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50 CENTS



## A houseful of windows will help ease some of the hardship for area woman

by Emma Palova

Shar Hamilton of Portage has received a houseful of windows from All-Weather Seal in their annual giveaway.

Hamilton was chosen as the lucky recipient because of the hardship she has experienced over the last year.

Hamilton, who worked at a hospital for 27 years, had two heart aneurisms last year.

"She's lucky to be alive," said marketing director Megan McGuire.

Hamilton can no longer work and she can't lift anything more than a gallon of milk. She is currently living off of her savings and it is highly unlikely that Hamilton will get social security.

She filled out an entry form for a drawing at the Kalamazoo Farmers' Market and All Weather Seal contacted her.

"She was in tears," said McGuire. "The woman really wanted to get an estimate on her windows, but she could not afford even one."

Hamilton's windows are original from the 60s and one window was so bad that the glass was falling out of the frame.

"She had someone help



Megan McGuire, Shar Hamilton and Heather Phillips.

her put wood putty on it to keep it from falling completely out of [her] home," said McGuire.

One of the employees nominated Hamilton for the

giveaway. "We like to help people who are in need and this woman had fallen on some very hard times this past year. We believe giving back to the community is the

right thing to do," said owner Scott McDowell.

All-Weather Seal has been generously donating windows for the last 30 years based on hardship of

the recipients. The windows will be installed in four to six weeks.

The annual giveaway is worth \$15,000.



Martha Coons is pictured with the Ledger in front of the Lilly Library in Florence, MA.

## Ledger helps Bay State reader stay connected with community

by Emma Palova

Martha Coons has been getting her hometown paper ever since she left for college after graduating from Lowell High School in 1971.

The Ledger has been her companion and the paper has followed her around to Wisconsin and later to the east coast.

Coons, who studied history at the University of Michigan, wanted to live on the coast to be closer to American history museums. She lived in Boston from 1977 to 1984.

"At that time east coast was considered much more historical," said Coons. "I didn't appreciate Michigan as much."

After Boston, came Williamstown in the rural

western part of Massachusetts and later North Hampton near Springfield.

Over the years, the Ledger has helped the Coons keep track of who got married, babies and deaths.

"I don't recognize as many names now," said Coons.

Her dad David Coons, a lifelong Lowell resident, is one of the oldest WWII veterans. So, Martha Coons gets to read about him around every Memorial Day.

Her favorite sections are "Along Main Street," "Looking Back Through the Ledgers" and news.

"It's important to me that I keep in touch with Lowell," said Coons. "Ledger helps me stay connected with the community."

Coons, who works at the Springfield library on programming for teens, would like to come back to Lowell more often.

When she does come to Michigan, the family usually gathers up north at a cottage. Her own family with three sons is also scattered all over the United States.

"They do like Michigan," she said.

Her sister Laura Bakken who lives in Terra Haute, Indiana, is also a faithful subscriber.

They both received the initial subscriptions from their parents Betty and David Coons.

Martha Coons said she will continue to subscribe and she likes the paper as it is. "You all are doing a good job," she said.

# DNR reminds snowmobile and ORV operators to have safe winter riding season

Winter is a beautiful time to experience Michigan's outdoors. Whether riding a portion of Michigan's groomed snowmobile trails or riding an off-road vehicle (ORV) to a favorite remote ice-fishing hole, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds riders to always exercise safety.

With more than 6,200 miles of designated groomed snowmobile trails located throughout state and federal forests, and many acres of privately owned lands, Michigan is one of the top snowmobiling destinations in North America. While the DNR does not recommend that

riders operate on the ice, Michigan's 11,000-plus lakes also tempt operators to ride on the frozen surfaces.

"With Michigan's riding opportunities also comes inherent risks associated with motorsports," said Gary Hagler, chief of the DNR's Law Enforcement Division. "It is each rider's responsibility to ensure their safety and the safety of their passengers and bystanders."

There are several common factors with snowmobile and ORV accidents in Michigan. The DNR urges snowmobilers and ORV operators to take simple precautions this winter

season. Excessive speed, alcohol use, inexperience, failure to wear helmets, operating on roadways and unfamiliarity with terrain are some of the most common factors involved in accidents. Many fatal accidents have one or more common factors as contributing causes.

Snowmobilers and ORV operators are reminded to:

Never operate under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

Slow down;

Wear safety equipment such as a helmet, eye protection, protective clothing and insulated boots and gloves;

Always operate with

the flow of traffic and stay as far to the right side of any legal road or trail;

Always keep a machine in top mechanical condition;

Never ride alone, and always leave a travel plan with someone;

Avoid, when possible, operating on frozen bodies of water;

Avoid operating in a single file when operating on frozen bodies of water;

Wear a winter flotation suit whenever operating on the frozen surfaces of water;

Always be alert and avoid fences and low-strung wires;

Safe snowmobiling, continued, page 3



## along main street

### WORKS IN PROGRESS ART EXHIBITION

This January LowellArts! will host an art exhibition with a new twist - all art on display is purposely incomplete. The Works in Progress Art Exhibition runs from Jan.

10 to Feb. 5. Gallery hours are Tues.-Fri., 10:00 am to 6:00 pm and Sat., 1:00-4:00 pm. LowellArts! is located at 149 S. Hudson, Lowell. For more information call LowellArts! at 616-897-8545.

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.

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### Earth-friendly laundry tips

(StatePoint) For an eco-friendly laundry day, consider the following:

Be sure to run only full loads of wash. According to Discovery's Planet Green, the average household would reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by 99 pounds a year by running only full loads.

Opt for cold water when possible, and consider a natural gas tankless water heater, which heats only the water you need when you need it. And with a natural gas dryer, you can dry on average two loads of clothes for the same cost as one electric dryer load.

Avoid conventional detergents containing harmful pollutants. Instead, use homemade or natural products. Remember -- you don't need to dirty up the planet when you clean your clothes.



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# Charter school reform bill signed by governor

Parents and students will have more options about where to attend school under landmark charter school reform legislation signed into law by the governor Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2011.

The bill signing marks an important milestone in efforts to transform Michigan's educational system into a performance-based system that puts student needs first. It follows

the successful passage of teacher tenure reform legislation that will focus on a new system of educator effectiveness, giving teachers and administrators the tools to help guide students to success and academic growth.

Joined at a bill signing ceremony by Senate Education Committee Chair Phil Pavlov, House Education Committee Chair Tom McMillin and other

legislators and educational choice advocates, the governor hailed the reform as an overdue step forward that will help Michigan attract the top charter school operators from across the nation and encourage more choice at the local level.

"Charter schools play a critical role in providing Michigan students and parents with alternative educational options," Snyder said. "This reform

gives families who are trapped in failing schools more freedom to take control of their future."

Public charter schools were an innovative concept when they were first introduced in Michigan in 1994, but because they were new, the number of charter schools that could be established was limited. The governor called on lawmakers to lift this

restriction when he rolled out his education reform plan in April, pointing out that the cap was arbitrary and long wait-lists show the need for action.

Senate Bill 618, sponsored by Pavlov, amends the state school code to lift and eventually remove the cap currently limiting the number of university-authorized charter schools. With this change, the number of charter schools that may be authorized will raise to 300 through 2012 and 500 through 2014, after which the cap will be completely removed.

The legislation also requires charter schools to meet the same rigorous standards as other public schools, which means they must comply with laws concerning participation in state assessments, student growth models and accountability standards. S.B. 618 increases transparency by requiring

charter schools to make contract information available to the public.

"Lifting Michigan's charter school cap gives hope to thousands of parents who will now be empowered to choose the education they believe is best for their children," said Pavlov, of St. Clair Township. "Today marks a historic moment in Michigan and I'm proud to be part of it."

Charter schools are public schools. They may not charge tuition and they must accept anyone who applies to attend without screening out students based on race, religion, sex or test scores. If the number of students who apply for admission exceeds enrollment capacity, students are randomly selected to attend.

S.B. 618 is now Public Act 277 of 2011. A full description of the bill may be found online at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov).

# Safe snowmobiling, continued

Always look for depressions in terrain;

Only carry passengers when the machine is designed to do so;

Ensure that headlights and taillights are on at all times;

When approaching an intersection, come to a complete stop, raise up off the seat and look for oncoming traffic;

Always check the weather conditions before departure; and

Bring a cell phone and other basic safety gear (something to start a fire with, rescue throw rope, self-rescue ice spikes, tow strap, flashlight, compass, blanket, etc.).

"Operators should respect the speeds that snowmobiles and ORVs are capable of attaining, and the demands that operating over snow and ice pose," Hagler said. "Safety education is a crucial factor in safe and responsible snowmobile and ORV operation. Safety education is required for youths and highly recommended for all others."

Persons interested in finding a safety course, go online to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr) and click on the "Education & Outreach" menu and then select "Hunter Education & Recreational Safety Classes." Safety training classes are offered in a classroom setting and some are available online.

The DNR does not recommend operating on the frozen surface of water; however, the DNR recognizes that it is a popular activity. If an ice crossing is unavoidable there are several safety concerns operators need to be aware of in the event they fall into the freezing water.

Once a person is

suddenly immersed in freezing water, their respiratory system will automatically and instantly have an uncontrollable inhaling gasp reflex because of the cold shock. If initially under the water, individuals will inhale water into their lungs. It is critical to get your head above the surface and first get your breathing under control which will take at least one minute. If you do not control your breathing the chances of drowning sooner are exponentially increased.

Once you have your breathing under control, get to the edge of the solid ice you were at before you fell in because you know that ice held your weight at one point. Secure your arms on top of the edge of good ice. Use your arms to lift your body up and kick your feet hard in a swimming motion while leaning over the good ice. Get your upper body up onto the solid ice and roll away from the open water. Using self-rescue ice spikes, which typically consist of two plastic cylinders with spikes on one end connected with a line, can greatly assist in pulling yourself out of the water onto safe ice. Once you are out, do not stand up immediately or you will have an increased risk

of falling through thin ice again. Once far enough away from the open water, begin to crawl away and eventually walk.

If you're unable to get yourself out of the water ensure your arms, and as much of your upper body, are out as far as possible. Reach out as far as you can onto the ice and do not move your arms. This will hopefully freeze your clothes to the ice and keep you from falling farther back in and increase the chances of being rescued. You will lose effective movement in roughly 10 minutes, but you can remain conscious for up to two hours. You should yell or signal for help.

Do not remove any protective gear such as a helmet or jacket. Your appropriate protective gear (riding clothes, suit and helmet) will offer some degree of flotation and provide insulating qualities. Helmets, while not marketed as a Personal Flotation Device (PFD), are partially constructed of foam liners and offer about the same amount

of buoyancy as a PFD. Wearing a helmet will also help retain body heat around your brain which would otherwise be lost quicker, hastening unconsciousness, if not wearing a helmet.

There are free safety videos available online to illustrate what to expect and how to react in cold water immersion scenarios. These videos may be viewed at: [www.yukonman.com/cold\\_water.asp](http://www.yukonman.com/cold_water.asp)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

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# ask kathryn



Kathryn Denhouter Ph.D.

