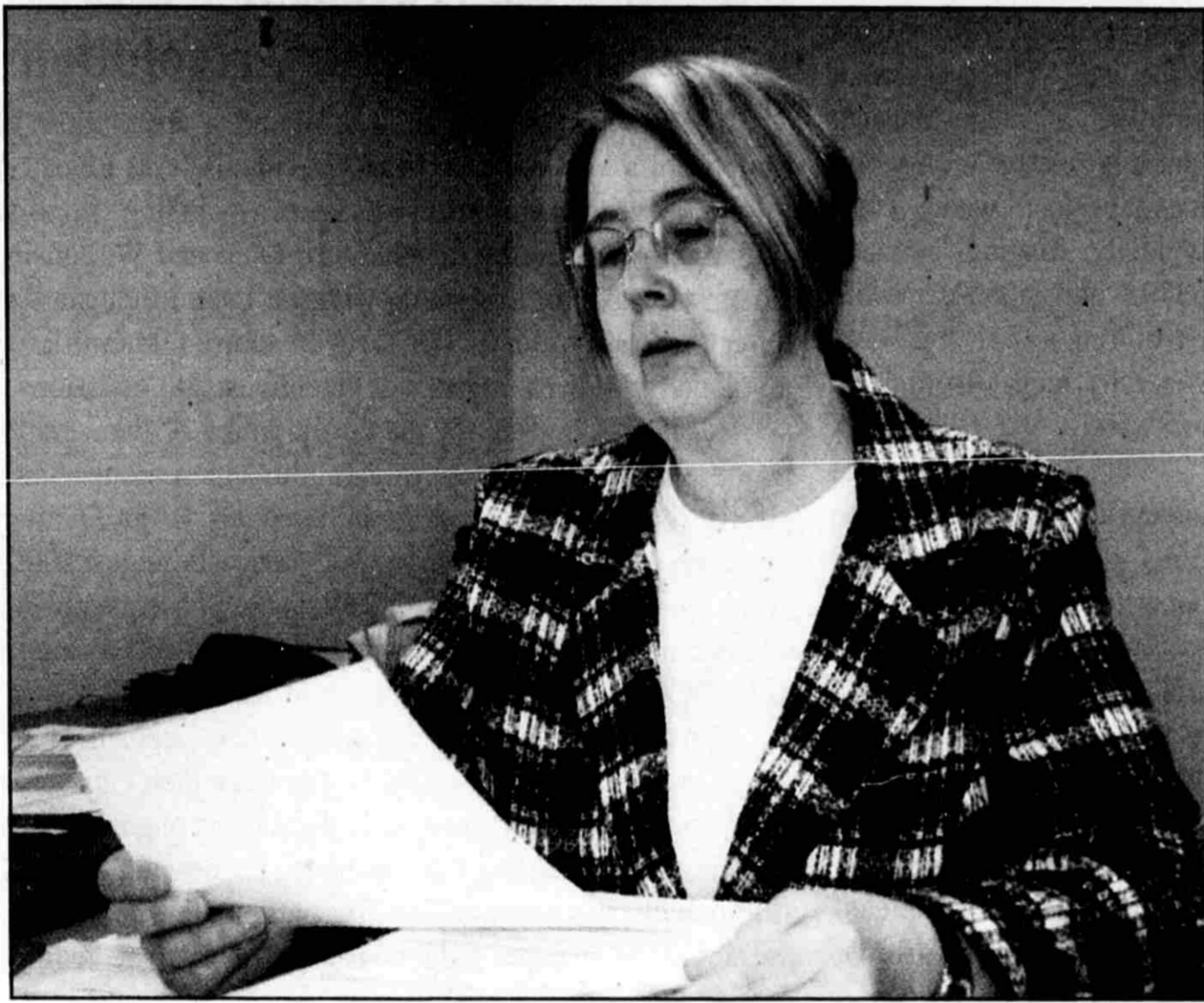


The Lowell Ledger

Volume 35 Issue 13

Serving Lowell Area Readers Since 1893

Wednesday, January 31, 2007



Paula Blumm appointed Lowell Township supervisor

By Emma Palova

Paula Blumm, 56, was appointed Lowell Township supervisor last week in a special meeting of the township board.

Blumm will serve as an appointee until the presidential election in 2008 at which time she will run for the supervisor seat.

"I worked hard to get to this point," she said. "I am well suited for it because of my experience, and I understand what the job is."

Blumm replaces longtime supervisor John Timpson who recently resigned due to health issues. Timpson defeated Blumm in the 2004 election.

Blumm was appointed on a 3:2 vote by the

board. Voting against the nomination were trustees Richard Huver and Carlton Blough.

"It's going to be a big challenge," said Blough who lost his nomination to Blumm.

However, with iron determination, Blumm has been preparing herself for the position over the last few years.

She is a level 1 assessor

Supervisor,
cont'd., pg. 4

Paula Blumm Lowell Township supervisor.

Lowell Light & Power holds public meeting, plans to start trimming soon

By Emma Palova

The Lowell Light & Power Company (LL&P) will start trimming trees according to the utility's policy in conjunction with the Department of Public Works (DPW) in two weeks.

The designated area to trim trees in the city's right-of-way stretches from the west end of Flat River to Foreman Street.

Some of the trees, much like the utility poles, are over 100 years old.

In an informational public meeting Thursday

following the regular utility board meeting, manager Tom Richards presented the rationale behind trimming.

The trimming follows national industry standards, and should minimize safety hazards. The utility trims to provide a minimum 10-foot clearance around power lines.

