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the lowell ledger

wednesday • april • 14 • 2010

vol. 39 issue 27

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Keep checking your local news source

the lowell ledger for more bridge project updates.

Also stay informed by going to: www.lowellbridge.blogspot.com

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restructuring the lpd



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GNO resonates with construction theme

by Emma Palova

Get a yellow hard hat and a safety vest at designated places on Main Street and jump in with the flow, just don't jump into the lowered Flat River.

That is the advice of Liz Baker, director of the Lowell Area Chamber for participants of this year's Girls' Night Out.

"Pay attention to construction and have a good time," she said.

The impact of the recently started replacement of the downtown bridge has so far translated into more participants in the event.

There are 37 participants this year spanning the town from east end's Flat River Cottage to Hunan Garden's La Te Da's on the west end of

town and almost everything in between. Hunan Garden's La Te Da's is also a first time participant.

"We hope to get more business from this," said manager Dawn Castillo.

That night the restaurant will have 15 percent off on all entrees and a happy hour all night.

Other newcomers include Bernard's Ace Hardware on the west end of town. So, why would a hardware store join in for a fun night out for girls?

Well, because, according to owner Charlie Bernard, women are the supervisors behind most house projects.

"It's a kind of fun downtown project," said Bernard who has been attending the bridge

meetings. "Everybody has become more concerned about all of our businesses." And although the construction project drew Bernard in, he intends to participate in the event in the future.

"We'll do it," he said.

That night a grill will be raffled off and \$5 rebates on paints will be offered.

Some merchants like

Simple Pleasures Fine Bath & Body don't even have a presence on Main Street but they will be

The incentives to stop in and shop include many deals and refreshments. Most merchants will be serving up treats and delights. For example, Chimera Design will have Ted Nugent coffee samples presented by Ella. And who can say no to chocolate covered strawberries served at Advanced Eyecare.

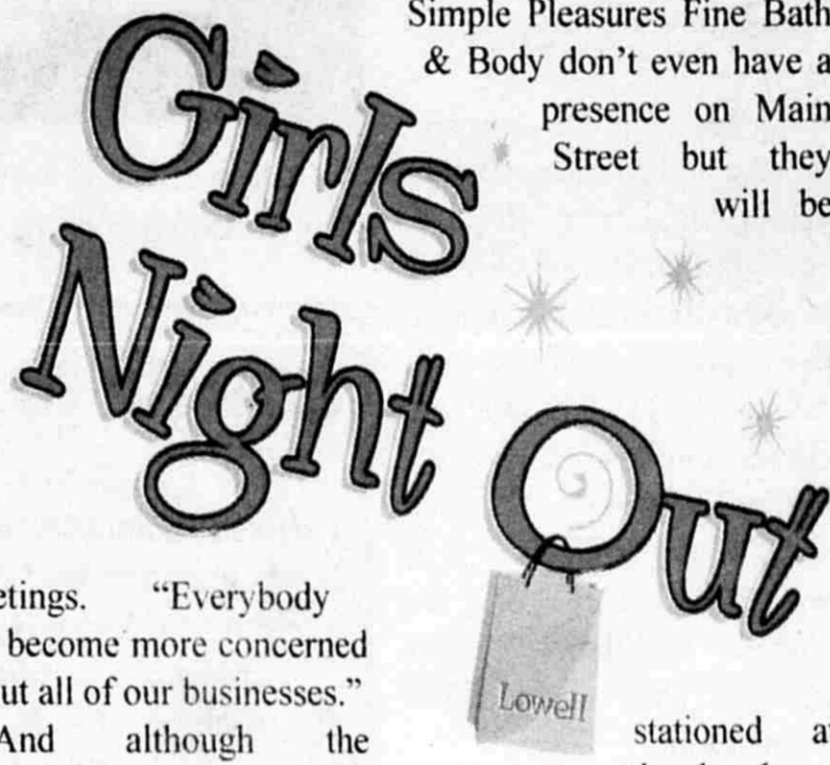
If you get your orange Girls' Night Out postcard signed by 15 merchants you can enter to win the grand gift bag filled with goodies from participating merchants.

The event will show off Lowell's positive attitude toward the bridge replacement project.

"We can still maintain business and build a bridge at the same time," said Baker.

Hard hats and safety vests can be obtained at Advanced Eyecare, Fire and Water Art, Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, and Flat River Cottage.

For more information check out www.discoverlowell.org and Cliffy's blog.



stationed at the chamber.

Other newcomers include Advanced Eyecare, Arctic Heating and Cooling, Ball's Softee Creme, Computer Rehab, Curtis Cleaners, D&L Tax Service, Dovetail Antiques, Gary's Country Meats, Giggles and Gumdrops, Lowell Beer Store, Salon 206, Sneaker's and YMCA-Lowell.

Among the mainstays of the event are Chimera Design, Cousins' Hallmark, Glasshouse Designs, Pep Talk, Lowell Area Historical Museum, and many more.

MDOT officials inform about bridge replacement progress

by Emma Palova

In a weekly Wednesday meeting at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) officials gave an update on the progress of the downtown bridge replacement.

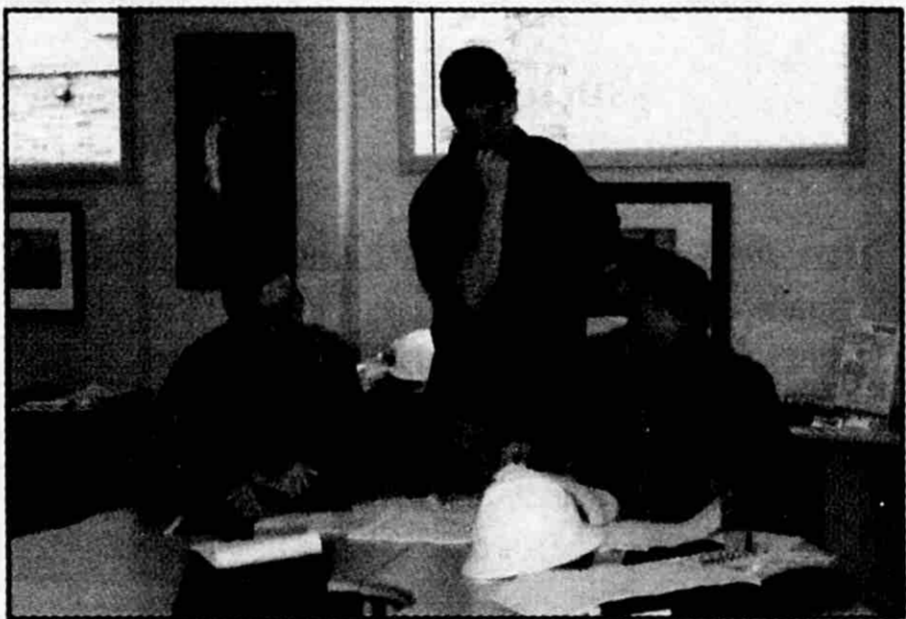
The project started April 5 with a westbound detour and is slated for completion by the Harvest Festival scheduled for Oct. 9.

Currently, the crews are working on the north side of the bridge, while pedestrians can use the sidewalk on the south side to access local businesses. The work zone, from the eastbound traffic, is separated by a temporary concrete barrier.

Due to backups on Bowes Road, the traffic signal downtown may be adjusted to longer periods northbound from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and southbound from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

According to police chief James Hinton, traffic volumes are light from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bridge progress, continued, page 7



Dave Frogner of Anlaan and Darrell Heuker of MDOT discuss the plans while consultant Al Halbeisen of HH Engineering looks on.



A concrete barrier wall separates the work zone from the eastbound traffic on the bridge.

New retirement living facility coming to Lowell

by Emma Palova

A 20-unit senior assisted-living facility, located next to the bowling alley on the west end of town, may open late this fall.

Green Acres Retirement Living, developed by Arlin Maas, has applied for a special use permit to construct a senior living facility on 4.2 acres zoned agricultural two in Lowell Township.

The facility will be built out in two phases, but will appear as one building with residential flavor sitting on the Grand River. It will have a retaining wall preventing any spill into the wetlands or the river. There will be 26 parking spaces to accommodate extra traffic on holidays. Phase II will be a seven unit specialized senior care.

"It will help appearance of that area,"

said commissioner Carlton Blough. "The area is overgrown now."

The Lowell Township Planning Commission approved the special use permit and site plan Monday night with several conditions.

These conditions include approval of land division, flood plain and fill, landscape plan, sidewalks as part of the special assessment, vehicle connection to the Lowell Lanes on east side, approval by the township engineer of the retention pond, rock wall for retaining purposes, and annual review of the special permit in May of each year.

"It is a nice facility in a good location," said secretary Timothy Clements.

Retirement facility, continued, page 2

Police chief proposes \$50,000 in savings by restructuring

Lowell police chief James Hinton is proposing a \$50,000 savings in the police department budget as the general fund budget is being finalized for May presentation. The police department budget is \$811,712 out of the total general fund budget of \$2.43 million. This equals 33 percent of the general fund budget.

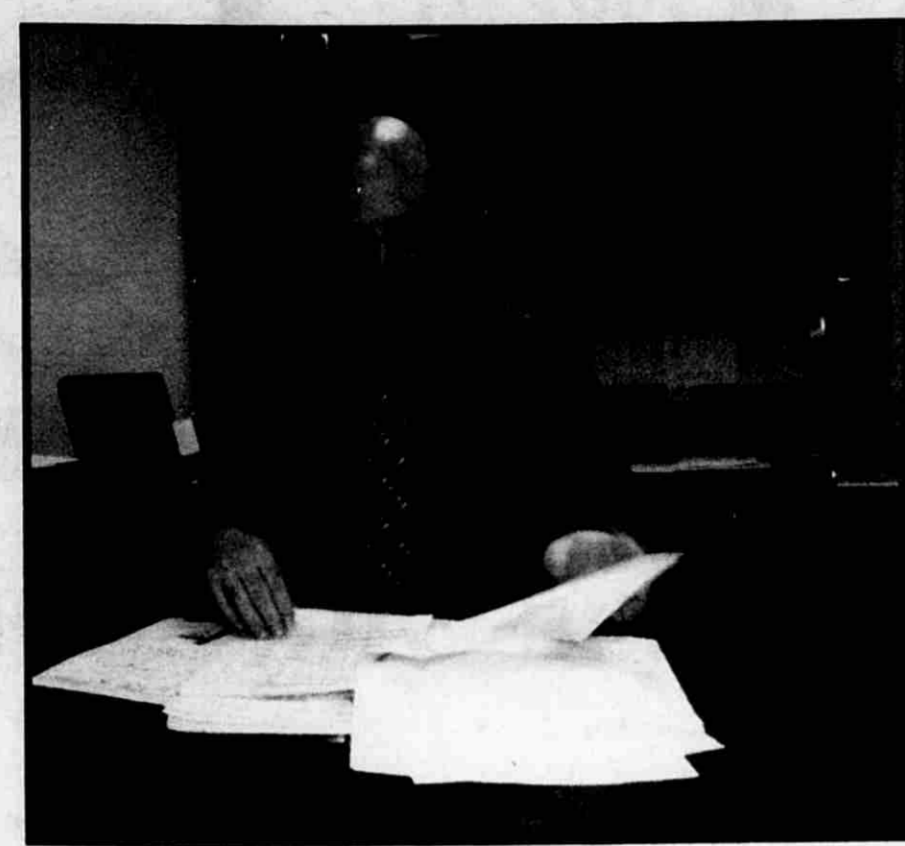
However, according to Hinton most police departments average 35 to 40 percent of the general fund budget. Hinton said the police department is the only city department that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"We have to be staffed at all times," he said. "We're running leaner than the average state cost."