This article is about a "New Approach to Pain." This is based on a book by Les Fehmi, Ph.D. and Jim Robbins entitled Dissolving Pain. The previous articles have been about the "Role

of Attention in Pain," The Domain of Pain is Mainly in the Brain" and "The Conventional Understanding of Pain." First and foremost, it is important to remember

that any sudden, severe pain should be first attended to by a doctor since this is our body's signal that something needs to be addressed. Daily pain, however, is something that we can learn to manage.

"How is it that you can dissolve pain simply by changing the way you pay attention," one might ask. The answer is in your brain since it is the "master control center" that governs the nervous system. The nervous system determines muscle tension, galvanic skin response, our heart rate, breathing and many other areas of our physical functioning. The brain is where the pain experience is generated and where we can intervene in the pain network. That intervention is about how we focus on the pain. Nothing illustrates this more than the case studies and research on "phantom limb pain." Ninety-five percent of amputees complain of such pain and it can continue throughout a lifetime. Even though the limb is gone, their brain registers pain.

Neurofeedback of EEG biofeedback quickly gained momentum in the 1970s. This approach is based on the theory that people can control their brain waves. Unfortunately, hype got ahead of science and this approach received a lot of criticism from the scientific community. Fortunately, since the mid 1990s it has made a comeback with the help of some very sophisticated computer programs. Research published in the European Journal of Neuroscience confirmed that individuals were able to calm and regulate the electrical activity in their brains in an ongoing way.

Much of the suffering from chronic pain is unnecessary and has to do with how we pay attention.

The next article will discuss the specifics of how to make our attention flexible so that we can reduce the intensity and duration of pain. If you have any questions about this article please contact me via email at kathryndenhouter@gmail.com

# financial focus



Christopher C. Godbold

## What does investment landscape look like in 2012?

As an investor, you know that 2011 was a somewhat "choppy" year, with the financial markets going through many ups and downs. So what can you expect in 2012?

As baseball Hall of Famer Yogi Berra is quoted as saying: "It's hard to make predictions — especially about the future." And these words are certainly applicable for anyone who would like an accurate forecast of the investment climate.

Yet we do know of some factors that may affect your portfolio in the months ahead. Here are a few of them:

- Strong business fundamentals — This past year, all the noise about the debt ceiling debate, the size of the U.S. deficit and the European financial situation tended to drown out some fairly good news: U.S. businesses' balance sheets were

strong for the most part, borrowing costs remained low, and corporate profits were good — and corporate profitability remains a key driver of stock prices. Heading into 2012, these fundamentals continue to look positive, which may bode well for investors.

- Europe's debt crisis — Greece's economic problems made a lot of news in 2011, but they weren't the end of the story in Europe, as major financial difficulties also face Italy, Spain, Portugal and Ireland. It's by no means clear how these problems will be resolved, so don't be surprised to see them lead to intermittent, if short-lived, shocks to the markets.

- Election-year patterns — As you're well aware, we're voting for

Financial Focus, continued, page 6

## Planning A Wedding?



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# viewpoint

## to the editor

### our days are numbered

To the Editor,  
From time to time we're favored with rather lugubrious, back slapping articles from Senator Carl Levin. His recent posting in the Lowell Ledger covering the Enron fiasco (quite some time ago) rambled on for over 762 words. In the meantime Senator Levin has conveniently overlooked the recent Solyndra hiccup that has cost the U.S. taxpayers 530

million dollars. These funds were literally squandered under the guise of "green energy." Then there's Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which are government housing funding agents, that lost 11 million in the last quarter and manage to give out 35 million in executive bonuses. Meanwhile, the Senate is preparing to block the Keystone Pipeline from

Canada, which would increase our natural energy supply and lower gas prices making us less dependent on the likes of Saudi Arabia. The Canadians are getting a little tired of waiting for Levin and his buddies and are talking with China that could result in that oil being diverted to Asia. Oh! Don't forget about the congressional insider trading scandal. Only the U.S. Congress is exempt from this type of illegal trading. Senator Levin is tireless in his diatribes about him-

self and his wonderful efforts, while the U.S. Senate has failed to pass a budget in the last 1,000 days (2.8 years). Our Congress and Presidents Bush and Obama have squandered our hard earned tax dollars on every scheme known to mankind. All the while, most Americans work diligently to live within their budgets. The USA is 14 trillion dollars in debt (14,000,000,000). Our days are numbered!  
Charles V. Bernard  
Lowell

## outdoors



### archery

Dave Stegehuis

Organized sports draw the interest of people of all ages. Participation begins at increasingly younger ages. Pint size players swarm gymnasiums, fields, and diamonds across the country. Friday nights in the fall are reserved for showdowns between high school football rivals from big cities to small towns. In the winter basketball brings the action inside. A half a dozen other sports fill in spaces in between. There is something for everybody.

sophomore from a Michigan high school recently won the World Championship of the Archery in Schools Program. Archery does require specialized equipment. Cost can be very reasonable but like with most sports, purchasing the latest and greatest technology can run the cost up quickly, but this is not necessary to enjoy shooting a bow.

Most of these activities require a high level of management, expensive facilities, and equipment. There are valuable lessons to be learned by the participants, and the fans enjoy following the exciting competition. As we grow older and move on in life, continued participation in the majority of organized sports becomes less practical for most of us.

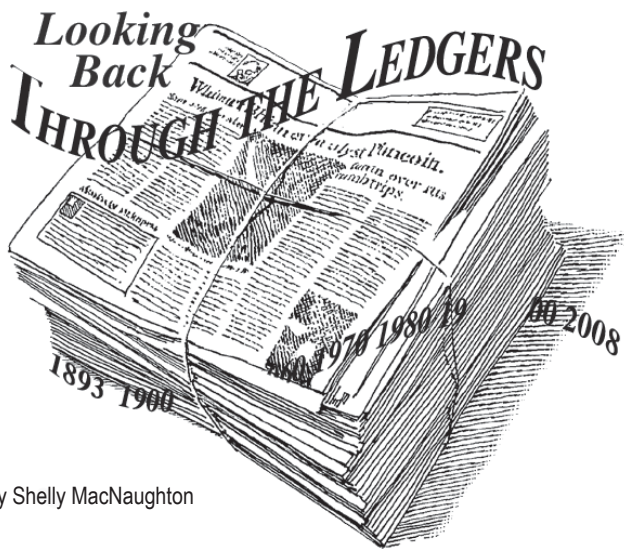
Safety is always a primary concern. Drawing and aiming a bow takes physical effort and mental focus, so the shooter is always in control of the bow. Established ranges at archery dealers and sportsman clubs provide safe places to shoot. It is usually possible to shoot in the backyard by applying common sense and taking proper precautions.

Archery can be practiced by those of any age, gender, and size, as well as those who are handicapped. It is a sport which can be learned at any time and continued throughout one's adult life. Mastering a few basic principles of form will allow the shooter to achieve competence through consistent practice.

Archery can be a gateway sport for hunting. At our house, we can safely set of a number of different targets in our yard several months before hunting season and try to practice every day. This sounds like work, but is fun and challenging, and we would shoot regularly even if we didn't buy a license in the fall.

There are competition archery matches, but competing with oneself provides motivation to get better. Five hundred schools in Michigan offer archery instruction through the Archery in Schools Program. The National Archery in Schools Program is managed by the D.N.R. and supported by private business and conservation organizations. A

Archery is not a high profile sport and could easily be overlooked by someone seeking an activity which is fun, inexpensive, and can be enjoyed over a lifetime. I took my wife golfing when we were in high school, and that was the first and last time she played. I also took her bow hunting then, and fifty years later she still is excited about spending time in the fall woods with her bow.



By Shelly MacNaughton

Monday by relatives of Paul Thomas, 92-year-old Vergennes Twp. farmer, of whom nothing has been heard since he disappeared from his home December 18. The family expected that he would return within a day or two after his departure; hence, at first were not much alarmed at his absence. But now anxiety is felt as to his safety. Mr. Thomas, who is 5 1/2 feet tall and weighs 160 lbs, wore a black overcoat and gray cap when he was last seen.

### 50 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger December 4, 1962

The application of the City of Lowell to extend sewers into the new subdivision, being constructed by the Lowell Construction Co. on the west side of the city, has been denied by the State Health Department. The Board of Education of the Lowell Area Schools has hired an architect to begin preliminary drawings for a new 600-student high school.

### 25 Years Ago The Grand Valley Ledger January 7, 1987

David M. Ondersma, president and chief executive officer of First Michigan Bank Corporation, announced the affiliation of State Savings Bank of Lowell with the corporation. The acquisition was completed on December 29, 1986. Forrest Buck passed away Monday at age 79. Affectionately known as "Bucky," it is difficult to think of him without also thinking about the Lowell Showboat. From nearly the first production in 1932, Bucky was a big part of the Lowell Showboat. He served in several capacities. He was a member of the chorus, an endman, the interlocutor, a board member and historian for the famed Showboat.

### 120 Years Ago The Lowell Journal January 6, 1892

There is a report afloat in this and other communities, the substance of which is as follows: That Miss Carrie Thomas, of Cannonsburg, corrected in some manner a pupil and the child was choked to death. This is a mistake, as she is not teaching school. The only teaching she has done this school year, was to take the place of Mrs. Gibbs, nee Cora Foster, in the Cannonsburg schools for a short time, when she was unable to perform her duties owing to her poor health. The report is pure falsehood, without any foundation. People are hereby cautioned in reference to reporting the same.

### 100 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger January 4, 1937

At the regular meeting Monday evening, Jan. 1, the street committee and special assessors submitted a report and recommended the paving of Main and Bridge streets from Hudson to Washington. Accepted and adopted. A number from here attended the New Year's party at Grattan Centre Monday evening. Misses Gerty and Pearl Pottruff spent Christmas with their brother Clare at Owendale. They also visited at Detroit, Pontiac and Ann Arbor before returning home.

### 75 Years Ago The Lowell Ledger and Alto Solo December 31, 1936

The assistance of local officers were enlisted last

## 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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# Financial Focus, continued

president in 2012. But you might be surprised to learn that the S&P 500 index has shown negative returns in only three of the last 21 presidential election years. Coincidence? No one can say for sure — and at this point, no one can say if this pattern of positive returns will continue during this election year. Still, it's an interesting phenomenon.

So there you have it: the good, the bad and the quirky. Take them all to-

gether, and you still may not be able to foresee what will happen with the markets this year, but you'll have a lot to think about. But instead of trying to predict what will happen in 2012, you may be better off following these tried-and-true investment strategies:

- Diversify your holdings. By spreading your money among a wide range of investments, you can reduce the effects of volatility on your portfolio. Keep

in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, can't guarantee profits or protect against loss.

- Don't ignore your risk tolerance. If you worry excessively about market fluctuations, you may have too much risk in your portfolio, which means you may need to make some changes.

- Always look at the "big picture." Financial markets will always fluctuate. But if you can keep your focus on your long-term ob-

jectives, and make decisions accordingly, you can avoid overreacting to short-term events.