The biggest concern, according to Richards, is any contact with an energized tree.

"There is a likely possibility of injury or death," he said.

Other utility concerns included trunks of 100-year-old trees approaching

the power lines. Richards also addressed the issue of volume and style of trimming.

"We trim to achieve necessary minimum clearance until the next anticipated trimming," said Richards.

The tree trimming program in the city is ongoing. It takes approximately two to five years to go through different areas in the city.

As to the style of trimming, the utility avoids topping the tree to prevent new branches from growing into the power lines. The utility contracts

tree trimming to MEDCO of Mount Pleasant, who are also trained arborists.

"We follow arborist standards," said Richards.

Any delay to tree trimming may be more costly, and puts the city at legal and financial exposure, said Richards.

"We're not taking this slightly," said utility board president Dave Austin. "We're all neighbors. We're struggling with what to do."

Austin said the tree trimming policy may change if the city council so desires.

Tree trimming,
cont'd., pg. 9



Lincoln Lake resident Tonia North asked the Lowell Light & Power Board for balanced tree trimming at the meeting.



Woman injured in one-car accident

By Emma Palova

The Lowell Area Police Department and Rockford Ambulance assisted at an accident on Parnell Road Friday afternoon. Carol Van Spronsen, of Lowell, was half out of her vehicle attempting to get her mail. The van she was driving rolled forward, knocked her out of the van, and Van Spronsen was trapped with her leg underneath the driver's rear tire.

According to Kent County Sheriff's deputy Rich VanDenburg, Van Spronsen was transported to Spectrum Health Butterworth Campus with non-life-threatening injuries.

Obituaries

RIPLEY
 Patricia (Trish) L. Ripley, aged 55, of Saranac, passed away January 23, 2007, in Greenville. She was born July 27, 1951, in Ionia, the daughter of Leon and Francis (Van Siclen) Miller. She married Philip Ripley October 8, 1994 at their residence. Patricia is survived by her loving husband Philip Ripley of Saranac; parents Leon and Francis Miller of Lowell; brother Lee and Judy Miller of Ionia; sister Peggy and Donald McLain of Lowell; best friend Shirley and Daniel Patrick of Ionia. Funeral services were held Friday at Lake Funeral Home in Saranac with Rev. Kenneth Harger officiating.

ROBERTS
 Jerrold Thamous Roberts, aged 68, of White Cloud, died Tuesday, January 23, 2007 at home. He is survived by his partner of 21 years June Comstock of White

Radon-resistant new home construction can keep families safe

As part of National Radon Month, the Department of Environmental Quality is encouraging home builders and buyers to consider radon-resistant new construction (RRNC) when building homes. Michigan survey data projects more than one in eight Michigan homes could have a radon problem, and elevated radon levels have been found in every county in the state.

"Radon-resistant new construction is easy, inexpensive, and most importantly, effective," said DEQ Director Steven E. Chester. "A system installed during construction can help to significantly reduce radon levels in a home and keep our families safe."

"RRNC is already required by the Michigan residential code in nine high-radon potential counties: Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lenawee, St. Joseph, and Washtenaw.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that emanates from homes through openings in the

foundation floor or walls. Outdoors, radon becomes diluted and poses little health risk, but indoors, radon can accumulate to unhealthy levels. RRNC allows the gas to bypass the house and be vented out through the roof into the atmosphere where it can be quickly diluted and dispersed. The process of building a radon-resistant home is relatively easy and inexpensive, with costs typically ranging between \$350 and \$500, while retrofitting an existing home generally ranges from \$800 to \$1,500.

Michigan signs greenhouse voluntary gas registry resolution

The state of Michigan has signed a Resolution in Support of a Voluntary Midwest Greenhouse Gas Registry, joining seven other Midwest states including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. The states have been working with the Lake Michigan Air Directors Consortium (LADCO) to develop a framework for a voluntary Midwest registry of greenhouse gas emissions.

All of the funding for the development of the registry framework has come from private foundation monies, and efforts for the registry were initiated by LADCO after receiving a grant from the Joyce Foundation in August 2005, at the request of Michigan and Wisconsin. Subsequently, an additional grant from the Energy Foundation was awarded to LADCO for further development of the registry.

The voluntary registry will provide the mechanism for greenhouse gas-emitting companies to track their emissions and reductions and will provide a validated list of greenhouse gas emission reduction credits available for possible trading. Additionally, this program will give participating companies the ability to register reductions now should the federal government require emission reductions in the future.

The registry will work in conjunction with registries already in place from the Northeast to California to become a multi-state registry involving more than 30 states.

More information on the Resolution can be found on the LADCO Web site at http://www.ladco.org/regional_greenhouse.htm, and the Michigan greenhouse gas inventory can be found at <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-aq-d-air-aqe-greenhouse-gases>.

LAAC seeking summer concert musicians

The Lowell Showboat Sizzlin' Summer Concerts is seeking the best musicians and groups in West and Central Michigan to perform this summer along Riverwalk Plaza.

The concert series runs for 10 weeks and the first concert is scheduled for Thursday, June 14.

Lowell Area Arts Council is looking for music styles such as blues, world-music, country and western, folk, big band, and jazz, to name a few. A complete sound system

and staff are provided. If you would like to be considered, applications must be received by Feb. 15.

Complete packets include your CD demo, a brief bio, contact info (name, email and phone number) and a photo. Mail to the LAAC, P.O. Box 53, Lowell 49331. For more information call 897-8545 or email info@lowellartscouncil.org. Musicians may also contact Gordon Gould at ggould@iserv.net.