The cost savings will be realized by having a full-time officer to eliminate overtime. This will bring the staffing levels to six full-time officers including Hinton and eight part-time officers.

"We'll be able to control the financial picture with more certainties," said Hinton. "We don't have a lot of continuity now. Shifting time and responsibilities will allow savings."

Currently, part-time or full-time officers have to fill



Police chief James Hinton reviews cost savings due to restructuring.

in the shift causing overtime. Six months ago, Hinton initialized set scheduling for hearings twice a month in the afternoon with the court.

"It's utilizing officers' time more and reducing overtime for the city," he said. "It has worked out for both parties."

The elimination of 2,000 part-time patrol hours will bring a savings of \$24,000.

"We are restructuring as much as we can to keep officers on the road," said Hinton.

Among other savings are the following measures: negotiated lower dispatch cost; the elimination of hours worked above 80 hours in two weeks, creating cost savings of \$15,000; and the elimination of animal control officer Jill Moore.

"Police officers will be taking care of the animal complaints," said Hinton. "This is part of the restructuring."

Also, the police department will align wages with other city staff which means no pay increase for all in 2010-2011. This brings a cost savings of \$8,500.

"It's hard to restructure too much without impacting the service or jeopardizing the safety of citizens and officers," said Hinton.

Hinton said in spite of the restructuring, the department is still providing better service than most police departments. The Lowell police department takes animal complaints, does lockouts, private property accidents, gets bats out of houses and takes care of neighbor disputes.

"We don't charge for special events nor seek reimbursement," said Hinton.

The budget, according to Hinton, meets crucial elements such as operating safety standards for both citizens and officers while being fiscally responsible.

"We're thinking outside the box of new ways of running things," said Hinton.

The department will utilize new technology to save on man hours, such as writing electronic tickets and electronic accident reports in the cars on the computer. A \$44,500 grant from the Lowell Area Community Fund, if obtained, will pay for new computers, modems, software and a new radio repeater.

"I feel very good about the budget," said Hinton. "I've been working on it for six months."

Lowell to Greenville trail receives \$650,000 grant

The Lowell to Greenville rail to trail group has received \$650,000 in transportation enhancement funds matched by \$461,000 from the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition.

The much coveted grant will enable the group to purchase the 16-mile corridor from Lowell to Greenville yet this summer. This section that connects

into the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail and Lowell to Ionia Trail and Clinton Ionia Shiawassee Trail will make the trail the fifth biggest in the entire nation. It results into 120 miles of trails traversing six counties. The total project cost is \$1,111,650. For full story see next week's Lowell Ledger.

Retirement facility, continued

The facility will connect into the sidewalk system and to the east to Lowell Lanes. It will integrate a handrail, guardrail and sidewalk. The building will have vinyl siding and partial brick.

"The site plan meets the requirements of the ordinance and there is a vehicle connection to the

bowling alley," said planner Tim Johnson.

According to Johnson and the planning commission, there will be no adverse effect on the neighborhood because the facility is in conformance with the lighting ordinance. A left turn light is not required due to low traffic volumes and

public water and sewer are available.

Pending final approval from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Environmental Division, the construction will start this spring and it is slated for late fall/early winter completion.

In related business, the planning commission approved annual reviews of special use permits for DenHouter Sand Mine and Heidi's Farm Market and Corn Maze. For complete story on Heidi's Farm Market check out next week's Lowell Ledger.

Thebes Players' presentation of Play On! starts this week

From the bumbling mechanicals led by Peter Quince in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to the much more recent drunken mishaps of "Noises Off," audiences apparently enjoy watching seemingly inept characters trying to put on a show. Thebes Players will continue this tradition by presenting *Play On!*, written by Rick Abbott and directed by Matt Tawney, on April 16, 17, 18, 22, and 23 at Cherry Creek Elementary School.

The story involves a "bad" theater group trying to put on a Victorian murder mystery, *Murder Most Foul*. Unfortunately, the playwright keeps changing the script on them (even three days before the production!) and hilarity ensues as the already overstressed actors reach a breaking point.

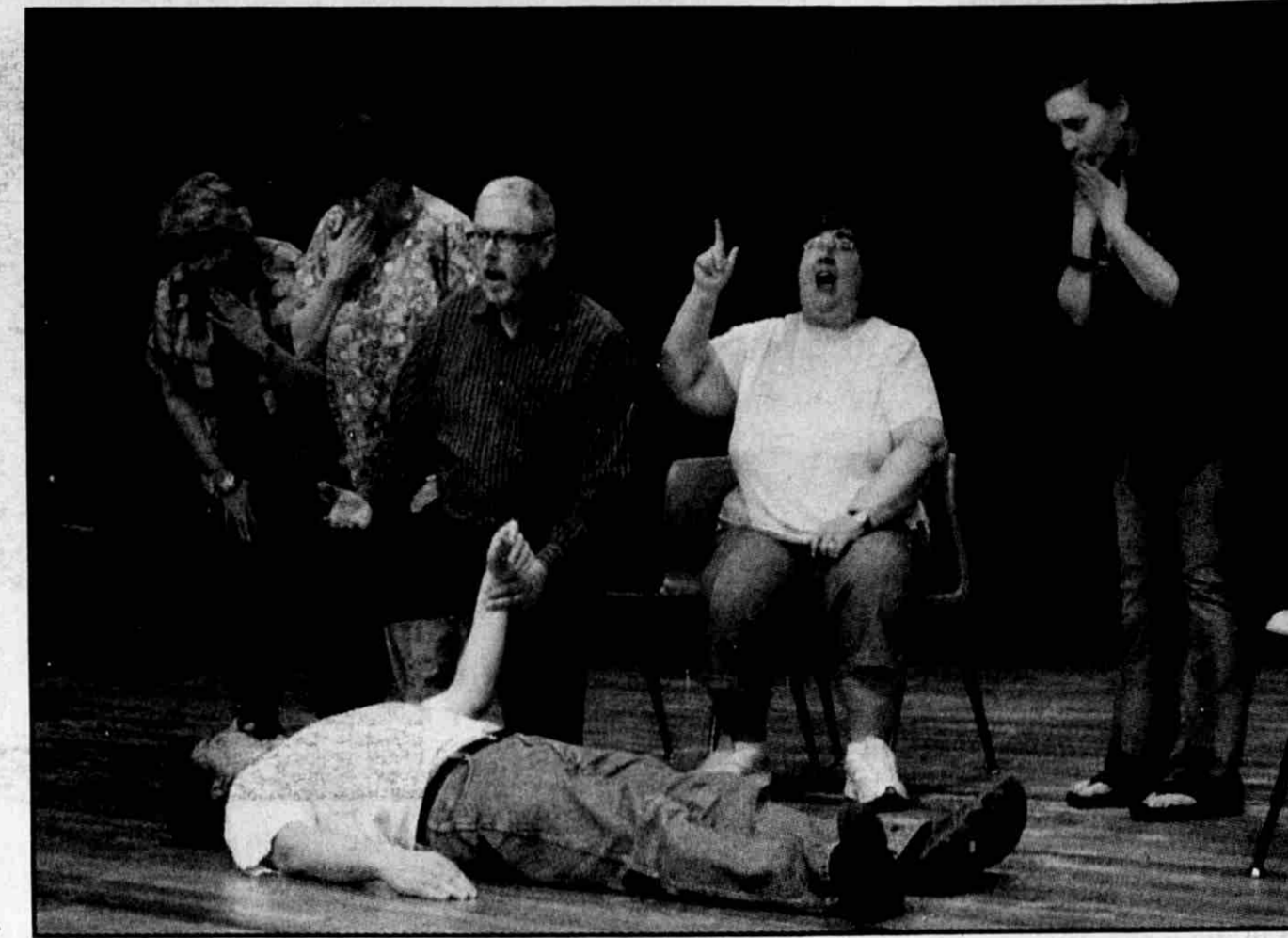
The cast includes many familiar faces to

Thebes Players as well as some newcomers. Of the returners, you have Laura Leasure (who directed *Jungle Book* for Thebes this past winter), Corey VanRavenswaay (last seen in *Nunsense*), Ken Parrish (actor in many community theater productions in the West Michigan area), Sue Bradford (actor and director in many productions), Anne Pasquale, Diana Roush, and Peggy Schmidt. The cast is rounded out by Courtney Kerry, George Poindexter, and Gary Brook, who returns to the stage after 25 years. Brook says, "I wanted to get involved with it again. I love playing Sol, who thinks it's a good idea to drink when the play goes wrong. And believe me, he gets to drink a lot!"

First-time director Matt Tawney was drawn to the play due to its comedic value. A participant in sketch

comedy groups and many other comedic plays, Tawney said, "I really liked not having to learn all the lines. It was nice to have blank slates to work with." The comedic experience of all the actors should make this a fun and fast-paced show.

The play was previously produced in Lowell in 1996 (back before the local theater group even called themselves the Thebes Players). Diana Roush was also involved in that production, in a different part, and she says that it is interesting being involved again with "a new director, new people, and now doing dinner theater instead of on a regular stage!" Anne Pasquale was not involved in the original, but acted in the sequel to it, *Sing On!* (which will be produced by Thebes Players in fall 2010). "The play is funny because the cast complements each other very



Thebes Players: Gary Brook (laying down), left to right, Diana Roush, Laura Leasure, Ken Parrish, Anne Pasquale and Courtney Kerry.

well," Pasquale related. Sue Bradford, current president of the Thebes Players Council, was the director of the 1996 production and says that it is a "new experience being on the other side of the footlights!"

The experienced players have only been helped by the "new blood," which includes Grand Rapids native George Poindexter who not only makes his debut with Thebes

Players with this work but also his theatrical debut as well! "I always wanted to try theater. This is a lot of fun. It's an open, fun group." Another newcomer is Courtney Kerry, who jokingly adds, "Matt [Tawney] called me up and begged me. No, really, I'm enjoying every minute of it. It's a funny group and we have a good time."

The group will bring this unique comedic experience

to dinner theater on April 16, 17, 22, and 23 with dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the show at 7:30 p.m. April 18 will be a matinee with a 1 p.m. dinner and the show at 2 p.m. For more information call the Lowell Area Arts Council at 897-8545 or visit them on the web at www.lowellartscouncil.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

School board hears budget predictions for next year

by Shelly MacNaughton

At its regular meeting Monday night, the Lowell Area School Board received several updates including a budget update from superintendent Greg Pratt and a MEAP update from curriculum director Roger Bearup.

Parker Liu, president of the Student Council, updated the board on activities that are taking place at the high school. A very successful blood drive has recently taken place. Several students participated in an alternative spring break trip to Biloxi, Mississippi. Students helped with demolition, painting and cleanup in an area still feeling the effects

of Hurricane Katrina. Liu mentioned several concerts coming up for the band, choir and orchestra as well as AP testing coming up in May.

Pratt provided a budget update at Monday night's meeting. School districts work in advance of state legislators when figuring budgets. School districts are mandated by the state to finalize budgets by July 1, however, state funding remains uncertain up through Oct. 1 or later. Administrators in Lowell have crunched numbers and are predicting a large shortfall for next year. "At this point we are projecting a 3.2 to 4.2 million dollar

shortfall for next year. As we look toward the state revenue meeting in May we will be able to get more accurate information.

School board, continued, page 8

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 CLASH OF THE TITANS (PG-13) 4:45, 7:10, 9:35
 THE LAST SONG (PG) 4:25, 7:00, 9:40
 HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON (PG) 4:35, 6:50, 9:05

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 Published weekly for \$22 a year for zip codes beginning with 493 or 495 \$32 a year any other zip code.