Like other years, 2012 will bring with it periods of both turbulence and smooth sailing. But by making the right investment moves, you can still chart a course that can allow you to move ever closer to your future goals.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.*

# health



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

## psoriasis

Psoriasis is a common skin disease that affects more than seven million people in the United States. Patients usually have red, scaly, small to large raised areas of skin, called plaques. These plaques commonly affect the scalp, trunk, elbows, knees and genital area, but can affect any part of the body, including the nails. About a quarter of patients develop pain, stiffness and swelling in their joints, called psoriatic arthritis. Patients with severe psoriasis may have an increased risk of obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease.

Psoriasis is usually a relatively straightforward diagnosis because of the very typical appearance of the red, scaly plaques. Occasionally, a small biopsy of skin may be needed to help diagnose the condition. Psoriasis is a disease that can improve and worsen over time, but it usually does

not go away completely. Treating psoriasis can improve the skin and may improve quality of life.

Dermatologists, doctors who treat skin conditions, have several types of treatment for psoriasis. Some of these options include topical treatments, including corticosteroid creams or vitamin D preparations; phototherapy (treatment with light) in specially equipped ultraviolet machines; and systemic medication, including oral or injected medications that act on the whole body.

Individuals with psoriasis should take care not to injure their skin or nails. Sunburn should be avoided because it can make psoriasis worse and increases the risk of skin cancer. Doctors need to individualize treatments for patients because the disease may affect people in different ways.

## LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
PROBATE COURT  
COUNTY OF KENT

NOTICE TO  
CREDITORS  
Decedent's Estate

FILE NO. 11-190850-DE

Estate of JEROME J.  
GOLEC, deceased. Date  
of birth: 04/09/1935.

TO ALL CREDITORS:

NOTICE TO  
CREDITORS: The  
decedent, Jerome J.  
Golec, who lived at 2138  
Sibley St., N.W. Grand  
Rapids, Michigan,  
49504 died 06/01/2011.

Creditors of the  
decedent are notified  
that all claims against

the estate will be forever  
barred unless presented  
to Judith Sapp, named  
personal representative  
or proposed personal  
representative, or to  
both the probate court  
at 180 Ottawa Avenue  
NW, Grand Rapids, MI  
49503 and the named/  
proposed personal  
representative within 4  
months after the date  
of publication of this  
notice.

Craig A. Bruggink  
(P29358)  
429 Turner Ave., N.W.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504  
616-456-5048

Judith Sapp  
1506 Dresden, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30319  
403-803-3790

# happy birthday!

### JANUARY 4

Nicholas Knonenwetter,  
Donna Johnson, Ruth  
Wood.

### JANUARY 5

Ryan Sauber, Craig  
Carpenter, Pauline  
LaDue, Genie Southwick,  
Jody Ann Young.

### JANUARY 6

Don Green, Mary Ellen  
Miller, Bob Kinsley, Bobbi  
Jo Young, Terri Stuckey,  
Norann DeLoof.

### JANUARY 7

Lois Seese, Helga Wester,  
Bob Leyman, Karen  
Cummings, Troy Dilly.

### JANUARY 8

Ron Stanford

### JANUARY 9

Jordan Potter, Helena  
Guastavino, Zvonko  
Andelkovic.

### JANUARY 10

Mary Jo Vezino, Jared  
Felling, Mike Barnes,  
Logan M. Eidenier, Chase  
Anderson.

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**Marriage is a great institution,  
but I'm not ready for an institution yet.**  
~ Mae West (1892 - 1980)

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LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
10305 Bluewater Highway (Missouri Synod)  
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www.goodshepherdlowell.org

Worship Service.....Sunday -10:00 A.M.  
(Nursery available)

Joseph Fremer, Pastor **897-8307**  
All facilities are wheelchair accessible

**CALVARY CHRISTIAN  
REFORMED CHURCH  
OF LOWELL**  
897-7060  
Pastor Rod Galindo  
1151 West Main Street, Lowell, MI  
Morning Worship.....10:00 A. M.  
Sunday School.....11:20 A.M.  
Evening Worship.....6:00 P.M.  
Nursery available at both services  
Barrier-Free

**SNOW UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH**  
3189 Snow Ave. SE, Lowell  
Pastor Dr. Mike Conklin  
9:45 A.M. ....Sunday School  
10:30 A.M. ....Fellowship  
11:00 A.M. ....Worship

**897-9863**  
Nursery & Children  
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OF THE NAZARENE**  
201 N. Washington  
Lowell, MI • 897-8800  
Pastor Wes Hershberger  
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Celebration.....10:40 a.m.  
Wednesdays - Kid's Service, Teen's Service,  
Adult Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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CHURCH OF LOWELL**  
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Rev. Jon Pickens  
Rev. W. Lee Taylor & Pastor Phil Severn  
Sun. Worship Service.....9:30 A.M. & 6:00 P.M.  
Sunday School Hour/ABF's.....11:00 A.M.  
AWANA 6-8/Youth Ministry.....Wed. 6:15 P.M.  
Contact Church Office For Prayer Meeting Times  
Nursery Provided • Barrier Free

**CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER  
(Assembly of God)**  
3050 Alden Nash S.E. • 897-1100 • Staffed Nursery  
Robert Holmes, Pastor  
**SUNDAYS:**  
Worship: 10 a.m.  
**WEDNESDAYS:**  
Family Night (for all ages): 7:00 p.m.  
"The Source" Youth: 7:00 p.m.  
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**FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH OF LOWELL**  
621 E. Main Street • 897-5936  
www.lowellumc.com  
Barrier-free entrance  
**Worship..... 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.**  
**Sunday School.....9:30**  
**Youth Groups (Jr. & Sr. High).....6:00**  
**Wednesdays**  
**After School Kids' Club..... UNTIL 5:30**  
**Rev. Rick Blunt**

**ST. MARY'S  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
402 Amity St. • 897-9820  
www.stmary-lowell.com  
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Saturday confessions: 4-4:45 PM  
Prayer & adoration each Wed. 8:00 AM - 8 PM  
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**Go to  
thelowellledger.com**



## At Your Local Library

Kent District Library programs at Englehardt Branch, 200 N. Monroe St. For additional information call 616-784-2007.

### BE A MINER 49'ER

Mosey on down for some good, old-fashioned, Gold Rush-inspired fun! Crafts, games and activities for all ages. Tues., Jan. 10 at 6:30 pm.

### TEDDY BEAR CLINIC

Bring your teddy bear to the library for a quick check-up! Learn ways to keep teddy healthy and happy and even get a clean bill of health, in partnership with Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. Tues., Jan. 17 at 6:30 pm and Thurs., Jan 19 at 10:30 am.

### ALPHABET SAFARI

Take a trip on the wild side and hunt for your favorite letters - safari style. This virtual journey to the savannah and jungle will let you experience the alphabet in a new and exciting way through interactive and creative activities. For young children, ages 6 and under with a caregiver. Thurs., Jan. 12 at 10:30 am.

### BABY TIME

Delight and stimulate your baby with songs, a story and playtime. Get to know other families and help your baby develop listening and language skills. For babies from birth to 18 months with a caregiver. Tuesdays, Jan. 17 - Feb. 28 at 1:00 pm.

### BOOKWORMS ADULT BOOK DISCUSSION

Join us for a friendly, informal book discussion on The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie by Alan Bradley. All adults welcome. Tues., Jan. 10 at 10:00 am.

### FRIENDS BUSINESS MEETING

All members and those interested in becoming a Friend of the Englehardt Library are encouraged to attend. For adults. Tues., Jan. 17 at 10:00 am.

# Baby boomers should protect their retirement nest egg

(StatePoint) For the more than 70 million Baby Boomers approaching retirement, the road to their financial goals has become much cloudier than for previous generations. With benefits such as Social Security and employer pensions less certain, it is up to those approaching, or at, retirement, to choose the right strategy and information sources for making responsible decisions. "Boomers are living longer and more active lives and should consider taking greater responsibility for the protection of their retirement savings so they don't outlive their nest eggs," says Holly Burgess, VP, Strategy and Marketing Communications, Liberty Mutual. "It's important to create a safe retirement savings strategy customized to your needs. "There are several things Boomers can do to help safeguard their retirement.

### Plan and Protect

Focus on protecting your nest egg via conservative investments. Start by asking what "safety" means to you. Are you seeking to protect your principal from stock market volatility or looking for protection from taxation as you grow your assets? Is your top priority planning for the unforeseen, such as funds for future medical emergencies? According to the U.S. Department of Labor, almost 20 percent of retiree income will be spent on health care. Knowing this will help you decide where to invest the portion of your nest egg you aim to safeguard.

### Think Conservatively

An easy rule of thumb is that you'll need to replace 70 to 90 percent of your pre-retirement income, say the experts at the Certified Financial Planner (CFP) Board of Standards. Your asset allocation may change over time, the CFP Board points out. As you age you may opt to limit exposure to riskier investments like stocks by investing more conservatively. Choose Safely For the portion of

retirement savings you want to protect for near-term use, consider safer options. Many financial planners are advising older Americans to consider conservative alternatives like Certificates of Deposit, Fixed Income Funds and Fixed Deferred Annuities. Unlike more volatile investments, Fixed Deferred Annuities protect your principal while providing the opportunity to generate regular, periodic income. These products

are offered by insurance companies and pay a fixed, guaranteed interest rate for an initial period. The rate may change later but cannot drop below a guaranteed minimum. Unlike many investments, interest earned on an annuity is tax deferred. Details about these types of products can be found on such websites as www.LibertyMutual.com/FixedAnnuitySolutions. It is important to consider an insurer's financial strength

and to choose an annuity that allows you to customize it and access funds when you need them.

### Take Control

"Don't sacrifice control over the design and price of the product you purchase. Pay for the features you need for your individual situation," says Mark McVeigh, SVP, Marketing and Distribution, Liberty Mutual. Lastly, understand any risks or sacrifices involved with each product.



