillary 2008" or anybody who's not a Bush.

Honestly! Where's the party at? There is nothing to do around here anymore!! - Sissy & Bud

Thank you Ms. Charles for keeping our first graders safe and healthy, for letting them be kids and have fun, and for loving them with all your heart. You are wonderful. - Kim P.

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Can anyone explain to me why a whole neighborhood can hear a dog barking/howling except their owners? Be a responsible dog owner, respect your neighbors. Peace please!

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From the lady in the silver car to the person that should get a life! Since when is it illegal to park in the park and take a walk?!!

The naked bear needs a nice spring outfit!!!

Isn't it great there is no speed limit for the semis and trucks from Main St. to the light on Vergennes. Just once I'd like to see a ticket given.

For you people worried about cigarette butts - I think you have too much time on your hands.

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For those small idiotic things - that's what makes it so interesting. Keep it up!

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Call 897-1597 or 450-7910. A MEMORY FOAM BED - NASA developed memory foam. Brand name, never used. Queen \$600; king \$750. Can deliver. Call 682-4767 or 616-293-6160.</p>	<p>FOR SALE HUSQVARNA SAW - \$120. Call 897-5138. '99 CHRYSLER 300M - loaded, Platinum, 42,000 miles, \$10,800. Call 897-1597 or 450-7910. BEDS - Name brand mattress sets. Twin, \$70, full \$80, queen \$95, king \$150 up. Call 616-682-4767 or 616-293-6160. BOAT SLIPS - Saugatuck area; pool, clubhouse. Rental \$750; purchase \$7,500. Call 897-0991. 1999 PONTIAC GRAND PRIX GT - 4dr., red, 3800, loaded, CD, heads up display, new tires, heated leather, 72,000 miles, \$7,800. Call 897-1597 or 450-7910. OAK BUNK BED - Includes mattress, like new, sell \$99. Dennis Distributing, 989-224-4822. FOR SALE - Horses (2) geldings, 7 years old, green broke, gentle, \$1,000 each. Call 616-642-6064. \$195 4 POST BED - (king) with pillowtop mattress set. Bought, never used. Was \$800. 517-719-8062. FOR SALE - John Deere 10 horse power riding mower, 30 inch cut, very good condition. Call 897-7924. THORNAPPLE HILLS CONDO - Cascade Township, Forest Hills Schools. 2 story, newly remodeled, 2 bedrooms, 1-1/2 baths. New furnace, central air, water heater and appliances. Great location. \$109,000. (616) 291-9587. MATTRESS/BOX SPRINGS - Brand new, \$49/set. Twin, full, queen, delivery available. Dennis Distributing, 989-224-4822. JAYCO "J" SERIES - 1985 12' pop-up. Sleeps up to 8, refrigerator, sink, stove, awning, \$1,800. Call 897-9741 after 5pm. HOUSE FOR SALE - Lowell Schools, 2.5 acres, 6 years old, 3 bedroom, possible 4th, 1 1/2 bath, 1,763 sq. ft., walk-out ranch. 4 miles from town, \$180,000. Call 897-7770. '98 CHEVY PICKUP - Long box, 2wd., new tires, brakes, etc. \$4,200. Call 897-1597 or 450-7910. \$110 QUEEN PILLOWTOP MATTRESS SET - (Brand new), Call 517-719-8062. 10 HEREFORD FEEDERS - approx. 600 lbs. Heifers & steers. \$1.25 a lb. Call 897-6754. APPLIANCES - Refrigerators, washers, dryers, stoves, reconditioned, guaranteed, over 100 to choose from, \$59 & up. Dennis Distributing 989-224-4822. \$125 AMISH QUEEN LOG BED - w/plush mattress. Bought, never used. Cost \$800. 517-719-8062.</p>	<p>FOR SALE BERBER CARPET - 80 yards, beige color, bought, never used. Cost \$800, sell \$295. 517-719-0451. FOR SALE - Hay, stored inside, 1st and 2nd cuttings. Call 616-642-6064. MEMORY FOAM BED - Queen (never used) Cost \$1,600 sell \$495. 517-719-8062. '96 CHEVY CONVERSION - White, high top, black leather, 38,000 miles. \$11,500. Call 897-1597 or 450-7910. HAY FOR SALE - \$1.75/bale, excellent 1st cutting, horse hay, extra large big square bales, 987-9124.</p>	<p>HELP WANTED 3rd SHIFT FORMULATOR - Manpower is looking for a candidate with prior mixing experience within a food manufacturing environment. Candidates must be able to follow recipes/written instructions, be competent in utilizing electronic scales & be able to demonstrate basic math skills. Duties for this long term/possible permanent position include basic quality assurance work, setting up mixers, pumps & controlling valves in order to operate the machinery that produces the finished food product. Successful candidates will also possess a high school diploma & be able to pass a drug screen. Fax resumes to Angela at 897-4801. DRIVER/CAGE CLEANUP/GARDENING WORK/PET SITTING - Lady needed for ride to Chiropractor in Grandville and variety of home, yard, and pet tasks throughout the year. \$20 for driving, \$25 for 2 hour work session. 897-9202. Dependability and love of animals a must. MECHANIC - Lowell truck repair facility seeks Certified Mechanic for Engine & Driveline work. Qualified candidates will be able to demonstrate proficiency in problem diagnosis & repair of diesel engines. Experience with electronics a plus. Excellent benefit package. Wages commensurate with experience. Apply in person to: D&D Trucking, 2485 W. Main St., Lowell or call Earl at 897-5995. 3RD SHIFT INVENTORY CLERK - Manpower is looking for a candidate who possesses excellent data entry skills & has the desire to work 3rd shift. Proficiency utilizing MS Word & MS Excel, & prior inventory experience would be a plus. This is a long-term/possible permanent position w/a customer located 20 minutes E. of Grand Rapids. Qualified candidates are encouraged to fax their resume to Angela at 897-4801.</p>	<p>FOR RENT FOR RENT - 1 & 2 bedroom trailers \$1,000 - \$1,050 to move in. No dogs please. \$400 - \$420 per mo. plus 1/12 mo. rent deposit. Call 813-8041 or 616-754-0276. HALL FOR RENT - with kitchen, seats 150. Call 897-6050. HALL FOR RENT - Caledonia Sportsman Club. Newly renovated. For more information call 616-891-1168. FOR RENT - Thornapple Hills Condo, Cascade Township, Forest Hills Schools. 2 story, newly remodeled, 2 bedrooms, 1-1/2 baths. New furnace, central air, water heater and appliances. Great location, \$850 (or \$1000 furnished). (616) 291-9587. POLE BARN FOR RENT - Large pole barn for rent just N. of Lowell. 2 sections. 1 with heat & cement floor, other gravel floor. Can be rented together or separate. Call 897-0686. FOR RENT - 3 bedroom, 1 bath in country, sharp! Call 517-349-2936. WATERFRONT COTTAGES - weekly or daily rental. Completely furnished, 10 miles N. of Remus. Ron, 897-5062.</p>	<p>SERVICES IT'S SPRING - so treat your deck, trailer or house to a powerwashing or staining. Call John at 551-8364. I HAVE FT/PT DAYCARE OPENINGS - for 3 children, 1 to 6, 5:00am - 5:30pm, fenced backyard, CPR and 1st Aid trained. Headstart bus pickup. 897-4389. CHRISTIAN DATING SERVICE - Over 100,000 Members, Countless relationships, and Hundreds of Marriages since 1989. Free package 1-800-829-3283. 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Concern over increased asthma cases at middle school