JON JACOBS.....PUBLISHER
 EMMA PALOVA.....LEAD REPORTER
 THAD KRAUS.....SPORTS/SALES
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 Published every Wednesday
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RELAY FOR LIFE CAPTAINS MEETING
 American Cancer Society Relay for Life team captains meetings will be held Apr. 20 and May 25 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the conference room at the administration bldg., 300 High St. Relay for Life is June 11-12 from 3 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lowell High School. For more information visit www.relayforlife.org/lowellmi or contact Carol Briggs at 897-5501 or cbriggs@lowellschools.com Sign up your team today.

HISTORY IN FASHION
 Somewhere In Time, the Lowell Area Historical Museum's fundraising gala, will be held May 7 at 7 p.m. at the Lowell Performing Arts Center. Reserve your tickets now, \$25 each and \$30 at the door. To purchase tickets call 897-7688.

SPRING MOON GAZE
 An exploration of our amazing solar system from the deck of the Wittenbach/Wege Center on Mon., Apr. 19 and Tues., Apr. 20, 8:30-10 p.m. (weather permitting). Telescopes will be available, feel free to bring your own. WWC staff and members of the Grand Rapids Amateur Astronomical Association will be on hand for assistance. Call 987-1002 for more information.

FOOD PANTRY
 The FROM Food Pantry is presently in need of cereals, crackers, canned fruit, fruit juice, dish soap, and personal care items such as toilet tissue. Please help if you are able.

MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP
 The Dr. Donald G. Gerard Honorary Medical Scholarship is provided for a Lowell High School graduate who is currently enrolled in medical school. Please contact Lisa Nauta 987-2913 at LHS for an application. Deadline is June 1, 2010.

TUPPERWARE FUNDRAISER
 The Lowell Senior Center will be having a Tupperware Fundraiser on Wed., Apr. 21 at 7 p.m. All proceeds go to the Lowell Senior Center/Gilda's Club Building Fund. Bring a friend and join the fun.

SAVE THE DATE
 LHS Class of 1973 is having an informal party on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend at Fallasburg Park, 5-10 p.m. Watch for more information.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION
 Come out to the Wittenbach/Wege Center and help celebrate all Mother Nature has provided us on Sat., Apr. 24, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Give back to earth by removing invasive species, join a guided hike, learn how to make your own bat house at 11 and learn what you can do at home to make our planet healthier. For more information call 987-1002.

Feel free to send your event information to the Ledger for Along Main St. All submission requests for Along Main St. are subject to space limitations. The Ledger makes no assurances that they will appear in print. To ensure that an event notification will appear in the Ledger, it is best to place a paid advertisement. All efforts will be made to place suitable items in the Along Main St. column but they are printed at the discretion of the publisher. For profit events, church services, yard sales and the like, will not appear in this column.

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN PARENT MEETING SCHEDULE
 Attendance is important! You will be scheduling your child's visitation time!

ALTO ELEMENTARY
 Kindergarten Parent Meeting THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010
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 6:30-7:30 PM - Meeting

BUSHNELL ELEMENTARY
 Kindergarten Parent Meeting THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010
 6:00-6:25 PM - Sign-up
 6:30-7:30 PM - Meeting

MURRAY LAKE ELEMENTARY
 Kindergarten Parent Meeting TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 2010
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 6:30-7:30 PM - Meeting

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financial focus



Christopher C. Godbold

Look for ways to cut investment taxes

Like millions of your fellow citizens, you may be filing your taxes this week. If you think that things might have turned out differently had you paid less in investment-related taxes, you might want to take steps soon to help ensure a different outcome in 2011.

Here are some "tax-smart" strategies to consider:

• Invest in municipal bonds. If you're in one of the upper income brackets, you might benefit from owning municipal bonds. The interest payments from "munis" are typically exempt from federal income taxes, and may also be exempt from state and local taxes, depending on where you live.

• "Max out" on your Roth IRA. If you qualify for a Roth IRA, try to fully fund it every year. Your earnings grow tax-free, provided you've had your account at least five years and you don't take withdrawals until you're at least 59-1/2. And now, it's easier to convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. Under previous rules, you could only convert if your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) was \$100,000 or less.

IRA. Under previous rules, you could only convert if your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) was \$100,000 or less. But starting this year, you can convert funds to a Roth IRA even if your MAGI is over \$100,000. And if you convert in 2010, you can report the taxable income from the conversion over a two-year period, in 2011 and 2012.

• Distribute assets between taxable and retirement accounts. You'll want to look at all your investments as a whole to determine if they're working together to help you achieve your goals. But in considering ways to control investment taxes, you may also find it useful to look at two separate categories: your tax tax-deferred retirement accounts, such as your traditional IRA and your 401(k), and your taxable accounts, which hold all the investments not in your retirement accounts.

Many will benefit from faster disability application process

Tens of thousands more people will benefit from a faster and more efficient process when applying for disability benefits, thanks to an expansion in Social Security's Compassionate Allowances. Compassionate Allowances are a way of quickly identifying diseases and other medical conditions that clearly qualify for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits — allowing for faster decisions in the most obvious cases. Thirty-eight more conditions are being added to the Compassionate Disability application, continued, page 6

As you hold these assets at least a year, you'll only have to pay the long-term capital gains rate, which is currently 15 percent if you're in one of the top three tax brackets. (This rate may soon rise, however.) • Sell your "losers" throughout the year. If you own investments that have lost value and that you don't need to keep for other reasons (such as portfolio balance), consider selling them throughout the year. Your losses can offset any capital gains you might have achieved; if you don't have any gains, the losses can offset up to \$3,000 of your regular income. Plus, any losses that you don't use in a given year can be carried forward indefinitely for use against future capital gains. Before embarking on any of these strategies, consult with your tax advisor. Every "tax-smart" move may not be appropriate for your individual situation. But if you're concerned about the impact of investment taxes, it can certainly pay to explore all your options.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, its associates and financial advisors do not provide tax or legal advice.

business matters

Greenridge Realty announced that Elaine Wingeier received Realtor of the Month in March. This award recognizes Wingeier for her outstanding success and achievements.



Elaine Wingeier

viewpoint

to the editor

To the Editor - I am vehemently opposed to the soft sided temporary structures proposed for the City of Lowell.

I sat on the planning commission during the onset of this proposal. I was immediately against this proposal when Mr. Robinson appeared before the commission.

When I left the commission after my tenure, it was resolved, as I recall, there would not be soft sided, but metal covers on three sides and possibly a door to close and a driveway. It was to be temporary for three years with one three-year renewal. After that, it was to be removed for a permanent structure (approved by city requirements) or none at all.

Now it seems since I left and one or two others have left the commission, there is only one hold-out, Jim Hall. Saying no one showed interest in the matter opposing it is a lie. Steve

Doyle appeared at the commission several times and brought a petition with 50 names opposing. I don't call that a lack of interest.

I was approached while on the commission by Jeff Altoft, who sits on the council, about this issue. He is also a friend of Mr. Robinson who first brought up the proposal. He took me for a "ride" one day and showed me two or three nicely placed and hard sided structures not clearly seen from the road. That is about the time the hard side and three-year limit was proposed, then a possible renewal of three more years only. Six in all!

Mr. Altoft wants one of these structures himself for the wood stoves he sells. Right now he has a white tarp or plastic structure in his yard. Looks like 'Hell.' The other soft sided structure, directly across from the Methodist Church on the NE corner of N. Division, is a

black tarp or plastic. Looks awful for a residential area. When my husband Charlie Doyle, who was a councilman several times, brought me to Lowell as a bride, he told me Lowell was the prettiest town in Michigan.

I am not a homeowner anymore but am very proud of my city - I know Charlie is guiding me right now in helping me keep this a beautiful place to live.

Dee Doyle Lowell

Dear Editor,

This past Saturday about thirty-five veterans and their spouses were the honored guests for dinner of the Lowell Boy Scout troop and their leaders. It was a perfect conclusion to an all day Boy Scout open house. In my lifetime I have attended many moving ceremonies, but none of them more so than what we experienced Saturday evening. Following dinner, we were invited to participate in a flag retirement

ceremony in which old, damaged and worn out flags are properly disposed. The Scouts had collected some 65-70 flags in all. In all my years in military service, I was totally unaware of the prescribed and proper manner that should be followed to retire an American flag. Likewise, I think all, or nearly all of the adult guests present, shared my feelings. As I sat there and watched, I was sorry that every Lowell citizen was not there to see this touching ceremony run entirely by the Scouts themselves. Perhaps the most moving of all was watching two adults, troop leader Dirk Ritzema who is himself an Eagle Scout, and the other, Vietnam veteran John VanderWilp, assist 92-year-old Col. Sam Yeiter, who just happens to be Lowell's first Eagle Scout, so that he could participate in the burning ritual during the ceremony.

In this day and age when many people wonder what the next generation of kids will become, I walked

away confident that we have young men (and women!) in this community who will step up and serve. I want to congratulate the adult troop leaders for the leadership qualities they infuse into our Scouts and for the many, many activities and services the Scouts provide around our community. From the striking display of American flags on the Hudson Street bridge during Sgt. Lucas Beachaw's funeral, the flags on Main Street for special holidays, to the removal of flags on veteran's graves after Memorial Day and a host of other community projects they do, I salute the Boy Scouts of Lowell. And, that salute also includes their adult leaders!

Sincerely, Dave Thompson, Commander, Lowell American Legion Post #152

Dear Editor,

I'm writing today about the soft sided garage issue. So far we've only heard from the people opposing them. I believe this is because there aren't that many in town and not that many people have a need for them right now so they feel if it doesn't affect them, they don't care.

People of Lowell - here is a wake-up call. Don't

give away your rights! Speak up. Your property belongs to you. Why would you limit what you can do with it. Last month there was a discussion about going to a one-hauler trash system. This would have potentially brought down refuse costs for everyone in Lowell, but because the City Council heard only from citizens about freedom to choose their own hauler, the one trash hauler option was abandoned. Now, many of the "freedom to choose" people want to dictate what everyone in Lowell does concerning soft sided garages. What really is amazing, is there is a business right downtown in the historical district that has, with the city's blessing, put up what is basically a soft sided "three seasoned porch/garage." Where is the citizen's outrage on that one? If the ordinance is defeated, that will have to be reexamined. Do we really want to go there? Please call a councilmember, or city hall, or write a letter to the city manager. Better yet, come to the public hearing, May 4, at City Hall at 7:30 p.m. Speak up for your rights.

Sincerely, Jeff Altoft Lowell

Letters To The Editor:

The Lowell Ledger welcomes your Letters to the Editor. Letters are required to bear the author's signature, phone number and address (for verification purposes only, not for publication). Letters will be published at the discretion of the publisher. All letters are subject to editing for length and grammar. Thank you letters, advertising or personal attacks will not be printed.