**Life wouldn't be worth living if I worried over the future as well as the present.**

~ W. Somerset Maugham (1874 - 1965)



## HAPPY NEW YEAR AND THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS FROM THE LOWELL WOMEN'S CLUB

- |                                |                                |   |                                  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Addorio Global Innovations     | Mary Kay Cosmetics             | Huntington Bank                             | North Country Trail              |
| Advanced Eyecare Professionals | Eco-Balance                    | Ice Cream Caboose                           | Oak Hill Place                   |
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| Alliance Financial & Insurance | Christopher Godbold            | Kerkstra Services                           | Porter Hills                     |
| All-Weather Seal               | Elite Auto Body                | L.A. Trim                                   | Raimor, Sue                      |
| Alpha Women's Center of Lowell | Ella's Coffee & Cuisine        | Lacey's Too Adult Foster Care               | Mary Kay Cosmetics               |
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| Alto Heating & Cooling         | Farm Bureau Insurance          | La Te Da's                                  | Reagan, James E., D.D.S.         |
| Alto Marathon                  | Mark Johnson                   | Laurels of Kent                             | Redfrog Technologies             |
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| Backwater Café                 | Flat River Grill               | Lowell Area Historical Museum               | Saranac Dental Care              |
| Ball's Softee Creme            | Flat River Outreach Ministries | Lowell Area Trailway                        | Showboat Automotive Supply       |
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| Daisy Floral & Gifts           | Greenridge Realty Inc.         | Morgan & Morgan PC CPAs                     | Wooden It Be Nice                |
| Dependable LP Gas Co           | Rick Seese                     | Nancy's Wedding & Party Cakes               | Zach's Clean Cut                 |
| Dery Physical Therapy          | Harold Ziegler Ford            | Napa Auto Parts                             | Lawn Care & Plow                 |
| Dirt Cheap Excavating          | Hooper Printing                | Nimble Needles                              | Zook Farm Equipment              |
| Durkee Lumber Inc              | Horsch, Kathy                  | Noon Equipment / Noon Tire                  |                                  |
| Dykstra, Cathy                 | Mary Kay Cosmetics             |   |                                  |

**Best wishes for a happy, healthy & prosperous New Year**

# LAS WINTER SPORTS SCHEDULE

## BOYS' & GIRLS' VARSITY BOWLING

\* Denotes a home game at Lowell Lanes

1/4 at 3:30 p.m. Kenowa Hills  
 1/7 at 8 a.m. White Pre-Conference at Creston  
 1/9 at 3:30 p.m. Creston\*  
 1/11 at 3:30 p.m. Grand Rapids Christian\*  
 1/13 at 3:30 p.m. Rockford\*  
 1/18 at 3:30 p.m. Northview  
 1/23 at 3:30 p.m. EGR  
 1/25 at 3:30 p.m. FHC\*  
 1/28 at 9 a.m. Union Invitational  
 1/30 at 3:30 p.m. Mona Shores\*  
 2/1 at 3:30 p.m. Creston  
 2/6 at 3:30 p.m. GR Christian  
 2/9 at 3:30 p.m. Forest Hills Eastern  
 2/13 at 3:30 p.m. Northview\*  
 2/15 at 3:30 p.m. EGR\*  
 2/16 at 3:30 p.m. Forest Hills Northern  
 2/18 time TBA Conference at EGR  
 2/22 at 3:30 p.m. Byron Center\*

## BOYS' VARSITY WRESTLING

\* Denotes a home meet at LHS gymnasium

1/4 at 6 p.m. Greenville/Kenowa Hills  
 1/7 at 9 a.m. New Lothrop Invitational  
 1/11 at 6 p.m. Creston/Reeths Puffer\*  
 1/14 at 9 a.m. Rivers Memorial Tournament\*  
 1/21 at 10 a.m. Detroit Catholic Central  
 1/25 at 6 p.m. EGR/Holland at FHC  
 2/1 at 6 p.m. Union at Northview  
 2/3 at 5 p.m. OK White Tournament at Greenville  
 2/8 at 6 p.m. District Tournament\*

## BOYS' VARSITY ICE HOCKEY

\* Denotes a home meet at E. Kentwood Ice Arena

1/6 at 8:30 p.m. Kalamazoo Blades\*  
 1/11 at 7 p.m. Wayland Union  
 1/13 at 8 p.m. Creston  
 1/14 at 7:30 p.m. Grand Rapids Christian  
 1/21 at 5 p.m. Jenison  
 1/27 at 9 p.m. South Christian  
 1/28 at 3 p.m. West Ottawa  
 2/3 at 9 p.m. South Christian\*  
 2/4 at 4 p.m. Essexville-Garber\*  
 2/8 at 7 p.m. Northview  
 2/10 at 8:30 p.m. Wayland Union\*  
 2/11 at 2 p.m. Jenison\*  
 2/17 at 6:30 p.m. Grand Rapids Christian\*  
 2/24 at 7:45 p.m. Mattawan  
 2/25 at 4 p.m. West Ottawa\*

## BOYS' & GIRLS' VARSITY SKIING

\* Denotes event held at Cannonsburg Ski Area

1/5 at 4:30 p.m. Slalom Championship\*  
 1/10 at 4:30 p.m. Tournament\*  
 1/17 at 4:30 p.m. Tournament\*  
 1/24 at 4:30 p.m. Tournament\*  
 1/27 time TBA Tournament at Caberfae  
 1/31 at 4:30 p.m. Tournament\*  
 2/7 at 4:30 p.m. Tournament\*  
 2/24 time TBA Brain Bucket Bonanza\*

## GIRLS' VARSITY COMPETITION CHEER

\* Denotes a home meet at LHS

1/25 at 6:30 p.m. OK White/Black Jamboree at Northview  
 2/1 at 6:30 p.m. OK White/Black Jamboree at Reeths Puffer  
 2/4 at 10 a.m. Lowell Invitational\*  
 2/8 at 6:30 p.m. OK White/Black Jamboree at Union  
 2/11 at 10 a.m. Conference at GR Christian

## BOYS' VARSITY BASKETBALL

\* Denotes a home game at LHS Main Gym

1/6 at 7:45 p.m. EGR\*  
 1/10 at 7:30 p.m. Kenowa Hills  
 1/13 at 7:45 p.m. Northview  
 1/17 at 7:30 p.m. Reeths Puffer  
 1/20 at 7:45 p.m. Greenville\*  
 1/27 at 7:45 p.m. Creston\*  
 1/31 at 7:45 p.m. Grand Rapids Christian  
 2/3 at 7:45 p.m. EGR  
 2/7 at 7:30 p.m. Mona Shores\*  
 2/10 at 7:45 p.m. Northview\*  
 2/14 at 7:30 p.m. Holland\*  
 2/17 at 7:45 p.m. Greenville  
 2/21 at 7:30 p.m. Union  
 2/24 at 7:45 p.m. Creston  
 2/28 at 7:30 p.m. Thornapple-Kellogg\*  
 3/1 at 7:30 p.m. Forest Hills Eastern

## GIRLS' VARSITY BASKETBALL

\* Denotes a home game at LHS Main Gym

1/6 at 6 p.m. EGR\*  
 1/10 at 7:30 p.m. Kenowa Hills  
 1/13 at 6 p.m. Northview  
 1/17 at 7:30 p.m. Reeths Puffer  
 1/20 at 6 p.m. Greenville\*  
 1/27 at 6 p.m. Creston\*  
 1/31 at 6 p.m. Grand Rapids Christian  
 2/3 at 6 p.m. EGR  
 2/7 at 7:30 p.m. Mona Shores  
 2/10 at 6 p.m. Northview\*  
 2/14 at 7:30 p.m. Holland  
 2/17 at 6 p.m. Greenville

## GIRLS' VARSITY GYMNASTICS

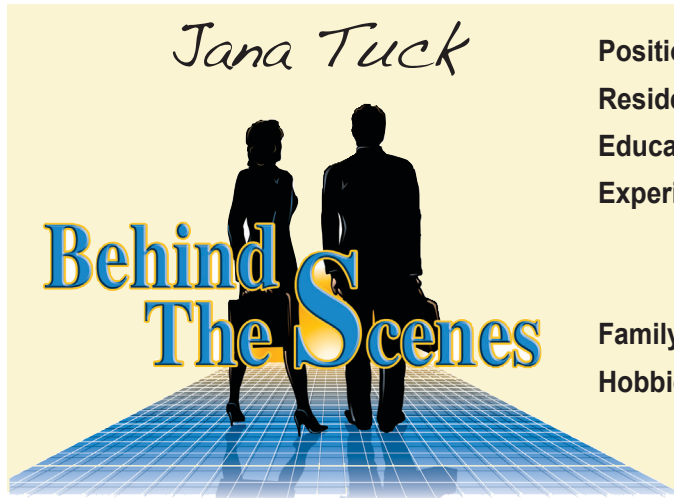
\* Denotes a home meet at LHS

1/4 at 7 p.m. Kenowa Hills  
 1/7 at 10 a.m. Rockford Invitational  
 1/16 at 7 p.m. Forest Hills Northern  
 1/18 at 7 p.m. Rockford\*  
 1/21 at 10 a.m. Lowell Invitational\*  
 1/23 at 7 p.m. East Kentwood\*  
 1/25 at 7 p.m. Kenowa Hills\*  
 1/28 at 10 a.m. Kenowa Hills Invitational  
 2/8 at 7 p.m. Forest Hills Northern\*

This Page Brought To You By

the lowell ledger





**Position:** Postmaster - Lowell Post Office  
**Residence:** Cascade  
**Education:** Gaylord High School, some college  
**Experience:** Started in 1982 in Houghton Lake as a clerk; postmaster since 1991, most recently in Grayling  
**Family:** Two children, two grandchildren  
**Hobbies:** Music, reading, golf, travel and grandchildren



## Postmaster loves working with the public

by Emma Palova

After 30 years, postmaster Jana Tuck still loves working in the business and being in direct contact with the public.

"I love the postal service," said Tuck. "The work is interesting and the people are wonderful."

Tuck started working as a postal clerk in Houghton Lake in 1982, after taking the postal exam.

However, it wasn't easy to get into the industry in the Upper Peninsula, where there is a persistent lack of jobs.

Tuck had to wait several years for an opening. So, she took the opportunity when it finally came. And she never regretted it since.

"It's been a good career," Tuck said.

Over the years much

like other industries, the postal business has changed dramatically from hand sorted mail to full automation.

Early challenges included the implementation of automation which affected every delivery unit.

"We had to work together as a team to prepare for transitions," said Tuck.

Transitions in any busi-

ness are difficult, the same goes for the post office that has been facing fierce competition from other large efficient companies.

"We do the best to serve the customers in the community," said Tuck. "We address issues as they arise."

Most often it's the issue of forwarding mail that needs to be dealt with.

"If the customers have a problem, we work as an office to resolve it," she said.

The competitive advantage of the post office service is mainly the fact that mail is delivered every day to every door.

"Our pricing is competitive," said Tuck. "We have a lot of new products and services we offer to customers."

Among these services are express mail, priority mail and delivery confirmation.

The integration of technology and innovation into the postal service includes EDDM (Every Door Direct

Mail) direct mail hubs and customers can target their audience with a specific message.

Most of the mail now is processed in mail processing facilities such as the one in Grand Rapids.

Getting ready for a big project in the postal service, such as Christmas, means having good staff on hand and borrowing and lending help between the branches.

"It's a joint effort," said Tuck.

And even in this economy, Tuck said the post office is doing well.

Success means getting the job done and having a good understanding of that, working well with staff and other colleagues.

A good day at the post office is when the weather is good for the carriers to deliver mail.

And what is a bad day like at the post office?

"We deal with it," said Tuck.

The postal service will

definitely be different in the years to come.

"We will still be here and delivering mail, but there will be changes," she said.

Tuck is hoping to retire within a year and enjoy traveling. She's been working in the area on an assignment for the Greater Michigan District in Grand Rapids. She was transferred to Lowell in November.

"Lowell is a very nice welcoming community," she said.

Lowell Post Office is a well run office with 23 full- and part-time staff including clerks and carriers. Volume size it is comparable to offices in Ionia and Greenville.

On January 22, the price of stamps will go up from 44 cents to 45 cents.

"I am very happy to be here," said Tuck. "I am looking forward to getting to know the people in the community and serving them."



## Five secrets of highly optimistic Americans

(StatePoint) Do you want to start the New Year with a renewed sense of optimism? Do optimistic people think or behave differently?

A new study recently uncovered the secrets of optimistic people who feel in control of their lives.

One key to achieving optimism and lowering stress levels is to find ways to take greater control over your life, say researchers.