AARP offers free tax service

AARP Tax-Aide will offer free tax counseling and tax preparation assistance throughout Michigan for people of middle and low incomes, with special attention given to those

volunteers are trained in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service and offer help with personal income tax returns at locations throughout Michigan. For more information

Myers appointed to Library of Michigan Board of Trustees

Charles Myers, city of Lowell mayor, was recently appointed to the Library of Michigan Board of Trustees by Gov.

Myers, a longtime advocate for the Kent District Library, is vice president, retail administrator for Ionia County National

Bank. He is involved in many area organizations and associations, including Lowell Rotary Club, Lowell Area Historical Association, and the American Red Cross.

Myers said, "Some time ago, I was part of the

Woman pleads not guilty to child abuse charges

By Emma Palova

Elizabeth Dillon of Sand Lake will return to court for a preliminary hearing on Feb. 12. Dillon pled not guilty to child abuse charges during

arraignment last week in the 63rd District Court before judge Sara Smolenski.

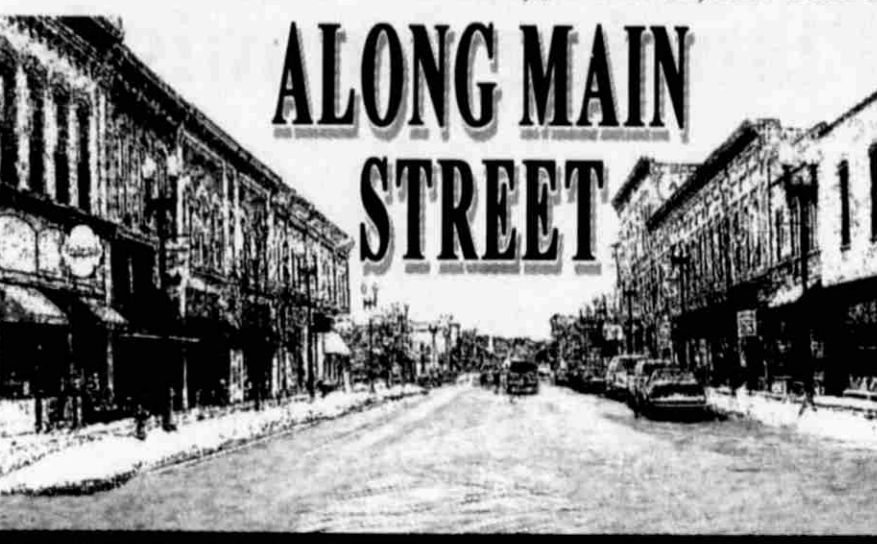
The 28-year-old mother left her children in a running car on Main Street in Lowell

for three hours, while shopping for a saddle.

Dillon now faces felony charges with penalties of up to four years in jail, according to Lowell police chief James Valentine.

The three children, six-year-old twin boys and a 22-month-old boy are staying with their mother.

Children's Protective Services are conducting a follow-up investigation.



ATHLETIC BOOSTERS
 Regular business meeting of the athletic boosters will be Monday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. in the high school staff lounge.

BLOOD DRIVE
 The Lowell Area Fire Department, along with the Michigan Community Blood Center, is sponsoring a blood drive on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at the Look Memorial Fire Station, 315 S. Hudson, from 2 to 7 p.m.

VICTORIAN ERA WORKSHOP
 Lowell Area Historical Museum and Wittenbach/Wege Center will present "Victorian Era Activities Workshop" for ages 8-13, Feb. 10, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Wittenbach/Wege Center. Cost: \$15, includes lunch. Choose 2 activities: Victorian Valentines & Pressed Flower Bookmarks; Decoupage Treasure Box; Decorative Food Carving & the Victorian Table; Victorian Art - Paint an Impression. Call Linda at 897-7688 to register; deadline: Feb. 2.

GREAT LAKES SHIPWRECKS
 The Lowell Area Historical Museum will present "Great Lakes Shipwrecks" with Jed Jaworski and Valerie VanHeest, Feb. 13, 7 p.m. at Lowell Township Hall. Included in the program are slides/video images of newly discovered Michigan shipwrecks. Free admission; public invited; light refreshments. Call Judy at 897-7688.

RELAY FOR LIFE
 Everyone is welcome to the Kick-off Relay for Life of Lowell on Tuesday, Feb. 27 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the LHS Performing Arts Center. Call Carol at 897-5501 for more information.

WWC ADVISORY BOARD POSITIONS
 Wittenbach-Wege Agri-science and Environmental Center has 2 Advisory board positions open for community members. Contact Ranger Steve smueller@lowellschools.com or 987-1002.

GET A BIRD HOUSE FREE
 Correctly contribute your knowledge with the name and use for the farm equipment at the Wittenbach/Wege Center entrance. Email smueller@lowellschools.com or drop off your answer in the mail box at the building. Agri-trivia contest ends Feb. 17 with answer to follow in the Lowell Ledger.

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We wish you could be here.
 Mom, Dale and Jeff, Russ, Debbie, Jessie, Justyne and Jake

Thank You

The family of Madonna (Bird) Bigelow would like to express their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to:

Lowell Medical Specialists,
 Roth Gerst Funeral Home,
 Rev. and Mrs. Vance Dimmick,
 The Office Staff,
 Bill Zinke,
 The Ladies Group of the Lowell First United Methodist Church,
 Marsha Beach

and all family and friends for their love, prayers and support during our mom's hospital stay and passing.

Words cannot express how much we appreciated your kindness and generosity during such a difficult time.