By Dan Schneider

Two parents of students at Lowell Middle School

have seen their children's asthma problems worsen during the time they've been at the school.

Sonnie Sullivan voiced her concerns to the school board that mold in the classrooms may be

responsible for exacerbating her seventh grade daughter's respiratory problems. She said her health problems

began shortly after she started attending the middle school. "We have very sick kids

and our doctors are coming to the conclusion that it's the school," Sullivan said. "This is the second full year and our daughter seems to be sick only at school."

The seventh grader's asthma attacks have increased to the point of her having two or three per day, she said. She also reported other reactions such as hives. Sullivan said her daughter tested with high levels of aspergillus antibodies. Aspergillus is a mold that frequently provokes allergic responses and asthmatic symptoms.

Joe Gillhespie said his son, also a seventh grader, often experienced breathing problems at the same time of day, suggesting the mold problem may be isolated to a particular classroom.

So far, Gillhespie and Sullivan are the only two parents to address their concerns to the administration, Lowell Area Schools superintendent Shari Miller said. School principal Linda Warren said administrators are intent on finding the root of the seventh graders' health problems.

"We will continue to work to find out whether there is something in the school that is causing this because we are concerned about this as well," she said.

"This is something that we take very seriously, we have done the checks and we'll continue to do the checks," Miller said.

The district hired an independent company, Environmental Health Resources, Inc. (EHR), to test the air quality of rooms 414 and 416 of the middle school. The tests concluded that the rooms did not contain unusual levels of fungal particulates. The company's report stated the particulate levels in the room were, in fact, below the levels out-of-doors.

"As soon as we heard about it, we had the tests done," said LAS director of transportation and operations Larry Mikulski. "I'm just frustrated because I can't find anything."

Another EHR test examined the carpeting in the rooms for allergens ranging from dust mite allergens to mouse allergens, but did not look for fungal spores.

The district submitted the case to the Kent County Health Department, which had no recommendations for further action, Mikulski said. But Gillhespie said the testing shouldn't stop.

"We're just getting the run around, I feel, and more intensive testing needs to be done," he said.

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