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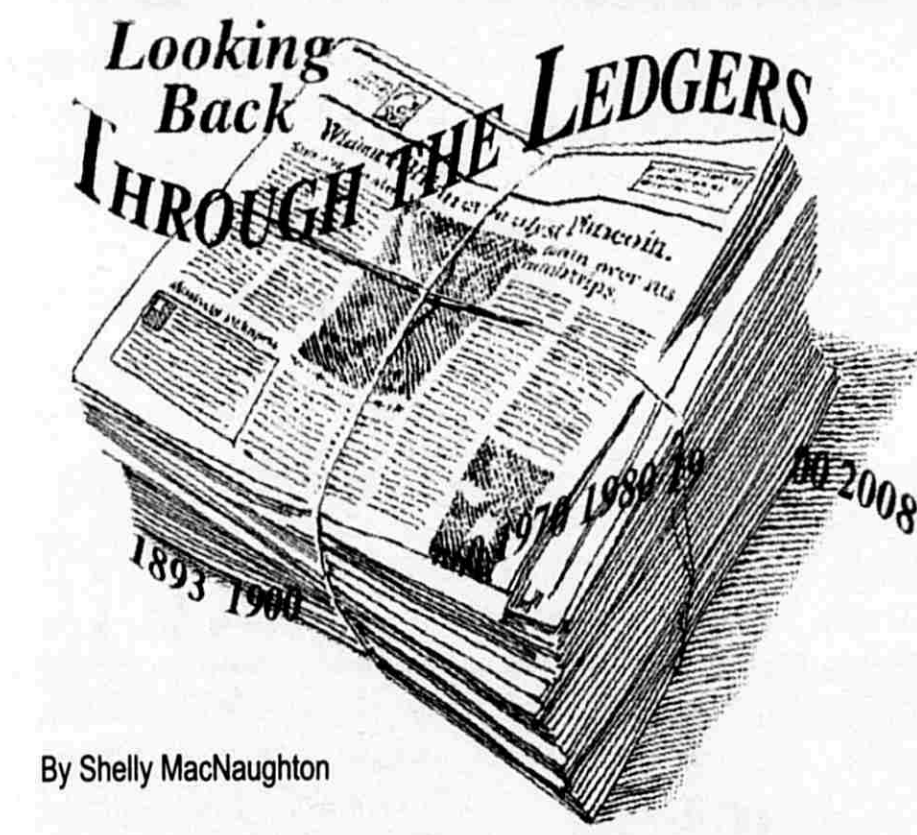
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By Shelly MacNaughton

shocking accident occurred soon after Billy and a companion had alighted from the school bus driven by the Rev. A. J. Hoolesema.

Betty Lou, 9-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Kyser, was seriously injured last Friday afternoon while walking on M-66 south of Segwun. The child was on her way from school to her house near the Emery orchard. As she stepped from the left side of the highway to get out of the way of an approaching truck she walked directly into the path of a car driven by Duane Krauss, a 14-year-old schoolboy who was on his way to his home in Elmdale. Although seriously injured, it is expected that she will fully recover. The Krauss boy, who was greatly grieved over the accident, was held blameless.

50 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger April 14, 1960

Quick action by Lowell police Monday afternoon led to the capture of Leonard Reed, 19, who escaped from Ionia Reformatory Sunday. Reed was spotted by Lewis Phillips standing near the Showboat stands Monday afternoon. While Phillips was notifying the police, the convict drove off in Theo Bailey's car which he had just parked on Lafayette. The loss was discovered almost at once and a complete description of the car was put on the police radio and a sheriff's department car stopped Reed just east of Ada on M-21. He had just about 10 minutes of freedom after stealing the car.

125 Years Ago The Lowell Journal April 15, 1885

And now it is said the ice in the straits will not be gone before the middle of June.

This great war drama, written by Gen. Kilpatrick, will be played at the Lowell Rink on Thursday and Friday evenings, April 30 and May 1, by the Lowell dramatic club and members of Joseph Wilson Post, G. A. R. Don't fail to see it.

100 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger Entry is missing from records.

75 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger and Alto Solo April 18, 1935

Willard C. Brown, 6-year-old son of Mrs. Helen Brown, and affectionately known to all as "Billy," met instant death on South Hudson St. at about 11:15 Tuesday morning by being crushed by the rear wheels of a passing truck. The

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Disability application, continued

Allowances list. This expands the original list of 50 conditions (25 rare diseases and 25 cancers) that was announced in October 2008. The new conditions range from adult brain disorders to rare diseases that primarily affect children.

In developing the expanded list of conditions, Social Security held public hearings and worked closely with the National Institutes of Health, the Alzheimer's Association, the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD), and other groups.

"The diagnosis of Alzheimer's indicates significant cognitive impairment that interferes with daily living activities, including the ability to work," said Harry Johns, President and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association. "Now, individuals who are dealing with the enormous challenges of Alzheimer's won't also have to endure the financial and emotional toll of a long disability decision process."

For a complete list of

the 88 Compassionate Allowance conditions, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances

Vonda VanTil is the public affairs specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 50 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov

health

With Drs. Paul Gauthier, Jim Lang, Wayne A. Christenson III, John G. Meier & Tracy Lixie

acute sinusitis

Sinusitis usually occurs as a result of a cold but can also result from swelling of the nasal passages, obstruction from a nasal deformity, or as part of a general infection process in the body. Acute sinusitis may be caused by viruses, bacteria, or rarely a fungal infection. Antibiotics may be used to treat sinusitis, but it is important to understand that they do not help a cold or viral sinusitis. Using antibiotics improperly can cause resistant bacteria to form.

Signs and symptoms of sinusitis include nasal obstruction, pain in the face over sinus areas, thick and purulent nasal discharge from both nostrils, cough, sore throat, fatigue, feeling generally unwell, and fever.

Medical history and physical exam are all that is necessary to diagnose

sinusitis. Sometimes x-rays or CT scans may be used to confirm the diagnosis and look for causes of sinusitis. Occasionally a sample of the sinus contents may be taken to the lab for examination.

Treatment of sinusitis includes supportive care. Drinking lots of fluids, getting a lot of rest, and inhaling steam may help to ease congestion of the sinuses. Temporary use of over-the-counter nasal spray may help relieve congestion, but should not be used for more than five days. Antibiotics may be prescribed if bacterial sinusitis is suspected. It is important to take the full course of antibiotics. Seek medical attention immediately if you develop a high fever, stiff neck, severe headache, tender swelling near the eyes, or changes in mental status.



Bridge progress, continued

"We're keeping this positive," said Darrell Heuker of MDOT.

The water in the Flat River was drawn down to its lowest level on April 2 and will go back up by May 1. The water level had to be lowered so the contractor can get underneath the bridge to access substructure repairs. However, due to last week's heavy rains, the water level rose again and it was difficult to get the barges under the bridge.

The barges are used to prevent debris from falling into the river stream when the bridge decks and beams are removed.

The construction crew advises people to stay out of the barreled and barricaded areas. Some people have been trying to get through the eastbound lane to the west side when no opposing traffic was present. Hinton advises not to do that.

Chamber director Liz Baker said that some people have had trouble getting out of town.

All contractor vehicles should be parked in the contractor's yard located off Front Street. The Department of Environmental Quality is conducting a mussel survey.

Businesses on the bridge and in the vicinity maintain a positive attitude as exemplified by Jack Reedy of Rookies Sportcards. In spite of the fact that the entire 100th block on the south side of the bridge has been abandoned, Reedy says he's not going anywhere.

"Everyone knows I am here," he said. "I had a busy week and I am not moving all this stuff."

On the contrary, Reedy is getting ready for his busy Free Comic Book Day on May 1 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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area births

VanderMeulen
Cora Grace Jagger VanderMeulen was born November 10, 2009, weighing 7 lbs. 12 oz., to proud parents Leslie Jagger

and David VanderMeulen of Forest Lake, Minnesota. Grandparents are Jim and Ann VanderMeulen and Toni Jagger, all of Belding.

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happy birthday!

APRIL 14
Phyllis Jones, Dennis Rasch, Joshua Anderson, Nichol Gurney, Bernie Boersma, Brenda Stuart, Cole Wade, Stephanie Ossewaarde.

APRIL 15
James Schafer, Craig Yeiter, Margaret Yoder, Charles Behnke, Fred Oesch Jr., Dave Carpenter, Terry Kinsley.

APRIL 16
Sam Roudabush, Kathleen Zywicki, Jack Ryder, Jacob Billingsley, Lori Gerard, Steve Kropf, Angie Farrell, Kristin Lee, Rayce Darby.

APRIL 17
Elsie Franks, Heather Vezino, Roger Teale, Dennie Ryder, Joe Merriman, Jill Harris.

Lucille Erickson, Betty Erickson, Gary Pieroni, Candice Bowne, Jace Eliason.

APRIL 18
Rick Warner, Angela Vezino, Doug Anchors, Jon Kinsey, Jason Borton.

APRIL 19
Heidi Barber, Ruth Harris, Karrie Akers, Krissie Akers, Shaun Thompson, Lisa Allchin, Sharon Bowden, Michelle Billingsley.

APRIL 20
Jim Hodges, Rick Briggs, Bobbie White, Donna Peterson, Kendra Merriman, Angela Miller, Charles Marshall.

area churches

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Celebration...10:40 a.m.
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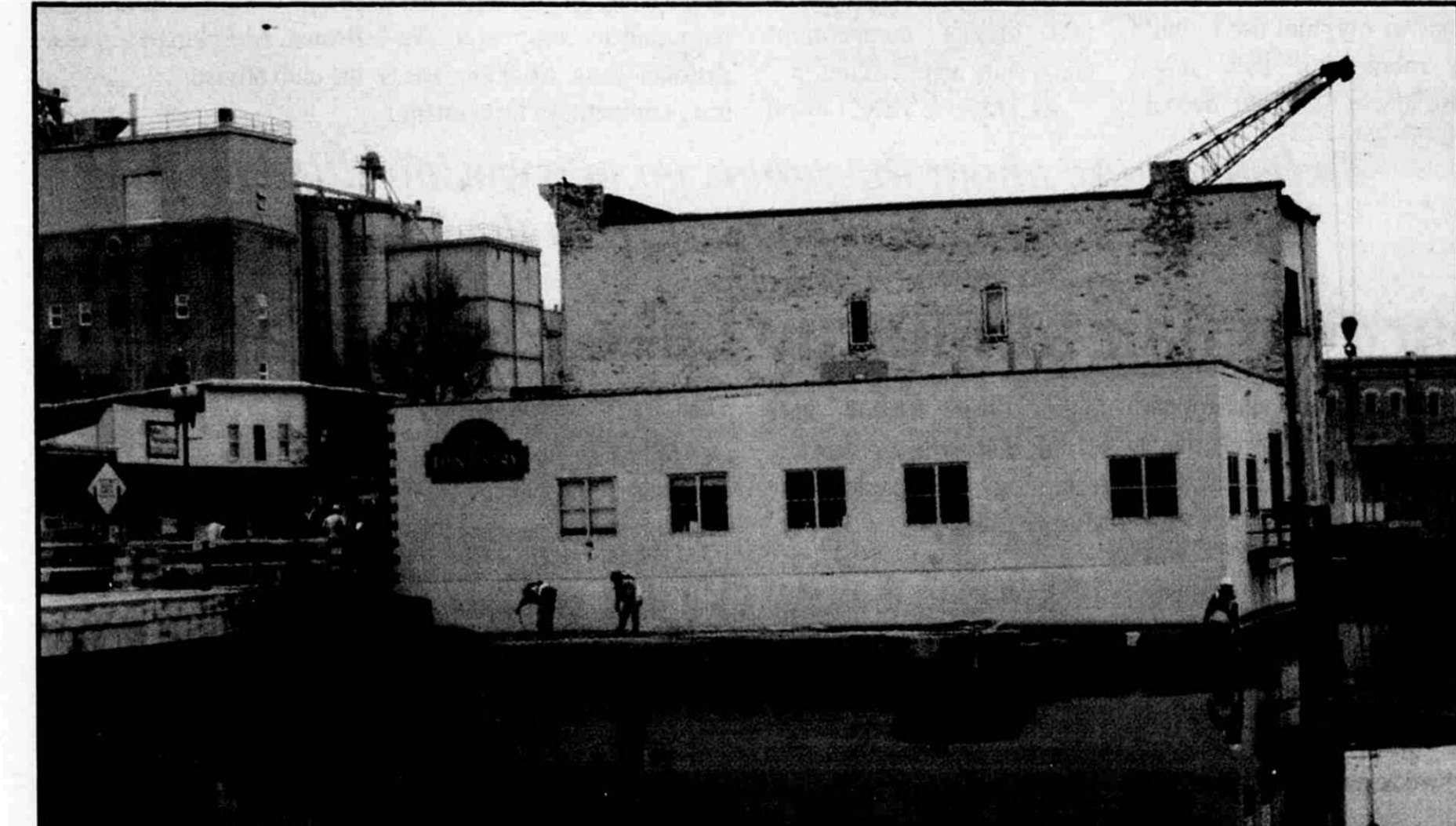
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Top right, the river has been drawn down to two feet exposing islands filled with tree limbs and stumps. Above, the barges are used by contractor Anlaan Corp. to prevent debris from falling into the river.