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NOTICE LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Lowell Township is seeking applications for the position of Trustee. Applicants must be a resident of Lowell Township and be at least 18 years of age. Applications should be received by Monday, February 5, 2007.

Application forms may be obtained at the Township offices, 2910 Alden Nash SE, on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 897-7600.

Linda S. Regan, Clerk
 Lowell Charter Township

Annual regional art competition

The 21st annual West Michigan Regional (art) Competition runs from Feb. 18 through March 24 at the Lowell Area Arts Council. An opening reception will be held on Sunday, Feb. 18 from 2-4 p.m.

This year's West Michigan Regional Competition juror is Pravin C. Sevak. He is an associate professor of design at Western Michigan University. Sevak will give a statement about his jury selection process before handing out award prizes at 3 p.m. at the reception.

Prizes will be awarded in Best of Show (\$500); 1st Place (\$400); 2nd Place (\$300); 3rd Place (\$200); and Honorable Mention (\$100).

For more information contact the LAAC at 897-8545 or visit their website at www.lowellartscouncil.org

Business Matters

Rick Seese, manager/broker of Greenridge Realty, announced that **Kim Schwacha** received Realtor of the Year 2006 for the Lowell office. **Lisa Brown, Jackie Rinks, Ann Wittenbach**, as well

as Schwacha, also received Greenridge Shining Star awards for their outstanding achievements and customer service displayed throughout the year. The awards were announced at Greenridge's annual awards luncheon.

 Even peace may be purchased at too high a price.
 - Benjamin Franklin

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DREAMGIRLS (PG-13)
 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:45

CHILDREN OF MEN (R)
 12:15, 2:40, 5:05, 7:30, 9:55

FREEDOM WRITERS (PG-13)
 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:15

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG)
 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30

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 Presentation at 7:00 p.m.

Planning commission elects officers, inches ahead on new year

By Emma Palova

The Lowell City Planning Commission has elected Maryalene LaPonsie as chair, and Clark Jahnke as vice-chair while inching ahead for another year of business.

The refinement of the fowl and small animal ordinance, along with the

master plan update will continue to top the planners' agenda. "We'll get there in two to three months," said Jahnke.

Due to recent controversy stirred by resident Brian McLane and his four chicken hens, the planning commission has been tweaking the small animal ordinance. Most

recently, the commission proposed two new sections to the ordinance. Section A would determine the quantity of small animals, as well as lot sizes. Section B would regulate the keeping of exotic animals, whether outdoors or indoors.

Jahnke said a committee is working on the definition of exotic animals. A special

permitting process would enforce the ordinance. "We would know where to look for the owner, where they exist through the permitting process," said Jahnke.

The city council will consider the proposal at its Feb. 5 meeting.

The master plan update is scheduled for completion by the end of this year.

In March, planning commissioners, along with McKenna planners, will review a future land use map and land use chapters. A draft of the entire master plan update is expected in May. After that, the plan will be distributed to adjacent townships and county officials for review. Then

the city will have a public hearing.

Also on the planning commission agenda is a joint signage ordinance with Lowell Township due to auto dealers' issues.

The planning commission also approved a conceptual plan for the Lowell Dog Park.

Utility wants to establish city tree fund

By Emma Palova

The Lowell Light and Power Board has passed a resolution to establish a city tree planting fund in response to the recent tree trimming controversy.

The proposal will now go before the city council at the Feb. 5 meeting.

The utility proposes to contribute \$250 to the fund for each tree removed during power line maintenance on the west side of the city.

The proposal, however, hinges on the city adopting a similar policy for each tree removed by the city due to projects such as road, water, sewer and sidewalks.