Sixty-six percent of Americans now say they

feel in control of their lives, and their lives are headed in the right direction, according to Lincoln Financial Group's "MOOD of America" study.

So how can you be more like them?

### Grasp the Future

Surprisingly, researchers uncovered several consistent behaviors and attitudes that are strongly associated with feeling in control of one's life -- all of which revolve around not letting money or your job define who you are.

Upbeat Americans are driven by a mindset that they can always find ways to solve problems. And they seem to have struck the right balance between finding time for fun

things they enjoy and taking the necessary steps to secure their futures.

"Americans who feel in control of their destinies share a common mindset focused on positive, constructive behaviors every day," said Mark Konen, president of Insurance and Retirement Solutions for Lincoln Financial Group.

### Simple Steps to Optimism

The good news is there are certain behaviors you can adopt to positively impact your life. Consider these top five behaviors of Americans who feel in control of their lives:

- They value and cultivate personal relationships.
- They volunteer in their communities and give to charity.
- They take quiet time to be alone and think.
- They exercise and spend time on hobbies.

- They adhere to budgets and save for retirement.

Not surprisingly, those who said they felt in control have taken concrete steps to build financial security, such as establishing retirement accounts and owning other financial products, including life insurance.

They are also more likely to stay within their budgets and save money from every paycheck, regardless of amount.

### It's Not About Money

One of the secrets of optimistic Americans, according to the research, is they are not driven by the desire to be wealthy.

Instead, Americans "in charge" consider financial freedom -- having enough money to do what they want -- to be four to five times more important than being wealthy.

"The combination of traits that apply to 'take charge' Americans shows these people strike the right balance," says Konen. "They value alone time, but also invest in relationships with friends and family. They enjoy leisure time but make time to sit down with their paperwork and adhere to budgets."

More details from the new survey can be found at [LincolnFinancial.com/surveys](http://LincolnFinancial.com/surveys).

According to the new research, the key to optimism is adopting a mindset centered on the fact that it's squarely within your power to control your destiny.

While you must take steps to build a secure future, it's equally important to take time to enjoy life.



# All about retirement

Social Security is as American as baseball and apple pie. Not everyone likes apples or baseball games, but almost every American who reaches retirement age will receive Social Security retirement benefits. In fact, 96 percent of Americans are covered by Social Security.

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you were born in 1929 or later, you need 40 credits (10 years of work) to qualify for retirement benefits. However, the amount of your benefit is determined by how long you work and how much you earn. Higher lifetime earnings result in higher benefits.

In addition, your age when you retire makes a difference in your benefit amount. At full retirement

age you receive the full benefit which is then reduced if you file early. Just as you can choose an early retirement and get a reduced payment, you also can choose to keep working beyond your full retirement age to take advantage of a larger payment.

The decision of when to retire is an individual one and depends on a number

of personal factors. To help you weigh the factors, we suggest you check out our online Retirement Planner at [www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2). You may want to consider your options by using our Retirement Estimator to get instant, personalized estimates of future benefits. You can plug in different retirement ages and scenarios to help you make a more in-

formed retirement decision. Try it out at [www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator).

When you decide to retire, the easiest and most convenient way to do it is right from the comfort of your home or office computer. Go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) where you can apply for retirement benefits in as little as 15 minutes. In most cases, there are no forms to

sign or documents to send; once you submit your electronic application, that's it!

*Vonda VanTil is the public affairs specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp St NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525 or via email at [vonda.vantil@ssa.gov](mailto:vonda.vantil@ssa.gov)*

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# Red Arrow SPORTS

## Boys' and girls' basketball look ahead to Forest Hills Northern

by Casey Cheney  
The boys' and girls' basketball teams play their first game of the new year

against Forest Hills Northern. The Forest Hills boys' team is coming off a split

week before Christmas, losing to Caledonia 56-51 after beating Zeeland West 60-44 two days before.

They are 2-3 for the season, while the Red Arrows are 0-3.

The Northern girls also split their last week before break, first beating Grand Rapids Christian 37-36, then losing to East Kentwood 55-37.

2-4. The Lowell girls are 1-4.

The games are Tuesday, Jan. 3. The girls' varsity plays at 6 pm, followed by the boys' varsity at 7:45.

The Northern girls are

## Lowell wrestlers dominate at home

by Casey Cheney  
The Red Arrow wrestling team went 3-0 on Wednesday at the Lowell Quad, defeating Jenison, Sparta and New Lothrop in that order.

Jenison lost to Lowell in the first round 68-3, going 0-3 for the day. Then, in round two, Lowell beat Sparta 63-10. Sparta finished third with a 1-2 record.

New Lothrop came in

second at 2-1. Lowell defeated them 48-14 in the third round.

The visiting team, however, was able to leave with bragging rights no other team has had.

New Lothrop's Austin Severn, the undefeated Division 4 state champion, wrestled his way to a double overtime victory against undefeated Division 2 state champion Gabe Dean.

## Freeland-Saginaw Swan Valley gymnastics outmatches Lowell

by Casey Cheney  
The Red Arrow girls' gymnastics team lost to a

visiting Freeland-Saginaw Swan Valley team Dec. 21.

This was their first competition of the year. Next, they face Forest Hills Central Jan. 16.

**GIRLS SOFTBALL CLINIC**  
Lowell Arrow Dynamics Softball Club is holding a softball skills clinic for girls ages 10 years old and younger. The clinic will cover all basic softball skills from beginners to advanced.  
**The clinic begins Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 7:00 pm at Murray Elementary.**  
This will be an 8-week clinic with a cost of \$45.00 and includes a t-shirt.  
**For more information call 366-3783**  
Special appearances by Lowell's varsity softball coach

**LUNCH MENU**

**ELEMENTARY MENU**  
Week of Jan. 9, 2012

**MON:** Nachos w/meat, shredded cheese (3 meat sub, also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), tossed salad w/ romaine, refried beans w/ cheese, pineapple, milk.

**TUES:** Homemade cheese pizza (fish sandwich w/cheese on wheat bun, also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), celery sticks, low fat ranch dipping sauce, pears, (Bushnell is offering carrots & applesauce), milk.

**WED:** Mini baked corn dogs (hamburger on wheat bun, also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), oven baked beans, grapes, milk.

**THURS:** Chicken fingers w/wheat bread (tuna salad sandwich, also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), mashed potatoes & gravy, diced peaches, milk.

**FRI:** Bosco sticks/marinara sauce (Jr. ham & cheese sub, also offered at Alto, Cherry Creek & Murray Lake), fresh mini carrots, low fat ranch dipping sauce, applesauce, milk.

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# obituaries

## ADAMSKI

Vincent Wallace Adamski, age 93, of Lowell, passed away Wednesday, December 28, 2011. He was preceded in death by his wife Annette of 70 years and grandson Mark Wylie. He is survived by his daughters, Patricia Horn, Roberta Wylie; grandchild, Tim (Lacy) Wolfe; great-grandchild, Lauren Wolfe; sister, Virginia (Chester) Janeczko; sister-in-law, Teresa Smith; and nieces and nephews. The family would like to give special thanks to Dr. Mogor and Dr. Evenhouse, Spectrum Hospital 5th floor nurses, Spectrum Hospice, Heather Hills, Dar Corl, Briana German, Lydia, Jenny and Don, Michelle Fisher, Fr. Tom and Pastor Chris. Cremation has taken place, following his wishes there will be no formal service held. Memorial contributions may be made to United States Coast Guard and Marianist Mission, Mt. Saint John, 4435 F. Patterson Road, Dayton, OH 45481.



## DeNOLF

Winifred "Wendy" Edith DeNolf, of Lowell, after an adventurous life of 81 years died Tuesday, December 27, 2011. She was preceded in death by her husband, Bob DeNolf. She is survived by her children, Bob (Sue), Kathy (Gary) Rosemary, David (Nancy), Steve (Mary Jo); grandchildren, Jennifer (Chad) Saalfrank, Beau, Garret (Sara), Elliot, Austin, Mitchell; great-grandchildren, Samantha and Cora. Wendy, a Lowell resident for the last 39 years, worked at City Hall for 15 years and was the co-owner of the Lowell Strand Theatre. She attended St. Mary's Church, was a member of Lowell Area Arts Council, Lowell Garden Club, Lowell Library and for the past 10 years was a docent for the Lowell Historical Society Museum. A lifelong learner and educator, she was also a docent at both the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and the VanAndel Public Museum for 17 years. Her passion for her family, life, educational experiences and travel will be long admired by her family. Memorial service will be held Saturday, January 28, 2012, 1:00 pm at Roth-Gerst Chapel, 305 N. Hudson, Lowell. Visitation Friday 3-7:00 pm. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Lowell Area Historical Museum, PO Box 81, Lowell, MI 49331.



## DECEMBER 28 - JANUARY 3

- A 100-year-old woman in San Clemente, CA, is reunited with the daughter she gave up 77 years ago. Minka Disbrow gave up the child but never stopped praying she'd someday see her. Her daughter Ruth Lee knew she was adopted but did not start searching for her biological mother until the age of 70.
- Republican presidential candidate is climbing in the polls and according to some he is tied with Ron Paul the day before the Iowa caucuses.
- NASA reports that the Quadrantid meteor shower is supposed to put on the first sky show of 2012 on Wednesday, Jan. 4. Peak hour is 2 am EST.
- Oprah's gal pal will be hosting a new morning show on CBS with cohosts Charlie Rose and Erica Hill on Jan. 4.
- A Lexington, NC, man tries to pass off a one million-dollar note while buying \$476 worth of merchandise at Walmart. He was charged with attempting to obtain property by false pretense.
- The Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, announces her engagement to longtime friend William "Willie" Wilkerson. The singer is 69 years old.
- Adding another elderly engagement - Steven Tyler, 63, announces that he is engaged.
- Benjamin Colton, 24, an armed war veteran suspected of killing a Mount Rainier National Park ranger is found dead on the mountain.

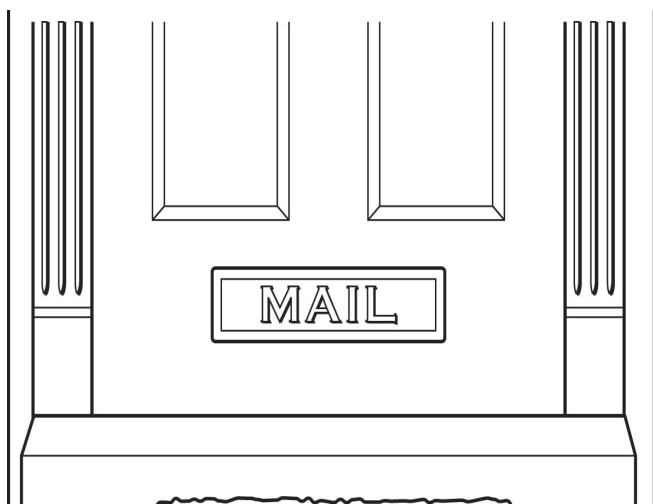
**NOTICE:** Due to increases in mailing and paper costs, as of January 4, 2012, the Ledger is charging \$20 to run an obituary. An additional \$5 will be charged to run a photo with the obituary. These fees must be paid before publication unless you have an account with the Ledger. This nominal fee only slightly offsets the cost of printing. We have deliberately kept the cost a minimum for our customers. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) CITY OF LOWELL COUNTY OF KENT PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

City of Lowell – Lowell, Michigan, County of Kent will hold a public hearing to consider potential projects for which funding may be applied under the CDBG Small Cities Program for Program Year 2011-2012.