Jack Reedy of Rookies Sportcards exemplifies positive attitude of the area businesses toward the project.

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Week of April 19, 2010

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TUES: Hamburger on wheat (ham & cheese cracker stackers also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), tossed salad/lite dressing, fresh orange, milk.

WED: Chicken strips w/ dinner roll (tuna sandwich also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), mashed potatoes/gravy, fresh fruit, milk.

THURS: Homemade cheese pizza (chili w/ crackers also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), corn, warm baked apples, milk.

FRI: Pizza dippers w/ sauce (turkey & cheese on bun also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), fresh vegetables, fruited gelatin salad, milk.

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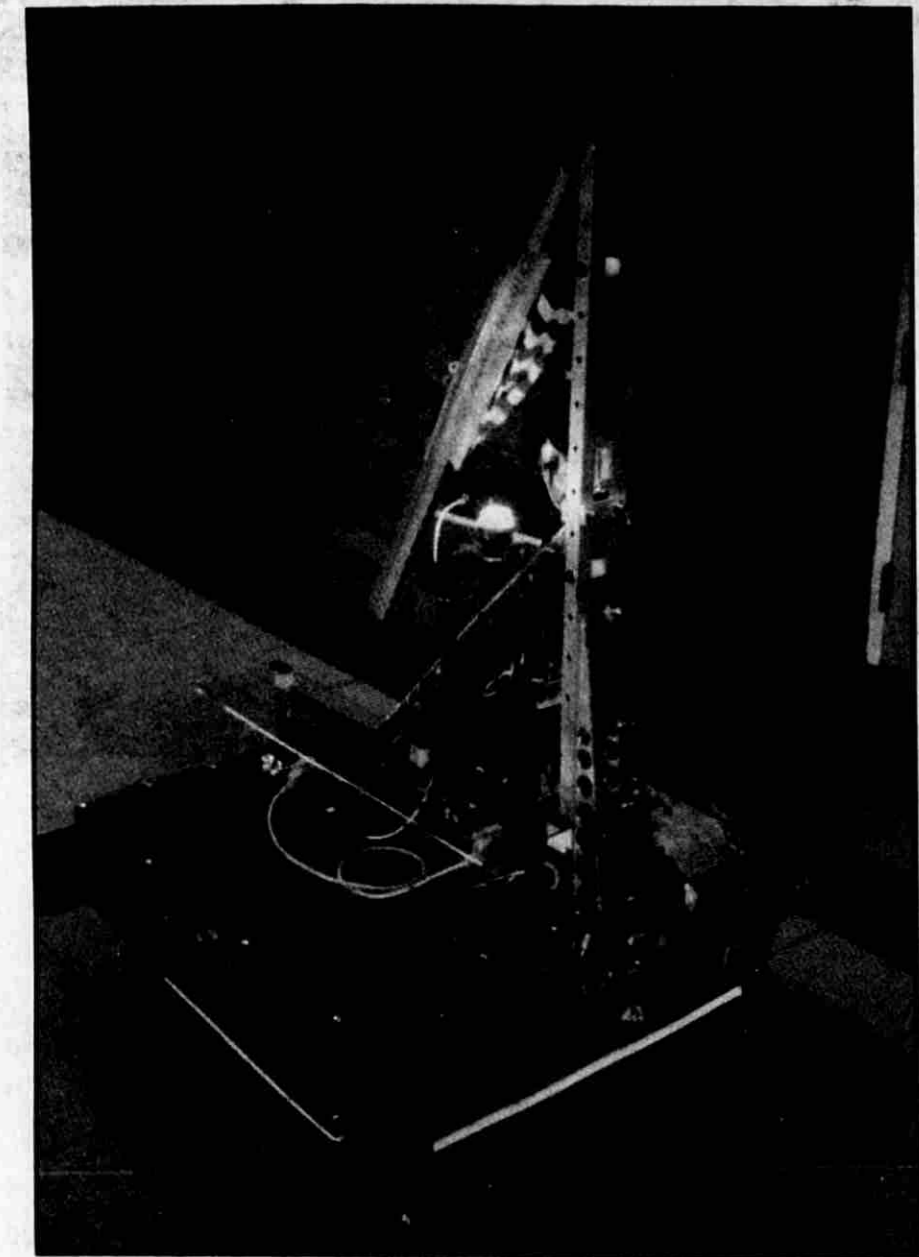
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Lowell robotic club traveling to Atlanta for world championship



The robot the club built is pictured above. The Lowell robotics club competes in the world championship in Atlanta, GA this weekend.

Picture submitted by Al Eckman

by Thad Kraus
Lowell will be one of 44 rookie teams to compete in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) robotics competition championship at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, April 15-17.

In addition, there will be 310 veteran teams that will compete in the championship.

The FIRST robotics competition is an annual competition that helps students discover the excitement of science, engineering, and technology.

FIRST gives kids the opportunity to build skill sets, like analytical thinking, to then develop what they may or may not use to build a robot; but they might use these skills to become

a scientist, engineer, or inventor. The competition kicked off in January with schools given six weeks to build a robot to compete in game-plan.

The investment for the kit of parts was \$6,500. This year it is "Breakaway."

This is a robotics game where two alliances of three teams compete, on a 27-by-54-foot field with bumps, attempting to earn points by kicking soccer balls in goals. Additional bonus points are earned for each robot suspended in air and not touching the field at the end of the match.

The Lowell Red Arrows' robotics club competed in two district competitions and a state competition.

At Traverse City, Lowell

won seven and lost five before being eliminated in the quarterfinal.

At Grand Valley State University, Lowell was eight to four and eliminated again in the quarterfinal. However, it was the highest seeded rookie team, winning the rookie all-star trophy and with it, qualifying for the state competition at Eastern Michigan University.

At Ypsilanti, Lowell was 15th out of 64 teams, winning eight and losing four competitions.

It was the highest seeded rookie team and received the rookie all-star trophy, qualifying it for the world championship in Atlanta.

The cost for the kit parts and to compete in the districts was \$6,000. The state competition investment

was \$4,000. The robotics club will pay \$5,000 to compete in Atlanta.

Funds to compete were raised through a grant from the Lowell Area Community Fund (\$6,000); a \$2,500 matching grant; monies from an anonymous donor; and through area sponsors, Autodie, White Bridge Tooling, and Lowell Area Schools.

Members of this year's team are Derek Chopp, Ben Veltman, Caleb Pratt, Nick Gibson, Matt Hess, Michael Schwarz, Calvin Warning, Josh Zalis, Scott Zalis, Jeff Odland, Marissa McGlamery, Foster Hovey, Josh Tozer, D.J. Mixon, Mary Veltman, and Mike Brown. Al Eckman serves as the club advisor.

To learn more about the robots go to www.lowellledger.com and watch the Ledger podcast from the Expo 2010!

Fun for all at annual Learning Fair at Murray Lake Elementary

Murray Lake Elementary held its annual Learning Fair on March 24. Students could be seen working late into the day putting final touches on art projects and Young Authors' stories that

would later be displayed at the Learning Fair.

The annual event is held as a way to bring attention to the quality work that these young students put so much effort into. Artwork lined

the hallways and classrooms. Young Author stories brought smiles to adults' faces. One second grader wrote in his autobiography, "When I grow up, I am going to have a boy who will play football, but I don't want a wife." Another youngster wrote, "When I grow up, I am going to have two kids and they are going to be really hard to raise."

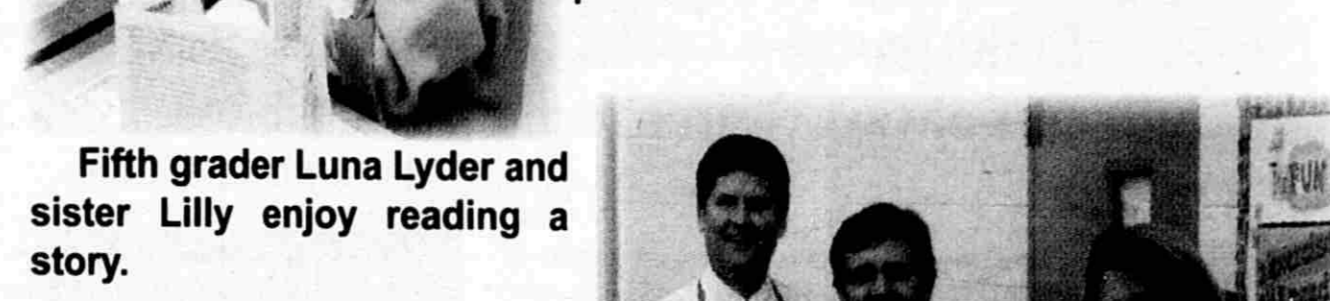
The night also included an ice cream social in the gym with live music from middle school and high school students. Dale Latva brought middle school band students to play, Tim Haan brought his jazz band, and Wendy Tenney brought her Fiddle Club.

The Murray Lake Family Links also held a raffle of themed baskets put together by each classroom at Murray

Lake. Over \$1,000 was raised that will go toward technology upgrades at Murray Lake.



Wendy Tenney and her Fiddle Club perform.



Fifth grader Luna Lyder and sister Lilly enjoy reading a story.



Murray Lake fifth grade teachers served up the ice cream.



This little girl just loved the ice cream!

School board, continued

There are many unknowns regarding the budget, revenue being one of them, but also student count and variables within our overhead all effect what our final shortfall might be," said superintendent Pratt. At this time district administrators, staff and parents are all working together to identify the needs of the district

during these uncertain financial times.

Board members approved a resolution to allow the Alto Downtown Development Authority to review, fund, and initiate construction of a track at Alto Elementary School.

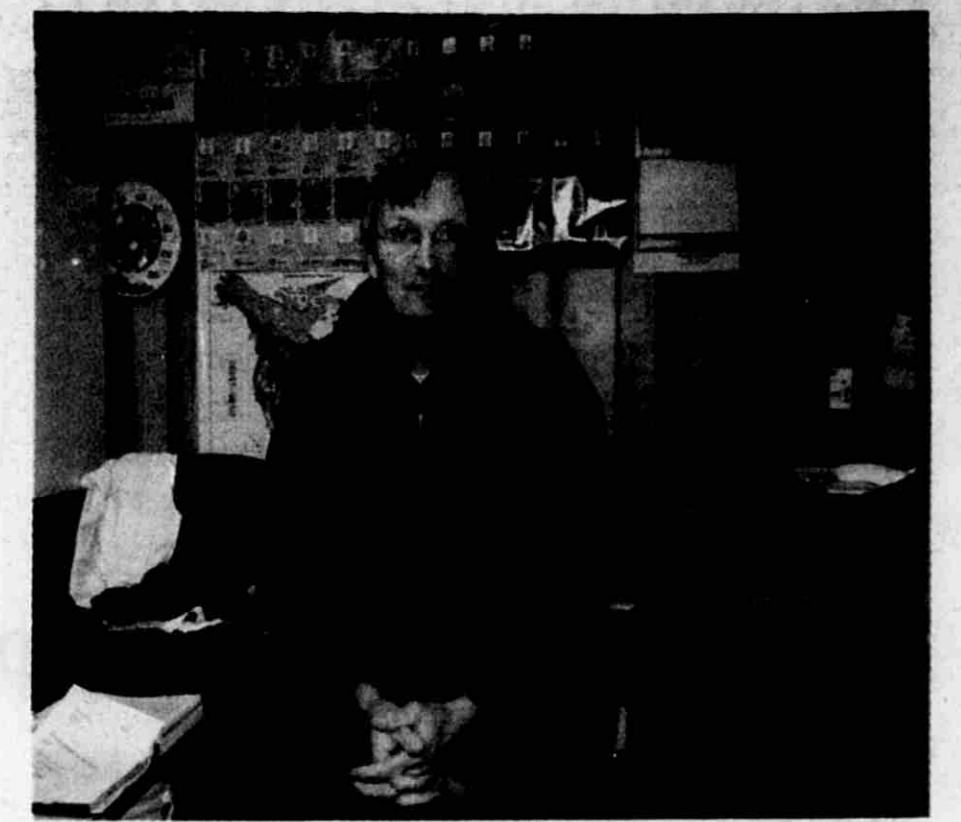
Roger Bearup shared the MEAP scores with a PowerPoint presentation.