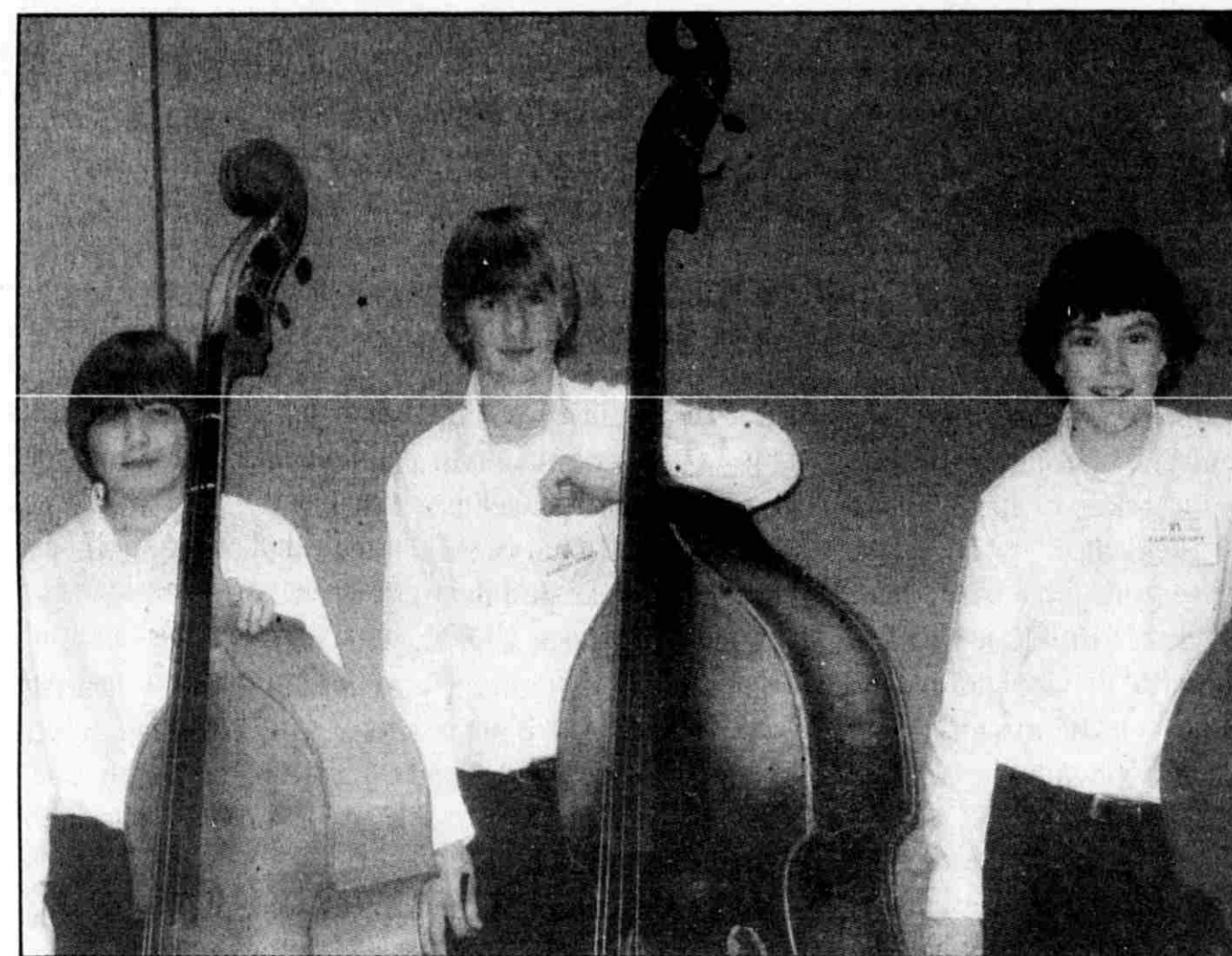
"We're asking the city to consider similar standards," said board president Dave Austin.

The city, too, would have to contribute \$250 into the tree planting fund.

The Lowell Light and Power Board would like to work with the city to establish acceptable guidelines on what constitutes a tree.

According to the proposal, the city would solely be responsible for the purchase and planting of all trees, including the type of tree to be planted.

Middle school string players perform in DeVos Hall



Three Lowell Middle School string orchestra members played at the All-State Ensembles Concert at the DeVos Performance Hall on Jan. 27. Drew Mayhew played the second chair double bass, Samuel Steed played the first chair double bass and James Collins played the fourth chair double bass. The students auditioned for the concert in December under the direction of middle school director Wendy Tenney.

Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent.

- Victor Hugo

Supervisor, continued ... From Page 1

who has served as deputy treasurer, township trustee, and township representative on a number of committees and commissions.

Blumm is a graduate of the first Michigan Township Association Township Governance Academy, Michigan State University Citizen Planner

and the Lowell Institute for Volunteer Excellence. "I started coming to meetings. That's how I got involved," she said. "It's a good start."

Blumm says she is ready to face the township challenges, mainly balancing growth with maintaining the rural character of the township.

The township has evolved over the last years from rural to modern, with water and sewer capacities serving residential and commercial developments.

"Managing a modern township involves legal responsibilities and duties, and carrying them out to the

best of your ability," Blumm said.

She believes that women's traditional organizational skills and concern for others have helped her attain the post.

"Due to changing government and modern communications, there is a changing role of women," she said.

Blumm's major goals include improving communications with the township residents and other units of local government, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

She plans to start a quarterly newsletter that will piggyback on other mailings to save costs.

"As a taxpayer I am going to watch the budget," she said. "I take it seriously

that we are using taxpayers' money."

The township finances, according to Blumm, are in good shape due to staff diligence.

Blumm, who resigned from her trustee position, intends to fill the vacancy by the end of February.

She can be reached at supv@twp.lowell.mi.us

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Viewpoint



by Roger Brown

cozy corner

to buy stainless and get a few years out of a grill. Only one problem, the burners are cast iron and pretty much gone. It's the old "weakest link" theory.

We ordered new burners, but they cost nearly as much as a whole new grill. Still, I opted for new burners because I didn't want to lug a new grill up those stairs.

This grill is actually three or four years old... easily a record for grill endurance in my experience. The ignition system on this thing requires three AA batteries. The side burner works, but none of the main burners have sparked in years. If the grill is four years old, the igniters haven't work for three.

My solution to faulty igniters is to keep one of those butane lighters handy. You know, the ones with the long tube that work well for grills, candles, camping lanterns, fireworks, etc. These things cost three or four bucks, can be left out in all weather and still light my grill every time. Seems like the engineers at BIC could go teach the guys at Charm Glow a thing or two about igniters.

With his particular grill I turn the right burner up to "Full Chew", let it go until I smell gas, stick the igniter through the grate, pull the trigger and "WUMP!" Voila, no hair on my knuckles!

With the right burner going full blast, I turn the middle burner on "High". A slight gas smell, then a second "WUMP!" Same procedure for the left burner. As they say, I am now "Cookin' with gas!" Not to worry, the hair on my hand always grows back.

My wife was gone to dinner with some of her girlfriends one night last week. There were some turkey brats thawed out in the fridge, so I decided to put them on the grill. Only one problem, my handheld lighter was nowhere to be found. Fumbling around in search of the thing, I stumbled across a

box of kitchen matches. Same deal... gas on, strike match, drop it through the grate and "WUMP!"