Suggestions for potential projects will be solicited, both verbally and in writing, from all interested parties. The expected amount of CDBG funds for this year will be discussed along with the range of projects eligible under this program and a review of previously funded projects.

The hearing will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 17, 2012 and will be held at the Lowell City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 301 East Main Street, Lowell, Michigan. Further information can be obtained by contacting Lowell City Offices at 616-897-8457.



Betty R. Morlock  
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# classifieds

## for sale

**BED & MATTRESS SET** - queen, Sealy, \$95 includes frame. Hammond Wholesale, 320 W. Main St., Carson City, 989-584-1600. See us on Facebook. Delivery available.

**KEY CARDS ARE HERE** - Help support the LHS Academic Boosters. Cards are \$25. Stop by & get your card today, Lowell Ledger 105 N. Broadway. Cash or check only please.

**LOWELL** - 3 bedroom, 2 bath ranch for sale or rent. Land contract terms. Call Ron or Marvie, 897-6757 or 485-9703.

**200 APPLIANCES** - Washers, dryers, refrigerators & stoves. Guaranteed. From \$69. Hammond Wholesale, 320 W. Main St., Carson City, 989-584-1600. See us on Facebook. Delivery available.

**KENMORE REFRIGERATOR & STOVE SET** - (2006), cost \$900, sell \$199 for pair. Hammond Wholesale, 320 W. Main St., Carson City, 989-584-1600. See us on Facebook.

**FIREWOOD FOR SALE** - split and seasoned, 12 months, \$150 per cord. Call Dan at 616-970-3832.

**TWIN BED** - Mattress, box spring & frame, (Sealy), \$85 complete. Hammond Wholesale, 320 W. Main St., Carson City, 989-584-1600. See us on Facebook.

**SHELTIE PUPPIES** - AKC, small & beautiful, shots, wormed, \$500. Also Border Collie pups, \$200. Bairds, 897-9081.

**QUEEN PILLOWTOP MATTRESS SET** - (new), \$248/set. Thick & plush. Hammond Wholesale, 320 W. Main St., Carson City, 989-584-1600. See us on Facebook.

**FREE AD!** - Place & pay for a classified ad in the Buyers Guide & Lowell Ledger for 3 weeks & receive the 4th week FREE! You must mention the special in order to receive this offer. Valid only with new classified ads, and must be paid for when ad is placed. Call 897-9555, fax 897-4809 or email to: classifieds@lowellbuyersguide.com, 105 N. Broadway, Lowell. Ph. 897-9261.

**1991 F-250 4X4 7.3 DIESEL PICKUP** - lots of expensive new parts, runs/drives great, rusty, \$1500. 616-644-8692.

**NEWSPAPER ENDS ROLLS AVAILABLE AT THE BUYERS GUIDE** - Many uses, table cover, art projects, packaging, etc. \$3-\$5 each. Stop by & grab one today! 105 N. Broadway.

### WEDDING INVITATIONS

Available at Lowell Litho, Ph. 897-9261. Stop by & check out one of our books. Many different styles & price ranges to choose from.

## for rent

**HALL FOR RENT** - Lowell Veteran's Center, 3100 Alden Nash. Newly remodeled, smoke-free, private, great location & great rate! www.vfw8303.org. Also for those interested in dance classes at the post. Call John at 299-0486 or 897-8303.TFN

**HORSE LOVER'S DREAM** - House, barns, pastures. 3 bedroom ranch, Lowell Schools. For more info search on Facebook Seaman Finn Ranch, go to wall. Call 616-897-5807.

**HOME FOR RENT** - Murray Lake area. Available Jan. 1st. Year round rental, large one bedroom, one bath, newly remodeled home with a great view of Murray Lake. No pets or smoking. \$650 per month. 897-8848.

**LAKEFRONT HOUSE FOR RENT ON MURRAY LAKE** - immediate occupancy, 2+ bedrooms, 2 baths, garage & workshop, fireplace. Very quiet, peaceful neighborhood, 100 ft. of sandy beach + dock. \$800/mo. + utilities. Call 231-834-1563.

## for rent

**DUPLEX FOR RENT** - 2 bedroom, 207 S. Jefferson, \$600 per month plus utilities. No pets. 897-5686.TFN

**PRICELESS STORAGE - Indoor/outdoor. New Units on Alden Nash, 1 mile South of I96. Call for specials 558-2900.**TFN

## help wanted

**NOW HIRING** - and training for career positions with West Michigan's leading real estate company. Call Rick Seese, Greenridge Realty, Inc. for a confidential interview. 616-437-2576 or 616-974-4250.TFN

**OCCASIONAL BABYSITTER** - New Christian family in Lowell looking for occasional babysitters for day & eve. appts. 5 well-behaved children, \$8/hr. 616-987-3356.

## services

**BUSINESS CARDS** - Before you order your cards from somewhere else - check our rates! Call Lowell Litho, 897-9261.

**TAXES, PAYROLL, QUICKBOOKS, & ACCOUNTING SERVICE** - by certified Quickbooks advisor. Call Kathy 897-6351.TFN

**ALL OCCASION PARTY BUS LLC** - Buses for parties, weddings, casinos, trips, etc. Special - buy 4 hours get 5th hour free! 616-292-6145.

**LOCAL COUNSELING SERVICES AVAILABLE** - by a licensed therapist. See www.facebook.com/LifeTransitionsTherapyLLC or call 616-238-2116.

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## services

**IS YOUR FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND** - Large or small, home alone while you're at work? Maybe a midday potty break or walk would help. In or near Lowell. Call Barbara at 897-5180.

**YOGA CLASSES** - Mornings: Tues. & Fri., 7:30-8:30 a.m. Evenings: Tues. & Thurs., 6:30-7:30 p.m. Walk-in fee \$8. 901 W. Main (Lowell). Call 893-5661. www.thehammockllc.com

**HANDY REPAIR SERVICE** - All kinds of service work: locks rekeyed, deadbolts installed, screen & window repair. Call Bob Ford, 299-3198.TFN

**COPIES COPIES** - We have color & black & white copiers! As low as 10¢ per copy for black & white. Stop by our office, Lowell Litho, 105 N. Broadway.

## lost

**LOST** - Orange tabby cat. Please call 897-0715.

## misc.

**JESUS CAME HOME** - for Christmas. John & Lucille Erickson

**CARD SHOWER** - Help Betty Griffin celebrate her 90th birthday on Jan. 7, 2012 by sending her a card: 10790 Bailey Dr. NE, Lowell, MI 49331.

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# Community Calendar

**PLEASE NOTE** - Coming Events are for non-profit organizations. If you are charging admission for an event - it is considered an advertisement. Coming events are ran on a space available basis & **ARE NOT GUARANTEED TO RUN**. If you would like to make sure your event is placed in the paper, please call our office & place it as a classified ad. We will not run ANY Garage or Rumage Sales as a coming event. All Coming Events or changes to coming events should be submitted by fax: 897-4809, email: classifieds@lowellbuyersguide.com, by mail: PO Box 128, Lowell, MI 49331 or in person: 105 N. Broadway, Lowell.

**THE LOWELL BOARD OF EDUCATION** - second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Administration Building, 300 High St., Lowell.

**WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY** - meets every Monday, 7-8 p.m. at Bowne Center United Methodist Church, fellowship hall, 12051 84th St., corner of Alden Nash. Call Sue at 868-6219 or www.womenforsobriety.org

**BOWNE TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY** - meets the second Monday of the month at 10 a.m. in the Historical Museum at 84th/Alden Nash.

**NEEDLERS** - Second & fourth Monday evenings, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Schneider Manor Community Room.

**WOMEN OF THE MOOSE** - third Monday at 7:30 p.m. for business meeting.

**AMERICAN LEGION CLARK-ELLIS POST 152** - meets the fourth Monday at 3100 Alden Nash S.E. at 7:30 p.m.

**ALTO AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY** - meets the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Alto American Legion Post.

**V.F.W. POST #8303** - meets the first Monday at 7 p.m. at 3116 Alden Nash S.E.

**LOWELL SHOWBOAT GARDEN CLUB** - meets the 3rd Monday in the Church of the Nazarene Fellowship Hall, 211 N. Washington St. at 6:30 p.m.

**BOY SCOUT TROOP 102** - every Monday, 7-8:30 p.m. during school year in Scout Cabin at the end of N. Washington St. Ages 11 and up or completing 5th grade. Call Scoutmaster Randy Jesberg at 897-4569 or Del Rockwell at 897-6814.

**MOVIE NIGHT** - Tues., Jan 17, 6:30 pm. Penguins of Madagascar: Operation Blow Hole. Free movie & popcorn at Saranac Public Library, 61 Bridge St., Saranac. 616-642-9146.

**TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY TOPS MI #372** - every Tuesday at Key Heights Mobile Home Park Community Building. Weigh-ins at 5:45 p.m.

**CUBSCOUT PACK 3188** - meets every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 621 E. Main.

**QUA-KE-ZIK SPORTSMANS CLUB** - meets second and third Tuesdays at 8 p.m. at 8731 West Riverside Dr. Go to www.qua-ke-zik.org for information. New members welcome.

**LOWELL LIONS CLUB** - meets third Tuesday at noon at Lowell City Hall.

**DIABETIC SUPPORT GROUP** - 2nd Tuesday at Schneider Manor Community Rm., 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. 897-2760 or 897-9160.

**BOOKWORM BOOK CLUB** - Mon., Jan 16, 6 p.m. Discuss "The Graveyard Book" by Neil Gaiman at Saranac Public Library, 61 Bridge St., Saranac. 616-642-9146.

**THE EAST KENT COUNTY REPUBLICANS (EKCR)** - meets the second Saturday of the month at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce (113 Riverwalk Plaza) from 8:30 to 10 a.m. to discuss current events on the local, state & national levels. Bring your concerns & issues to our meeting for open discussion! Share information about what you can do to become involved! For more information, please call Dave Emmette, 644-0759 or Nancy Steckler, 897-6380.

**FLAT RIVER OUTREACH INDUSTRIES THRIFT STORE** - is open Wed. 10 - 8 p.m.; Thurs. & Fri., 10-6; Sat., 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at 11535 Fulton St. E. Thrift Shop, 897-8260; Food Pantry, 897-8260; Emergency Services, 897-8260.

**ALPHA WOMEN'S CENTER** - 517 E. Main. Hours: Mon. 11-5 p.m.; Tues. 6-9 p.m.; Thurs. 10-6 p.m. 987-9533. Diapers, formula, clothing & free pregnancy testing available.

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

**ENGLEHARDT LIBRARY HOURS** - Mon.-Wed., noon - 8 p.m.; Thurs. & Fri., 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sat., 9:30 - 1:30 p.m.