Lowell students scored very well on the MEAP. "We are really delving into the data. We are always looking to take kids to the next level," said Bearup. Pratt concluded with, "Congratulations to everyone involved with our MEAP scores; kudos to Mr. Bearup as well."



Don DeJong

Position: Sexton for the city hall
Residence: 64th Street, Alto
Education: Bachelor's in social work from Bethel College, MN; trade school program in carpentry
Experience: Sexton as of July 1, 1995; buildings and grounds keeper for former Honey Creek Christian Homes, now Hope Network
Family: Wife Marianne; children, Benjamin, Luke and Joyanna
Hobbies: Printing, gardening



Sexton Don DeJong is a caretaker at heart.

Sexton works in sync with the seasons

by Emma Palova

Sexton Don DeJong has a caretaker's heart. He takes care of everything as if it was his own. That is why he takes pride and ownership in his job.

For DeJong, who wears two hats, work is enlightenment and enrichment. Apart from his cemetery duties, DeJong takes care of everything that is alive in the city. That is, in the plant kingdom.

So, he works in sync with

Over the years past, he had forgotten how much he loved history. But, the job of sexton and keeping cemetery records brought all that back to him. His love for history blossomed just like his flower beds.

"I started doing research to fill in blanks in record keeping," he said. "It's been enjoyable."

This love for history developed into the historical walks in the cemetery

money from the city to landscape around the signs.

"They told me to make them look pretty," he said. "So, I did."

Out of his own initiative, DeJong started taking care of the trees at Pebble Beach. He hauls a 200 gallon tank on a truck and takes water to the trees when it's hot and dry. DeJong keeps the woodchips around the trees weed free, fertilizes the trees and prunes them.

before or first thing in the morning. He has dug graves in snowstorms. And he has had two funerals in one day.

DeJong likes to be viewed as hardworking and pleasant to be around.

As far as innovations and changes, the record keeping has moved into the computer age and DeJong's attitude toward the job has changed.

"It's an honorable job taking care of a loved one in a timely fashion," he said. "Getting the grave topped and greened up, people appreciate that."

He got the idea of topping the grave to make it look finished from a couple of widows at the cemetery.

In order to be able to do

that at any time during the year, DeJong keeps top soil in the Foreman Building.

"It makes it look finished, otherwise in winter it looks like a partial hole," he said.

DeJong approaches big projects like springtime restoration with the plants' best interest at heart. He starts as early as possible cutting grass back, cleaning and getting the winter junk off the beds.

"I have a mindset in harmony with the seasons," he said. "There's never a moment that I wonder what I should do today, it's a matter of what to do first."

DeJong said even though the economy has impacted the

budget, the city recognizes that it is important to keep things alive.

His major contribution to the job is being able to do it with the available resources.

"Not too many guys would put up with an office that has no plumbing and only an outdoor port-a-john," he said.

A bad day at work for DeJong is when equipment breaks down or a major snowstorm hits. On the other hand, a good day at work is when he gets a genuine compliment or two.

"It's a highlight when people give you a pat on the back," he said. "We sure appreciate what you do."



Don DeJong wears two hats. He also takes care of all that is alive in the city, in the realm of plants.

the seasons, in harmony with the nature. DeJong tends to trees, shrubs, plants and pulls out weeds. He waters and fertilizes and mows, trims and cuts to keep the city looking beautiful.

"It's more than a job," he said. "Everything that is alive and needs to be taken care of is my responsibility."

In the early 1990s, DeJong was out of a job and barely keeping his head above the water as he was surviving using his carpentry and landscaping skills.

Then his wife Marianne saw an ad in The Lowell Ledger for a sexton and a water department assistant.

DeJong thought he was a better fit for the sexton job. He applied for the job until something better comes along. Little did DeJong know, how much he would love the job.

"I thought it would be a filler," he said. "This was such a perfect fit for me and by the time the first summer ended, I loved it."

books about civil war veterans, earliest pioneers and civic leaders. DeJong is working on his fourth book about business people and famous people buried in the cemetery.

His past experiences as a building and grounds keeper for former Honey Creek Christian Homes, now Hope Network, came in place with his new duties. Some of the early challenges of the job included learning how to use the backhoe for digging graves and getting a CDL to drive snowplow trucks. DeJong overcame them with practice.

"I never wanted to quit," he said.

He started taking care of the downtown in 1996 along with the streetscape project. DeJong mows all the parking lots, maintains drip irrigation and spray heads, and takes care of the four Welcome to Lowell signs.

"It's a nicer mix," he said. "It keeps me on the move." In 1998, DeJong got

"It adds a dynamic," he said. "It's worth it because it helps the city be a good steward. It shows that we take care of the city. Pebble Beach is a nice asset to the city."

And DeJong doesn't leave anything just hanging loose; he prioritizes every day the tasks that need to be done. On a long-term basis, he is always concerned about the health of the trees.

"Everything else is more crisis," he said.

However, if there is a funeral everything else has to wait. If the water department has a water main break and DeJong has a funeral, he gets the backhoe first.

"It's about putting people first, the family," he said.

Since July 1, 1995, DeJong has buried more than 560 people at the Oakwood Cemetery.

Quite often weather comes into play and DeJong has to dig the grave the night

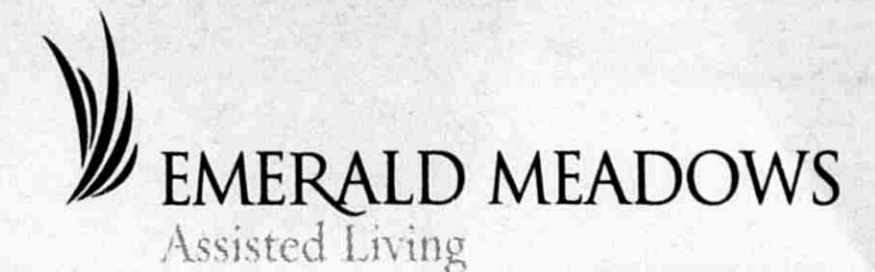
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6:30pm - The Law Office of Shawn Weera will explain Veteran Assistance Benefits and the application process

7:00pm - Justin Amash, Representative from Michigan's District #72, will update constituents on new issues affecting seniors. Bring your questions, and Representative Amash will answer!

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Dean honored by WMOA

by Thad Kraus

Lowell football coach Noel Dean was named West Michigan Officials' Association's (WMOA) 31st recipient of the Football Coach of the Year award. "I want to thank the West Michigan Officials' Association for their years of service and for treating their job as officials as a vocation," Dean said. "I also want to thank them for tolerating my sideline demeanor as a coach." The award was presented to Dean by WMOA official,

Lowell physical education teacher (39 years) and softball coach Bob Rodenhouse. "Bob has given to this community as a teacher, a coach and a father. In addition, I've appreciated his mentorship," Dean explained.

"As coaches, we're not looking for calls - instead just order," Dean said. "Good crews provide order. One of the best football crews in the state, Bob Rodenhouse is a member. Because of Bob's affiliation with Lowell, his crew's rotation never includes our games," Dean explained.

The WMOA award is related, on and off the field, to excellence in coaching and to community involvement.

Noel Dean, WMOA Coach of the Year.



Kid Scoop student reporter covers First Lady health initiative

The Kid Scoop Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Sonoma, California, sent Veronica Talbert, one of its young reporters, to the White House to cover the Student Town Hall meeting. The meeting, which was chaired by First Lady Michelle Obama,

addressed the need to tackle the challenge of childhood obesity in the U.S. The First Lady is working on a nationwide program called "Let's Move!" which inspires children of all ages to make smart and healthy decisions when it comes to food and exercise. The Let's Move! campaign will

focus on childhood obesity through approaches that mobilize public and private sector resources. Let's Move! will involve families, communities and schools, all of which impact the long-term health of children. Founder of Kid Scoop Newspaper Vicki Whiting says, "If kids are going

to take responsibility for their health, it is their own personal choices that will make the biggest difference. I think the White House is on target in taking the message of the Let's Move! campaign direct to kids." "By letting kids listen to the First Lady talk about the campaign and then

share that information kid to kid, I think it is more likely that the message will be heard and be taken on by kids. They can own the cause. Kid Scoop is about empowering young people through writing, education and participation." Kid Scoop produces a newspaper just for kids. It encourages kids between the ages of 7 and 12 to read, write, and think about the world around them. Topics featured within each edition range from American history to lessons on financial literacy. Health and fitness are also issues featured in many editions of Kid Scoop.

Like the First Lady's initiative, Kid Scoop works nationwide empowering the young voice. Its Hometown Hero competition, which took place last year, was created by 12-year-old Olivia de Raadt-St. James. The Hometown Hero competition asked children across America to write about someone they admire in their hometown. "It gave children all over America an opportunity to have their voice heard in a society that usually forgets about the value and knowledge that children can offer," says Olivia.



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More than two-thirds of active Michigan voters think legal notices should continue to be placed in your local newspaper.*

*EPIC-MRA November 2007



the ledger

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New partnership brings free health counseling to FROM

submitted by Jodie Seese

Clients with Flat River Outreach Ministries (FROM) now have access to free evidence based smoking

cessation counseling to help those who want to quit smoking. The timing is right as the State of Michigan prepares for the new smoke-

free law that goes into effect Saturday, May 1, 2010.

The program is called CAST, which stands for Counseling Assistance for

Smoking and Tobacco. It allows smokers to meet individually with a nationally certified tobacco treatment specialist. The purpose of

this one-hour appointment is to review previous quit attempts and outline the steps necessary to develop a personal plan to quit. In addition to the one-on-one counseling, participants get a resource guide that lists various forms of educational tools, classes, web sites and phone counseling options.

Another goal of the CAST program is to connect Lowell residents with other free health services such as smoking cessation classes offered locally at Lowell Family Medical Center. "It's important to maximize existing resources within the community for our clients. The timing is perfect with the new smoke-free law going into effect on May 1st. We also want our services to address the emotional needs of our clients as well as the health benefits. The CAST program does both."

Hunt for the Cure Lowell Hike scheduled for May

Hiking the beautiful forest at the Wittenbach/Wege Agriscience Center is the task, advancing one step closer toward the cure for cystic fibrosis is the goal.

The first-ever Hunt for a Cure's Lowell Hike will take place on Saturday, May 15 at the Wittenbach/Wege Center (across from the high school).

The hike will begin at 9 a.m.

Participants are asked to collect donations from friends, family, and businesses.