While my brats cooked on the grill, I worked a crossword puzzle at a nearby table. As I filled in boxes I could smell the singed hair on my right hand.

It was a beautiful night, very quiet and peaceful. Just the dogs and me, out on the porch with my crossword, listening to the brats sizzle away. About the time I figured out that the answer to "Balls with lids" is "eyes" (I hate those guys that create the USA Today puzzle.), my missing handheld lighter turned up. And, it turned up like a hand grenade, sending shrapnel all over the porch. I didn't even have a chance to holler "Incoming!" or hit the deck.

Once my heart started beating again and I had checked myself over for wounds, I did a little detective work. It soon became obvious that the lighter had been placed on the right hand side shelf, next to the hot portion of the grill. No wonder I couldn't find it. It was in plain sight, and I'm a man. That's what my wife would say.

Fortunately, nobody was hurt, including the dogs. Mick and I were within four feet of the blast. There was little damage to anything except the disintegrated lighter and a line scrawled across my crossword when I flinched from the explosion. I wasn't sent to "The Nam" back in my army days, so I guess flashbacks won't be an issue. Just scared the crap out of me, that's all.

I knew an old guy who lived life way out on the edge. He always brushed off his numerous close calls with, "A miss is as good as a mile." Guess so.

Even so, when those new burners come in, and I have the grill apart, maybe I'll have a go at getting the igniters working properly. You know, "Better safe, than sorry." Even if, "A miss is as good as a mile."

To The Editor

Dear Editor,

I have been following the issue about the property on north Washington. Has any of the city council drove around Lowell lately. There are 22 bank repo's in Lowell, 16 real estate repo's and loads of homes for sale by owner or listed homes through real estate agencies. We have some beautiful homes sitting empty in new developments. The last thing we need is another development to take up what is one of the last natural areas that we have left. I grew up in Lowell and spent lots of time up at the boy scout cabin and hiking the hills behind it. I have seen deer right by the houses that are right next to the Boy Scout cabin. There are also many different kinds of birds up there including sand hill cranes, eagles, hawks, king fishers, and probably 20 different kinds of small birds. Before we think of doing anything it at least be put up to vote for the many people who use that land to hike or even go on a picnic. There has to be a way to save this beautiful and the animals that live there. Isn't there something that would protect the wildlife that call that land home. If the city council would stop looking at the dollar signs and look out for the people that live in Lowell we would have less housing developments and more natural spaces in Lowell. Isn't there something the DNR could do to protect this property from money hungry council members. This land has always been open for all of the people of Lowell to enjoy and the thought of this land being filled with homes makes me sick. As far as the home that sits next to the Boy Scout cabin I have been in this home a few times and there is no way this home is worth 100 thousand dollars. I don't know who did the inspection and appraisal but they have to be working for the city council. If any one reading this agrees with me please let the city council know how you feel. If this land does get developed without a vote all

I can say is shame on the city council because they are not looking out for the people of Lowell or its green space. They are looking at dollar signs.

Cynthia Hendrick

Dear Editor,

I grew up in the suburbs of Detroit and watched as "progress" took over all the open spaces and cut down all the trees. That experience convinced me that I wanted to live near a more rural small town when I set out on my own.

After getting married and having two kids, I found that place just outside the town of Lowell. I soon met Gary Dietzel and Sandy Bartlett at their home on the North Washington Street property. I could not believe that there was such a beautiful undeveloped place so close to town and what a perfect place for a Boy Scout cabin. (When I was in scouts we met in an elementary school planted amongst brick ranch houses.) After my son got older he joined the scouts, had the experience of attending meetings at that cabin and sleeping out on the property around it.

Now I wonder what has happened to this town when I have witnessed numerous trees cut down along the streets of the city, the property on North Washington being thought about for development by our towns "leaders" and my friends Gary and Sandy being forced from their home. I also know from experience that even if the city has promised to leave the Boy Scout cabin in place, that it would be eventually consumed by the development around it.

I keep hearing that Joni Mitchell song, "They took all the trees and put them in a tree museum and they charged the people a dollar and half just to see 'em. Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. They paved paradise and put up a parking lot."

Michael Jernigan

To the Editor:

Dear Friends of Lowell,

Having lived in the Lowell area for 29 years, I have watched the community grow and prosper. I have developed many friends and a love for the small town feeling of Lowell. With each passing day, I continue to be grateful for the people that I know and the ones that I have yet to meet.

Today is a time to look at where we are and where we want to be. If Lowell is truly the next place to be, then it is because of the vision that we hold in our minds. We believe that Lowell is a friendly, caring community. We believe that Lowell is a place to raise our children. We believe that Lowell has the foresight and intelligence to preserve the boy scout land on North Washington Street. We all want what is best for the community and ourselves. Preserving the land falls into that category of what is best for all of us.

Peggy Covert has offered an encouraging vision of what is possible for preserving the beautiful 27 acres. I urge all of you who wish to preserve the land to hold the vision of what you want it to be. Keep a positive outlook and focus your mind on the end product. Go to meetings, write letters, talk about it, but hold the vision of preservation. The more people that focus on a positive outcome, the easier it will be to accomplish.

Stay vigilant, be positive, this piece of land is too important for any thing else, but care and conservation. They are not making any more of it.

Rev. Marjorie Morrison

Letters... We love to hear from you!