**LOWELL AREA ARTS COUNCIL GALLERY HOURS** - Tues. - Fri., 10-6 p.m.; Sat., 1-4 p.m.; Monday by appt.; 149 S. Hudson. Visit www.lowellartscouncil.org

**LOWELL AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM** - open Tuesday, Saturday & Sunday: 1-4 p.m.; Thursday: 1-8 p.m. 897-7688.

**ST. MARY'S PREGNANCY CRISIS CENTER** - 402 Amity. Mondays: 5:30-7:30 p.m. and Thursdays: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Non-denominational. Help for pregnant women/adolescents in need. Provides support, referrals, food, clothing/infant items. Lowell area. 897-9393.

**KNITTING 101** - Every Wed., 10 a.m. - noon, Saranac Public Library, 61 Bridge St., Saranac. 616-642-9146.

**BINGO** - Every Sunday, 2 p.m. The Moose Rec Hall, 1320 E. Main St. Sponsored by W.O.T.M. Chapter #1388. Open to the public.

**EVERY THURSDAY** - Night service at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 865 Lincoln Lake SE at 6:30 p.m. Public welcome.

**WINTER READING** - Begins Dec. 1 thru Mar. 31, ages 10 - adult, Clarksville Area Library, 130 S. Main, Clarksville, 616-693-1001.

**GRIEF - ADULT GROUP** - Each Tuesday, 6 - 7:15 p.m. A committed group for adults who have experienced the death of a family member or friend. Gilda's Club - Lowell Clubhouse, 314 S. Hudson, Lowell.

**GRIEF - KIDS GROUP** - Second & fourth Tuesdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m. A committed group for children in first - fourth grade on a grief journey. Incorporates curriculum-based activities, discussion. Gilda's Club - Lowell Clubhouse, 314 S. Hudson, Lowell.

**GRIEF - NEW MEMBER MEETING** - Call the clubhouse to schedule your introductory meeting for grief support groups. Gilda's Club - Lowell Clubhouse, 314 S. Hudson, Lowell, 897-8600.

**TEEN GROUP - CANCER AND GRIEF** - First & third Tuesdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m. A committed group for teens in ninth - twelfth grade on a cancer or grief journey. Incorporates curriculum-based activities & discussion. Gilda's Club - Lowell Clubhouse, 314 S. Hudson, Lowell.

**FREE ADDICTIONS PROGRAM** - every Friday, 7 p.m. at Bible Believers Church, 404 N. Hudson St., Lowell. For more information call 616-485-2385.

**MOTHERS WHO HAVE OR HAVE HAD** - sons/daughters serving in the military. We are meeting on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. For more info call Sally 616-761-2042.

**NOOGIELAND** - Tuesdays 5:30 - 7 p.m. Supervised play for children kindergarten or younger. Gilda's Club - Lowell Clubhouse, 314 S. Hudson, Lowell, 897-8600. www.gildasclubgr.org/pinkarrow

**LOWELL AREA PRAYER & HEALING ROOMS** - located in the FROM building, 11535 Fulton Street, most Monday evenings, 6-8 p.m. Christian Scripture based. No cost or fees, no appointment necessary, confidentiality respected.

**TOTS PLAYGROUP** - Meets every Tues., Wed. & Thurs. at Bushnell Elementary, 700 Elizabeth, Lowell. 8:30 a.m. or 10 a.m. Meeting at Alto Elementary, 6150 Bancroft, Alto on Thursdays at 10 a.m. For more info contact Lori at TOTS, 987-2532.

**KENT COUNTY NARFE GROUP** - for retired & current federal employees meet the 2nd Thursday at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2700 E. Fulton, 1/2 mile west of E. Beltline. Potluck at 12:30 p.m. & meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. Call Ed Moore for time, 616-784-6716.

**ALTO LIONS CLUB** - Meets 1st & 3rd Thursday at 7 p.m. at Keiser's Kitchen.

**COFFEE WITH THE COUNCIL** - Come meet & have a cup of coffee with your city councilmembers. First Saturday of each month at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce office, 113 Riverwalk Plaza, Lowell. 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.

# EARTH TALK™

## Questions & Answers About Our Environment

**Dear EarthTalk:** There are a number of companies out there now doing “energy audits” for the home, after which they try to sell you attic insulation and other products and services. Is this just a scam or would it be wise for me to look into this? -- Bill Richards., New York, NY

For the most part, companies offering energy audits are reputable and legitimate and will help you both save money and reduce your carbon footprint if you follow their advice in regard to upgrading things like insulation, windows and appliances. “A home energy assessment, also known as a home energy audit, is the first step to assess how much energy your home consumes and to evaluate what measures you can take to make your home more energy efficient,” reports the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). “An assessment will show you problems that may, when corrected, save you significant amounts of money over time.”

“During the assessment, you can pinpoint where your house is losing energy,” adds DOE. “Energy assessments also determine the efficiency of your home’s heating and cooling systems [and] may also show you ways to conserve hot water and electricity.”

You can conduct your own energy audit if you know where to look for air leaks (drafts), water waste and other key areas of a home’s inefficiencies. The DOE’s [energysavers.gov](http://energysavers.gov) website has guidelines to help homeowners conduct their own do-it-yourself home energy assessments. For instance, DOE recommends that homeowners make a list of obvious air leaks, such as through gaps along baseboards or at the edges of flooring and at wall and ceiling junctures. The potential energy savings from reducing drafts in a home can be as high as 30 percent per year, reports DOE. (The DOE website also provides information on other ways to save money and resources through less obvious things such as outdoor landscaping. It also posts guidelines for energy-efficient designing and remodeling.)

You should also check the filters on heating and cooling equipment to see if they need to be changed so as to keep your furnace and air conditioners functioning at maximum efficiency. And if these or other appliances are over 15 years old consider replacing them with newer models that meet federal EnergyStar efficiency criteria. Also, swapping out older incandescent bulbs in light fixtures with higher efficiency compact fluorescent or LED bulbs will save money and energy.

A professional energy auditor with dedicated assessment tools and the knowledge of how to use them will in all likelihood carry out a more comprehensive assessment than you can do yourself. “Thorough assessments often use equipment such as blower doors, which measure the extent of leaks in the building envelope, and infrared cameras, which reveal hard-to-detect areas of air infiltration and missing insulation.”

If you are concerned about enlisting a for-profit firm that upsells its own energy efficiency upgrade services based on a “free” energy audit, check with your utility to see whether it offers unbiased, independent energy audit services (which it may do for free or for a nominal cost). The assessor from your utility may be able to recommend window and door replacement companies, heating and cooling specialists and other vendors nearby that do reputable work to make your home not only

energy efficient but warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.

CONTACTS: DOE Energy Savers, [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov); EnergyStar, [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

**Dear EarthTalk:** What’s the story with Echinacea? Many herb teas contain it, and many people swear by it as a cold remedy. But I’ve also seen headlines saying that the herb has no medicinal value whatsoever. Can you set the record straight? -- Arlene Hixson, Portland, ME

Echinacea, also known as purple coneflower, has gained popularity in recent years as a nutritional supplement that proponents believe is helpful in staving off the common cold and shortening its duration. But given the variation between dosages and formulations — such herbs are not regulated as medical drugs by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and so makers have little incentive to standardize — it’s hard to get definitive answers as to Echinacea’s effectiveness.



Historically, Native Americans relied on the root of Echinacea to numb toothache pain and treat dyspepsia as well as snake, insect and spider bites. While some modern day folks rely on Echinacea just based on this anecdotal evidence, scientific studies have verified that the herb can be effective. To wit, a 2008 University of Connecticut review of 14 different clinical trials of Echinacea use found that taking the supplement reduced the chances of getting a cold by 31 percent, and helped

people get over cold and flu symptoms a day and a half earlier than those who didn’t take it.

Researchers initially thought Echinacea’s effectiveness was due to its immune-boosting traits, but they now believe instead that the herb works more as an anti-inflammatory agent. A 2009 University of British Columbia study found that typical commercially available Echinacea preparations are effective in reducing the body’s production of inflammatory proteins in human bronchial cells. In layman’s terms, this means that Echinacea can help lessen the annoying symptoms of common colds, the flu and other respiratory ailments. Furthermore, the study found that Echinacea is just as effective in reducing bronchial inflammation whether it is consumed before or after a viral infection sets in, indicating that taking moderate doses on a regular basis during cold season can help prevent some bronchial irritation if and when cold symptoms begin.

Interestingly, though, a 2010 study of 719 participants in Wisconsin focusing on illness duration and severity found that the duration of the common cold could be shortened by taking a pill of some sort, whether Echinacea or a placebo with no active ingredients. But this study merely underscored the importance of psychological factors in fighting illness and did not say that Echinacea isn’t effective.

Given the lack of FDA oversight of herbs, different formulations may contain vastly different amounts of Echinacea. A 2004 evaluation of 19 different Echinacea brands by the non-profit Consumers Union and published in Consumer Reports found that the amount of Echinacea actually present in supplements varied considerably from brand to brand — and even in some cases from bottle to bottle of the same brand. The magazine recommended a few brands as “best picks,” including Spring Valley, Origin and Sundown, all which featured high concentrations of Echinacea and reliable dosage amounts from pill to pill.

Before taking the Echinacea plunge, beware that the herb can cause allergic reactions in some people and may interact negatively with some common medications. Researchers warn that anyone with autoimmune disease or a handful of other illnesses should not take Echinacea without first consulting with their doctor.

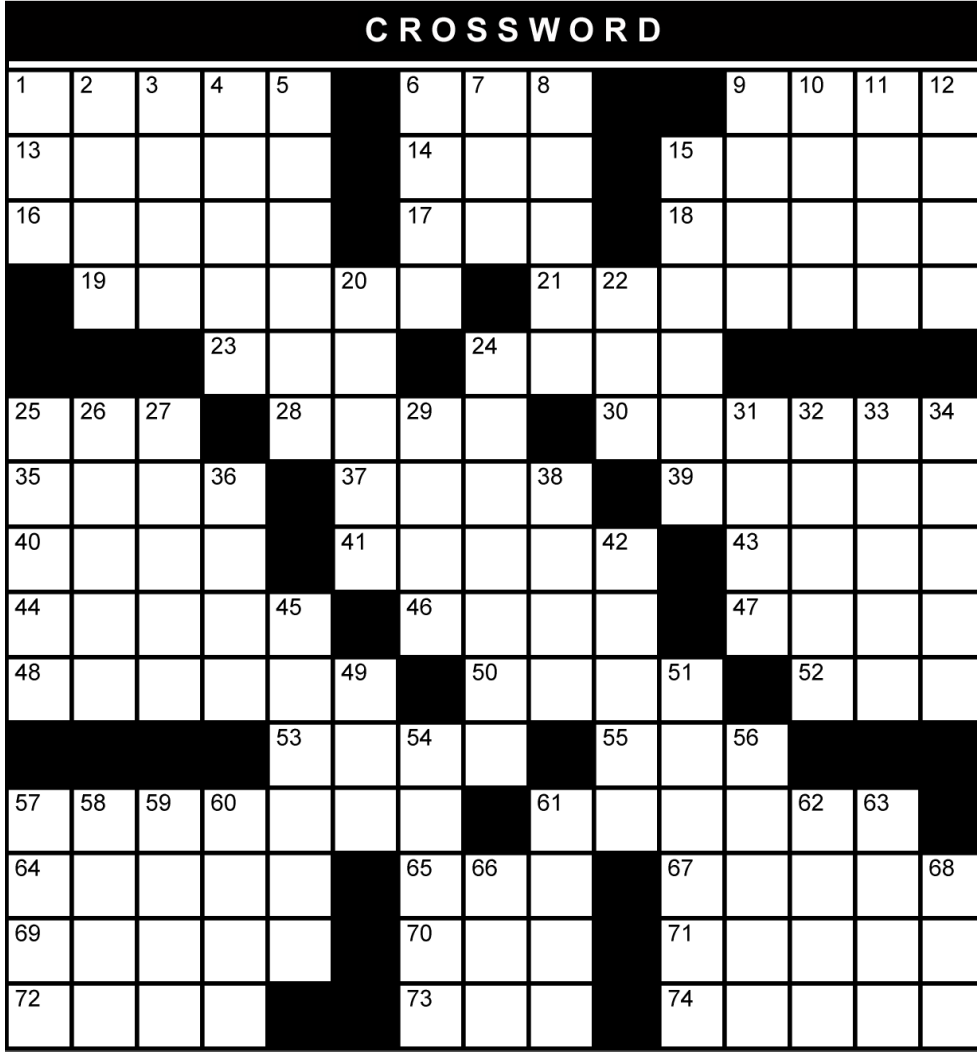
CONTACTS: FDA, [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov); Consumers Union, [www.consumersunion.org](http://www.consumersunion.org).