Those who raise \$100 or more will get a free Hunt for a Cure t-shirt.

A trophy will also be presented to the Lowell Hike's top fundraiser.

Jeffrey Odland is the chairman of the event.

The terminal illness is the number one inherited disease in the United States.

It currently affects about 30,000 children and young adults.

With cystic fibrosis, the body produces thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs, causing those affected with coughing, wheezing and serious lung infections.

It also blocks the flow of pancreatic enzymes to

the intestines, impeding digestion.

For more information or questions, Odland may be contacted at 897-7829 or contact Pete Odland (father) at 897-4151.

The Odlands can also be e-mailed at flyingant9@gmail.com or at pete@wbtooling.com

Interested participants can learn more at www.huntforacure.com

FROM was selected for the pilot program for several reasons. The agency has a ten-year track record of providing quality programs to the greater Lowell community.

FROM's programs include financial assistance and a food pantry. FROM serves a clientele that is likely to have recently lost employment and therefore access to health care.

"Often, our clients look to FROM for help after experiencing a job loss or being laid off. Many times that means loss of health insurance," noted Mary Novello, executive director

of our clients as well as the health benefits. The CAST program does both." Initiation of the CAST program began April 5. Volunteers are coordinating the program with clinical counseling donated through in-kind contributions. The team of coordinators and the counselor will evaluate the outcomes after six months. The goal is to provide at least one year of services, more if time and resources permit. Anyone interested in the program can contact Jodie Seese at 616-446-7058 for details.

Red Arrow SPORTS

Hockey wraps up the season at end of year banquet

The Lowell-Caledonia Hockey Association held its end-of-season banquet at Deer Run Golf Course serving up plenty of food and awards.

All-Conference awards were earned by Billy Watson (Caledonia), Braden McGillicuddy (Lowell), Kolin Morgan (Lowell), and Tyler Morris (Lowell).

The 2010 most valuable player (MVP) honor was given to Morris.

Watson was the team's leading scorer and the recipient of the Hobey Baker award. Lowell's Dan Tome' won the sportsmanship award.

The scholar award went to Caledonia's Jake Anderson.

Kyle Stanford (Lowell) was voted most improved.

Academic All-State honors were bestowed upon Caledonia's Jake Anderson.

The entire Lowell/Caledonia hockey team received the Academic All-State award.

The junior varsity team was also recognized for finishing third in Tier 2 and finishing second in the Tier 2 end-of-season tournament.

Party for the Planet at the zoo

John Ball Zoo's fourth annual Party for the Planet, a celebration of Earth Day, will be April 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is an important event for the zoo. Party for the Planet is a national event taking place at zoos around the country in an initiative spear-headed by the American Zoo and Aquarium Assoc. (AZA). The event is also a chance for the zoo to emphasize its role as a conservation organization that takes preservation of our world's resources very seriously.

Party for the Planet at John Ball Zoo includes over 20 of the area's conservation-minded organizations! The Association of Landscape Professionals will be giving away seedlings for planting; Grand Valley Metro Council will help kids build a "molecule"; and Kent County Public Works will even have a robot that talks to kids about the importance of recycling! Other organizations, such as the City of Grand Rapids' Environment Services, GVSU's Sustainability Initiative, The Rogue River Project and Padnos Metal & Iron, will be at the event showing off the work they

do to save the earth and its resources. But these are only a few of the highlights of a busy, exciting event.

One of the most popular features of Party for the Planet will be the easy, drive-up/one-stop recycling center. Thanks to 1-800-GOT-JUNK, Goodwill Industries, and Godwin Plumbing, guests can drop off anything from old computers, to televisions, to clothes and even compact fluorescent light bulbs for recycling without getting out of their cars!

Over 5,000 conservation minded families attend this event each year. John Ball Zoo is still accepting applications from conservation organizations to participate in the event. Interested parties should email kblyund@johnballzoosociety.org

John Ball Zoo is located on Fulton Ave. just one mile west of downtown Grand Rapids. The Zoo is open daily 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., but the Party for the Planet activities will take place until 3 p.m. For more information go to www.johnballzoosociety.org, Facebook: John Ball Zoo Society, or Twitter: JBZSociety.



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Lighthouse, a local manufacturer of dressings, dips and sauces is growing and we are seeking exceptional candidates to fill our positions. All of our positions require strong attention to detail, passion to produce superior products, and a want to learn new processes and procedures. We are an Employee Owned Company, offering a benefits package that includes 401K with match, health, dental and life insurances, and paid time off. Come join our growth in one of the following positions:

- **Machine Operators**—set up, run, troubleshoot and changeover machines. Use of PLC's, hand tools, basic computer applications to ensure that the machines are running to spec. Quality checks using signoff sheets verifying product, packaging and other criteria are met prior to shipment. Weekend work is required.
- **Material Handlers/Order Pickers**—use of handheld scanners, stand up and sit down forklifts and order tickets to pick orders ranging from a single case to full pallets of product for customer needs. Must be comfortable working in a cold environment for a whole shift. Will work a rotating four, 10 hour day shift with weekend work required.
- **Maintenance Mechanic**—troubleshoot, repair, and maintain our packaging and production systems. Must be able to demonstrate a well rounded knowledge of conveyor systems, packaging equipment and an overall mechanical aptitude. Previous experience in a similar position is required. Candidates must have the ability to work with notice on 2 or more different shifts, and on weekends on a rotating schedule.

To apply for these opportunities, email your resume to lowelljobs@lighthouseinc.com, apply online at www.lighthousefoods.com or come to 1400 Foreman St, Lowell, MI 49331. We are an equal opportunity, AA employer.



The Tale of the Lowell Troll: Part I

Once upon a time in a far, far away land known as the U.P. (Upper Peninsula of Michigan) there lived a troll. This particular troll was a very kind, loving troll. This little troll was always laughing, smiling, whistling a tune - rather off-key, but a truly happy guy was our troll. However, he was quite young and quite alone in the vast open spaces of the U.P.

Everywhere he would go, he would try to find other trolls to wile away his days with. But he always, always ended up alone. He looked everywhere for a place to belong.

The troll grew very sad because he was so alone. He smiled less and less. He rarely laughed anymore and he stopped whistling altogether.

One fine, sunny day a passerby noticed the sad little troll sitting alone with his chin resting in his upturned hands. The passerby heard the troll let out a rather loud, heavy sigh.

Now, it was unusual for the passerby to get involved in other folks' business, yet the troll's downtrodden look tugged at the heart strings of the passerby.

"Whatever is making you so sad on this fine and glorious day young troll?" the passerby asked in a gentle voice.

So lost in his thoughts was he that the troll almost did not respond. But finally, he noticed the man and with tears in his eyes he looked up and replied, "Why I have looked high and I have looked low, but I cannot find anyone who is like me."

"Ha ha ha! Is that all that is bothering you my friend?" the man laughed. "Do you not know that trolls live below the bridge?"

"What? What is that you say? Trolls live below a bridge? Oh my! Oh my, I have not looked below a bridge for a friend!" And with that bit of encouraging news the troll popped up, hugged the stranger, did a

bit of a dance, and started to whistle a little tune. "Thank you, thank you! I know I can find just the right bridge."

So thus began our troll's search for the perfect bridge, the perfect home and a place to live.

Well, as you may have guessed by now, the troll journeyed many, many days and had many a great adventure. But this troll being, oh so smart and oh so clever, wouldn't settle for just any home. This troll wanted to find the perfect bridge in a perfect town. He went looking for the "Next Place To Be!" a

magical town where anything was possible, a town where people took pride in their homes, their stores, their schools, their community, and their bridges!

And that is how our troll came to live in Lowell, Michigan. Our troll set up his home under the bridge over Main Street.

Little did our troll know what was in "store" for him in the future. Join us each week in The Ledger to learn about the adventures of our Lowell troll.

To be continued
next week...

Someone had to say it!



Thad Kraus

The Masters' moniker, "unlike any other," was probably more fitting this weekend than at any other time.

Tiger Woods returning to golf after a lengthy time away dealing with his infidelity. Media darling Phil Mickelson winning his third green jacket.

Tiger uncoiling a few expletives about his less than Tiger-esque Sunday golf performance.

Jim Nantz versing us in magnolia sweet prose as Mickelson hugged his wife and kids following his victory.

From what we can see through the eyes of golf, Mickelson has the storybook marriage, a wife, three kids and probably a dog or two.

While Nantz is going through an ugly divorce and Woods' marriage is on life

support, having Mickelson near or at the top of the leader board on 11-12 and 13 really did prove to be an "Amen" corner for those searching for some sort of spiritual atonement.

Which leads me to the "holier than thou" Augusta National Golf Club chairman Billy Payne who dressed down Tiger for his action off the course, on Wednesday, prior to the start of the Masters.

Who is Payne to judge Woods or anybody else?

It wasn't that long ago the Augusta National allowed in its first black member.

Where was Billy Payne and his pulpit then?

Probably locked away in his all white house. So, we have Woods associated forever with infidelity and Augusta National clothed in bigotry and racism.

Some might say sounds like a perfect pair. After all, misery loves company.

Not even the sweet smell of the magnolia's can cover up that stench.

If Payne is worried about role models for his grandchildren, maybe he should start by explaining away why Augusta took so long to allow blacks into its club.

The real role models for children should be their parents.

Pro athletes aren't worthy of that status. That doesn't mean they shouldn't aspire to such loftiness, but let them start by just trying to be decent human beings.

Meanwhile, Billy and everybody else should worry about whether or not they're doing right by their own children.



Sound Off! The Ledger's "Almost" anything goes column!

last week's poll result:

Is it safe for the U.S. to reduce its reliance on nuclear weapons?
YES 33%
NO 67%

How do you feel about the new smoking bans being put into effect?
To vote on the current poll question go to: thelowelledge.com

Thank you Dr. Langlois for everything you do to help animals and their owners. And thank you for the Lowell dog park. My dogs and I still love the place.



APRIL 7 - APRIL 13

- Supreme court justice John Paul Stevens announces he plans to retire this summer at age 90.
- President Obama hosts a nuclear summit with representatives from 47 nations to focus on how to better safeguard nuclear weapons materials and keep them out of the hands of terrorists.
- Polish president Lech Kaczynski and his wife are killed along with all passengers aboard when their airplane crashes while attempting to land in Russia.
- Phil Mickelson wins The Masters golf tournament. Tiger Woods comes in fourth.
- A landslide in northern Italy derails a train injuring 28 and killing nine.
- 'Designing Women' star and wife of Hal Holbrook, Dixie Carter, dies at age 70.

Kid Scoop

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch

What's so great about it?

A growing island of plastic rubbish is in the Pacific Ocean. It is twice the size of the United States!

Where is it?
This large collection of trash stretches from about 500 nautical miles off the coast of California, across the northern Pacific, past Hawaii and almost to Japan.

The original idea that people had was that it was an island of plastic garbage that you could almost walk on. It is not quite like that. It is more like a plastic soup.

Find these trashy items in the water:

- sunglasses
- toothbrush
- toy car
- pen
- comb
- plastic bottle
- cup
- plastic bag

How long is a nautical mile?
Circle every other fish below to reveal the answer.

Standards Link: Environmental Science: Know the ways in which the physical environment is stressed by human activity. Geography: Know the location of places and geographic features.

Kid Scoop Together: REUSE IT!

We can change trash into something useful. Before you toss anything into the recycle bin, think about how it could be used again. Jars can be washed and used to store things. Plastic butter tubs can be used to pack food for school lunches. Some trash can even be turned into toys!

The Mighty Scoop

- To make a scoop, cut away the bottom and one side of a plastic milk jug as shown. Cut here
- Use the scoop to toss a ball back and forth. See who can catch the ball most often in one minute!