The Lowell Ledger - welcomes all "Letters to the Editor" for publication on its "Viewpoint" page. Letters can be typed or written. However, we ask that they not exceed 250 words and not be strictly thank you letters. "Letters to the Editor" should be sent to the Lowell Ledger, 105 N. Broadway, P.O. Box 128, Lowell, MI 49331 or emailed to: ledger@lowellbuyersguide.com. Letters must be signed and please include a phone number. Editing may be necessary for space, clarity and to avoid obscenity, libel or invasion of privacy. The Lowell Ledger thanks you in advance for your cooperation.

LHS presents "Odd Couple"

By Emma Palova

So what happens when two females lose their counterparts? In Neil

Simon's "Odd Couple" female version Florence Unger moves in with Olive Madison into her Riverside Drive apartment in New

York City with hilarious results. Presented by Thebes Players of the Lowell Area Arts Council, this classic is

now playing at the Lowell High School Performing Arts Center. The basic story line is the same as the original Odd

Couple, but Simon rewrote the script to present it from a women's point of view. In his directorial debut, Ken Parrish hopes to show the values of loss, renewal and friendship.

"You won't see Oscar or Felix here," he said, "But who among us hasn't had that fleeting thought of wringing a friend's neck. I particularly like both the strength and the vulnerability of the lead characters."

Neatly groomed Flo packs in complete with her former husband's Old Spice Menthol, a set of pots and pans and fluffy towels. Olive, dressed in shorts and a hanging shirt, explains that marriage is the one area where self-respect does not work.

"I don't want this divorce life without Sidney," Flo whined to Olive. "I hate me, I hate my guts."

A few weeks later at the next Trivial Pursuit game, Flo challenges the lady coterie to start using coasters. The group, used to Olive's green sandwiches and stale chips, is no longer sympathetic with suicidal Flo. "I will not talk crispy toast or fluffy towels," said Sylvie, the youngest of the group in vain trying to get pregnant. "There's two things that make you crazy, a diet and being separated." The two lead actresses, Karen Sue Stevenson-Bradford as Flo and Jennifer Reyers as Olive have shown real chemistry in the play, according to Parrish.

"It is easy to believe they could live together as Florence and Olive do," said Parrish. The play takes on an interesting twist in the second act, when Olive driven by her hormones arranges for a double date with two Spanish guys.

"I can't have a date, I got to call my children," Florence whines. "I am not over Sidney yet."

However, Olive encourages Florence to live out her fantasies. "Don't sulk. It's the same thing as pouting," said Olive. "You're a human accident."

The guys, played by James Ball as Manolo Costazuella and David Durkee as Jesus Costazuella, bring on their Spaniard charm. They left their wives in Spain to come to New York.

At one point in the scene, Manolo, Jesus and Flo all break down crying over their lost spouses (spouses).

"I hope that in addition to laughing a little, you will recognize a friend or two of your own on the stage," said Parrish.

Performance dates are: Feb. 2 and Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 4 at 2 p.m., Feb. 9 and Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lowell High School Performing Arts Center.

General admission is \$12. Tickets in advance are available through PayPal at www.lowellartscouncil.org

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

- Dale Carnegie



Pictured, left to right, are the ladies in the Odd Couple play: Jen Reyers, Diana Roush, Karen Sue Stephensen-Bradford, Laura Leasure, Brandy Palmer and Debi Foote.

Tree trimming, continued ... From Page 1

"We are appointed by the city council," said Austin.

Lincoln Lake resident Tonia North, impacted by the upcoming tree trimming, questioned the utility's policy.

"Have you been trimming enough or not enough?" she asked. "What about balance? I want to see a long-term plan."

North admitted she was not a tree hugger; she wants her kids to have trees.

On the other hand, Riverside Drive resident Bonnie Meiste claimed to be a tree hugger. Nine of her trees will be impacted by the trimming program, as well as her shade gardens.

"I'd be happy to have somebody discuss this with me," she said. "This will affect my shade flowers, and the natural beauty of the community."

Richards said the utility will meet personally with each impacted owner. So far, the impacted residents have received letters of notification.

Marsac Street resident Mike Lessens was concerned about the utility using METCO both to trim the trees and as arborists. "They're making a profit on cutting trees," said Lessens.

Other residents continued to question the utility stump removal policy.

The stump removal policy differs for stumps in the city right-of-way, and for stumps on owners' property.

If the stump is in the city right-of-way, the utility will remove the stump, grind it and restore the lawn.

If the stump is on the owner's property, it will be removed by MEDCO contractors. The owner will be reimbursed on the electrical bill.

Correction
The Lowell Light and Power Board held the public information meeting on Jan. 25 at 7:30 p.m. with city council members present.



Members of the city council listen while Lowell Light & Power holds a presentation on tree trimming.



Service learning project an example of compassion

Compassion is one of Lowell Area Schools' character traits. Third grade students in the classrooms of Carol Mandel and MaryBeth Reed are learning to demonstrate that trait through their service learning project. On Friday, Jan. 19, the students made lap blankets for wheelchair vets who reside at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. The students will deliver the blankets, as well as provide an ice cream social for the vets on Jan. 31. Pictured, left to right, are: Tyler Ritchie, Amber Ritchie and Brett Maxim.

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Ask Kathryn

With Kathryn DenHouter Ph.D.



This month we have quite an interesting question to discuss. Someone asked the question: "Why do people say, 'I'm going to kill that person with kindness?' This is a common idiom. An idiom is a common expression that is unique or peculiar to the language of a people. The reason why it is so intriguing is because there is a deeper psychological meaning behind the expression. This psychological truth goes back to the work of B.F. Skinner, a notable behavioral scientist. He did most of his work in the 1940s and 1950s. He discovered that when people were praised for their positive, socially appropriate behaviors, these behaviors increased tremendously. His results had what we call the "sledge hammer effects" That means that the results of his study were so dramatic because the data so clearly demonstrated his hypothesis.