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**THEME:**  
**Winter Fun**

**CROSSWORD**



**ACROSS**

- 1. Found on a necklace
- 6. Cul de \_\_\_\_
- 9. Loads
- 13. Furry coats
- 14. Make a mistake
- 15. \*Snow impression
- 16. Nets basketball coach
- 17. Major record label
- 18. Bogart's "Key \_\_\_\_"
- 19. \*Dripped shape
- 21. \*Like cleanest snow?
- 23. Sigma \_\_\_\_ Epsilon
- 24. Never wave the white one?
- 25. Bayerische Motoren Werke
- 28. Somebody \_\_\_\_
- 30. \*It means more winter?
- 35. Paper unit
- 37. One of many on a list
- 39. Pro teams do this all the time
- 40. Therefore
- 41. \*\*"The Bear Who \_\_\_\_ Through Christmas"
- 43. Algonquian people
- 44. Sour in taste
- 46. Dunking treat
- 47. Retained
- 48. Often done for ransom
- 50. "Eternal life" character
- 52. "\_\_\_\_ & the Family Stone"
- 53. It's projected in frames
- 55. Long time
- 57. \*Popular sculpture
- 61. Result of audience demand
- 64. Hades river with magic water
- 65. Cause annoyance in or disturb
- 67. Native of American Great Plains
- 69. Worry
- 70. Female reproductive cell, pl.

- 71. Ruhr's industrial center
  - 72. Between stop and roll
  - 73. Type of sweet potato
  - 74. Used in fermenting
- DOWN**
- 1. Accounting degree
  - 2. \_\_\_\_ Strauss
  - 3. Actor recently kicked off airplane
  - 4. Used for landing
  - 5. Psychologist's domain
  - 6. Withered
  - 7. Part of a circle
  - 8. Front \_\_\_\_ in swimming
  - 9. Annoying biter
  - 10. Mike Myers animated character
  - 11. What panhandler does

- 12. Vegas bandit
- 15. Ablaze
- 20. Jaunty rhythms
- 22. Possesses
- 24. F in FBI
- 25. \*No school
- 26. Sarkozy's thank you
- 27. Engaged, as in war
- 29. Unaccompanied
- 31. St. Louis monument
- 32. Challenges
- 33. Nancy \_\_\_\_ of "Entertainment Tonight"
- 34. Like untended garden
- 36. Between dawn and noon
- 38. Welcoming sign
- 42. \_\_\_\_ of appreciation
- 45. Male mixologists
- 49. Princess tester?
- 51. \*It features six on six
- 54. Diplomat on a mission
- 56. It can be loud or white
- 57. \*Pulled ride
- 58. Not far
- 59. Von Bismarck or Hahn, e.g.
- 60. Wallop
- 61. Ophthalmologist's check-up, e.g.
- 62. Civil Rights icon
- 63. Female sheep, pl.
- 66. Actress Longoria
- 68. The little one "stopped to tie his shoe"

Puzzle solutions, on page 11

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Sound Off! is meant to be a way for you to compliment or vent your feelings with civility. A healthy way to get something off your chest or spread a little kindness.

We welcome your comments, with or without signatures, but signing your name to your comment does increase the odds of seeing it in print.

Threatening or deliberately cruel comments will not be accepted and, of course, no advertising a product or service please.

**So basically, submit anything - but not everything will make it to print.**

The Ledger reserves the right to choose what is printed, and reminds the public that views expressed in Sound Off!, unless otherwise stated, are not the opinions of The Ledger staff or its publishers.

*Per "Off the Cuff" article, I think our loving God cares about all his children and that would include Tim Tebow and all football players. And you shouldn't compare our troops to a football.*

*Why are Michigan State and Michigan both allowing a jersey manufacturer to dictate the colors of their uniforms? The MSU green is so dark it looks black on TV and whatever happened to that beautiful Michigan's maize? It's become almost orange! Does anyone agree?*

- A Michigan Fan

*To "Anonymous," I've recently had the pleasure of moving to this lovely community. In the seven months I've lived here (five of which being treated for breast cancer), I've experienced humanity at it's finest. Lowell is really a special place for those in my position. Your generous gift and your lovely message did not go unnoticed. I will keep your card and remember your kind words for years to come. The tears that were generated were a wonderful reminder to me that there are still good people out there - especially in Lowell. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!*

- JS

**SUDOKU**

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		1	3	5	2			
3	5	2						
			4					

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

**THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL RESULTS**

**If you had to cast your vote for president today - for whom would you vote?**

- Newt Gingrich ..... 11%
- Mitt Romney ..... 18%
- Barack Obama ..... 47%
- Ron Paul ..... 2%
- Michelle Bachman ..... 2%
- None of the above ..... 20%

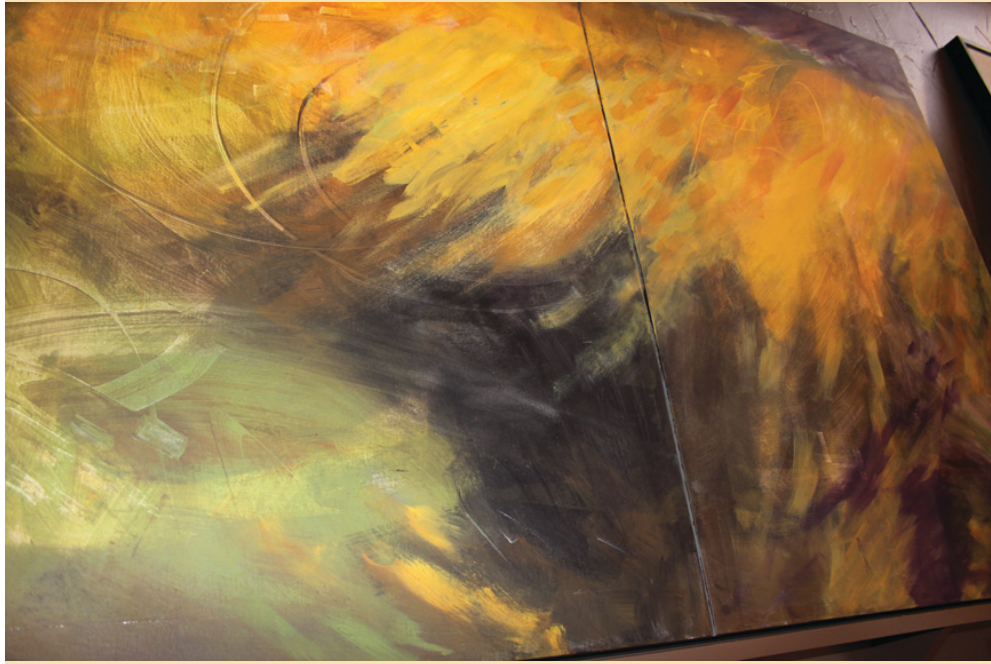
# Fire and Water gallery owner creates dramatic landscapes

by Emma Palova

Looking at Kathleen Mooney's twin paintings inspired by Ireland, "Walking the High Fields" and "Far & Golden Fields," one experiences a deep explosion in yellow.

Seemingly chaotic, the large paintings have strict organization and structure in color and subject. A path can be detected at the bottom of the high fields painting with gray broken up

The second painting expresses the painter's longing for sunshine and a nice sunny day after all the rain and mist. And as the light changes something else is revealed, a touch of



Large 40 by 60 two-panel painting "Walking the High Fields."



Kathleen Mooney with her art book "A Tear the Sun Let Fall."

purple in opposite corners of the painting.

"I wanted a nice sunny day," Mooney said. "There's all this stuff going on in these paintings. I am very happy with them."

Mooney, completely in touch with herself, says her paintings become her best friends. She spends a lot of time with her own ideas and then makes them happen whether on canvas, pottery or jewelry. Mooney has the unique ability to transform her thoughts and vision in an organized manner onto any type of media.

"It's a happy life," she said while examining her paintings with satisfaction.

Mooney, owner of Fire and Water Art gallery in downtown Lowell, is a pro-

lific artist, whose work is as diverse as the night sky.

She is the featured artist at the gallery for January. But, that is just a fraction of her overall presence in the art world. Over the last year, Mooney has been getting ready for a solo exhibit at the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center in February.

The prep work for the show led to the publishing of a 40-page full color companion book "A Tear the Sun Let Fall."

"Curating your own show allows you to tell the entire story," she said.

Mooney's exhibit story is an incredible journey into the night sky and to the stars. The journey starts in painted caves with Neolithic art and ends with NASA

explorations of the space. Somewhere in between are epic ancient Irish tales and mystic poets captured on canvas.

Mooney has a love for symbols, words, signs and abstraction. Her paintings always manifest that love in elements like winding paths or small puzzle like pieces.

"Digging deep into our need to create this will be a thoughtful and thought provoking exhibit," she said. "My take is the stars."

Mooney used Celtic constellations to depict the night sky in a breathtaking manner. The series inspired by NASA contains paintings such as "Course Correction" and "Apollo." Her "Coordinates" painting has been selected by the National Watercolor Society (NWS) as one of 30 paintings to travel on a sponsored tour to six NWS exhibitions in the USA in 2012.

Mooney has been awarded a signature status in NWS for her work.

Always looking ahead, Mooney views the current status of her art as a significant step for the next steps. She plans to start approaching galleries on the coasts and in Ireland to seek representation.

Mooney takes each project seriously, making the most out of it for her own career as in the case of the Forest Hills' exhibit that has produced the book.

"Nobody's going to throw this away," she said, holding the glossy art publication that will be sent to gallery owners.

Mooney is also inspired by poetry of EE Cummings.

The show at Forest Hills Fine Arts Center will run from Feb. 2 to Feb. 24 with artist's reception on Feb. 9.

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