Plastic Power Bowling

- Save six or more plastic bottles (soda, dishwashing liquid, etc.).
- Clean bottles thoroughly and remove labels.
- Place bottles in a triangle shape and try to knock down with a small ball.



Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow multiple-step directions.

Kid Scoop-doku™

Complete the grid by using all the letters in the word TRASH in each vertical and horizontal row. Each letter should only be used once in each row. Some spaces have been filled in for you.

T	S	R
R	H	S
A	R	S
S	R	H
H	S	R

Kid Scoop VOCABULARY BUILDERS

This week's word: **DETECT**

The verb **detect** means to learn of the presence of something.

My teacher doesn't like to detect litter on the playground after lunch.

Try to use the word **detect** in a sentence today when talking with your friends and family members.

Write On!

Cleverly Re-Use

Think about things you throw in the trash, like boxes and plastic bags. How could you use these in different ways and NOT throw them away?

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Not good when other offer! Good on initial presentation

LOOK AT ME NOW!!!

The Laurels of Kent is pleased to be sending 4 guests home after their short-term therapy stay. Margaret Hentschel (pictured left), Ann Marvin (pictured left middle), Earl Schafer (pictured right middle) and Ruth Hembree (pictured right) are among the 94% of rehab guests at The Laurels of Kent that reach their goal to return home.



The 4 guests smile with their therapists before saying their goodbyes. When asked about their stay: Margaret Hentschel stated "It is amazing the respect and courtesy the staff gives to each person", Ann Marvin replies "It is the best therapy I've ever had", Earl Schafer smiles and says "The attitude of the therapists made significant improvements on my recovery", and Ruth Hembree exclaims "I don't know of any place with nicer people, good service and companionship."

Congratulations Margaret, Ann, Earl and Ruth!

THE LAURELS OF KENT

Our current Rehab to Home Rate is 94%!

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www.laurelsokent.com

Kids Can Help!
Here are five simple ways to help stop the plastic soup from growing.

- Use reusable cups instead of disposable ones.
- Use reusable bags when you go to the grocery store.
- Pack your lunches in reusable containers. Bring them home, wash them and use them again.
- Pick up litter you see on the street, in a park, anywhere.
- Put anything that can be recycled into the recycle bin.

Extra! Extra! Prefix Hunt

Look through the newspaper for words with a prefix such as re-, un-, pre-, ex-, con-, or com-. Separate the word and its prefix and write a definition. Bonus—find words with prefixes not listed here.

Standards Link: Vocabulary: Identify base words and affixes.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Follow each path to find out what new products can be made from different kinds of trash.

Standards Link: Environmental Science: Identify different resources and classify them.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. Then look for each word in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

GARBAGE
PACIFIC
PLASTIC
YACHT
SATELLITE
FLOATING
NAUTICAL
TRASH
SAIL
GYRE
HAWAII
PREFIX
PACK
WALK
IDEA

GLACITUANS
FLOATINGAA
IERBTHCAET
IGYREIDEAE
AAXIFERPHL
WBKIASWSGL
ARCITSALPI
HAAEPRLIAT
PGPTTCKHLE

Standards Link: Letter sequencing; Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Discovery News

Look through the newspaper for an article about a discovery. Summarize the article telling, who, what, when, where, why and how.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Summarize informational text identifying main ideas and supporting details.

JOHN SILVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REPORT CARD 2009-2010

TEACHER: MR. SCURVY

STUDENT NAME: REDBEARD

Mathematics	C+	Knots and Planks	D+
Social Studies	D-	Navigation	D-
Science	D	Swashbuckling	F
Language Arts	D	Deck Swabbing	F

Why was the pirate's report card all wet?

ANSWER: Because it was below C level!

Hildenbrand launches State Senate bid

Teaming up with campaign volunteers to knock on doors and talk with voters in Grand Rapids, Dave Hildenbrand formally announced his candidacy to represent the residents of Michigan's 29th State Senate District.

"Attracting jobs. Getting spending under control in

Lansing. Reforming our government. These are the concerns I hear from taxpayers and these are my goals for Lansing," Hildenbrand said. "It's not a complicated agenda, but it is common sense. It's why I am running for the state senate."

A three-term Republican state representative from

Lowell, Hildenbrand is running to fill the senate seat currently held by state senator Bill Hardiman who is term limited. Hildenbrand is a life-long resident of Kent County.

"I was born and raised in Kent County and today I'm raising my family here,"

Hildenbrand said. "While the challenges facing Michigan are clear to all of us in our community, I side with the hardworking families of Kent County who are fed up with the mess in Lansing, but who won't give up on what Michigan can be."

In announcing his candidacy, Hildenbrand outlined a 10-point "Let's Fix Michigan" plan aimed at attracting jobs, reforming Lansing and saving taxpayer dollars. It includes:

- Fixing the Michigan Business Tax (MBT) and getting rid of the MBT surcharge.
- Eliminating lifetime health care benefits for lawmakers.
- Applying the "Pay as you go" rule to state government.
- Requiring all public employees to pay a share of their taxpayer funded health care benefits.

• Putting in place a 4-year limit on welfare for able-bodied adults in Michigan.

• Preserving Michigan's share of federal road funding to fix our roads.

• Directing money saved through reforms and audits toward vital priorities like schools, public safety and to taxpayers.

• Requiring Lansing to pass the state budget by July 1, like schools, or lawmakers do not get paid.

• Opening the budget process to the public.

• Posting all state government spending online to prevent corruption, waste and inefficiency.

Hildenbrand ran for state representative in Kent County and was elected to the Michigan House of Representatives in 2004. He was overwhelmingly re-elected by voters in Kent County in 2006 and 2008 and was elected floor leader by his Republican colleagues in the State House. He is a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church and has been the only endorsed candidate in all his previous campaigns by Right to Life of Michigan.

An avid outdoorsman, Hildenbrand is a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association, and active in Republicans for Environmental Protection, Safari Club International, the Kent County Farm Bureau, and Kent County 4-H.

Hildenbrand is a graduate of Michigan State University. He is married to Sarah and they have a young daughter, Jane.

"I'm starting this campaign on the doorsteps of taxpayers because it's where I've spent a lot of time over the last six years and where I'll be spending even more time in the weeks ahead," Hildenbrand said. "I want to hear from people what they expect from their government in Lansing. I want to share with them what I stand for and what I'll do as their next state senator. And, I plan to ask them for their vote."

Girls Night Out
 Thursday, April 15, 2010
 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
 Kick Off Bridge Construction at Girl's Night Out

<p>ADVANCED EYECARE PROFESSIONALS 1335 W Main Stop in for our "Eyewear Style Show" and chocolate covered strawberries, trendy eyewear and accessories!</p> <p>AIC INSURANCE SERVICES 219 E Main Celebrate our 1yr anniversary in Lowell with Bridge beverages & ask insurance questions you always wanted to know and were afraid to ask!!</p> <p>ALL WEATHER SEAL 319 E Main Play the slot machines for a chance to win windows for your entire house or sign up to win \$15,000 worth of windows or siding</p> <p>ARCTIC INC. HEATING & COOLING 220 W Main Sign up for drawing of Gift bag with sweatshirt, hat and coupons.</p> <p>BALL'S SOFTEE CRÈME 503 E Main Small Turtle Sundae for \$2.50</p> <p>BERNARD'S ACE HARDWARE 1601 W Main \$5 rebate - gallons of Ace & Benjamin Moore, 5 seed packets for \$1.00 and enter to win a gas grill!</p> <p>CHIMERA DESIGN FINE JEWELRY 208 E Main No sales tax on purchased items! Meet Ella and taste Evelyn Bay coffee samples!!!</p> <p>COLLECTOR'S KORNER 218 W Main Ain't no sense going anyplace else, Collectors Korner has been accredited by the BBB®</p> <p>COMPUTER REHAB 505-B W Main \$10 off service</p> <p>COUSINS' HALLMARK/RIVER HOLLOW 223 W Main Treats and refreshments, 25% of any reg. priced item. In store super sale items. Free gift with purchase!</p> <p>CURTIS CLEANERS 1410 W Main 50% off Silk Blouses good all day on the day of GNO!</p> <p>CURVES FOR WOMEN-LOWELL @ PEP TALK 207 E Main Curves is looking for 25 more women to take part in our Fitness Study. \$30 for 30 days. After completion, you have option of using the \$30 to join or get a refund!</p> <p>D & L TAX SERVICE & BOOKKEEPING 220 W Main \$5 off next year's tax return!</p> <p>DIGITAL IMAGE SIGNS & GRAPHICS 508 W Main Enjoy wine and cheesecake.</p> <p>DOVETAIL ANTIQUES 211 W Main Purchase a fun "girl power" decal, for a special price of \$2 each, and be entered into a drawing for a \$25 visa gift card!</p> <p>EJA' SALON, INC. 204 W Main \$5 eyebrow waxes!</p> <p>FIRE AND WATER ART! 219 W Main Fabulous drawing for prizes enter 5-8 and drawing is at 8 - must be present to win! Decorate YOUR Hard Hat as our featured activity 5-8 PM</p> <p>FLAT RIVER COTTAGE 317 E Main Enter the 6 drawings for gift bags with items from our store!</p>	<p>FLAT RIVER GRILL 201 E Main 50% off regular priced appetizers!</p> <p>GARY'S COUNTRY MEATS 205 E Main \$1 off per pound on all home made jerky on Girls' Night Out and free samples.</p> <p>GIGGLES & GUMDROPS 217 W Main 10% off entire purchase for Girls Night Out</p> <p>GLASS HOUSE DESIGNS 215 W Main Join us for champagne and chocolate as we debut a brand new line of jewelry.</p> <p>HEARTHSTONE DESIGN STUDIO, LLC 218 E Main 25% off on all in stock items</p> <p>HUNAN GARDEN'S LA TE DA'S 11656 E Main Happy Hour all night and 15% off all food entrées!</p> <p>LARKIN'S FINE FOOD & COCKTAILS 301 W Main Pecan Cherry Chicken Salad with Blue Cheese crumbles for \$6.99, Mike's Margarita Mix for \$3.00</p> <p>LOWELL AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM 325 W Main 10% off gift shop items.</p> <p>LOWELL BEER STORE 213 E Main Get a free pen and \$1.00 off any bottle of wine Girls' Night Out!</p> <p>MODERN PHOTOGRAPHICS 216 W Main Girls get your photo taken and get a FREE 4x6 each. Enter to win a portrait package worth \$150.</p> <p>NIGHTFOREST JEWELRY 210 W Main 10% off anything...in the store!</p> <p>PEP TALK 207 E Main Buy one garment Get 2ND half off and all gift items are 30% off</p> <p>ROOKIES SPORTCARDS PLUS 106 W Main 20% off board games and comic hardcover books and trade paperbacks!</p> <p>SALON 206 206 E Main \$5 hand paraffin dips, eyebrow waxes, 10 min scalp massages and 10 min chair massages. Check out ALL our great in store specials!</p> <p>SNEAKER'S 211 E Main Happy Hour special 5-9 for women only!</p> <p>SP FINE BATH & BODY @ THE CHAMBER 113 Riverwalk Plaza New SP *FREE Line (no chemicals!) Natural Deodorant plus MORE! Food, Fun, & Deals!!!</p> <p>SPRINGROVE VARIETY 123 W Main 25% off entire store, excluding "Super Saver Yarn"</p> <p>THE HANGER 209 W Main In store specials!</p> <p>YMCA - LOWELL 1335 W Main Start your GNO off right with ZUMBA! Join us at the YMCA for a Zumba class from 4-5pm. Please call 897-8445 to reserve your spot! Stop by during the evening to get in a drawing for 1/2 off a personal training session</p>
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