From that time, the "smile faces," the stars, the behavior

modification charts entered the school system, and because of B.F. Skinner's research, our educational system has changed forever. Gone are the days of excessive negative comments (especially in the elementary school). Gone are the days of papers that are saturated with red ink. Teachers, by and large, have been trained to accentuate the positive behaviors of their students, and to encourage rather than to discourage. These strategies are used because generally they do work. When I was a student (many more years ago than I care to remember) there were no smile faces. At best, the teacher would give you a good grade, but would almost always comment on your shortcomings. I went to a private Christian school where some of my teachers would

say, "Only God gets 'A's' -- so you accept your 'B' with gratitude.

Getting back to the idiom, "I'm going to kill that person with kindness." Essentially, my take on what this is saying is that by being nice to a person, by being generous with kindness, you will bring that person around to your way of thinking. You will win him or her over to your point of view. This is based on behavior change strategies researched and developed by B.F. Skinner. Another idiom that captures a similar idea is, "You catch more flies with honey."

Thank you for your questions, they have been good "food" for thought. Please keep them coming. My e-mail address has changed to kathryndenhouer@gmail.com.

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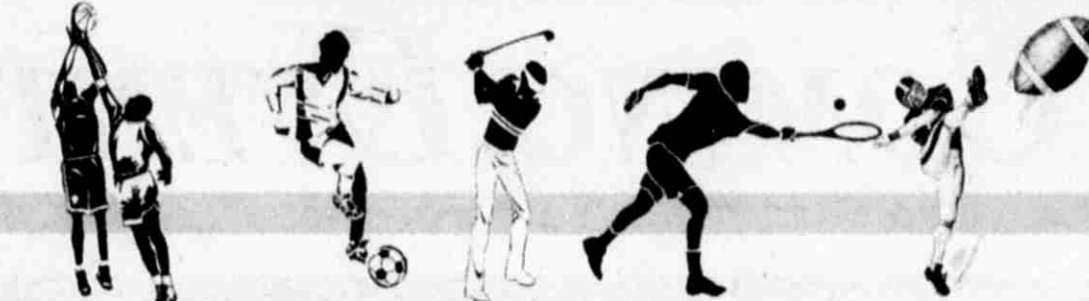
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RED ARROW SPORTS



Lowell/Caledonia hockey set back by Forest Hills 5-1

By Aly DeYoung
Contributing Writer

After enduring an unrelenting contest with Lowell/Caledonia, the Forest Hills hockey team pulled through with a win.

At the end of the first period, the combination team of Forest Hills Northern and

Forest Hills Eastern high schools had already racked up the majority of its points - the score 3-0.

Lowell/Caledonia scored one point in the second period, as did Forest Hills, causing Lowell/Caledonia to face the start of the third period 4-1.

Forest Hills secured one more point, winning the game 5-1.

According to Lowell/Caledonia coach Mike Ballard, the team from Forest Hills had more experience, and that was what the game came down to. Ballard had anticipated that Forest

Hills might win. "We came in knowing they were the favorite team," he said.

"We've been playing pretty well this year," said Forest Hills coach Kevin Zschak. "Just working hard defensively and staying out of the penalty box are our main focuses this year."

While Lowell made only one goal against that defense, the goalie, Corey Phillips, had a total of 26 saves in the game.

"Our goaltending has been on and off, but the last couple of weeks Corey stepped up and really took

the leadership role," Ballard said.

The point Lowell/Caledonia did make was shot by Justin Story and assisted by Jordan Steger.

Lowell/Caledonia will go on to face the Kalamazoo Blades in a tournament on Feb. 2-3.

Red Arrow volleyball team shows strength against Northview

By Aly DeYoung
Contributing Writer

Northview's varsity volleyball team put out a lot of effort, but not quite enough to beat Lowell. In what turned out to be a very close match, Northview trailed slightly most of the time, but lost to Lowell by 16 points in the last game.

In the first game, the Red

Arrows put some distance between themselves and the Wildcats. Northview caught up, but didn't pull through in time and lost 25-22.

"It started out close. It's been nice," said Lowell coach Gigi Peal. "We've been playing great volleyball, but we've had a hard time finishing. I mean, they showed up in the state ranks this week."

Lowell again advanced

in the second game, but Northview showed promise this time, catching up right away. Near the end, they lagged behind again and the Red Arrows pulled ahead for another win, 25-16.

Northview hit its losing streak in the third game. Lowell moved ahead in the beginning and kept going, eventually winning the game and the match, 25-9.

"Lowell's a good team,"

said Kris Schrotenboer, coach for Northview. "We're very young. We're very inexperienced."

While the event was well matched, the Red Arrows seemed to have a little better defense than Northview did. Lowell often hit the ball right into the middle section of the Wildcats' court ... Northview's girls couldn't get there fast enough.

"At that point, we were in the experimental stages," Schrotenboer said about a new defense the Wildcats are practicing.

Aside from a few spills here and there, Northview had its bright spots. The team worked well together. They oozed focus and drive where Lowell's team was excitable and ready to show

their team spirit. "They are a close group," Peal said.

The night went well for Lowell with a strong team effort. Lisa Johnson was powerful in her serve, had good poise and made 12 kills. Taryn Schumacher put in 23 assists.

The Lady Arrows face Kenowa Hills this Thursday at 7 p.m.

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